# TOPIC OF THE WEEK

## JUN'18 (22 to 30)

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# Topic: NITI Aayog to launch Composite Water Management Index

## History:

NITI Aayog was formed on 1st January 2015, which was a replacement of the Planning Commission. It serves as an advisory body or a "Think Tank" of the government of India to advice on social and economic issues.

NITI Aayog on June 13, 2018 announced to launch the Composite Water Management Index with an aim to achieve the objective of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'.

A Water Aid report in 2016 ranked India among the worst countries in the world for the number of people without safe water. Nearly 76 million people in India do not have access to safe drinking water, as polluted rivers and poor storage infrastructure over the years has created a water deficit which may become unmanageable in the future

## Water Shortage in India:

Government records show that in 1980, just 1% of India's rural areas had access to safe, usable water. By 2013,

that had increased to 30%, but the majority of rural India continues to live without proper access to safe drinking water.

The Asian Development Bank has forecast that by 2030, India will have a water deficit of 50 per cent. The Union Ministry of Water Resources has estimated the country's current water requirements to be around 1100 billion cubic metres per year, which is estimated to be around 1200 billion cubic metres for the year 2025 and 1447 billion cubic metres for the year 2050.

**Reasons for Water Shortage:**

**Erratic monsoon and climate change:** Climate change is a real global challenge today that is altering the water cycle in the worst way possible. Increased temperature, droughts, river drying and insufficient monsoon to replenish the ground water has become one of the greatest cause of water scarcity in India.

**Poor planning and Leakage:** This is one of the greatest reasons of the Shimla water crisis happening now as some reports states that around 20–25% of water is

wasted due to the leakage in the pipelines. Delhi wastes around 40% of its water by leakage problems. India wastes considerably lot of water as leakage in pumping and distribution.

**Irrational wastage of water in agriculture:** Farming accounts for approximately 70% water consumed globally as stated by the World Water Forum. India uses around 80% of its total water consumption in agriculture. Irrational water wastage (water logging), flood irrigation and over exploitation of ground water for agriculture are a big challenge today.

**Shortage of water storing areas:** Compared to population and area of India, there are quite less number of dams and embankments to store the river water for further use. India is the **third** largest dam building nation of the world after China and the US, but despite that its annual per capita water storage capacity is just 225 cubic meters.

**Improper waste water treatment:** In India there is no policy support for recycling and reuse of the industrial waste water contrary to other countries that have proper

guidelines on waste water management. **Israel uses about 86% of its treated waste water in agriculture.**

**Composite Water Management Index:**

The Composite Water Management Index will be a useful tool to assess and improve the performance in efficient management of water resources. This index is an attempt to inspire States and UTs towards efficient and optimal utilisation of water and recycling, with a sense of urgency.

The index can be utilised to formulate and implement suitable strategies for better management of water resources. The index will provide useful information for the States and also for the concerned Central Ministries, thus, enabling them to formulate and implement suitable strategies for better management of water resources.

**What led NITI Aayog to launch the Index:**

Recently, limitations on availability of water resources and rising demand for water, sustainable management of water resources have gained critical importance.

Taking note of all these factors, NITI Aayog finalised to launch the Composite Water Management Index after undertaking an elaborate exercise including seeking feedback from the States and consultation with reputed experts.

**Conclusion:**

With the increasing population and the changing lifestyle of the people, food production will have to increase. Water conservation is something that India needs to look at very seriously today. The resources are limited and sustainability will be the biggest global game player in the upcoming decades.

Massive R&D is the need of the hour for creating better water storage areas. New concepts should be implemented like **underground storage, coastal reservoirs, micro-storages like rain water harvesting, artificial lake and increasing the water storage capacity of dams and reservoirs.**

Suggested Reading:

- ✓ http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=179920
- ✓ https://qz.com/931878/india-is-facing-its-worst-water-crisis-in-generations/
- ✓ https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/niti-aayog-to-launch-composite-water-management-index/article24155492.ece
- ✓ https://swachhindia.ndtv.com/76-million-dont-have-safe-drinking-water-indias-looming-water-crisis-5606/