



**Date - 16 Feb 2022**

## **Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority- APEDA**

- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) celebrated its 36th Foundation Day on February 13, 2022.
- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority was established by the Government of India under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act, 1985.
- It works under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The headquarters of the Authority is at New Delhi. The Hindu Analysis.
- The Authority replaced the Processed Food Export Promotion Council. It looks after the development of industries related to the products scheduled for export.
- APEDA performs this task in the form of financial assistance or other forms of survey and feasibility studies and through participation through schemes of support.
- APEDA has actively supported the government in increasing agricultural exports, due to which agricultural exports increased from \$ 600 million in 1986 to \$ 200 billion in the year 2020-21.
- According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, APEDA has helped in increasing Indian exports to many countries. Today Current Affairs.

- **APEDA aims to export \$23 billion 700 million in the current financial year, of which more than 70 percent of the target has been achieved by January 2022.**
- **The ministry has said that keeping in mind the 'Vocal for Local' and self-reliant India on the call of the Prime Minister, APEDA is promoting the export of local agricultural products. These include land indicators, indigenous and tribal agricultural products.**

## **Koala: Australia**

- Recently Australia has officially declared the koala as an 'endangered' species.

### **Reason for being declared as Endangered:**

- Australia's koala population has been on the verge of extinction for more than two decades. The koala population in NSW (New South Wales) has declined from 33% to 61% since 2001.
- The government has been accused of doing little to protect the species, despite several demands made by animal rights groups and conservationists. The koala was declared as "vulnerable" in the year 2012.
- During the catastrophic 2019 fires in Australia, now known as the 'Black Summer', around 60,000 koalas were affected, leaving their vast residential areas unlivable.
- Another major threat is the spread of chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease that causes blindness and ulcers in the reproductive tract in koalas.

### **Today Current Affairs**

#### **Importance:**

- The 'endangered' status for koalas means that they and their forest habitat will be given greater protection under Australia's national environmental law.

### **Koala: The Hindu Analysis**

- Koala is a rare species of tree living in the forests of Australia. The koala is the last rare animal of the genus Phascolarctidae.
- These are herbivorous marsupial mammals that keep their babies in a pouch made on their abdomen.
- It is noteworthy that the newborns of marsupials are less developed than the newborns of other mammals and develop in their mother's womb for a long time after birth (up to several weeks or months).
- They share many characteristics with Wombats, their closest living relatives.

## Natural habitat: The Hindu Analysis

- The typical habitat of koalas is open Nilgiri woodlands and most of their diet is tree leaves. In terms of social behavior, koalas are antisocial animals and usually emotional bonding is seen only between mothers and offspring.
- It is an endemic animal of Australia. Today's Current Affairs.
- Koalas can sleep up to 18 hours a day due to low levels of nutrients in eucalyptus leaves.

## To risk: Today Current Affairs

- Habitat destruction, climate change and severe weather (droughts, extreme temperatures).
- **IUCN Status:** Vulnerable

## Solomon Islands: America

- Recently the US says that it will open an embassy in the Solomon Islands, which will strongly plan to increase US influence in the South Pacific nation before China's "strengthening influence".

### Reasons for the decision:

- The Solomon Islands have been a witness to the battle site history of the Americans since the time of World War II (1939–45), but the US feared losing its privileges in the region as China brought elite politicians and business people to its side in the Solomon Islands.

- This move comes after the escalation of riots in this country with a population of 700,000 in November, 2021.
- The peaceful protests turned into violent riots and highlighted long-running regional rivalries, economic problems and concerns about the country's growing ties with China.
- The embassy's announcement fits in with the new Biden governance strategy for the Indo-Pacific region and emphasizes building partnerships among allies in the region to counter China's growing influence and ambitions.
- In the recently held Quad talks, the US has said that it is committed to making the Indo-Pacific region "free, open, prosperous, secure and resilient".

### **Location of Solomon Islands:**

- The Solomon Islands is a nation located in Melanesia, east of Papua New Guinea, consisting of more than 990 islands. Its capital is Honiara, which is located on the island of Guadalcanal.
- It consists of a double chain of volcanic islands and atolls.
- Melanesia is a subregion of Oceania in the southwestern Pacific Ocean.
- The country includes most of the Solomon Range with the exception of Buka and Bougainvillea, which form an autonomous region called Papua New Guinea at the northwestern end.
- The island is a constitutional monarchy, in which the British monarch is represented by a governor-general, who serves as the ceremonial head of state.

## **National Award in Educational Administration**

- Recently the Ministry of Education presented the 5th National Award for Innovations and Best Practices in Educational Administration.
- National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) has instituted 'National Awards for Innovations and Best Practices in Educational Administration' (IGPEA) for district and block level education officers.
- NIEPA, under the Ministry of Education is a premier organization concerned with capacity building and research in planning and management of education not only in India but also in South Asia.

## **Award Key Points**

- The award was instituted by NIEPA in the year 2014 with the objective of encouraging innovations and better practices in educational administration at the grassroots level to improve the functioning of the public system of education.

## **Objective:**

- To recognize the innovative ideas and practices adopted by the district and block level education officers for effective management of educational administrative system at the district and block level.

## **Importance:**

- Educational officers at the regional level are also an essential link between the administration of the system and the management of the institutional level of education. The role of these officers is important in the process of implementation of policies and programs at the regional level.
- Some of the key areas where the authorities have taken several measures include- ICT access to digital classrooms, use of Facebook and WhatsApp; mobilization of human and financial resources; improving infrastructure in schools, community support and support; skill building, especially improving language skills; Measures related to capacity building of teachers and enhancing the quality of overall work of schools.

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