

UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES 20-10-2023

Operation 'Nanhe Farishtey'

Railway Protection Force (RPF) is entrusted with the responsibility of security of railway property, passenger areas and passengers. The force has been working round the clock for providing safe, secure and comfortable travel experience to the passengers. It helps Indian Railways in providing safe freight transport service to its customers.

Operation Nanhe Farishte

by



Indian Railways



RPF has ably discharged the responsibility of protection of huge assets of railways spread throughout the country by taking preventive security measures and making efforts for detection of crime against railway property as and when they occur.

A brief of the achievements of RPF during the month of September 2023 is as under –

Rescue of children & Operation Nanhe Farishtey:- RPF plays an important role in reuniting the children lost/separated due to several reasons from their family. In this regard, operation 'Nanhe Farishtey' was launched on Indian Railways and under this drive, more than 895 Children (Boys-573 & Girl-322)



in need of care & protection who came in contact with Indian Railways in the month of September-2023 were rescued and handed over to concerned authorities before being restored to their families.

Human Trafficking & Operation AAHAT– In order to have an effective counter to evil plans of Human traffickers, Anti Human Trafficking Units of RPF are operational at the Post level (Thana level) over the Indian Railways. These AHTUs are in regular touch with agencies and NGOs involved in preventing human trafficking and have assisted them in rescue of children being trafficked. During the month of September 2023, 29 persons were rescued from the clutches of traffickers with the arrest of 14 traffickers.

Operation “Jeevan Raksha”: - Due to alertness and swift action by RPF, lives of 265 passengers were saved by Team RPF, who had come close to getting run over by trains, at platforms and railway tracks in the month of September 2023 under operation ‘Jeevan Raksha’.

Women Security:- Safety and security of women passengers has been an important concern of Indian Railways. In this regard, an initiative “Meri Saheli” has been launched to provide security to lady passengers in long distance trains, particularly those travelling alone or those who are vulnerable to crime. Under this initiative, 231 Meri Saheli teams attended 13071 trains and provide security assurance to 421198 lady passengers during the month of September 2023.

Further, RPF took action against the 6033 persons who were travelling in the coaches reserved for the ladies during September 2023.

Action against touts & Operation “Uplabdh” :— In this regard during the month of September 2023, 405 nos. of the touts were arrested and legal action was taken against them as per law and future tickets valued Rs. 36.43 lacs were seized.

Operation “NARCOS” :- During the month of September 2023, 70 persons have been arrested along with seizure of NDPS valued at Rs.2.65 Crores and the arrested criminals were handed over to empowered agencies for further legal action.

Emergency Response & Operation ‘Yatri Suraksha’ - In order to redress security related complaints of passengers in distress and for immediate assistance, passengers can make complaint on Rail Madad Portal or through

helpline No. 139 (integrated with Emergency Response Support System No. 112). During the month of September-2023, more than 28000 complaints were received and appropriate necessary action was taken to resolve them.

Key facts about the Railway Protection Force

- The history of the RPF dates back to 1882, when various Railway companies appointed their own guards for protection of Railway property.
- It was declared a statutory force in 1957 by an enactment of Parliament and subsequently declared as an armed force of the Union of India in the year 1985.
- In 2003, the RPF partially took up the duties of escorting passenger trains and access control at the railway stations”.
- It is led by a director-general.
- It is an armed force under the operational and administrative control of the Union Ministry of Railways.
- It is tasked with protecting and securing railway property, the passenger areas, and the passengers themselves.

Someshwara inscription





Recently, archaeologists discovered a rare inscription connected to the Alupa dynasty during a recent archaeological exploration at Someshwara near Mangaluru, Karnataka.

About the Someshwara inscription:

This inscription is very significant in the study of Tuluva history and culture.

It has two panels on the top, and in between the two panels, the first line is engraved.

The rest of the inscription written below the panels is in Kannada script and the language of 12th century characters announcing the death of Alupendra I.

The human figures shown in the inscription represent Kulashekara Alupendra himself.

In the first figure, he is shown standing in Tribhanga (tri-bent posture). He holds a sword in his right hand while the left hand rests on a gurani (shield).

To the left of this panel, divided by a pillar, the King is again shown in a sitting posture on a mound, resting both his palms on the centre of his legs in dhyana mudra.

Kulashekara Al Upendra

Kulashekara Alupendra I was a famous ruler of the Alupas of South Canara.

He was responsible for the establishment of a new city called Kulashekara in Mangalore.

He also laid down strict rules and regulations for temple administration, which are still followed in all temples in this region.

He was the first ruler to give royal patronage to Tulu language and culture, ruling from both the capitals, Mangalore and Barkuru.

Alupendra I ruled Tulunadu from 1156-1215 A.D., as known from his other records.

Though the present inscription is undated, it is dated to the 12th century on the basis of paleography.



SPECIAL AND LOCAL LAWS

The recent criminal law Bills in India, while amending the Indian Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure, highlight the paramount significance of Special and Local Laws (SLLs) containing critical offences and procedures.

Special and local laws

Special and local laws in India are designed to cater to the unique needs of specific regions, communities, or situations within the country. These laws are localized and vary based on the cultural, social, and historical context of different regions and communities.

These laws serve to supplement or modify the general laws applicable to the entire country. They provide additional provisions or amendments to address the specific requirements of diverse communities and regions, ensuring a more tailored and context-specific legal framework.

Some examples of special and local laws

Personal Laws

India has separate personal laws for different religious communities such as Hindu Law, Muslim Law, Christian Law, and Parsi Law. These laws govern matters related to marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption within specific religious communities.

Tribal Laws

Various states in India have special laws and regulations to protect the rights and interests of tribal communities. These laws are aimed at preserving their customs, traditions, and way of life.

State Laws

Each state in India can have its own set of laws and regulations on various subjects such as land reforms, education, and local governance. These laws are specific to individual states and may differ from one state to another.



Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Laws

SEZs in India are governed by specific laws that provide various incentives and benefits to promote exports and economic activities within these designated zones.

Taxation Laws

entities. For example, certain states in India have state-level taxes in addition to national taxes.

Local Municipal Laws

Municipal laws and regulations vary from one city or municipality to another. These laws govern local issues such as property tax, sanitation, and urban development.

Educational Laws

Different states have their education laws governing matters related to schools, colleges, and universities.

Criminal Tribes Act

Though significantly modified and reformed, certain states in India have laws that historically targeted specific communities, often referred to as denotified tribes. These laws are aimed at integrating these communities into mainstream society.

Need to reform Special and Local Laws (SLLs)

Quantitative and Qualitative Relevance

SLLs constitute a significant share, almost 40%, of all registered offences in India, underscoring their quantitative importance in the criminal justice system. They are a substantial part of the legal landscape, impacting the overall crime statistics.

SLLs often deal with complex and contentious issues, giving rise to fundamental debates and discussions about individual rights and civil liberties. Their qualitative significance lies in their capacity to spark crucial dialogues surrounding justice and civil liberties in society.



Deficient and Ambiguous Definitions

Many SLLs, including the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act, contain vague and unclear definitions of offences and critical terms such as 'terrorist act' or 'organised crime.' This lack of specificity can lead to confusion and varied interpretations, creating legal uncertainty.

Ambiguous definitions provide room for misuse of these laws against individuals, as interpretations can differ widely. To ensure fairness and prevent abuse, it is essential to reform and clarify these definitions, establishing clear boundaries for legal application and protecting individuals from wrongful prosecution.

Concerns about Criminalization

Some SLLs have been accused of overreaching by applying criminal penalties to activities that might be more appropriately addressed through civil or regulatory means. For example, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act has faced criticism for applying criminal penalties to consensual sexual activities between minors.

The clear distinction between what constitutes a criminal offence and what should be handled under civil or regulatory jurisdiction is crucial to avoid overreach and miscarriages of justice. Reforms are necessary to ensure that the legal system appropriately categorizes and addresses different types of activities, aligning with the principles of justice and proportionality

Erosion of Due Process

SLLs grant law enforcement agencies excessive powers, enabling practices like invasive search and seizure. Additionally, these laws allow the admissibility of confessions recorded by police officers, potentially compromising the reliability of evidence presented in court.

SLLs, such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, impose stringent bail conditions, making it extremely difficult for individuals to secure release pending trial. These practices undermine the fundamental principle that individuals are presumed innocent until proven guilty, challenging the core tenet of due process in the legal system.



Shift from Original Codification

The Indian Penal Code (IPC) was designed as a comprehensive legal document meant to encompass all criminal laws. It aimed to provide a unified legal code, ensuring clarity and consistency in the legal system. This unified approach was essential for legal coherence and understanding.

The increasing number of SLLs has led to fragmentation in the legal landscape. Instead of a single, unified legal code, the proliferation of SLLs has created a diverse and complex array of laws, deviating from the original intent of comprehensive codification. This fragmentation poses challenges in maintaining a clear and consistent legal framework.

Need for Integration

Integrating SLLs within the broader penal code ensures the integrity of the legal system. By incorporating these laws as separate chapters, the legal framework becomes more cohesive, avoiding discrepancies and ensuring consistency in the application of criminal laws.

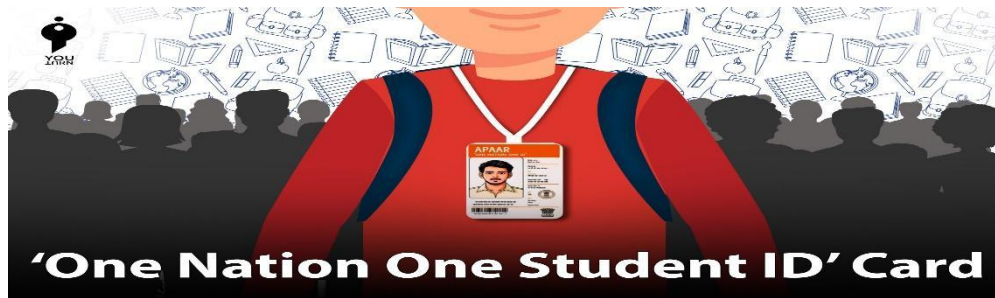
Inclusion of procedures related to offences, arrest, investigation, prosecution, trial, evidence, and bail either as separate sections within the Code of Criminal Procedure or as exceptions ensures standardized legal processes. This clarity prevents confusion and promotes fairness, guaranteeing that individuals are treated equitably under the law.

Second Generation of Reforms

The omission of substantive and procedural aspects of SLLs from current reform efforts creates a gap in the legal system. A second generation of reforms is essential to bridge these gaps, ensuring comprehensive coverage and addressing any shortcomings in the existing laws.

Introducing reforms will bring SLLs in line with constitutional principles, promoting fairness and justice. These reforms are crucial for the legal system to evolve coherently, uphold individual rights, and adhere to the fundamental principles of due process of law, thereby strengthening the overall integrity of the legal framework.

AUTOMATED PERMANENT ACADEMIC ACCOUNT REGISTRY (APAAR)



The Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR), also known as One Nation, One Student ID, is a pioneering initiative undertaken by the Union Ministry of Education.

Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR)

It is a unique identification system introduced by the Union Education Ministry. It is often referred to as 'One Nation, One ID' and is part of the Education Ecosystem Registry, also known as EduLocker.

The purpose of APAAR is to create a lifelong identification number for students, allowing seamless tracking of their academic progress and achievements from pre-primary education to higher education levels.

Objectives of APAAR

It aims to assign a 12-digit unique identification number to every student in India, starting from pre-primary education up to higher education levels.

The system is designed to link this unique APAAR ID with the student's Aadhaar number, ensuring accurate identification and reducing the chances of duplication.

It intends to create a comprehensive, centralized database that tracks a student's academic progress throughout their educational journey, providing a unified record system from early education to higher studies.

Functionality and Features

One of the key features is its ability to **streamline the admission process**. When students transfer between institutions, they can provide their APAAR ID



instead of physically transferring academic records, making the transition process smoother and more efficient.

It eliminates the need for students to maintain and carry multiple physical copies of their academic records. All records are stored electronically, reducing paperwork for both students and educational institutions.

By providing a single view of a student's academic progress, APAAR promotes transparency. Students can access their records, including grades, attendance, and achievements, enabling them to identify areas for improvement and take proactive steps to address learning gaps.

Its standardized record-keeping system facilitates student mobility. Students can move across institutions and regions without concerns about variations in record-keeping methods, ensuring uninterrupted education.

Benefits for Students

It simplifies the transfer process between institutions, ensuring that academic records are readily accessible, reducing admission-related hassles for students.

Students no longer need to worry about losing or damaging physical documents; their academic history is securely stored online, accessible whenever needed.

With transparent access to their academic data, students can identify weak points in their studies, enabling them to focus on areas that need improvement, leading to more personalized and effective learning experiences.

Benefits for Educational Institutions

APAAR automates many administrative tasks such as verifying student transcripts and issuing certificates, reducing the burden on educational institutions' administrative staff.

By being the central repository for student data, APAAR minimizes errors and discrepancies in student records, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the information institutions use for decision-making.

Educational institutions can leverage the data stored in APAAR for research purposes, studying student progress patterns, and developing strategies to enhance the overall educational experience.

Benefits for the Government

Real-time data provided by APAAR enables the government to make data-driven decisions in educational planning and policy formulation. Trends and gaps can be identified promptly, allowing for timely interventions.

By identifying students from marginalized backgrounds or regions with specific needs, the government can tailor educational support programs, promoting equal access and bridging gaps in education.

It ensures strong privacy measures. Students have control over who accesses their academic data, addressing privacy concerns and ensuring the security of sensitive information.

Reforms in Multilateral Development Banks



Reforms have been proposed for World Bank, other Multilateral Development Banks.

Multilateral Development Banks are institutions whose members include multiple developed and developing countries.

The banks have to fulfil certain lending obligations to facilitate developmental objectives.

They provide financing and technical assistance to countries and organizations undertaking projects across sectors including transport, energy, urban infrastructure, and waste management.



Usually, developed countries in MDBs contribute to the lending pool while developing countries primarily borrow from these institutions to fund development projects.

Why are experts advocating for reforms within MDBs? The G20 expert group cites the climate crisis to argue that while stakeholders worldwide know what needs to be done to mitigate it, they “lack mechanisms to make this happen on a global scale, especially in **emerging markets and developing economies (EMDEs).**”

According to the expert group, a reformed MDB ecosystem can equip stakeholders to better deal with global challenges in effective ways.

It has recommended that MDBs operate more in sync with the developmental priorities of individual nations.

Additionally, the expert group called for bringing private sector engagement to the center of MDB operations by breaking away from the culture of limited operational interaction between their private and sovereign financing arms.

In the group’s view, greater coordination between multiple stakeholders is crucial to the success of MDBs.

To mitigate coordination failures, the expert group has called for greater involvement of national governments to develop “a home-grown unified vision of goals, policies, investments and financing.”

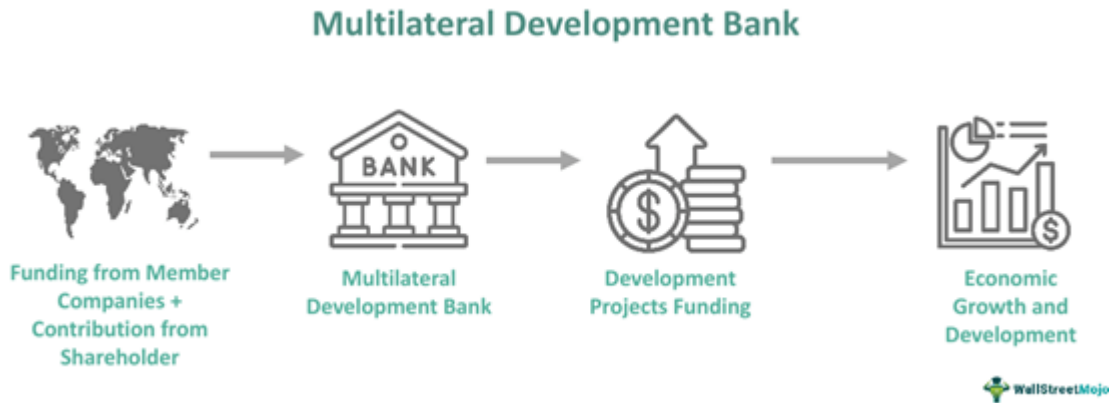
These recommended reforms are to “help address multiple coordination failures among domestic and international stakeholders, public and private.” The expert group also notes that the existing perception and practices of MDBs have adversely impacted their engagement with the private sector.

MDBs are often seen as bureaucratic and risk averse, which deters the private sector from being more involved in assisting with financing.

Given that MDBs need to ramp up financing to \$390 billion by 2030, the private sector can play a pivotal role in making that happen by reversing the current trend of “disappointingly low” private financial flows to EMDEs.

As per the group, the private sector’s involvement depends on “MDBs embracing partnerships with the private sector, taking on more risk – especially credit risk and policy risk – and then managing it properly.”

Multilateral Development Banks traditionally lent in countries such as India



MDBs have played a crucial role in India’s development journey by financing key infrastructure projects with longer gestation periods.

The World Bank, established in 1944, has committed to lending worth \$97.6 billion in India, including all active and closed projects.

Of the total commitments, \$18.7 billion (19 per cent) have been committed to projects in the public administration sector, \$14.8 billion (15 per cent) to the agriculture, fishing and forestry sector, and \$10.6 billion (11 per cent) to the transport sector.

The Manila-based Asian Development Bank, formed in 1969, has cumulatively committed to assistance worth \$59.7 billion in India for project and technical assistance.

Of the total assistance, \$20.2 billion (34 per cent) has been committed to the transport sector, \$15 billion (25 per cent) to the energy sector, and \$6.7 billion (10 per cent) to the urban infrastructure sector.

Of the \$2 billion it committed in 2022, \$1.8 billion was committed to sovereign projects, for which the loan amount is guaranteed by either the central, state, or local government(s), and just \$0.2 billion to non-sovereign projects.

The Beijing-headquartered Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which was formed in 2016, has approved financing worth \$9.9 billion in India. Of this, \$4.2 billion (42 per cent) has been approved for the transport sector, \$1.4 billion

(14 percent) for the energy sector, and \$1.25 billion (12.6 per cent) for economic resilience.

Centre Rolls Back its Plan to Licence Laptop, PC Imports



The Union Government has rolled out an ‘Import Management System’ for IT hardware, including laptops and computers, modifying its initial stance of imposing physical restrictions.

The notification comes just days after concerns were raised by US, China, South Korea and Taiwan at a recent World Trade Organisation meeting.

Background:

On 3rd August 2023, the Union Government imposed restrictions on import of laptops, tablets, all-in-one personal computers and ultra-small computers and servers with immediate effect.

However, this decision was later suspended **till 1st November, 2023**.

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) had to suspend the implementation as custom officials stationed at ports started holding up shipments of the specified electronic items.



The issue had also come up in meetings between US and Indian officials after American companies including **Apple**, **Dell**, and **HP** urged the US government to ask Indian government to reconsider its policy.

Government's Plans of Introducing "Import Management System":

The Union government is conducting consultations on a new system through which it aims to monitor the sources from which IT hardware is being imported.

Through a system known as "**Import Management System**", the government will monitor the sources from which IT hardware is being imported.

After the introduction of this system, finished IT hardware such as laptops, personal computers and servers can only be imported from "**trusted geographies**".

Beyond laptops, personal computers and servers, the directive could be applied on a large range of finished IT hardware equipment including 5G sensors, which are predominantly being imported from China.

The Import Management System is currently in draft stage. Once finalised, it is expected to replace the licensing requirement.

There is precedence to this idea of allowing imports only from trusted sources.

National Security Directive on Telecommunication Sector:

In June 2021, the Central government launched the 'trusted telecom portal' and signaled the implementation of the **National Security Directive on Telecommunication Sector (NSDTS)**.

Under the directive, telecom companies are mandatorily required to connect in their networks only those new devices which are designated as "trusted products" from "trusted sources".

Post the 5G spectrum auction last year, operators like **Reliance Jio** and **Bharti Airtel** have signed agreements with companies like **Ericsson** and **Samsung**, excluding Chinese majors **Huawei** and **ZTE**.

Reasons Behind the Introduction of Import Management System:



China Factor –

Data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry gives us a broad picture of India’s dependence on China with regard to the import of electronic goods such as laptops, computers etc.

Indeed, India’s imports of the aforementioned class of electronic goods have been steadily rising.

Whereas in 2019-20, India’s imports of electronic goods stood at \$5.3 billion, that figure climbed to \$10.3 billion in 2021-22, before declining slightly to hit \$8.7 billion in 2022-23.

Given this fact, a rise in indigenous manufacturing would not only help India reduce its dependence on its diplomatic and business rival but would also help indigenous manufacturers expand their footprint globally.

The introduction of Import Management System could force IT hardware companies to establish new supply chains, as China is unlikely to be classified as a trusted geography.

Security Factor –

Another factor behind the restrictions imposed on this class of electronic goods is concerns about ‘security’.



The restrictions may have been brought in to guard against electronic hardware coming in with “in-built security loopholes that may potentially endanger sensitive personal and enterprise data”.

Across the world, many red flags have been raised about cybersecurity with regard to Chinese-manufactured electronics.

PM to launch India’s first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)

PM Modi will inaugurate the first leg of the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS), India’s first mass rapid system dedicated to regional connectivity.

Trains on the first section will eventually cut the journey time between Delhi and Meerut to less than an hour.

Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)

About

With semi high-speed rail connectivity at its core, the RRTS is an integrated, mass transit network.

It aims to ensure balanced and sustainable urban development through better connectivity and access across the NCR.

Origin

The idea of such a network lies in a study which the Indian Railways was commissioned to carry out in the year 1998-99.

The study identified the possibility of an RRTS network to connect various locations in the NCR through fast commuter trains.

The proposal was re-examined in the year 2006 with the extension of the Delhi Metro lines to some NCR towns such as Gurgaon, Noida and Ghaziabad.

It was soon taken up by the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) while developing its Functional Plan on Transport for NCR-2032.

NCRPB identified and recommended eight RRTS corridors to connect NCR towns with high speed rail-based commuter transit services.



Objective

It seeks to unlock the entire potential of the NCR in various ways in addition to enhancing multi-modal connectivity at the existing transportation hubs.

One of the most significant aims of the project is to nudge commuters towards public transportation.

Hence, it will have a positive impact on relieving the congestion both on its road/highways as well as existing metro and railway networks.

The project aims to give a push to employment generation and the opening up of newer commercial hubs along the current contours of the NCR.

Shorter travel times are expected to increase the overall economic productivity of the region.


Features

RRTS trains will travel significantly faster than metro trains.

These will operate at a speed of 160 km/hour but are designed to be able to run at speeds up to 180 km/hour.


The RRTS is modelled on systems such as the RER in Paris, Regional-Express trains in Germany and Austria as well as the SEPTA Regional Rail in the United States, among others.

FASTER THAN METROS, MORE FREQUENT THAN TRAINS

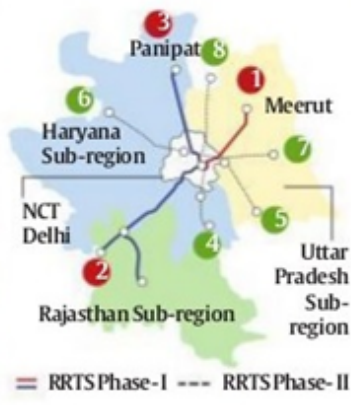

180 km/hr
DESIGN SPEED

160 km/hr
OPERATION SPEED

100 km/hr
AVERAGE SPEED



Praveen Khanna



OTHER CORRIDORS

- 4 Delhi – Faridabad – Ballabhgarh – Palwal
- 5 Ghaziabad – Khurja
- 6 Delhi – Bahadurgarh – Rohtak
- 7 Ghaziabad – Hapur
- 8 Delhi – Shahadra – Baraut

CORRIDORS- UNDER RRTS PHASE 1

- 1 Delhi – Ghaziabad – Meerut Corridor
- 2 Delhi – Gurugram – SNB – Alwar Corridor
- 3 Delhi – Panipat Corridor

60 Min
TIME TO TRAVEL 100KM

How is the RRTS different from existing metro or railways systems?

When compared with metros, the RRTS network is faster.

Compared with the Indian Railways, though the RRTS train will cover relatively smaller distances. It will do so at higher frequency and provide relatively more comfort than the average Railways coach.

Namo Bharat trains

About

India’s first regional rapid train, between Delhi and Meerut, has been named “Namo Bharat”.

Today, PM is scheduled to:

inaugurate the priority section of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) corridor and

flag off the “RapidX train” connecting Sahibabad and Duhai Depot.

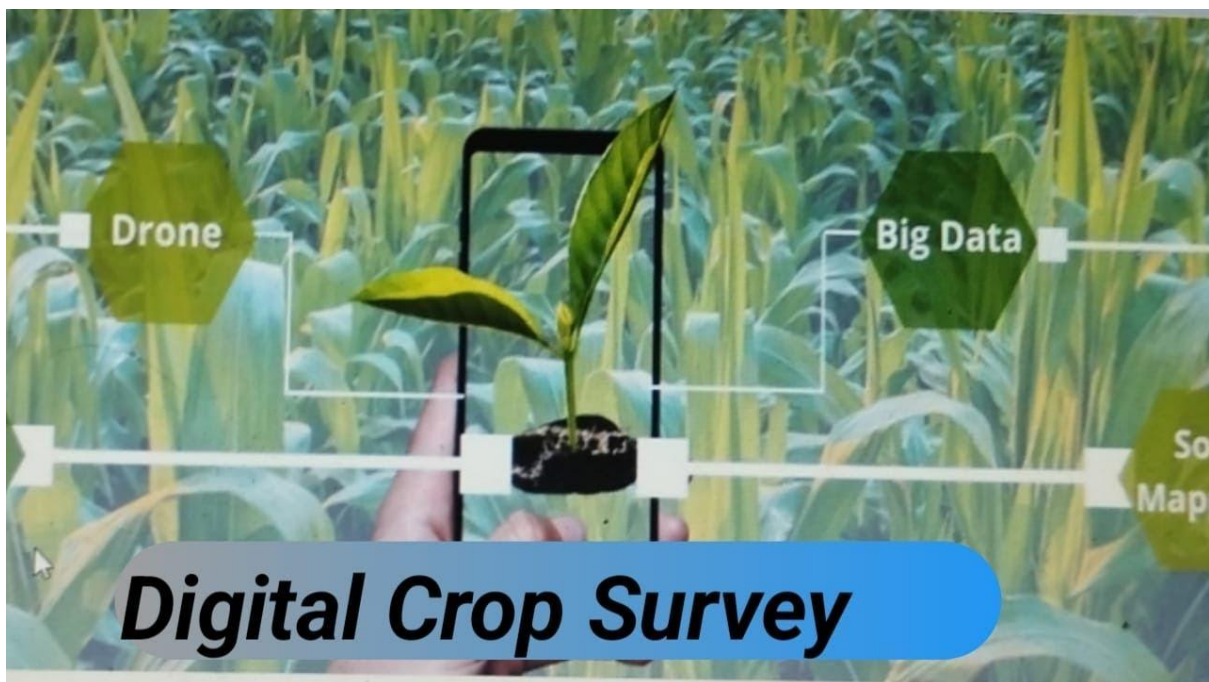
Construction

The National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) has constructed the RRTS also known as Namu Bharat.

NCRTC is a joint venture company of the Central government and the governments of Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

NCRTC, under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, is mandated with implementing the RRTS project across the National Capital Region.

Digital Crop Survey System



Highlighting that the present system of estimation of crop area and production is completely manual, the Centre has asked states and Union Territories (UTs) to digitise the process by adopting the Digital Crop Survey System from July next year.

Currently, the collection and compilation of crop statistics is completely manual except in a few states, resulting in delay and manual errors.

Only a few of the states like Karnataka, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh have established a digital data collection system in the form of GPS-enabled mobile applications for crop area and CCEs data collection directly from the field.

States like Maharashtra and MP have also developed such digital systems but only for crop area recording.

India suffers for want of reliable agricultural production estimates and stressing on the need for “a real time assessment estimate” of crops.

Therefore, a need was felt to reform the existing production estimation system through the use of technological intervention.

Guidelines for the Digital Crop Survey:

According to sources, the Economics, Statistics and Evaluation Division (ESED) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare (MoA&FW), has finalised the guidelines.

According to the guidelines, all states/ UTs shall automate/digitise the process of area enumeration/girdawari of crops at field level, i.e., Digital Crop Survey, from 2024-25 Agricultural Year.

In India, the agriculture year begins in July and ends in June, the following year.

Under the guidelines, states and UTs shall use GPS enabled mobile application for collecting crop sown data of each plot for each season and share the village level aggregated data with DA&FW through API only.

About the Digital Crop Survey:

As part of the Digital Crop Survey, the MoA&FW has asked states **to collect information on “basic parameters”**, including -

- Village name, year, season, farmer ID, farm ID,
- Crop name (at farm plot level),
- Crop variety,
- Crop sown area (at farm plot level),
- Geotags of crop photos,
- Geotags of farm boundary where the crop is sown,

Sowing/planting date (at farm plot level), irrigation type (at farm plot level), and

Irrigation source (at farm plot level).

This move comes after the Centre launched a pilot Digital Crop Survey across a dozen states earlier this year.



In a separate move, the MoA&FW has also revamped the timelines of the estimate release.

As per the earlier system, the ministry used to release estimates in five phases.

However, now the ministry has decided to do away with the fourth phase that had been released every August.

The ministry will release the final estimates covering all states and all seasons (kharif, rabi, summer) in September-October.

Earlier, the final estimates used to be released in the month of February, the following year.