



C.A Dated On 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018

**General Studies- 1**

**Study on Groundwater Contamination**

Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) regularly monitors ground water quality of shallow aquifers on a regional scale, once every year.

Ground water quality data generated during various scientific studies and ground water quality monitoring indicate that the ground water in major part of the country is potable.

However, some parts of various states are contaminated by Salinity, Arsenic, Fluoride, Iron, Nitrate and Heavy metals beyond the permissible limits of BIS.

**Major Pollutants:**

The possible sources of contamination of ground water are either geogenic or anthropogenic in nature.

Anthropogenic contamination of ground water is due to industrial discharges, landfills, diffused sources of pollution like fertilizers and pesticides from agricultural fields etc.

**Steps taken to check the ground water pollution are –**

- Control of industrial pollution under the provision of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 by consent mechanism being applied by SPCBs/ PCCs.
- A mutually agreed time targeted programme is implemented under Corporate Responsibility on Environment Protection (CREP).
- Establishment of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) for cluster of Small Scale Industrial units.
- Continuous water quality monitoring systems are being established on industrial units in the country, through the directives issued by CPCB, for getting real time information on the effluent quality.

For improving the coverage of safe drinking water to rural population, the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation supplements the efforts of the states by providing them with technical and financial assistance through the centrally sponsored National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP).

It is the State Governments who plan, design, approve, execute and operate & maintain the schemes for providing safe drinking water to rural population.



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## **Blood Moon**

### **Lunar Eclipse**

*A Lunar Eclipse (Chandra Grahan)* is when one can't see the moon at night because its position is relative to the sun and earth ensures that light doesn't fall on the part of it we can see.

The moon gives off no light and is only visible because it reflects the light of the sun. We only see the part where light falls and thus as the earth and moon move through their orbits and different amounts of light falls on the moon, we see different phases of the moon.

### **About Blood Moon:**

When a lunar eclipse (Chandra Grahan) occurs, the Earth comes between the sun and moon, preventing light from falling on the moon. When this happens, the moon appears to glow red and is thus called the blood moon.

### **Why red colour?**

The red colour is because of the way light travels through the Earth's atmosphere. Sunlight is made of several colours and they all have different wavelengths. Depending on the way they travel through our atmosphere, we see different colours.

That's why the sun and sky have different colours during sunrise and sunset. Blues and purples have shorter wavelengths and scatter in our atmosphere, giving the sky its inky colour, but reds and oranges have the highest wavelengths and pass through our atmosphere before it is bent or refracted around Earth, hitting the surface of the Moon and making it red.



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**Significance of July 2018 Lunar Eclipse:**

It was the longest eclipse of the 21st century. It occurred for 1 hour 43 minutes.

**General Studies- 2**

**'NOTA' Option**

**Why in News?**

The Supreme Court on Monday reserved for judgment a PIL petition, which won the full support of the Centre, seeking to scrap the 'NOTA' option in Rajya Sabha election.

Chief Justice Misra orally observed that NOTA is meant only for universal adult suffrage and direct elections and not polls held by the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote as done in the Rajya Sabha.

**About NOTA:**

The Election Commission of India told the Supreme Court in 2009 that it wished to offer the voter a "none of the above" option on ballots, which the government had generally opposed.

The People's Union for Civil Liberties, a non-governmental organisation, filed a public-interest litigation statement in support of this.

On 27 September 2013, the Supreme Court of India ruled that the right to register a "none of the above" vote in elections should apply, and ordered the Election Commission to provide such a button in the electronic voting machines, noting that it would increase participation.

The Election Commission also clarified that even though votes cast as NOTA are counted, they are considered as invalid votes so they will not change the outcome of the election process.

**Effect Of NOTA:**



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They are not taken into account for calculating the total valid votes and will not be considered for determining the forfeiture of [deposit](#).

In the [2014 general election](#), NOTA polled 1.1% of the votes, counting to over 6,000,000.

The specific symbol for NOTA, a ballot paper with a black cross across it, was introduced on 18 September 2015.

### **Rehabilitation Of Manual Scavengers**

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing a Central Sector Scheme, 'Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers' (SRMS) under which identified manual scavengers and their dependents are provided the following rehabilitation benefits:

- Onetime cash assistance of Rs.40000/
  - Loans upto Rs. 15.00 lacs at concessional rate of interest.
  - Credit linked back end capital subsidy upto Rs. 3,25,000/-.
  - Skill Development Training upto two years with stipend of Rs.3000/- per month.

Ministry is also implementing a Scheme titled "Pre-Matric Scholarship scheme to the Children of those engaged in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards".

Children of manual scavengers are also eligible for this scholarship.

### **Manual Scavengers Status in India:**

13 States have identified 13,657 manual scavengers up to 30.06.2018. State-wise details are given below.

In addition, a National Survey of manual scavengers has been undertaken in 170 districts of 18 States to identify all those persons who were cleaning the insanitary latrines prior to their conversion into sanitary latrines under Swachh Bharat Mission.

The survey also identifies those who are continuing to work as manual scavengers in some places.

### **General Studies- 3**



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**Strategic Partnership Model:**

**Why in news?**

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Raksha Mantri Smt Nirmala Sitharaman met here today.

In continuation of its efforts to boost indigenous defence industry and to reduce timelines so as to ensure timely delivery of equipment to the Armed Forces, the DAC discussed and approved Implementation guidelines for the Strategic Partnership Model.

**About Strategic Partnership:**

Strategic Partnership Model aims to revitalise defence industrial ecosystem and progressively build indigenous capabilities in the private sector to design, develop and manufacture complex weapon systems for the future needs of the Armed Forces.

The amplifying guidelines lay emphasis on incentivisation of transfer of niche technology and higher indigenous content Global Majors, who in collaboration with Indian Partners are ready to make India a Regional / Global manufacturing hub for the platform will also be incentivized.

**Benefits of SP Model:**

This will give a major fillip towards encouraging self-reliance and aligning the defence sector with the 'Make in India ' initiative of the Government.

In an endeavour to convert policy into implementable directions and to kick start the process, the DAC also approved platform specific guidelines for procurement of Naval Utility Helicopters.

All procurements under the SP Model would be executed by specially constituted Empowered Project Committees (EPC) to provide focussed attention and ensure timely execution.

**PRASHAD Scheme**



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**Why in News?**

The Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance to State Governments/Union Territory (UT) Administrations under the schemes of Swadesh Darshan, National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) and Assistance to Central Agencies for the development of tourism related infrastructure in the country.

Under the PRASHAD Scheme, 26 religious cities/sites in 19 States have been identified for development which inter-alia include:

- Amaravati and Srisailem (Andhra Pradesh), Kamakhya (Assam), Patna and Gaya (Bihar), Dwarka and Somnath (Gujarat), Gurudwara Nada Saheb (Haryana), Hazratbal and Katra (Jammu & Kashmir), Deogarh (Jharkhand), Chamundeshwari Devi (Karnataka)
- Guruvayoor (Kerala), Una (Himachal Pradesh), Omkareshwar (Madhya Pradesh), Trimbakeshwar (Maharashtra), Puri (Odisha), Amritsar (Punjab), Ajmer (Rajasthan), Kanchipuram and
- Vellankani (Tamil Nadu), Varanasi and Mathura (Uttar Pradesh), Badrinath and Kedarnath (Uttarakhand) and Belur (West Bengal).

The Scheme of Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development aims at developing tourism related infrastructure through central financial assistance to the Central Agencies who own the assets.