

21 August 2019: PIB Summary & Analysis

Capacity Building of Sustainable Food Value Chains

Context

A National Conference on Capacity Building of Sustainable Food Value Chains for Enhanced Food Safety and Quality was organized by National Productivity Council (NPC) in collaboration with the Asian Productivity Organization, Tokyo, Japan.

National Productivity Council (NPC)

- NPC is a national level organization to promote productivity culture in India.
- Established by the Ministry of Industry, Government of India in 1958, it is an autonomous, multipartite, non-profit organization with equal representation from employers' & workers' organizations and Government, apart from technical & professional institutions and other interests.
- NPC is a constituent of the Tokyo-based Asian Productivity Organisation (APO), an Inter-Governmental Body, of which the Government of India is a founder member.
- NPC teams up with its clients to work out solutions towards accelerating productivity, enhancing competitiveness, increasing profits, augmenting safety and reliability and ensuring better quality.
- It provides a reliable database for decision-making, improved systems and procedures, work culture as well as customer satisfaction both internal & external.
- The solutions can be all-encompassing or specific depending on the nature of the problem. The council also helps monitor, review and implement the identified strategies. Promotional and catalytic in nature, NPC's services have bearings on economic growth and quality of life.
- The Council promotes a comprehensive view of productivity-focused on improving the triple bottom line – economic, environmental and social and adds value for all the stakeholders through generation & application of advanced knowledge for inclusive Growth.

Relics found by ASI in Maharashtra's Phupgaon

Context

- The recent excavation carried out by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) at Maharashtra's Phupgaon has revealed evidence of an Iron Age settlement in the Vidarbha region.

About the site

- The site is situated in the vast meander of the river Purna, a major tributary of Tapi, which used to be a perennial river, but at present is completely dried-up due to the dam construction in the upper stream.
- The site is situated about 20 m away from the river bed and its one-third portion has been subjected to frequent erosion during the heavy water current in the earlier times.
- The river Purna, a major tributary of the river Tapi, has witnessed several archaeological sites on its either side of the banks.
- A number of cultural remains in the form of various antiquities and pottery have unraveled the nature of those settlements ranging from Paleolithic to the late medieval period.

Significance

- The excavation is significant as it indicates the presence of sedentary (permanent) settlement, belonging to the Iron Age of Vidarbha.
- The settlement comes under the category of a small village with evidence of a small agro-pastoral community with evidence of craftsmanship in the form of beads of agate-carnelian, jasper, quartz and also usage of other artifacts like hopscotch, wheel, and barrel-shaped beads.
- The finding from Phupgaon indicates its contemporaneity with other Iron Age settlements of Vidarbha like Naikund, Mahurjhari, Bhagimori, and Thakalkat.

Reduce, Rebate and Reuse Milk Pouches

Context

- A high-level meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying to review the milk situation in the country

About the initiative

- The Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying requested Major Dairy Federations to encourage reuse of plastic milk pouches, in a campaign mode, with 3R strategy – Reduce, Rebate and Reuse.
 - REDUCE consumption of plastics by subsidizing the price of the 1-liter pack over ½ liter pack
 - REBATE to customers for bringing back plastics
 - REUSE of pouches for users such as Road construction, recyclers.

- Media was requested to start a campaign like Swachha Bharat to discourage plastics and thereby improve the environment.
- The milk procurement price was observed to have increased by Rs.1-2 across the country. The representatives were requested to focus on the quality aspects of milk and reduction in the cost of production.

Union HRD Minister launches NISHTHA

Context

- Union Human Resource Development Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' launched the National Mission to improve Learning Outcomes at the Elementary level- NISHTHA, National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement.

NISHTHA: National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement

- NISHTHA is a capacity building programme for "Improving Quality of School Education through Integrated Teacher Training". It aims to build competencies among all the teachers and school principals at the elementary stage.
- The functionaries shall be trained in an integrated manner on learning outcomes, school-based assessment, learner-centered pedagogy, new initiatives in education, addressing the diverse needs of children through multiple pedagogies, etc.
- This will be organized by constituting National Resource Groups (NRGs) and State Resource Groups (SRGs) at the National and the State level who will be training 42 lakhs teachers subsequently.
- A robust portal/Management Information System (MIS) for delivery of the training, monitoring and support mechanism will also be infused with this capacity-building initiative.

Objectives

1. Improvement in learning outcomes of the students.
2. Creation of an enabling and enriching inclusive classroom environment
3. Teachers become alert and responsive to the social, emotional and psychological needs of students as first-level counsellors.
4. Teachers are trained to use Art as pedagogy leading to increased creativity and innovation among students.
5. Teachers are trained to develop and strengthen the personal-social qualities of students for their holistic development.
6. Creation of a healthy and safe school environment.
7. Integration of ICT in teaching-learning and assessment.

8. Developing a stress-free School-Based Assessment focused on the development of learning competencies.
9. Teachers adopt Activity Based Learning and move away from rote learning to competency-based learning.
10. Teachers and School heads to become aware of new initiatives in school education.
11. Transformation of the Heads of Schools into providing academic and administrative leadership for the schools for fostering new initiatives.

Power Minister Shri RK Singh launches SARAL

Context

- Shri RK Singh, Union Minister of State for Power and New & Renewable Energy (IC) and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, launched the State Rooftop Solar Attractiveness Index–SARAL

About SARAL

- SARAL has been designed collaboratively by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (SSEF), Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and Ernst & Young (EY).
- It was launched during the Review Planning and Monitoring (RPM) Meeting with States and State Power Utilities. SARAL currently captures five key aspects –
 - robustness of policy framework
 - implementation environment
 - investment climate
 - consumer experience
 - business ecosystem
- It encourages each state to assess the initiatives taken so far, and what it can do to improve its solar rooftop ecosystem.
- This will help states to channelize investments that can eventually help the sector grow.
- In addition, such an exercise is likely to create a more conducive environment for solar rooftop installations, encourage investment and lead to accelerated growth of the sector.
- To achieve our rooftop solar targets, it is important to develop an ecosystem that ensures information symmetry, access to financing and clear market signals.
- Thus, the MNRE has developed the State Rooftop Solar Attractiveness Index–SARAL that evaluates Indian states based on their attractiveness for rooftop development.
- SARAL is the first of its kind index to provide a comprehensive overview of state-level measures adopted to facilitate rooftop solar deployment.

