Daily Current Affairs

Posted at: 18/02/2019

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana

Why in news?

The PM inaugurated Lower Panazara Medium Project under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).

About Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana:

The overreaching vision of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) is to ensure access to some means of protective irrigation to all agricultural farms in the country, to produce 'per drop more crop', thus bringing much desired rural prosperity.

Background:

- Out of about 141 m.Ha of net area sown in the country, about 65 million hectare (or 45%) is presently covered under irrigation.
- Substantial dependency on rainfall makes cultivation in unirrigated areas a high risk, less productive profession.
- Empirical evidences suggest that assured or protective irrigation encourages farmers to invest more in farming technology and inputs leading to productivity enhancement and increased farm income.

Objectives

The broad objectives of PMKSY include

- Achieve convergence of investments in irrigation at the field level (preparation of district level and, if required, sub district level water use plans).
- Enhance the physical access of water on the farm and expand cultivable area under assured irrigation (Har Khet ko pani).
- Integration of water source, distribution and its efficient use, to make best use of water through appropriate technologies and practices.
- Improve on - farm water use efficiency to reduce wastage and increase availability both in duration and extent.
- Enhance the adoption of precision - irrigation and other water saving technologies (More crop per drop).
- Enhance recharge of aquifers and introduce sustainable water conservation practices.
- Ensure the integrated development of rainfed areas using the watershed approach towards soil and water conservation, regeneration of ground water, arresting runoff, providing livelihood options and other NRM activities.
- Promote extension activities relating to water harvesting, water management and crop alignment for farmers and grass root level field functionaries.
- Explore the feasibility of reusing treated municipal waste water for peri - urban agriculture.
- Attract greater private investments in irrigation.

Programme implementation

- Krishi Sinchayee Yojana with an outlay of Rs.50,000 crores for a period of 5 years (2015-16 to 2019-20) is to achieve convergence of investments in irrigation at the field level.
- PMKSY has been formulated amalgamating ongoing schemes viz. Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) of Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation; Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) of Department of Land Resources; and On Farm Water Management (OFWM) component of National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation.
- PMKSY is to be implemented in an area development approach, adopting decentralized state level planning and projectised execution,

allowing the states to draw their irrigation development plans based on district/blocks plans with a horizon of 5 to 7 years. States can take up projects based on the District/State Irrigation Plan.

- All the States and Union Territories including North Eastern States are covered under the programme.
- The National Steering Committee (NSC) of PMKSY under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister, will provide policy direction to programme framework and a National Executive Committee (NEC) under the chairmanship of Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog will oversee the programme implementation at national level.
- Provision has been made under PMKSY during 2015-16 for carrying out extension activities in the field with special focus on water harvesting, water management and crop alignment for farmers and grass root level field functionaries.

Programme Components

PMKSY has the following programme components:

A. Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP)

To focus on faster completion of ongoing Major and Medium Irrigation including National Projects.

B. PMKSY (Har Khet ko Pani)

- Creation of new water sources through Minor Irrigation (both surface and ground water)
- Repair, restoration and renovation of water bodies; strengthening carrying capacity of traditional water sources, construction rain water harvesting structures (Jal Sanchay);
- Command area development, strengthening and creation of distribution network from source to the farm;
- Ground water development in the areas where it is abundant, so that sink is created to store runoff/ flood water during peak rainy season.
- Improvement in water management and distribution system for water bodies to take advantage of the available source which is not tapped to its fullest capacity (deriving benefits from low hanging fruits). At least 10% of the command area to be covered under micro/precision

irrigation.

- Diversion of water from source of different location where it is plenty to nearby water scarce areas, lift irrigation from water bodies/rivers at lower elevation to supplement requirements beyond IWMP and MGNREGS irrespective of irrigation command.
- Creating and rejuvenating traditional water storage systems like Jal Mandir (Gujarat); Khatri, Kuhl (H.P.); Zabo (Nagaland); Eri, Ooranis (T.N.); Dongs (Assam); Katas, Bandhas (Odisha and M.P.) etc. at feasible locations.

C. PMKSY (Per Drop More Crop)

- Programme management, preparation of State/District Irrigation Plan, approval of annual action plan, Monitoring etc.
- Promoting efficient water conveyance and precision water application devices like drips, sprinklers, pivots, rain - guns in the farm (Jal Sinchan);
- Topping up of input cost particularly under civil construction beyond permissible limit (40%), under MGNREGS for activities like lining inlet, outlet, silt traps, distribution system etc.
- Construction of micro irrigation structures to supplement source creation activities including tube wells and dug wells (in areas where ground water is available and not under semi critical /critical /over exploited category of development) which are not supported under AIBP, PMKSY (Har Khet ko Pani), PMKSY (Watershed) and MGNREGS a s per block/district irrigation plan.
- Secondary storage structures at tail end of canal system to store water when available in abundance (rainy season) or from perennial sources like streams for use during dry periods through effective on - farm water management;
- Water lifting devices like diesel/ electric/ solar pumpsets including water carriage pipes, underground piping system.
- Extension activities for promotion of scientific moisture conservation and agronomic measures including cropping alignment to maximise use of available water including rainfall and minimise irrigation requirement (Jal sarankchan); Capacity building, training and awareness campaign including low cost publications, use of pico projectors and low cost films for encouraging potential use water source through technological, agronomic and management practices

including community irrigation.

- The extension workers will be empowered to disseminate relevant technologies under PMKSY only after requisite training is provided to them especially in the area of promotion of scientific moisture conservation and agronomic measures, improved/ innovative distribution system like pipe and box outlet system, etc. Appropriate Domain Experts will act as Master Trainers.
- Information Communication Technology (ICT) interventions through NeGP - A to be made use in the field of water use efficiency, precision irrigation technologies, on farm water management, crop alignment etc. and also to do intensive monitoring of the Scheme.

D. PMKSY (Watershed Development)

a) Effective management of runoff water and improved soil & moisture conservation activities such as ridge area treatment, drainage line 5 treatment, rain water harvesting, in - situ moisture conservation and other allied activities o n watershed basis.

b) Converging with MGNREGS for creation of water source to full potential in identified backward rainfed blocks including renovation of traditional water bodies.

Kala Ghoda Arts Festival

Why in news?

Recently Kala Ghoda Arts Festival was celebrated in Mumbai.

About Kala Ghoda Arts Festival

- The Kala Ghoda Arts Festival is annual festival, nine days long, commencing always on the first Saturday of February and closing always on the second Sunday in February, in the Kala Ghoda area of South Mumbai, India.

- From its inception in 1999, the Festival has grown in stature and popularity, attracting visitors and participants from other parts of the country, and the world.
- The Festival is organised by the Kala Ghoda Association (a non-profit organisation that states its objectives as "physically upgrading the Kala Ghoda sub-precinct and making it the Art District of Mumbai") and curated by teams handling each of the 12 sections of the festival.
- The festival sections are visual arts, dance, music, theatre, cinema, literature including children's literature as a sub section, workshops, heritage walks, urban design and architecture (2014), food, a dedicated section for children, and a vibrant street section including stalls selling eco friendly, hand made arts and crafts wares.
- The success of the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival has, arguably, encouraged the setting up of several other arts and cultural festivals at that time of the year, when the weather in Mumbai is cool and the sun sets early.
- These include the Mumbai Festival, the Celebrate Bandra Festival, and in 2007, the Kitab Festival.
- The festival has also featured noticeable music acts like Spencer Maybe, Indus Creed, Benny Dayal and Ustad Zakir Hussain.

Sharp rise in methane levels threatens world climate targets

Why in news?

In a paper published this month by the American Geophysical Union, researchers say sharp rises in levels of methane – which is a powerful greenhouse gas – have strengthened over the past four years.

Highlights:

- Scientists have warned that dramatic rises in atmospheric methane are threatening to derail plans to hold global temperature rises to 2C,

scientists have warned.
- Urgent action is now required to halt further increases in methane in the atmosphere, to avoid triggering enhanced global warming and temperature rises well beyond 2C.

About Methane:

- Methane is produced by cattle, and also comes from decaying vegetation, fires, coal mines and natural gas plants.
- It is many times more potent as a cause of atmospheric warming than carbon dioxide (CO2). However, it breaks down much more quickly than CO2 and is found at much lower levels in the atmosphere.
- During much of the 20th century, levels of methane, mostly from fossil fuel sources, increased in the atmosphere but, by the beginning of the 21st century, it had stabilised.
- Studies suggest these increases are more likely to be mainly biological in origin. However, the exact cause remains unclear.
- Some researchers believe the spread of intense farming in Africa may be involved, in particular in tropical regions where conditions are becoming warmer and wetter because of climate change.
- Rising numbers of cattle – as well as wetter and warmer swamps – are producing more and more methane.

Sources of CH4 (Methane)

Paddy fields, wetlands, gas drilling, landfills, decomposition of animals wastes and carcasses.

Institute for Public Policy Research

Why in news?

In a recent journal Institute for Public Policy Research under the title THIS IS A CRISIS-FACING UP TO THE AGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL

BREAKDOWN points out impact on human due to climate change.

Highlights:

- Mainstream political and policy debates have failed to recognise that human impacts on the environment have reached a critical stage, potentially eroding the conditions upon which socioeconomic stability is possible.
- Human-induced environmental change is occurring at an unprecedented scale and pace and the window of opportunity to avoid catastrophic outcomes in societies around the world is rapidly closing.
- These outcomes include economic instability, large-scale involuntary migration, conflict, famine and the potential collapse of social and economic systems.
- The historical disregard of environmental considerations in most areas of policy has been a catastrophic mistake.
- In response, this paper argues that three shifts in understanding across political and policy communities are required: of the scale and pace of environmental breakdown, the implications for societies, and the subsequent need for transformative change.

1. Scale and pace of environmental change – the age of environmental breakdown Negative human impacts on the environment go 'beyond' climate change to encompass most other natural systems, driving a complex, dynamic process of environmental destabilisation that has reached critical levels. This destabilisation is occurring at speeds unprecedented in human history and, in some cases, over billions of years. For example:

  - global vertebrate populations have fallen by 60 per cent since the 1970s
  - topsoil is now being lost 10 to 40 times faster than it is being replenished by natural processes, and, since the mid 20th century, 30 per cent of the world's arable land has become unproductive due to erosion
  - the UK is also experiencing environmental destabilisation, and is

described as one of the “most nature-depleted countries in the world”.

2. Implications – a new domain of risk facing policymakers

- The consequences of the age of environmental breakdown on societies and economies are more serious than is recognised by mainstream political and policy debates.
- As complex natural systems become more destabilised, the consequences of this destabilisation – from extreme weather to soil infertility – will impact human systems from local to global levels, interacting with existing social and economic trends such as inequality, compounding them.
- This process is already underway, damaging human health and driving forced migration and conflict around the world, and is set to accelerate as breakdown increases.

3. A transformational response is required

The consequences of environmental breakdown will fall hardest on the poorest, who are most vulnerable to its effects and least responsible for the problem.

It is estimated that the poorest half of the global population are responsible for around 10 per cent of yearly global greenhouse gas emissions, with half of emissions attributed to the richest 10 per cent of people.

In the UK, per capita emissions of the wealthiest 10 per cent are up to five times higher than those of the bottom half.

In addition, environmental breakdown interacts with other inequalities, such as class, ethnicity and gender. This makes environmental breakdown a fundamental issue of justice.

Environmental breakdown is a result of the structures and dynamics of social and economic systems, which drive unsustainable human impacts on the environment. While providing high living standards to many people,

these systems fail to provide for all, and by driving environmental breakdown, these systems are eroding the conditions upon which human needs can be met at all. In response, two overall socioeconomic transformations are needed, to make societies:

• Sustainable and just: bring human activity to within environmentally sustainable limits while tackling inequalities and providing a high quality life to all

prepared: increased levels of resilience to the impacts of environmental breakdown resulting from past and any future activity, covering all areas of society, including infrastructure, markets, political processes, social cohesion and global cooperation.

International Court of Justice

Why in news?

India will ask the UN's top court on Monday to order Pakistan to take an alleged Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadav off the death row in a case.

About International Court of Justice:

- The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN). It was established in June 1945 by the Charter of the United Nations and began work in April 1946.
- The seat of the Court is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands). Of the six principal organs of the United Nations, it is the only one not located in New York (United States of America).
- The Court's role is to settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by States and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorized United Nations organs and specialized agencies.
- The Court is composed of 15 judges, who are elected for terms of office of nine years by the United Nations General Assembly and the

Security Council. It is assisted by a Registry, its administrative organ. Its official languages are English and French.

Jurisdiction

- As stated in Article 93 of the UN Charter, all 193 UN members are automatically parties to the court's statute. Non-UN members may also become parties to the court's statute under the Article 93(2) procedure.
- For example, before becoming a UN member state, Switzerland used this procedure in 1948 to become a party, and Nauru became a party in 1988.
- Once a state is a party to the court's statute, it is entitled to participate in cases before the court. However, being a party to the statute does not automatically give the court jurisdiction over disputes involving those parties.
- The issue of jurisdiction is considered in the three types of ICJ cases: contentious issues, incidental jurisdiction, and advisory opinions.

Contentious issues

- In contentious cases (adversarial proceedings seeking to settle a dispute), the ICJ produces a binding ruling between states that agree to submit to the ruling of the court.
- Only states may be parties in contentious cases. Individuals, corporations, parts of a federal state, NGOs, UN organs and self-determination groups are excluded from direct participation in cases although the court may receive information from public international organizations.
- That does not preclude non-state interests from being the subject of proceedings if a state brings the case against another. For example, a state may, in cases of "diplomatic protection", bring a case on behalf of one of its nationals or corporations.
