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March 9th, 2020

Topic: Governance and Bureaucratic hurdles.

What is the news?

- Wildlife department fumes at the proposal of Punjab Pollution Control Board to expand the molasses capacity by Chadha Sugar mill.

Background: -

- In 2018, Chadha Sugar mill at Kiri Afghans in Gurdaspur faced a leakage due to which massive damage was done to the cause of the river Beas.
- A large number of aquatic life was adversely affected.
- Due to this spillage, PPCB had imposed a fine of ₹ 5 crore on the mill.
- Though the Wildlife department is seeking ₹3.60 crores, the PPCB sanctioned only ₹ 1.03 crore.

- Of this amount, only ₹74 lakh has been sanctioned by the PPCB.
- This delaying and unenthusiastic response from PPCB has caused a setback in the process of revival of the Beas river and its ecology.

The Beas Revival plan:-

- Creating a buffer zone between the Beas and land.
- Removal of plastic and other waste materials from the region.
- Mapping and keeping a record of species of aquatic wildlife in the Beas till Harke Downstream.
- Replenishment of the river base and special efforts for Gharial and dolphin protection.
- Restocking 20000 kg fish seedlings.
- Planting saplings for healthy and stable river banks.

Way forward:-

- National Green Tribunal can take a suo moto cognisance of the matter.
- The NGOs such as the Centre for Science and Environment can study every aspect of the damage and give some recommendations.
- Civil society and citizens active role is a must for making the mills accountable.
- the comprehensive River rejuvenation plan could be done with the help of the World Bank and other institutions.

(Source:- The Tribune)

Topic: Agriculture and allied sectors

What is the news?

- Coronavirus threat leads to sharp downfall in the income of the poultry farmers.
- Coronavirus scare has led to a sharp fall in the income of the poultry farmers.
- The demand for poultry products has plunged by 50%.

The reason:-

- misconception and misinformation about the relationship between the virus and non-vegetarian food is a big reason.
- The government and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) have stepped in to clarify th doubts regarding this.
- People are probably mistaking coronavirus flu with bird flu.

Result:-

- The wholesale price of eggs has fallen from ₹ 3.75 to Around ₹2.60 to 2.80.
- The wholesale prices have also dropped from ₹ 70 per kg of live bird to ₹25 to ₹40.
- Sales in Amritsar city have faced a downfall of around 25%.
- There are other reasons for this loss in the poultry sector:

- High input costs such as feed is an issue (the cost of feed has gone up by 30%).
- The subsidised poultry farms of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have been supplying cheap poultry products.
- So, the government along with Punjab Poultry farms Association should chalk out a course of action to tackle this dip in the poultry sector.

(Source:-The Tribune)

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