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News: Atal Bhujal Yojana

- Recently, the 5th meeting of the National Level Steering Committee (NLSC) of Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL) was held to review the overall progress of the scheme.

Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL)

- Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL) is a **Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Jal Shakti** to **improve ground water management through community participation.**
- The scheme has a total outlay of Rs.6000 crore and is to be **implemented over a period of 5 years** (2020-21 to 2024-25).
- Out of this, **INR 3,000 crore will be a loan from the World Bank** and INR 3,000 crore as a matching contribution from the Government of India (GoI).
- Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL) is **an initiative for ensuring long term sustainability of ground water resources** in the country.
- The **Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti** is adopting a mix of 'top down' and 'bottom up' approaches in identified ground water stressed blocks in seven states, representing a range of geomorphic, climatic and hydro geologic and cultural settings.

- ATAL JAL has been designed with the principal objective of **strengthening the institutional framework for participatory ground water management** and bringing about behavioral changes at the community level for sustainable ground water resource management.
- The scheme envisages undertaking this through various interventions, including awareness programmes, capacity building, convergence of ongoing/new schemes and improved agricultural practices etc.
- The scheme aims to improve ground water management through community participation in identified priority areas in **seven States, viz. Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.**
- Implementation of the scheme is expected to benefit nearly 8350 Gram Panchayats in 78 districts in these States.

ATAL JAL has two major components:

- Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building Component for strengthening institutional arrangements for sustainable ground water management in the States including improving monitoring networks, capacity building, strengthening of Water User Associations, etc.
- Incentive Component for incentivising the States for achievements in improved groundwater management practices namely, data dissemination, preparation of water security plans, implementation of management

interventions through convergence of ongoing schemes, adopting demand side management practices etc.