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Potash

Why in news?

Recently potash reserve has been discovered in the Punjab region which is significant to reduce India's import dependence and bolster the domestic fertilizer industry.

- **Potash** - Refers to potassium-bearing minerals that are primarily used in fertilisers.
- **N-P-K** - Over 90% of potash is used as fertilizer and it is one of the three primary agricultural nutrients (Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium or N-P-K).
- **Indian Minerals Yearbook for 2021** - According to it, Potash can be used on all plants to boost plant health and nutrition as well as to increase crop yields.
- **Different forms of it** - While all potash fertilizers contain potassium there are a number of different forms in which it exists.
- **Sulphate of Potash (SOP)** - Among these forms is Sulphate of Potash (SOP), a premium potash fertilizer that is free of chloride (a compound considered harmful to plants).
- SOP is used primarily on high-value crops, usually leafy plants, fruits and vegetables.
- **Muriate of Potash (MOP)** - Contains some chloride. MOP is commonly used on carbohydrate-type crops, such as wheat.
- **Potash reserves in India** - Punjab is now the second state after Rajasthan to have significant potash reserves.
- **The three mining blocks** - With potash reserves are:
 - Kabarwala (Muktsar Sahib),
 - Sherewala and Ramsara (Fazilka)
 - Shergarh and Dalmir Khera (Fazilka)
- **In Rajasthan** - Potash deposits were mainly found in the *north-western Nagaur-Ganganagar basin*, including the Ganganagar and Hanumangarh districts that border Fazilka and Muktsar.
- **Auctioning rights & royalties** - Although the central government has

the auctioning rights for minerals, states receive royalties upon their extraction.

Reference

[The indian express - Potash](#)

President's Rule

Why in news?

President rule is likely to be in Manipur, since Biren Singh, Chief Minister of Manipur has resigned from the post.

- The President's Rule is crucial for maintaining the federal structure of the Indian polity and ensuring that governance remains stable even in crises.
- **Article 355** - Imposes a duty on the centre to ensure that the government of every state is carried out in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.
- **Articles 355 to 357 in Part XVIII** - Along with Article 365 in Part XIX of the Indian Constitution, pertain to the President's Rule.
- Grounds of imposition - **Article 356** empowers the President to issue a proclamation if he is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of a state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.
- **Article 365** says that whenever a state fails to comply with or to give effect to any direction from the centre, the president rule can be imposed.
- **Parliamentary approval** - A proclamation imposing president's rule must be approved by both the houses of parliament ***within two months*** from the date of its issue.
- However, if the proclamation of President's rule is issued at a time when the Lok Sabha has been dissolved or the dissolution of the Lok Sabha takes place during the period of ***two months without approving the proclamation***.
 - Then the proclamation survives until ***30 days*** from the first sitting of the Lok Sabha after its reconstitution, provided that the Rajya Sabha approves it in the meantime.
- **Scope of judicial review** - 44th Amendment Act of 1978 implying that the satisfaction of the President is not beyond judicial review.

Reference

Autonomous District Council

Why in news?

The elections to the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council and the Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council are scheduled for February 21.

- **The Autonomous District Council** - Have real ***power to make laws***, possibility on the various legislative subjects, receiving grants-in-aid from the *Consolidated Fund of India*.
- The mandate towards devolution, de-concentration and divestment determines the protection of their customs, better economic development and most importantly ethnic security.
- **Sixth schedule** - Of the Constitution includes ***10 autonomous district councils in 4 states***. These are:
 - **Assam** - Bodoland Territorial Council, Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council and Dima Hasao Autonomous District Council.
 - **Meghalaya** - Garo Hills Autonomous District Council, Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council and Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council.
 - **Tripura** - Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council.
 - **Mizoram** - Chakma Autonomous District Council, Lai Autonomous District Council, Mara Autonomous District Council.
- **Major Issues** - Granting special provisions to certain minority tribal groups have led to further demands by other groups for such provisions under the 6th schedule.
 - This has created disparity among the people and resulted in the rise of conflict between various groups.
- In terms of financial autonomy, the members across the ADCs in North Eastern states share the same view that the ADCs are at the mercy of the state governments.
- There exists a huge gap between the approved budget and the funds received from the State Government which has had a direct impact on the development of these tribal communities.
- They are also dependent upon state governments for decisions regarding undertaking of developmental activities in their region.

Reference

[The Hindu - Autonomous District Council](#)

Disturbed Areas Act, 1986

Why in news?

Under the provisions of the Disturbed Areas Act, Surat property sealed over sale to Muslim woman recently.

- The Disturbed Areas Act was enacted in the year 1986 and replaced with a new Act in 1991.
- **Act's full name** - The Gujarat Prohibition of Transfer of Immovable Property and Provision for Protection of Tenants from Eviction from Premises in Disturbed Areas Act.
- **Riot-prone areas** - It empowers the government to declare riot-prone areas as 'disturbed'.
- **Collectors Consent** - Property sale or transfer in areas where the Act has been imposed *requires additional permission from the collector's office* affirming free consent.
- **Distress sales** - The motive of the Act was to *prevent distress sales*. It was also to prevent house owners of one community from selling to another in case of social distress.
- **Areas are covered under the Act** - Several areas in the districts of Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Surat, Anand, Amreli, Bhavnagar, Panchmahals and others remain under the purview of the Act, with newer areas being added.
- The Gujarat government last month extended the application of the Act in existing areas of Anand district for another five years.
- **Amendments in 2020** - Gave more power to Collector, government.
- In 2020, the Gujarat government amended certain sections of the Act, giving the Collector more powers.
- Under the Disturbed Areas Act, the district Collector notifies a particular area of a city or town as 'disturbed'.
 - After this, the transfer of immovable property in those areas requires express permission of the Collector.
- The amendments raised the imprisonment for violation from six months to between three and five years.

1986 Disturbed Areas Act introduced as ordinance by Congress government to curb distress sales during communal conflicts in Ahmedabad.

1991 The ordinance is replaced by a permanent legislation under CM Chimanbhai Patel, eliminating the initially intended 1.5-year time limit and widening its ambit across Gujarat.

Post-2002 riots: Act is increasingly used to prevent Muslims from buying properties in 'Hindu' areas.

2019 Act amended with more stringent provisions. It mandates district collector's nod for any property transactions in disturbed areas. It says areas can be declared disturbed if "polarisation", "demographic equilibrium", or "improper clustering" is taking place. Amendments are challenged in Gujarat HC.

2021 Gujarat High Court stays the amendments, directing govt not to issue notifications under revised provisions.

October 2023 – present Gujarat government announces in high court that it is 'contemplating' revising the challenged amendments. BJP Vadodara president Vijay Shah hints new provisions may be even more stringent.

References

1. [Indian express - Disturbed Areas Act, 1986](#)
2. [The Print - Disturbed Areas Act, 1986](#)

Polity & Governance

The Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS)

- **Launched in** - 2016 under the umbrella scheme ***Skill India Programme (SIP)***.
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- **Aim** - To promote apprenticeship training in the country, by providing partial stipend support to the apprentices engaged under the *Apprentice Act, 1961*.
- **Eligibility** - 14-35 years
- To support both apprentices and establishments in India, 25% of the stipend, **up to Rs.1, 500 per month** per apprentice, will be provided through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) during the training period.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS)

- It originally launched as *Shramik Vidyapeeth (SVP)* in 1967.
- **Umbrella scheme** - Skill India Programme (SIP).
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- **Aim** - Community-centric skilling initiative designed to make vocational training accessible, flexible, and inclusive, particularly for women, rural youth, and economically disadvantaged groups.
- **Key Initiatives** - PM JANMAN, Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society (ULLAS),
- **Targeted beneficiaries** - Non-literates, neo-literates, individuals with rudimentary education, and school dropouts up to class 12th, aged 15-45 years.

Yuva Sahakar - Cooperative Enterprise Support and Innovation Scheme

- **Launched in** - 2018.
- **Implemented by** - National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Cooperation.
- **Aim** - To encourage newly formed cooperative societies with new and/or innovative ideas and young entrepreneur cooperative societies which are in operation for a minimum of 3 months.
- **Loan** - Long-term loan (up to 5 years).
- **Interest subvention** - 2% on rate of interest.

Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF)

- **Launched in** - 2020 as a ***central sector scheme***.
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying.
- **Merged with** - Dairy Infrastructure Development Fund (DIDF).
- **Aim** - To support investments in infrastructure related to animal husbandry, including dairy, meat processing, and animal feed plants.
- **Eligible entities** - Individuals, Private companies, cooperatives, section 8 companies, MSMEs, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), and Dairy Cooperatives & dairy farmers.
- **Loan** - Up to 90% of the estimated/ actual project cost.
- **Timeline** - 6 years.

Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF)

- **Launched in** - 2018.
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying.
- **Implementing agency** - National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB).
- **Aim** - It helps in the creation of fisheries infrastructure facilities both in ***marine and inland fisheries*** sectors.
- **Nodal Loaning Entities**
 - **NABARD** - State/UT government projects.
 - **National Cooperative Development Corporation** - Cooperative Sector either through State Governments/UTs or directly to Eligible Cooperative Societies & Federations
 - **Scheduled Banks** - All the Private Beneficiaries/ Private Entrepreneurs.
- **Loan** - Up to **80%** of the estimated/ actual project cost.
- **Interest Subvention**- Up to **3%** per annum for development of identified fisheries- based infrastructure facilities.
- **Repayment period** - **12 years** inclusive of moratorium of 2 years on repayment of principal.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY)

- **Launched in** - 2024 as a ***central sector sub-scheme***.
- **Umbrella scheme** - Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying.
- **Aim** - To formalize the fisheries sector and to support fisheries micro and small enterprises.
- **Timeline** - 4 years (2023-2027).

GLOF Mitigation Project

- **GLOF-NGRMP** - National Glacial Lake Outburst Flood-Risk Mitigation Project.
- **Launched in** - 2025.
- **Funding** - National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF).
- **Aim** - To reduce the risks associated with glacial lake outburst floods, particularly in regions that are highly susceptible to such natural disasters.
- **Implemented states** - Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, **Sikkim** and Uttarakhand.
- **Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF)** - It is a sudden release of water from a glacial lake due to the failure of a natural dam, resulting in flooding.

CRIDA Mission

- **CRIDA** - Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture.
- **Launched by** - Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.
- **Aim** - To conduct essential and strategic research on dryland agriculture.

Agriculture

Pisciculture

- **Pisciculture** - It is the *commercial breeding of fish*.
- It is a type of aquaculture in which aquatic creatures, including fish, crabs, and molluscs, are carefully cultivated and harvested.
- It can be done in either a natural or a simulated natural context.
- **Process** - It is the process of breeding, producing, and shipping fish for both home and commercial purposes.
- It is also known as *aquaculture, fish farming, or mariculture*.

Security

TROPEX-25

- **TROPEX-25** - Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise, 2025.
- It is an operational level exercise conducted *biennially* with participation by *all operational Indian Naval units*.
- **Substantial participation** - Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard assets.
- **Conducted in** - Indian Ocean Region.
- **Aim** - Validate Indian Navy's core warfighting skills, ensuring a synchronised, integrated response to preserve and protect national maritime security interests.
 - Against conventional, asymmetric as well as hybrid threats.

