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National Water Awards

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Why is in news? Vice President, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar confers 4th National Water Awards

- The Vice President of India conferred the 4th National Water Awards, 2022 at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.
- 41 winners, including joint winners across 11 categories were awarded for their exemplary work in the field of water conservation and management. Each award winner was conferred with a citation and a trophy as well as cash prizes in certain categories.
- The Vice President also launched an animated short film on 'Piku', the mascot of National Water Mission for telecast on Doordarshan to spread the message of water conservation. The event started with the traditional 'Jal Kalash' ceremony.
- The **first edition** of the National Water Awards was introduced by the **Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation in 2018**, under the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- They have provided a good opportunity for start-ups as well as leading organizations to engage and deliberate with senior policymakers on how to adopt the best water resources management practices in India.
- These awards have been instituted to **recognize and encourage exemplary work** and efforts made by States, Districts, individuals, organizations, etc across the country in attaining the **vision of a 'Jal Samridh Bharat'**.
- It covers **11 categories** 'Best State', 'Best District', 'Best Village Panchayat', 'Best Urban Local Body' etc.
- The award winners in different categories will be given a citation, trophy and cash prize. The cash prizes for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd rank winners are Rs.2 lakhs, Rs.1.5 lakhs, and Rs.1 lakh, respectively.
- During the event, the Minister of Jal Shakti said that "Life cannot be imagined in any form without it. **The per capita availability of water is decreasing with each passing day.** Water scarcity has emerged as a major challenge. Water is also a common point of concern for all of us. We face great challenges **in terms of our water resources as India is home to about 18% of the world's population, over 18% of the livestock, but we have just 4% of the fresh water resources of the world.** Our challenge is grave as the **pace of urbanization is high** and India also has large geographical variation".
- **Some of the Government initiatives:**
- **"Jal Shakti Abhiyan - Catch the Rain"** campaign which has been carried out with the cooperation from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Rural Development has brought about a new momentum in the field of rain water harvesting and water conservation.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission, world's biggest drinking water supply program** is well on its way to providing household tap connections to about 194 million rural households, thereby providing drinking water security. Under the Mission, the journey which the Ministry started with a little more than 15% households, today **in a short span of less than 4 years, has surpassed from 15% to about 63% households**".
- **Atal Bhujal Yojana** focusses on demand side **management of ground water** and the encouraging results in ground water recharge demonstrate **community-led sustainable ground water management.**
- **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana** which has, on one hand, **created 30 lakh hectares of new irrigation area** and on the other, brought **about 70 lakh hectares of land under smart/micro irrigation** due to coordinated efforts with the states.
- **56,000 Amrit Sarovars** all over the country have been constructed and almost the same number of Amrit Sarovars are under construction.
- The **linking of Ken and Betwa rivers** as the beginning of a new era in the country and **30 links have been identified** which will help to quench the thirst of thirsty rivers and thirsty throats. Also working towards maximizing the use of water resources and transferring water from surplus basin to deficit basin.

Kamaraj IAS Academy

Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040

Phone: **044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477 / Whatsapp : 09710729833**