

19 April 2019: UPSC Exam PIB Summary & Analysis

International Fleet Review

Context:

- *IN* Ships Kolkata and Shakti are scheduled to arrive **Qingdao**, China (on 21 Apr 19) to participate in the International Fleet Review as part of **70TH Anniversary celebrations of PLA (Navy)**.

Details:

- **International Fleet Review (IFR)** is a parade of naval ships, aircraft and submarines, and is organised by nations to promote goodwill, strengthen cooperation and showcase their organisational capabilities.
- IFR also serves as an ideal platform for the world's navies to showcase their prowess and indigenous ship designing and shipbuilding capabilities in a global/ international arena.
- The **second IFR** conducted by India off **Visakhapatnam in Feb 2016** saw an overwhelming participation of 50 navies with nearly 100 warships.
- The Indian Navy would be represented in the IFR at Qingdao by indigenously built stealth guided missile destroyer *INS Kolkata* and fleet support ship *INS Shakti*.
- *INS Kolkata* is equipped with state-of-the-art weapons and sensors to address threats in all dimensions of naval warfare.
- *INS Shakti*, a replenishment ship, is one of the largest tankers displacing over 27,000 tonnes and capable of carrying 15,000 tonnes of liquid cargo and over 500 tonnes of solid cargo including victuals and ammunition.
- The visit of Indian Navy's most potent destroyer and versatile fleet support ship showcases India's prowess, reach and sustainability in addition to indigenous shipbuilding capability.

Media Clarification on Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen)

Context:

- An opinion piece titled "The truth about Swachh Bharat" was published (18th April) in The Telegraph.

Details:

- **The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation** would like to place on record its response to the claims made in the piece about the progress made under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) and the veracity of the findings of the National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey 2018-19.
- The piece compares the nationwide 90240 household survey, NARSS, conducted in over 6000 villages, with a study of four states conducted by r.i.c.e. that surveyed merely 1558 households in 157 villages in the four States.
- Surprisingly, the piece seems to attach greater credibility to this statistically insignificant and non-representative sample survey than the large-scale NARSS survey.
- It is relevant to mention here that the methodology and processes of NARSS have been developed and approved by an empowered and independent Expert Working Group (EWG) comprising leading experts on statistics and sanitation which include Prof. Amitabh Kundu, Dr N. C Saxena, World Bank, UNICEF, BMGF, Water Aid India, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

(MOSPI), among others.

- The EWG oversaw the entire survey process and some of the members also conducted field visits to validate the data collection process and do a thorough quality check on the results.
- The piece calls the national representative and expert validated NARSS survey “**statistical jugglery**” while believing the statistics of the **r.i.c.e. survey**, which was found to be rife with gaps in methodology and bias of the surveyors which was evident in the questionnaire design itself.
- These gaps have been highlighted by this Ministry in detail through a media statement published on the PIB website.
- The NARSS 2018-19 is the largest independent sanitation survey in the country to date, making it the most representative sanitation survey in the country.
- The survey has found toilet usage in rural India to be 96.5%. Two more independent surveys conducted in the past by the **Quality Council of India in 2017, and National Sample Survey Organization in 2016**, also found the usage of these toilets to be 91% and 95% respectively.
- These results speak for themselves and cannot conceivably be achieved without true behaviour change happening at the grassroots.
- The claims made in this opinion piece about the programme being focused on toilet construction rather than behaviour change, therefore, seem to be either ignorant or biased.
- The piece goes as far as to quote a 2008 study with the aim to debunk a programme that was launched only in 2014.
- **The Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen)** is a people-led sanitation movement in rural India and is on track to achieve an **ODF India by October 2019**.