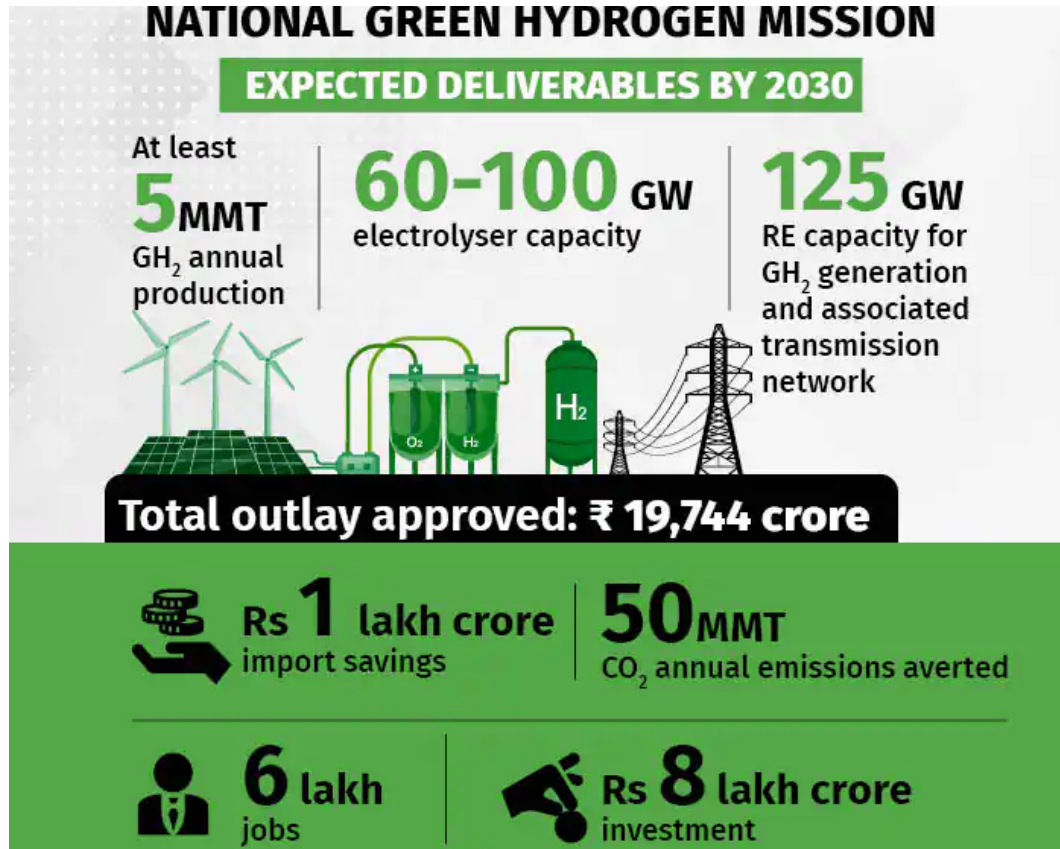




1. Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT) Program



Topic: Government Programmes

In News: The Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) has announced guidelines under the National Green Hydrogen Mission for manufacturing electrolysers and production of green hydrogen for implementing SIGHT Program.

More on the Topic:

- SIGHT is a sub-component of the National Green Hydrogen Mission.
- Under the Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition Programme (SIGHT), two distinct financial incentive mechanisms are provided. They are:
- **Targeting domestic manufacturing of electrolysers and**
- **Production of Green Hydrogen**

About National Green Hydrogen Mission:

- The National Green Hydrogen Mission was launched in 2023, as part of its decarbonization strategy.



- The Mission places significant emphasis on R&D in green hydrogen and **aims to make India a global hub of Green Hydrogen production, utilization, and export.**
- The Mission will **encourage private investment in the sector and enable rapid scale-up, technology development,** establish standards & regulatory framework and enable rapid cost reduction.

Objectives of NGHM:

- Production of 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030.
- Make India a leading producer and supplier of Green Hydrogen in the world.
- Creating opportunities for employment and economic development.
- Supporting R&D projects in India for further development of Green Hydrogen.

About Green Hydrogen:

- Green Hydrogen is produced using **electrolysis of water with electricity generated by renewable energy.**
- The **electrolysis process splits water into hydrogen and oxygen,** and the hydrogen produced can be used as a clean and renewable fuel.
- The carbon intensity ultimately depends on the carbon neutrality of the source of electricity (i.e., the more renewable energy there is in the electricity fuel mix, the "greener" the hydrogen produced).
- Green hydrogen energy is vital for India to meet its **Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Targets** and ensure regional and national energy security, access and availability.

Source: Indian Express

2. India - Philippines Relations

Topic: International Relations

In News: India and Philippines had organised its 5th meeting of the Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation (JCBC).

More on the Topic:

India - Philippine Areas of Cooperation:

Supporting Philippines in South China Sea Conflict:

- India called for **adherence to the 2016 arbitration decision in favour of the Philippines,** which has been rejected by China.
- **Back ground:** The Philippines had instituted an arbitration proceeding against China in the Permanent Court of Arbitration under UNCLOS on January 22, 2013.
- The court ruled in favour of Manila on July 12, 2016, but this was rejected by China, which had called it "null and void."
- China, which claims rights to most of the resource-rich South China Sea upto the nine-dash line, has become more assertive in recent years, leading to flare-ups in the region.

Defence Cooperation:



- Defence has emerged as a key pillar of Indo-Philippines partnership amid China's territorial claims along the South China Sea region.
- India has offered **concessional Line of Credit** to meet Philippines' defence requirements, and acquisition of naval assets.
- India also expressed intention on **expansion of training and joint exercises** on maritime security and disaster response.

Shared view on Indo-Pacific:

- Both the countries believe that Indo-Pacific should be a region which is **free and open** and a region whose members **promote peace and stability**.
- There is lot of potential to develop mutual cooperation in ensuring free and open Indo-pacific.

About South China Sea:

- The South China Sea is an arm of **western Pacific Ocean in Southeast Asia**.
- It is south of China, east & south of Vietnam, west of the Philippines and north of the island of Borneo.
- It is **connected by Taiwan Strait** with the East China Sea and by **Luzon Strait** with the Philippine Sea.
- **Bordering states & territories:** the People's Republic of China, the Republic of China (Taiwan), the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam.

India's Interests in SCS:

- Strategic Importance: This sea holds tremendous strategic importance for its location as it is the connecting link between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean (Strait of Malacca). India's commercial interest's directly linked to it.
- According to the United Nations Conference on Trade And Development (UNCTAD) one-third of the global shipping passes through it.
- **The China Problem:** China is playing threatening tactics in SCS to monopolise its interests. As a key element of the **Act East Policy**, India has started internationalizing disputes in the Indo-Pacific region.

Source: Hindu

3. Panchayat Development Index (PDI)

Topic: Polity and Governance



Bengaluru, Karnataka-560028

Go, change the world



In News: Panchayat Development Index (PDI) has been released by Ministry of Panchayati raj.

More on the Topic:

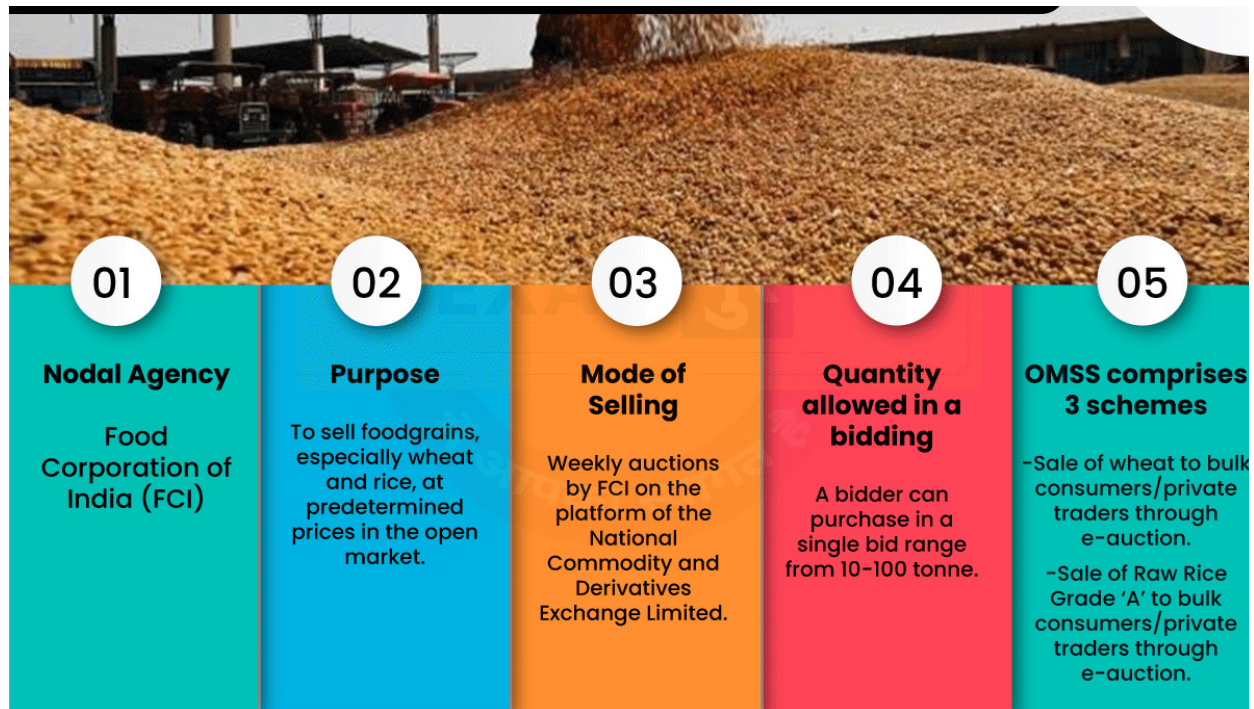
- It is a new initiative by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to assess the progress of local development through panchayats, the rural self-government institutions in India.
- The PDI is **based on the concept of Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs)**, which aims to align the national and global development goals with the local context and priorities.
- It is designed to be a compact and comprehensive statistical tool that captures various aspects of development at the panchayat level.
- It covers nine themes that reflect the vision of an ideal village, such as; **Poverty-free, Healthy, Child-friendliness, Water-sufficiency, Clean and green, Self-sufficiency, Socially just and security, Well-governed, Women-friendliness.**
- The PDI takes into account the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of development interventions in each theme.

Significance:

- It provides a matrix to **monitor and evaluate the progress of panchayats** through the scores achieved by them.
- It ranks panchayats on the basis of scores, and categorize them into four grades. Grades include A (75 to 90%), B (60-75%), C (40-60%) and D (under 40%).
- The PDI has several applications for **policymaking, planning, monitoring, evaluation, and learning.**
- It can help identify the strengths and weaknesses of panchayats in different themes and indicators, and suggest areas for improvement.
- It serves as a tool for social accountability.

Source: PIB

4. Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS)



Topic: Government Schemes

In News: States have been looking at alternative ways of procuring wheat and rice in the aftermath of the Food Corporation of India's (FCI) quantity restrictions followed by the refusal to allow states to procure the two food grains through its Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS).

More on the Topic:

- The procurement of food grains like wheat and paddy for the central pool happens in **Rabi and Kharif marketing seasons by the FCI and State corporations** according to procurement estimates finalised by the government of India before the seasons.
- These purchases happen as per the **Minimum Support Price**. From the central pool, the government has to set aside wheat and rice for the 80 crore beneficiaries of free foodgrains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), maintain a buffer stock, and have a marketable surplus.
- Under the Open Market Sale Scheme, the **FCI from time to time sells surplus food grains** from the central pool especially wheat and rice in the open market to traders, bulk consumers, retail chains and so on at pre-determined prices.
- The Corporation does this through **e-auctions** where open market bidders can buy specified quantities at the prices set at the start of a cycle and revised routinely.

- Usually, **states are also allowed to procure food grains through the OMSS without participating in the auctions**, for their needs beyond what they get from the central pool to distribute to NFSA beneficiaries.

The Objective of OMSS:

- The idea is to activate the OMSS during the lean season, the time between harvests, to **improve and regulate domestic supply and availability** of the two grains and bring down their prices in the open market; essentially making the scheme a measure to curb food **grain inflation**.

How has the Centre revised the OMSS?

- Recently, the Centre decided to **restrict the quantity that a single bidder can purchase in a single bid under the OMSS**.
- While the maximum quantity allowed earlier was 3,000 metric tonnes (MT) per bid for a buyer, it will now range from 10-100 metric tonnes (MT).
- The rationale given for the same by the Corporation is that the quantities have been reduced this time **“to accommodate more small and marginal buyers and to ensure wider reach of the scheme”**.

Source: Indian Express

5.Indian Skimmer

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: Six Indian Skimmer eggs laid on sandbar — a partially exposed ridge of sand in a water body — were washed away.

More on the Topic:

- The Indian skimmer is found in the coastal estuaries of western and eastern India. It resides primarily on larger, sandy, lowland rivers, around lakes and adjacent marshes and, in the non-breeding season, in estuaries and coasts.



- The bird, having an estimated population of 3,700-4,400 in south Asia, according to BirdLife International 2021, has been under threat as human activities gnaw away at its habitats.
- IUCN Conservation Status: **Endangered**

Source: **Business Standard**

6. Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP)

Topic: **Economy**



In News: Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved FRP of sugarcane for 2023-24 sugar season.

More on the Topic:

- Fair and remunerative price (FRP) is the minimum price at which rate sugarcane is to be purchased by sugar mills from farmers.
- The FRP is fixed by Union government (Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)) on the basis of **recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**.
- The 'FRP' of sugarcane is determined under Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966.
- Recommended FRP is arrived at by taking into account various factors including **cost of production, demand-supply situation, domestic & international prices, inter-crop price parity etc.**

Source: **Business Standard**

7. Duqm Port in Oman



Topic: Places in News

In News: India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval visits Duqm Port in Oman, which offers strategic access to Indian Navy.

More on the Topic:

- Facing the **Arabian Sea and located outside Strait of Hormuz**, Port of Duqm is perfectly positioned to serve the main Eastern and Western trade corridors.
- The port of Duqm overlooks the Gulf of Oman, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Sea. It will play a significant role in **India's Maritime security and strategy**, especially in the Indian Ocean Region as China is expanding its ever-growing footprint in this region.
- Being located northwest of the Indian Ocean, the port can provide India with **access to the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden**.



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Source: Business Standard

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