

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JUNE 27, 2019

TAMIL NADU

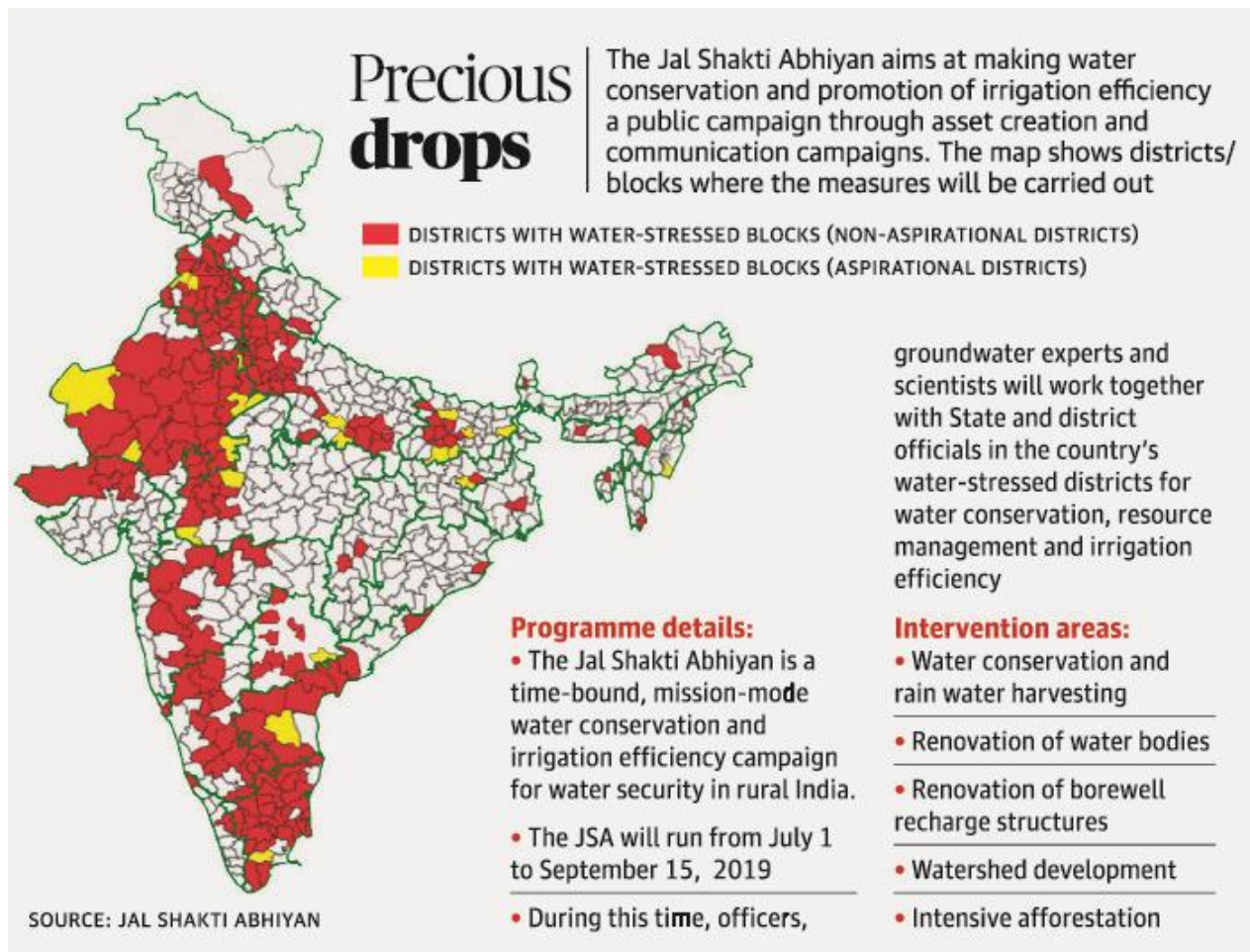
◆ **A fifth reservoir, that would help quench the thirst of Chennai residents - was nearing completion in Tiruvallur district**

- ✓ The scheme, announced by the late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa in 2012, involves linking of the Kannankottai and Thervoykandigai lakes in Tiruvallur district and a reservoir created to store 1 tmc ft of water to cater to Chennai's needs.
- ✓ The city's drinking water requirement is presently met from reservoirs at Poondi, Cholavaram, Redhills and Chembarambakkam

SCHEMES

◆ **The Centre - is set to initiate the Jal Shakti Abhiyan to ramp up rainwater harvesting and conservation efforts in 255 water-stressed districts from July 1**

- ✓ The campaign will be coordinated by 255 central IAS officers of Joint or Additional Secretary-rank, drawn from ministries as varied as Space, Petroleum and Defence
- ✓ The campaign seems to follow the model of last year's Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, where central officials monitored the implementation of 7 flagship development schemes in 117 aspirational districts across the country.
- ✓ The campaign will run from July 1 to September 15 in States receiving rainfall during the south-west monsoon, while States receiving rainfall in the retreating or north-east monsoon will be covered from October 1 to November 30.
- ✓ Overall, 313 blocks with critical groundwater levels will be covered, along with 1,186 blocks with over-exploited groundwater and 94 blocks with low groundwater availability.
- ✓ The Jal Shakti Abhiyan would aim to accelerate water harvesting, conservation and borewell recharge activities



- ✓ These activities were already being carried out under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme and the Integrated Watershed Management Programme of the Rural Development Ministry, along with existing water body restoration and afforestation schemes being undertaken by the Jal Shakti and Environment Ministries.
- ✓ Progress would be monitored in real time through mobile applications and an online dashboard at indiawater.gov.in

NATIONAL

◆ 1,02,462 people names - have been found ineligible for inclusion in the final National Register of Citizens (NRC) to be released on July 31.

- ✓ These names, present in the draft NRC, were removed in the additional draft exclusion list released on June 26
- ✓ These people should prove their citizenship credentials now to get back into the NRC
- ✓ The draft NRC published on July 30 last year had excluded 40.07 lakh applicants out of 3.29 crore
- ✓ The reason for the exclusion cited was that the people were found to be declared foreigners or doubtful (D) voters or with cases pending at Foreigners Tribunal

◆ **Defence minister Rajnath Singh - told Lok Sabha that the government plans to establish 5 more Sainik Schools at Amethi (Uttar Pradesh), Alwar (Rajasthan), Rudraprayag (Uttarakhand), Sambalpur (Odisha) and Warangal (Telangana)**

- ✓ MoUs have been signed with the state governments for these schools, which is done after the state government provides land free of cost and the construction budget
- ✓ The Centre, in turn, provides annual financial assistance of about ₹80 crore to the Sainik Schools.
- ✓ The 31 Sainik Schools in the country are also providing about 25% of the cadets selected for the National Defence Academy (NDA) in Khadakwasla

◆ **'Seventy-five by 75' - is the name given to a dream project that the Indian Technology Congress Association (ITCA) has conceived to celebrate the nation's 75th birthday.**

- ✓ As part of the project, up to 75 tiny satellites built by students of Indian universities could fly to the skies between late next year and 2022 in batches.
- ✓ 2022 also marks the year of Gaganyaan, the first trip of Indian astronauts to space
- ✓ The ITCA, a technology promotion body based in Bengaluru, has roped in around 40 engineering colleges to form a consortium.
- ✓ It is also in the midst of discussing launch contracts with the Indian Space Research Organisation and working out Israeli finance for its '75 Student Satellites Mission 2022'
- ✓ Students of participating institutions would come from different disciplines and get to build nano satellites weighing between 3 and 12 kg
- ✓ Indian universities have so far built and launched only nine satellites of fleeting lifespans.
- ✓ In the last three to five years, other countries launched about 3,500 student satellites that demonstrated innovative technologies
- ✓ A student satellite, depending on its payload, can cost between ₹30 and ₹50 lakh and ₹5 and ₹6 crore.

INTERNATIONAL

◆ **San Francisco - became the first major US city to ban the sale and manufacture of electronic cigarettes**

- ✓ The city's legislature approved an ordinance suspending the sale in shops or online of e-cigarette products that lack approval by federal health authorities.
- ✓ The move follows the popularity of e-cigarettes that enable users to inhale nicotine liquids that are often fruit flavoured

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

◆ India's candidature for a non-permanent seat at the powerful UN Security Council for a two year term - has been unanimously endorsed by the 55-member Asia-Pacific grouping, including China and Pakistan

- ✓ India will need the vote of two-thirds of the 193 UN General Assembly members to win a non-permanent seat on the UNSC
- ✓ India had announced its candidacy for the 2021-22 seat at the end of 2013
- ✓ The announcement followed the withdrawal of Afghanistan, a potential contender, to accommodate India's candidacy based on the "long-standing, close and friendly relations" between the two countries
- ✓ India will also be hosting G20 summit in 2022 at New Delhi, coinciding with the 75th anniversary of Independence in 2022.

Pride of place

The earlier instances of India being elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council

- 1950-1951
- 1967-1968
- 1972-1973
- 1977-1978
- 1984-1985
- 1991-1992
- 2011-2012



FIVE PERMANENT MEMBERS: CHINA, FRANCE, RUSSIA, THE U.K. AND THE U.S.

- ✓ Elections for the five non-permanent members of the 15-nation Council for the 2021-22 term will be held around June next year
- ✓ Estonia, Niger, Tunisia, Vietnam and St. Vincent and the Grenadines were elected earlier this month.
- ✓ The 10 non-permanent seats are distributed on a regional basis: five for African and Asian States; one for Eastern European States; two for the Latin American and Caribbean States; and two for Western European and other States.

COMMITTEES

◆ **The government - has decided to expand the scope of the Committee drafting a new income tax law to suggest ways for easier compliance of IT returns**

- ✓ It had asked the panel headed by CBDT member Akhilesh Ranjan to include a reduction in the compliance burden through process simplification, faceless and anonymized scrutiny and verification of returns as well as a systems-based verification of financial transactions as new terms of reference



Akhilesh Ranjan
Member, CBDT

- ✓ The panel was originally set up to suggest ways to reduce litigation and faster disposal of cases across judicial forums in addition to data-sharing between tax authorities.
- ✓ The committee was set up 18 months ago but was reconstituted after the earlier members could not agree on a report

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

◆ **A three-stage Centaure rocket, capable of reaching an altitude of 350 kms - would be fabricated in India by the end of this year**

- ✓ This completely Indian-made rocket would be an “**improved version**” of the two-stage French Centaure rocket, which could carry payloads only to heights of about 160 km
- ✓ The two-stage Centaure rocket is already being made in India under an agreement with Sud-Aviation, France, the entire rocket hardware being manufactured at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Trombay
- ✓ The rocket has been used at the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station for measurement of electron density in the upper atmosphere.

APPOINTMENTS

- ◆ **The government - extended the tenure of NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant by two years up to 2021, four days before his term was to end.**



- ✓ Kant, a 1980 batch Kerala cadre IAS officer, was appointed as the CEO of the government think tank in 2016 after he retired as secretary in the then department of industrial policy and promotion (DIPP).
- ✓ He was appointed on a two-year term which was extended up to June 30 by the appointments committee of the cabinet.
- ◆ **The government - appointed senior IPS officer Samant Kumar Goel as chief of external intelligence agency RAW**



Samant Kumar Goel

Arvind Kumar

- ✓ Goel brings with him years of expertise in counter-terrorism having in-depth knowledge about the origins and operations of Pakistan-based terror groups as well as global jihadi outfits like Al Qaida and Islamic State.
- ✓ Intelligence Bureau too got a new director in Arvind Kumar, currently special director in the agency, who has handled desks like Kashmir and Left-wing extremism over the years
- ✓ Goel, a 1984 batch IPS officer of Punjab cadre, and Kumar, from the same batch but belonging to Assam-Meghalaya cadre, succeed Anil Dhasmana and Rajiv Jain respectively
- ✓ The incumbents were on six-month extensions after having completed their fixed two-year terms in December, 2018.
- ✓ Goel and Kumar have a strong intelligence background, with the former having first served in RAW in 2001 and Kumar with IB since 1991
- ✓ Goel has served foreign postings in London and Dubai
- ✓ Arvind Kumar, during his long stint in IB, handled various desks including Kashmir and Left-Wing extremism, besides serving in Delhi SIB in the early 2000s

SPORTS

◆ **The International Olympic Committee (IOC) - voted unanimously to suspend recognition of amateur boxing's governing body, the AIBA, as an Olympic governing body ahead of the Tokyo 2020 Games.**

- ✓ The move follows an investigation into alleged serious mismanagement at boxing's crisis-ridden ruling authority
- ✓ Thus, AIBA becomes the first federation to have been stripped of its right to organise its own sport at an Olympics
- ✓ The IOC will now organise boxing in AIBA's place

◆ **Indian Olympic Association president Narinder Batra - was elected as a member of the International Olympic Committee**



- ✓ Batra now has a rare distinction of becoming a member of the IOC, while heading a National Olympic Committee as well as an international federation
- ✓ He is also the head of FIH.
- ✓ Earlier, Nita Ambani was elected as an individual member of the IOC in 2016.
- ✓ Former IOA secretary-general Randhir Singh, who served as a member of the IOC from 2001 to 2014, is a honorary member.

