



**July – 05**

## **TNPSC BITS**

- ❖ Dubai Duty Free has announced that Indian Rupee will now be an accepted currency at all the retail outlets of the Dubai airport.
  - The move makes Indian rupee the 16th international currency to be accepted at Dubai's airports.

## **NATIONAL**

### **Increase in MSP**

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the increase in the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for all kharif crops for 2019-20 Season.
- ❖ The MSP for this year is 1.5 times all India weighted average Cost of production.
- ❖ The highest percentage return to farmers over their cost of production is for Bajra (85%) followed by urad (64%) and tur dhal (60%).
- ❖ The MSP mechanism is implemented across the country as nearly 86% farmers are in small and marginal category and to ensure equity.
- ❖ It also helps in stabilising prices in the market and thus services the consumers as well.

### **Watson Decision Platform for Agriculture**

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) with IBM India.
- ❖ They will undertake a pilot study to utilise Artificial Intelligence (AI) and weather technology solutions in agriculture in selected pilot districts.
- ❖ IBM's Watson Decision Platform for Agriculture will give solutions at village level and farm level.
- ❖ The pilot study will be undertaken in 3 districts – Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), Rajkot (Gujarat) and Nanded (Maharashtra).
- ❖ This study will cover crops for Kharif season 2019.



### **Ship to Maldives**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has given ex-post facto approval for the MoU between India and Maldives for the establishment of passenger and cargo services by sea.
- ❖ Shipping services will connect Kochi with the capital city of Maldives, Male and Kulhudhuffushi, the third most populous city in Mali.
- ❖ It is expected to boost health and wellness tourism for India.
- ❖ Maldives is presently connected to India by flights and sea planes only.

### **Education of Differently Abled Children**

- ❖ UNESCO and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) have released a report titled "State of the Education Report for India-2019: Children with Disabilities."
- ❖ It cites 2011 census data and shows that there are more than 78 lakh children with disabilities in the country between 5-19 years.
- ❖ It also says that 27% of children with disabilities have never been to school in India.
- ❖ The report recommends to amend the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 to be aligned with the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

### **Electrified Railway Tunnel**

- ❖ South Central Railway (SCR) railways has commissioned the longest "electrified tunnel" in Indian Railways.
- ❖ The electrified tunnel measuring 6.6 kilometers is situated between Cherlopalli and Rapuru stations, Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ It is constructed in the shape of 'Horse Shoe' on the New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM).
- ❖ The 11.25 km-long Pir Panjal railway tunnel is India's longest railway tunnel and Asia's second longest railway tunnel.

### **Tur Dhal Price Stabilization**

- ❖ Minister for Consumer Affairs has decided to increase the import limit on Tur Dal from two metric tonnes to 4 lakh metric tonnes for the year 2019 - 20.



- ❖ It will release 2 lakh metric tonnes of Tur Dal buffer stock to States and Union Territories under the Price Stabilization Fund.
- ❖ This step is expected to compensate for the fall in tur dal production during 2018-19 crop year (232 lakh tonnes).

### **Rooftop Solar in Delhi Police**

- ❖ Delhi Police signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI).
- ❖ It will set up Rooftop Solar Energy Systems in more than 200 of its buildings across the city.

#### **About SECI**

- ❖ SECI is a company under Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- ❖ It was started in 2011.
- ❖ It is government's nodal agency for implementation of the National Solar Mission.
- ❖ It is the only Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSU) dedicated to solar energy sector.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **European Union President**

- ❖ Germany's Ursula von der Leyen was appointed by European Union (EU) leaders as the next President of European Commission.
- ❖ This would be the 1st time in 50 years a German national holds the top EU job.
- ❖ European Commission is responsible for implementing decisions, proposing legislation, upholding EU treaties and managing day-to-day business of European Union.
- ❖ It was founded in 1958 and headquartered at Brussels, Belgium.

## **ECONOMY**

### **Core Investment Companies**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up a working group to review the regulatory and supervisory framework for core investment companies (CIC).



- ❖ The group will be headed by Tapan Ray, non-executive chairman, Central Bank of India.
- ❖ A Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) with asset size of more than 100 crores is designated as a CIC.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Artificial Gravity

- ❖ A Team of Scientists from the University of Colorado, USA is working on making the concept of artificial gravity a reality.
- ❖ Artificial gravity means spacecraft generating their own gravity by spinning around in space.
- ❖ This will ensure astronauts remain healthy during space explorations and stay for longer periods.

### Lithium-Ion Giga Factories

- ❖ NITI Aayog has proposed the establishment of “giga factories” in India for the manufacture of lithium-ion batteries in the next couple of years.
- ❖ The recommendation is part of NITI Aayog’s push for the adoption of electric mobility in the country.
- ❖ It has recently proposed that only electric three-wheelers should be sold in the country after March 31, 2023 and only electric two-wheelers below 150cc should be sold post March 31, 2025.

## STATES

### Ease of Doing Agribusiness

- ❖ Maharashtra has achieved the first rank in NITI Aayog’s “Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index (AMFFRI)”.
- ❖ Gujarat ranks second closely and followed closely by Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ Tamilnadu is ranked 25<sup>th</sup> due to poor implementation of market reforms.



- ❖ The index ranks states based on the degree of reforms they have undertaken in agricultural marketing.
- ❖ AMFFRI has a score that can have minimum value “0” implying no reforms and maximum value “100” implying complete reforms in the selected areas.
- ❖ This index was launched in 2016.

### **Aadhar Seva Khendra**

- ❖ The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has operationalized 1st ‘Aadhaar Seva Kendra’ (ASK) in Delhi and Vijayawada.
- ❖ The new centres are functioning on a pilot basis.
- ❖ UIDAI plans to set up 114 such centres across 53 cities by the end of 2019.
- ❖ ASK centres will function similar to Passport Seva Kendras.
- ❖ They are meant to facilitate enrolment, updation and other related activities.

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