30 APRIL 2019

NATIONAL CLEAN AIR PROGRAMME

Why in news?

- Recently the Union Environment Ministry has constituted a committee to implement the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)

More on news:

- The committee will be chaired by the Secretary, Union Environment Ministry has among its members the Joint Secretary (Thermal), Ministry of Power; Director-General, The Energy Resources Institute (TERI).

About National Clean Air Programme:

i. It is a pollution control initiative that was launched by the Ministry of Environment.
ii. It aims to cut the concentration of particulate matter 10 and 2.5 by at least 20% in the next five years(Base year - 2017).
iii. This programme has 3 components: Mitigation measures, strengthening air quality monitoring network and improve community awareness and capacity building.

Significance:

i. It is a national level framework with a time-bound reduction target.
ii. The programme aims to cover all sources of pollution.
iii. It calls for Multi-sectoral collaboration and Participatory approach (Central ministries, state governments, local bodies and other stakeholders)
iv. Thus it aims to dovetail the plans and efforts of both Union and State governments.
v. It brings also the rural areas and transboundary pollution under its ambit.

Mitigation Strategies include:

i. Setting up of a web-based 3 tier mechanism for monitoring and implementing the mitigation strategies:
ii. Extensive Plantation Drive (under National Mission for Green India)
iii. Promoting the Clean Technologies.
iv. Both Regional and Transboundary plans for mitigation will be implemented.
v. Sectoral interventions include promoting e-mobility, solid waste management, dust management etc.
vi. City specific air quality management plans for 102 non-attainment cities.

Knowledge and Database augmentation will be done by

i. Setting up Air quality monitoring network throughout India.
ii. Extending Source apportionment studies to all Non-Attainment cities
iii. Studying the health and economic impact studies of air pollution.

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iv. International cooperation by sharing best practices.
v. Review of Ambient Air Quality Standards.
vi. Preparing an National Emission Inventory.

Institutional Strengthening:

i. The Central Pollution Control Board is the chief executive agency of this programme.
ii. Apex Committees at both the Central and State level will be constituted.
iii. Various institutions like National level and state level project monitoring and implementation unit will be constituted.
iv. Setting up of Air Information Centre
v. Implementation of NPL-ICS (India Certification Scheme)
vi. Setting up of Air Quality Forecasting system
vii. Networking of Technical Institutions as Knowledge partners.

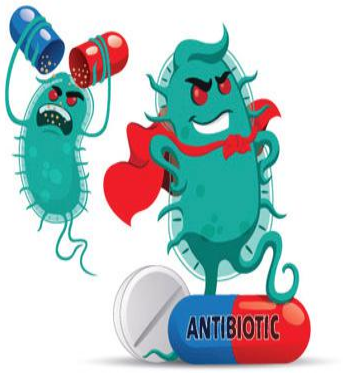
DRUG RESISTANT DISEASES

In News:

Drug-resistant diseases could kill 10 million a year by2050. They claim 7,00,000 lives annually, says UN report.

In Brief:

1. Drug-resistant diseases could cause 10 million deaths each year by 2050, warned the UN Ad Hoc Interagency Coordinating Group on Antimicrobial Resistance in a report released.
2. It added that by 2030, antimicrobial resistance could force up to 24 million people into extreme poverty.
3. Currently, at least 7,00,000 people die each year due to drug-resistant diseases, including 2,30,000 people who die from multidrug-resistant tuberculosis.
4. It also noted that more and more common diseases, including respiratory tract infections, sexually transmitted infections and urinary tract infections, are becoming untreatable; lifesaving medical procedures are becoming riskier, and food systems are getting increasingly precarious.
5. Antimicrobial resistance is one of the greatest threats we face as a global community. This report reflects the depth and scope of the response needed to curb its rise and protect a century of progress in health.
6. The report noted that the world is already feeling the economic and health consequences as crucial medicines become ineffective. Without investment from countries in all income brackets, future generations will face the disastrous impacts of uncontrolled antimicrobial resistance.



7. It has now recommended that countries prioritise national action plans to scale-up financing and capacity-building efforts, put in place stronger regulatory systems and support awareness programs for

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responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials by professionals in human, animal and plant health and invest in ambitious research and development for new technologies to combat antimicrobial resistance.

About Anti Microbial Re sistance:

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is the ability of a microorganism (like bacteria, viruses, and some parasites) to stop an antimicrobial (such as antibiotics, antivirals and antimalarials) from working against it. As a result, standard treatments become ineffective, infections persist and may spread to others.

UN Ad Hoc Interagency Coordinating Group on Antimicrobial Resistance:

1. On 21 September 2016, during the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Member States adopted the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance.
2. This reflected Member States' recognition of the magnitude of this global problem and consensus about the actions needed to prevent a post-antibiotic era.
3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the Political Declaration, the Secretary-General has established an ad hoc Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance, in consultation with the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the World Organisation for Animal Health.
4. The Group is co-chaired by the UN Deputy Secretary-General and the Director General of the World Health Organization and comprises high level representatives of relevant UN agencies, other international organizations, and individual experts across different sectors.

Objective:

The objective of the Group will be to provide practical guidance for approaches needed to ensure sustained effective global action to address antimicrobial resistance, including options to improve coordination, taking into account the Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance.

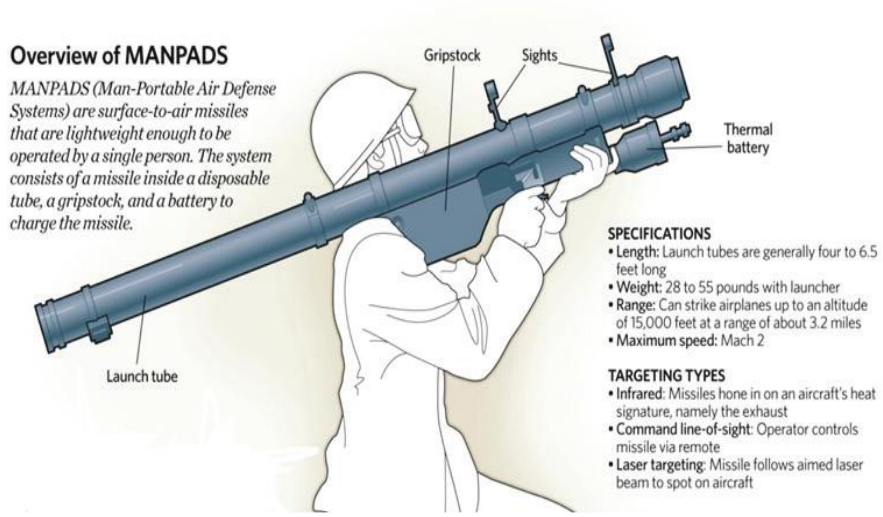
SPIKE-LR and IGLA-S

In news:

- The Army is in the process of procuring Spike-LR Anti-Tank Missiles from Israel and Igla-S - Very Short Range Air Defence Systems (VSHORAD) from Russia through a set of new financial powers for emergency procurements sanctioned by the Defence Ministry.
- Under which, armed forces have been given a free hand to procure equipment worth up to Rs.300 crore on a priority basis.

Igla-S - MANPADS (Man-portable air-defense missile system)

- Igla-S air defense systems with man-portable systems will be replacing its predecessor Igla-M which has been with India armed forces from the early '80s.



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- It is a fourth generation man-portable infrared homing surface-to-air missile.
- It will have maximum range of 6km, altitude of 3km along with all-weather capability.
- It is designed for use against visible aerial targets at short range such as tactical aircraft, helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAVs), cruise missile, head-on or receding, in presence of natural (background) clutter and countermeasures.

Spike – ATGM:

- It is a fourth-generation Israeli anti-tank guided missile and anti-personnel missile.
- It was developed by the Rafael Advanced Defence Systems.
- It is available in man-portable, vehicle-launched, and helicopter-launched variants.
- Spike is a fire-and-forget missile with lock-on before launch and automatic self-guidance. The missile is equipped with an imaging infrared seeker.
- Effective firing range: 1.5 km (Spike-SR); 2.5 km (Spike-MR); 4 km (Spike-LR); 8 km (Spike-ER); 25 km (Spike NLOS)
- Short and Medium range missiles are used by infantries.

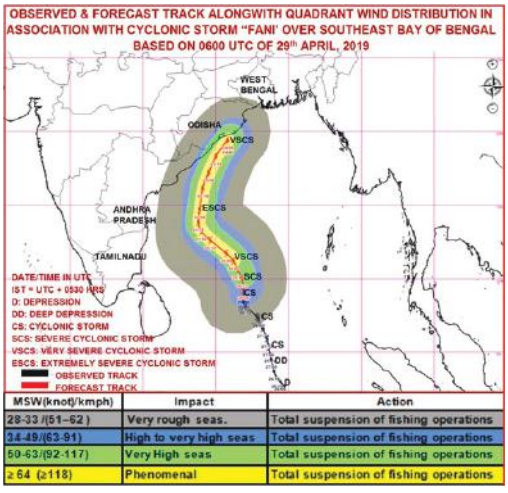
Cyclone Fani

In news:

- The Cyclonic storm 'Fani' over Southeast Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood moved north-north-westwards.
- National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), the country's top body to deal with emergency situation, met under the chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary and took stock of the situation.
- The wind speed of a cyclonic storm is 80-90 kilometres per hour with wind gusting up to 100 kmph. In case of an 'extremely severe cyclonic storm', the wind speed goes up to 170-180 kmph and could gain the speed of 195 kmph.

Recurving of cyclone:

- Storms that form north of the equator spin counter-clockwise. Storms south of the equator spin clockwise. Tropical cyclones usually move from east to west, because of presence of easterly winds in tropical zone.
- In Northern Hemisphere, recurvature of a tropical cyclone is defined as the situation when a tropical cyclone transits from a mainly westward track to a northward and sometimes even an eastward track. It happens because of local phenomena, such as presence of winds in westerly direction.



MSW(knot)/(kmph)	Impact	Action
28-33 /(51-62)	Very rough seas.	Total suspension of fishing operations
34-49/(63-91)	High to very high seas	Total suspension of fishing operations
50-63/(92-117)	Very High seas	Total suspension of fishing operations
≥ 64 (≥118)	Phenomenal	Total suspension of fishing operations

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- For example, Cyclone Ockhi,The whirlwind that arose in the Bay of Bengal and revved up over Sri Lanka was expected to pass over Lakshadweep and then ease into the Arabian Sea, far away from India's west coast.
- However, the cyclone ended up sharply swerving into parts of Maharashtra and Gujarat.
- Long-term data suggest that while there has been an increase in the number of tropical cyclones in India's neighbourhood there is no clear trend in re-curving ones.

National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC):

- For effective implementation of relief measures in the wake of a natural calamity, the Cabinet may set up a committee.
- NCMC is the country's apex body to handle emergency situations.
- NCMC has been constituted in the Cabinet Secretariat. Prime Minister is the ex-officio Chairman.
- The composition of the Committee:
- Cabinet Secretary - Chairman

Members:

- Secretary to Prime Minister
- Secretary (MHA)
- Secretary (MCD)
- Director (IB)
- Secretary (R&AW)
- Secretary (Agri&Coopn.)
- An officer of Cabinet Secretariat.
- When a situation is to be handled also by the NCMC, it will give such directions to the Crisis Management Group of the Ministry as deemed necessary.
- The Secretary(A&C) will be responsible for ensuring that all developments are brought to the notice of the NCMC promptly.

NDMA:

- The Government of India enacted the Disaster Management Act, 2005 which envisaged the creation of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), headed by the Prime Minister, and State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) headed by respective Chief Ministers.
- It functions under Ministry of Home Affairs.

NDMA Composition:

- Prime Minister of India – Chairman
- A Vice Chairman with the status of Cabinet Minister
- Eight members with the status of Ministers of State.

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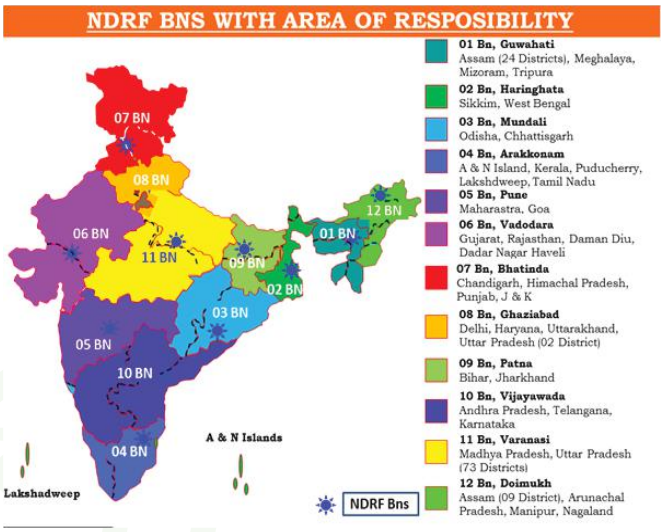
Functions and Responsibilities

NDMA, as the apex body, is mandated to lay down the policies, plans and guidelines for Disaster Management to ensure timely and effective response to disasters.

- Approve the National Plan
- Approve plans prepared by the Ministries or Departments of the Government of India in accordance with the National Plan
- Recommend provision of funds for the purpose of mitigation
- Provide such support to other countries affected by major disasters as may be determined by the Central Government.

NDRF:

- National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is under the National Disaster Management Authority.
- The head of the NDRF is designated as Director General. The Director Generals of NDRF are IPS officers on deputation from Indian police organisations.
- At present, NDRF consists of 12 battalions, three each from the BSF and CRPF and two each from CISF, ITBP and SSB. The total strength of each battalion is 1,149.
- Battalions are also trained and equipped for response during chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) emergencies.
- These NDRF battalions are located at 12 different locations in the country based on the vulnerability profile of country and to cut down the response time for their deployment at disaster site.



ROLE AND MANDATE OF NDRF:

- Specialized response during disasters.
- Proactive deployment during impending disaster situations.
- Acquire and continually upgrade its own training and skills.
- Liaison, Reconnaissance, Rehearsals and Mock Drills.
- Impart basic and operational level training to State Response Forces (Police, Civil Defence and Home Guards).
- Community Capacity Building Programme.
- Organize Public Awareness Campaigns.

GOLDMAN ENVIRONMENTAL PRIZE

Why in news?

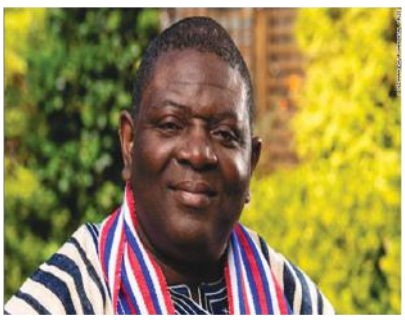
- Alfred Brownell an environmental activist has been recently awarded the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize.

More on news:

- He has been selected crediting his action which stopped the destruction of over half a million acres of the country's tropical forests.

About Goldman Environmental Prize:

- The Goldman Environmental Prize is a prize awarded annually to grassroots environmental activists, one from each of the world's six geographic regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Islands and Island Nations, North America, and South and Central America.
- The award is given by the Goldman Environmental Foundation headquartered in San Francisco, California.
- It is also called the Green Nobel.
- The Goldman Environmental Prize was created in 1989 by civic leaders and philanthropists Richard N. Goldman and Rhoda H. Goldman.



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