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February 18, 2020.

Topic: Groundwater resources.

News:-Only 60% of groundwater of Punjab is fit for use.

- Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has prepared a first-ever audit report on Punjab groundwater.
- It has found that more than half of the groundwater of Punjab is contaminated with hazardous chemicals, heavy metals and radioactive materials.

It has found that:

- Excessive use of fertilizers is being used to increase the production, which is causing Massive problems to the state groundwater.
- Fertilizers used in the state has gone up by 146. 46%. (From 1980 to 2018).
- 10% of the state's groundwater is unsafe even for

irrigation purposes.

- 30% of the water is moderately alkaline or saline. (But cannot be used by the humans).
- Electrical conductivity and residual sodium carbonate indicate salinity and alkalinity.
- Permissible limits of various pollutants were found to be breached in various regions.
- In 16 districts, Fluoride limit was found to be more than the permissible limits. (1.5 mg in 1 litre).
- In 19 districts, Nitrate was above 45 mg in one litre.
- In 6 districts, Arsenic was above 0.05 mg.
- And In 9 districts, Iron was above 1.0 mg.
- Also, Groundwater extraction has increased in the state at rapid levels.

(From 149% in 2013 to 165% in 2018).

- Paddy sowing is the main culprit here.
- Punjab has the maximum percentage of wells showing depletion in groundwater and figures among the top 10.

Solutions:

- Rajinder Singh, Waterman of India, can help Punjab in devising some policy regarding it.
- Rainwater harvesting and other techniques of conservation should be used
- UN water and other agencies such as central groundwater Board could be roped in.
- Aquifer management should be done by the expert geologists for knowing the state of affairs of groundwater in details.
- Mass awareness and rewarding programs should be set up.
- State groundwater conservation policy should be set up.

(Source:- The Tribune)

Topic: Festival

News:- Patiala festival to be held from February 22.

- Its main purpose is to commemorate the 257 years of existence of the Patiala city.
- Department of Cultural Affairs and Tourism will be organising it.
- Patiala's culture, royalty and hospitality will be on display.
- Various cultural activities will also take place eg dance shows, food festival, dog show etc.
- Prominent personalities such as Kuchipudi dancer Raja Radha Reddy, Tabla Player Ustad Zakir Hussain etc would also be seen.
- Patiala's iconic Sheesh Mahal and other structures such as Yadavindra public School, Thapar University etc would also host shows.
- A vintage car rally would also take place from Chandigarh to Patiala.

(Source:- The Tribune)

Please visit Regular Quiz Section for important questions.

Punjab PCS --> See Second (Regular Quiz)

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