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# 24th, August, 2022

## Today's Topic Covered

**1) Inter-ministerial central team on Damages due to Natural Disasters in Himachal....*Read in Detail***

**2) Himachal Chief Secretary to meet railway team over Chakki river bridge repair....*Read in Detail***

**3) Solar Power Project: Country's largest solar power park to come up in Himachal's Kaza, DPR ready.....*Read in detail***

**4) Vikas Thakur district icon for the systematic voters' education and electoral participation (SVEEP) programme.....*Read in detail***



***Topic: Inter-ministerial central team on Damages due to Natural Disasters in Himachal***

## ***Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains***

### ***What is the news?***

1) Government of India has constituted a Central team led by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs Sunil Kumar Barnwal to take stock of the damage caused by natural calamities in the state. The state government had requested the central government to send an inter-ministerial central team on 23rd August, 2022.

2) Central Government has decided to send the teams in the first week of September, whereas earlier the Central team used to visit the state only after the end of the Monsoon. Timely assessment of the damages caused by natural calamities will enable the state to get additional central assistance from the National Disaster Response Fund and adequate relief assistance could be provided to the disaster affected people in the state.



3) Many incidents of heavy rains, landslides and cloudbursts have occurred in the state during the current Monsoon, in which 258 people lost their precious lives and 10 people are still missing. Due to this calamity, 270 cattle were killed and 1658 residential houses, shops, gaushalas and gharats etc were damaged. National highways, rural roads, drinking water schemes and power projects have also suffered heavy damages during this period.

4) A loss of Rs. 1367.33 crore has been assessed so far in the state during this Monsoon season and process of assessment is going on continuously.

### ***What is National Disaster Response Fund?***

***The National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) was renamed the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) following the adoption of the Disaster Management Act in 2005.***

- It is defined in Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (Disaster Management Act).
- It is placed in the “Public Account” of Government of India under “reserve funds not bearing interest”.
- Public Accounts: It was constituted under Article 266 (2) of the Constitution. It accounts for flows for those transactions where the government is merely acting as a banker eg small savings etc. These funds do not belong to the government and have to be paid back at some time.
- Expenditures from it are not required to be approved by the Parliament.

***National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF), constituted under Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, supplements***

***State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) of a State, in case of a disaster of severe nature, provided adequate funds are not available in SDRF.***

### ***State Disaster Response Fund:***

- The State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF), constituted under Section 48 (1) (a) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, is the primary fund available with State Governments for responses to notified disasters. The Central Government contributes 75% of SDRF allocation for general category States/UTs and 90% for special category States/UTs (NE States, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir). The annual Central contribution is released in two equal installments as per the recommendation of the Finance Commission. SDRF shall be used only for meeting the expenditure for providing immediate relief to the victims.

***Disaster (s) covered under SDRF:*** Cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm, landslide, avalanche, cloudburst, pest attack, frost and cold waves.

***Local Disaster:*** A State Government may use up to 10 percent of the funds available under the SDRF for providing immediate relief to the victims of natural disasters that they consider to be 'disasters' within the local context in the State and which are not included in the notified list of disasters of the Ministry of Home Affairs subject to the condition that the State Government has listed the State specific natural disasters and notified clear and transparent norms and guidelines for such disasters with the approval of the State Authority, i.e., the State Executive Authority (SEC).



## ***NDRF managed by:***

- It is managed by the Central Government for meeting the expenses for emergency response, relief and rehabilitation due to any threatening disaster situation or disaster.

***Financing of NDRF*** : Financed through the levy of a cess on certain items, chargeable to excise and customs duty, and approved annually through the Finance Bill.

## ***Who audits the accounts of NDRF?***

- Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) audits the accounts of NDRF.

*(Source: HP Government and ndmindia)*

## ***Topic: Damaged Chakki rivulet bridge***

***Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains***

## ***What is the news?***

- Himachal Chief Secretary to meet railway team over Chakki river bridge repair.
- Amid a blame game over the collapse of the colonial-era rail bridge over the Chakki rivulet in Kangra, a meeting has been scheduled between Himachal Chief Secretary RD Dhiman and Northern Railway officials on August 26 to

discuss early restoration of the link.



### ***High Court panel called for mining ban in 2012:***

- In 2012, the HP HC had formed a panel to look into the damage to railway and road bridges.
- Headed by then Kangra DC RS Gupta, the panel suggested ban on mining within 500 metres of the bridges.

### ***Causes for Damaged shared:***

- Built in 1928 by the British, a portion of the bridge collapsed on August 20 after being damaged in a flash flood following heavy rain. The narrow gauge line connected Jogindernagar in Himachal with Pathankot in Punjab.
- The Kangra, Pathankot and railway authorities have been blaming each other for the incident. Railway officials claimed that the bridge was damaged due to illegal

mining, and that their “repeated reminders to the Punjab and Himachal governments went unheeded”.

### ***Pathankot Deputy Commissioner Harbir Singh said:***

No mining was taking place within 1 km upstream and downstream of the railway bridge. “About eight years ago when the rail bridge was damaged, the railway authorities constructed a platform under the bridge to save it. The NHAI had asked the railways to break the platform as it was diverting entire water flow towards one side. The diversion of 70,000 cusecs towards one pillar can be one of the reasons behind the bridge’s collapse.

### ***About Chakki river bridge:***

1) The story of this railway line, built for about 164 km across many mountains and river drains, is also quite surprising. Construction on the Kangra Valley rail line was completed in just 3 years.

2) At the time of the British rule, the dream of making electricity from the stream of Uhal river in Jogendranagar was dreamed by the then engineer Colonel VC Batti in 1922. At that time, the government also gave the green signal to the railway line for the construction of the hydropower project.

3) The narrow track from Pathankot to Jogendranagar began in 1926 and rail traffic began on this track on April 1, 1929. A tramway line was built with the help of a railway line from Jogendranagar to Barot, which has been shut down for many years.

4) This railway line was built for 3 years and the total cost of 2 crore 72 lakh 13 thousand. After that, this railway line

remains unchanged. While the English government had plans to take it to Kullu.

5) During the Second World War, in 1942, the rail line from Nagrota Bagwan to Jogendranagar was removed from the rail route and its iron was sent to Europe to make weapons. Twelve years later, in 1954, during the tenure of then Minister of Railways, Lal Bahadur Shastri, the broken track was remodelled and rail traffic began.

6) After this, due to the construction of Pong Dam in 1973, the rail route from the Jawanwala city (Jawali) to Guler was removed and it was removed from other routes and this railway line was restored in December 1976. After that, this route is closed after the year 2001 due to frequent landslides etc which was never there before.

7) The mill bridge has broken for the second time in 11 years. On August 14, 2011, some part of the chakki bridge and pillars were damaged. Even at that time, there was a lot of flow in the Chakki River. Illegal mining has been taking place in this river for many years, due to which the road built the Pathankot Mandi road and the railway bridge has also been damaged. Now again, some pillars of the mill bridge have been damaged.

8) The three sections of this railway line are divided into the stretches of 12 km, 130 km and 22 km respectively.

The first runs between Pathankot and Chakki Bridge, the second section runs between Chakki Bridge and Baijnath Paprola (pilgrimage route) and the third section runs between Baijnath Paprola and Joginder Nagar station.

### ***About Chakki River:***

- Chakki river is a tributary of the river Beas River.

- It flows through Indian states, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab and joins Beas near Pathankot.
- It is fed by snow and rain in the Dhauladhar mountains.

*(Source: The Tribune, UNESCO & Jagran)*

## ***Topic: Country's largest solar power park in Himachal***

***Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains***

### ***What is the news?***

- Solar Power Project: ***Country's largest solar power park to come up in Himachal's Kaza***, DPR ready.





## About Project:

### *Under which Plan it will be built?*

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plan to develop the ambitious **Ultra mega renewable energy power park (UMREEP)** is going to take off in Himachal Pradesh.
- The Detailed Project Report (DPR) of this proposed 880 MW solar energy park at Kaza in tribal district Lahaul-Spiti has been prepared. Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Limited (SJVN Limited) has prepared the DPR of the project and sent it to the Union Ministry of Renewable Energy (MNRE) for approval.
- After getting approval from here, the work of building a solar park will be started. This will be the first largest solar power park in the country. The entire project will cost over Rs 5,000 crore. SJVN Limited will manufacture it. In this, solar plants will be built at seven places in Kaza. These will generate 100 to 200 MW of power.
- The government has set a target of power generated by completing the project by December 31, 2025. Thousands of people will get employed in this project. At the same time, there will be no power crisis, even in heavy snowfall in the tribal district.

Kinnaur's 400 MW project will also connect to the Kaza-Wangtoo transmission line. To develop a solar power park, it will cost around Rs 4,000 crore.

In this, solar projects will be built in Hikkim, Kibber, Damul, Hul, Ladarcha, Losar and Poh. Apart from this, the power generated from the 400 MW solar park project in district

Kinnaur will also be connected with the Kaza-Wangtu transmission line near Shalkhar village. It has been approved by the Center in the past. The DPR of this project of about 2,000 crores is also being prepared. This will benefit the government.

*(Source: Amar Ujala)*

## ***Topic: Electoral Awareness***

***Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains***

### ***What is the news?***

- Vikas Thakur, who won the silver in weightlifting at Commonwealth Games 2022, has been made Hamirpur district icon for the systematic voters' education and electoral participation (SVEEP) programme.



## ***Objective:***

- While making the announcement, the district Deputy Commissioner, Debasweta Banik, said it was a matter of pride that athletes from the district were shining at the international arena.
- She urged Thakur to spread awareness among people about the importance of vote and ask them to get themselves enrolled in the voter list.
- The SVEEP is the flagship program of the Election Commission for voter literacy, and spreading awareness in the country.

*(Source: The Tribune)*



## ***Topic: CA stores directed to revise apple colour classification***

***Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains***

### ***What is the news?***

- Shimla: CA stores directed to revise apple colour classification.
- Private certification authority (CA) stores have been directed to revise their colour classification for apple procurement by the committee formed to resolve the grievances the apple growers have against these stores. The CA stores offer different prices for apple on the basis of its colour.



***Committee chairman Rajeshwar Chandel, Vice Chancellor of the***

***University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauni, after the meeting here today shared:***

- The CA stores have three color categories – 80 to 100 per cent, 60 to 80 percent and below 60 per cent.
- We have asked the CA stores to revise the color classification as 70 to 100 per cent, 50 to 70 per cent and up to 50 per cent.
- The proposed classification will push apple into higher color categories, fetching a better price.
- We have also directed the CA stores to revise the prices of extra-large and under-sized apple. The CA stores will respond within three days.

***Sanyukt Kisan Manch representatives in the committee – convenor Sanjay Chauhan and co-convenor Harish Chauhan shared:***

- They walked out from the meeting alleging that the officials could not produce the MoU signed between the government and these CA stores.
- The meeting was supposed to visit the original MoUs signed between the government agencies and the CA stores and to find out gaps in the implementation of the agreed terms and conditions.
- However, member secretary told us no MoU has been signed with these CA stores. If no MoU has been signed, how these CA stores were given subsidy worth crores of rupees?
- Also, out of 18 CA stores, the representatives of just eight stores came for the meeting. It shows the lack of seriousness to resolve the growers' issues. So, we will go ahead with our protest at the Adani stores on August 25," said Chauhan.
- Meanwhile, the committee sought explanation from the CA stores who did not send their representatives for the meeting. "Also, we have sought explanation from Adani

and other stores who announced their procurement rates before the meeting of the committee,” said Chandel.

- In another decision, a sub-committee has been formed under the chairmanship of Managing Director, State Agricultural Marketing Board, for random checks at CA stores. “As per the demands of the growers, the sub-committee will ensure the weighing machines and colour sensors are properly calibrated. Also, this sub-committee will check if these stores are providing facilities like toilets, canteen, etc, to the growers.

*(Source: The Tribune)*

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