

APPOLLO STUDY CENTRE

TNPSC GROUP II/IIA MAIN 2023

CURRENT AFFAIRS - TOPICS BASED ON BUDGET 2023-24

1. Saptarishi

Saptarishi - 7 Priorities

1. Inclusive Development
2. Reaching the Last Mile
3. Youth Power
4. Financial Sector
5. Green Growth
6. Unleashing the Potential
7. Infrastructure and Investment

2. DigiLocker to be 'one-stop shop' for updating details

- ❖ KYC process to be simplified
- ❖ "The financial sector regulators will also be encouraged to have a KYC system fully amenable to meet the needs of Digital India
- ❖ Businesses will be able to use their PAN as a common identifier across government platforms.
- ❖ As for individuals, DigiLocker and Aadhaar will serve as a 'foundational identity,' from where changes in address or identity will be reflected across other platforms.
- ❖ This announcement could mean that the government is working to synchronise citizen data across multiple portals when just the Aadhaar is updated.

3. National Digital Library

- ❖ Finance Minister has-proposed a national digital library for children and adolescents along with strengthening of the National Book Trust, for building a “culture of reading” and to make up for pandemic-time learning losses.
- ❖ States would be encouraged to set up physical libraries at panchayat and ward levels, and provide infrastructure for accessing the National Digital Library resources.
- ❖ The National Book Trust, Children’s Book Trust and other sources would be encouraged to provide and replenish non-curricular titles in regional languages and English, which could be used by the brick and mortar libraries set up by the States.
- ❖ The latest Annual Status of Education Report 2022 conducted by NGO Pratham showed that children’s basic literacy had taken a big hit following closure of schools during COVID-19, with their reading ability as compared to numeracy skills worsening and falling to pre-2012 levels.

4. e - Courts

- ❖ Finance Minister allocated Rs. 7,000 crore for the introduction of Phase III of the eCourts Project that aims at efficient administration of justice.
- ❖ The Minister said Phase III of eCourts Project would build on the gains made by the earlier two phases that proved crucial in the delivery of justice during the COVID-19 pandemic when courts were under lockdown protocol.
- ❖ “The project envisages various path-breaking initiatives like: Digital & Paperless Courts that aim to bring court proceedings under a digital format in a court.
- ❖ Thereby limiting the use of paper and speeding up the disposal of cases, Online Court that focus on eliminating the presence of litigants or lawyers in the court, Expansion of scope of Virtual Courts beyond adjudication of Traffic Violations,”.
- ❖ The use of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning would allow for data analysis to work towards reducing pendency and understanding litigation patterns.

5. 5G Lab

- ❖ The government to set up 100 labs for developing application using 5G services in engineering institutions across the country. Three Centres of Excellence for AI will also be set up.
- ❖ These labs would cover, among others, applications such as smart classrooms, precision farming, intelligent transport systems, and healthcare.
- ❖ Government had taken a big leap to embrace 5G much more swiftly by setting up these labs. He agreed that they would indeed further boost employment and business opportunities in the country
- ❖ Setting up new centres of excellence for AI and 5G labs for developing apps would help democratise AI and push for wider adoption of 5G services.

6. Small Saving scheme for women

- ❖ Union Finance Minister announced a one-time small savings scheme for women to commemorate celebrations of 75 years of Independence.
- ❖ "Commemorating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, a one-time new small savings scheme. Mahila Samman Savings Certificate, will be made available for a two-year period up to March 2025,".
- ❖ The small saving certificate will have a fixed interest rate of 7.5% for two years. The deposit can be made in the name of a woman or a girl child. The maximum deposit amount has been kept at Rs.2 lakh and the scheme will have a partial withdrawal facility as well.
- ❖ That women's self-help groups (SHGs) had achieved remarkable success under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana National Rural Livelihood Mission by mobilising rural women into 81 lakh SHGs.
- ❖ The largest allocation of Rs.20,554.31 crore has been for the Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0 schemes, while Rs. 1,472 crore has been allotted to Mission **VATSALYA** (Child Protection Services and Child Welfare Services), and Rs. 3,143 crore to Mission Shakti (Mission for Protection and Empowerment for Women).

7. Sree Anna

Global Hub for Millets: 'Shree Anna'

- "India is at the forefront of popularizing Millets, whose consumption furthers nutrition, food security and welfare of farmers."
- India the largest producer and second largest exporter of 'Shree Anna' in the world.
- Several types of 'Shree Anna' such as jowar, ragi, bajra, kuttu, ramdana, kangni, kutki, kodo, cheena, and sama. These have a number of health benefits, and have been an integral part of our food for centuries.
- To make India a global hub for 'Shree Anna', the Indian Institute of Millet Research, Hyderabad will be supported as the Centre of Excellence for sharing best practices, research and technologies at the international level.

8. Sickle cell anemia

1. Mission to eliminate Sickle Cell Anaemia by 2047

- **Sickle Cell Anaemia**
Sickle Cell Anaemia affects the RBCs in the human body. When a person suffers from the disease his RBCs (usually rod-shaped) deform.
- Their shapes are affected.
- The primary function of RBC is to carry oxygen to different parts of the body.
- In a person with sickle cell anemia, the oxygen-carrying capacity of RBCs is affected.
- Sickle cells are those cells that form a C - shape, just like the shape of a sickle.
- They deform themselves.
- The disease creates adverse effects if left untreated.
- During the Union budget 2023, the Government of India launched the Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission.
- Under the Mission, the GoI is planning to eliminate the disease by 2047.

Mission to eliminate Sickle Cell Anaemia

- Objective: Eliminate completely by 2047
- Create awareness about the disease
- The mission will screen seven crore people
- People in the age group 0 to 40 years are to be screened
- Tribal areas to be targeted

Major Challenge of the mission: Consanguineous marriage

- When both the boy and the girl in marriage have sickle cell traits, it is called consanguineous marriage. In such marriages, there are 25% chance that their babies will have sickle cell anemia.
- This is a challenge in India avoiding Consanguineous marriages is very difficult.

9. Inclusive development

I. AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION

- **Digital Public Infrastructure for Agriculture:** Will be built as an open source, open standard and inter-operable public good. It aims to promote farmer-centric solutions related to inputs, marketing, etc.
- **Agriculture Accelerator Fund:** To encourage agri-startups in rural areas.
- **Enhancing productivity of cotton crop:** Aims to adopt a cluster-based and value chain approach through Public Private Partnerships (PPP).
- **Atmanirbhar Horticulture Clean Plant Program:** Aim to boost availability of disease-free, quality planting material for high value horticultural crops at an outlay of ₹2,200 crore.
- **Global Hub for Millets (referred to as 'Shree Anna'):** For this Indian Institute of Millet Research, Hyderabad will be supported as the Centre of Excellence.
- **Agriculture Credit:** Rs.20 Lakh crore credit for Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Fishing sector. New sub-scheme of PM Matsya Sampada Yojana will be launched with targeted investment of ₹6,000 crore.

- **Cooperation:** Government is promoting cooperative-based economic development model especially for small and marginal farmers, and other marginalised sections. Government has initiated computerisation of 63,000 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) and enabling them to become multipurpose PACS. Also aim is to facilitate setting up cooperative societies in uncovered panchayats and villages in the next 5 years.

II. AFFORDABLE HEALTH FOR ALL

- **Nursing Colleges:** 157 new nursing colleges co-location with the existing 157 medical colleges established since 2014.
- **Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission:** Mission to eliminate Sickle Cell Anaemia by 2047 will be launched. Focuses on awareness creation, universal screening of 7 crore people in the age group of 0-40 years in affected tribal areas.
- **Multidisciplinary courses for medical devices:** To ensure availability of skilled manpower for futuristic medical technologies, high-end manufacturing and research.
- **Pharma Innovation:** A new programme to promote research and innovation in pharmaceuticals will be taken up through centres of excellence.

III. ACCESSING EDUCATION AND SKILLING

- **Teachers' Training:** The District Institutes of Education and Training will be developed as vibrant institutes of excellence for this purpose.

10. Bharat SHRI digitalization of ancient inscriptions

Bharat Shared Repository of Inscriptions (BharatSHRI), a digital epigraphy museum, with digitization of one lakh ancient inscriptions to be set up

The BharatSHRI will be setup by the Archaeological Survey of India at **Hyderabad**.

11. MISHTI

The Mangroves cover 0.15% of the total Indian Geographical area. This is around 4,975 square kilometers. The state of West Bengal alone has 42.45% of India's mangroves. Indian mangroves are facing limitations such as an increase in salinity, lack of oxygen, and diurnal tidal inundations. MISHTI will aim and protect the Mangrove forest along the coastline. MISHTI in Bengal means Sweet.

What is the new MISHTI Scheme launched in Union Budget 2023?

- The main aim of the scheme is to take up mangrove plantations along the coastline. Meaning, mangrove saplings will be planted along the coastal regions of the country. Mangrove forests are spread across AP, WB, Odisha, Andaman and Nicobar, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu. As you can see Mangrove forests are present in all the coastal states of India.
- The main objective of the MISHTI Scheme is to “preserve Mangrove forests”

Scheme implementation

MISHTI is to be implemented by converging CAMPA Fund, MGNREGS, and other sources. CAMPA Fund means Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority. The fund was established to increase the activities of afforestation in the country. MGNREGS is Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. It was launched under the MGNREGA Act of 2005.

12. Senior citizens savings scheme

- The maximum deposit limit for Senior Citizen Savings Scheme will be enhanced from Rs.5 lakh to Rs.30 lakh.
- The maximum deposit limit for Monthly Income Account Scheme will be enhanced from Rs.4.5 lakh to Rs.9 lakh for single account and from Rs.9 lakh to Rs.15 lakh for joint account.

13. Agricultural accelerator fund

Agriculture Accelerator Fund

There are more than two thousand agriculture startups in the country. The Government of India is trying to increase this number to ten thousand. Agriculture is the Backbone of the Indian Economy contributing 53.89% GVA of India. In Union Budget 2023-24, Finance Minister allocated Rs 1.25 lakh crores for agriculture. Agriculture was one of the seven major priorities of the budget. During the Budget presentation in the parliament, the Finance Minister announced that GoI will set up Agriculture Accelerator Fund.

What is Agriculture Accelerator Fund?

- This fund is to be setup to increase the number of agricultural startups in the rural areas
- The main aim of the fund is to provide innovative and affordable solutions
- It will focus only on farmers and the challenges faced by them
- More young entrepreneurs will be encouraged to begin agri startups using these funds
- Startups focusing on cost-effective solutions will be given priorities
- Also, technology startups that aim to increase agricultural outputs will be given preference

14. PM PRANAM

Green Growth will be one of the major priorities of the Indian Government during 2023-24. To make India free from pollution and increase the use of electric vehicles and achieve green growth, Indian Government allocated Rs 5,172 lakh crores for FAME Scheme. Also, launched the PM-PRANAM Scheme. This scheme was launched under the GOBAR Dhan scheme.

What is PM-PRANAM Scheme?

- It stands for PM Programme for Restoration, Awareness, Nourishment, and Amelioration of Mother Earth. Under the scheme, the GoI is planning to promote alternatives to fertilizers. Also, it aims to promote the balanced use of chemicals.
- The main objective of the scheme is to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers.

15. Amrit Dharohar

India lost 30% of its wetlands in the past three decades. Of all Mumbai lost the maximum wetlands. 71% of wetlands in Mumbai were lost between 1970 and 2014. 57% lost in Ahmedabad, 56% in Bengaluru, 55% in Hyderabad, 38% in Delhi, and lots more in other major cities. The loss of wetlands is mainly due to anthropogenic activities and illegal constructions. To increase the optimal use of wetlands in the cities and to improve their biodiversity the GoI launched the Amrit Dharohar Scheme. The scheme was announced by the Finance Minister during her budget speech.

What is Amrit Dharohar Scheme?

- The scheme will aim to conserve wetlands by promoting their optimal use
- The scheme is to be implemented in the next three years
- The scheme will increase eco-tourism, and carbon stock, and also will help the local communities in their income generations

Need for the Scheme

To achieve 2030 sustainable development goals. These goals were adopted by India along with other UN Members in 2015. The SDG aims to provide peace and prosperity. The Amrit Dharohar scheme will help India achieve the SDG goals.

GoI towards wetland conservation

The GoI believes that wetlands are important to sustain bio-diversity. The total number of Ramsar sites in India was only 26 in 2014. This was increased to 75. RAMSAR convention is an international treaty to conserve wetlands. It aims to address wetland degradation, ensure there is water supply in the wetlands in the right season (for migratory birds), promote the wise use of wetlands, and increase the wetlands under the designation of “Ramsar site”.

16. ‘Centre of Excellence’ tag for Millet institute in Hyderabad

The Indian Institute of Millet Research (IIMR) in Hyderabad

- ❖ Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR) is a premier agricultural research institute engaged in basic and strategic research on sorghum and other millets under Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
- ❖ IIMR coordinates and facilitates Millets research at national level through All India Coordinated Research Projects on Millets, Pearl Millet and Small Millets and provides linkages with various national and international agencies.

Mandate of IIMR

- ❖ Basic and strategic research to increase productivity of millets and their diversified utilization for enhancement of profitability.
- ❖ Coordination and development of improved crop production and protection technologies of millets.
- ❖ Training and consultancy on millet production and utilization.
- ❖ Dissemination of technologies and capacity building.

Current focus

- ❖ Genetic resource management
- ❖ Crop improvement for increased productivity
- ❖ Genetic enhancement for high biomass per unit time
- ❖ Mitigating adverse effects of climate change
- ❖ Development of crop production technologies for increased input efficiency
- ❖ Abiotic stress management
- ❖ Biotic stress management

- ❖ Seed science and technology
- ❖ Value addition for commercialization
- ❖ Functional foods and basic studies

17. Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF)

Like the RIDF, an Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF) will be established through use of priority sector lending shortfall. This will be managed by the National Housing Bank, and will be used by public agencies to create urban infrastructure in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. States will be encouraged to leverage resources from the grants of the 15th Finance Commission, as well as existing schemes, to adopt appropriate user charges while accessing the UIDF. We expect to make available ` 10,000 crore per annum for this purpose.

18. PM Vishwakarma KAushal Samman (PM VIKAS):

For centuries, traditional artisans and craftspeople, who work with their hands using tools, have brought renown for India. They are generally referred to as Vishwakarma. The art and handicraft created by them represents the true spirit of Atmanirbhar Bharat. For the first time, a package of assistance for them has been conceptualized. The new scheme will enable them to improve the quality, scale and reach of their products, integrating them with the MSME value chain. The components of the scheme will include not only financial support but also access to advanced skill training, knowledge of modern digital techniques and efficient green technologies, brand promotion, linkage with local and global markets, digital payments, and social security. This will greatly benefit the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, women and people belonging to the weaker sections.

19. Aspirational Districts and Blocks Programme.

Building on the success of the Aspirational Districts Programme, the Government has recently launched the Aspirational Blocks Programme covering 500 blocks for saturation of essential government services across multiple domains such as health, nutrition, education, agriculture, water resources, financial inclusion, skill development, and basic infrastructure.

20. Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission

To improve socio-economic conditions of the particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs), Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission will be launched. This will saturate PVTG families and habitations with basic facilities such as safe housing, clean drinking water and sanitation, improved access to education, health and nutrition, road and telecom connectivity, and sustainable livelihood opportunities. An amount of ` 15,000 crore will be made available to implement the Mission in the next three years under the Development Action Plan for the Scheduled Tribes

21. GOBARDhan scheme

500 new 'waste to wealth' plants under GOBARDhan (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan) scheme will be established for promoting circular economy. These will include 200 compressed biogas (CBG) plants, including 75 plants in urban areas, and 300 community or cluster-based plants at total investment of ` 10,000 crore.. In due course, a 5 per cent CBG mandate will be introduced for all organizations marketing natural and bio gas. For collection of bio-mass and distribution of bio-manure, appropriate fiscal support will be provided.