Odisha’s Integrated Irrigation Project for Climate Resilient Agriculture

The Government of India, Government of Odisha and the World Bank on 24th October 2019 signed a $165 million loan agreement for the Odisha’s Integrated Irrigation Project for Climate Resilient Agriculture.

About Project

- The project aims to support small landholding farmers in order to strengthen the resilience of their production systems against adverse climatic conditions by improving access to climate resilient seed varieties and production technologies.
- For increasing the income of the farmers, the project strives to diversify towards more climate-resilient crops and improve access to better water management and irrigation services.
  
  The project will also provide marketing support to farmers who are able to generate a marketable surplus.
- The project will be implemented in rural areas that are vulnerable to droughts and are largely dependent on rainfed agriculture.
  
  It is expected to benefit about 125,000 smallholder farmer households from 15 districts of Odisha.
- The project also aspires to support the rehabilitation of 532 water tanks thereby:
  - Promoting the productivity improvements at the farm level,
  - Supporting farmers to reduce the current emphasis on food grains (especially paddy- a water guzzler crop) and increase the share of high-value and more nutritious products like fruits and vegetables, and
  - Practising aquaculture in rehabilitated tanks so as to help farmers access affordable and quality fingerlings, and disseminate improved aquaculture practices and post-harvest management.
• This project is under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) of the government so as to achieve the sustainable agriculture-related targets of the SDGs by 2030.

There are 8 national missions that form the core of the NAPCC representing the multi-pronged, long term and integrated strategies for achieving key goals in climate change.

Need for Project

• Since 2009, the frequency of droughts in Odisha has increased from 1 in 5 years to 1 in 2 years.
• About 70% of the total cultivated area is prone to droughts as compared to 40% in the 1970s.
• In Odisha, agriculture is also a major source of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and is responsible for about 25% of the GHG emissions in the state.
• Such erratic and extreme weather are responsible for declining yields and falling incomes of the farmers.

Greenhouse Gases (GHG)

• These are the gases that absorb and emit radiant energy within the thermal infrared range.
• Primary GHGs are- water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone.
• GHGs create Greenhouse Effect which is the process by which radiation from a planet's atmosphere warms the planet's surface.

Way Forward

The project is intended to be a game-changer for the State by creating a more resilient agricultural sector, enhancing food security, increasing farmers' incomes and reducing the GHG footprint of the sector.

Source: PIB

2000 Years Old Trade Centre Unearthed in Andhra Pradesh

Recently, the possible presence of maritime trade centre near the banks of the Swarnamukhi river in Andhra Pradesh around 2,000 years ago has been put forward by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Key Findings
• An excavation of the site has unearthed a huge settlement surrounded by a brick enclosure.
  The size of bricks can be compared to those in the Satavahana/Ikshvaku period structures in the Krishna valley.
  Thus, the site may date back to the 2nd century to 1st century BCE
• The excavation of four-armed 2-meter tall sculpture of Vishnu belonging to the Pallava period (8th Century CE), a series of broken terracotta pipes pointing towards a form of drainage make it appears to be a trade centre.
• Additionally, the southern coastal location and more such evidence of the trade, reinforces the possibility of the existence of a trade centre at the excavated site.

Source: TH