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3rd, April, 2022

Topic: Argriculture

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

What is the news?

- The dry spell, with exceptionally high temperatures, could become a concern for apple and stone fruit growers after about a week.

Challenges shared:

- The prolonged dry spell hasn't hurt the fruit growers, yet due to the presence to abundant moisture in the soil, thanks to good rains and snowfall this winter," says Satish Bhardwaj, chairman of the Department of Environmental Science, University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauni.
- "However, the situation becomes critical for apples and

stone fruit if present weather conditions persist beyond seven to ten days," he adds.

Suggestions made by Nauni university:

- Farmers should immediately resort to mulching to prevent the loss of moisture in the soil, and start irrigation wherever they feel the soil has become quite dry. –Satish Bhardwaj, Chairman of department of environmental science, Nauni university.

Inputs by Expert:

- A sunny and clear weather over the past many days has resulted in good flowering in apple trees and good fruit setting in stone fruits. "Flowers can start dropping if the heat wave continues and the soil loses moisture," says Bhardwaj. The dry spell will hit even stone fruits. "It will impact fruit development, the fruit will not grow to its optimum size," he adds.
- Bhardwaj says that the farmers should immediately resort to mulching to prevent the loss of moisture in the soil, and start irrigation wherever they feel the soil has become quite dry. "Mulching and irrigation are two practices that will help retain moisture in the soil and enhance the probability of good crop," he adds.
- He says that given the fickleness of weather these days, every farmer should practice water harvesting so that they have enough water for irrigation as and when the need arises. "The government is spending a lot of money on water conservation, and there are several schemes the farmers can make use of for water harvesting. With the weather becoming increasingly uncertain, farmers must go for water harvesting to mitigate damage caused by dry spells," he adds.
- Deepak Singha, an apple and plum grower, agree that the

next 10 days are very crucial for both apple and stone fruits. "If the heat wave persists for over 10 days, the plants will go into stress and will tend to shed flower and fruits," he says. "Also, such a prolonged dry spell makes conditions conducive for insect attacks on the plants. So, that's also been a big concern if it doesn't rain shortly," he adds.

(Source: HP Tribune)

Topic: Welfare Schemes

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

What is the news?

- Government welfare schemes bringing sea change in the lives of people: CM

Few Schemes shared by CM:

- The Chief Minister said that the HIMCARE scheme has been started to benefit those eligible beneficiaries who could not be covered under the ambit of Ayushman Yojna of the centre government. So far, 3.66 lakh people have been provided free medical treatment facilities in the state under both these schemes by spending Rs. 372 crore.
- The state government also launched Mukhya Mantri Sahara Yojana to provide financial assistance of Rs. 3000 per month to the patients suffering from critical ailments.

More than Rs. 56 crore has been spent on helping around 17 thousand needy patients under the scheme, said the Chief Minister.

- He said the ambitious schemes like Mukhya Mantri Grihini Suvidha Yojna, Mukhya Mantri Swavlamban Yojna, Mukhya Mantri Shagun Yojana, Mukhya Mantri Roshni Yojna, Sewa Sankalp Helpline-1100 and Jan Manch programme have proved to be a boon to the people of the state. Yet another initiative which has benefited poor people is to give zero billing up to consumption of electricity up to 60 units.

(Source: HP Government)

Topic: New Species of Flower found in Himachal

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

What is the news?

- In Chamba at a height of 1800 feet a new species of white Burans flower blossom.

What is the other name of this flower?

- Burans (Buransh), which goes by the common name Rhododendron and scientific name Rhododendron Arboreum Sm.

Where in Chamba?

- Kalbala Forest Area, Churah.

About White Burans Flower:

- 1) Found usually at a height of 2900-3500 meter.
- 2) It is the State Flower of Uttrakhand.
- 3) The bright red flower whose scientific name is *Rhododendron arboreum*, is found in several areas of the hill state. During season, villagers engage in plucking and extracting juice from its petals. Burans juice is believed to have high medicinal properties and is widely sold across the state and outside generally in the form of processed squash.

Topic: Tourism

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims

What is the news?

- New Ropeway at Ancient Dhayunsr temple of Chintputpurni Area for tourism.

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