

March - 21

NATIONAL

Disqualification petition

- ❖ For the first time in its history, the Supreme Court removed the Manipur Minister Thounaojam Shyamkumar Singh from the state cabinet.
- ❖ The apex court has also been restrained him from entering the Legislative assembly.

Background

- ❖ Mr Shyamkumar won the 2017 assembly elections on Congress Ticket and switched over to BJP to become the minister of Town Planning, forest and Environment.
- ❖ The Disqualification petitions against the minister by other MLAs was pending before the speaker of the Manipur Assembly since 2017.
- ❖ When the issue was appealed to SC, the apex court has invoked Article 142 and has removed the minister from the cabinet.
- ❖ According to the Article 212, the courts in India including Supreme Court cannot interfere in the proceedings of the Legislature of state.
- ❖ The Supreme Court under the article 142 can pass an order doing “complete justice” to matter pending before it.

State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs decided to treat COVID-19 as a notified disaster for the purpose of providing assistance under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF).
- ❖ Constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 by respective states, it is the primary fund available with state governments for responses to notified disasters.
- ❖ The fund was constituted based on the recommendation of 13th Finance Commission.
- ❖ Under the Disaster Management Act, the States/UTs can draw funds from the State Disaster Response Fund, in addition to the funds from the state government.
- ❖ By law, the State Disaster Response Funds can be used only for notified Disasters under Disaster Management Act, 2005.



- ❖ The Central government contributes 75 per cent towards the SDRF allocation for general category states and UTs, and over 90 per cent for special category states/UTs, which includes north eastern states, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand).
- ❖ SDRF is located in the 'Public Account' under 'Reserve Fund'.
- ❖ But direct expenditures are not made from Public Account.
- ❖ The share of Government of India to the SDRF is treated as a 'grant in aid'.
- ❖ Ministry of Home Affairs is the nodal ministry for overseeing the operation of the SDRF and monitors compliance with prescribed processes.
- ❖ Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) audit the SDRF every year.
- ❖ The disasters covered under the SDRF include cyclones, droughts, tsunamis, hailstorms, landslides, avalanches and pest attacks among others.
- ❖ 31 disaster categories are organised into five major sub-groups, which are: water and climate related disasters, geological related disasters, chemical, industrial and nuclear related disasters and biological related disasters, which includes biological disasters and epidemics.

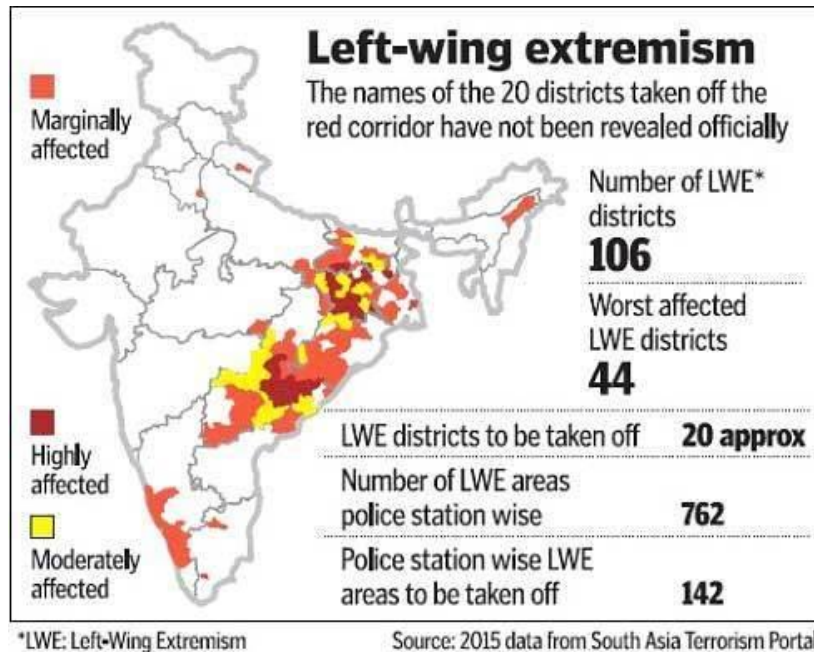
Current scenario

- ❖ Odisha became the first state in the country to allocated funds to fight against Corona Virus.
- ❖ The Odisha State government has allocated Rs 200 crores to fight against the deadly disease.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Government allocated Rs 60 crores.

Decline in Left Wing Extremism

- ❖ The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs said about the decline in Left Wing Extremism in the last five years.
- ❖ This has been possible mainly due to the implementation of "National Policy and Action Plan-2015".
- ❖ In 2019, number of Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) has reduced by 38% as compared to 2014.
- ❖ The control of these organizations and the counter measures are governed by the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) act of India, 1967.
- ❖ The Naxalite and Maoists organizations in the regions were declared as terrorists' group under the act.
- ❖ The Red Corridor includes the southern, central and eastern parts of India.

- ❖ It includes Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, and West Bengal and eastern Uttar Pradesh states.



ECONOMY

MSP for crops

- ❖ The Union Government has increased the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Kharif and Rabi crops of 2019-20 season including Paddy, wheat, pulses and oilseeds on the line of fixing the MSP at a level of 1.5 times of the cost of production.
- ❖ The Government fixes MSPs of 22 mandated crops including wheat, pulses and oilseeds on the basis of recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP), after considering the views of State Governments and Central Ministries/Departments concerned & other relevant factors.
- ❖ In addition, MSP for Toria and De-Husked coconut is also fixed on the basis of MSPs of Rapeseed & Mustard and Copra respectively.
- ❖ While recommending MSP, CACP considers various factors viz. cost of production, overall demand-supply situations of various crops in domestic and world markets, domestic and international prices, inter-crop price parity, terms of trade between agriculture and non-agricultural sector, likely effect of price policy on rest of economy, rational utilization of land, water and other production resources and a minimum of 50 percent as the margin over the cost of production

- ❖ The National Commission on Farmers (NCF) headed by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan had recommended that the MSP should be at least 50 percent more than the weighted average cost of production.

PRICE CHART

Kharif MSP of major crops in 2019-20 (in ₹/quintal)

Crop	2018-19	2019-20	% Increase
Paddy (common)	1,750	1,815	3.71
Jowar (Hybrid)	2,430	2,550	4.9
Bajra	1,950	2,000	2.56
Maize	1,700	1,760	3.52
Arhar (Tur)	5,675	5,800	2.20
Moong	6,975	7,050	1.07
Groundnut	4,890	5,090	4.08
Soybean (yellow)	3,399	3,710	9.14
Cotton (medium staple)	5,150	5,255	2.03
Cotton (long staple)	5,450	5,550	1.83

Note: The kharif marketing season runs from July to June
Source: Government

Proposed MSP for Rabi Crops

Crops	(2019-20)		% Hike
	Existing MSP	Proposed MSP	
	(in Rs/quintal)		
Wheat	1,840	1,925	4.61
Barley	1,440	1,525	5.9
Mustard	4,200	4,425	5.35
Masur	4,475	4,800	7.26
Safflower	4,945	5,215	5.4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ)

- ❖ The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) has reported that Ocean-sat Satellite data are used to prepare the Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ) advisories on the potential rich fishing areas and provide to the sea faring fishermen in all states.
- ❖ This methodology utilizes data on chlorophyll concentration (Chl) obtained from ISRO's Oceansat-2 satellite and the sea surface temperature from National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA / USA satellites).
- ❖ For seamless and effective dissemination of emergency information and communication on disaster warnings, Potential Fishing Zones (PFZ) and Ocean States Forecasts (OSF) to fishermen, the Government launched the Gagan Enabled Mariner's Instrument for Navigation and Information (GEMINI) device.

Anti-HIV Drugs for COVID 19

- ❖ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has issued revised guidelines on the 'Clinical Management of COVID-19'.
- ❖ The Ministry has recommended use of drug combinations Lopinavir and Ritonavir (sold under the brand name Kaletra) depending upon the severity of the condition of a person having coronavirus infection.
- ❖ The use of this drug combination is suggested by an expert committee comprising doctors from the All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), experts from



National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and World Health Organization (WHO).

- ❖ Lopinavir-Ritonavir is recommended for high-risk groups of patients aged above 60 who are suffering from diabetes mellitus, renal failure, chronic lung disease and are immuno-compromised.
- ❖ Lopinavir-Ritonavir is used widely for controlling Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection.

ENVIRONMENT

Danube-Oder-Elbe canal

- ❖ The Danube-Oder-Elbe canal intends to connect the three rivers Danube, Oder and Elbe.
- ❖ This is to provide an alternate route of navigation from Black sea to Baltic and North seas.
- ❖ However, several concerns are being raised by the environmental organizations against the construction of the canal.

STATES

ROPAX

- ❖ The Ministry of Shipping has launched a roll on-roll off cum passenger ferry service, called 'ROPAX', between Mumbai and Mandwa (Maharashtra).
- ❖ The road distance from Mumbai to Mandwa is about 110 kilometres, and it takes three to four hours, whereas by waterway the distance is about 18 kilometres and a journey of just an hour.
- ❖ The benefits of this service include reduction in the travel time, vehicular emission and traffic on the road.

