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DEEP OCEAN MISSION

Focus: GS I- Physical Geography

Why in news?

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister has approved the



proposal of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) on "Deep Ocean Mission", with a view to explore deep ocean for resources and develop deep sea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources.

About Deep Ocean Mission:

Nodal: Ministry of Earth Sciences

- Deep Ocean Mission is a mission mode project to support the Blue Economy Initiatives of the Government of India.
- Government of India has also launched a 'Deep Ocean Mission' for exploration of polymetallic nodules in Central Indian Ocean Basin.
 - Polymetallic nodules contain multiple metals like copper, nickel, cobalt, manganese, iron, lead, zinc, aluminum, silver, gold, and platinum etc. in variable constitutions and are precipitate of hot fluids from upwelling hot magma from the deep interior of the oceanic crust.
- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** and no separate allocation for States is envisaged.
- It is proposed to collaborate with non-governmental organizations for research collaboration for various components of Deep Ocean Mission.

The major objectives proposed under Deep Ocean Mission are as follows:

- Development of technologies for deep sea mining, underwater vehicles and underwater robotics;
- Development of ocean climate change advisory services;
- Technological innovations for exploration and conservation of deep sea biodiversity;
- Deep ocean survey and exploration;
- Proof of concept studies on energy and freshwater from the ocean; and
- Establishing advanced marine station for ocean biology.



NUTRIENT BASED SUBSIDY REGIME

Focus: GS III- Agriculture

Why in news?

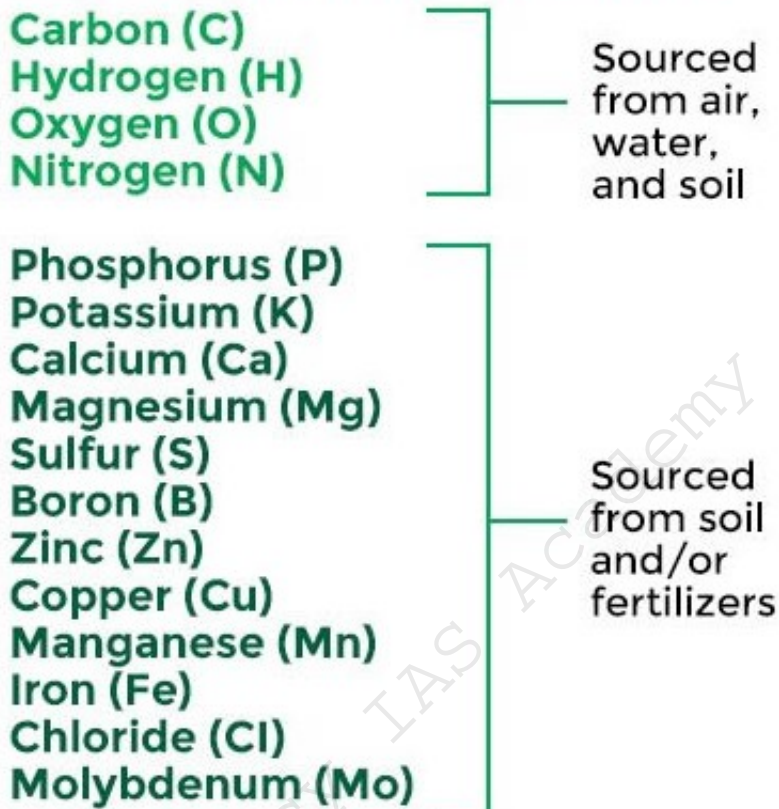
The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister has approved the proposal of the Department of Fertilizers for fixation of Nutrient Based Subsidy Rates for P&K Fertilizers for the year 2021-22.

About Nutrient-Based Subsidy Regime

- It is being implemented from April 2010 by the **Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers.**
- Under NBS - fertilizers are provided to the farmers at the subsidized rates based on the nutrients (N, P, K & S) contained in these fertilizers.
- Also, the fertilizers which are fortified with secondary and micronutrients such as molybdenum (Mo) and zinc are given additional subsidy.
- Under NBS regime, the subsidy on Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers is announced by the Government on an annual basis for each nutrient on a per kg basis – which are determined taking into account the international and domestic prices of P&K fertilizers, exchange rate, inventory level in the country etc.
- NBS policy intends to increase the consumption of P&K fertilizers so that optimum balance (N:P:K= 4:2:1) of NPK fertilization is achieved.
- This would improve soil health and as a result the yield from the crops would increase resulting in enhanced income to the farmers.
- Also, as the government expects rational use of fertilizers, this would also ease off the burden of fertilizer subsidy.
- It is being implemented from April 2010 by the Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers.



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR GROWTH OF PLANTS



Issues Related to NBS

- Urea is left-out in the scheme and hence it remains under price control as NBS has been implemented only in other fertilizers.
- There is an imbalance as the price of fertilizers (other than urea) — which were decontrolled have gone up from 2.5 to four times during the 2010-2020 decade. However, since 2010, the price of urea has increased only by 11%. **This has led to farmers using more urea than before, which has further worsened fertilizer imbalance.**
- Considering that fertilizer subsidy is the second-biggest subsidy after food subsidy, the NBS policy is not only damaging the fiscal health of the economy but also proving detrimental to the soil health of the country.
- Subsidised urea is getting diverted to bulk buyers/traders or even non-agricultural users such as plywood and animal feed makers. It is being smuggled to neighbouring countries like Bangladesh and Nepal.



Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs

- Chaired by the Prime Minister, CCEA lays down the priorities for public sector investment and considers specific proposals for investment of not less than specific levels (Rs. 3 Billion at present) as revised from time to time.
- It has a mandate to review economic trends on a continuous basis, as also the problems and prospects, with a view to evolving a consistent and integrated economic policy framework for the country.
- It also directs and coordinates all policies and activities in the economic field including foreign investment that require policy decisions at the highest level.

JALGAON BANANA

Focus: GS III- Geographical Indications



Why in news?

In a major boost to exports of Geographical Indications (GI) certified agricultural produce, a consignment of fibre and mineral rich 'Jalgaon banana' has been exported to Dubai.

About Jalgaon banana:

- In 2016, Jalgaon Banana got GI certification which was registered with Nisargraja Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Jalgaon.
- The twenty-two metric tonnes of GI certified Jalgaon banana were sourced from progressive farmers of Tandalwadi village, part of Jalgaon district of Maharashtra, a banana cluster identified under Agri Export Policy.
- India's banana export has been rising sharply because of adoption of farm practices as per the global standards.
- India is the world's leading producer of bananas with a share of around 25% in total output.
- Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh contribute more than 70% of the country's banana production.

About GI Tag

- Geographical Indications of Goods are defined as that aspect of industrial property which refer to the geographical indication referring to a country or to a place situated therein as being the country or place of origin of that product.
- Typically, such a name conveys an assurance of quality and distinctiveness which is essentially attributable to the fact of its origin in that defined geographical locality, region or country.



- Geographical Indications are covered as a component of intellectual property rights (IPRs) under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.
- GI is also governed by the World Trade Organization's (WTO's) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
- In India, Geographical Indications registration is administered by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 which came into force with effect from September 2003, this tag is issued by the Geographical Indication Registry under the Department of Industry Promotion and Internal Trade (DIPIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The first product in India to be accorded with GI tag was Darjeeling tea in the year 2004-05.
- The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of 10 years.
- It can be renewed from time to time for further period of 10 years each.
- The Geographical Indications Registry would be located at Chennai.
- Any association of persons, producers, organisation or authority established by or under the law can be a registered proprietor.
- Their name should be entered in the Register of Geographical Indication as registered proprietor for the Geographical Indication applied for.
- Karnataka has the highest number of GI tags i.e. 47 products followed by Tamil Nadu (39).



ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

Focus: GS II- International Groupings

Why in news?

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$484 million loan to improve transport connectivity and facilitate industrial development in the Chennai–Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor (CKIC) in the state of Tamil Nadu.

About Asian Development Bank (ADB):



- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank established on 19 December 1966 to promote social and economic development in Asia.
- It is headquartered in the city of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines.
- The ADB was modeled closely on the World Bank and an official United Nations Observer.
- Japan holds the largest proportion of shares in ADB followed by the USA, and it has a



weighted voting system where votes are distributed in proportion with members' capital subscriptions (just like the World Bank).

- The bank admits the members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP, formerly the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East or ECAFE) and non-regional developed countries.
- ADB defines itself as a social development organization that is dedicated to reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.
- ADB aids in reducing poverty through investments in the form of loans, grants and information sharing (in infrastructure, health care services, financial and public administration systems), helping nations prepare for the impact of climate change or better manage their natural resources, as well as other areas.

TUBERCULOSIS

Focus: GS II- Health

Why in news?

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare participated in a virtual high-level event on 'Global Drive to Scale up TB Prevention' organized by WHO Global Tuberculosis Programme, through video conference.

About Tuberculosis

- TB remains the world's deadliest infectious killer.



- Each day, over 4000 people lose their lives to TB and close to 30,000 people fall ill with this preventable and curable disease
- TB is caused by bacteria (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*) that most often affect the lungs.
- **Transmission:** TB is spread from person to person through the air. When people with TB cough, sneeze or spit, they propel the TB germs into the air.
- **Symptoms:** Cough with sputum and blood at times, chest pains, weakness, weight loss, fever and night sweats.
- **Treatment:** TB is a treatable and curable disease. It is treated with a standard 6 month course of 4 antimicrobial drugs that are provided with information, supervision and support to the patient by a health worker or trained volunteer.
- Anti-TB medicines have been used for decades and strains that are resistant to 1 or more of the medicines have been documented in every country surveyed.
- Multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) is a form of TB caused by bacteria that do not respond to isoniazid and rifampicin, the 2 most powerful, first-line anti-TB drugs. MDR-TB is treatable and curable by using second-line drugs.
- Extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB) is a more serious form of MDR-TB caused by bacteria that do not respond to the most effective second-line anti-TB drugs, often leaving patients without any further treatment options.

A WORLD FREE OF TB

ZERO deaths, disease, and suffering due to TB

END THE GLOBAL TB EPIDEMIC

	MILESTONES		TARGETS	
	2020	2025	SDG* 2030	END TB 2035
Reduction in number of TB deaths <small>compared with 2015 (%)</small>	35%	75%	90%	95%
Reduction in TB incidence rate <small>compared with 2015 (%)</small>	20%	50%	80%	90%
TB-affected families facing catastrophic costs due to TB (%)	0%	0%	0%	0%

* The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include ending the TB epidemic by 2030 under Goal 3.

Above image attached on Global Targets by The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include ending the TB epidemic by 2030 under Goal 3.



NATIONAL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Focus: GS II- Infrastructure

Why in news?

In order to enhance transparency, uniformity and leverage latest technology, the National Highways Authority of India, under Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has made mandatory use of drones for monthly video recording of National Highway projects during all stages of development, construction, operation and maintenance.

National Highways

- National Highways (NH) are the arterial roads of the country for inter-state movement of passengers and goods.
- They traverse the length and width of the country connecting the National and State capitals, major ports and rail junctions and link up with border roads and foreign highways.
- The NHs including Expressways constitute only about 1.7% of the length of all roads, they carry about 40% of the road traffic.

About National Highways Authority of India (NHAI):

Nodal: Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.



- National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) was set up under NHAI Act, 1988.
- It has been entrusted with the National Highways Development Project, along with other minor projects for development, maintenance and management.
- **National Highways Development Project (NHDP)** is a project to upgrade, rehabilitate and widen major highways in India to a higher standard. The project was started in 1998.
- NHAI maintains the National Highways network to global standards and cost effective manner and promotes economic well being and quality of life of the people.
- NHAI has mandated development of about 27,500 km of national highways under **Bharatmala Pariyojna Phase-I**.
 - Bharatmala Pariyojana is an umbrella program for the highways sector that focuses on optimizing efficiency of freight and passenger movement across the country by bridging critical infrastructure gaps through effective interventions.
 - The effective interventions include development of Economic Corridors, Inter Corridors and Feeder Routes, National Corridor Efficiency Improvement, Border and International connectivity roads, Coastal and Port connectivity roads and Green-field expressways.

PRELIMS TIDBITS

NATIONAL MARITIME HERITAGE MUSEUM

- National Maritime Heritage Museum will be established at Lothal in Gujarat.
- It is India's first maritime museum in Gujarat
- The museum will act as an independent research centre for archaeology of boat building, reconstruction of maritime history and materials traded.
- It will hold display of salvaged materials from shipwreck sites in Indian Ocean waters.



Legacy IAS Academy