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MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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THE HINDU Page 12

MAULANA AZAD NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

Centre to stop Maulana Azad Fellowship for minority students

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Centre has decided to discontinue the Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF), a scholarship for students from the minority communities, from this year. The scholarship was launched during the UPA government as part of implementing the Sachar panel recommendations.

Union Minority Affairs Minister Smriti Irani told the Lok Sabha here on Thursday that the decision was made since the MANF overlaps with various other schemes. "Since the scheme overlaps with various other fellowship schemes for higher education implemented by the government, the government has decided to discontinue the MANF scheme from 2022-23," Ms. Irani said.

She added that as per the data provided by the UGC, 6,722 candidates were selected under the scheme between 2014-15 and 2021-22 and fellowships to the tune of ₹738.85 crore were distributed during the same period.

Context: The Centre has decided to discontinue the **Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF)**, a scholarship for students from minority communities that was launched during the UPA regime as part of implementing the Sachar Committee recommendations, from this academic year.

Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF)

- **About**: The Maulana Azad National Fellowship for Minority Students is formulated and funded by **Ministry of Minority Affairs**.
- **Nodal Ministry**: The **Ministry of Minority Affairs implements MANF Scheme** for educational empowerment of students **belonging to six notified minority communities** i.e. Buddhist, Christian, Jain, Muslim, Sikh, Zoroastrian (Parsi).
    - The scheme is open to candidates who are **pursuing higher studies** such as regular and full time M.Phil/Ph.D. degrees in Sciences, Humanities, Social Sciences and Engineering & Technology.
    - The r**eservation for differently abled students** shall be made as per provision laid down by the Government of India.
- **Implementing agency:** The Scheme is **implemented through the University Grants Commission (UGC)** and no waiting list is prepared under the Scheme by UGC.
- **Selection criteria**: The selection of candidates is **done through JRF-NET** (Junior Research Fellow-National Eligibility Test) examination conducted by the National Testing Agency.
    - Prior to 2019-20, the merit list was prepared on the **basis of marks obtained** by the candidates in their Post Graduate examination.
    - However, in 2018-19, only the candidates who had **qualified CBSE-UGC-NET/JRF or CSIR-NET/JRF** were eligible to apply.
- **Eligibility criteria**: The candidate should belong to one of the minority communities **notified under Section 2 (C) of the National Minorities Commission Act, 1992.**
    - According to the UGC advertisement, he/she should be **admitted and enrolled in a regular and full-time M.Phil /PhD. course**, fulfilling the conditions of admission to a university/institution as per the provisions of the Fellowship.
    - Minority students once considered eligible for the fellowship, **will not be entitled to receive benefits for this study from any other source** i.e. from other bodies like Central or State Govt or UGC.

BUSINESS STANDARD

Page 1

USFDA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

Sun Pharma's Halol plant gets 'import alert' from USFDA

SOHINI DAS
Mumbai, 8 December

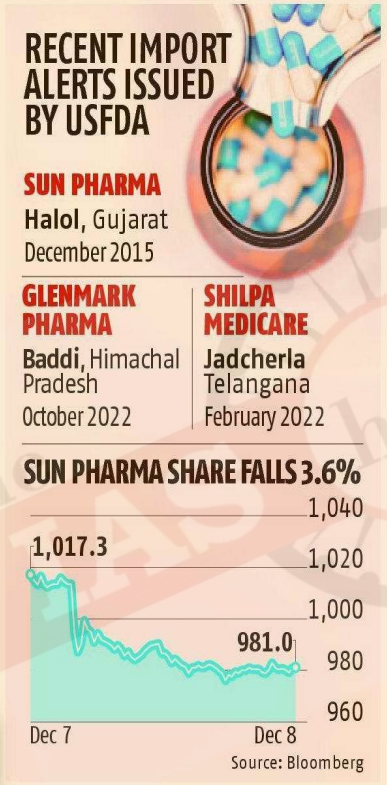
The Halol facility of Sun Pharmaceuticals, the eighth-largest pharma company in the US generics market, was slapped with an import alert by the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA), which could result in shipments from the Gujarat plant being refused entry into the USA.

As a result, analysts expect a 2-3 per cent hit to the firm's top line and a 5-6 percent impact on its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation (Ebitda).

On Thursday, the company's stock took a beating, declining 3.57 per cent on the BSE.

The USFDA had imposed an import ban on the Halol plant in December 2015 too.

Turn to Page 6



PHARMA LOGS 17% GROWTH IN NOVEMBER P3

Context: The Halol facility of Sun Pharmaceuticals, the eighth largest pharma company in the US generics market, was slapped with an import alert by the **US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA),** which could result in shipments from the Gujarat plant being refused entry into the USA.

US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA)

- **About**: A federal agency of the **Department of Health and Human Services in United states.**
- **Functions**: The FDA **exercises authority for inspections of facilities** in foreign countries which supply pharma products to the US.
  - It is **responsible for protecting and promoting public health through the control and supervision** of food safety, tobacco products, dietary supplements, prescription and over-the-counter pharmaceutical drugs (medications), vaccines, biopharmaceuticals, blood transfusions, medical devices, electromagnetic radiation emitting devices (ERED), cosmetics, animal foods & feed and veterinary products.
  - So, pharma plants in India that export to the US must **adhere to the cGMP (current good manufacturing practices) as per FDA guidelines.**
    - cGMP is a **set of regulations that was initially put forth by the FDA** to ensure that business organizations, manufacturers, and packagers of pharmaceutical products, medical devices, blood, and certain foods proactively guarantee that their products are effective, safe, and pure.
  - FDA officials often visit the facilities to **check compliance with the rules.**
- **FDA form 483**: FDA **issues Form 483** at the completion of inspection.
  - If FDA finds deviations from cGMP, it is mentioned in the Form 483.
  - The **form specifies areas** in which the facility fell short of **regulatory expectations**.
  - It is then **presented and discussed** with the management of the company.
  - Along with the Form 483, the FDA also **issues an Establishment Inspection Report (EIR)** which specifies whether action is required to be taken.

INDIAN EXPRESS

Page 20

NATIONAL PARTY STATUS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

NATIONAL PARTY

After winning almost 13% of the vote in Gujarat, AAP is set to become a 'national party'. What does this mean?

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 8

THE AAM Aadmi Party (AAP) won 5 seats in the Gujarat Assembly election on Thursday evening, and its vote share was almost 13%, which meant it was set to be recognised as a national party by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

What is a national party?

The name would suggest it's a party with a 'national' presence, as opposed to a regional party with a presence only in a particular state or region. Parties like the Congress and BJP are obviously 'national'; however, some smaller parties like the CPM and CPI are also recognised as national parties.

Not every national party has a lot of political clout nationally. And many parties, despite being dominant in a major state — such as the DMK in Tamil Nadu, BJD in Odisha, YSRCP in Andhra Pradesh, RJD in Bihar, or TRS in Telangana — and having a major say in national affairs, remain regional parties.

Certain practical benefits flow from being recognised as a national party. Their election symbols (like the AAP's broom) are reserved for use by their candidates across the country; they are eligible to get land in Delhi to build a party office; and they can have up to 40 star campaigners instead of the 20 that state parties are allowed. The expenditure on campaigning and travel of star campaigners is not added to the candidate's spending limit.

How are they defined?

The ECI has laid down specific criteria for recognition as a national party. A party may gain or lose national party status from time to time, depending on whether it meets these criteria. The ECI's *Political Parties and Election Symbols, 2019* handbook says a party would be considered a national party if:

- it is 'recognised' in at least four states; or
- if its candidates polled at least 6% of valid votes in any four or more states in the last Lok Sabha or Assembly elections, and has at least four MPs in the last LS polls; or
- if it has won at least 2% of the total seats in LS from not less than three states.

To be recognised as a state party, a party needs:

- at least 6% vote share in the last Assembly election and at least 2 MLAs; or
- 6% vote share in the last LS elections from that state and at least one MP from that state; or
- at least 3% of the total number of seats or three seats, whichever is more, in the last Assembly elections; or
- at least one MP for every 25 members or any fraction allotted to the state in Lok Sabha; or
- at least 8% of total valid votes in the last Assembly election or LS election from the state.

Where does AAP stand?

It is in power with very large vote shares in Delhi and Punjab; in the Goa elections in March, it won 6.77% of the vote. Going into the current elections, it needed 6% in either Gujarat or Himachal — that would be the fourth state, and would qualify it for recognition as a national party. While AAP got only 1% of the vote in Himachal, its almost 13% in Gujarat is more than double what it required.

Which parties are 'national'?

As of now, there are eight — the BJP, Congress, TMC, CPI(M), CPI, NCP, BSP, and Conrad Sangma's National People's Party (NPP), which was recognised in 2019. Once the official results of the Gujarat elections are announced, AAP will become the ninth party to be recognised as a national party.

Context: After Gujarat results, **Aam Aadmi Party is set to become a national party.**

National party Status

- **About**: A national party would be one that has a **presence 'nationally',** as opposed to a regional party whose presence is restricted to only a particular state or region.
- **Criteria**: The **ECI has laid down the technical criterion** for a party to be recognised as a national party. As per the **ECI's Political Parties and Election Symbols, 2019 handbook**, a political party would be considered a national party if:
  - it is 'recognised' in **four or more states**; or
  - its candidates polled **at least 6% of total valid votes in any four or more states** in the last Lok Sabha or Assembly elections and has at least four MPs in the last Lok Sabha polls; or
  - it has won **at least 2% of the total seats in the Lok Sabha** from not less than three states.
- **Current status**: As of now, the ECI has recognised **eight parties as national parties** - the BJP, Congress, Trinamool Congress, CPI(M), CPI, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), and **Conrad Sangma's National People's Party (NPP), which was recognised in 2019.**
- **State party:** To be **recognised as a state party**, a party needs:
  - **at least 6% vote-share** in the last Assembly election and have at least 2 MLAs; or
  - **have 6% vote-share** in the last Lok Sabha elections from that state and at least one MP from that state; or
  - **at least 3% of the total number of seats or three seats**, whichever is more, in the last Assembly elections; or
  - **at least one MP for every 25 members** or any fraction allotted to the state in the Lok Sabha; or
  - **have at least 8% of the total valid votes** in the last Assembly election or Lok Sabha election from the state.

LIVEMINT

Page 2

MULTI STATE COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Government Policies & Interventions)

Centre plans cooperative export society

Ravi Dutta Mishra & Utpal Bhaskar

NEW DELHI



This comes in the backdrop of India's exports contracting 16.65% to $29.78 billion in October 2022 from a year ago. BLOOMBERG

The government is planning to set up a "National Cooperative Export Society" to help boost India's exports, with a proposal on it having been circulated by the ministry of cooperation among central ministries and departments for consultation, said two people with knowledge of the development.

This Society will be geared toward promoting exports and is proposed to be set up under the Multi State Cooperative Societies Act 2002. This comes in the backdrop of India's exports contracting 16.65% to $29.78 billion in October 2022 from a year ago.

India is home to about 800,000 industrial units that are run by producers in rural sectors, catering mostly to the domestic sector. In spite of the export potential, much of the industry is unorganized. The newly formed ministry of cooperation says there is no comprehensive database on cooperatives available with it but the process of creating a national database on cooperatives has started.

In June Union minister for cooperation Amit Shah informed the Lok Sabha that the government is working on a national policy for cooperatives, based on consultations on reforming the sector.

In a push to cooperatives, the government had also approved expanding the mandate of the Government e Marketplace-Special Purpose Vehicle (GeM-SPV) to allow procurement by cooperatives.

The society is proposed to be set up under the Multi State Cooperative Societies Act 2002

Prior to this, the platform was open for procurement by government buyers, central and state ministries, departments and public sector enterprises.

Queries emailed to a spokesperson for the ministry of cooperation on 4 December remained unanswered. The government on Thursday introduced the Multi-State Co-operative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2022 to strengthen governance, transparency and accountability in cooperative societies and reform their electoral process. It also seeks to improve monitoring and ease of doing business for these entities.

Indian exporters welcomed the move. "There are thousands of cooperatives in the country and if we are able to bring them under a single umbrella body, it will definitely help in attracting their focus towards exports. Most of the cooperative bodies are looking at the domestic market. Beyond a point the domestic market gets saturated. So as a long-term strategy we should be open to the global market. This will help in the internationalisation of Indian cooperatives," said Federation of Indian Export Organizations director general Ajay Sahai.

A CareEdge report on Thursday said that cotton yarn exports declined by 59% in HIFY23 to 289,000 tonnes and are expected to record a de-growth of 28-30% in FY23 due to high cotton prices and weakening export demand. India produces around 3.5 million tonnes of cotton yarn per annum, 60-65% of which is consumed domestically, and the rest exported.

ravi.dutt@livemint.com

Context: The government is planning to set up a "**National Cooperative Export Society**" to help boost India's exports, with a proposal on it having been circulated by the ministry of cooperation among central ministries and departments for consultation.

- This Society will be geared toward promoting exports and is proposed to be set up under the **Multi State Cooperative Societies Act 2002.**

Multi state cooperative societies

- **About**: Cooperatives are a state subject. But many societies have their members and areas of operation **spread across more than one state.**
  - **For example**, sugar mills along the districts on the Karnataka-Maharashtra border.
- **Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act 2002**: It was enacted to consolidate and amend the laws relating to cooperative societies and to substitute the **Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 1984.**
  - **Objective**: To facilitate the **incorporation, functioning, and organization** of cooperative societies which have jurisdiction in more than one state.
  - **Definition of multi-State co-operative society**: It says that "multi-State co-operative society" means a society registered or deemed to be **registered under this Act** and **includes a national co-operative society and a Federal co-operative.**
  - **Key features of the act**: The Act provides for the formation of both the types of cooperative societies i.e. **primary (with both individual and institutional members) and Federal Cooperatives (with only institutional membership).**
    - They draw their membership from both states, and they are thus registered under the MSCS Act.
    - Their board of directors has **representation from all states** they operate in.
    - Administrative and financial control of these societies are with the central registrar, with the law making it clear that **no state government official can wield any control on them**.
- **Cooperatives in India:** The **Constitution (97th Amendment) Act, 2011** added a new Part IXB regarding the cooperatives working in India.
  - The word "**cooperatives**" was added after "unions and associations" in Article 19(1)(c) under Part III of the Constitution.
  - This enables **all the citizens to form cooperatives** by giving it the status of fundamental right of citizens.
  - A new **Article 43B** was added in the Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV) regarding the "promotion of cooperative societies".

ECONOMIC TIMES

Page 1

SWAMIH FUND

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy & Infrastructure)

Govt Puts ₹5k crore in SWAMIH Fund-I

Social impact fund logs final close at ₹15,530cr

Kailash.Babar@timesgroup.com



Mumbai: The government has invested more than ₹5,000 crore in SBICAP Ventures-backed SWAMIH Investment Fund I, which supports stressed housing projects in the affordable and mid-income categories, taking its final close to ₹15,530 crore. This is one of the largest corpuses raised by any fund in India in the last few years.

The fund is sponsored by the finance ministry and is managed by SBICAP Ventures, a State Bank Group company. State Bank of India is also one of the anchor investors of the fund along with Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC). Mortgage lender HDFC and major nationalised banks are among its key investors.

"The State Bank Group will continue to provide all execution capabilities required to fully implement this strategic Government of India initiative," said Suresh Kozhikote, MD of SBICAP Ventures.

Context: The government has invested more than ₹5,000 crore in **SBICAP Ventures-backed SWAMIH Investment Fund I,** which supports stressed housing projects in the affordable and mid-income categories, taking its final close to ₹15,530 crore.

Special Window for Affordable & Mid-Income Housing (SWAMIH) Fund

- **About**: A government backed fund that was set up as a **Category-II AIF (Alternate Investment Fund)** debt fund registered with SEBI, launched in 2019.
  - Under this category, funds that are **invested in equity securities and debt securities** are included.
  - Those **funds not already under Category I and III** respectively are also included.
  - **No concession** is given by the government for any investment made for Category II AIFS.
- **Objectives**: Formed **to complete construction of stalled**, Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act (RERA)-registered affordable and mid-income category housing projects which are stuck due to paucity of funds.
- **Investment Manager of the Fund:** SBICAP Ventures is a **wholly-owned subsidiary** of SBI Capital Markets, which in turn is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the State Bank of India.
- **Sponsor of the Fund**: **Secretary**, Department of Economic Affairs, **Ministry of Finance**, on behalf of the Government of India.
- **Investor of the Fund:** Alternate Investment Funds created/funded under the **Special Window** would solicit investment from 14 investors:
  - With the **government holding 50%** of the fund.
  - **Life Insurance Corp. and State Bank of India** each having 10%.
  - The **rest with public and private-sector players** which will include cash-rich financial institutions, public and private banks, sovereign wealth funds, domestic pension and provident funds, global pension funds and other institutional investors.
- **Eligibility Criteria:** The **real estate projects seeking last-mile funding from SWAMIH** must be Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act (RERA)-registered which have been stalled due to a lack of adequate funds. Each of these projects must be very close to completion.
  - They must also **fall under the 'Affordable and Middle Income Project' category** (any housing projects wherein housing units do not exceed 200 sq.m.).
  - **Net-worth positive projects** are also eligible for SWAMIH funding.
    - Net-worth positive projects are those projects for which the value of their receivables (debts owed to them by buyers), plus the value of their unsold inventories is **greater than their completion costs and outstanding liabilities**

TIMES OF INDIA

Page 1

Consider making lawyers ad hoc judges in HCs for 2-3 yrs, SC urges Centre

Eye On Pendency And Vacancies

AmitAnand.Choudhary
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Noting that many eminent lawyers are willing to take a break for a few years from their booming legal practice to be appointed ad hoc judges in high courts as part of their social responsibility, the Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Centre to consider offering them judgeship for two to three years.

With various high courts reeling under huge pendency of cases in addition to a large number of judicial vacancies, a bench of Justices Sanjay K Kaul, Abhay S Oka and Vikram Nath said senior advocates are often not willing to take up permanent judgeship but inclined to accept posts of ad-hoc judges for short tenures.

Reasoning that their appointment would be an effective way to increase the rate of disposal of cases if they are allowed to decide cases in the field of their expertise, the SC asked attorney general R Venkataramani to explore this idea.

▶Shouldn't take mths, P 26

'SIMPLIFY PROCESS'

- SC says process for ad hoc appointment of judges cumbersome, **wants simpler procedure to attract lawyers**
- Such appointments will be effective in reducing pendency **if these judges are allowed to decide cases in fields of expertise**, SC says
- Last year, the court activated a 'dormant' constitutional provision **to pave way for appointment of retired HC judges as ad hoc judges** for a short period

AD HOC JUDGES IN HC

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

Context: Noting that many eminent lawyers are willing to take a break for a few years from their booming legal practice to be appointed ad hoc judges in high courts as part of their social responsibility, the Supreme Court asked the **Centre to consider offering them judgeship for two to three years.**

Ad hoc judges in the High Court

- **Constitutional Provisions: Article 224A of the Constitution** of India provides that the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court may at any time, with the prior approval of the President of India, request a person who has been in the office of Judge of that court or any other High Court to act as Judge of the Supreme Court of that State.
  - **Article 224A enables a Chief Justice of a High Court**, with the previous consent of the President, to request a former High Court judge to "sit and act as a judge" of the High Court to hear cases.
- **Consent of the person required**: Whenever the need arises, the **Chief Justice of India after obtaining the consent of the person concerned** will inform the name of the retired Judge and the period during which he or she will be required to sit and act as a High Court Judge to the CM of the State.
- **Role of state government**: The Chief Minister will forward his **recommendation to the Union Minister of Law and Justice** after consultation with the Governor.
- **Role of Union Minister**: The Minister of Law and Justice of the Union Government then contacted the **Chief Justice of India according to the procedure provided.**
- **Role of Prime Minister:** On receiving the advice of the Chief Justice of India, it would be **put up to the Prime Minister,** who then **advises the President** related to the person to be appointed as Ad-Hoc Judge of the High Court.
  - After the President approves the appointment of a Judge , the **Secretary of State of India to the Ministry of Justice will notify** the Chief Justice of that High Court and the Chief Minister of State will issue the required notice in the Indian Gazette.

PIB

Dec 9

ATMA NIRBHAR BHARAT ROJGAR YOJANA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Govt. Policies & Interventions)

Beneficiaries Under ABRY

Posted On: 08 DEC 2022 2:50PM by PIB Delhi

An amount of Rs. 6400 Crore has been allocated during the financial year 2022-23 for the Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY) scheme. Since inception of the scheme, till 28.11.2022, an amount of Rs. 8180.00 Crore has been sanctioned and benefits of Rs. 7855.07 Crore have been provided to 60.13 lakhs beneficiaries under the scheme.

Context: An amount of Rs. 6400 Crore has been allocated during the financial year 2022-23 for the **Atma Nirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY) scheme.**

Atma Nirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana

- **About**: It **provides subsidy for provident fund contribution** for adding new employees to establishments registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO).
- **Origin**: Launched in **November 2020** to boost employment in the formal sector and incentivize creation of new employment opportunities during the Covid-19 recovery phase under **Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package 3.0.**
- **Eligibility Criteria**: Establishments **registered with EPFO will be eligible for the benefits** if they add new employees compared to the reference base of employees as in September 2020.
  - Establishments, with **up to 50 employees**, would have to add a minimum of two new employees.
  - The organizations, with **more than 50 employees**, would have to add at least five employees.
- **Benefits**: The organizations of **up to 1000 employees** would receive employee's contribution (12% of wages) and employer's contributions (12% of wages), totalling 24% of wages, for two years.
  - **Employers with over 1,000 employees** will get employees' contribution of 12%, for 2 years.
  - The subsidy amount under the scheme will be credited upfront only in **Aadhaar-seeded EPFO accounts of new employees.**
- **Beneficiaries**: **Any new employee** joining employment in EPFO registered establishments on monthly wages less than Rs. 15,000.
  - Those who **left their job between 1st March to 30th September 2020** and are employed on or after 1st October 2020.

PIB

Dec 9

NUCLEAR POWER CORPORATION OF INDIA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy & Infrastructure)

Union Minister Dr Jitendra says, Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) has so far spent about Rs. 663 crores on its CSR programmes, of which about 70% was incurred on development of infrastructure facilities in the villages around nuclear power plant sites

Context: Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) has so far spent about Rs. 663 crore on its **Corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes**, of which about 70% was incurred on development of infrastructure facilities in the villages around nuclear power plant sites.

Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL)

- **About**: An **Indian public sector** undertaking based in Mumbai, Maharashtra which is wholly owned by the Government of India.
- **Origin**: NPCIL was created in **September 1987 under the Companies Act 1956**, "with the objective of undertaking the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the atomic power stations for generation of electricity in pursuance of the schemes and programmes of the Government of India under the provision of the Atomic Energy Act 1962."
  - All nuclear power plants operated by the company are certified for **ISO-14001 (Environment Management System).**
- **Functions**: Responsible for the generation of electricity from nuclear power.
- **Nodal department:** NPCIL is administered by the **Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).**
  - The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), **under the Prime Minister's Office,** is responsible for nuclear technology and research.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes

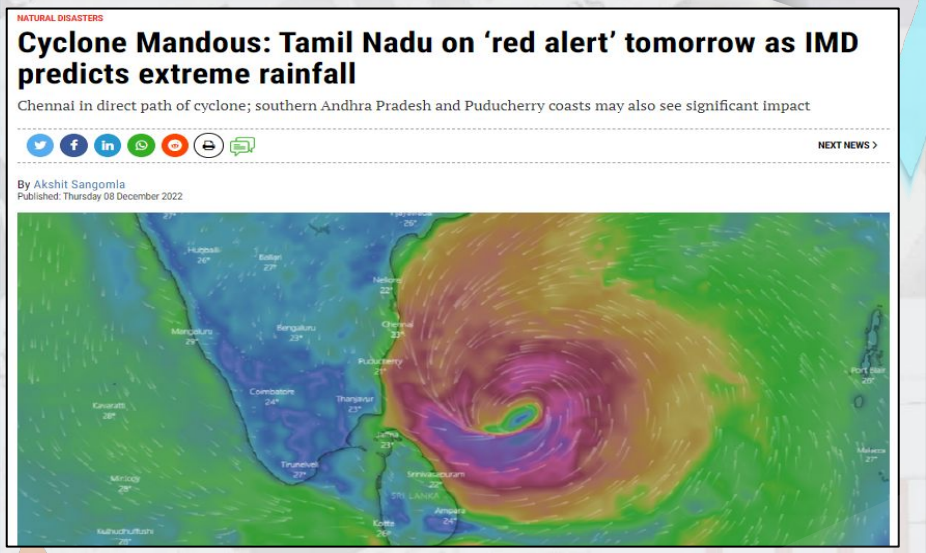
- **About**: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the idea that a company should play **a positive role in the community and consider the environmental and social impact of business decisions.**
- **India's status:** CSR is governed by clause 135 of the **Companies Act, 2013 in India.**
  - **India is the first country** in the world to mandate CSR spending along with a framework to identify potential CSR activities.
- **Key provisions for CSR:** The CSR provisions within the Act is applicable to companies with an **annual turnover of 1,000 crore and more, or a net worth of Rs. 500 crore and more, or a net profit of Rs. 5 crore and more.**
  - The Act requires companies to set up a CSR committee which shall recommend a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy to the Board of Directors and also monitor the same from time to time.
  - The Act encourages companies to **spend 2% of their average net profit** in the previous three years on CSR activities.
- **Activities**: Specified under **Schedule VII of the Companies Act 2013,** these activities include:
  - Eradicating extreme hunger and poverty
  - Promotion of education, gender equality and empowering women
  - Combating HIV-AIDS and other diseases
  - Ensuring environmental sustainability
  - Contribution to the PM's National Relief Fund or any other fund set up by the Central Government for socio-economic development and relief.

DTE

Dec 9

CYCLONE MANDOUS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Geography)



NATURAL DISASTERS

Cyclone Mandous: Tamil Nadu on 'red alert' tomorrow as IMD predicts extreme rainfall

Chennai in direct path of cyclone; southern Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry coasts may also see significant impact

NEXT NEWS >

By Akshit Sangomla
Published: Thursday 08 December 2022

Context: Northern Tamil Nadu, southern Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry coasts have to be ready to face the worst impacts of **Cyclone Mandous.**

- **India Meteorological Department's (IMD)** predicted that the storm system may move in the west and northwestward directions and intensify into a depression by the evening of December 6.
- It may subsequently strengthen further into a cyclone over **southwest Bay of Bengal** and move towards the Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coasts by the morning of December 8.

Key points

- The **cyclone is not a major storm** but could still have significant impacts along the coast, especially in the city of Chennai, which currently lies in the direct path of the cyclone.
  - A **storm is any disturbed state of the natural environment** or the atmosphere of an astronomical body.
- Another impact of the cyclone could be in terms of **storm surge**, which is the increase in the height of tidal waves during a storm or cyclone.
  - **Storm surge is an abnormal rise of water generated by a storm**, over and above the predicted astronomical tides.
  - Storm surge should not be confused with storm tide, which is defined as the water level rise due to the combination of storm surge and the astronomical tide.

Cyclone Mandous

- **About**: Mandous is a **slow-moving cyclone** that often absorbs a lot of moisture, carries a humongous amount of rainfall and gains strength in the form of wind speeds.
- **Naming**: The name has been suggested by the **United Arab Emirates**. Mandous, in Arabic, means "treasure box."
  - The name "Mandous" was given to the storm when it was only a well-marked area over the Andaman Sea and the adjoining Bay of Bengal.
- **Cyclone**: These are r**apid inward air circulation around a low-pressure area.**
  - The air circulates in an anticlockwise direction in the Northern hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern hemisphere.

Naming of Cyclone

- **Naming of Cyclones**: Cyclones that form in every ocean basin across the world are named by the **regional specialised meteorological centres (RSMCs)** and Tropical Cyclone Warning Centres (TCWCs).
  - There are **six RSMCs in the world,** including the **India** Meteorological Department (IMD), and five TCWCs.
- **WMO/ESCAP**: In 2000, a group of nations called **WMO/ESCAP (World Meteorological Organisation/United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific),** which comprised Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand, decided to start naming cyclones in the region.
  - After each country sent in suggestions, the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones (PTC) finalised the list.
  - The WMO/ESCAP **expanded to include five more countries in 2018** - Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

DTE

Dec 9

BT BRINJAL

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)



Bt Brinjal biopiracy case: Apex court restores PIL in Karnataka HC after nearly a decade

In this decade, 231 more crops have been removed from the protection of piracy provided in Section 3 of the Biodiversity Act, bringing the total to 421

NEXT NEWS >

By Shuchita Jha
Published: Thursday 08 December 2022

Context: The Supreme Court has ordered the Karnataka High Court to continue hearing a **public interest litigation (PIL) on biopiracy** which it had sent to the National Green Tribunal in 2013.

- The PIL had stated that the **seed of the Bt Brinjal**, developed by the public-private partnership, was created by accessing six varieties of indigenous brinjal seeds **illegally**.

Background

- **Issue**: The Bt Brinjal has been developed **without obtaining any consent of local Biodiversity Management Committees**, the State Biodiversity Board and the National Biodiversity Authority.
- **PIL**: A decade ago, **Environment Support Group (ESG)**, a non-profit that works to mainstream environmental and social justice in decision-making, filed a PIL before the Karnataka High Court.
  - The high court transferred the petition to the **National Green Tribunal.**
- **SC's order**: After nearly a decade, the apex court has now restored the petition back to the high court after ESG challenged the move in the Supreme Court, stating that the **NGT did not have the power to look into petitions challenging the constitutional validity.**

Bt Brinjal

- **About**: Bt Brinjal is a transgenic brinjal **created by inserting a gene cry1Ac** from the soil bacterium Bacillus thuringiensis into Brinjal.
  - This g**enetically modified brinjal gives resistance against insects** such as the Brinjal Fruit and Shoot Borer (Leucinodes orbonalis).
- **Developed by**: The Bt Brinjal was developed by the **University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Dharwad, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu UAS, Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company (Mahyco)** and Monsanto, along with Sathguru Management Consultants Private Ltd.
  - They developed it by accessing the germplasm of indigenous brinjal varieties - **malpur, majarigota, kudachi, udupi, 112 GO and rabkavi.**
- **Controversy about Bt Brinjal:** Bt Brinjal has generated much debate in India. The promoters say that Bt Brinjal will be **beneficial to small farmers because it is insect resistant,** increases yields, is more cost-effective and will have a minimal environmental impact.
  - On the other hand, concerns about Bt Brinjal relate to its **possible adverse impact on human health and biosafety, livelihoods and biodiversity.**

- **Commercial use:** Bt Brinjal is the **first Genetically Modified food crop in India** that has reached the approval stage for commercialization.
  - The **Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC)** cleared BT brinjal for commercial use in India on 14 October 2009.
  - When concerns were raised by farmers, scientists and NGOs, the Central Government announced in February 2009 that it **needed more time to test how safe the BT Brinjal** was before approving it for commercial use.
  - In 2010, it was announced that the government would be putting a **10-year moratorium** on the commercialization of Bt brinjals, citing that a thorough field test must be carried out before it can be used by farmers.

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