

**GOVERNMENT POLICY AND INTERVENTIONS**❖ **Multi-State Cooperative Societies**

➤ **Context: Cabinet approves Setting up of a national level multi-state cooperative seed society, multi-state cooperative organic society and multi-state cooperative export society under Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002.**

➤ **Multi-state cooperative seed society:**

- It will act as an apex organization for:
  - ✓ production, procurement, processing, branding, labelling, packaging, storage, marketing and distribution of quality seeds; strategic research & development; and to develop a system for preservation and promotion of indigenous natural seeds.

- Primary to national level cooperatives societies can become its member.

- All these cooperatives will have their elected representatives in the Board of the society as per its bye-laws.

- Quality seeds production through this national level seed cooperative society will increase the agriculture production in the country.

➤ **Multi-state cooperative organic society**

- The cooperative society will manage various activities related to organic sector by providing certified and authentic organic products.

- It will help in unlocking demand and consumption potential of organic products in domestic as well as in global markets.

- This society will also help cooperatives and ultimately their farmer members in getting benefits of high price of organic products through aggregation, branding and marketing on large scale by facilitating testing and certification at affordable cost.

- The cooperative society will also provide institutional support and arranging financial assistance to the organic farmers through its member cooperatives including Primary Agricultural Credit Societies/Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs).

- It will take up all promotion and development related activities of organic products with the help of various schemes and agencies of the Government.

- It will empanel accredited organic labs and certification bodies who meet the criteria specified by the society to bring down the cost of testing and certification.

- The society will manage entire supply chain of organic products produced by cooperatives and related entities through member cooperatives

➤ **Multi-state cooperative export society:**

- The proposed society will provide thrust to exports from cooperative sector by acting as an umbrella organisation for carrying out and promoting exports.

- This proposed society will also help cooperatives in getting benefits of various export related schemes and policies of different ministries of Government of India in a focussed manner through 'Whole of Government Approach'.

- This will also help in achieving the goal of "Sahakar-se-Samridhhi" through the inclusive growth model of cooperatives.

- Higher exports through the proposed society will increase production of goods and services by the cooperatives at various levels thus leading to more employment in the cooperative sector.

- Increased export of cooperative products would also promote "Make in India" thus leading to Atmanirbhar Bharat.

➤ **Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002**

- Cooperatives are a state subject, but there are many societies such as those for sugar and milk, banks, milk unions etc whose members and areas of operation are spread across more than one state.

- ✓ For example, most sugar mills along the districts on the Karnataka-Maharashtra border procure cane from both states.

- ✓ They draw their membership from both states, and they are thus registered under the MSCS Act.

- Their board of directors has representation from all states they operate in.

- Administrative and financial control of these societies is with the central registrar, with the law making it clear that no state government official can wield any control on them.

- Maharashtra has the highest number of such societies followed by Uttar Pradesh and New Delhi (133).

- Credit societies constitute the bulk of registered societies followed by agro-based ones (which include sugar mills, spinning mills etc).

➤ **History of India's cooperative movement**

- India's cooperative movement originated in the agriculture and related sectors as a means for farmers to pool their resources to prevent exploitation by money lenders.

- According to the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), cooperatives are people-centred enterprises jointly owned and democratically controlled by and for their members to realise their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations.

- Article 43B of the Constitution inserted by the 97th Amendment says that “states shall endeavour to promote voluntary formation, autonomous functioning, democratic control and professional management of cooperative societies”.
- Cooperatives in India range from those providing credit to those producing, procuring, or marketing products like fertilisers, milk, sugar, and fish.
  - ✓ Indian Farmers Fertilisers Cooperative (IFFCO) has around a third of the market share in fertilizers, while Gujarat’s Amul is a highly profitable dairy cooperative.
- According to the Ministry of Cooperation, there are around 8.5 lakh cooperatives in India, with about 1.3 crore people directly attached to them.
- As per NCUI data from 2018, the percentage of cooperative members in proportion to the total population increased from 3.8% in 1950-51 to 22.2% in 2016-17.
- **Formalization:**
  - ✓ India’s cooperative movement was formalised at the end of the 19th century, inspired by the German model of agricultural credit banks.
  - ✓ In 1904, the British government in India enacted the Cooperative Credit Societies Act.
  - ✓ While this Act dealt solely with the extension of credit, the sector was opened up to other activities in 1912.
  - ✓ Administrative reforms in 1919 transferred cooperatives to provincial control.
  - ✓ After Independence, the framers of the Constitution placed cooperatives in the State list.
  - ✓ They came to be considered instruments of socio-economic development and became an essential focus of the initial Five-Year Plans.
  - ✓ States made their own laws to regulate cooperatives within their jurisdiction, but in 1984, the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act (amended in 2002) was enacted by Parliament to consolidate different laws at the central level.
- **Multi-State Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2022**
  - To plug the loopholes in the MSCS Act, the Centre introduced a Bill seeking to amend the 2002 law for more transparency and increase the ease of doing business.
  - The amendments have been introduced to improve governance, reform the electoral process, strengthen monitoring mechanisms and enhance transparency and accountability.
  - Changes in the board of directors:
    - ✓ The Bill seeks to improve the composition of the board and ensure financial discipline, besides enabling the raising of funds in MCSCs.
    - ✓ The Bill provides for the creation of a central Co-operative Election Authority to supervise the electoral functions of the MSCSs.
    - ✓ The Authority will have a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and up to three members appointed by the Centre.
    - ✓ Another provision makes it possible to override the board of directors of the society and the appointment of an administrator, not necessarily a member of the collective.
  - The Bill seeks to amend Section 17 of the principal act to allow the merger of any State cooperative society with an existing MSCS.
  - It envisages the creation of a Co-operative Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Fund for the revival of sick MSCSs, financed by existing profitable MSCSs which will have to deposit either Rs. 1 crore or 1% of their net profit.
  - In order to make the governance of these societies more democratic, transparent and accountable, the Bill has provisions for appointing a Cooperative Information Officer and a Cooperative Ombudsman.
  - To promote equity and inclusiveness, provisions relating to the representation of women and Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe members on MSCS boards have been included.
  - **Definition of members:**
    - ✓ The Bill makes only members eligible to be elected to the board or as office bearers of the cooperative society.
    - ✓ Active members have been defined as those who are availing a minimum level of services from the society or have attended at least three consecutive general meetings.
  - The Bill also increases the penalty amount for violation of the law to Rs. 1 lakh and potential imprisonment from six months to a year.

**PRELIMS**

**1. Pineapple Express**

- **CONTEXT:** Forecasters said the rain arriving in California is being caused by a “true Pineapple Express” (a specific example of a common atmospheric phenomenon that resembles a conveyor belt for moisture).
- Over the past weeks, California and other parts of the West Coast have been hit with a series of what meteorologists call atmospheric rivers ( long, narrow regions in the atmosphere that transport most of the water vapor outside the tropics). “Like rivers in the sky,” according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

➤ **Is 'Pineapple Express' a common phenomenon?**

- These rivers in the sky occur often on the West Coast but can happen in other locations, including the eastern United States, where they often channel moisture from the Caribbean. And they carry a lot of moisture that is:
  - ✓ Enough water vapour to equal or sometimes exceed the average flow of the Mississippi River at the point where it flows into the Gulf of Mexico.
- When this moisture begins to interact with land, it can fall as rain or snow. Often, as is the case lately in California, the precipitation is abundant because these atmospheric rivers provide a continuous flow of moisture.
- Although atmospheric rivers come in different shapes and sizes, for one to be a "true Pineapple Express," location matters. The tail end, where the moisture is pulled into the atmosphere, must start near Hawaii. Then the river must stretch continuously through the atmosphere to the U.S. West Coast.

➤ **What happens, as a result?**

- Whether an atmospheric river is a Pineapple Express or not, the result is something like a conveyor belt for precipitation. That makes them essential to the livelihood of coastal states, which rely heavily on precipitation for their water supply: Between 30% and 50% of the annual precipitation on the West Coast occurs from just a few atmospheric river events, according to the NOAA.
- But when the rivers are particularly strong — or come back-to-back in what are called "atmospheric river families" — the effects can be serious, like the extensive flooding that California is experiencing now.

**2. NOTAM system**

➤ **CONTEXT: Thousands of flights, within, into or out of the United States were delayed or cancelled due to a technical glitch recently. The US Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) system, which alerts pilots and other flight personnel about hazards or any changes to airport facility services and relevant procedures, was not processing updated information, the civil aviation regulator's website showed.**

- In an advisory, the FAA said its NOTAM (Notice to Air Missions) system had "failed". There was no immediate estimate for when it would be back, the website showed, though NOTAMs issued before the outage were still viewable. After hours of delay, the FAA claimed that normal operations "have resumed".

➤ **NOTAM: notices containing essential information concerned with flight operations**

- According to the FAA, "a NOTAM is a notice containing information essential to personnel concerned with flight operations but not known far enough in advance to be publicized by other means." Further,
  - ✓ NOTAMs indicate the real-time and abnormal status of the National Airspace System (NAS) impacting every user.

- ✓ NOTAMs concern the establishment, condition, or change of any facility, service, procedure or hazard in the NAS.
- ✓ NOTAMs have a unique language using special contractions to make communication more efficient.

- Without NOTAMs, aeroplanes are at a risk of running into flocks of birds or remaining unaware of slippery conditions on runways, for example. NOTAMs are listed location wise with pilots needing to check "25 nautical miles to either side of your full route of flight" for relevant NOTAMs.

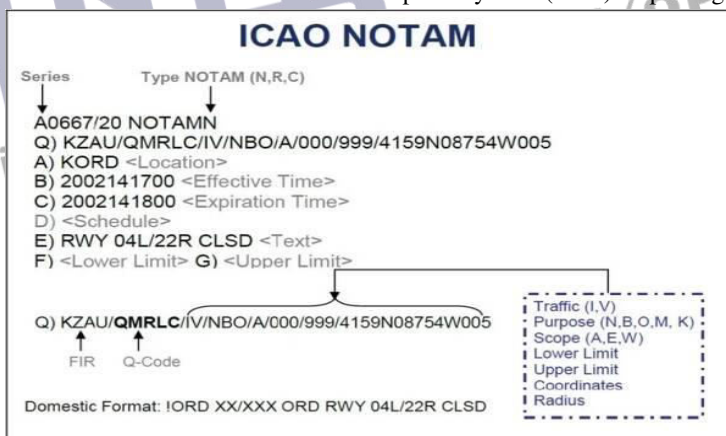
➤ **An example of a NOTAM**

- The system relays information about changes in conditions such as weather, volcanic activity, airspace restrictions and other factors, as well as unusual events such as parachute jumps, rocket launches and military exercises.
- It also advises pilots of extraordinary situations at airports, including icing, malfunctioning lights and the presence of flocks of birds, reported Simple Flying.
- The FAA runs a centralised NOTAM system, which displays on a monitor relevant information according to the scheduled flight path. However, as with any centralised system, glitches/failures have a widespread impact.

**3. VSHORAD missile system**

➤ **CONTEXT: The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) recently accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) to procure the Very Short Range Air Defence System or VSHORAD (IR Homing) missile system, designed and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), among other weapon systems for the Army and Navy at a total cost of Rs4,276 crore.**

- The development comes amid the ongoing military standoff with China at the LAC in eastern Ladakh and reports of air violations by China along the LAC last year.



- India has been in talks with Russia since 2018 to procure the Iгла-S air defence missiles at a cost of \$1.5 billion under the VSHORAD programme in a bid to replace the Russian Iгла-M systems which have been in use with the Army.
- However, there has been little progress on that front and it has been put on hold for now with the strong government pitch for atmanirbharta (self-dependence) in defence. The latest AoN granted to the procurement of the DRDO-developed VSHORAD testifies that.

➤ **What is the missile system?**

- Meant to kill low altitude aerial threats at short ranges, VSHORADS is a man portable Air Defence System (MANPAD) designed and developed indigenously by DRDO's Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad, in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and Indian Industry Partners.
- The DRDO, in September 2022, conducted two successful test flights of the VSHORADS missile from a ground based portable launcher at the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha.
- As per the defence ministry, the missile—which is propelled by a dual thrust solid motor—incorporates many novel technologies including miniaturised Reaction Control System (RCS) and integrated avionics, which were successfully proven during the tests conducted 2022. The DRDO has designed the missile and its launcher in a way to ensure easy portability.

➤ **How will it help India?**

- Being man portable and lightweight compared to the other missile systems in the Army's armoury, it can be deployed in the mountains close to the LAC at a short notice.
  - ✓ "When it comes to man portable air defence missiles, there was a critical gap in the Army's inventory, especially for the eastern and northern borders, though not so much for the western borders with Pakistan, for which India has the Soviet-vintage OSA AK missile systems.
  - ✓ "Others like the Akash Short Range Surface to Air Missile System are heavier with a theatre air defence umbrella of up to 25 km and can be deployed further away from the LAC for static formations," they may not be the best bet for mountains.
- When inducted, they will be a critical air defence missile for the forces, even for an all-equipped infantry unit, and will be the best option for mountain warfare.
- In view of the recent developments along the northern borders, there is a need to focus on effective Air Defence weapon systems which are man portable and can be deployed quickly in rugged terrain and maritime domain. The procurement of VSHORAD, as a robust and quickly deployable system, will strengthen India's air defence capabilities.

**4. Indian Skimmer**

➤ **CONTEXT:** As per the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), the Godavari estuary in Andhra Pradesh has become a prime and safe habitat for the Indian Skimmer (*Rynchops albicollis*).

➤ **About**

- The Indian skimmer grows to a length of 40-43 cm.
- It has black upper parts, white forehead, collar and lower parts, long, thick, deep orange bill with a yellow tip and longer lower mandible.
- In flight, it has a white trailing-edge to wing and a short forked tail with blackish central feathers.
- It breeds colonially on large, exposed sand-bars and islands.
- Colonies of mating pairs can be observed nesting on sandy islands or open sand banks.

➤ **Threats:**

- Habitat degradation: Due to Exploitation and degradation of rivers and lakes through fishing, transportation, domestic use, irrigation schemes and pollution from agricultural and industrial chemicals.
- Excessive and widespread increases in disturbance: The damming of the Chambal River, in upstream Rajasthan, has adversely affected its population.

➤ **The Godavari Estuary:**

- The Godavari estuary is situated at the place where the 1330 km long Godavari meets the Bay of Bengal on the east coast of India in the state of Andhra Pradesh.
- River Godavari divides at Dowlaiswaram into two principal distributaries viz., the Vasishta and the Gautami which enclose a wide delta between them.

**ANSWER WRITING**

**Q. Discuss the need for regulation in addressing issues related to online gaming in India and suggest potential approaches for addressing these challenges.**

**Introduction**

- Online gaming refers to playing video games over the internet with other players. This can be done through a computer or through a gaming console or smartphone that is connected to the internet.
  - ✓ It allows players to interact with each other and compete in real-time, regardless of their location.
  - ✓ It has become increasingly popular in recent years, with the proliferation of high-speed internet connections and the availability of a wide range of games to choose from.
- The online gaming industry grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 38% in India between 2017-2020, as opposed to 8% in China and 10% in the US.

- Further, it is expected to grow at a CAGR of 15% to reach Rs 153 billion in revenue by 2024, as per a report by VC firm Sequoia and management consulting company BCG.
- **challenges:**
  - Problematic gaming behavior: Online gaming can be addictive and can lead to problematic gaming behavior, which can negatively impact an individual's personal, social, and professional life. This can be particularly concerning for children and young people who may be more vulnerable to developing addictive behaviors.
  - Cybersecurity risks: Online gaming can also expose users to cybersecurity risks such as hacking, phishing, and identity theft.
  - Fraud and cheating: There have been instances of fraud and cheating in online gaming, which can undermine the fairness and integrity of the games.
  - In-game purchases: Many online games rely on in-game purchases as a source of revenue. However, there have been instances of fraudulent or predatory practices related to in-game purchases, which can be harmful to consumers.
  - Social responsibility: There is a need to ensure that online gaming platforms are socially responsible and do not promote harmful or offensive content.
- **Government Initiatives:**
  - Draft Rules for Online Gaming: The proposed rules have been introduced as an amendment to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.
    - ✓ Online games will have to register with a self-regulatory body, and only games cleared by the body will be allowed to legally operate in India.
    - ✓ Online gaming companies will not be allowed to engage in betting on the outcome of games.
    - ✓ The online gaming platforms will also have to appoint a compliance officer who will ensure that the platform is following norms.
- There are several potential approaches for addressing these challenges:
  - Age verification: One approach is to implement age verification measures to ensure that children and young people are not able to access games that are not suitable for their age.
  - Parental controls: Another approach is to provide parental controls that allow parents to set limits on the amount of time their children spend playing online games and to restrict access to certain games.
  - Education and awareness: Raising awareness about the potential risks and challenges of online gaming can help individuals make informed decisions about their gaming habits.
  - Industry self-regulation: The online gaming industry could adopt self-regulatory measures to address issues such as fraud, cheating, and predatory in-game purchases.
  - Government regulation: In cases where self-regulation is not effective, governments may need to step in and regulate the industry in order to protect consumers and address challenges such as cybersecurity risks and problematic gaming behavior.

### Conclusion

Overall, it is important for the government and other stakeholders to carefully consider the potential risks and benefits of online gaming, and to take a balanced approach to regulation that helps to ensure the safety and well-being of players while also allowing the industry to thrive.

### MCQs

1. The Indian skimmer bird's existence is threatened by which of the following?
  1. Sand mining.
  2. The multitude of dams on rivers.
  3. Overfishing and pollution.
  4. Feral dogs.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below

a) 1,2 and 3 only      b) 2,3 and 4 only      c) 3 and 4 only      **d) 1,2,3 and 4**
2. With reference to Cooperative Societies consider the following statements:
  1. Both Multi-State Cooperative Societies and State Cooperative Societies come under the Union Government.
  2. All members in a Cooperative Society have equal rights in handling the internal affairs.
  3. The surplus generated by these societies is dispensed equally among the members.
  4. Recently Union Cabinet has approved to setting up and promoting a national level cooperative society for organic products under the Multi State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002 with following the 'Whole of the Government Approach'.

Which of the above statement/s given above is/are correct?

a) 1,2 and 3 only      **b) 2,3 and 4 only**      c) 1,2 and 4 only      d) 1 and 4 only
3. With reference to Defence Acquisition Council, consider following statements
  1. It is the final decision-making body for defence policy or expenditure.
  2. Minister of Defence is the Chairperson of the DAC.
  3. All members of the Cabinet Committee on Security are ex-officio members of the DAC.

Which of the above statement/s is/are not correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only  
b) 2 and 3 only  
c) **1 and 3 only**  
d) 1,2 and 3
4. With reference to VSHORAD (IR Homing) missile system consider the following statements  
1. It is Very Short Range Air Defence System  
2. It has been developed by DRDO with collaboration with Russia  
Which of the above statement/s is/are correct?  
a) **1 only**  
b) 2 only  
c) Both 1 and 2  
d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. Igla-S, Igla-M Air Defence System recently seen in news are associated with which of the following country?  
a) USA  
b) Israel  
c) China  
d) **Russia**
6. "NOTAM system" recently seen in news, which of the following statement is related to it?  
a) A soil moisture sensor that measures current soil moisture.  
b) A first-of-its-kind and state-of-art fully automated buoy-based coastal observation and water quality nowcasting system  
c) Man portable Air Defence System (MANPAD) designed and developed indigenously by DRDO  
d) **It is a notice filed with an aviation authority to alert aircraft pilots of potential hazards along a flight route or at a location that could affect the flight.**
7. With reference to the term atmospheric rivers, which was in news recently consider the followings.  
1. They occur when water evaporates into the air and is carried along by the wind, forming long currents that flow in the sky like rivers flow on land  
2. One of the most well-known atmospheric rivers is the Pineapple Express, a ribbon of water vapour that begins in Hawaii, where warm conditions help evaporate ocean waters into the atmosphere.  
3. It regularly brings rains to California and other parts of the western United States, especially during winter's cooler months.  
Which of the above statement/s is/are correct?  
a) 1 and 2 only  
b) 2 and 3 only  
c) 1 and 3 only  
d) **1,2 and 3**
8. Recently 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of National Board for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (NBMSME) concluded, with reference to this board consider the following  
1. It is a statutory body.  
2. It is a specialised body administer directly under Prime minister's office (PMO)  
3. It's ex-officio chairman is Prime Minister of India.  
Which of the given above statement/s is/are correct?  
a) **1 only**  
b) 1 and 2 only  
c) 2 only  
d) 2 and 3 only
9. With reference to Anti Dumping Duty consider the following  
1. Anti-dumping duty is a protectionist tariff that a domestic government imposes on foreign imports that it believes are priced after fair market value.  
2. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) plays an important role in the regulation of anti-dumping measures.  
Which of the above statement/s is/are correct?  
a) 1 only  
b) 2 only  
c) Both 1 and 2  
d) **Neither 1 nor 2**
10. Lokur Committee often heard in news is related to which of the following?  
a) **Define any new community as a Scheduled Tribe**  
b) Bank recapitalisation formula  
c) Environment Impact assessment defined by the committee  
d) Mapping of national waterways