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Important Facts for Prelims (19th January 2019)

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Saturn Rings

- Scientists have found that the rings of Saturn are younger than previously thought.
- The rings are not more than 100 million years i.e. the period when dinosaurs used to walk on earth.
- Previously, it was predicted that the ring system formed along with the planet from icy debris remaining in orbit after the formation of the Solar System.
- NASA's Cassini spacecraft to Saturn after completing its mission fell into Saturn's gravity. The fall allowed the orbiter to act as a probe and it was able to take the close up data of the planet and the rings.

Saturn

- It is the second largest planet after Jupiter in our Solar System.
- Saturn is a Jovian planet i.e. it is completely made up of gas.
- Along with Uranus and Neptune, Saturn is the only planet which has rings.
- As of now, Saturn has 62 confirmed natural satellites or moons orbiting it.

Cassini

- Launched: Oct. 15, 1997
- End of Mission: Sept. 15, 2017
- Significance: Cassini orbited and studied the Saturn and its moons in detail.
Cassini mission also landed the Huygens probe on Saturn's largest moon, Titan, in January 2005.

District Mineral Fund

The Ministry of Mines has requested State governments to complete the audit of District Mineral Fund (under Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana) spends till the financial year 2017-18 before the current financial year (2018-19) ends.

Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)

- **Objective:** To minimize/mitigate the adverse impacts, during and after mining, on the environment, health and socio-economic conditions of people in mining districts and also to ensure a sustainable livelihood for the affected people.
- It is implemented by the **District Mineral Foundations (DMFs)** of the respective districts that use the funds collected from the miners.
- District Mineral Foundation (DMF) is a **trust set up under Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Amendment Act (MMDRA) 2015** as a non-profit body in those districts affected by the mining operations.
- **60% of the funds will be utilized for high priority areas such as drinking water supply, health care, sanitation, education, skill development, women and child care, the welfare of aged and disabled people and environment conservation.**
- **40% of the fund** will be utilized for physical **infrastructure, irrigation, energy, and watershed development.**