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- 
- 
- Home
- UPSC
 - Current Affairs IAS
 -   
 - Quiz IAS
 -   
 - UPSC News Editorial (/Eng)
 - Answer Writing ( /Eng)
 - UPSC Essay (/Eng)
 - UPSC GS (/Eng)
 - UPSC GS 1 ( /Eng)
 - UPSC GS-2 ( /Eng)
 - UPSC GS-3 ( /Eng)
 - UPSC GS-4 ( /Eng)
 - Kurukshetra ( /Eng)
 - Yojana ( /Eng)
 - IAS Strategy for Prelims
 - General Studies
 - CSAT
 - IAS Strategy for Mains
 - IAS GS 1
 - IAS GS 2
 - IAS GS 3
 - IAS GS 4
 - IAS Test Series
- Himachal HPAS
 - Himachal Daily Current Affairs
 -   
 - Daily Himachal GK Quiz

- Himachal News Editorial (Hindi/Eng)
- Answer Writing (Hindi /Eng)
- Himachal Essay (Hindi/Eng)
- Giriraj
 - Magazine
 - Giriraj Quiz
- Himachal Pradesh
 - Himachal Pradesh
 - Himachal Pradesh Government Schemes
- HP Government Schemes
- Himachal Pradesh Government Schemes
- Syllabus Prelims Himachal HPAS
 - GENERAL STUDIES
 - CSAT
 - English
 - Hindi
- Syllabus Mains Himachal HPAS
 - English,Hindi,Essay & One Optional
 - HPAS GS 3
 - HPAS GS 2
 - HPAS GS 1
- Himachal HPAS Test Series
- All You need to Know about Himachal HPAS
- HARYANA HCS
 - Haryana Current Affairs
 - Himachal Pradesh Government Schemes
 - HCS Quiz
 - Himachal Pradesh Government Schemes
 - Haryana News Editorial (Hindi/Eng)
 - Answer Writing (Hindi /Eng)
 - Haryana Essay (Hindi/Eng)
 - HR Government Schemes
 - Himachal Pradesh Government Schemes
 - Syllabus Mains Haryana HCS
 - Syllabus Prelims Haryana HCS
 - HCS Prelims Test Series

- [Punjab PCS](#)
- [Punjab PCS Current Affairs](#)
- [Daily Quiz Punjab PCS](#)
- [Punjab News Editorial \(Eng\)](#)
- [Answer Writing \(Eng\)](#)
- [Punjab Essay \(Eng\)](#)
- [All you need to know about Punjab PCS Exam 2021](#)
- [Syllabus Prelims Punjab PCS](#)
 - [General Studies](#)
 - [Prelims GS 1](#)
- [Syllabus Mains Punjab PCS](#)
 - [PCS GS 1](#)
 - [PCS GS 2](#)
 - [PCS GS 3](#)
 - [PCS GS 4](#)
 - [Online PUNJAB PCS TEST SERIES 2020](#)
- [CSAT](#)
 - [CSAT English](#)
 - [Punjab PCS CSAT](#)
- [Concept Mindmaps](#)
 - [Polity \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Geography \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Environment \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [History \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Economics \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Science and Technology \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [CSAT Concepts \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Maps \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Art and Culture \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [International Affairs \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Punjab PCS Concepts](#)
 - [Himachal HPAS Concepts \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Haryana HCS Concepts \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Rajasthan RAS Concepts \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
- [Concept Quiz](#)
 - [Polity Quiz \(Hindi/Eng\)](#)

- Geography Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Environment Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- History Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Economics Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Science and Technology Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- CSAT Concepts Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Maps Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Art and Culture Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Punjab PCS Concepts Quiz
- Himachal HPAS Concepts Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Haryana HCS Concepts Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Rajasthan RAS Concepts Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Mains
 - UPSC Answer Writing (हिंदी/Eng)
 - HPPSC Answer Writing (हिंदी/Eng)
 - Haryana HCS Answer Writing (हिंदी/Eng)
 - Punjab PCS Answer Writing
- Exam Blogs
 - UPSC Exam Blogs
 - Himachal Exam Blogs
 - Punjab exam Blogs
 - Haryana Exam Blogs
 - Rajasthan Exam Blogs
 - E-Magazine
 - E-Magazine for HPAS
 - हिंदी/English में हिंदी-हिंदी/English
 - E-Magazine for Punjab PCS
- UPCOMING EXAMS
 - National Exams
 - Himachal Pradesh Exams
 - Punjab Exams
 - Test Series Planner
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Click on Drop Down for Current Affairs

April 2nd, 2020

Topic:- Important Personality

What is the news?

- ***Unfortunate passing away of Hazuri Ragi Padma Shri Bhai Nirmal Singh Ji.***

About Bhai Nirmal Singh Ji:-

- Bhai Nirmal Singh Khalsa (12 April 1952 – 2 April 2020) was an Indian Sikh Hazoori Ragi of Darbar Sahib in Punjab, India.
- Born in Village Jand Wala Bhime Shah, Distt. Ferozepur, Punjab, he obtained a diploma in Gurmat sangeet from the

Shaheed Missionary College, Amritsar in 1976.

- He served as a music teacher in Gurmat College, Rishikesh, in 1977 and in Shaheed Sikh Missionary College, Sant Baba Fateh Singh, Sant Channan Singh, Budha Johar, Ganga Nagar, Rajasthan, in 1978.
- From 1979, he started serving as 'Hazoori Raagi', at Sach Khand Sri Harmandir Sahib.
- He has also performed Kirtan at all the five Takhts, historical Gurdwaras in India and 71 other countries.
- He is one of the finest raagis having knowledge of all the 31 Raags in Gurbani of Dhan Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.
- For his services in the field of "arts", he was awarded the Padma Shri award (India's fourth-highest civilian award) by the government of India in 2009.

(Source:- Punjab Govt)

Topic:- Farmers challenge due to COVID-19

What is the news?

- Labour shortage likely to take a toll on wheat procurement in Punjab.
- As the state government prepares for its biggest annual exercise of procuring wheat amid the curfew, it faces a serious challenge of shortage of the migrant labour.

- The state is expecting to produce 180-185 lakh metric tonnes (lmt) of wheat this year. Of this, 135 it is expected to reach mandis after the harvesting of the crop begins in a fortnight.

Challenges:-

- Though the harvesting of crop is largely mechanised, there are farmers who harvest the crop manually. For this, labour from other states starts arriving in Punjab around this time.
- Also, labour is required for the handling of foodgrain in the mandis.

Sutantar Kumar Airi, Director, Agriculture,

- He hoped that the local labour in Punjab would be able to help in the harvesting of the crop. Sukhdev Singh Kokrikalan, general secretary, BKU, however, is sceptical. "We have been repeatedly appealing to the government to get proactive in the matter. Barely 10 per cent of the farmers have employed permanent labour, while the remaining hire daily wagers for harvesting. There are also reports on combine harvesters not being able to reach Punjab after these machines were taken to central and southern states for harvesting earlier," he said.

Secretary, Agriculture, Kahan Singh Pannu:-

- The real challenge arising out of the shortage of labour

will be in the mandis. "Foodgrain handling operations require specialised labour. We can only hope that the lockdown period would end and the labour would be available,"

Additional Chief Secretary, Development, Vishwajit Khanna:-

- Today announced a slew of measures to allow free movement of men and machines for the purpose. In an advisory issued to all Deputy Commissioners, he said free movement of farmers, labourers, farm operation machinery (both individual and that of custom hiring centres) would be allowed. He has also asked all districts to ensure that sale of seed and fertilisers is not affected.

(Source:- The Tribune)

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- National Current Affairs
- UPSC Quiz
- Editorials
- Mindmaps
- E-Magazine
- Free Mock Test
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Punjab PCS

- Punjab Current Affairs
- PPSC Quiz
- Punjab Mindmaps
- Punjab Editorial

- Punjab E-Magazine
- PPSC Free Mock Test
- PPSC Prelims Test Series

Haryana HCS

- Haryana Current Affairs
- HCS Quiz
- HCS Editorials
- HCS Mindmaps
- HCS E-Magazine
- HCS Free Mock Test
- HCS Prelims Test Series

संबन्धित लेख

- राजस्थान प्रशासनिक सेवा
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- राजस्थान प्रशासनिक सेवा

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- UPSC
- राजस्थान प्रशासनिक सेवा
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