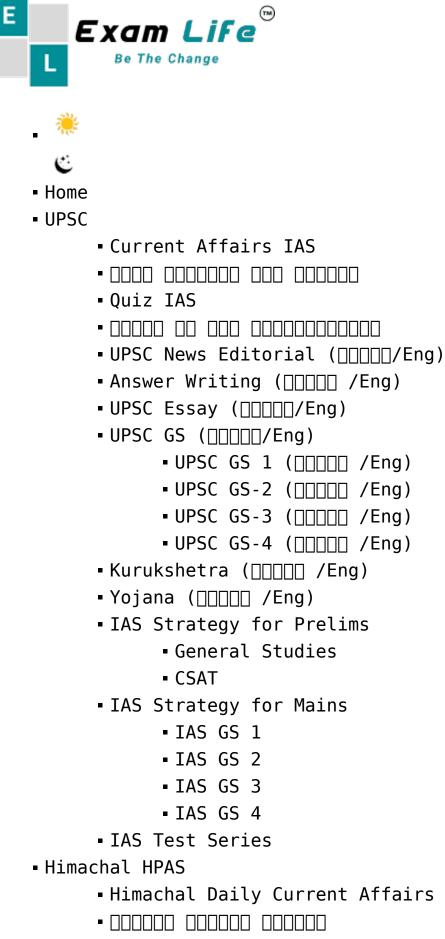
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## 27th, August, 2022

## **Today's Topic Covered**

1) Tata Steel signs MoU with Punjab govt to set up a plant in Ludhiana.....*Read in Detail* 

2) Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) scientists have decoded the mystery of stunted growth of paddy plants.....Read in Detail

3) Three teachers from the state have been selected for the National Awards to Teachers-2022......Read in Detail

4) Punjab Building and Other Construction Workers' (BOCW) Welfare Board has said it would recover money illegally given to construction workers ....Read in Detail

5) Panel formed to get NAAC accreditation for Punjab colleges

Topic: Tata Steel signs MoU with Punjab govt to set up a plant in Ludhiana

## Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

#### What is the news?

 Tata Steel has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Punjab for setting up a 0.75 million tonne per annum (MnTPA) long products, steel plant with a scrap-based electric arc furnace (EAF).



## Where it will be located?

 This initiative to set up the greenfield facility at Kadiana Khurd, Hitech Valley, Ludhiana in Punjab is part of Tata Steel's commitment to investing in a circular economy and transitioning to low-carbon steelmaking through the steel recycling route. It is a step aligned to the Company's goal of achieving Net Zero carbon emission by 2045.

- The state-of-the art electric arc furnace (EAF)-based steel plant would produce construction grade steel rebar under the Company's flagship retail brand 'Tata Tiscon', which would enable Tata Steel to further augment its market presence in the construction segment
- This is the biggest secondary steel unit to be set up by Tata Steel, having a capacity of producing 0.75 MTPA of finished steel per annum. In the first phase, Tata Steel is investing Rs 2,600 crore in this project.

## Why important?

 Tata group's first scrap-based integrated steel plant of India.

## Some Kepy Points:

- The biggest secondary steel unit to be set up by Tata Steel.
- Has capacity to produce 0.75 MTPA of finished steel yearly.
- In Phase-I, Tata Steel to invest Rs 2,600 crore in project.
- The state-of-the art electric arc furnace (EAF)-based steel plant

## Chief Minister shared:

 The investment by this major industrial group would further put the state on a high – growth trajectory of industrial development. The CM also patted the team of Invest Punjab, which facilitated Tata Steel management in their endeavor to set up **Tata group's first scrapbased integrated steel plant of India**.

## Some other future projects shared by CM:

#### Rs 350 Crore cost of each train:

- There is a scheme of the Railways, under which it will offer a loan for the purpose at 3%. Bhagwant Mann, CM.
- If everything goes as per the plan of the state government, Punjab will be the first state in the country to have its own goods trains to transport goods meant for export and import. The move will help save the precious working capital of exporters and importers as it is likely to bring down the transportation cost by at least 50 per cent.

## On connectivity:

 Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said the government was in talks with major airlines to start direct international flights from Amritsar and Mohali. ''We are in talks with the Tatas (Air India), Vistara, British Airways and Air Canada regarding direct flights from Amritsar and Mohali to London, Vancouver, Toronto, Silicon Valley and Chicago," he said.

### **On tourism:**

 The CM said the state was focusing on tourism. Clean water of the Ranjit Sagar Dam would be leveraged to develop tourism on the lines of Udaipur lake.

#### On power generation:

 He said Punjab's captive coal mine in Jharkhand, which had remained closed for some reasons, had reopened and 'there won't be any coal shortage for power generation''.

## Single-window system:

 Kamal Kishor Yadav, Chief Executive Officer, Invest Punjab, said, "As a unified regulator, we are ensuring that all clearances take place in a time-bound manner. Another focus will be on transparency. This is a singlewindow system or one-stop solution that the Government of Punjab is provided to all industries."

(Source: The Tribune & Livemint)

# Topic: Mystery of stunted growth of paddy plants in Punjab

Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

## What is the news?

• Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) scientists have decoded the mystery of stunted growth of paddy plants.



## According to the experts:

• Southern rice, black-streaked dwarf virus (SRBSDV) is the real cause behind it and the university has constituted a five-member committee to investigate the cause behind this rising trend.

## Agricultural Varsity's advisory:

- Monitor paddy crop regularly for the presence of whitebacked plant hopper (WBPH). Tilt few plants slightly and tap 2-3 times at the base at weekly intervals. WBPH nymphs, if present, will be seen floating on the water
- Spray insecticides at the base of the plants on observing the WBPH; farmers should follow the transplanting dates advised by the PAU since stunting

was observed to be more in early transplanted crop.

#### Dr Satbir Singh Gosal, Vice Chancellor, PAU said:

• "The incidence of SRBSDV is the first viral disease in the state. It is caused by a double stranded RNA virus that was first reported in 2001 from Southern China. The symptoms produced on the rice as well as the genome structure of this virus resembles with that of rice black streaked dwarf virus, but as this virus was first reported from the southern China, this virus was named as southern rice black streaked dwarf virus. In addition to paddy, it also infects different weed species."

#### Dr AS Dhatt, Director of Research, PAU, said:

- The virus was transmitted by white-backed plant hopper (WBPH) in persistent circulative and propagative manner. Nymphs of WBPH can transmit SRBSDV more efficiently as compared to their adults. Long distance transmission of this virus may occur through WBPH migrating with strong convection winds. The viruliferous WBPH nymphs and adults may transmit SRBSDV to rice plants at different growth stages.
- Since there is no corrective measure for the viral diseases, hence the only way out is to adopt preventive measures for managing the vector of this viral disease, added Dr Dhatt.

The PAU committee members said the analysis of soil and plant samples collected from the affected fields showed no relationship of stunting with nutrition deficiency. Meanwhile, Dr Rajbir Singh, Director, Agricultural Technology Application Research Institute (ATARI), who was the co-leader of the team formed the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, said:

- The stunting incidence has been observed to be associated with the date of transplanting as it was more in June 15 to 25 transplanting as compared to the crop transplanted after June 25. Same observation was made by the PAU team as well.
- "In Punjab, the problem was found more in the Kandi areas than in the plains. In Haryana, the problem is seen more in areas like Yamunanagar, Ambala, which are in the Shivalik foothills and have climate like that of Kandi areas in Punjab," he said.

## About Southern rice, black-streaked dwarf virus (SRBSDV):

 Southern rice, black-streaked dwarf virus (SRBSDV), a non-enveloped icosahedral virus with a genome of 10 double-stranded RNA segments, is a novel species in the genus Fijivirus (family Reoviridae) first recognized in 2008.

(News Source: The Tribune)

## Topic: National Awards to Teachers-2022

## Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

#### What is the news?

- Three teachers from the state have been selected for the National Awards to Teachers-2022.
- President Droupadi Murmu will confer the awards on 46 selected teachers on Teacher's Day to honour their unique contribution to school education.
- The three teachers selected for this annual coveted award from the state this year are Harpreet Singh, Dr Vandna Shahi and Arun Kumar Garg.



#### Who released the list?

• In the list released by the Ministry of Education.

## About Harpreet Singh:

•Harpreet Singh, posted as the head teacher at the

Government Primary Smart School, Bihla (Barnala), joined the school in 2002.

 "With the support of the Panchayat, the state government and NRIs of the area, we have spent Rs 39 lakh to provide facilities to our students here," said Harpreet. Today the school has an education activity park, digital classrooms, a smart language lab, a computer lab, a multipurpose hall, an auditorium and other required facilities for all students.

### About Dr Vandna Shahi:

- Dr Vandna Shahi, principal of BCM School, Basant Avenue, Dugri, Ludhiana, has been chosen for her "immense commitment", innovative teaching methods, for initiating numerous community outreach programmes such as "We care" and "Reach" in the school.
- Under her guidance, students got selected for NASA programmes and also won many competitions. She has conducted 75 sessions on pedagogical leadership this year.

#### About Arun Kumar Garg:

Arun Kumar Garg, principal of Government Senior Secondary School at Datawas in Mansa, is a mathematics teacher. He runs a free online channel on YouTube, "Abhyaas By Arun Sir", to facilitate both students and teachers. He started this channel during the Covid period. The channel currently has more than 11,000 subscribers. Apart from delivering online lectures, Arun is quite innovative as he had invented many activitybased learning models with a motive that students do not fear maths and learn and understand it in a fun way. (Source: The Tribune)

# Topic: Steps to tackle corruption in Punjab

## Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

#### What is the news?

- The Punjab Building and Other Construction Workers' (BOCW) Welfare Board has said it would recover money illegally given to construction workers under various welfare schemes. Some of the beneficiaries have already died.
- The special audit has exposed that thousands of ineligible beneficiaries received financial help under the shagun scheme.
- Officials, allegedly in connivance with middlemen, extended financial help to ineligible beneficiaries; some of whom are dead.



## Why this came into highlight:

- The direction comes after a special audit by the Finance Department.
- The board's decision is seen in the light of a report by the CAG submitted in the Vidhan Sabha in 2020. It had highlighted financial irregularities worth more than Rs 80 crore.
- The audit has exposed thousands of ineligible beneficiaries received financial help under the shagun scheme. Under the ex gratia scheme, financial help was given to construction workers whose names were registered after their death.
- Manvesh Singh Sidhu, Principal Secretary, Labour, said: "The department will try to recover the amount from ineligible beneficiaries. If anyone has died, the amount will be recovered from his legal heirs." As to the action against erring officials, he claimed some of them had already been chargesheeted.

## About Punjab Building and Other Construction Workers' (BOCW) Welfare Board:

 Punjab Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board was constituted vide Punjab Govt. Notification No S.0.17/C.A.27/96/S.18/2/2009 dated 30/04/2009, as per provisions under "The Building and Other Construction Workers' (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996". The major functions of the board are to register the construction workers in the state of Punjab, to frame welfare schemes for these construction workers and to provide them financial benefits under these schemes.

#### Our Mission:

The mission of the Board is to uplift the living standards of the construction workers and thier family members, in the State of Punjab, by way of providing them basic amenities and adequate welfare measures after enrolling them as beneficiaries with the Board and providing them benefits by way of direct transfer into their bank accounts, under various welfare schemes of the board in a very transparent and efficient manner.

#### Construction Worker:

 Any worker doing any building and other construction work in the State of Punjab for minimum 90 days during the last 12 months and whose age is between 18 to 60 years is a construction worker.

#### Registration with the Board:

 A construction worker becomes member of the board by filling an application form No 28 along with depositing registration fees of Rs.25/- only (once in life) and Rs.10/- per month as contribution fees. A worker at a time can get himself registered for a minimum period of 1 year & maximum period of 5 years.The registered worker is called 'Beneficiary' of the Board.

#### Applications for Benefits:

 For the registration of a construction worker and for filing applications for various benefits under the Welfare Schemes of Board, the construction worker is to visit the nearest sewa kendras or contact the Assistant labour Commissioner/Labour-cum-Conciliation Officer/Labour Inspector/Labour Enforcement Officer of his area.

#### Welfare Schemes of the Board:

 Once a construction worker gets registered with the Board he becomes eligible for benefits under various Welfare schemes such as Ex-Gratia Scheme, Stipend Scheme, BPSSBY Scheme, Funeral Scheme, Shagun Scheme, Pension Scheme etc. For details of Welfare Schemes, click at "Welfare Schemes" Menu on the left sidebar.

#### Source of Income of the Board:

 The main source of income of the Board is Cess levied and collected under the Cess Act and the registration and contribution fee received from the registered construction workers. The board has received Rs. 1195.76 Crore cess amount as on 30/06/2018 and has spent about Rs 608.82 Crore under various Welfare Schemes and other administrative expenses

#### **Online facility through Sewa Kendras:**

 Board has integrated the whole network of the Web Portal "bocw(dot)punjab(dot)gov.in" with the Punjab Sewa Portal, as a result of which now construction workers can file their applications at the nearest Sewa Kendras. Beneficiaries Registered : 7.48 Lakh workers have been registered with the Board as beneficiaries till 30/06/2018.

(News Source: The Tribune & Punjab Government)

# Topic: Panel formed to get NAAC accreditation for Punjab colleges

## Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

#### What is the news?

- The Higher Education Department has formed a coordination committee comprising internal quality assurance cell (IQAC) directors at various universities to get colleges accredited with the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).
- The higher education institutions need to get themselves accredited in order to get grants from the central government. Of the 1,050 governments, government-aided and private colleges in the state, only 150 were accredited with NAAC. Of these, 28 institutes were set to lose their accreditation by the end of October.
- Ashwani Bhalla, Assistant Director, DPI Colleges, said, "There are 64 government colleges in the state. Of these, 16 have been set up recently, which are yet not eligible for the accreditation.:



# About National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC):

### What is NAAC Accreditation?

- NAAC certification is a measure to evaluate and ensure a standard of education in higher education institutions across the country. The Commission for University Grants (UGC) has issued a decree stipulating that each university and faculty must obtain certification by the board known as NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council).
- NAAC accreditation focuses on improving the quality parameters of education.
- Unlike the traditional education system, NAAC aims to improve the overall development of students by assisting them to acquire skills and knowledge through their education.
- Institutions accredited by NAAC fall under the category of institutions that offer "quality education" to students. Therefore, institutions that aim to maximize the student learning outcomes by ensuring the best practices must try to attain NAAC accreditation.

## Purpose of NAAC Accreditation:

- The main purpose of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) for conducting accreditation in colleges, and higher education institutes is to create understanding about the status of education quality among the institutes.
- The NSAC body itself creates the set of standards that educational institutions can recommend to determine their eligibility for NAAC accreditation. It provides

access to funding programs by federal and state. Further, it maintains private sector confidence among the institutes and helps in the easy transfer of student credits.

## Role of NAAC Accreditation in Higher Education:

- Education is the most important pillar of a nation for its development.
- Therefore, the excellence and relevance of the university's programs must have a standard.
- As in every arena of business, the method of improving quality has a predefined set of measures. Colleges must find and recognize additional requirements to satisfy them per the international standards.
- The role of NAAC Accreditation is to bring the best in every institution and help institutions grow across research, innovation, student success, governance & more.

## Importance of NAAC Accreditation for Students & HEIs:

 NAAC accreditation identifies the quality of the institute in terms of its education, research, faculty, infrastructure, etc., as well as giving students confidence that they are selecting a quality institution. It gives an institute instant credibility and increases its admissions.

## Some More Punjab News:

 The mega integrated textile park, which was earlier planned near the protected Mattewara forest in Ludhiana and was later scrapped following a public outcry, will now be built in Fatehgarh Sahib.



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