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## **Digital Sky Platform launched**

Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS), popularly referred to as drones, are a technology platform with wide-ranging applications. In August 2018, India had announced the release of its Civil Aviation Regulations (CAR) to enable safe flying of RPAS in India.

### **Digital Sky Platform -**

- In line with this policy, India has therefore, announced Digital Sky Platform, a first of its kind that implements 'no permission, no take-off' (NPNT) – a novel system of software-based self-enforcement to minimize deviations from the CAR.
- Nano drones in India can start flying legally from today. For micro and above categories, operators and pilots are required to register on the Digital Sky Portal.

### **Procedures -**

- To get permissions to fly, RPAS operators or remote pilots will have to file a flight plan.
- Flying in the 'green zones' will require only intimation of the time and location of the flights via the portal or the app.
- Permissions will be required for flying in 'yellow zones' and flights will not be allowed in the 'red zones'.
- The location of these zones will be announced soon. Permission, if granted, will be available digitally on the portal.

## **EX SHINYUU Maitri - 2018**

The Japanese Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) is in India for a bilateral air exercise SHINYUU Maitri-18 with Indian Air Force from 03-07 Dec 18 at Air Force Station Agra.

### **Theme -**

The theme of the exercise is joint Mobility/Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) on Transport aircraft.

## **GSAT - 11 - India's heaviest communication satellite**

Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) heaviest and most-advanced high throughput communication satellite GSAT-11 was successfully launched from the Spaceport in French Guiana recently.

### **Details -**

- The 5,854-kg GSAT-11 will provide high data rate connectivity to users of Indian mainland and islands through 32 user beams in Ku-band and 8 hub beams in Ka-band.

- GSAT-11 will boost the broadband connectivity to rural and inaccessible Gram Panchayats in the country coming under the Bharat Net Project, which is part of Digital India Programme.

## **SHC for optimal utilisation of fertilisers**

Soil Health Card Scheme has been taken up for the first time in a comprehensive manner across the country. Under the scheme soil health cards are provided to all farmers so as to enable the farmers to apply appropriate recommended dosages of nutrients for crop production and improving soil health and its fertility.

### **Features -**

The unique features of SHC scheme are:-

- Collecting soil samples at a grid of 2.5 ha in irrigated area and 10 ha in un-irrigated areas.
- Uniform approach in soil testing adopted for 12 parameters viz. primary nutrients (NPK); secondary nutrient (S); micronutrients (B,Zn, Mn. Fe & Cu); and other (pH, EC & OC) for comprehensiveness.
- GPS enabled soil sampling to create a systematic database and allow monitoring of changes in the soil health over the years.

## **Ex-Cope India 2018**

Joint Air Force Exercise between India and US being conducted in Kalaikunda (West Bengal). It is the fourth edition of the exercise.

## **Amendment to the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Act, 1951**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the Amendment of the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Act, 1951.

### **Details -**

The decisions aims to suitably amend the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Act, 1951 so as to secure representation as Trustees, “the Leader of Opposition recognized as such in the House of the People, or where there is no such Leader of Opposition, then the Leader of the single largest Opposition Party in the House”.

### **Benefits -**

- In the existing Act, there is a provision for representation of a single national political party. Deletion of the party specific member from the Trust will make it apolitical.
- The proposed amendment ensures representation of the Opposition Party in the Trust.

- The proposed Amendment will empower the Government to terminate and replace a Trustee to participate in functioning of the Trust or for any other reason.

## **Agriculture Export Policy, 2018**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the Agriculture Export Policy, 2018.

The Cabinet has also approved the proposal for establishment of Monitoring Framework at Centre with Commerce as the nodal Department with representation from various line Ministries/Departments and Agencies and representatives of concerned State Governments, to oversee the implementation of Agriculture Export Policy.

### **Objectives -**

- To double agricultural exports from present ~US\$ 30+ Billion to ~US\$ 60+ Billion by 2022 and reach US\$ 100 Billion in the next few years thereafter, with a stable trade policy regime.
- To diversify our export basket, destinations and boost high value and value added agricultural exports including focus on perishables.
- To promote novel, indigenous, organic, ethnic, traditional and non-traditional Agri products exports.
- To provide an institutional mechanism for pursuing market access, tackling barriers and deal with sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues.
- To strive to double India's share in world agri exports by integrating with global value chain at the earliest.
- Enable farmers to get benefit of export opportunities in overseas market.

### **Elements of Agriculture Export Policy -**

- **Strategic -**
  - a. Policy measures
  - b. Infrastructure and logistics support
  - c. Holistic approach to boost exports
  - d. Greater involvement of State Governments in agri exports
  - e. Focus on clusters
  - f. Promoting value-added exports
  - g. Marketing and promotion of 'Brand India'
- **Operational -**
  - a. Attract private investments into production and processing
  - b. Establishment of strong quality regimen
  - c. Research and development
  - d. Miscellaneous

## **National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today has approved the launching of National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) to be implemented by Department of Science & Technology at a total outlay of Rs. 3660 crore for a period of five years.

### **What is Cyber-Physical System?**

- It is a mechanism that is controlled or monitored by computer-based algorithms, tightly integrated with the Internet and its users. In cyber-physical systems, physical and software components are deeply intertwined, each operating on different spatial and temporal scales.
- Examples - Smart Grid, Autonomous Automobile Systems, Medical Monitoring, Process Control Systems, Robotics Systems, and Automatic Pilot Avionics.

### **Details -**

The Mission addresses the ever increasing technological requirements of the society, and takes into account the international trends and road maps of leading countries for the next generation technologies. The mission implementation would develop and bring:

1. Cyber Physical Systems (CPS) and associated technologies within reach in the country,
2. adoption of CPS technologies to address India specific National / Regional issues,
3. produce Next Generation skilled manpower in CPS,
4. catalyze Translational Research,
5. accelerate entrepreneurship and start-up ecosystem development in CPS,
6. give impetus to advanced research in CPS, Technology development and higher education in Science, Technology and Engineering disciplines, and
7. place India at par with other advanced countries and derive several direct and indirect benefits.

### **Impact -**

The proposed Mission would act as an engine of growth that would benefit national initiatives in health, education, energy, environment, agriculture, strategic cum security, and industrial sectors, Industry 4.0, SMART Cities, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) etc.

## **Hand in Hand 2018**

### **Details -**

- Exercise Hand-in-Hand is conducted annually as part of military diplomacy and interaction between armies of India and China.
- The joint exercise for the year 2018 will be conducted in Chengdu, China. This will be the 7th exercise between the two armies.
- The exercise was last held in 2016. It was suspended in 2017 following tensions at Doklam Plateau.

## **Kolkata-Patna becomes India's second container cargo sector on Inland Waterways**

PepsiCo India and Emami Agrotech Ltd has utilised the second inland waterways between Kolkata and Patna to ship their containers from this sector.

### **Details -**

- Kolkata-Patna is India's new IWT origin-destination pair for containerised cargo movement on the National Waterway-1.
- Plans are at an advanced stage to operationalise Patna-Varanasi sector of NW-1 for container cargo movement.
- The Ministry of Shipping is developing NW-1 (River Ganga) under Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) from Haldia to Varanasi (1390 Km) with the technical and financial assistance of the World Bank.

## **Shahpurkandi Dam on river Ravi approved**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved implementation of Shahpurkandi Dam Project, Punjab on river Ravi. For this, Central Assistance of Rs. 485.38 cr (for irrigation component) would be provided over five years from 2018-19 to 2022-23.

Implementation of this project would help minimising some of the water of the River Ravi which at present is going waste through the Madhopur Headworks downstream to Pakistan.

### **Impact -**

- Some of the water of the River Ravi at present is going waste through the Madhopur Headworks downstream to Pakistan whereas there is requirement for the same for use in Punjab and J&K. Implementation of the project would minimise such wastage of water.
- On completion of the project an additional Irrigation Potential of 5000 ha in Punjab State and 32173 ha in J&K State would be created.
- On completion, Punjab would also be able to generate 206 MW of hydropower.

### **Background -**

Indus Waters Treaty was signed between India and Pakistan in 1960 for sharing of Indus waters. According to the Treaty, India got the full rights for utilization of waters of the three Eastern Rivers namely Ravi, Beas and Satluj.

## **Combined Guided Weapon Firing Exercise**

Air Chief Marshal witnessed the combined guided weapons firing exercise of Surface to Air Missiles.

**Details -**

This was the first of its kind exercise undertaken by the Indian Air Force in which firing of four different class of missiles - **AKASH, SPYDER, OSA-AK-M and IGLA** was successfully carried out during day and night in an integrated networked environment. **(Remember the names for Prelims).**

**Ex Aviandra 2018**

Ex AVIANDRA, a service specific exercise between Indian Air Force and Russian Federation Aerospace Force (RFSAF), is planned at Air Force Station Jodhpur from 10-21 Dec 2018.

**Details -**

- AVIANDRA-2018 is the second in the series of bilateral joint exercise between IAF-RFSAF.
- The exercise is unique wherein the foreign participant does not bring its air assets.
- In Russia, the IAF pilots flew alongside their Russian counterparts in RFSAF aircraft at Lipetsk.
- In India, the RFSAF pilots will fly alongside their Indian counterparts in the IAF aircraft, which are common to both Air Forces.

**Changes approved in National Pension System (NPS)**

The Union Cabinet in its Meeting on 6th December, 2018 has approved the following proposal for streamlining the National Pension System (NPS).

**Changes approved -**

- Enhancement of the mandatory contribution by the Central Government for its employees covered under NPS Tier-I from the existing 10% to 14%.
- Providing freedom of choice for selection of Pension Funds and pattern of investment to central government employees.
- Payment of compensation for non-deposit or delayed deposit of NPS contributions during 2004-2012.
- Tax exemption limit for lump sum withdrawal on exit has been enhanced to 60%. With this, the entire withdrawal will now be exempt from income tax. (At present, 40% of the total accumulated corpus utilized for purchase of annuity is already tax exempted. Out of 60% of the accumulated corpus withdrawn by the NPS subscriber at the time of retirement, 40% is tax exempt and balance 20% is taxable.
- Contribution by the Government employees under Tier-II of NPS will now be covered under Section 80C for deduction up to Rs. 1.50 lakh for the purpose of income tax at par with the other schemes such as General Provident Fund, Contributory Provident Fund, Employees Provident Fund and Public Provident Fund provided that there is a lock-in period of 3 years.

## **ENSURE Platform launched**

A portal named **ENSURE** has been launched by NABARD, operated under the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries.

### **Details -**

- Under the National Livestock Mission's component called Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation (EDEG), subsidy payment for activities related to poultry, small ruminants, pigs etc. through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) goes directly to the beneficiary's account.
- In order to make it better, simpler and transparent, the NABARD has developed an online portal "ENSURE" (<https://ensure.nabard.org>) so that the information related to beneficiary and processing of application can be made readily available.

## **Deep Sea Submarine Rescue System**

Indian Navy's first flyaway Deep Sea Submarine Rescue System was formally inducted recently.

### **Details -**

- The operating medium and the nature of operations undertaken by submarines expose them to high degree of inherent risk.
- In such an eventuality, traditional methods of search and rescue at sea are ineffective for a disabled submarine.
- To overcome this capability gap the Navy has acquired a third generation, advanced Submarine Rescue System consisting of a Non-tethered Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) and its associated equipment.

### **Impact -**

- The Indian Navy now joins a select league of Nations worldwide with the sovereign capability, in fly away configuration, to search, locate and rescue crew from a disabled Submarine.
- The Deep Sea rescue system would have a global footprint and can be mobilised from the Naval base at Mumbai to the nearest mobilisation port by air/land or sea to provide rapid rescue to the Submarines in distress.

### **Advantage -**

- The Indian Navy's Deep Sea Submarine Rescue System considered to be the most advanced system currently in operation globally, is capable of undertaking rescue from a disabled Submarine upto 650 m depth.
- The DSRV, which is operated by a crew of three, can rescue 14 personnel from a disabled Submarine at one time and can operate in extreme sea conditions (upto Sea State 6).

## **National Medical Devices Promotion Council**

Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry has decided to set up National Medical Devices Promotion Council under the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).

### **Structure -**

The Council will be headed by Secretary, DIPP. Apart from the concerned departments of Government of India, it will also have representatives from health care industry and quality control institutions. Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone, Visakhapatnam, will provide technical support to the Council.

### **Objectives -**

The National Medical Devices Promotion Council will have the following objectives and activities:

- Act as a facilitating and promotion & developmental body for the Indian MDI.
- Hold periodic seminars, workshops and all related networking activities to garner views of the industry and understand best global practices in the sector and deliberate on various parameters for inclusion in the industrial and trade policies in medical devices.
- Identify redundant processes and render technical assistance to the agencies and departments concerned to simplify the approval processes involved in medical device industry promotion & development.
- Enable entry of emerging interventions and support certifications for manufacturers to reach levels of global trade norms and lead India to an export driven market in the sector.
- Support dissemination and documentation of international norms and standards for medical devices, by capturing the best practices in the global market and facilitate domestic manufacturers to rise to international level of understanding of regulatory and non regulatory needs of the industry.
- Drive a robust and dynamic Preferential Market Access (PMA) policy, by identifying the strengths of the Indian manufacturers and discouraging unfair trade practices in imports; while ensuring proactive monitoring of public procurement notices across India to ensure compliance with PMA guidelines of DIPP and DoP.
- Undertake validation of Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) and other such entities within MDI sector, which add value to the industry strength in manufacturing to gain foothold for new entrants.
- Make recommendations to government based on industry feedback and global practices on policy and process interventions to strengthen the medical technology sector, including trade interventions for related markets.

## **ECO Niwas Samhita 2018 - Building Code for Residential Buildings**

Giving a further fillip to India's energy conservation efforts, Ministry of Power has launched the ECO Niwas Samhita 2018, an Energy Conservation Building Code for Residential Buildings (ECBC-R).

#### **Details -**

- The Code is expected to assist large number of architects and builders who are involved in design and construction of new residential complexes in different parts of the country.
- Implementation of this Code will have potential for energy savings to the tune of 125 Billion Units of electricity per year by 2030, which is equivalent to about 100 million ton of Co2 emission.
- The implementation of this Code will give a fillip to energy efficiency in residential sector.
- It aims to benefit the occupants and the environment by promoting energy efficiency in design and construction of homes, apartments and townships.

#### **About BEE -**

BEE is a statutory body under Ministry of Power which is mandated to implement policy and programmes in the area of energy efficiency and conservation.

## **Eklavya Model Residential Schools**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its in-principle approval for setting up of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) in every block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons.

#### **The CCEA has further approved the following:**

- There will be an Autonomous Society under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs similar to Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti to run the EMRSs.
- Upgradation of already sanctioned EMRSs on need basis with unit cost subject to a maximum of Rs. 5 crore per school.
- Setting up sports facilities in 163 tribal dominated districts at a unit cost of Rs. 5 crore each to be constructed by the year 2022.
- Enhancing the grants for maintenance which are admissible every five years from Rs 10 lakh to Rs.20 Lakh.

#### **Background -**

- EMRS is an excellent approach for imparting quality education to ST children.
- Apart from school building including hostels and staff quarters, provision for a playground, students' computer lab, teacher resource room etc. are also included in the EMRSs. This initiative will benefit ST students immensely.
- By focusing on specific intervention to cater to the educational needs of STs, the quality of the life of STs is expected to improve to the level of rest of the social groups and a visible impact by 2021 Census.

## **IMPRESS Scheme**

The Government of India, in August 2018, had sanctioned the scheme “Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS)” at a total cost of Rs. 414 Cr for implementation up to 31.03.2021. Under the Scheme, 1500 research projects will be awarded for 2 years to support the social science research in the higher educational institutions and to enable research to guide policy making.

The Indian Council of Social Science and Research (ICSSR) will be the project implementing agency.

### **Objectives -**

The broad objectives of the scheme are:

- To identify and fund research proposals in social sciences with maximum impact on the governance and society.
- To focus research on (11) broad thematic areas such as : State and Democracy, Urban transformation, Media, Culture and Society, Employment, Skills and Rural transformation , Governance, Innovation and Public Policy, Growth, Macro-trade and Economic Policy, Agriculture and Rural Development, Health and Environment, Science and Education, Social Media and Technology, Politics, Law and Economics. The sub- theme areas will be decided on the basis of Expert Groups’ advice before notifying the scheme and calling for applications.
- To ensure selection of projects through a transparent, competitive process on online mode.
- To provide opportunity for social science researchers in any institution in the country, including all Universities (Central and State), private institutions with 12(B) status conferred by UGC.
- ICSSR funded/ recognized research institutes will also be eligible to submit research proposals on the given themes and sub-themes.

## **BHASHA Sangam**

The Department of School Education & Literacy has initiated Bhasha Sangam – A Celebration of Linguistic Diversity which marks the appreciation of the unique symphony of languages of our country, from 20th November to 21st December, 2018.

### **Details -**

In order to celebrate the unique characteristic of our country, Bhasha Sangam provides an opportunity to schools and educational institution (BIETS, DIETs, CTEs/IASEs, SCERTs, SIEs, School Boards, Directorates of School Education, etc.) to provide multilingual exposure to students in Indian Languages.

### **Objective -**

The objective is to familiarize every child with simple dialogues in all the 22 languages under Schedule VIII of the Constitution of India, taking up one language on each working day, to enhance linguistic tolerance and promote national integration.

## **Steps taken to ensure Cyber Security**

Government has taken a number of legislative, technical and institutional measures for addressing issues related to cyber security.

These include National Cyber Security policy (2013), enactment of Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 and setting up of Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In).

### **Steps taken -**

Some specific measures taken by the Government of India to strengthen cyber security system in the country are as under:

- National Cyber Security Coordinator (NCSC) under National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) coordinates with different agencies at the national level for cyber security matters.
- Information Technology Act, 2000 was enacted to provide legal recognition for electronic communication, electronic commerce and cyber crimes etc. IT Act has deterrent provisions to deal with cyber threats and cyber attacks.
- The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) issues alerts and advisories regarding latest cyber threats and countermeasures on regular basis.
- National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) has been established for protection of critical information infrastructure in the country.
- Cyber security exercises are being conducted regularly to enable assessment of preparedness of organizations in Government and critical sectors.
- Guidelines have been issued for Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) regarding their key roles and responsibilities for securing applications / infrastructure and compliance.
- Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre) has been launched for detection of malicious programs and provide free tools to remove the same.
- National Cyber Coordination Centre (NCCC) has set up to generate necessary situational awareness of existing and potential cyber security threats and enable timely information sharing for proactive, preventive and protective actions by individual entities.
- All the new government websites and applications are audited prior to their hosting and on regular basis after hosting.
- CERT-In conducts regular training programmes for network / system administrators and Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) of Government and critical sector organisations regarding securing the IT infrastructure and mitigating cyber attacks.
- Under Cyber Crime Prevention for Women and Children (CCPWC) Scheme, Government of India has released grants to States/UTs including Andhra Pradesh for setting up of a Cyber Forensic cum Training Laboratory and organizing capacity

building programme on cyber awareness and cyber crime investigation. Rs. 4.42 Crore has been released to Andhra Pradesh for the purpose.

- A Division has been established under the Ministry of Home Affairs to deal with Cyber and Information Security.
- The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with its overseas counterpart agencies/ Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) for information exchange and collaboration for cyber security incident response.

## **National e-Vidhan Application Project**

### **National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) Project -**

- Paperless Assembly or e-Assembly is a concept involving of electronic means to facilitate the work of Assembly.
- It enables automation of entire law making process, tracking of decisions and documents, sharing of information.
- NeVA aims to bring all the legislatures of the country together, in one platform thereby creating a massive data depository without having the complexity of multiple applications.

## **Asiatic Lion Conservation Project**

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India has launched the “***Asiatic Lion Conservation Project***” with an aim to protect and conserve the world’s last ranging free population of Asiatic Lion and its associated ecosystem.

### **Need -**

- It will strengthen the ongoing measures for conservation and recovery of Asiatic Lion with the help of state-of-the-art techniques/ instruments, regular scientific research studies, disease management, Modern surveillance/ patrolling techniques.
- The total budget of the project for 3 years that amounts to nearly Rs. 9784 lakh will be funded from the Centrally Sponsored Scheme- Development of Wildlife Habitat (CSS-DWH) with the contributing ratio being 60:40 of Central and State share.

### **Asiatic Lions -**

- Asiatic lions that once ranged from Persia (Iran) to Palamau in Eastern India were almost driven to extinction by indiscriminate hunting and habitat loss.
- A single population of less than 50 lions persisted in the Gir forests of Gujarat by late 1890's.
- With timely and stringent protection offered by the State Government and the Center Government, Asiatic lions have increased to the current population of over 500 numbers.
- The last census in the year 2015 showed the population of 523 Asiatic Lions in Gir Protected Area Network of 1648.79 sq. km. that includes Gir National Park, Gir

Sanctuary, Pania Sanctuary, Mitiyala Sanctuary adjoining reserved forests, Protected Forests, and Unclassed Forests.

## **IFC-IOR**

The Honourable Raksha Mantri, launched the **Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)** at Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) Gurugram.

### **Details -**

- The IFC-IOR aims to engage with partner nations and multinational maritime constructs to develop comprehensive maritime domain awareness and share information on vessels of interest.
- The intention of this collaborative endeavour shall be to secure the global commons for a peaceful, stable and prosperous region towards the well-being of all.
- The information exchange at the IFC-IOR would be initially undertaken by virtual means, using telephone calls, faxes, emails and video conferencing over internet. Subsequently, to enable better interaction, quicker analysis of information and provide timely inputs, the IFC-IOR would host Liaison Officers from partner countries.

## **Section 79 of IT Act**

The Information Technology Act (IT Act), 2000 was enacted with a view to give a fillip to electronic transactions, to provide legal recognition for e-commerce and e-transactions, to facilitate e-governance, to prevent computer based crimes and ensure security practices and procedures.

### **What is Section 79?**

- Section 79 of the IT Act elaborates on the exemption from liabilities of intermediaries in certain cases.
- Section 79(2)(c) mentions that intermediaries must observe due diligence while discharging their duties, and also observe such other guidelines as prescribed by the Central Government.
- Accordingly, the Information Technology (Intermediaries Guidelines) Rules, 2011 were notified in April 2011.

## **Coastal Regulation Zone Notification 2018**

The Union Cabinet has approved the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2018 which was last reviewed and issued in 2011, with periodic amendments to some clauses.

### **Benefits -**

The proposed CRZ Notification, 2018 will lead to enhanced activities in the coastal regions thereby promoting economic growth while also respecting the conservation principles of coastal regions. It will not only result in significant employment generation but also to better life and add value to the economy of India. The new notification is expected to rejuvenate the coastal areas while reducing their vulnerabilities.

### **Salient Features -**

1. **Allowing FSI as per current norms in CRZ areas:** As per CRZ, 2011 Notification, for CRZ-II (Urban) areas, Floor Space Index (FSI) or the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) had been frozen as per 1991 Development Control Regulation (DCR) levels. In the CRZ, 2018 Notification, it has been decided to de-freeze the same and permit FSI for construction projects, as prevailing on the date of the new Notification. This will enable redevelopment of these areas to meet the emerging needs.
2. **Densely populated rural areas to be afforded greater opportunity for development:** For CRZ-III (Rural) areas, two separate categories have now been stipulated as below -
  - a. **CRZ-III A** - These are densely populated rural areas with a population density of 2161 per square kilometre as per 2011 Census. Such areas shall have a No Development Zone (NDZ) of 50 meters from the HTL as against 200 meters from the High Tide Line stipulated in the CRZ Notification, 2011 since such areas have similar characteristics as urban areas.
  - b. **CRZ-III B** - Rural areas with population density of below 2161 per square kilometre as per 2011 Census. Such areas shall continue to have an NDZ of 200 meters from the HTL.
3. **Tourism infrastructure for basic amenities to be promoted:** Temporary tourism facilities such as shacks, toilet blocks, change rooms, drinking water facilities etc. have now been permitted in Beaches. However, a minimum distance of 10 m from HTL should be maintained for setting up of such facilities.
4. **CRZ Clearances streamlined:** The procedure for CRZ clearances has been streamlined. Only such projects/activities, which are located in the CRZ-I (Ecologically Sensitive Areas) and CRZ IV (area covered between Low Tide Line and 12 Nautical Miles seaward) shall be dealt with for CRZ clearance by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The powers for clearances with respect to CRZ-II and III have been delegated at the State level with necessary guidance.
5. **A No Development Zone (NDZ) of 20 meters has been stipulated for all Islands:** For islands close to the mainland coast and for all Backwater Islands in the main land, in wake of space limitations and unique geography of such regions, bringing uniformity in treatment of such regions, NDZ of 20 m has been stipulated.
6. **All Ecologically Sensitive Areas have been accorded special importance:** Specific guidelines related to their conservation and management plans have been drawn up as a part of the CRZ Notification.
7. **Pollution abatement has been accorded special focus:** In order to address pollution in Coastal areas treatment facilities have been made permissible activities in CRZ-I B area subject to necessary safeguards.

8. **Defence and strategic projects have been accorded necessary dispensation.**

## **Gaganyaan Programme**

The Union Cabinet has approved the Gaganyaan Programme with demonstration of Indian Human Spaceflight capability to low earth orbit for a mission duration ranging from one orbital period to a maximum of seven days.

### **Details -**

- A human rated GSLV Mk-III will be used to carry the orbital module which will have necessary provisions for sustaining a 3-member crew for the duration of the mission.
- The necessary infrastructure for crew training, realization of flight systems and ground infrastructure will be established to support the Gaganyaan Programme.
- ISRO will collaborate extensively with National agencies, laboratories, academia and industry to accomplish the Gaganyaan Programme objectives.

### **Expenditure -**

The total fund requirement for the Gaganyaan Programme is within Rs.10,000 crore and includes cost of technology development, flight hardware realization and essential infrastructure elements. Two unmanned flights and one manned flight will be undertaken as part of Gaganyaan Programme.

### **Benefits -**

- Gaganyaan Programme will establish a broader framework for collaboration between ISRO, academia, industry, national agencies and other scientific organizations.
- It This will allow pooling in of diverse technological and industrial capabilities and enable broader participation in research opportunities and technology development benefitting large number of students and researchers.
- The flight system realization will be through Industry.
- It is expected to generate employment and train human resources in advanced technologies.
- It will inspire large number of young students to take up science and technology careers for national development.
- Gaganyaan Programme is a national effort and will involve the participation of the Industry, Academia and National Agencies spread across the length and breadth of the country.

### **Impact -**

- The programme is expected to spur research and development within the country in niche science and technology domains.

- Huge potential for technology spinoffs in areas such as medicine, agriculture, industrial safety, pollution, waste management, water and food resource management etc.
- Human spaceflight programme will provide a unique micro-gravity platform in space for conducting experiments and test bed for future technologies.
- The programme is expected to give impetus to economic activities within the country in terms of employment generation, human resource development and enhanced industrial capabilities.
- Human Spaceflight capability will enable India to participate as a collaborating partner in future Global space exploration initiatives with long term national benefits.