



STATE PCS CA

(CONSOLIDATION)

RAJASTHAN

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Fennel Production in Rajasthan

Why in News?

Following a three-year-long study, **four desert districts in Rajasthan**, where farmers depend on saline water for irrigation, are **set to emerge as hubs of fennel production**.

- The **study was conducted** in Bikaner, Nagaur, Churu, and Barmer districts

Key Points

- Taxonomically classified as *Foeniculum vulgare*, fennel is a **hardy, perennial herb with yellow flowers and feathery leaves**.
- **Rajasthan and Gujarat are the leading fennel-producing States** in India, contributing about **96% of the total production**.
 - In Rajasthan, the **highest amount of fennel is cultivated** in Nagaur district, covering 10,000 hectares. Its cultivation also **takes place** in Sirohi, Jodhpur, Jalore, Bharatpur, and Sawai Madhopur districts.
- The **trials measured the yield and tested salt tolerance** of the different fennel varieties and found encouraging results.
 - The **fennel variety, RF-290, was found to be viable** for irrigation with saline water.
- Drip irrigation with saline water **could expand the area under fennel production** and increase productivity to make agriculture remunerative for farmers cultivating the spice.
- According to the study, **the experimental irrigation led to the production of about nine quintals of fennel per hectare** and good production of fennel can also be obtained in areas **where farming is done through tube wells**.



Rajasthan to Build Water Harvesting Units

Why in News?

The Rajasthan government has chosen to increase efforts in **water conservation** in the state with the **Mukhyamantri Jal Swavlamban Abhiyan 2.0** in response to **water scarcity** issues in various regions.

- Under the initiative, there is a plan **to construct 500,000 water harvesting structures** in **20,000 villages** over the next four years.

Key Points

- As per the government statistics, Rajasthan, known as one of the driest areas in the country, has consistently dealt with a lack of water.
 - The **state receives an annual rainfall varying from 100 mm to 800 mm**, resulting in numerous regions experiencing **water shortages, including for basic drinking needs**.
- Rainfall is the main contributor to **groundwater replenishment** in the state, and water levels differ significantly throughout the region.
 - A government report highlighted Rajasthan as one of the prominent states where groundwater sources have been excessively utilized.
- **Rajasthan State Industrial Development & Investment Corporation (RIICO)** recently released a notification requiring all individuals leasing plots measuring 500 square meters or more to install **rainwater harvesting systems** on their property to enhance water conservation efforts and boost groundwater levels.
- **Rajasthan Police Housing and Construction Corporation Limited (RPH&CCL)** will also incorporate rainwater harvesting in its current building projects.

Mukhyamantri Jal Swavlamban Abhiyan

- **CM launched the campaign** from village Gardan Kheri in **Jhalawar district** of Rajasthan on 27th January **2016**.
- The Scheme is based on **Four-waters Concept** that involves harvesting of available runoff (rain water, ground water, under-ground water & in situ soil moisture) in rural areas by treatment of catchment, proper utilization, renovation & creation of new water harvesting structures.

Note:



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Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation (RIICO)

- It is a **premier agency of the Government of Rajasthan** that has played an important role in the industrial development of Rajasthan, it was **formed in 1980**.
- A Government enterprise established under **Companies Act, 1956** on 28th March 1969 as Rajasthan State Industrial & Mineral Development Corporation (RSIMDC) was divided into two entities on 1st January 1980:
 - Rajasthan State Industrial Development & Investment Corporation Limited (**RIICO**)
 - Rajasthan State Mineral Development Corporation (**RSMDC**)

Development of Maharana Pratap Tourist Circuit

Why in News?

Rajasthan Chief Minister announced a **Rs100 crore investment** to develop the **Maharana Pratap Tourist Circuit** during the inauguration of **Maharana Pratap Jayanti** celebrations in Udaipur.

Key Points

- He emphasized the global significance of the **16th century king** as a **source of inspiration for youth worldwide**.
 - The Chief Minister emphasized Maharana Pratap's exceptional bravery, courage, and patriotism, extending beyond his legacy.
- The Rajasthan government is also working to implement **people-friendly innovations in medical science and AI-based technologies** to improve health facilities for locals and tourists.

Maharana Pratap

- **Rana Pratap Singh**, also known as Maharana Pratap, was **born on 9th May 1540 in Kumbhalgarh, Rajasthan**.
 - He was the **13th King of Mewar** and was the eldest **son of Udai Singh II**
 - Maharana Udai Singh II ruled the kingdom of Mewar, with his capital at Chittor.
 - **Udai Singh II** was also a **founder of the city of Udaipur** (Rajasthan).



- **Battle of Haldighati:**
 - The **Battle of Haldighati** was fought in **1576** between **Rana Pratap Singh of Mewar** and **Raja Man Singh of Amber** who was the general of the Mughal emperor Akbar.
 - Maharana Pratap fought a brave war but was **defeated by Mughal forces**.
 - It is said that **Maharana Pratap's loyal horse named Chetak**, gave up his life as the Maharana was leaving the battlefield.
- **Reconquest:**
 - **After 1579**, the Mughal pressure relaxed over Mewar and Pratap recovered Western Mewar including Kumbhalgarh, Udaipur and Gogunda.
 - During this period, he also built a **new capital, Chavand**, near modern Dungarpur.
- **Death:**
 - He died on 19th January 1597. He was **succeeded by his son Amar Singh**, who submitted in 1614 to Emperor Jahāngīr, son of Akbar.

Hike in Kisan Samman Nidhi Assistance to Farmers

Why in News?

The **Rajasthan government** announced an **increase in the annual honorarium paid to farmers** under the Union government's **Kisan Samman Nidhi**.

- The **amount** given to each farm household has been **enhanced from ₹6,000 to ₹8,000 per year**.

Note:

Key Points

- Overall, **5.7 million farmers in Rajasthan** are receiving assistance through the Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme, initiated by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2019**.
- The state's **interim budget** has allocated Rs. 1,400 crore to increase the financial aid.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

- **About:**
 - It was launched on 24th February, 2019 to supplement financial needs of land holding farmers.
- **Financial Benefits:**
 - Financial benefit of **Rs 6000/- per year in three equal installments**, every four months is transferred into the bank accounts of farmers' families across the country through **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode**.
- **Scope of the Scheme:**
 - The scheme was initially meant for **Small and Marginal Farmers (SMFs) having landholding upto 2 hectares** but scope of the scheme was **extended to cover all landholding farmers**.
- **Funding and Implementation:**
 - It is a **Central Sector Scheme** with 100% funding from the Government of India.
 - It is being implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- **Objectives:**
 - To supplement the financial needs of the Small and Marginal Farmers in procuring various inputs to **ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income** at the end of each crop cycle.
 - To protect them from falling in the clutches of moneylenders for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming activities.
- **PM-KISAN Mobile App:**
 - It was developed and designed by the **National Informatics Centre** in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- **Physical Verification Module:**
 - A mandatory physical verification of **5% beneficiary every year is being done as per the provisions** laid down in the scheme.

Earthquake in Sikar

Why in News?

According to the **National Center for Seismology (NCS)**, recently a **3.9 magnitude earthquake** occurred in Rajasthan's Sikar city.

Key Points

- The earthquake occurred at a depth of 5km, at 27.41 N latitude and 75.06 E longitude.
- **National Centre for Seismology (NCS):**
 - This is the agency responsible for **monitoring and reporting the seismic activity** in India and its neighbourhood.
 - It **operates a network of seismological observatories** across the country, and provides real-time data and information on earthquakes and **tsunamis**.
 - It also **maintains a website and a mobile app, called BhooKamp**, to provide earthquake alerts and updates to the public.

Note:



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EARTHQUAKE



ABOUT

- Shaking of the earth; caused due to release of energy, generating **seismic waves in all directions**

EARTHQUAKE WAVES

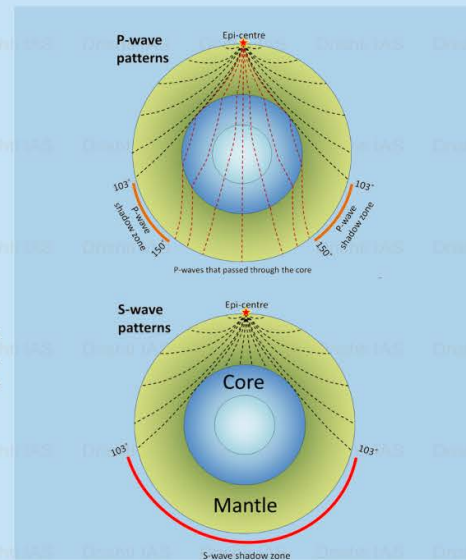
- Body Waves:** Move in all directions travelling through the body of the earth
 - P Waves:** Move faster, First to arrive at surface, Similar to sound waves, Travel through gaseous, liquid and solid materials
 - S Waves:** Arrive at surface with some time lag, Travel only through solid materials
- Surface Waves:** Last to report on seismographs, More destructive, Cause displacement of rocks
 - Love Waves:** Same motion as S-waves (horizontal) without vertical displacement, Sideways motion perpendicular to the direction of propagation, Faster than Rayleigh waves
 - Rayleigh Waves:** Cause the ground to shake in an elliptical pattern, Spread out the most of all seismic waves, Move vertically and horizontally in a vertical plane

HYPOCENTER

- Location where the earthquake starts (below earth's surface)

EPICENTER

- Location right above the Hypocenter (on the earth's surface)



CAUSES OF EARTHQUAKES

- Release of energy along a **Fault/Fault Zones** (break in the crustal rocks)
- Movement of **tectonic plates** (most common)
- Volcanic eruption** (stress changes in rock-injection/withdrawal of magma)
- Human activities** (mining, explosion of chemical/nuclear devices etc.)

MEASURING EARTHQUAKE

- Seismometers** - Measures seismic waves
- Richter Scale** - Measures magnitude (energy released; range: 0-10)
- Mercalli** - Measures intensity (visible damage; range: 1-12)

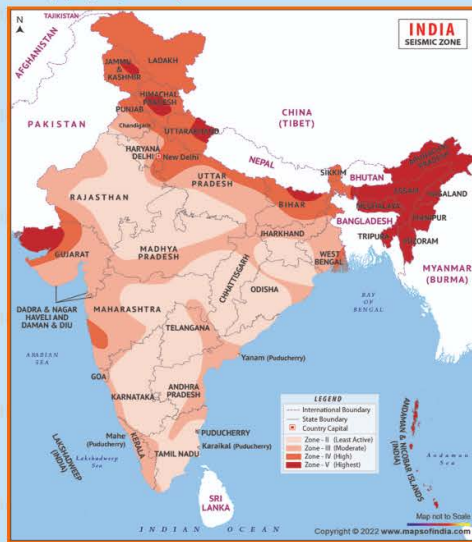
DISTRIBUTION

- Circum-Pacific Belt** - 81% of earthquakes
- Alpine Earthquake Belt** - 17% of the largest earthquakes
- Mid-Atlantic Ridge** - Mostly submerged underwater



EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA

- India is **one of the highly earthquake affected countries** due to the presence of technically active mountains - the Himalayas.
- India has been divided into **4 seismic zones** (II, III, IV, and V)



Note:

Popular Spice Brands Adulterated with Insecticides

Why in News?

Recently, **Indian spice** labels are deemed **inappropriate for human consumption** in Rajasthan due to the suspected presence of the **cancer**-causing chemical **ethylene oxide**.

- Singapore, Hong Kong, and Nepal have prohibited the distribution of these Indian spice labels.

Key Points

- As per latest reports, Spice brands **failed quality tests** conducted by the **Rajasthan health departments** as part of the state's campaign against food adulteration.
 - During the sample test, it was found that the spices have **thiamethoxam and acetamiprid**, **ethion**, and **azoxystrobin**.
- The investigation team discovered that the **levels of pesticides and insecticides** in these spices **exceeded permissible limits**, which **could pose significant health hazards**.

Ethylene Oxide (ETO)

- **ETO** is a chemical used as a **sterilizing agent** in spices, but it is considered **carcinogenic** when used beyond certain limits.
 - While efforts are being made to prevent **ETO contamination**, the sample failure rate for Indian spice exports is **less than 1%** in major markets.
- The Spices Board released guidelines for exporters to prevent ETO contamination and ensure the safety of all markets.
 - It advises against using ETO as a sterilising agent for spices and suggests alternatives like **steam sterilisation and irradiation**.

Thiamethoxam

- Thiamethoxam is moderately hazardous to humans because it is **harmful if swallowed**. It found it to be **no skin or eye irritant**, and not mutagenic in any in vitro and in vivo toxicology tests.

Acetamiprid

- It is an **organic compound**. It is an **odorless neonicotinoid** (neuro-active insecticides chemically similar to nicotine) insecticide.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

- FSSAI is an **autonomous statutory body** established under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, of 2006**.
- FSSAI is responsible for **protecting and promoting public health** by regulating and supervising food safety and quality in India, operating under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare**.
- FSSAI has a **headquarters in New Delhi** and regional offices in eight zones across the country.
- The Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of FSSAI, appointed by the central government. The Chairperson is in the **rank of Secretary to the Government of India**.

Solar Energy Hub in Rajasthan

Why in News?

Trade and industry organisations in Rajasthan have urged the government to establish the state as a **hub for manufacturing solar panels**.

- Rajasthan is among the **top states in India** for generating **solar energy**.

Key Points

- The **state's electricity demand is rising** by 8 to 10% annually. The government aims to have 43% of total electricity consumption come from solar energy by 2030.
 - In 2023, solar power plants with a combined capacity of 15,195.12 megawatts (Mw) were set up in the state.
- According to the **Federation of Rajasthan Trade and Industry (FORTI)**, considering the scope in the field of solar energy, the **state government should promote solar panel manufacturing** in the state.

Solar Panels

- Solar Photovoltaic (PV) technology converts sunlight directly into electricity through the **photovoltaic effect**.
 - The term "photovoltaics" is derived from the conversion of **light (photons)** into **electricity (voltage)**, a phenomenon known as the photovoltaic effect.

Note:

- PV cells are made of semiconductor materials like **silicon**. When sunlight strikes the cell, electrons are knocked loose from the atoms, generating electricity.
 - **Grid-connected systems** feed surplus electricity back into the grid.
- In many regions, photovoltaic systems are being deployed at large scales to help power the electric grid.
- **Methods:** PV systems come with small rooftop solar installations, solar pumps, off-grid lighting systems, and large utility-scale solar power plants.
- **Cost-effective:** The costs of PV systems have **fallen dramatically**, making solar power cost-competitive.
 - With weatherproof panels and no moving parts, PV systems require **minimal maintenance** and have **long lifespans**.
- **Drawback:** Solar PV generation relies on **sunny weather** and output varies throughout the day.

Rajeev Gandhi Yuva Mitra Internship Scheme (RGYMIS)

- Launched in 2021-22, the **scheme aimed to provide practical work experience to young graduates** and help them develop their skills and knowledge.
- Under this the interns were placed in various government departments and agencies, and they were provided a stipend of up to Rs 10,000.
 - Around **50,000 youngsters were enrolled under this program**.
- According to the Department of Economics and Statistics, the scheme was brought in to develop a **pool of intellectual and self-motivated youths named Rajiv Gandhi Yuva Mitras (RYM)**.
- The initiative also **aimed to educate people about governance** and build their confidence in the government and ensure that their basic needs are met at their doorsteps.

Yuva Mitras Protest in Rajasthan

Why in News?

Rajiv Gandhi Yuva Mitras, who **lost their jobs after the change of power in the state**, have **intensified their protest** in the districts and tehsils, demanding the reinstatement of their services.

Key Points

- It is possible that the Rajasthan government will introduce a **new provision** in the state budget to **hire 8,000 yuva mitras within a revamped scheme**.
- The current scheme, Rajasthan Gandhi Yuva Mitra, initiated by the previous government, is **likely to be changed to Viksit Rajasthan Yuva Mitra**.
- Before the **Model Code of Conduct (MCC)** was enforced for Lok Sabha elections, approximately 5,000 yuva mitras protested for over two months, seeking reinstatement in government jobs.
 - The protest ended after the additional chief secretary (ACS) of the chief minister's office (CMO) assured them that they would receive priority under the government's new scheme.

Legislation for Forced Religious Conversions

Why in News?

Recently, The Rajasthan government informed **the Supreme Court** that it is **in the process of bringing in its own legislation** as it does not have any specific legislation regarding **religious conversions**.

- The state emphasized that it follows the directives of the Supreme Court, various High Courts, and the Central Government on this matter.

Key Points

- According to a **Public Interest Litigation (PIL)** filed by an advocate the Centre and States have failed to control the menace of deceitful religious conversion, though it is their duty under **Articles 14, 21, 25 of the Constitution**.
- The penal law does not cover religious conversion, many states have become the safe place for foreign funded individuals, and **Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)** for illegal conversion.
 - In 2022, the Supreme Court issued notice to the Centre and others seeking their response to the plea for a direction to control fraudulent religious conversion and those carried out by **intimidation, threat, deceit, and through gifts and monetary benefits**.

Note:



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Religious Conversion

- Religious conversion is the **adoption of a set of beliefs identified with one particular religious denomination** to the exclusion of others.
- Thus “religious conversion” would describe the **abandoning of adherence to one denomination** and affiliating with another.
 - For example, Christian Baptist to Methodist or Catholic, Muslim Shia to Sunni.
- In some cases, religious conversion “marks a **transformation of religious identity** and is symbolized by special rituals”.

Article 14

- **Article 14** says that **no person shall be denied treatment of equality before the law** or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.
- The right is **extended to all persons** whether **citizens or foreigners, statutory corporations, companies, registered societies or any other type of legal person**.

Article 21

- This declares that **no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty** except according to procedure established by law. This right is **available to both citizens and non-citizens**.
- The right to life is not merely confined to animal existence or survival but also includes **the right to live with human dignity** and all those aspects of life which go to make a man's life meaningful, complete and worth living.

Article 25

- The Indian Constitution under **Article 25** guarantees the freedom to **profess, propagate, and practice religion**, and allows all religious sections to manage their own affairs in matters of religion, subject to public **order, morality, and health**.
- However, no person shall force their religious beliefs and consequently, no person should be forced to practice any religion against their wishes.

Coal Supply to Rajasthan

Why in News?

Rajasthan is set to receive **400,000 metric tonnes of coal** which had been stranded at the washing plants in Chhattisgarh.

- This incoming **coal shipment will boost the supplies for the state's power stations**, guaranteeing sufficient electricity for the residents.

Key Points

- Currently, all **23 power plants in the state** are operational, receiving 25 rakes of supply, and maintaining a 7-day stock in advance.
- An additional 4 lakh metric tonnes will extend this stock by 4 days, as the thermal plants require 1 lakh metric tonnes daily to function.
- **Aryan Coal Beneficiation India Limited (ACBEL)** in Korba, Chhattisgarh, had been contracted by **Rajasthan State Power Generation Corporation** for five years to provide coal from **South Eastern Coalfields Limited's (SECL)** mine to the **Suratgarh and Chhabra thermal power plants**.
 - However, in July 2022, ACBEL's washing facilities were closed by a joint effort of **Chhattisgarh's state tax (GST) department**, mineral department, revenue department, and environment department, leading to approximately 4 lakh metric tonnes of coal from Rajasthan being stranded in the washing facilities.

Suratgarh Thermal Power Plant

- Suratgarh Super Thermal Power Station is **Rajasthan's first super thermal power station**.
- It is located 27 km away from Suratgarh town in **Ganganagar district**. The power plant is operated by **Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd (RVUNL)**.
- The power plant has **6 units** that can produce **250 megawatt** and **2 units** can produce **660 MW**.

Chhabra Thermal Power Plant

- Chhabra Thermal Power Plant is **one of Rajasthan's coal fired power plants**.
- It is located in Rajasthan's **Baran district**.
- The planned capacity of the power plant is **2320 MW**.

Rajasthan High Court Notice to NTA

Why in News?

The **Rajasthan High Court** issued notices to the **National Testing Agency (NTA)** and the Centre regarding requests for the **cancellation of the medical entrance exam NEET-UG** due to alleged irregularities.

Note:



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Key Points

- The National Eligibility and Entrance Test (NEET) Undergraduate **exam paper leak** has escalated, leading to **protests demanding a re-test** and a **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe**.
- The Rajasthan high court set the hearing for 10th July 2024, two days after **the Supreme Court** is **scheduled to hear similar petitions**, including those seeking cancellation of the NEET-UG 2024 exam and a court-monitored investigation.

National Testing Agency

➤ About:

- The **National Testing Agency (NTA)** was established as a Society registered under the **Indian Societies Registration Act, 1860**.
- It is an **autonomous and self-sustained testing organisation** to conduct entrance examinations for admission in higher educational institutions.

➤ Governance:

- NTA is chaired by an eminent educationist appointed by the **Ministry of Human Resource Development**.
- The **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** will be the Director-General to be appointed by the Government.
- There will be a **Board of Governors** comprising members from user institutions.

NEET- UG

- **National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Undergraduate) or NEET**, formerly the **All India Pre-Medical Test**, is an entrance examination for admission in undergraduate medical programs (**MBBS and BDS courses**) in India.
- It is **conducted by the NTA**.



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