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28th, August, 2022

Today's Topic Covered

1) The Punjab Government has approved an action plan of Rs 25,237 crore to improve the quality and reliability of the power supply to consumers.....*Read in Detail*

2) Cases of swine flu (H1N1) starting to surface in the state, the Punjab government.....*Read in Detail*

3) Punjab became the first state in the country by felicitating its Commonwealth contingent with cash prize.....*Read in Detail*

4) Steps to Combat Corruption in Punjab



Topic: Steps to Impower Power Supply in Punjab

Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

Punjab PCS Prelims: Economy

Punjab PCS Mains:

- ***Paper 6: General Aptitude III: Topic: Infrastructure***
- ***Paper 4: General Aptitude 1: Topic: Issues relating to the development and management of Social Sector- Health, Education, Human Resources.***

What is the news?

- The Punjab Government has approved an action plan of Rs 25,237 crore ***to improve the quality and reliability of the power supply to consumers.***

Aim:

- The aim is to provide 24*7 reliable power supply.
- The reform-based and result-linked Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) is an ambitious flagship scheme aimed at increasing the operational efficiency and financial sustainability of the distribution companies through a robust and sustainable distribution network.



Power Minister Harbhajan Singh Shared:

- Under the scheme, various infrastructure works like commissioning of 94 new 66 kV sub-stations and installation and augmentation of 89 66 kV and 382 11 kV power transformers shall be carried out.
- In addition to this, 2,015 circuit kilometres of 66 kV transmission lines shall be erected for system strengthening and modernization along with installation of 23,687 11 kV distribution transformers and erection of 15,859 circuit kilometers of High Tension and Low Tension lines.

About Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme: Reforms-Based and Result-Linked:

- The government of India has approved the Revamped

Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) to help DISCOMs improve their operational efficiencies and financial sustainability by providing result-linked financial assistance to DISCOMs to strengthen supply infrastructure based on meeting pre-qualifying criteria and achieving basic minimum benchmarks. The scheme has an outlay of Rs 3,03,758 Crore over 5 years i.e. FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26. The outlay includes an estimated Government Budgetary Support (GBS) of Rs 97,631 Crore.

REC and PFC have been nominated as nodal agencies for facilitating the implementation of the scheme.

The scheme aims to meet the following objectives:

- 1) Reduction of AT&C losses to pan-India levels of 12-15% by 2024-25.
- 2) Reduction of ACS-ARR gap to zero by 2024-25.
- 3) Improvement in the quality, reliability and affordability of power supply to consumers through a financially sustainable and operationally efficient distribution sector.
- 4) The Scheme has the following components:

Part A – Financial support for Prepaid Smart Metering & System Metering and up-gradation of the Distribution Infrastructure.

Part B – Training & Capacity Building and other Enabling & Supporting Activities.

Learning from the experience of previous schemes, the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme has been developed to address state-specific needs.

Some of the salient features are as below:

Prepaid Smart Metering to be prioritized for:

- 500 AMRUT cities, with AT&C Losses > 15%.
 - All Union Territories.
 - MSMEs, Industrial and Commercial consumers.
 - All Government offices at the Block level and above.
 - Other areas with high losses.
1. Prepaid Smart metering for remaining consumers and areas is proposed to be taken up by the respective DISCOMs in a phased manner.
 2. Prepaid Smart metering and system metering are proposed to be implemented through PPP on TOTEX (CAPEX+OPEX) mode.
 3. Part A of the scheme also provides financial assistance to DISCOMs for infrastructure creation and undertaking reforms to achieve the desired results towards improvement in operational efficiency and financial sustainability.
 4. Provision of feeder segregation for unsegregated feeders. Thereafter, these feeders are to be summarized under KUSUM – leading to cheap/ free daytime power for irrigation.
 5. The pre-qualifying criteria need to be mandatorily met with the DISCOMs before they can be evaluated based on the Result Evaluation Matrix.
 6. Thereafter, performance based on Result Evaluation Matrix shall form the basis for the release of funds under the scheme.
 7. For Prepaid Smart metering, a grant of Rs 900 or 15% of the cost per consumer meter (whichever is lower), shall be available for “Other than Special Category” States. For “Special Category” States, the grant of Rs 1350 or

22.5% of the cost per consumer (whichever is lower) shall be available.

8. To incentivize the States/UTs to fast-track installation of prepaid Smart Meters by December 2023, an additional incentive of 7.5% of the cost per consumer meter or Rs. 450 (whichever is lower) shall be available. For “Special Category” States the additional incentive shall be 11.25% or Rs. 675 per consumer meter (whichever is lower).
9. For works other than smart metering, maximum financial assistance given to DISCOMs of “Other than Special Category” States will be 60% of the approved cost, while for the DISCOMs in special category states, the maximum financial assistance will be 90% of the approved cost.

(Source: The Tribune & recindia)

Topic: Steps to Combat Corruption in Punjab

Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

Punjab PCS Prelims: Polity

Punjab PCS Mains:

- ***Paper 5: General Aptitude II:*** Topic: Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability

What is the news?

- Days after the Punjab Vigilance Bureau (VB) busted a racket in which some of the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) offices, Motor Vehicles Inspectors (MVI) were giving fitness certificates without verifying a vehicles and their documents, the state transport minister Laljit Singh Bhullar on Saturday appointed MVIs on 11 vacant posts to reduce the ever-increasing burden of passing and issuing fitness certificates of old vehicles in the state.



The minister shared:

- Only four Motor Vehicles Inspectors (MVI) under 11 RTA offices are currently looking after the work of passing and issuing fitness certificates to the old vehicles in 23 districts of the state as a result of which very little could be done and files are piling up in the department.
- Responding to the complaints of delays, the minister made internal arrangements by appointing staff from

Punjab roadways to reduce the workload and bring more transparency. Now, all 11 dedicated MVIs will work under 11 RTA offices, an official spokesperson said.

- Emphasizing on the resolution of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann of zero tolerance policy against corruption, the minister said any officer or employee found involved in corruption will not be spared at all, these officers should discharge their duty honestly.

Official sources shared:

- The same modus operandi is being followed in the entire state. As each district is not having MVI, one MVI is holding charge of two or three districts. An official said MVIs were found to be operating through agents who do the paperwork for issuing the fitness certificates and play the role of middleman for per vehicle bribes to MVIs and RTA staff members.

(Source: thestatesman)

Topic: Swine Flu cases in Punjab

Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

Punjab PCS Prelims: General Science

Punjab PCS Mains:

- ***Paper 4: General Aptitude I: Topic:*** Issues relating to

the development and management of Social Sector- Health.

- **Paper 7: General Aptitude IV: Topic:** Human Diseases and Microbial infections; Common infections and preventive measures; preventive measures during outbreaks; Immunity and vaccination

What is the news?

- With cases of swine flu (H1N1) starting to surface in the state, the Punjab government has issued directions for setting up flu corners for the management of suspected cases of influenza-like illness in all the government and private hospitals of the state.
- H1N1 is a contagious disease that can develop into serious illness if treatment is delayed. This year, a total of 38 cases of swine flu has been reported, while six infected persons – two each from Ludhiana and Patiala and one each from Sangrur and Malerkotla – have died. All the deceased had underlying health conditions.



About Swine Flu:

- Swine influenza is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza viruses that regularly cause outbreaks of influenza in pigs.
- Influenza viruses that commonly circulate in swine are called “swine influenza viruses” or “swine flu viruses.” Like human influenza viruses, there are different subtypes and strains of swine influenza viruses.

What is Swine Influenza?

- Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza in pigs. Swine flu viruses do not usually infect humans, but rare human infections have occurred.
- Swine flu viruses can cause high levels of illness in pig herds, but cause few deaths in pigs. Swine influenza viruses can circulate among swine throughout the year, but most outbreaks occur during the late fall and winter months similar to outbreaks in humans.

How many swine flu viruses are there?

- Like influenza viruses in humans and other animals, swine flu viruses change constantly.
- Pigs can be infected by avian influenza and human influenza viruses as well as swine influenza viruses. When influenza viruses from different species infect pigs, the viruses can reassort (i.e. Swap genes) and new viruses that are a mix of swine, human and/or avian influenza viruses can emerge. Over the years, different variations of swine flu viruses have emerged.
- At this time, there are three main influenza A virus

subtypes that have been isolated in pigs in the United States: H1N1, H1N2, and H3N2. U.S. pigs in recent years have been, swine triple reassortant (tr) H1N1 influenza virus, trH3N2 virus, and trH1N2 virus.

About H1N1:

- The H1N1 flu, commonly known as swine flu, is primarily caused by the H1N1 strain of the flu (influenza) virus. H1N1 is a type of influenza A virus, and H1N1 is one of several flu virus strains that can cause the seasonal flu. Symptoms of the H1N1 flu are the same as those of the seasonal flu.
- In the spring of 2009, scientists recognized a particular strain of flu virus known as H1N1. This virus is a combination of viruses from pigs, birds and humans that causes disease in humans. During the 2009-10 flu season, H1N1 caused the respiratory infection in humans that was commonly referred to as swine flu. Because so many people around the world got sick, in 2009 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the H1N1 flu to be a pandemic. In August 2010, WHO declared the pandemic over. After the pandemic was over, the H1N1 flu virus became one of the strains that cause seasonal flu.
- The flu vaccine can now help protect against the H1N1 flu (swine flu). The H1N1 flu virus strain is included in the seasonal flu vaccine, including the vaccine for 2020-21.

(Source: timesofindia and cdc)

Some More News:

1) Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann felicitated 23 sportspersons of Punjab who represented the country in recently concluded Games at Birmingham with cash prize worth ₹9.30 Crore.

Why important?

Punjab became the first state in the country by felicitating its Commonwealth contingent with cash prize.

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