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Vernacular Innovation Program

Recently, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog has launched the Vernacular Innovation Program (VIP), to enable innovators and entrepreneurs to have access to the innovation ecosystem in 22 scheduled languages.

About:

- VIP is an initiative to lower the language barrier in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship.
- To build the necessary capacity for the VIP, AIM has identified and will be training a Vernacular Task Force (VTF) in each of the 22 scheduled languages.
- Each task force would comprise vernacular language teachers, subject experts, technical writers, and the leadership of regional Atal Incubation Centers (AICs).

Significance:

- It will be a stepping stone in the journey of the Indian innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem which will cement the cognitive and design thinking attitude in young and aspiring minds.
- Building a strong local network of design experts and innovation practitioners and helping in overcoming the barriers of language and empowering innovators in the farthest areas of the country.



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- It will create equal opportunity for the vernacular innovators (90% of the Indian population).
 - As per the 2011 census, **only 10.4% of Indians speak English** and Only **0.02% of Indians spoke English** as their first language.
- **Other Initiatives Related to Innovation/Entrepreneurship:**
 - **India Innovation Index**
 - **IMPRINT (IMPacting Research INnovation and Technology)**
 - **Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana (UAY)**
 - **StartUp India initiative**
 - **Mission Innovation 2.0**
 - **AIM-PRIME**
 - **AIM-iCREST: NITI Aayog**
 - **Atal Community Innovation Center**
 - **Atal Tinkering Labs**

Hindi Translation of Tamil literature

Why in News

- Recently, the Minister of State for Education released the **Hindi translation of Tolkāppiyam and the Kannada translations of 9 books of Classical Tamil literature that related back to the Sangam Era.**

Sangam Period:

- The period roughly between the **3rd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D.** in South India is known as **Sangam Period**, it was the area lying to the south of river **Krishna and Tungabhadra.**
- It has been named after the **Sangam academies** held during that period of **Pandya kings** of Madurai.
- At the Sangams, **eminent scholars assembled and functioned as the board of censors**, created the **earliest specimens of Dravidian literature.**
- South India, during the Sangam Age, was ruled by three dynasties-the **Cheras, Cholas, and Pandyas.**



Three Sangams:



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- According to the Tamil legends, there were **three Sangams (Academy of Tamil poets)** held in ancient South India popularly called **Muchchangam**.
- The **First Sangam**, is believed to be held at **Madurai**, **attended by gods and legendary sages**. No literary work of this Sangam is available.
- The **Second Sangam** was held at **Kapadapuram**, **only Tolkappiyam survives** from this.
- The **Third Sangam** was also held at **Madurai**. **A few of these Tamil literary works have survived** and are a useful source to reconstruct the history of the Sangam period.

Sangam Literature:

- The Sangam literature includes **Tolkappiyam, Ettutogai, Pattuppattu, Pathinenkilkanakku**, and two epics named – **Silappadikaram and Manimegalai**.
- **Tolkappiyam**: It was **authored by Tolkappiyar** and is considered the **earliest of Tamil literary work and other than being a Tamil grammar it** provides insights into the political and socio-economic conditions of the time.
- **It is a unique work on grammar and poetics**, in its three parts of nine sections each, deals with **Ezhuttu(letter), Col (word), and Porul (subject matter)**.
- Almost all levels of the human language from the **spoken to the most poetic lie within the purview of Tolkappiyar's analysis** as he treats in exquisitely poetic and epigrammatic **statements on phonology, morphology, syntax, rhetoric, prosody, and poetics**.
- **Ettutogai (Eight Anthologies)**: It consists of **eight works** – **Aingurunooru, Narrinai, Aganaooru, Purananooru, Kuruntogai, Kalittogai, Paripadal and Padirrupattu**.
- **Pattuppattu (Ten Idylls)**: It consists of **ten works** – **Thirumurugarruppadai, Porunararruppadai, Sirupanarruppadai, Perumpanarruppadai, Mullaippattu, Nedunalvadai, Maduraikkanji, Kurinjippattu, Pattinappalai and Malaipadukadam**.
- **Pathinenkilkanakku**: It contains **eighteen works about ethics and morals**.
- The most important among these works is **Tirukkural authored by Thiruvalluvar**, the Tamil great poet, and philosopher.
- **Tamil Epics**: The two epics **Silappathikaram are written by Elango Adigal and Manimegalai by Sitalai Sattanar**.
- They also provide valuable details about the Sangam society and polity.

Beej Gram Yojana

Why in News:

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has informed Lok Sabha about the **Seed Village Programme (Beej Gram Yojana)**.

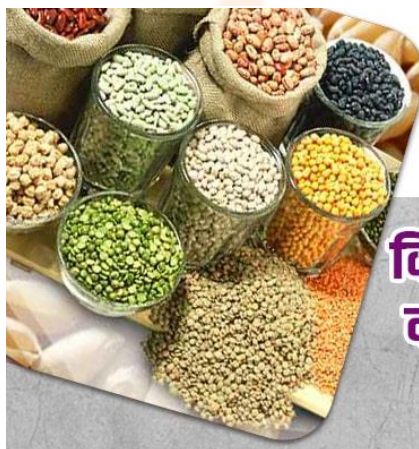


What is a Seed Village Programme?

- It was launched by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in 2014-15.**
- The programme is a **key component of the Sub-Mission on Seeds & Planting Materials.**

Aim:

- To **upgrade the quality of farmers' saved seeds.**
- Financial assistance for the **distribution of foundation/certified seeds at 50% of seed cost for cereal crops and 60% for pulses, oilseeds, fodder, and green manure crops is available** for up to one acre per farmer.



बीज ग्राम योजना

किसानों को रियायती दरों पर बीज उपलब्ध कराएंगी सरकार

What is Sub-Mission on Seeds & Planting Materials?

- **The mission aims to promote the production and multiplication of quality seeds of agricultural crops** so that the required quantities of seeds could be made available to farmers in the country.

Components: The various components under the mission include –

- a) **Seed Village Programme,**
- b) **Establishment of Seed Processing- cum- Seed Storage Godowns** at Gram Panchayat Level,
- c) **National Seed Reserve,**
- d) **Boosting Seed Production in Private Sector** and
- e) **Strengthening of Quality Control Infrastructure** Facilities.

Agri-Tech Challenge

Why in News:

- **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)** have launched their **first AgriTech Challenge** under its ambitious innovative Agri-tech program.

Background

- **South-South Innovation Platform** was launched by the AIM, NITI Aayog, UNCDF, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Rabo Foundation in 2021.
- The platform **aims to enable the cross-border exchange of innovations, insights, and investments** among emerging markets across **India, Indonesia, Malawi, Malaysia, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia.**
- The first initiative of the Platform is the **Agritech Challenge ('Programme').**

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What is the purpose of the Agritech Challenge?

- To help smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa to address their challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic.
- The challenge will support selected AgriTech and Agri-fintech startups to expand to the international markets.
- They will get access to industry, investor & market linkages, along with mentorship from sector experts.



What is the significance of the Agritech challenge for India?

- In India, more than 50% of the population is dependent on agriculture, and it contributes to about 15-18% of the GDP. To improve the agricultural sectoral landscape, NITI Aayog is taking several steps.
- This challenge will help in those steps by helping develop a more self-reliant and responsive agriculture ecosystem that can address the issue of food security and also benefits smallholder farmers.

Pralay: First conventional ballistic missile

Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted a maiden flight test of indigenously developed surface-to-surface missile 'Pralay', from Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.

- 'Pralay' is India's first conventional ballistic missile and is an answer to any conventional missile attack from northern or western borders.
- Pralay is a solid-fuel, surface-to-surface battlefield missile developed by DRDO based on Prithvi Defence Vehicle from the Indian ballistic missile programme.
- 'Pralay' is a 350-500 km short-range missile with a payload capacity of 500-1,000 kg.
- It can be launched from a mobile launcher.



- The **missile guidance system includes a state-of-the-art navigation system** and integrated avionics.

National Retail Trade Policy

Recently, A **draft National Retail Trade Policy** has been prepared by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry to **streamline retail trade and the development of all formats of the retail trade sector** in a harmonious manner.

- **Objectives of the National Retail Trade Policy is to -**
 - **Promote e-commerce all over the country.**
 - **Leverage retail trade as a tool** for the socio-economic development of the country.
 - **Encourage skill development and create more employment opportunities** for all sections of society involved in retail trade.
 - **Identify and address existing infrastructure gaps** affecting the retail trade industry.
 - **Accelerate investment flow to underdeveloped regions** across the country.
- This Policy aims at **improving the ease of doing business by ensuring easy and quick access to affordable credit.**
- It also aims at **providing an effective consultative and grievance redressal mechanism** for the retail sector, for the welfare of traders & their employees.
- It will also **address the issue of physical infrastructure in setting up of data centres** along with power supply, connectivity, etc,
- It also **aims to encourage foreign investment in the marketplace and e-commerce platform**, in which foreign investment has been made.

Albino Indian Flap Shell Turtle

Why in News:

- Mountaineers in Telangana have encountered a rarely found species of **Albino Indian Flapshell Turtles**.

What is Albino Indian Flapshell Turtle?

- **Indian flapshell turtle (Lissemys punctata)** is a freshwater species of turtle found in South Asia.
- **Different colour of the turtle may be due to albinism** – a genetic disorder that causes a complete lack of pigments in the body, or a congenital disorder that is



characterized by a complete or partial absence of tyrosine pigment.

About Indian Flapshell Turtle

- The “flap-shelled” name stems from the presence of femoral flaps located on the plastron. These flaps of skin cover the limbs when they retract into the shell.



Distribution:

- They are found in **Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh (Indus and Gange’s drainages), and Myanmar** (Irrawaddy and Salween Rivers).
- They live in the **shallow, quiet, often stagnant waters** of rivers, streams, marshes, ponds, lakes and irrigation canals, and tanks.
- These turtles **prefer waters with sand or mud bottoms because of their tendency to burrow**. They are also well adapted to drought conditions.
- **Diet:**
 - They are known to be **omnivorous**. Its diet consists of **frogs, shrimp, snails, aquatic vegetation, plant leaves, flowers, fruits, grasses and seed**.
- **IUCN Status of Indian Flapshell Turtle is Vulnerable.**

RaghukulCS

