

**23– 02 – 2022**

**News: Kisan Drones**

- Recently, the **Prime Minister has flagged off 100 Kisan drones in different cities and towns of India to spray pesticides in farms** across India.
- Earlier, the **government banned the import of drones** to encourage their manufacturing in India (Drone Shakti Scheme).

**Kisan Drones**

- The **Kisan drone will have an unmanned tank filled with insecticides and nutrients.**
- The drones are expected to have a **high capacity of 5 to 10kg.**
- The **drone will spray the same amount of pesticide on about one acre of land in just 15 minutes.**
- It will **save time, will require less effort and spraying will be done uniformly.**
- They will also be used to **carry vegetables, fruits, fish, etc to the markets from the farms.**
- These **items will be supplied directly to the market with minimal damage, consuming lesser time, resulting in more profits** to farmers and fishermen.

## Significance

- Kisan Drones will be used to boost the agricultural sector in the country.
- The use of Kisan Drones will be promoted for crop assessment, digitization of land records and spraying of insecticides and nutrients.
- It will usher in a new edge revolution as high capacity drones will be used to carry vegetables, fruits, fishes to the market directly from the farms.
- The development of the drone market in India will generate fresh employment and new opportunities for the youth.

## Associated Challenges

- Experts in the agricultural sector are skeptical about the benefits of drones and how they will increase farmers' income.
- There is not any sign of the government meeting its earlier promise of doubling farmers' income by 2022.
- The spraying of pesticides and fertilizers may help in production, but it is the industries that will profit the most.

## News: Leprosy

- According to the latest report by the Leprosy Mission Trust India, the Covid-19 pandemic and its ensuing recommendations on social distancing and lockdowns caused a fall of 62.5% in the detection of active leprosy cases between April and September 2020 in four States — Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.

## Leprosy

- Leprosy is also known as **Hansen's disease**.
- Leprosy is a **chronic, progressive bacterial infection**.
- It is caused by a **bacterium** called Mycobacterium Leprae, which is an acid-fast rod-shaped bacillus.
- It is a **disease that leaves a terrifying image in its wake of mutilation, rejection, and exclusion** from society.
- It infects **Skin, Peripheral nerves, Upper respiratory tract and Lining of the nose**.
- Leprosy is **transmitted mainly by breathing airborne droplets from the affected individuals**. It can be **contacted at any age**. Leprosy is **curable** with the combination of drugs known as Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT).

- The 1<sup>st</sup> Phase of the World Bank supported the National Leprosy Elimination Project started from 1993-94. In the year 2001, after the global elimination was achieved, **India was among the 14 countries that missed the target of eliminating leprosy.**
- The National Leprosy Eradication Programme that was launched after this, achieved the goal of elimination of leprosy as a public health problem, defined as less than 1 case per 10,000 Population, at the National Level in December 2005. In 2017, the SPARSH Leprosy Awareness Campaign was launched to promote awareness and address the issues of stigma and discrimination.
- In commemoration of the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019, the NLEP has prepared the comprehensive plan to reduce the grade to disability to less than one case per million people by October 2019.