



**Date - 16 May 2022**

## Chief election commissioner

- Presently, Rajiv Kumar working as 'Election Commissioner' will soon take over as 'Chief Election Commissioner' (CEC).

### **About 'Election Commission of India':**

- The 'Election Commission of India' is an autonomous constitutional authority responsible for conducting the Union and State election processes in India. This body conducts elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies in India, the offices of the President and the Vice-President in the country.
- Under Article 324 of the Constitution of India, provision has been made for the Election Commission to conduct, direct and control the elections to the offices of Parliament, State Legislature, President and Vice President and to prepare the electoral rolls.
- According to the Constitution, the Election Commission was established on 25 January 1950. That is why, January 25 is celebrated as National Voters' Day.

### **Composition of the Election Commission of India:**

#### **The following provisions have been made in the Constitution regarding the composition of the Election Commission:**

- The Election Commission shall consist of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Commissioners.

- The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners will be appointed by the President.
- When any other Election Commissioner is so appointed, the Chief Election Commissioner shall act as the Chairman of the Election Commission.
- The President may, in consultation with the Election Commission, appoint Regional Commissioners to assist the Election Commission.
- The service conditions and term of office of Election Commissioners and Regional Commissioners shall be determined by the President.

### **Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners (EC):**

- Although the Chief Election Commissioner is the Chairman of the Election Commission, his powers are similar to those of other Election Commissioners. All matters of the Commission are decided by a majority vote among the members.
- The Chief Election Commissioner and both the other Election Commissioners get the same salary, allowances and other benefits.

### **Term of office:**

- The term of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners is six years or till the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier. He can resign at any time while addressing the President.

### **Resignation:**

- The Election Commissioner can resign at any time or he can be removed even before the expiry of his term.
- The Chief Election Commissioner can be removed from his office in the same manner and on the same grounds as the Judges of the Supreme Court.

### **Limitations:**

- In the Constitution, no qualification (legal, educational, administrative or judicial) has been prescribed for the members of the Election Commission.
- The Constitution does not prohibit retiring Election Commissioners from being re-appointed to any post by the government.

# Iron quarrying: Tamil Nadu

- Carbon dating of recent excavation work in Tamil Nadu has provided evidence that iron was used in India 4,200 years ago.
- Earlier, the evidence of the use of iron in the country was believed to be 1900-2000 BC and 1500 BC for Tamil Nadu.
- The latest evidence of iron use in Tamil Nadu dates back to 2172 BC.

## Conclusion:

- This excavation took place at Mayiladumparai near Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu.
- Mayiladumparai is an important site with cultural material dating back to the Microlithic (30,000 BCE) and Early Historic (600 BCE) eras.
- Among other important findings, evidence has been found that the Neolithic phase in Tamil Nadu began before 2200 BC. This conclusion is based on the study of cultural deposits of 25 cm height found below the dated level.
- Archaeologists also found that black and red colored pottery was introduced only towards the end of the Neolithic period and not the Iron Age as is widely believed.

## Historical importance:

### Production of agricultural equipment:

- The invention of iron technology led to the production of agricultural tools and weapons, which made possible the production necessary for a civilization before economic and cultural progress.
- Where copper was first used by Indians (1500 BC), there are no known records or evidence of iron being used in the Indus Valley?

### Useful in deforestation:

- Deforestation occurred when humans started using iron tools to clear dense forests and clear land for agricultural work because it would have been difficult to clear dense forests and use copper tools in agricultural land.

### Socio-Economic Changes:

- On the basis of the latest evidence obtained from 1500 BC to 2000 BC, it can be assumed that the cultural emergence of Iron Age took place in 2000 BC.
- Around 600 BCE iron technology formed the basis for large-scale socio-economic changes that led to the development of the Tamil Brahmi script.
- The Tamil Brahmi scripts are believed to have originated around 300 BCE, but a historical discovery in the year 2019 put the period at 600 BCE.
- This dating or period served to bridge the gap between the Indus Valley Civilization and the Sangam Age of Tamilgam/South India.

## MoU between the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and the United Nations Development Program

- Recently the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

### **Purpose of the MoU:**

- UNDP will provide technical assistance for the Centre's ambitious Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Kisan Credit Card scheme.
- Under the MoU, UNDP will use the expertise acquired from its global experiences in the system to support the Ministry of Agriculture for the implementation of joint agricultural credit and crop insurance.

### **PMFBY Scheme:**

- The scheme provides a comprehensive insurance cover to the farmers in the event of crop failure, which helps in stabilizing the income of the farmers.
- This scheme has been made mandatory for farmers taking loan in crop loan / Kisan Credit Card (KCC) account for notified crops, while other farmers can voluntarily join this scheme.

### Scope:

- All food and oilseed crops and annual commercial/horticultural crops for which past yield data is available.

### Premium:

- The fixed insurance premium / premium paid by the farmers under this scheme is 2% for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all Rabi crops. Annual premium is 5% in case of commercial and horticultural crops.
- The premium cost of farmers' share is shared equally by the states and the central government in the form of subsidy.
- However, 90% of the insurance premium subsidy under this scheme is borne by the central government in the states of Northeast India.

### Coverage:

- On an average more than 5.5 crore farmer applications are included in this scheme every year.
- Aadhaar Seeding (Linking of Aadhaar through Internet Banking Portal) has helped in expediting claim settlement directly in the accounts of farmers.
- During the locust attack in the Rabi 2019-20 season, a claim of about 30 crore rupees was presented in the state of Rajasthan, which is a remarkable example.

### Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana 2.0:

- Necessary reforms were made in PMFBY in the year 2020 Kharif season by the Central Government to ensure more efficient and effective implementation of the scheme.
- This modified PMFBY is also often called PMFBY 2.0, **some of its features are as follows:**

### Totally Voluntary:

- Under this, enrollment is 100% voluntary for all farmers from the Kharif crop of the year 2020.

### Limited Central Subsidy:

- The Union Cabinet has decided to limit the Central Government's share on insurance premium rates to 30% for non-irrigated areas/crops and 25% for irrigated areas/crops under this scheme.

### **More autonomy to the states:**

- The Central Government has given wide relaxations to the States/UTs to implement PMFBY and also has given them the option to choose any additional risk cover/features in it.

### **Investing in ICE activities:**

- Now 0.5% of the total premium collected by insurance companies under this scheme will have to be spent on Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities.

### **Use of Technology under PMFBY:**

#### **Crop Insurance App:**

- It provides easy enrollment facility to the farmers.
- Facilitates easy reporting of crop damages within 72 hours of occurrence of any incident.

#### **Latest technical equipment:**

- Satellite imagery, remote-sensing technology, drones, artificial intelligence and machine learning are used to assess crop damage.

#### **PMFBY Portal:**

- PMFBY portal has been launched for integration of land records.

#### **Kisan Credit Card Scheme:**

- It was introduced in the year 1998 to provide adequate and timely cash credit through banking system to farmers with easy and simple procedures for their cultivation and other requirements such as purchase, withdrawal and production

needs of agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides etc. was introduced to provide assistance.

- This scheme was carried forward in the year 2004 to meet the investment credit requirement of farmers for allied and non-farm activities.

### **Objective:**

#### **Kisan Credit Card is provided with the following objectives:**

- Short term credit requirements for cultivation of crops.
- Post-harvest expenses.
- Agriculture-credit marketing for the consumption needs of the farmer family.
- Working capital for maintenance of agricultural assets and activities related to agriculture, such as dairy cattle, inland fisheries etc.
- Requirement of investment credit for agriculture and allied activities like pump sets, sprayers, dairy cattle etc.

### **Implementing agency:**

- Kisan Credit Card Scheme is implemented by commercial banks, regional rural banks, small finance banks and cooperative societies.
- Farmers are not given short term loan assistance for purchase of combine harvesters, tractors and mini trucks and for construction of house for the family and setting up of cold storage facility in the village.

### **Achievements:**

- As part of the self-reliant India package, the government has announced a credit incentive of Rs 2 lakh crore to 2.5 crore farmers under the Kisan Credit Card scheme.

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