

15– 02 – 2022

News: Fortification of Rice and its Distribution under Public Distribution System

- Fortification of Rice and its Distribution under Public Distribution System has been approved by Union Cabinet for a period of 3 years beginning in 2019-20 with total outlay of Rs. 174.64 Cr.

Fortification of Rice and its Distribution under Public Distribution System

- Fortification of Rice and its Distribution under Public Distribution System is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme to address anemia and micro-nutrient deficiency in the country.
- Under the Scheme, FCI (Food Corporation of India) has been asked to come up with a comprehensive plan for procurement and distribution of fortified rice in all the Districts of the country under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) & Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme (PM Poshan) from 2021-2022.
- Special focus remains on supplying fortified rice to the 112 specially identified Aspirational Districts of the country.

Objectives the Scheme

- Distribution of Fortified Rice through Public Distribution System, to cater 15 Districts in the country - preferably one district per State in the initial phase of Implementation.
- Coverage of NFSA (National Food Security Act) beneficiaries under PDS with Fortified Rice in the selected Districts.
- Facilitate cross learning and sharing of best practices among States/UTs and DoF&PD (Department of Food and Public Distribution).
- To evaluate the provision, coverage and Utilization of Fortified Rice by the target population as well as the efficiency/effectiveness of the consumption of fortified rice in reducing the targeted micronutrient deficiencies in different age and gender groups.

Food Fortification

- Fortification is the addition of key vitamins and minerals such as iron, iodine, zinc, Vitamin A & D to staple foods such as rice, milk and salt to improve their nutritional content.
- These nutrients may or may not have been originally present in the food before processing.

Fortification of Rice

- According to the Food Ministry, fortification of rice is a cost-effective and complementary strategy to increase vitamin and mineral content in diets.
- According to FSSAI norms, 1 kilogram fortified rice will contain iron (28 mg-42.5 mg), folic acid (75-125 microgram) and Vitamin B-12 (0.75-1.25 microgram).
- In addition, rice may also be fortified with micronutrients, singly or in combination, with zinc, Vitamin A, Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, Vitamin B3 and Vitamin B6.

News: Koalas

- Recently, Australia has officially classified koalas as 'endangered'.
- The Endangered status of the koala in Australia means them and their forest homes should be provided with greater protection under Australia's national environmental law.

Koala

- Koala is an arboreal herbivorous marsupial endemic to Australia.
- The typical habitat for Koalas is open eucalypt woodlands, and the leaves of these trees make up most of their diet.

- In terms of societal behavior, Koalas are asocial animals and typically emotional bonding is seen only between mothers and dependent offspring.
- They are mainly found in coastal areas of southern and eastern Australia, mainly Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.
- Due to the low nutrient levels of the Eucalyptus leaves they feed on, the koala can sleep up to 18 hours each day.
- Recently IUCN upgraded the Koalas from “Vulnerable” to “Endangered” as 30% of its habitat was destroyed in bushfires that rocked the continent.
- As they are slow-moving creatures, they couldn’t outrun the fires that destroyed the population.
- Another major threat is the spread of chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease known to cause blindness and cysts in the koalas’ reproductive tract.

Marsupial Creatures

- A Marsupial creature is born in a very incomplete stage. They are minute, hairless and with hand limbs only partially formed.
- 2/3rd of Marsupial creatures are found in Australia and the rest is found in South America.

News: PSLV C-52 mission success

Earth Observation Satellite (EOS) – 04 / PSLV C 52

Mission

- PSLV-C52, guided an earth observation satellite (EOS-04), weighing 1710 kg into a **sun synchronous polar orbit**.
- PSLV C-52 was the **54th flight of PSLV and 23rd mission using PSLV – XL configuration with six PSOM – XLs** (strap on boosters).
- PSLV-C52 mission also carried **two small satellites as co-passengers which includes one student satellite (INSPIREsat-1) from Indian Institute of Space Science & Technology (IIST) in association with Laboratory of Atmospheric & Space Physics at University of Colorado, Boulder and a technology demonstrator satellite (INS-2TD) from ISRO, which is a precursor to India-Bhutan Joint Satellite (INS-2B)**.
- EOS-04 is a Radar Imaging Satellite designed to **provide high quality images under all weather conditions for applications such as Agriculture, Forestry & Plantations, Soil Moisture & Hydrology and Flood mapping**.
- The mission life of EOS is expected to be **10 years**.

Co passenger Satellites

INSPIREsat-1

- INSPIREsat-1 is an 8.1kg weighing satellite aimed at improving the understanding of ionosphere dynamics and the sun's corona heating processes.
- The mission life of INSPIREsat-1 is one year.

INS-2TD

- INS-2TD is a 17.5kg weighing satellite having a mission life of 6 months. It helps in the assessment of land surface temperature, water surface temperature, temperature of wetland or lakes, delineation of vegetation and thermal inertia.