

PRELIMS MANTRA – 5 (18/02/2025)

- **Gyanesh Kumar appointed as new CEC (he was EC earlier) & Vivek Joshi as EC:**
 - Election Commission (EC) is a **three-member Constitutional body (Article 324)** made up of one Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and two Election Commissioners. Although **all three are equal**, CEC, like Chief Justice of India, is first among equals.
 - Earlier, there was no law passed by Parliament for appointment of the CEC and ECs. Appointments were done by President on advice of Prime Minister.
 - **Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023** lays down procedures for appointment of both CEC and ECs.
 - A **Search Committee headed by Law Minister and comprising two senior bureaucrats** serving as secretaries to Government of India must first draw up a **shortlist of five candidates**.
 - This shortlist is then **sent to a Selection Committee made up of Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition, and a Cabinet Minister nominated by the PM**. Section 8 of the Act gives this **Committee power to also consider names beyond shortlisted five**.
 - **President appoints** next CEC and EC based on Selection Committee's recommendation.
 - **Section 5 of Act states eligibility criteria** as "persons who are holding or have held a post equivalent to the rank of Secretary to the Government of India and shall be persons of integrity, who have knowledge of and experience in management and conduct of elections,".
 - **Act also states the terms of service as CEC and ECs shall not be eligible for re-appointment**. Where an Election Commissioner is appointed as Chief Election Commissioner, his term of office shall not be more than six years in aggregate as the Election Commissioner and the Chief Election Commissioner.

Notes: In its judgment on March 2, 2023, Supreme Court ruled that a selection committee comprising Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and Chief Justice of India would select the CEC and ECs, until Parliament enacted a law.

- **Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak (EAST):** It is **China's nuclear fusion reactor**. Lightest nucleus in nature is of hydrogen, consisting of a single proton. An isotope of hydrogen called deuterium has one proton and one neutron in its nucleus. Nucleus of another isotope called tritium has one proton and two neutrons. While **deuterium is abundant in seawater, there are no natural deposits of tritium, and it is very hard to produce**. At present it is mostly created as a by-product in heavy-water fission reactors in Canada, India, and South Korea.
- **Deposit insurance:** Money deposited by bank customers is insured under **Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation Act, 1961** by **Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation under Finance Ministry**. When a bank fails and RBI steps in to stop withdrawals, corporation acts as a guard to secure money of depositors. Corporation has been in existence since January 1968. **Deposit insurance limit was increased to ₹5 lakh in 2020 from ₹1 lakh fixed in 1993**, following failure of Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative Bank.
- **Colour revolutions:** With the dawn of the 21st century, **post-Soviet States experienced a wave of uprisings known as "colour revolutions"**. Most notable examples include **Georgia's Rose Revolution (2003), Ukraine's Orange Revolution (2004), and Kyrgyzstan's Tulip Revolution (2005)**. They were largely peaceful protests to replace pro-Moscow governments with a pro-West government in the name of democratic reforms.
- **Bacterial cellulose:** It can be used as a **bandage to significantly improve healing and regeneration in plants**, researchers reported. Bacterial cellulose is a natural polymer produced by certain bacteria. It has thus far been **widely used in human medicine, often for wound healing**.
- **Magnitude 4 Earthquake in Delhi:** **MSK, or Medvedev-Sponheuer-Karnik scale is a measure of intensity**, rather than strength, or energy released, which is described by magnitude. MSK scale measures the susceptibility of an area to an earthquake. **Zone 4 (in which Delhi lies) in India includes areas that are expected to experience MSK-8-level intensity** during an earthquake. Zone 5, the most vulnerable areas in India, correspond to MSK-9 levels of intensity or higher.
- **Green Bonds:** Green bonds are debt instruments issued by governments, corporations, and multilateral banks to raise funds for projects that reduce emissions or enhance climate resilience. **'Greenium'** refers to lower borrowing costs typically associated with Green Bonds. **Sovereign green bonds (SGrBs)** are those that are issued by sovereign entities, like Government of India, which formulated a framework for issuing such bonds in 2022.
- **Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs launched by Finance Minister:** To provide guarantee coverage to **Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) for term loan assistance of up to Rs.100 crore to eligible MSMEs** for their projects involving **purchase of equipment/machinery**, in pursuance of Union Budget 2024-25 announcement.
- **National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA)** will be launched in 152 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across 26 States and 3 Union Territories. **Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development**, has

initiated this pilot program. It aims to create and update land records in urban areas to ensure accurate and reliable documentation of land ownership. It is fully funded by Central government. Survey of India is technical partner for NAKSHA programme which is responsible for conducting aerial surveys.

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana

- **Launched in 2016** by PM, scheme offers a comprehensive shield against crop losses caused by unpredictable natural hazards.
- **Central Sector Scheme** voluntary for the States as well as farmers.
- It envisages use of improved technology like satellite imagery, drones, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) & remote sensing.
- Capturing crop yield data/Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs) via the **CCE-Agri App for direct upload to the National Crop Insurance Portal (NCIP)**.
- For timely and transparent loss assessment as well as timely settlement of admissible claims **YES-TECH (Yield Estimation System Based on Technology)** has been introduced from Kharif 2023. It enables large scale adoption of technology-based yield estimates for yield loss and insurance claim assessments under PMFBY.
- **CROPIC (Collection of Real Time Observations and Photo of Crops)**.
- Maximum premium payable by farmer will be 2% for the Kharif food and oilseed crops. For rabi food and oilseeds crop, it is 1.5% and for yearly commercial or horticultural crops it will be 5%. The remaining premium is subsidized by the government.
- It covers natural disasters (droughts, floods), pests, and diseases, along with post-harvest losses due to local risks like hailstorms and landslides.

Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)

- An umbrella scheme aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce.
 - It has three components, and states can choose whichever one they wish to implement.
- 1.Price Support Scheme (PSS):**
- Procurement of notified Pulses, Oilseeds and Copra conforming to the prescribed Fair Average Quality (FAQ) is undertaken by Central Nodal Agencies (CNAs) at MSP directly from pre-registered farmers through State level agencies.
 - National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), Food Cooperation of India (FCI) will take up PSS operations in states/districts.
 - Procurement expenditure and losses due to procurement will be borne by Central Government as per norms.
- 2.Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS):**
- Cover all oilseeds for which MSP is notified.
 - Direct payment of the difference between the MSP and the selling/modal price will be made to pre-registered farmers selling his produce in the notified market yard through a transparent auction process.
 - It does not involve any physical procurement of crops.
- 3.Pilot of Private Procurement and Stockist Schemes (PPPS):**
- It will allow private players to participate in the procurement of crops. Pilot district/selected APMC(s) of the district will cover one or more crops of oilseeds for which MSP is notified.
- Note: Only one scheme, i.e., PSS or PDPS, may be made operational in one State with respect to one commodity.**

PRACTICE MCQs

Q.1 Consider the following statements about the National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA) pilot program:

1. It is an initiative of the Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development.
2. It aims to create and update land records in urban areas to ensure accurate and reliable documentation of land ownership.
3. It is fully funded by the Central Government.
4. Survey of India is the technical partner in this initiative.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 2 and 3 only
- b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- c) 1, 2 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: D

Q2. With reference to the provisions under the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023, consider the following statements:

1. A search committee headed by Law Minister and comprising two senior bureaucrats serving as secretaries to Government of India must first draw up a shortlist of seven candidates.
2. Selection Committee made up of Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition, and Union Home Minister considers the names shortlisted by search committee.
3. Selection Committee has power to consider names beyond those shortlisted by search committee.

4. When an Election Commissioner is appointed as Chief Election Commissioner, his term of office shall not be more than six years in aggregate as the Election Commissioner and the Chief Election Commissioner.

Which of the statements given above are incorrect?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 3 and 4 only
- d) 1 and 4 only

Answer: A

Q3. Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak (EAST), is a fusion reactor of which of the following countries?

- a) Japan
- b) South Korea
- c) China
- d) Russia

Answer: C

Q4. Which of the following statements is incorrect about Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana?

- a) It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- b) Maximum premium payable by farmer will be 2% for the Kharif food and oilseed crops.
- c) Maximum premium payable by farmer for rabi food and oilseeds crop is 1.5%
- d) Maximum premium payable by farmer for yearly commercial or horticultural crops is 5%.

Answer: A

Q5. The Post-Soviet States experienced a wave of uprisings at the start of the 21st Century. Which of the following is/are correctly matched pairs in this regard?

- 1. Georgia - Rose Revolution (2003)
- 2. Ukraine - Orange Revolution (2004)
- 3. Kyrgyzstan - Tulip Revolution (2005)

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D



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