

## 1. Geo-tagging of payment system touch points2.0

### Topic: Economy

**In News:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the framework for geo-tagging of payment system touch points.

### More on the Topic:

- Geotagging, or GeoTagging, is the process of adding geographical identification metadata (**geographical coordinates (latitude and longitude)**) to various metadata.
- Under the framework, Banks/Non-bank PSOs shall **capture and maintain geographical coordinates for all payment touch points.**
- Further, geo-tagging in respect to PoS terminals and Paper-based/Soft QR Codes should be submitted to RBI.
- PoS terminals include - mobile PoS, soft PoS, tablet PoS, desktop PoS, self-service kiosk PoS, android-based PoS terminals, non-android-based PoS terminals with GPRS SIM Card-embedded, non-android-based PoS terminals with PSTN Line Connectivity, etc. Meanwhile, QR codes consist of Bharat QR, UPI QR, etc.
- RBI has directed all banks and non-banks to maintain a registry with accurate location of all payment touch points across the country.



### Why Geotagging of payment touch points are important?

- Geo-tagging of payment system touch points will enable proper monitoring of availability of payment acceptance infrastructure like Points of Sale (PoS) terminals, Quick Response (QR) codes, etc.
- In turn, such monitoring will support policy intervention to optimize the distribution of payment infrastructure.
- It provides insights on regional penetration of digital payments.
- It monitors infrastructure density across different locations.
- Also, geo-tagging identifies the scope for deploying additional payment touch points, and facilitates focused digital literacy programmes.

**Source: The Hindu**

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## 2. India's Edible Oil Import Dependence

### Topic: Economy

**In News:** In a bid to contain the rising edible oil prices, India is looking to sign long-term contracts with Mercosur countries to import crude sunflower oil.



### More on the Topic:

- Russia's invasion of Ukraine has disrupted imports from Europe's second-largest nation, which has resulted in a sharp spike in edible oil prices.
- **Mercosur, a Latin American trading bloc**, is composed of sovereign member states: **Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay**. India had signed the PTA with Mercosur in 2004.
- India's Edible Oil Imports:
- India imports 60 per cent of its edible oil requirements, and sunflower oil constitutes around 14 per cent of such imports.
- In 2021, India imported 90 per cent of crude sunflower oil from Ukraine and Russia.

### India's edible oil economy

- India is the world's largest importer of edible oil with a share of 20.7 per cent, followed by EU and China.
- 60% of edible oil requirement is met through imports and the share of palm oil is about 60% of the import bill.
- India is the second-largest edible oil consuming country.

### Government initiatives to Improve Edible Oil Cultivation:

- National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm (NEOM-OP)
- Oil Palm Area Expansion under Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana
- Increasing the MSP of rapeseed-mustard up by 8.6 % recently
- Creation of buffer stock for oilseeds
- Cluster demonstration of oilseed crops

**Source: Business Today**

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### 3.The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act, 2020

**Topic: Polity and Governance**

**In News:** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has extended the validity of FCRA registration of NGOs further.

**More on the Topic:**

- **Registration under FCRA is mandatory for any NGO or association to receive foreign funds** and it is renewed every five years.
- Latest 2020 amendments to FCRA mandated that registered NGOs must open a designated account in the main branch of the State Bank of India in the Capital in which the foreign contributions to their various causes would exclusively receive.
- According to the MHA, between 2016 and 2020, the government cancelled the FCRA licences of more than 6,600 NGOs and suspended those of about 264.
- **FCRA is implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs.**



**Significance of FCRA:**

- FCRA regulates foreign donations and ensures that such contributions **do not adversely affect the internal security of the country.** The Act, first enacted in 1976 was amended in the year 2010 and then 2020.
- Intelligence Bureau (IB) inputs have shown that **foreign funds entering India were used to fund activities that destabilise national peace and security.**
- The inputs even indicated that the money was used to train naxals. There is an element of national security, integrity of the nation involved here.

**Source: Indian Express**

### 4. Manual Scavenging

**Topic: Social Justice**

**In News:** GOI has clarified on the discrepancy in manual scavengers data.

**More on the Topic:**

- The data of number of manual scavengers as per Socio-Economic Caste Census, 2011 was based on self-declaration at that period of time and was not verified by the concerned local authority.





- The data was also verified by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment through sample check and found not to be correct.
- Thereafter, a National Survey was proposed to identify the manual scavengers. The National Survey of Manual Scavengers, 2018 was conducted jointly by representatives of local authority/State/District Administration.
- Therefore, there is variation in the data of manual scavengers as per the Socio-Economic Caste Census, 2011 and the National Survey of Manual Scavengers, 2018.

#### **Government Initiatives to Eliminate Manual Scavenging:**

- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched a mobile app **“Swachhata Abhiyaan”** (available on play store) to capture the data of insanitary latrines, if any, still existing and manual scavengers associated with them.
- Any person can upload the data of insanitary latrines and manual scavengers on the mobile app.
- Under the **Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS)** payment of One Time Cash Assistance of Rs. 40,000/- to the identified manual scavengers is being done.
- **Rs. 10 lakh each is paid to the families of those who have died while cleaning sewers/septic tanks.**
- Central and State Governments are providing rehabilitation benefits, as per their schemes to the family of persons who died due to hazardous cleaning.

#### **The following measures have been taken to promote 100% mechanization of Scavenging associated with septic tanks/sewers:**

- **Under the Swachhta Udyami Yojana (SUY) concessional loans** are provided to sanitation workers and their dependants and the urban local bodies for procurement of sanitation related equipments, machines and vehicles costing upto Rs. 50.00 lakh.
- Under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programme, free short duration upskilling training is provided to the sanitation workers. The candidates are trained about mechanized cleaning and safety precautions for safe and healthy cleaning of sewers and septic tanks.
- Through workshops conducted for the sanitation workers, the participants are made aware about the provisions under the “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013”.

#### **About Manual Scavenging:**

- Manual scavenging is a term used mainly for "manually cleaning, carrying, disposing of, or otherwise handling, human excreta in an insanitary latrine or in an open drain or sewer or in a septic tank or a pit".
- The construction of dry toilets and employment of manual scavengers to clean such dry toilets was prohibited in India in 1993.
- The law was extended and clarified to include a ban on use of human labour for direct cleaning of sewers, ditches, pits and septic tanks in 2013.

#### **Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (PEMSR).**

- **India banned the practice of Manual scavenging** under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (PEMSR).
- The Act bans the use of any individual for manually cleaning, carrying, disposing of or otherwise handling in any manner, human excreta till its disposal.
- **In 2013, the definition of manual scavengers was also broadened** to include people employed to clean septic tanks, ditches, or railway tracks.
- The Act recognizes manual scavenging as a **“dehumanising practice,”** and cites a need to **“correct the historical injustice and indignity suffered by the manual scavengers.”**

Source: PIB

## 5. Minimum Support Price

### Topic: Economy

**In News:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for raw jute for the 2022-2023 season.

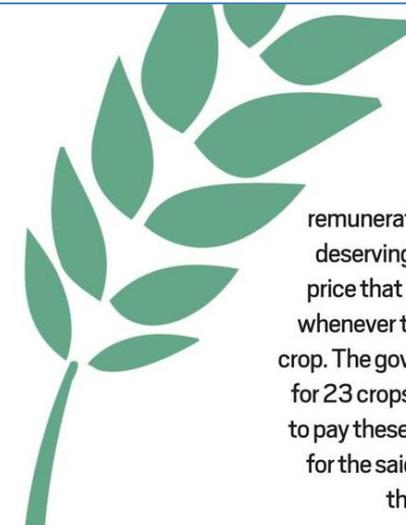
#### More on the Topic:

- The announced price is in line with the principle of fixing the MSP at a level of **at least 1.5 times of the all-India weighted average cost of production** as announced by the government in the 2018-2019 Budget.
- It is also based on the recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices**. It assures a minimum of 50% as margin of profit.
- **The Jute Corporation of India (JCI)** will continue as the central government nodal agency to undertake the price support operation.
- In case of any losses in the operation, they would be fully reimbursed by the central government.

#### About MSP:

- MSP is the rate at which the government buys grains from farmers. Currently, it fixes MSPs for 23 crops grown in both Kharif and Rabi seasons.
- The MSP is fixed twice a year on the recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**, which is a statutory body and submits separate reports recommending prices for kharif and rabi seasons.

#### About Jute Cultivation:



**WHAT'S MSP**

It is a **“minimum price”** for any crop that the government considers as remunerative for farmers and hence deserving of **“support”**. It's also the price that government agencies pay whenever they procure the particular crop. The government now fixes MSPs for 23 crops, but is NOT legally bound to pay these even if open market rates for the said produce are ruling below their announced floor prices

- India is the **world's largest producer of raw jute and jute goods**, contributing to over 50% and 40% respectively of global production.
- Temperature: Between 25-35°C.
- Rainfall: Around 150-250 cm.
- Soil Type: Well-drained alluvial soil.
- **Top Jute Producing States:** West Bengal > Bihar > Assam > Andhra Pradesh > Odisha.
- It is mainly concentrated in eastern India because of the rich alluvial soil of Ganga-Brahmaputra delta.

Source: Hindu

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## 6. Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary

**Topic: Environment and Ecology**

**In News:** The Environment Ministry's Expert Appraisal Committee has recommended grant of environment clearance to a private firm near Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary.

**More on the Topic:**

- The Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary is one of the oldest in India.
- It is located at Tamil Nadu.
- It is home to migratory birds such as pintail, garganey, grey wagtail, blue-winged teal, common sandpiper etc.
- Realising its ornithological importance, the British government undertook steps to develop Vedanthangal into a bird sanctuary as early as 1798.
- It was upgraded to a wildlife sanctuary in 1972 by the Wildlife Protection Act. Till date the local community holds low key functions and marriages during the breeding season of the birds marking their exemplary link with the ecosystem.

Source: Hindu

