

(1) First Advance Estimates for GDP

News :- Recently, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the First Advance Estimates (FAE) for the current financial year (2021-22).

According to MoSPI, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will grow by 9.2% in 2021-22.

Key Points**First Advance Estimates of GDP:**

The FAE, first introduced in 2016-17, are typically published at the end of the first week of January.

They are the "first" official estimates of how GDP is expected to grow in that financial year.

Apart from it, they are also the "advance" estimates because they are published long before the financial year (April to March) is over.

The FAE is published soon after the end of the third quarter or Q3 (October, November, December).

However, they do not include the formal Q3 GDP data, which is published at the end of February as part of the Second Advance Estimates (SAE).

Significance: The main significance of FAE lies in the fact that they are the GDP estimates that the Union Finance Ministry uses to decide the next financial year's budget allocations.

From the Budget-making perspective, it is important to estimate the nominal GDP — both absolute level and its growth rate.

This will further help in calculating Real GDP and inflation.

The difference between the real and nominal GDP shows the levels of inflation in the year.

Real GDP = Nominal GDP — Inflation Rate.

FAE Calculation:

According to the MoSPI, the approach for compiling the Advance Estimates is based on the Benchmark-Indicator method.

According to this, the estimates available for the previous year (2020-21 in this case) are extrapolated using relevant indicators reflecting the performance of sectors.

The MoSPI extrapolates sector-wise estimates using indicators such as previous data of Index of Industrial Production (IIP), sale of commercial vehicles data, etc.

Issues in Calculation of Data: The pandemic has upset many such projections because of significant fluctuations during the past couple of years.

Due to this, the MoSPI has alerted that "these are early projections" which are liable for subsequent revisions depending on Covid, the impact on the economy and the government's fiscal response.

GDP vs GVA

GDP maps the economy from the expenditure (or demand) side — that is by adding up all the expenditures.

$GDP = \text{private consumption} + \text{gross investment} + \text{government investment} + \text{government spending} + (\text{exports} - \text{imports})$.

The Gross Value Added (GVA) provides a picture of the economy from the supply side.

GVA maps the "value-added" by different sectors of the economy such as agriculture, industry and services.

$\text{Gross Value Added} = \text{GDP} + \text{subsidies on products} - \text{taxes on products}$.

In 2015, India opted to make major changes to its compilation of national accounts and decided to bring the whole process into conformity with the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA) of 2008.

Change of base year from 2004-2005 to 2011-2012.

Replacing Factor Cost with Market Prices.

Broadening of data pool.

Improved coverage of financial corporations in GDP estimation (like stock brokers, stock exchanges, asset management companies, mutual funds and pension funds).

(2) Sweet Revolution

News :- Recently, the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has launched the country's first Mobile Honey Processing Van at Village in Uttar Pradesh.

Mobile Honey Processing Van that will process beekeepers' honey at their doorsteps and thus save them the hassle and the cost of taking the honey to processing plants in far off cities for processing.

This initiative is taken in pursuance of "Sweet Kranti" (Sweet Revolution).

Key Points

Benefits of 'Mobile Honey Processing Van':

The transportation of honey to processing plants is an expensive affair for small farmers and beekeepers. To avoid high transportation and processing costs, a majority of beekeepers would sell their raw honey to the agents at their farms themselves at a very low price.

The Processing Van will reduce the honey extraction and processing cost to the beekeepers.

This will also eliminate any scope for adulteration of honey as the processing will be done at the doorsteps of the beekeepers and farmers.

About 'Sweet Revolution':

It is an ambitious initiative of the Government of India for promoting apiculture, popularly known as 'beekeeping'.

To provide a booster shot to Sweet Revolution, the government launched the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission in 2020 (under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare).

It aims to accelerate the production of quality honey and other related products.

The demand for good quality honey has grown over the years as it is considered a naturally nutritious product.

Other apiculture products such as royal jelly, beeswax, pollens, etc., are also used extensively in different sectors like pharmaceuticals, food, beverage, beauty, and others.

Under the Honey Mission, the KVIC provides the farmers or beekeepers –

Practical training about the examination of honeybee colonies,

Identification and management of bee enemies and diseases along with the management of bee colonies in all seasons.

Acquaintance with apicultural equipment's and

Honey extraction and wax purification.

The Honey Mission programme was launched by KVIC during 2017-18.

Technology intervention through this mission will ensure bee conservation, prevent diseases or the loss of bee colonies and provide quality and quantity of apiculture products.

Farming practices will yield superior-quality honey and other products for the domestic as well as international market.

Beekeeping is a low investment and highly skilled enterprise model, in which technology application has emerged as a great enabler for socio-economic growth.

Scaling up beekeeping will double farmers' income, generate employment, ensure food security and bee conservation, and increase crop productivity.

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)

KVIC is a statutory body established under the Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act, 1956.

The KVIC is charged with the planning, promotion, organisation and implementation of programmes for the development of Khadi and other village industries in the rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary.

It functions under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

(3) Gharials

News :- The Assam government has issued a preliminary notification to make Orang National Park more than thrice its existing size for conserving Gharials.

Key Points

About:

Gharials, sometimes called gavials, are a type of Asian crocodylian distinguished by their long, thin snouts. Crocodylians are a group of reptiles that includes crocodiles, alligators, caimans, and more.

India has three species of Crocodylians namely:

Gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*): IUCN Red List- Critically Endangered

Mugger crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*): IUCN- Vulnerable.

Saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*): IUCN- Least Concern.

All the three are listed on Appendix I of CITES and Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

Exception: Saltwater Crocodile populations of Australia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea are included in Appendix II of CITES.

Habitat of Gharials:

Natural Habitat: Fresh waters of the northern part of India.

Primary Habitat: Chambal river (a tributary of Yamuna).

Secondary Habitat: Ghagra, Gandak river, Girwa river (Uttar Pradesh), the Ramganga river (Uttarakhand) and the Sone river (Bihar).

Significance: Population of Gharials are a good indicator of clean river water.

Conservation Efforts:

Kukrail Gharial Rehabilitation Centre in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, National Chambal Sanctuary (Gharial Eco Park, Madhya Pradesh).

Threats:

Increased river pollution, dam construction, massive-scale fishing operations and floods.
Illegal sand mining and poaching.

Orang National Park

The Orang National Park also known as Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park is located on the north bank of the Brahmaputra River in the Darrang and Sonitpur districts of Assam and covers an area of 78.81 square kilometers.

It was established as a wildlife sanctuary in 1985 but was declared as a National Park in 1999. It is also the 49th Tiger Reserve of the country, being notified in 2016.

It is also known as the mini Kaziranga National Park since the two parks have a similar landscape made up of marshes, streams, and grasslands.

It is the only stronghold of rhinoceros on the north bank of the Brahmaputra river.

Other Protected Areas in Assam

Dibru-Saikhowa National Park,
Manas National Park,
Nameri National Park,
Kaziranga National Park.
Dehing Patkai and Raimona National Parks
Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary

(4) Collective Security Treaty Organisation

News :- Recently, Kazakhstan's President called on the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) to help manage ongoing protests in the country.

Key Points

About:

It is an intergovernmental military alliance (six countries) that came into effect in 2002.

It started storming into Kazakhstan to curb the protests which threatened the very existence of the regime that has ruled the Central Asian country since it became an independent republic in 1991.

History:

It is an intergovernmental military alliance that was signed on 15th May 1992.

In 1992, six post-Soviet states belonging to the Commonwealth of Independent States—Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan—signed the Collective Security Treaty.

This is also referred to as the “Tashkent Pact” or “Tashkent Treaty”.

Three other post-Soviet states—Azerbaijan, Belarus, and Georgia—signed the next year and the treaty took effect in 1994.

Five years later, six of the nine—all but Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Uzbekistan—agreed to renew the treaty for five more years, and in 2002 those six agreed to create the CSTO as a military alliance.

Headquarters:

The headquarters is located in the Russian capital of Moscow.

Members:

Current members are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan.

Objectives:

To strengthen peace, international and regional security including cybersecurity and stability, the protection on a collective basis of the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the member states.

(5) First Multi-Dimensional Adventure Sports Expedition: NIMAS

News :- Recently, the Defence Minister flagged-in India's first multi-dimensional adventure sports expedition conducted by National Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports (NIMAS) in France.

Key Points

About:

The expedition was conducted in November 2021 and the team was led by Director NIMAS comprising 12 people - eight Army personnel and four youths of Arunachal Pradesh.

The expedition team carried out over 250 kilometres of winter trekking in the Alps Mountain Ranges, which included Tour De Mont Blanc trek covering the French, Swiss and Italian Alps.

National Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports:

It is an advanced sports training institute located in the West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh.

It operates under the control and superintendence of the Ministry of Defence.

The institute offers training across land, air and water, a first of its kind that allows civilians to experience challenges across a variety of outdoor surfaces as well as pursue a career in adventure sports. It provides structured training to defence personnel as well.

Alps

Alps is a small segment of a discontinuous mountain chain that stretches from the Atlas Mountains of North Africa across southern Europe and Asia to beyond the Himalayas.

The Alpine region encompasses eight European countries: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Slovenia and Switzerland.

The Alps are an interzonal mountain system (Orobicome), or a “transition area” between Central and Mediterranean Europe.

Mont Blanc is the highest peak.

Though they are not as high and extensive as other mountain systems uplifted during the Paleogene and Neogene periods (i.e., about 65 million to 2.6 million years ago)—such as the Himalayas (great mountain system of Asia) and the Andes and Rocky mountains (in South America and North America respectively) — they are responsible for major geographic phenomena.

The Alpine crests isolate one European region from another and are the source of many of Europe’s major rivers.

Waters from the Alps ultimately reach the North, Mediterranean, Adriatic, and Black seas.