

1. Union Budget 2020-21 for Agriculture

Union Finance Ministry has proposed 16 action points focusing on **doubling Farmers income**, Horticulture sector, Food storage, Animal Husbandry and Blue economy in budget 2020.

Doubling Farmers Income

- Intending to double farmer's income by 2022, the government has proposed to expand PM-KUSUM to 20 lakh farmers for setting up stand-alone solar pumps.
- The operationalize scheme to enable farmers to set up solar power generation capacity on their fallow/barren lands and to sell it to the grid.
- The portal on “**Jaivik kheti**” – online national organic products market will also be strengthened.

Storage and Logistics

- To promote storage infrastructure and reduce wastage of food grains Smt. Sitharaman proposed the creation of warehouses through viability gap funding on a PPP mode at the block level.
- She also proposed warehouse building by Food Corporation of India (FCI) and Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) on their land too.

Kisan Rail

- It helps to build a seamless national cold supply chain for perishables, inclusive of milk, meat.
- Indian Railways will set up **Kisan Rail**-through PPP arrangements.
- **Krishi Udaan** will help improve value realization, especially in North-East and tribal districts the Ministry of Civil Aviation will launch Krishi Udaan.

Animal Husbandry

- The government aims to eliminate Foot and Mouth disease, brucellosis in cattles and peste des petits ruminants (PPR) in sheep and goat by 2025.
- The government has also facilitated the doubling of milk processing capacity from 53.5 million MT to 108 million MT by 2025.

Agriculture credit

- Agriculture credit target for the year 2020-21 has been set at Rs 15 lakh crore.
- All eligible beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) will be covered under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme.

Horticulture

- For better marketing and export, the government will propose supporting states which, adopting a cluster basis will focus on **one product one district.**”



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Blue Economy

- In the Blue Economy, raising of fish production to 200 lakh tonnes is proposed by 2022-23.
- Youth to be involved in fishery extension through 3477 Sagar Mitras and 500 Fish Farmer Producer Organisations.
- Fishery exports hoped to be raised to Rs 1 lakh crore by 2024-25.

2. nCoV outbreak declared a State calamity in Kerala

- Recently after the confirmation of a third case of the novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection in the State, the Kerala Government has declared the epidemic a State calamity.

About the Coronavirus

- Coronaviruses are a group of viruses that cause diseases predominantly in mammals.
- In humans, Coronaviruses cause respiratory infections – which are typically mild.
- However, these infections can turn lethal in some rare cases.
- Coronaviruses can also cause pneumonia and bronchitis.

About the Novel Coronavirus

- It is also known as the Wuhan Pneumonia or the Wuhan Coronavirus.
- It is the virus that is responsible for the 2019-20 outbreaks in Wuhan, China.

Note:

- World Health Organization has also declared an international emergency over the novel coronavirus from China which could lead
- International Emergency is a rarely used designation that could lead to improved international coordination in tackling the disease.

3. Bodo Peace Accord

- Recently the Centre, the Assam government and Bodo groups — including all factions of the militant National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) — signed Bodo accord.

About the Bodos

- They are the single largest community among the notified Scheduled Tribes in Assam.
- They are the part of the giant umbrella of Bodo-Kachari, the Bodos constitute about 5-6% of Assam's population.

About Bodoland Territorial Council



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- It is an autonomous body under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.
- There have been two Bodo Accords earlier, and the second one led to the formation of BTC.
- The All Bodo Students Union and the Government of India signed the first accord in 1993.
- This agreement resulted in the creation of a Bodoland Autonomous Council with some political powers.
- In 2003, the second Bodo Accord was signed by the extremist group Bodo Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF), the Centre and the state which led to the BTC.
- The second agreement resulted in the formation of Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) with four districts – Udalguri, Chirang, Baska and Kokrajhar.
- These areas are commonly called the Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD).
- The area under the jurisdiction of BTC, formed under the 2003 Accord, was called (BTAD).
- **The Bodo Territorial Autonomous District was renamed Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR).**

Note:

- Bodoland Territorial Region will comprise of Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri districts, accounting for 11% of Assam’s area and 10% of its population.

4. Indian gaur

- Wildlife researchers recently documented the presence of an Indian gaur in **Phansad Wildlife Sanctuary** for the first time in recorded history.

About the Indian Gaur

- Gaurs are the world’s largest and tallest wild bovines, with 85% of their current population found in India.

Conservation Status

- The Indian Gaur is listed as Schedule I species under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- It is tagged as ‘vulnerable’ on the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s (IUCN) Red List.

About Phansad Wildlife Sanctuary

- Phansad Wildlife Sanctuary is a wildlife sanctuary in the Murud and Roha talukas of Raigad district, Maharashtra.
- It was created in 1986 to preserve some of the coastal woodland ecosystems of the Western Ghats.

5. Bodo: One language, three scripts



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- Recently Prime Minister acknowledged the signing of the Bodo Peace Accord in which Bodo language is one of the key thrust areas in the Bodo Accord.

About the Bodo language

- It is listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution which was added in 2003.
- The 2003 Accord was very significant for language because it was the first tribal language to be included in the Eight Schedule
- It is spoken in Assam, where the Bodo tribe constitutes about 5-6% of the population, and in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and West Bengal.
- It is written in both the Devanagari script and the Roman script while Bodo is officially written in the Devanagri script.

History of the Bodo Language

- The language is believed to have had its script in the pre-13th century era when it was called Deodhai.
- When the Danish missionaries came to the Bodo-dominated area in the latter part of the 19th century, they started using the Roman script to teach Bodo in missionary schools.
- **J D Anderson, a member of Indian Civil service (1873-1900), is known to have translated several Bodo folk songs into English.**
- In the first decade of the 20th century, Bodos started writing in the Assamese/Bangla script.

6. National Mission on Quantum Technologies & Applications

- The government, in its budget 2020 has announced a National Mission on Quantum Technologies & Applications (NM-QTA).
- It is implemented under the ministry of science and technology.

About the Quantum Technology

- It is based on the principles of quantum theory, which explains the nature of energy and matter on the atomic and subatomic level.
- Quantum computers store and process information using quantum two-level systems (quantum bits or qubits) which unlike classical bits, can be prepared in superposition states.
- The mission helps to develop and bring quantum computers secured communications through fibre and free space, quantum encryption and crypt-analysis and associated technologies.
- Its applications which will receive boost include those in aerospace engineering, numerical weather prediction, simulations, securing the communications & financial transactions, cybersecurity etc.
- It also focuses on the creation of high skilled jobs, human resources development, start-ups & entrepreneurship leading to technology leads to economic growth.

7. Somalia declares national emergency on desert locust infestation



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- Somalia has recently proclaimed a desert locust infestation which is ravaging several parts of the country as a national emergency.

About the Desert locust

- According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the desert locust is considered the most destructive migratory pest in the world.
- The desert locust (*Schistocerca gregaria*) is a species of locust, a swarming short-horned grasshopper in the family Acrididae.
- Plagues of desert locusts have threatened agricultural production in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia for centuries.
- The desert locust is potentially the most dangerous of the locust pests because of the ability of swarms to fly rapidly across great distances.

Life Cycle

- The life cycle of the desert locust consists of three stages, the egg, the nymph known as a hopper, and the winged adult.

Conservation Status

- It is listed as **Least Concern in IUCN Red List**



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