

10th Dec, 2024

1. In Energy-Dependent World, the Issue of Food Security GS 2 (Environment)

• Why in News:

- As emphasised by the World Bank, the intertwined crises of food insecurity and energy poverty present one of the most significant challenges of the 21st century.

In energy-dependent world, the issue of food security

- Both sectors face individual and systemic threats, yet their interconnected nature magnifies the complexity of the problem and the agricultural sector critical for human survival, simultaneously contributes to and suffers from energy dependency and climate change.

- Therefore, it is imperative to explore the strain on food and energy systems, highlighting the economic and environmental vulnerabilities they face, and potential pathways toward a sustainable future.

• The Dual Strain on Food and Energy Systems

○ Impact of Climate Change

- Food production and energy systems are increasingly strained by climate change, population growth, and systemic inequalities.
- Agriculture consumes nearly 70% of global freshwater resources and contributes over 20% of global greenhouse gas emissions.
- This sector's heavy reliance on fossil fuels for irrigation, mechanisation, fertiliser production, and transportation perpetuates environmental degradation.
- At the same time, rising temperatures and erratic weather patterns disrupt agricultural output, threatening the livelihoods of 2.5 billion people globally.

• Geopolitical Challenges

- Similarly, the energy sector faces geopolitical tensions, outdated infrastructure, and a slow transition away from fossil fuels.
- Despite a \$500 billion investment in renewable energy in 2022, short-term economic and geopolitical pressures have sustained high fossil fuel consumption.
- Nations such as the United States, Brazil, and Guyana continue expanding oil and gas production, exacerbating energy and food system vulnerabilities.

• A Detailed Analysis of Agriculture's Fossil Fuel Dependency and Its Consequences

○ The Role of Fossil Fuels in Agriculture

- Mechanisation, irrigation systems, and transportation networks depend on oil, diesel, and coal-based electricity.
- Additionally, fertilisers, which are critical for boosting crop yields, are predominantly produced using natural gas.
- Approximately 80% of natural gas in agriculture is used as a feedstock for ammonia synthesis, a key ingredient in nitrogen-based fertilizers, while the remaining 20% powers the energy-intensive production process.

○ Price Volatility and Food System Vulnerabilities

- The close link between energy prices and agricultural costs creates a cascade of vulnerabilities and when fossil fuel prices rise, production costs for farmers increase dramatically.
- Fertiliser prices are highly sensitive to natural gas costs, for example, geopolitical actions such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 triggered spikes in global energy prices, which reverberated through agricultural supply chains.



- **Fertiliser costs surged, leading to increased food prices** and putting millions at risk of hunger, especially in low-income nations with limited resources to absorb such shocks.
- **For countries like India, which imports 60% of its diammonium phosphate (DAP) fertilisers,** this led to **delays during critical cropping seasons, undermining food security** and agricultural productivity.
- **Environmental Consequences of Fossil Fuel Dependency**
 - Fertiliser production and transportation are **major sources of greenhouse gas emissions.**
 - The **heavy use of synthetic fertilisers leads to nitrous oxide emissions,** a potent greenhouse gas, and causes soil degradation and water pollution through runoff.
 - **Mechanised farming practices reliant on fossil fuels worsens these issues,** contributing to a vicious cycle of environmental harm and reduced long-term agricultural productivity.
- **Inequities in Energy Access and their Impact**
 - The unequal access to energy systems **disproportionately affects low-income nations,** where unreliable power grids and limited resources hinder agricultural productivity.
 - **In sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, fertiliser usage per hectare remains far below the global average,** contributing to chronic food insecurity.
 - **Despite spending \$1.9 billion on fertilizer imports in 2021,** double the expenditure of 2016, many **African nations remain trapped in cycles of low productivity** and high dependency on imports.
 - Furthermore, **the transition to renewable energy remains uneven.**
 - **High-income countries installed 83% of new renewable capacity in 2022, leaving low-income nations dependent on outdated, carbon-intensive systems.**
 - While solutions like solar-powered irrigation and biomass energy hold promise for transforming agriculture, their **high costs and inadequate infrastructure limit widespread adoption in vulnerable regions.**
- **Competing Demands on Agriculture and Economic and Environmental Costs of Inaction**
 - **Competing Demands on Agriculture**
 - In addition to feeding a growing global population, **agriculture faces the added responsibility of supporting the energy transition through biofuel production.**
 - This **dual role often pits food security against energy needs,** as biofuel cultivation consumes vast land and water resources.
 - **With nearly 12% of the global population experiencing hunger,** prioritising energy production over food **raises ethical questions.**
 - **Economic and Environmental Costs of Inaction**
 - **Ensuring basic caloric needs for the world's most vulnerable populations would require \$90 billion annually until 2030,** while transforming global food systems could cost \$300 billion to \$400 billion annually, just 0.5% of global GDP.
 - However, **for low-income nations, these figures are staggering,** often surpassing 95% of GDP in some cases.
 - **Food insecurity could cost the global economy trillions in lost productivity** and adverse health outcomes, **while climate-induced energy disruptions threaten to destabilise entire regions.**
 - For example, **Africa's mineral wealth, critical for renewable energy technologies, is often extracted without benefiting local economies,** perpetuating poverty, and underdevelopment.
- **Way Forward to a Sustainable Future**
 - **A Call for Inclusive Solutions**
 - Despite record investments in renewable energy, **the expansion of fossil fuels continues unabated, compounding environmental and economic costs.**
 - To address these intertwined crises effectively, **clean energy solutions must overcome structural barriers to inclusivity, ensuring that vulnerable communities are not left behind.**
 - **Renewable energy technologies like solar-powered irrigation and decentralised biomass systems offer opportunities** for sustainable agricultural transformation but **require targeted investments and infrastructure development.**

- **Reimagining Agriculture for a Sustainable Future**
 - The **twin crises of food and energy insecurity demand a fundamental shift** in global priorities.
 - **Agriculture must be reimagined as a cornerstone of sustainable development** rather than merely a source of sustenance.
 - **Achieving this vision requires significant investments in renewable energy, equitable resource distribution**, and the inclusion of marginalized communities in decision-making processes.
- **Breaking the Fossil Fuel Dependency**
 - Addressing agriculture's reliance on fossil fuels **requires a multi-faceted approach. Transitioning to renewable energy sources is crucial.**
 - Technologies like solar-powered irrigation systems, wind-driven farm equipment, and decentralised biomass energy production hold the potential to revolutionise agricultural practices.
 - **For instance, solar-powered pumps can reduce the dependence on diesel for irrigation**, while biogas plants can convert agricultural waste into sustainable energy.
- **Conclusion**
 - **Agriculture's dependence on fossil fuels is a pressing issue that threatens food security**, exacerbates economic inequalities, and accelerates environmental degradation.
 - As the clock ticks, **the question remains: will the world rise to meet this moment of unprecedented challenge and opportunity?**
 - **By addressing food and energy insecurity as interconnected priorities, humanity can chart a course toward a more equitable and sustainable future.**

2. On Reforms in Merchant Shipping GS 2 (Governance)

- **Why in News:** The Government plans to introduce the **Merchant Shipping Bill, 2024** and the **Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024** to drive reforms and bring transformative changes aimed at boosting the shipping industry.
- **Need for a new bill**
 - The **Merchant Shipping Act, 1958**, and the **Coasting Vessels Act, 1938**, which the new bills aim to repeal, are outdated and fail to address the contemporary needs of the merchant marine sector.
 - Significant regulatory gaps exist, particularly for vessels operating in the offshore sector, comprising nearly 50% of Indian-flagged vessels.
 - Furthermore, maritime training was liberalised allowing private sector participation, yet **there is no legal framework in the existing Act to regulate their activities effectively.**
 - Welfare provisions in the Merchant Shipping Act are limited to Indian-flagged ships, though 85% of Indian seafarers work on foreign-flagged vessels.
 - The existing Act lacks enabling provisions for implementing international conventions signed or planned by India.
 - License-era provisions hinder modernization, preventing maritime administration from transitioning to a regulator-cum-facilitator model.
- **Features of the Merchant Shipping Bill**
 - **Expanded vessel scope**
 - The existing Act regulates only large mechanized ships, leaving smaller and non-mechanized vessels unregulated, creating operational and safety risks in the offshore sector.
 - India's offshore drilling sector gained prominence in 1974 when **Sagar Samrat**, a merchant vessel designed for exploratory offshore drilling, drilled the first well in Bombay High.

On reforms in merchant shipping

Here the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2024 and the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 are introduced. The bills aim to repeal the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 and the Coasting Vessels Act, 1938, which are outdated and fail to address the contemporary needs of the merchant marine sector.

Source: the hindu

at welfare measures introduced by the Government to Indian flag vessels.

THE GIST

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- Since then, the offshore sector has employed a diverse range of mechanised and non-mechanised vessels.
- However, these vessels remain either unregulated or inadequately regulated
- The new Bill addresses this by expanding the definition of 'vessels' to include a wide range of crafts, such as submersibles, hydrofoils, and Mobile Offshore Units (MOUs), ensuring comprehensive oversight and enhanced transparency.
- **Foreign investment**
 - Lowers the ownership threshold for Indian entities from 100% to 51%, enabling NRIs, OCIs, and foreign entities to invest while maintaining majority Indian ownership.
- **Bareboat charter-cum-demise**
 - The Bill allows the registration of vessels chartered by Indian entities under the bareboat charter-cum-demise, enabling entrepreneurs to acquire ownership of vessels at the end of the charter period.
 - A bareboat charter-cum-demise is a maritime contract where a vessel is leased without crew or provisions, with the intention that ownership will transfer to the charterer after a set period, functioning like a lease-to-own arrangement for the ship
 - This provision, particularly beneficial for capital-deficient entrepreneurs, facilitates entry into the shipping industry without upfront investment.
- **Provisions for temporary registration of vessels destined for demolition**
 - India, the second-largest ship recycling center after Bangladesh, faces challenges in registering vessels for demolition as they are often deemed unseaworthy
 - The Merchant Shipping Bill introduces provisions for temporary registration of such vessels, aiming to boost activities at recycling hubs like Alang.
- **Enhancing coastal security**
 - The 26/11 Mumbai attacks highlighted gaps in maritime security, emphasizing the need for stricter vessel regulations.
 - The new Bill empowers authorities to issue instructions to all vessel types, enhancing coastal security and safeguarding India's coastline.
- **Marine Pollution Measures**
 - Reduction of sulphur content in marine fuel to less than 0.5%.
 - Ban on single-use plastics on Indian ships.
 - Launch of the 'Swachh Sagar' portal for ship waste disposal at ports.
 - The new Bill fully incorporates international conventions like MARPOL and the Wreck Removal Convention, aligning India's maritime regulations with global standards and promoting sustainable shipping practices.
- **Provisions for Seafarers**
 - Indian seafarers on foreign-flagged ships have grown significantly, from 1,16,000 in 2015-16 to 2,85,000, representing 85% of the workforce.
 - The existing Act lacks provisions for the welfare and safety of this vast workforce working on foreign-flagged vessels.
 - The new Bill addresses gaps in welfare and safety provisions for these seafarers by extending government welfare measures and protections under the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), ensuring better working conditions and safety standards.
- **Provision for maritime training**
 - The Union Government is responsible for regulating maritime education and training under **Entry 25 of List 1 (Union List) of the Constitution**.
 - Previously, training was managed by government-run institutions, so no specific legal framework was needed.
 - However, with economic liberalization has allowed unauthorized institutes to thrive, complicating regulatory actions.

- The proposed Bill introduces clear legal provisions to regulate maritime training, aiming to eliminate illegal institutes and ensure high-quality, standardized education, protecting rural youth from exploitation.
 - **Focus on coastal shipping**
 - **Distinguishing Technical Regulation and Commercial Utilisation**
 - The Government has separated the technical regulation of ships from the commercial use of Indian coastal waters.
 - Licensing, operational permissions, coastal planning, and integration of inland and coastal shipping are now part of the proposed **Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024**.
 - It has removed the provisions related to the commercial utilisation of Indian coastal waters from the Merchant Shipping Act.
 - The Merchant Shipping Act will focus on technical regulation of ships
 - **Alignment with 'Sagarmala' Program**
 - The new Bill supports the Government's '**Sagarmala**' program, which promotes coastal shipping through dedicated berths and better hinterland connectivity for coastal cargo.
 - This approach is essential for infrastructure growth and a strong regulatory framework.
 - **Conclusion**
 - The reforms are intended to be bipartisan, focusing on investment, safety, marine pollution prevention, and seafarers' welfare. These measures are aimed at unlocking the full potential of India's maritime sector.
- ### 3. UGC's New Guidelines to Promote Lifelong Learning **GS 2 (Governance)**
- **Why in News:**
 - The University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced a new set of guidelines titled "**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Higher Education**" aimed at making education more accessible and promoting the concept of lifelong learning.
 - This initiative addresses the needs of India's large informal workforce and helps bridge the gap between real-world experience and formal education.
 - **What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?**
 - RPL is a **formal system designed to evaluate and recognize the skills, knowledge, and experience individuals have gained through informal, non-formal, or experiential learning.**
 - It allows individuals to gain formal recognition and qualifications, improving their career prospects and employability.
 - **Alignment with NEP 2020**
 - UGC Chairman highlighted that RPL aligns with the goals of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, which emphasizes inclusivity and skill-based education.
 - RPL is also supported by the **National Credit Framework (NCrF)**, enabling individuals to convert their skills into qualifications by crediting all forms of learning, whether academic, vocational, or experiential.
 - **Key Objectives of the Guidelines:**
 - **Enhancing Accessibility:**
 - Enable individuals with competencies acquired through informal learning to access higher education programs.
 - Provide flexible pathways for learners with diverse educational and professional backgrounds.

UGC finalises draft guidelines promoting access to 'life-long' learning and education

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has finalised the 'Draft Guidelines for Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Higher Education' to provide access to education and to enable the concept of life-long education. RPL is defined in the guidelines as a formal mechanism used to evaluate a person's existing knowledge, skills, and experience gained through formal, non-formal, or informal learning.

UGC Chairman M. Jagadeesh Kumar said the guidelines are to address the challenges faced by India's large informal workforce, which requires formal education and career progression opportunities.

He said RPL is integral to the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020. "RPL allows individuals



M. Jagadeesh Kumar

to gain formal recognition for skills and competencies acquired through informal, non-formal, or experiential learning. Through RPL, such individuals can access higher education, earn formal qualifications, and improve their employability," he said.

The National Credit Framework (NCrF) supports RPL by facilitating the creditisation of all learning forms –academic, voca-

tional, and experiential, he said. "To enable individuals to convert their skills into qualifications, RPL helps bridge the gap between real-world experience and formal education and enhance career prospects. RPL contributes to economic growth, social inclusion, and a more skilled workforce," Mr. Kumar said.

The guidelines emphasise robust governance, quality assurance, and collaboration among policy-makers, educational institutions, employers, and assessment bodies to ensure fairness, consistency, and inclusivity while implementing RPL.

The objectives of RPL guidelines include enabling individuals who have acquired competencies through non-formal and informal learning methods to access higher education programmes.

- **Promoting Lifelong Learning:**
 - Equip individuals with updated skills to adapt to evolving career demands and changing labor markets.
 - Foster continuous learning for a more skilled and adaptable workforce.
- **Encouraging Social Inclusion:**
 - Recognize experiential learning to help marginalized and disadvantaged groups improve their socio-economic status by obtaining recognized qualifications.
 - Promote equity and inclusivity in higher education.
- **Benefits of RPL:**
 - **Economic Growth:** By creating a more skilled workforce, RPL contributes to the nation's economic development.
 - **Career Progression:** Individuals can access higher education, earn formal qualifications, and improve employability.
 - **Bridging Gaps:** It connects real-world experiences with formal education, helping individuals integrate more effectively into the professional world.
- **Implementation Focus:**
 - The guidelines emphasize:
 - **Robust Governance:** Collaboration among policymakers, educational institutions, employers, and assessment bodies to ensure fairness and consistency.
 - **Quality Assurance:** Establishing reliable systems to uphold the integrity of RPL.
 - **Inclusion:** Providing opportunities for marginalized groups and disadvantaged communities.
- **Impact:**
 - The initiative aims to create a competent workforce capable of meeting the challenges of a rapidly changing job market.
 - By valuing prior knowledge and experience, RPL paves the way for lifelong learning, career mobility, and social equity.
- **Conclusion:**
 - The UGC's new RPL guidelines represent a progressive step toward an inclusive and skill-oriented education system in India.
 - By valuing diverse learning experiences and promoting lifelong education, the initiative addresses both societal and economic challenges, fostering a more equitable and capable workforce.

4. Bima Sakhi Yojana GS 2 (Governance)

- **Why in News:** The Prime Minister of India recently launched the Bima Sakhi Yojana in Haryana's Panipat.

- **About Bima Sakhi Yojana:**

- It is an initiative of the State-owned **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)**.
- It is designed to **empower women** aged **18-70 years** who have **passed out of Class 10**.
- They will receive specialised **training and a stipend for the first three years** to promote financial literacy and insurance awareness.
- After training, they can serve as **LIC agents** and the **graduate Bima Sakhis** would have the opportunity to qualify for being considered for **Development Officer** roles in LIC.
- Women LIC agents will get a stipend of **Rs. 7,000 per month for the first year, Rs. 6,000 per month in the second year, and Rs. 5,000 per month in the third year**.
- Bima Sakhis will **also get commission** of Rs 48,000 (excluding bonus) for the first year.
- The plan is to appoint two lakh Bima Sakhis over a period of three years.

PM launches LIC's 'Bima Sakhi Yojana'

Press Trust of India
PANIPAT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday launched the 'Bima Sakhi Yojana' of LIC here under which two lakh woman insurance agents will be appointed over the next three years.

'Bima Sakhi Yojana', an initiative of State-owned LIC, is designed to empower women aged 18-70 years who are Class X pass.

The women agents will receive specialised training and a stipend for the first three years to promote financial literacy and insurance awareness.

Under the scheme, the woman agents will also get



Narendra Modi

a stipend of ₹7,000 per month for the first year, ₹6,000 per month in the second year and ₹5,000 per month in the third year. Bima Sakhis will also get the benefit of commission.

The plan is to appoint two lakh Bima Sakhi over a period of three years.

- Relatives of existing agents and employees are **not eligible** for the scheme. **Retired employees are also ineligible**

5. The Friction Between RBI Governors and the Indian Government

GS 3 (Economy)

Why in News:

- As Shaktikanta Das concludes his tenure as the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on December 10, his leadership witnessed a familiar tension between the central bank and the government.
- This friction, **particularly over monetary policy decisions**, echoes a longstanding history of conflicts between successive RBI Governors and governments.

Historical Context - Tensions Between RBI Governors and Governments:

- **YV Reddy (2003-2008):**
 - **Conflicts with Finance Ministry:** Reddy faced disagreements with then-Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, particularly over the development of financial markets and a controversial farm loan waiver of ₹60,000 crores.
 - **Foreign exchange reserves debate:** Reddy opposed utilising India's growing forex reserves for government-backed lending without guarantees, ensuring fiscal prudence.
- **D Subbarao (2008-2013):**
 - **Resistance to cheerleading:** Subbarao frequently clashed with Finance Ministers Chidambaram and Pranab Mukherjee over the RBI's **anti-inflation stance**, which was perceived as a barrier to growth.
 - **Creation of FSDC:** Subbarao opposed the formation of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC), arguing it undermined the RBI's role in maintaining financial stability.
- **Raghuram Rajan (2013-2016):**
 - **Advocating independence:**
 - He strongly defended the RBI's **autonomy, resisting government moves to shift money market regulation to SEBI.**
 - He famously emphasised the importance of the RBI's ability to say **"No."**
 - **Demonetisation disapproval:**
 - Rajan advised caution on demonetisation, warning of the costs and preparation required.
 - His recommendations were not heeded, and his term ended shortly before the policy was implemented.
- **Urjit Patel (2016-2018):**
 - **Surplus transfer dispute:** Patel resisted the government's attempt to tap into the RBI's excess reserves, leading to escalating tensions.
 - **Resignation:** Citing personal reasons, Patel resigned amid increasing government pressure, notably after the invocation of **Section 7 of the RBI Act** to influence policy.
 - **Section 7 of RBI Act of 1934** gives the central government the power to direct the RBI on matters of public interest.
- **Key Issues During Shaktikanta Das' Tenure - Policy Rate Standoff:**
 - Despite government pressure to cut key policy rates to address GDP slowdown, the RBI maintained the repo rate at 6.50% to control inflation.
 - **This decision, opposed by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, highlighted the central bank's prioritisation of inflation management over growth stimulation.**

Govt vs RBI Governor tussle: Repeat of the same script at the fag end of Shaktikanta Das' tenure



- **Recurring Themes in RBI-Government Conflicts:**

- **Autonomy of the central bank:** Governments often push for accommodative monetary policies, while RBI Governors prioritise inflation control and fiscal discipline.
- **Interest rate policies:** Disagreements frequently arise over interest rate cuts, as governments aim to spur growth, while the RBI remains cautious about inflationary risks.
- **Regulatory jurisdiction:** Conflicts over the RBI's regulatory authority, including disputes on financial market reforms and surplus reserves, underscore tensions in governance.
- **Diverging priorities:** While governments focus on immediate economic growth and political considerations, the RBI emphasises long-term economic stability.

- **The 26th RBI Governor**

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet gave its nod for the selection of the 56-year-old **Sanjay Malhotra** (currently Revenue Secretary in the Finance Ministry) as the 26th RBI Governor with effect from December 11 for a period of three years.

- **Conclusion:**

- The tension between the RBI and the government **reflects the delicate balance of ensuring monetary policy autonomy while addressing fiscal and economic imperatives.**
- As Shaktikanta Das' tenure ends, this enduring dynamic underscore the **critical role of the RBI in safeguarding financial stability against political pressures.**

6. Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme

GS 2 (Governance)

- **Why in News:** Recently, the central government has revised the prices of food items provided to children under the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Yojana.

- **About Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme:**

- In 2021, Mid-Day Meal Scheme was renamed as Pradhan Mantri POSHAN Scheme.
- It is a centrally sponsored scheme, which aims at **providing nutritional support** and enhancing **school participation** of students.
- Under the scheme, **one hot cooked meal** is served to students studying in Balvatika (pre-primary education program) and classes I to VIII, in **Government and Government-aided schools** on all school-days.
- The **objectives of the Scheme** are to address two of the pressing problems for majority of children in India, viz. hunger and education by:
 - Improving the **nutritional status of eligible children** in Government and Government aided schools.
 - Encouraging poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, **to attend school more regularly** and help them concentrate on classroom activities.
 - Providing nutritional **support to children of elementary stage** in drought-affected and disaster affected areas during summer vacation.
- The Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour provides data on inflation for the items under the PM POSHAN basket on the basis of **Consumer Price Index – Rural Labourers (CPI-RL)**.
 - The CPI-RL is constructed by Labour Bureau on the basis of collecting continuous monthly prices from the sample of 600 villages spread over 20 States of the country.
- Recently, on the basis of CPI-RL, the Government of India has enhanced the 'Material Cost' of the items under the PM POSHAN basket by 13.70 %.

7. National Panchayat Awards

Recent events of importance

- **Why in News:** The National Panchayat Awards Conferment Ceremony 2024, organized by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, will take place at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- **About National Panchayat Awards:**
 - These awards are pivotal in recognizing and encouraging Panchayats for their **efforts in poverty alleviation, health, child welfare, water conservation, sanitation, infrastructure, social justice, governance, and women empowerment.**
 - These awards have been revamped and launched during the year 2022 aligning them with **9 Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs)** themes aggregating 17 SDGs.
 - Primary objective through this competition is to assess the performance of Panchayats in attainment of SDGs, **promote competitive spirit** among them and catalyze the process of LSDGs through Panchayati Raj Institutions for attaining LSDGs by 2030.
 - These **9 LSDG themes** are: Poverty-Free and Enhanced Livelihoods Panchayat, Healthy Panchayat, Child-Friendly Panchayat, Water-Sufficient Panchayat, Clean and Green Panchayat, Self-Sufficient Infrastructure in Panchayat, Socially Just and Socially Secured Panchayat, Panchayat with Good Governance and Women-Friendly Panchayat.
 - This award has been conferred under the **following categories:**
 - **Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (DDUPSVP):** This award is for top-3 ranking GPs/Equivalent bodies for their outstanding performance under each of the above mentioned 9 award themes.
 - **Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar:** This award is for top 3 Gram, Block and District Panchayats each for their aggregate performance under all the 9 award themes of DDUPSVP.
 - **Special categories of Awards:**
 - **Gram Urja Swaraj Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar** is for top 3 GPs/Equivalent Bodies for their performance in adoption and usage of renewable sources of energy
 - **Carbon Neutral Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar** is for top 3 GPs/Equivalent Bodies for their performance in adoption and **usage of renewable sources of energy.** This year, total 3 awards have been conferred under this category.
 - **Panchayat Kshamta Nirmaan Sarvottam Sansthan Puraskar** is for 3 Institutions across the country who have provided institutional support to GPs in achieving LSDGs.

MCQ Current Affairs
10th Dec, 2024**1. Consider the following statements regarding the Bima Sakhi Yojana:**

- A. It is an initiative of the state-owned Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).
- B. It intends to give health insurance to women falling below the poverty line.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) A only
- b) B only
- c) A and B
- d) Neither of two

2. Which one of the following types of majority is required in the Rajya Sabha to pass a resolution for the removal of the Vice President of India?

- a) Two-third majority of members present and voting
- b) Simple majority of members present and voting
- c) Majority of all the then members of the House
- d) Three-fourth majority of all members

3. The "GG Tau A System", recently seen in the news, is a/an:

- a) newly discovered plant gene
- b) Large Language Model
- c) Asteroid
- d) triple-star system

4. Melye-amiley, a traditional fermented bamboo shoot variety, is found in which one of the following states?

- a) Uttarakhand
- b) Tripura
- c) Maharashtra
- d) Assam

5. Consider the following statements regarding National Panchayat Award:

- A. It recognizes and encourages Panchayats for their efforts in poverty alleviation.
- B. Under this, Gram Urja Swaraj Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar is awarded to Panchayats for their performance in adoption and usage of renewable sources of energy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) A only
- b) B only
- c) A and B
- d) Neither of two

Answers Current Affairs
10th Dec, 2024

1. a
2. d
3. d
4. b
5. c

