



Daily Current Affairs

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Six Project 75(I) submarines

Why in news?

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), in a landmark decision approved indigenous construction of six submarines for the Indian Navy at a cost of over Rs. 40,000 crores.

Highlights:

- This is the second project under the MoD's ambitious Strategic Partnership (SP) model that aims at providing a significant fillip to the Government's 'Make in India' programme.
- SP model envisages indigenous manufacturing of major defence platforms by an Indian Strategic Partner, who will collaborate with foreign OEM to set up production facilities in the country.
- The model has a long term vision of promoting India as a manufacturing hub for defence equipment through transfer of niche technologies and higher Indigenous Content thereby enhancing self-sufficiency for meeting the future requirements of the Armed Forces.
- DAC approval would be second such project following indigenous production of 111 Naval Utility Helicopters that was approved in August 2018.
- Construction of six submarines under Project 75(I) will provide a major boost to the existing submarine design and manufacturing ecosystem in India through transfer of design and equipment technology as well as necessary skill sets.
- The DAC also approved the acquisition of approximately 5000 Milan Anti Tank Guided Missiles for the Army.

About Project 75(I):

- The Project 75I-class submarine is a follow-on of the Project 75 Kalvari-class submarines for the Indian Navy.
- Under this project, the Indian Navy intends to acquire six diesel-electric submarines, which will also feature advanced Air-independent propulsion (AIP) systems to enable them to stay submerged for longer duration and substantially increase their operational range.
- In October 2014, the project got clearance from Defence Acquisition Council. All six submarines are expected to be constructed in Indian shipyards.
- Project 75I-class submarines will have a vertical launch system (VLS) to enable them to carry multiple Brahmos supersonic cruise missiles, making the submarines fully capable of anti-surface and anti-ship warfare missions.
- Project 75I submarines will also be armed with torpedoes and will feature advanced stealth capabilities such as a greater ability to suppress noise and acoustic signatures.
- Submarines will also be outfitted with Air-independent propulsion (AIP) fuel cells which can significantly increase submerged endurance and operational range.

About Defence Acquisition Council:

An overarching structure, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), under the Defence Minister was constituted for overall guidance of the defence procurement planning process.

The composition of the DAC is as follows:

- Defence Minister: Chairman
- Minister of State for Defence: Member
- Chief of Army Staff: Member
- Chief of Naval Staff: Member
- Chief of Air Staff: Member
- Defence Secretary: Member
- Secretary Defence Research & Development: Member

- Secretary Defence Production: Member
- Chief of Integrated Staff Committees HQ IDS: Member
- Director General (Acquisition): Member
- Dy. Chief of Integrated Defence: Staff Member Secretary

The **objective** of the Defence Acquisition Council is to ensure expeditious procurement of the approved requirements of the Armed Forces in terms of capabilities sought, and time frame prescribed, by optimally utilizing the allocated budgetary resources.

The functions of the DAC include:

- in-principle approval of 15 Year Long-Term Integrated Perspective Plan for Defence Forces;
- accord of Acceptance of Necessity to acquisition proposals;
- categorization of the acquisition proposals relating to 'Buy', 'Buy & Make' and 'Make';
- issues relating to Single vendor clearance;
- decision regarding 'offset' provisions in respect of acquisition proposals above Rs. 300 crores;
- decisions regarding Transfer of Technology under 'Buy & Make' category of acquisition proposals; and
- Field Trial evaluation.

National Workshop on Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM)

Why in news?

The Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBMG) of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, held a National Workshop on Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) on 30th and 31st January 2019 in New Delhi.

Highlights:

- The workshop was attended by District Collectors, CEOs, CDOs, Executive Engineers and other officers, from across the country.
- Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, reiterated the SBMG's continued commitment to SLWM and shared an overview of the various ongoing initiatives of the Ministry.
- Mission is on track to deliver an Open Defecation Free (ODF) India well before the set deadline of October 2019 and is focusing increasingly on sustaining the ODF outcomes and ODF-plus activities including SLWM.
- The workshop emphasized the importance of Fecal Sludge Management (FSM) for rural census towns and large dense villages and Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resource-dhan (GOBAR-DHAN) in rural areas.
- It also covered Plastic Waste Management, Grey Water Management and featured case studies from across the country.

About GOBAR-DHAN scheme

- Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation has launched the GOBAR (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources) - DHAN scheme. The scheme is being implemented as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin).
- The Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) comprises two main components for creating clean villages - creating open defecation free (ODF) villages and managing solid and liquid waste in villages.
- With over 3.5 lakh villages, 374 districts and 16 States/UTs of the country being declared ODF, the stage is set for ODF-plus activities, including measures to enhance Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM).
- The GOBAR-DHAN scheme, with its focus on keeping villages clean, increasing the income of rural households, and generation of energy from cattle waste, is an important element of this ODF-plus strategy.

Aim:

The scheme aims to positively impact village cleanliness and generate wealth and energy from cattle and organic waste. The scheme also aims at creating new rural livelihood opportunities and enhancing income for farmers and other rural people.

Implementation

- GOBAR-Dhan shall cover 700 districts in 2018-19. The scheme will be implemented in 350 districts on pilot basis. Remaining districts would be covered in second half of the financial year 2018-19.
- The programme will be implemented using SLWM funding pattern of SBM-G Guidelines. The total assistance under SBM (G) for SLWM projects is worked out on the basis of total number of households in each GP, subject to a maximum of Rs 7 lakh for a GP having up to 150 households, Rs.12 lakh up to 300 households, Rs. 15 lakh up to 500 households and Rs.20 lakh for GPs having more than 500 households. Funding for SLWM project under SBM (G) will continue to be provided by the Central and State Government in the ratio of 60:40 as per the existent formula.
- Only those Gram Panchayats which have not availed SLWM funds under SBM(G) are eligible to receive the financial assistance under GOBAR-Dhan scheme, subject to the limits of guidelines. However, States shall have the flexibility to provide additional funds to any GP based on viability under the scheme.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

Why in news?

Recently The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has approved the construction of another 4,78,670 more affordable houses for the benefit of urban poor under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban).

About Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana:

- The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) Programme launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA), in Mission mode envisions provision of Housing for All by 2022, when the Nation completes 75 years of its Independence.
- The Mission seeks to address the housing requirement of urban poor including slum dwellers through following programme verticals:
- Slum rehabilitation of Slum Dwellers with participation of private developers using land as a resource.
- Promotion of Affordable Housing for weaker section through credit linked subsidy
- Affordable Housing in Partnership with Public & Private sectors.
- Subsidy for beneficiary-led individual house construction /enhancement.

Beneficiaries

- The mission seeks to address the housing requirement of urban poor including slum dwellers. A slum is defined as a compact area of at least 300 people or about 60 - 70 households of poorly built congested tenements in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities.
- Beneficiaries include Economically weaker section (EWS), low-income groups (LIGs) and Middle Income Groups (MIGs). The annual income cap is up to Rs 3 lakh for EWS, Rs 3-6 lakh for LIG and Rs 6 + -18 lakhs for MIG.
- EWS category of beneficiaries is eligible for assistance in all four verticals of the Missions whereas LIG and MIG categories are eligible under only Credit linked subsidy scheme (CLSS) component of the Mission.
- For identification as a EWS or LIG beneficiary under the scheme, an individual loan applicant will submit self-certificate/ affidavit as proof of income.
- A beneficiary family will comprise husband, wife, unmarried sons and/or unmarried daughters.
- The beneficiary family should not own a pucca house either in his/her name or in the name of any member of his/her family in any part of India to be eligible to receive central assistance under the mission.

- States/UTs, at their discretion, may decide a cut-off date on which beneficiaries need to be resident of that urban area for being eligible to take benefits under the scheme.
- At the slum decadal growth rate of 34%, the slum households are projected to go upto 18 million.
- 2 million non-slum urban poor households are proposed to be covered under the Mission. Hence, total housing shortage envisaged to be addressed through the new mission is 20 million.

Scope

- “Housing for All” Mission for urban area is being implemented during 2015-2022 and this Mission will provide central assistance to implementing agencies through States and UTs for providing houses to all eligible families/beneficiaries by 2022.
 - Mission will be implemented as Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) except for the component of credit linked subsidy which will be implemented as a Central Sector Scheme.
 - Mission with all its component has become effective from the date 17.06.2015 and will be implemented upto 31.03.2022
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Interim Budget

Why in news?

Today Union Government Presented a Interim budget as it is last year for present Lok Sabha session before going to general election.

What is interim budget or vote on account?

- A vote on account, also known as interim Budget, essentially means that the government seeks the approval of Parliament for meeting expenditure for the first four months of the fiscal year (April-March) — paying salaries, ongoing programmes in various sectors etc — with no changes in the taxation structure, until a new government takes

over and presents a full Budget that is revised for the full fiscal.

- Over the years, some governments have made policy announcements or tweaked tax rates in the vote on account. Such practices are now being recalled, amid indications that the government may present more than a vote on account on February 1.

Why present a vote on account?

- The reasoning is that there is little time to get approvals from Parliament for various grants to ministries and departments, and to debate these as well as any provisions for changes in taxation.
 - More importantly, the reasoning is that it would be the prerogative of the new government to signal its policy direction, which is often reflected in the Budget.
 - So, starting 1948, when Finance Minister R K Shanmukham Chetty presented a vote on account and followed it up with Independent India's first regular budget, most governments have followed this convention.
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