



An Institute for Civil Services



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PIB Compilation

1. Union HRD Minister conferred Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2017 – 18 in New Delhi

(Topic: Society, governance General studies-I & II)

Salient Features of Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (2017-18)

- ▶ The methodology for the awards was evolved in consultation with UNICEF and Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI), which were the Implementation and Technical partners for the awards.
- ▶ The schools voluntarily applied online through a website and mobile App for the awards.
- ▶ Schools were rated through a transparent mechanism on five broad parameters of (i) Water (ii) Toilet (iii) Hand washing with Soap (iv) Operations and Maintenance (v) Behaviour Change and Capacity Building.
- ▶ Out of 52 Awardee schools, 37 schools are from rural areas and 15 from urban areas. 45 are government/ government aided schools and 7 are private schools. Further, 24 are elementary and 28 are secondary/ higher secondary schools.
- ▶ Awardee schools were also given an additional school grant of Rs. 50,000/- along with Certificate of Recognition.

About Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar:

- ▶ This Puraskar was launched as a follow up to the Swachh Vidyalaya Initiative launched in 2014.
- ▶ It is to honour the schools that have done exemplary work in the field of water, sanitation and hygiene.
- ▶ These awards are given to ensure long term sustainability and behaviour change towards cleanliness. It also provides a benchmark and roadmap for schools to make further improvements.
- ▶ This year, first time the awards have also been extended to private schools besides government and government aided schools.

Practice Question

○ With reference to Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar, consider the following statements:

- ◆ It is to honour the schools and colleges that have done exemplary work in the field of water, sanitation and hygiene
- ◆ This award is given only to government schools.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only (b) 2 only
- Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

▶ Correct Option: (d)

Explanation:

- This Puraskar was launched as a follow up to the Swachh Vidyalaya Initiative launched in 2014.

- Statement 1 is incorrect: It is to honour the schools (not colleges) that have done exemplary work in the field of water, sanitation and hygiene.
- These awards are given to ensure long term sustainability and behaviour change towards cleanliness. It also provides a benchmark and roadmap for schools to make further improvements.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: This year, first time the awards have also been extended to private schools besides government and government aided schools.

2. The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions inaugurated the 'Pension Adalat'

(Topic: governance, General studies-II)

Significance:

- The measure is expected to resolve issues of thousands of pensioners in one day, in a single sitting across the country.

Key Highlights:

- On the occasion, all the central government ministries would be conducting their respective pension adalats, in which on-the-spot resolution would be provided across the table to the grievance holder.
- All the concerned stakeholders of the pensioner's case including the department pay and account officer, bank, along with the pensioner or his representative, will settle the grievance within the framework of extant rules.
- This is a great reformative measure to get the grievances resolved in the quickest possible way by avoiding unnecessary recourse by the pensioners to Courts.
- In addition to the central ministries, the offices of accountant general would be separately addressing the pensioner grievances of all-India service officers, in all the states across the country.

Practice Question

o With reference to 'Pension Adalat', consider the following statements:

- ♦ 1. All the central government ministries will conduct their respective pension adalats
- ♦ 2. This is a great reformative measure to get the grievances resolved in the quickest possible way

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

► Correct Option : (C)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1** is correct: On the occasion, all the central government ministries would be conducting their respective pension adalats, in which on-the-spot resolution would be provided across the table to the grievance holder.
- All the concerned stakeholders of the pensioner's case including the department pay and account officer, bank, along with the pensioner or his representative, will settle the grievance within the framework of extant rules.
- **Statement 2** is correct: This is a great reformative measure to get the grievances resolved in the quickest possible way by avoiding unnecessary recourse by the pensioners to Courts.
- In addition to the central ministries, the offices of accountant general would be separately addressing the pensioner grievances of all-India service officers, in all the states across the country.

3. Cabinet approves enhancement of Honorarium to Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) and Performance Linked Incentive to AWHs under Anganwadi Services (Umbrella ICDS Scheme)

(Topic: Women, health, General studies-I & II)

The proposals approved consist of the following:

Name of Functionary	Old Rates p.m.	Revised Rates p.m.
Anganwadi Worker	Rs.3,000/-	Rs.4,500/-
Anganwadi Worker at Mini-AWC	Rs.2,250/-	Rs.3,500/-
Anganwadi Helper	Rs.1,500/-	Rs.2,250/- (*)

Impact:

- ▶ The programme through targeted interventions will strive to reduce the level of malnutrition, anaemia and low birth weight babies, ensure empowerment of adolescent girls, provide protection to the children who are in conflict with law, provide safe place for day-care to children of working mothers, create synergy,etc.
- ▶ Will ensure better **monitoring, issue negative alerts for timely action**, encourage States/UTs to perform, guide and supervise line Ministries and States/UTs to achieve the targeted goals and bring more transparency.

Background:

- ▶ Anganwadi Services (ICDS) aims at **holistic development of children under the age of six years and its beneficiaries are children of this age group and Pregnant Women & Lactating Mothers.**
- ▶ The rate of honorarium paid to the Anganwadi Workers and Anganwadi Helpers was last revised in the year 2011.
- ▶ Since then the cost of living has increased and the cost norms for the administration of Supplementary Nutrition have also been revised recently in the year 2017.

4. Cabinet approves ASHA Benefit Package

(Topic: Women, Society, General studies-II)

Two components of this package:

- ▶ ASHAs and ASHA facilitators meeting the eligibility criteria to be enrolled in social security schemes implemented by Government of India namely, the Pradhan Mantri JeevanJyoti Bima Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha BimaYojana.
- ▶ An **increase in the amount of routine and recurring incentives under National Health Mission for ASHAs under NHM from Rs. 1000/- per month to Rs. 2000/-per month.**

No of beneficiaries:

- ▶ Estimated 10,636,701 ASHAS and ASHA facilitators to be covered under Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana.

- ▶ Estimated 957,303 ASHAS and ASHA facilitators to be covered under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana.

Who are ASHAs?

The Accredited social health activists (ASHAs) are community health workers instituted by the Union Government's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) as a part of the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).

The main **aim of the ASHA scheme is to provide every village in the country with a trained female community health activist ASHA.**

The ASHAs, who are selected from the village itself, are trained to work as an interface **between the community and the public health system.**

Practice question

- **With reference to 'The Accredited social health activists (ASHAs)', consider the following statements:**

- ◆ 1. The main aim of the ASHA scheme is to provide every village and city in the country with a trained female community health activist
- ◆ 2. They are trained to work as an interface between the community and the public health system

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

- ▶ **Correct Option: (b)**

Explanation:

- The Accredited social health activists (ASHAs) are community health workers instituted by the Union Government's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) as a part of the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The main aim of the ASHA scheme is to provide **each village (not city)** in the country with a trained female community health activist ASHA.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The ASHAs, who are selected from the village itself, are trained to work as an interface between the community and the public health system

5. PM, Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina, jointly unveil e-plaques for ground-breaking of two projects

(Topic: India and its neighbourhood, International relations, General studies-II)

- ▶ **The projects include:** (a) India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline (b) Dhaka-Tongi-Joydebpur Railway Project

About India-Bangladesh Friendship Product Pipeline Project

- ▶ Through the cross-border pipeline, India will supply fuel oil from its Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL), located at Golaghat in the **north-eastern state of Assam**, while **Bangladesh will receive the oil at Parbatipur Depot** of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) in north-western district of Dinajpur.
- ▶ The import of fuel through the pipeline will be raised further as per the requirements of Bangladesh. The NRL will distribute diesel for 15 years through the pipeline and the time could be expanded following the consent of both sides, local media reported.

- The project will replace existing practice of sending diesel by rail covering distance of 510 kilometers. The estimated cost of this pipeline project is Rs. 346 crore and it will be completed in 30 months' timeframe.
- The pipeline has **capacity of 1 million metric tons per annum.**

About Dhaka-Tongi-Joydebpur Railway Project

- A new double-gauge rail track along the Dhaka-Tongi-Joydebpur will be constructed to improve communication with eight more districts with the capital.
- The new rail line will solve the regular rail line clearance problem in the route.
- Indian financial institution Export Import Bank will provide financial support in the rail line project while Aarvee Associates Architects Private Limited and Ayesha Engineering institutions will work in the project as consultancy firm.

6. Vice President made successful visit to Serbia, Malta and Romania

(Topic: International relations, General studies-II)

Some key outcomes:

- **Support for India's aspiration to be on UNSC** and for taking forward **UN reforms.**
- Endorsement of **India's stand on terror** and support for early adoption of United Nation's Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
- Strong **support for resuming EU-India trade agreement after Romania assumes Presidency of EU.**
- The leaders in all the countries expressed unequivocal admiration for India's economic growth and were eager to engage and partner with India politically, economically and culturally. In Romania, there was a special interest in Space and Aerospace. Malta expressed its desire to join the International Solar Alliance.
- The visit gave an **opportunity for the members of India Diaspora to listen to the Vice President about the transformative agenda of the government** and encouraged them to think of various ways in which they can contribute to the country's development. The vice President underscored the growing importance of India on the world stage and drew attention to four key features that need to be recognised. He called them 4Ds – Democracy, Demographic dividend, Demand and Diaspora.
- MOUs entered into related to **plant protection, tourism, air services, oil research, diplomatic training and maritime cooperation.**
- In all the three countries, there was **considerable interest in Yoga and Ayurveda** and in Romania, the Vice President launched two books on Ayurveda and inaugurated an Ayurveda Information Centre.

7. Successful Flight Test of Prahar

(Topic: Defence, Science and Technology, General studies-III)

About the surface-to-surface tactical missile 'Prahar':

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested the indigenously developed surface-to-surface tactical missile 'Prahar', from Launch Complex-III, ITR, Balasore.
- 'Prahar' is a contemporary weapon system **capable of carrying multiple types of warheads and neutralizing a wide variety of targets.**
- It is a **solid-fuel road-mobile** and is expected to **replace the Prithvi-I short-range ballistic missile**
- Prahaar is developed to provide a **cost effective, quick reaction, all-weather, all-terrain**, highly accurate battlefield support tactical weapon system.

- ▶ The missile fills the short-range tactical battlefield missile role as required by the Indian Army to take out strategic and tactical targets.
- ▶ The mobile launch platform will carry six missiles, which can have different kind of warheads meant for different targets and **can be fired in salvo mode in all directions covering the entire azimuth plane.**
- ▶ This solid-fuelled missile **can be launched within 2–3 minute without any preparation**, providing significantly better reaction time than liquid-fuelled Prithvi ballistic missiles and act as a gap filler in the 150 km (93 mi) range, between the Pinaka Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher and Smerch MBRL in one end and the Prithvi ballistic missiles on the other.
- ▶ Prahaar was test-fired successfully on 21 July 2011 from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur. On 20 September 2018, Prahaar was test fired for the second time from ITR, Chandipur.

Practice question

o With reference to tactical missile 'Prahar', consider the following statements

Consider the following statements.

- ◆ The missile fills the medium and long range tactical battlefield missile role as required by the Indian Army
- ◆ It cryogenic fuel road-mobile and is expected to replace the Prithvi-I

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only (b) 2 only
- Both 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2

▶ Correct Option: (d)

Explanation:

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested the indigenously developed surface-to-surface tactical missile 'Prahaar', from Launch Complex-III, ITR, Balasore.
- **Statement 1** is incorrect: The missile fills the **short-range(not medium and long range)** tactical battlefield missile role as required by the Indian Army to take out strategic and tactical targets
- **Statement 2** is incorrect: **It solid-fuel(not cryogenic) road-mobile and is expected to replace the Prithvi-I short-range ballistic missile**
- Prahaar is developed to provide a **cost effective, quick reaction, all-weather, all-terrain**, highly accurate battlefield support tactical weapon system.

8. Union Home Minister inaugurated two pilot projects of smart fencing along the Indo-Pak International Border in Jammu

(Topic: Security challenges and their management in border areas, General studies-III)

Why smart fencing is needed?

- ▶ With this smart fencing, **the number of casualties of our jawans on borders would get minimised** and the stress level among the jawans would also reduce to a large extent.
- ▶ With the digital smart fencing, our borders would become absolutely safe since it would **virtually make it impossible for the terrorists to breach it and infiltrate across the borders.**

About smart fencing:

- ▶ The smart border fencing projects built under the Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) programme is the first of its kind in the country.

- The two projects each covering a 5.5 km border stretch along the International Border have got **hi-tech surveillance system** that would create an **invisible electronic barrier on land**, water and even in air and underground and would help the BSF detect and foil infiltration bids in most difficult terrains.
- The CIBMS is designed to guard stretches where physical surveillance is not possible either due to inhospitable terrain or riverine borders. CIBMS uses a number of different devices for surveillance, communication and data storage.
- Sensors like Thermal Imager, UGS, Fibre Optical Sensors, Radar, and Sonar have been mounted on different platforms like Aerostat, tower, poles etc.
- A comprehensive integration of such sensors and other technical systems of communication and data processing has been achieved in the CIBMS project. The signals reach the Unified Command and Control Centre where the BSF can monitor the border on real-time basis.

Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) :

CIBM involves deployment of a range of state-of-the-art surveillance technologies - thermal imagers, infra-red and laser-based intruder alarms that form an invisible land fence, aerostats for aerial surveillance, unattended ground sensors that can help detect intrusion bids. **The CIBMS enables round-the-clock surveillance on border and under different weather conditions, be it in dust storm, fog or rain.**

9. Cabinet approves Indore (Mangaliyagaon) — Budni New Line (205.5 Km) with Electrification

(Topic: Infrastructure, General studies-III)

Significance:

- The new line will provide basic infrastructure support for industrial development of the surrounding area having large socio-economic ramifications.
- About the Indore (Mangaliyagaon) — Budni New Line
- The main purpose of this project is the development of backward area and reduction in travel time from Indore to Jabalpur as well as from Indore to Mumbai and towards southern side also, as this will reduce distance by 68 Kms compared to present available route via Bhopal. It will provide better transport facilities for public and industries in this area.
- It will also help to **provide/generate employment opportunities in the project area**. The project will generate direct employment during construction for about 49.32 Lakhs man-days.
- This project is meant for development of backward area of this region and to provide connectivity to various towns/villages like Nasrullaganj, Khategoan and Kannod, where presently there is no railway connectivity.

10. The Union Minister for Railways and Coal, inaugurated the 'first ever' India Tourism Mart (ITM 2018)

(Topic: Infrastructure, General studies-III)

Objective of India Tourism Mart (ITM 2018):

- The objective of the event is **to create an annual Global Tourism Mart for India in line with major international travel marts** being held in countries across the world. The Mart **provides a platform for all stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality industries to interact and transact business opportunities.**

- Unless the infrastructure/fundamentals are set up, India can't come up as a well sought after destination.

About India Tourism Mart (ITM 2018):

- The ITM 2018 has a participation of around 225 hosted international buyers and Media personnel across the world such as North America, West Europe, East Asia, Latin America, CIS countries etc.
- The international delegates from overseas markets will interact with Indian seller delegates and the buyers will include current buyers who are already marketing India as a tourist destination as well as potential buyers who are not marketing India as a tourist destination at present but have shown interest in the country.
- The event **also provides an opportunity to the buyers to see the world class tourism facilities available in our country** such as Airports, Hotels, Tourist destinations, upcoming facilities, MICE facilities, possibility in the field of adventure tourism and other niche products.
- Around 225 stalls have been provided to the sellers to enable them to interact with the buyers. These include pavilion for States & Union Territories to showcase their unique tourism destinations and products. The B2B meetings between buyer and seller delegates are being held during these 3 days.
- ITM will be an annual event hereafter in line with other International Tourism Marts and it **will be held in the month of September.**
