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Sanskriti Kumbh

Sanskriti Kumbh, a 29 days cultural extravaganza was today inaugurated by the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Ram Naik in Kumbh Mela area, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.

About Sanskriti Kumbh:

- The biggest cultural festival named Sanskriti Kumbh is celebrating the conglomeration of Spiritual Consciousness and Cultural Heritage of India in the main premises of Kumbh Mela area in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.
- The Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India is organizing Sanskriti Kumbh with intent to showcase the rich Cultural Heritage of India in all its rich and varied dimensions viz. Performing Arts- Folk, Tribal and Classical art forms, Handicrafts, Cuisines, Exhibitions etc. all in one place.
- "Kumbh is one of the oldest tradition in the world which showcases the unity in diversity of our country. .

About Kumbh Mela:

- Kumbh Mela is one of the oldest and largest congregation in the world.
- Kumbh Mela is attended by millions of people irrespective of all caste, creed, sex and region.
- The significance of Kumbh Mela has been enhanced at the Global level as the UNESCO has inscribed Kumbh Mela on the list of Intangible Cultural heritage for humanity in 2017.
- This time Kumbh is being organized in the city of Prayagraj which is located at the confluence of the Ganges, the Yamuna and Mystic river of Saraswati in Uttar Pradesh.

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Indus Food 2019

Why in News?



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INDUS FOOD-II with the theme of 'World Food Supermarket' will be held on 14th and 15th January, 2019, at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida.

About the Event:

- The event is aimed at promoting India as a strong and reliable exporter of food and beverage products to the world.
- INDUS FOOD 2019 will promote value addition to India's agriculture exports and integrate Indian farmers and agricultural products with global value chains.
- INDUS FOOD-II being held this year will be much bigger with bigger volumes of business.
- The mega food event will bring business opportunities to the doorstep of Indian producers and manufacturers and help small exporters, who cannot afford participation in overseas fairs, to have a direct interface with foreign buyers who visit India for this show.
- INDUS FOOD is a global platform where top exporters from Food and Beverage Industry of India will be participating and buyers from across the world have been invited.

Aims:

- INDUS FOOD is a platform of its kind exclusively devoted to enhancing Indian exports in F&B sector.
- It enables B2B engagements of buyers and suppliers, after careful business matchmaking, which takes care of precise business requirements of each participant, and enables him to pick and choose whom to meet.

Bilateral Swap Arrangement between India and Japan

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the proposal for entering into an Agreement for Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA) between India and Japan and authorizing the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to sign the Agreement for Bilateral Swap Arrangement between the RBI and the Bank of Japan for a maximum amount of USD 75 billion.

Salient Features:



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- The swap arrangement is an agreement between India and Japan to essentially exchange and re-exchange a maximum amount of USD 75 Billion for domestic currency, for the purpose of maintaining an appropriate level of balance of payments for meeting short-term deficiency in foreign exchange.

Benefits:

- The BSA is a very good example of mutual cooperation between India and Japan for strategic objective of assisting each other in times of difficulty and for restoring international confidence.
- This facility will enable the agreed amount of Capital being available to India on tap for use.
- Also, with this arrangement in place, prospects of Indian companies would improve in tapping foreign capital as there would be greater confidence in stability of country's exchange rate.
- Availability of such swap line to tide over difficulties arising out of Balance of Payment (BOP) would deter speculative attacks on the domestic currency and greatly enhance the RBI's ability to manage exchange rate volatility.

The arrangement is another milestone in mutual economic cooperation and special strategic and global partnership between India and Japan.

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e-NAM

Why in News?

With the start of New Year 2019, the Prime Minister's flagship program e-NAM has achieved another milestone by commencing inter-State trade between mandis of two different States.

Achievements:

- Earlier trade used to happen either within the APMC or between two APMCs situated within same state.



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- The very first Inter State transaction in tomatoes has been carried out between trader of Bareilly e-NAM APMC of Uttar Pradesh and farmer of Haldwani e-NAM APMC of Uttarakhand.
- In all the cases, e-payments have been made through e-NAM portal. This will help farmers get better market access, more buyers/ traders & realise better prices for their produce.

About E- NAM :

- E-NAM i.e. National Agriculture Market is a pan-India electronic trading (e-trading) portal which seeks to network the existing physical regulated wholesale market (known as APMC market) through a virtual platform to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.
- e-NAM platform promotes better marketing opportunities for the farmers to sell their produce through online competitive and transparent price discovery system and online payment facility.
- It also promotes prices commensurate with quality of produce.
- The e-NAM portal provides single window services for all APMC related information and services. This includes commodity arrivals, quality & prices, buy & sell offers & e-payment settlement directly into farmers' account, among other services.

Accessibility:

- Farmers can access the information on e-NAM easily through their mobile phones from anywhere.

Benefits:

- This online trading platform aims at reducing transaction costs, bridging information asymmetry and helps in expanding the market access for farmers.
- So far, 585 Regulated Markets of 16 States and 2 Union Territories have been integrated to e-NAM platform.
- Government has also decided to integrate additional 415 markets by March, 2020. "Logistic providers" information is also being provided in the e-NAM portal to traders from outside the State, which will facilitate transportation of commodities after trading.
- An Inter-State dashboard on e-NAM platform has been developed to promote inter State trade among e-NAM States.



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Bureau of Energy Efficiency

Why in News?

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) here today, kick starting cooperation in building energy efficiency.

Details:

- According to the MoU, BEE and CPWD will cooperate on promoting designs and construction of Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) compliant new buildings.
- Star rating of CPWD managed buildings across the country with no registration or renewal fee.
- Awareness on energy efficiency in building sector and support for capacity building of CPWD officials in ECBC.

Results Expected:

- This association of BEE, with CPWD, a premier construction agency of Govt. of India would establish new benchmarks for energy efficient buildings in the country and will support Government of India's vision for achieving energy security, economic growth and environmental sustainability.

About BEE:

- The **Bureau of Energy Efficiency** is an agency of the [Government of India](#), under the [Ministry of Power](#) created in March 2002 under the provisions of the nation's 2001 Energy Conservation Act.
- The agency's function is to develop programs which will increase the conservation and efficient use of energy in India.
- The government has proposed to make it mandatory for certain appliances in India to have ratings by the BEE starting in January 2010.
- The mission of Bureau of Energy Efficiency is to "institutionalise" energy efficiency services, enable delivery mechanisms in the country and provide leadership to energy efficiency in all sectors of the country.
- The primary objective would be to reduce energy intensity in the economy.



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National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)

Why in News?

Air pollution is one of the biggest global environmental challenges of today.

A time bound national level strategy for pan India implementation to tackle the increasing air pollution problem across the country in a comprehensive manner in the form of National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was today launched by Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Objectives:

Overall objective of the NCAP is comprehensive mitigation actions for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution besides augmenting the air quality monitoring network across the country and strengthening the awareness and capacity building activities.

Importance:

- NCAP is a path breaking initiative and one of the most critical and most significant programme as it addresses one of the most alarming challenges of urbanization i.e. air pollution.
- Today cities occupy just 3% of the land, but contribute to 82% of GDP and responsible for 78% of Carbon dioxide emissions;
- Cities though are engines of growth and equity but they have to be sustainable and it is in this context that NCAP being a very inclusive program holds special relevance."

About NCAP:

- The NCAP will be a mid-term, five-year action plan with 2019 as the first year.
- The approach for NCAP includes collaborative, multi-scale and cross-sectoral coordination between the relevant central ministries, state governments and local bodies.
- Dovetailing of the existing policies and programmes including the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and other initiatives of Government of India in reference to climate change will be done while execution of NCAP.



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- There will be use of the Smart Cities program to launch the NCAP in the 43 smart cities falling in the list of the 102 non-attainment cities.
- The NCAP is envisaged to be dynamic and will continue to evolve based on the additional scientific and technical information as they emerge.
- Other features of NCAP include, increasing number of monitoring stations in the country including rural monitoring stations, technology support, emphasis on awareness and capacity building initiatives, setting up of certification agencies for monitoring equipment, source apportionment studies, emphasis on enforcement, specific sectoral interventions etc.