

15 June 2020: PIB Summary & Analysis

Locust Control Programme

Context:

India supplies Malathion 95% ULV insecticides to Iran for Locust Control Programme.

Details:

- HIL (India) Limited, a PSU under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers has supplied 25 MT Malathion 95% ULV to Iran under a Government-to-Government initiative for Locust Control Programme.

Background:

- India had recently approached Iran and Pakistan for a coordinated response to counter the desert locust menace in the region.
- Iran has expressed its willingness to the proposal and accordingly, the Ministry of External Affairs placed an order with HIL (India) Limited to manufacture and supply 25 MT of Malathion 95% ULV to Iran.
- As per the reports of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the hopper stage population of locust is building up in Sistan-Baluchistan Region of Iran, which shall migrate to India in the coming months leading to further crop devastation.
- The Government of India has taken an initiative to counter the locust menace at its breeding ground itself and approached Iran for coordinated efforts.
- Desert Locust, after severe crop devastation in the Horn of Africa, East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, has entered into India in March/April 2020 and it has affected the field crop, horticulture crops and other plantation in the states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.
- India is experiencing its worst locust invasion, which was last observed more than 25 years back.

For more on [locust swarms](#), click on the linked article.

Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI)

Context:

India joins Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) as a founding member to support the responsible and human-centric development and use of AI.

Details:

- India joined the league of leading economies including the USA, the UK, the EU, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of Korea and Singapore to launch the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI or Gee-Pay).

About GPAI:

- GPAI is an international and multi-stakeholder initiative to guide the responsible development and use of AI, grounded in human rights, inclusion, diversity, innovation, and economic growth.
- This is also a first initiative of its type for evolving better understanding of the challenges and opportunities around AI using the experience and diversity of participating countries.
- In order to achieve this goal, the initiative will look to bridge the gap between theory and practice on AI by supporting cutting-edge research and applied activities on AI-related priorities.
- In collaboration with partners and international organizations, GPAI will bring together leading experts from industry, civil society, governments, and academia to collaborate to promote responsible evolution of AI.
- It will also evolve methodologies to show how [Artificial Intelligence](#) can be leveraged to better respond to the present global crisis around COVID-19.

- GPAI will be supported by a Secretariat, to be hosted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development ([OECD](#)) in Paris, as well as by two Centers of Expertise - one each in Montreal and Paris.

Also read about India's National AI Portal on [PIB dated May 30, 2020](#).

Central Board of Indirect Taxes (CBIC)

Context:

CBIC Begins Using e-Office in all CGST and Customs offices.

To know more about CBIC, check [PIB dated Nov 7, 2019](#) under the headline "DIN system of CBIC".

Feedback Call Centres on COVID-19 Public Grievances

Context:

Union Minister launches Feedback Call Centres on COVID-19 Public Grievances.

Details:

- The Feedback Call Centres would seek feedback from individual citizens on citizen satisfaction on 1.28 lac COVID-19 Public Grievances that have been filed on CPGRAMS.
- The call centres would operate in multiple languages.

Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) of DARPG:

- The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DAR&PG) is the nodal agency of the Government of India in-charge of policy making, monitoring and coordinating departments for public grievances.
- Centralized Public Grievance Redress And Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) is an online web-enabled system over NICNET (satellite-based nation-wide computer-communication network) developed by NIC.
- CPGRAMS is the platform based on web technology which primarily aims to enable submission of grievances by the aggrieved citizens from anywhere and anytime – (24×7) basis to Ministries/Departments/Organizations/State Governments who scrutinize and take action for speedy and favourable redressal of these grievances.

Indian Gas Exchange

Context:

The Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas launched the Indian Gas Exchange.

About the Indian Gas Exchange (IGX):

- The IGX is the first nationwide online delivery-based gas trading platform.
- Incorporated as a wholly-owned subsidiary of the IEX - India's energy market platform, IGX will enable market participants to trade in standardised gas contracts.
- The IGX is a digital trading platform that will allow buyers and sellers of natural gas to trade both in the spot market and in the forward market for imported natural gas across three hubs - Dahej and Hazira in Gujarat, and Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh.
- Imported Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) will be regassified and sold to buyers through the exchange, removing the requirement for buyers and sellers to find each other.
- This means that buyers will not have to contact multiple dealers to ensure they find a fair price.
- The exchange also allows much shorter contracts – for delivery on the next day, and up to a month – while ordinarily contracts for natural gas supply are as long as six months to a year. This, experts say, will allow buyers and sellers greater flexibility.
- The platform is fully automated with web-based interface to provide seamless trading experience to the customers.
- As there will be a market driven pricing mechanism, the IGX is expected to play a bigger role towards realizing a free market for gas.

- The price of domestically produced natural gas is decided by the government. It will not be sold on the gas exchange.
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