



August - 02

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The eighth annual plastic collection drive has commenced at Vembanad Lake, Kerala.
  - It is a designated Ramsar site and one of the most polluted waterbodies in the world.
- ❖ Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has launched a country-wide tree planting exercise named as “Green Legacy Initiative”.
  - Under the initiative more than 350 million trees were planted in a single day and it is claimed to be a world record.
- ❖ Delhi State Government has announced free Electricity for people who consume upto 200 units. People who consume between 201 and 400 units would also be given a 50% subsidy by the state government.
- ❖ IIT – Kharagpur has developed a new technology for solid waste management termed “Hydro Thermal Carbonization (HTC)”.
  - HTC technology can convert municipal solid waste to biofuel, soil amendment and absorbents. This Technology can be used by civic bodies to effectively manage solid waste.
- ❖ India's Vivek Kohli and M P Singh have been elected as chairman and secretary general respectively of the Commonwealth Table Tennis Federation (CTTF).
  - The current President of CTTF is Dushyant Chautala. It is for the first time that all the three positions in CTTF are held by Indians.

## NATIONAL

### Water Stress Index

- ❖ According to Water Stress Index, 11 of 20 biggest cities in the country are facing extreme risk of scarcity.
- ❖ Water Stress Index is formulated by London-based risk analytics firm Verisk Maplecroft and has listed India as the 46th highest risk country in the World.
- ❖ The index measures the water consumption rates of households, industries and farm sectors and the available resources in rivers, lakes and streams.
- ❖ Delhi, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Nashik, Jaipur, Ahmedabad and Indore are among the cities facing ‘extreme risk’.



### **Nutrient Based Subsidy**

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) Rates for P&K Fertilizers for the year 2019-20.
- ❖ It was proposed by the Department of Fertilizers.
- ❖ Under NBS mechanism, annual subsidy will be fixed on the basis of per kilogram of the following nutrients
  - Nitrogen (N)
  - Phosphate (P)
  - Potash (K)
  - Sulphur (S)
- ❖ Other fertilisers with other micro nutrients like Boron and Zinc will also be eligible for a separate subsidy.
- ❖ This will enable the manufacturers and importers to formalize supply contracts for fertilizers and fertilizer inputs and make fertilizers available to the farmers in the year 2019-20.

### **Increasing the Number of SC Judges**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved increasing the number of judges in the Supreme court from the present 31 to 34, including the Chief Justice of India.
- ❖ The bill to increase the strength of judges awaits parliamentary nod.
- ❖ The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956 originally provided for a maximum of 10 judges (excluding the CJI).
- ❖ The Act was last amended in 2009 to increase the judges' strength from 25 to 30 (excluding the CJI).

### **The Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2019**

- ❖ The Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2019 which amends the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 has been approved by both Houses of Parliament.
- ❖ Under the 1993 Act, the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is a person who has been a retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
- ❖ But now Chief Justice of India or any Supreme Court Judge can become a Chairperson.
- ❖ Similarly, State HRC can be headed by any Judge of the High Court including Chief Justice of High Court not only by a former Chief Justice of High Court.



- ❖ The Act provides for two persons having knowledge of human rights to be appointed as members of the NHRC.
- ❖ But after this amendment, three members will be appointed, of which at least one will be a woman.
- ❖ The Amendment reduces the term of office to three years or till the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier. Earlier it was five years.
- ❖ Further, the Act allows for the reappointment of members of the NHRC and SHRCs for a period of five years. The Bill removes the five-year limit for reappointment.
- ❖ The 1993 Act provided for a Secretary-General (SG) of the NHRC and a Secretary of a SHRC, who exercise powers as may be “delegated” to them.
- ❖ After amendments, SG will exercise all administrative and financial powers (except judicial functions), subject to the respective chairperson’s control.
- ❖ The present commission must include Chairperson of the National Commission for Backward Classes, Chairperson of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities as deemed Members of the Commission.
- ❖ The Bill provides that the central government may confer on a SHRC human rights functions being discharged by Union Territories. Functions relating to human rights in the case of Delhi will be dealt with by the NHRC.

### **One Nation One Ration – Trail Implementation**

- ❖ In a major boost to national food security, Union Government has launched One Nation-One Ration Card scheme on pilot basis in
  - Telangana
  - Andhra Pradesh
  - Maharashtra
  - Gujarat
- ❖ The pilot project is effective from 1 August 2019.
- ❖ One Nation One Ration Card scheme seeks to allow portability of food security benefits.
- ❖ Families who have food security cards can buy subsidized rice and wheat from any ration shop in these states but their ration cards should be linked with Aadhar Number to avail this service.



## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **Nagar Kirtan – 550th Guru Nanak Anniversary**

- ❖ For 1st time since partition, the 'Nagar Kirtan' carrying Guru Granth Sahib which was taken out from Nankana Sahib district of Punjab province of Pakistan, arrived at Attari in Amritsar, India.
- ❖ Nagar Kirtan is a religious procession.
- ❖ This procession by devotees is to mark the 550th birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev, founder of Sikhism.
- ❖ It will culminate at Sultanpur Lodhi in Kapurthala district of Punjab in India.
- ❖ Guru Nanak Devji was born in 1469, in the village Talwandi now known as Nankana Sahib, is situated near Lahore, Pakistan.

### **Singapore Convention on Mediation**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister has approved the signing of the UN Convention on International Settlement Agreements (UNISA).
- ❖ UNISA was adopted in 2018. It will be officially signed in Singapore.
- ❖ This agreement will be known as "Singapore Convention on Mediation".
- ❖ It provides a uniform framework for the enforcement of 'international settlement agreements' resulting from mediation and for allowing parties to invoke such agreements.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **TB Medicine Trial**

- ❖ On July 15, 2019 the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) launched India's first large-scale trial for two new tuberculosis (TB) vaccines.
- ❖ There are two vaccines being tested in the latest trial
  - Immuvac (also known as mycobacterium indicus pranii or MIP) - manufactured by Cadila Pharmaceuticals in Ahmedabad
  - VPM1002 - manufactured by Serum Institute of India in Pune.
- ❖ Currently BCG (Bacille Calmette-Guerin) (BCG) vaccine is used.
- ❖ But it is over 100 years old and provides poor protection against pulmonary disease in adolescents and adults.

## STATES

### Mobile Library Buses in Delhi

- ❖ The Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism has launched Mobile Library Buses in New Delhi.
- ❖ They were procured under (Corporate Social Responsibility) CSR assistance from Airports Authority of India.
- ❖ The Mobile Library Buses were launched under the “Ghar Ghar Dastak Ghar Ghar Pustak” Scheme of the Delhi Public Library (DPL).
- ❖ Under this scheme, DPL aims to provide books to the citizens of Delhi, especially, the residents of slums, resettlement colonies and rural areas.
- ❖ DPL is a national library established in 1951 with the aid Of UNESCO and Union Government.

