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2nd, September, 2022

Today's Topic Covered

1) GST collection showed an increase of 14 percent in Himachal...Read in Detail

2) Steps to Control Pollution in Himachal...Read in Detail

3) Himurja, the state government's nodal agency for renewable energy programmes...Read in Detail

4) New rail project in Himachal...Read in Detail



Topic: GST collection showed an increase of 14 percent in Himachal

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

Importance for Prelims: Indian Economy

Importance for Mains Exam:

- *PAPER-VI: GENERAL STUDIES-III: Unit III: Topic: Latest / Current Development Schemes / Initiatives / Institutional Changes .*

What is the news?

- The Commissioner State Taxes and Excise Yunus said here today that the GST collection in the month of August has registered an increase of 14 percent with the collection of Rs. 398 crore. The GST collections in the first five months of the current financial year has reached 2255 crore against Rs. 1634 crore collected during the same period last year.



How state is able to achieve?

- Collections have maintained a handsome growth trajectory so far in the current financial year as a result of various policy and administrative measures taken by the Department of State Taxes and Excise to improve taxpayer compliances and strengthen enforcement related activities. Continuous improvement in return filing, speedy scrutiny of returns, timely completion of GST audits and strengthened enforcement continue to be the focus areas for the department so as to achieve the target of 25 percent cumulative growth in the current financial year.
- Department has verified 5.6 lakh e-way bills during road checkings conducted in the current financial year. It remains committed to improve voluntary compliances with time bound redressal of the issues of the stakeholders under 'Tax Haat Programme'. It has planned to organize awareness programmes for stakeholders on a big scale during the current month. The awareness programmes are expected to further boost voluntary compliances, he added.
- Department continues to focus on capacity building of tax officers in order to strengthen their knowledge base. It has trained more than 400 tax officers in the last six months. The implementation of the Departmental Restructuring principally approved by the State Cabinet alongside well trained tax officers are expected to help the department in achieving the revenue target.

About GST:

1) The idea of a Goods and Services Tax (GST) for India was first mooted sixteen years back, during the Prime Ministership of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Thereafter, on 28th February, 2006, the then Union Finance Minister in his Budget for

2006-07 proposed that GST would be introduced from 1st April, 2010. The Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers (EC), which had formulated the design of State VAT was requested to come up with a roadmap and structure for the GST. Joint Working Groups of officials having representatives of the States as well as the Centre were set up to examine various aspects of the GST and draw up reports specifically on exemptions and thresholds, taxation of services and taxation of inter-State supplies. Based on discussions within and between it and the Central Government, the EC released its First Discussion Paper (FDP) on GST in November, 2009. The FDP spelled out the features of the proposed GST and has formed the basis for the present GST laws and rules.

2) In March 2011, Constitution (115th Amendment) Bill, 2011 was introduced in the Lok Sabha to enable levy of GST. However, due to lack of political consensus, the Bill lapsed after the dissolution of 15th Lok Sabha in August 2013.

3) On 19th December, 2014, The Constitution (122nd Amendment) Bill 2014 was introduced in the Lok Sabha and was passed by Lok Sabha in May 2015. The Bill was taken up in Rajya Sabha and was referred to the Joint Committee of the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha on 14th May, 2015. The Select Committee submitted its report on 22nd July, 2015. Thereafter, the Constitutional Amendment Bill was moved on 1st August 2016 based on political consensus. The Bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha on 3rd August 2016 and by the Lok Sabha on 8th August 2016. After ratification by required number of State legislatures and assent of the President, the Constitutional amendment was notified as Constitution (101st Amendment) Act 2016 on 8th September, 2016. The Constitutional amendment paved way for introduction of Goods and Services Tax in India.

4) After GST Council approved the Central Goods and Services Tax Bill 2017 (The CGST Bill), the Integrated Goods and Services Tax Bill 2017 (The IGST Bill), the Union Territory Goods and Services Tax Bill 2017 (The UTGST Bill), the Goods

and Services Tax (Compensation to the States) Bill 2017 (The Compensation Bill), these Bills were passed by the Lok Sabha on 29th March, 2017. The Rajya Sabha passed these Bills on 6th April, 2017 and were then enacted as Acts on 12th April, 2017. T 2015. 6 on 08.09.2016

5) Thereafter, State Legislatures of different States have passed respective State Goods and Services Tax Bills. After the enactment of various GST laws, GST was launched with effect from 1st July 2017 by Sh.Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India in the presence of Sh.Pranab Mukherjee, the then President of India in a mid-night function at the Central Hall of Parliament of India.

(Source: HP Government)

Topic: Steps to Control Pollution in Himachal

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

Importance for Prelims: Polity and Environment

Importance for Mains Exam:

- *PAPER-VI: GENERAL STUDIES-III: Unit III: Topic: Issues, concerns, policies, programmes, conventions, treaties and missions aimed at environment protection, and dealing with the problem of climate change.*

What is the news?

- Thirtyfive industrial units in the ***Baddi-Barotiwala-Nalagarh (BBN)*** belt have been served a show-cause notice by the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) for flouting norms.
- Several violations like having non-functional air pollution control devices and a lack of record of effluent treatment plants and the storage and disposal of hazardous waste were found at these units during a recent surprise check conducted by the board.



Praveen Gupta, Chief Environmental Engineer, SPCB, Baddi, shared:

- The show-cause notice had been issued to the 35 units engaged in manufacturing textiles, pharmaceuticals , home appliances, etc, for various violations under Sections 41,43 and 44 of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act,1974, and Section 31-A of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act,1981.

In how many days they have to reply?

- “These units have been directed to reply within seven days, failing which further action will be initiated against them,” added Gupta.

About BBN Area:

- The BBN industrial units are already under the scanner of the National Green Tribunal for failing to adhere to the norms and for flagrantly discharging toxic effluent into the water bodies.
- The SPCB was directed to take strict action against such units and also monitor the working of the Common Effluent Treatment Plant in Baddi after laxities were found in its working.
- The Sirsa river stretch in Baddi is rated the most polluted and contaminated by the Central Pollution Control Board. Various water bodies of the BBN area drain into this river.
- Baddi also figures in the Central Pollution Control Board’s list of non-attainment cities as it does not meet the national ambient air quality standards.

About HP State Pollution Control Board (SPCB):

1) The H.P. State Pollution Control Board is a nodal agency in the administrative structure of the State Government, for the planning, promotion, co- ordination and overseeing the implementation of environmental programs.

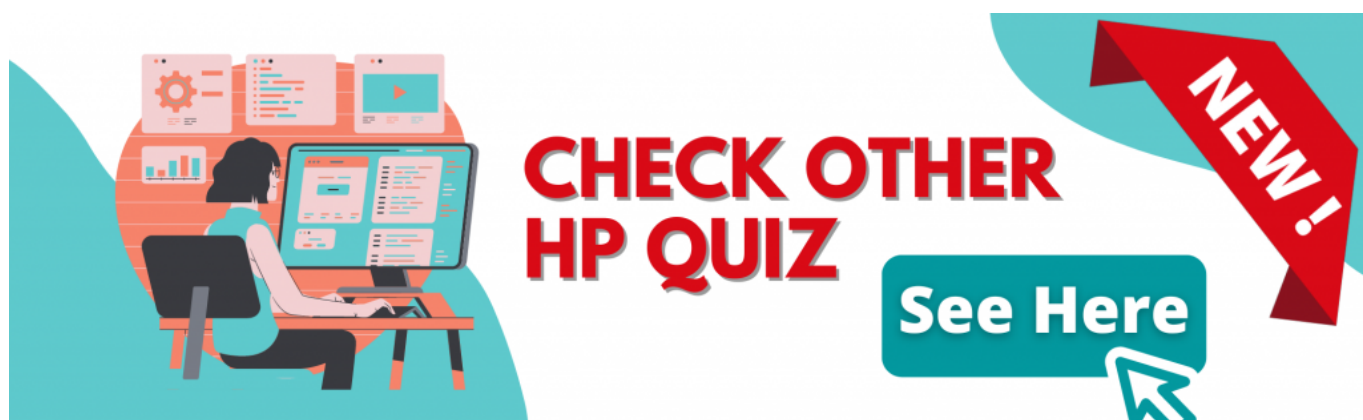
2) The principal activities undertaken by H.P. State Pollution Control Board consist of prevention & control of pollution, protection of e nvironment, in the framework of following legislations:

. Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974: The Parliament in the 25th year of the Republic promulgated this legislation in pursuance to Clause – 1 of Article 252 of the Constitution of India, with the objective of prevention and control of water pollution and maintenance and restoration of wholesomeness of water. The H.P. State Pollution Control Board was constituted in 1974 under the provisions of this Act

. Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977: This Act provides for levy of cess on the water consumed for specific purposes with a view to dissuade wasteful and indiscreet use of water.

. Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981: On the analogy of the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 the Union Government promulgated another identical legislation which was exclusively meant to deal with the problems of air quality and preservation and maintenance thereof.

. Environment (Protection) Act, 1986: In order to provide the existing legislation for control of water and air pollution more effectively and to remove the deficiency of these legislation, the Union Government enacted another umbrella legislation in 37th Year of Republic.



The prime objective of the legislation was to plug the existing statutory gaps whereby tremendous responsibilities by way of functions have been entrusted to the State Board. The

following prominent rules and notifications are significant in context to the role and functions of the H.P. State Pollution Control Board:-

1. Manufacture, Storage and Import of Hazardous Chemical Rules, 1989.
2. The Hazardous Waste (Management & Handling) Rules, 1989/2000
3. Rules for Manufacture, Use, Import, Export and Storage of Hazardous Microorganism, Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells, 1989.
4. Noise Pollution (Control and Regulation) Rules, 1999.
5. Bio – medical Wastes (Management & Handling) Rules, 1998.
6. Recycled Plastics Manufacture and Usage Rules, 1999/2003.
7. Municipal Solid Wastes (Management & Handling) Rules, 2000.
8. Ozone Depleting Substances (Regulation & Control) Rules, 2000.
9. Batteries (Management & Handling) Rules, 2000.

(News Source: The Tribune)

Topic:Himurja, the state government's nodal agency for renewable energy programmes

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

Importance for Prelims: Environment (Current Events)

Importance for Mains Exam:

- *PAPER-VI: GENERAL STUDIES-III: Unit III: Topic: Issues, concerns, policies, programmes, conventions, treaties and missions aimed at environment protection, and dealing with the problem of climate change.*

What is the news?

- *Himurja, the state government's nodal agency for renewable energy programmes, has been awarded with three runners-up awards by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.*
- *It bagged the awards for installing the second highest number of solar street lights till March 31 this year, for installing the second highest small hydro power installed capacity and the highest small hydro power capacity during 2021-22.*



Where Himruja got this award?

- The awards were received by Himurja CEO Rahul Kumar at Willingdon Island Kochi, Kerala on the occasion of the eighth foundation day of the Association of Renewable Energy Agencies of States.
- “Himurja has so far installed 90 small hydroelectric projects with the installed capacity of 334.25 MW.
- All these projects are up to 5 MW capacity.
- He added that the agency had installed the 2,24,086 solar streetlights through gram panchayats across the state.

About Himruja:

- Himurja, the state government’s nodal agency for renewable energy programmes.

Objectives:

- 1) To promote and produce Renewable Energy under all schemes of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India and State Government.
- 2) To harness Hydel Potential from Projects up to 5 MW under State sector and also through Private Sector Participation.
- 3) To boost the number of installations of Solar Energy Technologies throughout Himachal Pradesh.
- 4) To develop and improve Water Mills (Traditional Gharats).
- 5) To create Public Awareness to encourage Renewable Energy Development and Utilization



Functions:

- 1) To adopt a strategy for the development and promotion of renewable energy technologies across the State
- 2) To process, allot and support Small Hydro Projects up to 5 MW.
- 3) To improve Water Mills (Traditional Gharats) under the scheme by Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India.
- 4) To promote and boost the installations of Solar Energy Devices.

5) To facilitate Municipal Bodies in preparation of proposals under development of Smart City Programme and implementation thereof.

6) To train and educate internal staff in implementing Renewable Energy Programmes.

7) To submit proposals under Projectised mode to Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India for sanctioning under various available schemes.

8) Process cases for providing financial incentives to Independent Power Producers (IPPs).

9) To provide subsidy to beneficiaries under National Solar Mission and other schemes of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India.

10) To ensure availability of reliable sustained quality power supply from Himurja Micro Hydroelectric Plants.

11) To ensure employment to Himachalis in the Power Projects as per Himachal Pradesh Government Policies to boost local development.

12) To coordinate with Directorate of Energy, HP Power Transmission Corporation & Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Limited for approval of Techno-Economic Clearance (TEC) and Inter-Connection point.

13) To create Public Awareness through advertisements.

14) To organize awareness programmes through various modes of promoting and popularization of renewable energy development.

(News Source: The Tribune)

Topic: New rail project in Himachal

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

Importance for Prelims: Infrastructure (Current Events)

Importance for Mains Exam:

- *PAPER-IV: GENERAL STUDIES-I: Unit II: Topic: Settlements, Industry and Transport.*

What is the news?

- ***The Union Ministry of Railways has started the exercise of acquiring land for Baddi-Chandigarh rail line.***
A notification has been issued and around 4.34 hectares of additional land would be acquired in Baddi for the railway line. It will include 4.09 hectares of private land and .25 hectares of government land.
- The sub-divisional administration would start paying compensation to the owners of the land after completing the formalities. The administration has so far acquired 30.3 hectares of land in nine villages and compensation has been paid to most of the land owners.
- In this episode, the Ministry of Railways has issued a notification under 20-E of the land to be acquired.



How this will help?

- The rail line would ensure better connectivity to industrial areas such as Baddi, Barotiwala and Nalagarh. Also, the entire BBN belt will be benefited immensely by being connected to the Baddi-Amritsar-Kolkata corridor, which will prove to be a lifeline for the industrial sector.

(Source: Divya Himachal)

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