

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – FEB 27, 2020

NATIONAL

- The Union government - approved setting up of a 'National Technical Textiles Mission' on February 26 with a total outlay of Rs 1,480 crore



- ✓ The mission will be for a four-year implementation period, commencing from 2020-21 till 2023-24.
- ✓ The mission has been launched with an objective to position India as a global leader in the field of 'Technical Textiles'.
- ✓ It will have four components
 - The first component will focus on research and development and innovation at the fibre level and will have an outlay of ₹1,000 crore.
 - Under the component the focus is to be on Aramid Fibre, Carbon Fibre, Composites and Nylon Fibre.
 - The second component will be for promotion and development of market for technical textiles.
 - The third component will focus on export promotion
 - The last component will be on education, training and skill development.
- ✓ The mission aims at an average growth rate of 15-20% per annum
- ✓ It intends to achieve a domestic market size of \$40-50 billion by the year 2024 through market development, market promotion, international technical collaborations, investment promotions and 'Make in India' initiatives

- ✓ Technical textiles are niche segment of textiles that are used for various applications ranging from agriculture, roads, railway tracks, sportswear, healthcare, bullet proof jackets, fire proof jackets, high altitude combat gear and space applications.
 - ✓ They are widely utilized in the fields of aquaculture, dairy, poultry and also forms the part of centre's flagship schemes such as Jal Jivan Mission, Swachh Bharat Mission and Ayushman Bharat
 - ✓ The mission aims to bring an overall improvement in cost economy, water and soil conservation, better agricultural productivity and higher income to farmers per acre of land holding apart from promoting the manufacturing and exports activities in India
 - ✓ It also seeks to promote the export potential of technical textiles, enhancing it from the current annual value of approximately Rs 14,000 crore to Rs 20,000 crore by 2021-22
 - ✓ It plans an average growth of 10% in exports per year up to 2023-24.
 - ✓ In India, the technical textiles segment is estimated at \$16 billion (about Rs 1.14 lakh crore) which is approximately 6% of the \$250 billion (about Rs 17.75 lakh crore) global technical textiles market.
 - ✓ However, the penetration level of technical textiles is low in India, varying between 5-10% against the level of 30-70% in developed countries.
 - ✓ As per the Union textiles minister Smriti Irani, the mission will provide skill development to around 50,000 people in the field of technical textiles
- **The Cabinet - approved the Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2020 on February 26**
- ✓ The 15 major changes suggested by the 23-member Rajya Sabha select committee, headed by Bhupendra Yadav, was accepted by the Cabinet
 - ✓ The amended bill allows a "willing woman" and not just a "close relative" to become a surrogate mother
 - ✓ The amendment also seeks to increase the proposed insurance cover for a surrogate mother to 36 months from 16 months earlier.
 - ✓ The bill aims to regulate surrogacy while prohibiting commercial surrogacy and allowing altruistic ones
 - ✓ Also, only Indian couples with both partners being of Indian origin, can opt for surrogacy in the country.
 - ✓ The other recommendations included omission of five-year wait period before opting for surrogacy, and allowing single women – either divorcee or widow – in the 35- to 45-year age group and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) to avail surrogacy, besides infertile Indian couples.
 - ✓ The Surrogacy (Regulation) bill was passed in Lok Sabha in 2019

- **The Union Cabinet - paved the way for implementation of all central laws under the Concurrent List with required modification and amendments for the Union Territory of J&K on February 26.**
- ✓ These Acts will be adapted under the Section 96, Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.
- ✓ A total of 37 central laws have now been made applicable to the UT of J&K effective from October 31, 2019.
- ✓ The changes comes into effect after the scrapping of Article 370 of the Constitution that removed special status given to the erstwhile state of J&K
- ✓ The section 96 of J&K Reorganisation Act grants powers to the Central Government to adopt or modify laws for the application of any law within one year of newly formed Union territories.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The Sri Lankan Government - formally notified the United Nations on February 26, 2020 that it is withdrawing from a United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) resolution for investigating alleged war crimes**
- ✓ The UNHRC resolution 40/1, co-sponsored by Sri Lanka and 11 other countries, aims to investigate war time violence against Tamil Tiger rebels.
- ✓ Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa announced that the government will not abide by a 2015 resolution anymore that calls for accountability for alleged excesses carried out by Sri Lankan forces and reparations for victims.
- ✓ Sri Lankan forces defeated Tamil Tigers in 2009
- ✓ The state forces were accused of killing thousands of civilian Tamil people in the final stages of Sri Lankan civil war
- ✓ The Sri Lankan government ended the war on May 18, 2009 by killing V Prabhakaran, the head of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), in a coastal village in Mullaitivu.
- ✓ At least 1,00,000 people were killed in the conflict lasting more than three decades.

COMMITTEES

- **A high-level committee - submitted its report to the Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on February 25 over the implementation of Clause 6 of Assam Accord**



- ✓ The committee was headed by Retd Justice B K Sharma.
- ✓ The Clause 6 provides constitutional, administrative and legislative safeguards to preserve and promote cultural, linguistic and heritage of Assamese people
- ✓ Assam Accord was an agreement signed between the government of India and the leaders of Assam Movement in 1985
- ✓ Under the agreement, the Centre agreed to accept all the migrants that entered before 1966

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - will inaugurate the first ever two-day summit on Artificial Intelligence on April 11, 2020 in New Delhi.**
- ✓ The summit will aim at boosting social empowerment, inclusion and transformation in key areas and sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, education and smart mobility.
- ✓ The summit is named as 'Responsible AI for Social Empowerment- RAISE 2020'
- ✓ It will begin with a Startup Challenge – Pitchfest, organized by Central Government & Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- ✓ The summit is expected to witness participation from a large number of global industry leaders, key opinion makers, AI experts, academia and government representatives

DEFENCE

- **The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) - has launched three ocean-based advanced warning systems-**
 - ✓ **Swell Surge Forecast System (SSFS),**
 - ✓ **Algal Bloom Information Service (ABIS) and**
 - ✓ **the Small Vessel Advisory and Forecast Services System (SVAS)**

JUST LAUNCHED : NEW SERVICES/PRODUCTS FROM INCOIS



- **ALGAL BLOOM INFORMATION SERVICE (ABIS)**
- **SMALL VESSEL ADVISORY AND FORECAST SERVICES SYSTEM (SVAS)**
- **SWELL SURGE FORECAST SYSTEM**



- ✓ The swell surge forecast system has been designed to predict swell surges, which occur along the Indian coast, mostly on the western coast

- ✓ The Forecast System will reduce the flash flood like damages and losses to the boats and nets of the fishermen and alert them well in advance about the swell surges.
- ✓ The Swell Surges are surface gravity waves and not wind waves (the common waves).
- ✓ The Small Vessel Advisory and Forecast Services System will warn the small marine vessels, especially fishing vessels, regarding the potential areas where the small vessels are likely to overturn
- ✓ It is based on the Boat Safety Index (BSI), which is derived from wave model forecast outputs including wave height, wave steepness, directional spread and rapid development of wind at sea, which is boat-specific.
- ✓ The Algal Bloom Information Service aims to provide information regarding the harmful algal blooms
- ✓ The algal blooms can cause damage to the marine life, fishery sector and water quality and cause respiratory problems among the coastal population.
- ✓ The INCOIS is an autonomous body operating under Ministry of Earth Sciences

ECONOMY

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman - launched Enhanced Access and Service Excellence (EASE 3.0) on February 26**



- ✓ The main aim of EASE 3.0 is to make public sector banking 'technology-enabled' and 'smart'.
- ✓ By this initiative, the Government intends to achieve ease of banking for customers.
- ✓ EASE is set of technology-based banking reforms which aim at improvising banking sector with technology.
- ✓ The initiative will enhance paperless, digital banking.
- ✓ It ensures wider financial inclusion, better banking experience and easier credit distribution.
- ✓ The EASE agenda was launched in January 2018

SPORTS

- **Five-time Grand Slam winner Maria Sharapova - announced her retirement at the age of 32.**



- ✓ Sharapova served a 15-month ban for failing a drugs test at the 2016 Australian Open
 - ✓ She was convicted of using the banned drugs Meldonium during the 2016 Australian Open
 - ✓ She returned to the court in April 2017.
 - ✓ Sharapova achieved instant fame as a 17-year-old Wimbledon winner in 2004, the third-youngest player to conquer the All England Club's grass courts.
 - ✓ She became World No. 1 on August 22, 2005, when she was just 28 years old and won the US Open the next year.
 - ✓ Later, Sharapova won the Australian open in 2008
 - ✓ After that, she won the French Open title in 2012 and became the 10th female player to complete a career Grand Slam
 - ✓ She also won the Olympic silver medal.
 - ✓ She won the French Open trophy in 2014 despite an injury.
 - ✓ The Russian Sharapova is currently ranked 373.
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- **The sports ministry - cancelled the recognition of the country's premier school sports body, School Games Federation of India (SGFI), on charges of gross mismanagement of affairs**
 - ✓ The federation was headed by double Olympic medallist Sushil Kumar
 - ✓ The ministry held the organisation responsible for negligent behaviour which had resulted in the death of a promising 15-year-old footballer, Nitisha Negi, during the Pacific School Games in Adelaide, Australia in December 2017.
 - ✓ During the same event, a girls' hockey team, sent by the SGFI as part of the 187-member contingent of athletes, was subjected to alleged ill-treatment and lack of support from the Indian officials/managers accompanying them.

- ✓ The ministry cited these two incidents, apart from other irregularities committed by accompanying coaches/managers, as reasons behind suspending the recognition of the SGFI.
- ✓ The Adelaide event was neither recognised by the International School Sports Federation (ISSF) nor sanctioned by the ministry and Sports Authority of India (SAI).
- ✓ The SGFI had sent the players to the event after taking a participation fee of Rs 2.5 lakh from each competing athlete.

