

16 Mar 2022: PIB Summary for UPSC

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1. 36th International Geological Congress (IGC)

Syllabus: GS I, Distribution of key natural resources across the world including the Indian sub-continent

Prelims: About the IGC

Mains: India's role in the development of earth sciences for a sustainable future.

Context: The 36th International Geological Congress will be hosted by India in New Delhi on a virtual platform.



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About the IGC:

- The IGC is a joint effort of the Ministry of Mines, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Indian National Science Academy and the science academies of Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka.
- It is described as the Olympics of Geosciences which is organised once every four years.
- The Congress operates under the supervision of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) which is the scientific sponsor of the International Geological Congress.
- This event attracts participants and delegates across the globe.
- The IGC creates a unique platform for knowledge exchange in the field of geosciences and professional networking.
- The focus areas of the Congress will include first-hand information on the latest technologies in mining, mineral exploration and management of water, mineral resources and the environment.

- It will facilitate the increased academic production and opportunities for capacity building in the geoscientific streams.
- In the present era, there is a huge demand for sustainability and platforms like the IGC will ensure a futuristic roadmap towards the goal of sustainable development by addressing the key issues.
- There will be talks held for highlighting the complex interactions of various phenomena that regulate the Earth's processes and their symbiosis with the biosphere.
- India is the only Asian country to host the Congress twice. The 22nd session of IGC was held in New Delhi in 1964.

About IUGC:

- It is an international non-governmental organisation that is devoted to the cause of international cooperation in the field of geology.
- It was established in 1961.
- IUGC is headquartered in Paris with its secretariat in Beijing.

2. Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan

Syllabus: GS II, Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and State and the performance of these schemes.

Prelims: Facts related to Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan

Mains: Welfare schemes and their significance in rural development.

Context: The progress made by Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan has been discussed in the Parliament.

About the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)

- It was launched on the occasion of 'National Panchayat Day' as an umbrella scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India.
- Ever since its inception, it had intended to develop and empower the Panchayati Raj System across the country's rural areas.
- Under the scheme, the capacities of institutions for rural development and governance have been facilitated through participatory planning, leveraging technology and efficient use of resources.

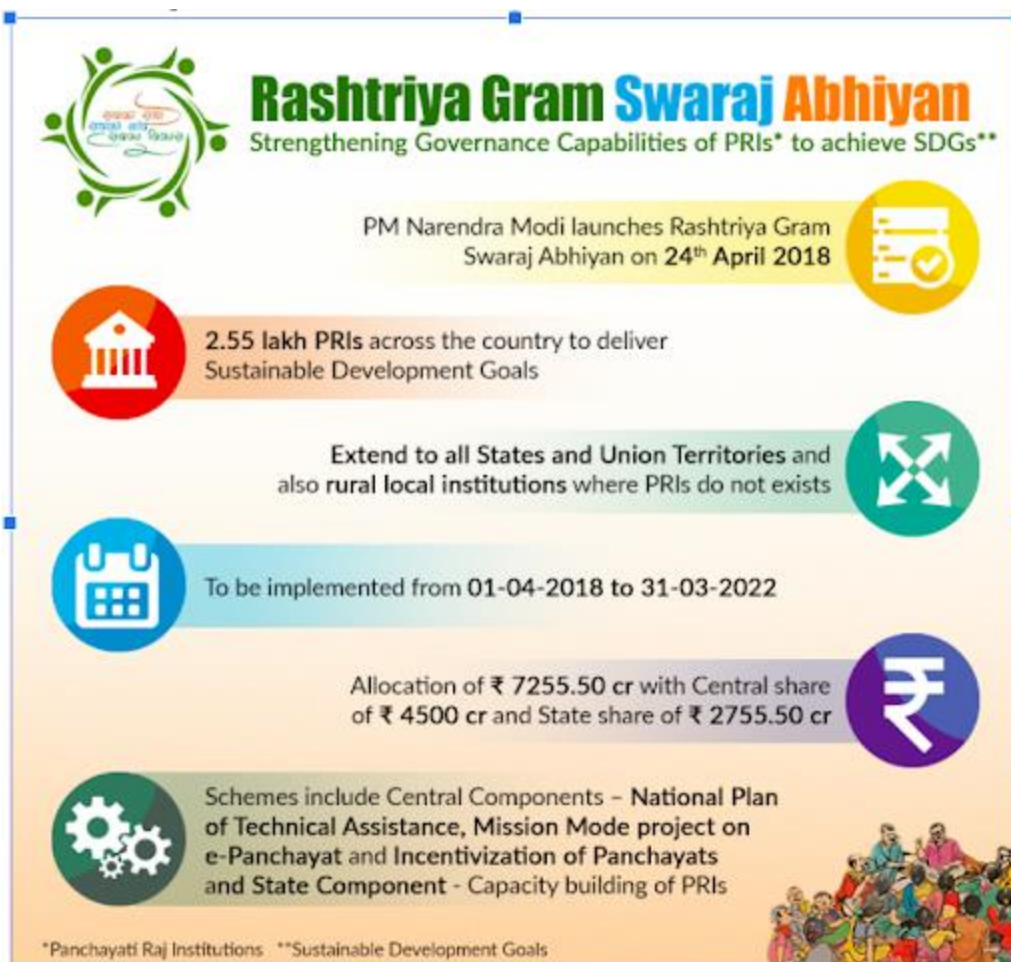


Image Source: transformingindia.mygov.in

Implementation:

- The RGSA was implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with a sharing ratio for the State components as 60:40 except in the Northeast and hilly states where the ratio of funding between the central and state will be 90:10.

Read more about [Panchayati Raj System](#) in the linked article.

3. Consumer Price Index (CPI)

Syllabus: Economy, growth and development

Prelims: CRI, Retail Inflation

Mains: Measures taken by the government to retain stability in the prices of food commodities.

Context: It has been inferred that retail inflation has retained its stability for the past year. This inference is based on the CPI (Consumer Price Index) data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

An Overview:

- There exists a strong correlation between retail inflation and the yearly changes in the CPI.
- The food price inflation is measured by the year-on-year variations in the Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) that carries a weightage of 47.25% in the CPI.
- The daily retail and wholesale prices of 22 essential food commodities are monitored by the Department of Consumer Affairs.

Effective Government Measures:

- The government takes several measures to expand the domestic availability of commodities and to ensure stability in the prices of those commodities. These steps include:
 - Release of food grains from buffer to cool down prices
 - Imposition of stock limits
 - Monitoring of stocks to prevent hoarding
 - Reforming the trade policy instruments like rationalisation of import duty, changes in import quota, restrictions on exports of the commodities and so on.
- The government has also allowed the import of Tur, Urad and Moong under 'Free Category' to improve the availability of pulses and stability in their prices. This has offered a positive outcome by increasing the import of these pulses.
- To mitigate the effects of high international prices on domestic consumers, the government has brought down the duty of Masur (one of the lentils) to zero for an extended period.
- Besides, the centre has provided the state governments with the supply of pulses from the buffer for nutrition and welfare programmes.
- The duty structure on edible oils has been rationalised by reducing effective duties to improve the domestic availability of edible oils.
- Open market release of onions from the buffer stock has been carried out to stabilise the retail prices of onion.

Read more about Inflation in the linked article.