

PERSON IN NEWS

Masood Azhar, Hafiz Saeed, Lakhvi, Dawood Ibrahim declared terrorists under new anti-terror law

Invoking the recent amendments in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, the Central Government has decided to declare the following individuals as terrorists and add their names to Schedule 4 of the Act:

1. Maulana Masood Azhar : chief, founder and key leader of Jaish-e-Mohammad
2. Hafiz Muhammad: chief, founder and key leader of Lashkar-e-Taiba/Jamat-ud-Dawa
3. Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi: chief operation commander of Lashkar-e-Taiba and one of its founder members
4. Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar: runs an international underworld crime syndicate and is involved in perpetrating acts of terror

All of the above are involved in terrorist attacks in India, and have been designated as global terrorists under United Nations. Earlier when terrorist organizations were banned, the individuals associated with it simply changed names and continued to carry out terrorist activities.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/masood-azhar-hafiz-saeed-dawood-ibrahim-declared-terrorists-under-new-anti-terror-law/article29330657.ece>

Which of the following person declared as terrorist under Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967?

- A. Masood Azhar
- B. Hafiz muhammad
- C. Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar
- D. All of the above

Answer- D

ENVIRONMENT

Mussel Mytilopsis

Only around a centimetre or two long invasive black-striped mussel *Mytilopsis sallei* found in Kochi's backwaters black-striped mussel is native to the South and Central Americas and it is from the Lam Tsuen River in Hong Kong (China), is an invasive species in most parts of the world. In India, it is from the ports of Mumbai and Vishakapatnam and spreads primarily through the discharge of ballast waters of ships. They are fast-growing species – which dwells in shallow water – can tolerate a wide variety of environmental conditions (salinity, water temperatures and oxygen levels), which helps them thrive in the new areas they colonise. They invasive mussels are 'biofoulers': organisms that accumulate on wet surfaces, causing huge ecological and economic losses and cause the deterioration of coastal infrastructure. They displace native species of clams from their coastal habitats and cause a reduction in native biodiversity.

- ☞ An invasive species is a species that is not native to a specific location, and that has a tendency to spread to a degree believed to cause damage to the environment, human economy or human health

Consider the following statement regarding mussel *Mytilopsis sallei*.

- 1) They are fast-growing species which dwells in deep water
- 2) They can tolerate a stenohayline.

Find the correct statement using code given below.

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer –D

KVIC shows how to reuse plastics to end pollution

Khadi and Village Industries Commission(KVIC) has launched a ‘Terracotta Grinder’ at Sewapuri in Varanasi. This terracotta Grinder will grind the wasted and broken pottery items for re-using in pottery-making. Earlier, the wasted pottery items were grinded in normal mortar and pestle and its fine powder was mixed with the normal clay. Mixing this powder in stipulated ratio to normal clay makes the resulting pottery items stronger. This Terracotta grinder will make grinding of wasted pottery items faster than the traditional mortar and pestle. It will lessen the cost of production, and will also help in solving the problem of shortage of clays. Further, KVIC has also started manufacturing of plastic mixed handmade paper under its project REPLAN (REducing PLAstic in Nature). This project is a part of KVIC’s commitment to Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan. In this project, the waste plastic is collected, cleaned, chopped, beaten and treated for softness. After that, it is mixed with the paper raw material i.e. cotton rags pulp in a ratio of 80 % (pulp) and 20% (plastic waste). The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a statutory body formed by the Government of India under the Act of Parliament ‘Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956. It is an apex organization under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, with regard to khadi and village industries within India.

<https://www.dailypioneer.com/2018/india/kvic-shows-how-to-reuse-plastics-to-end-pollution.html>

Consider the following statements regarding REPLAN

- 1) KVIC has started manufacturing of plastic mixed handmade paper under its project REPLAN (REducing PLAstic in Nature).
- 2) In this project, the waste plastic is collected, cleaned, chopped, beaten and treated for softness. After that, it is mixed with the paper raw material i.e. cotton rags pulp in a ratio of 80 % (pulp) and 20% (plastic waste).
- 3) The project is a part of KVIC’s commitment to Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan.

Find the correct statement using code given below.

- A. 1 and 3 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1, 2 and 3
- D. 1 and 2 only

ANSWER-C

ECONOMY

RBI releases the Report of the Task Force on the Development of Secondary Market for Corporate Loans for comments

The Reserve Bank of India had constituted a Task Force on Development of Secondary Market for Corporate Loans under the Chairmanship of Shri T. N. Manoharan, Chairman, Canara Bank, on May 29, 2019. The Terms of Reference of the Task Force were to review the existing state of market for loan sale/transfer in India as well as the international experience in loan trading and to make recommendations for the development of secondary market for corporate loans in India. The Task Force has since submitted its report to the Governor. The key recommendations of the Task Force are as follows:

1. setting up of a Self-Regulatory Body of participants which will finalise detailed modalities for the secondary market for corporate loans including standardisation of documentation;
2. setting up a Central Loan Contract Registry;
3. setting up an online loan sales platform to conduct auctions/sale process of the secondary market loans;
4. amending the extant regulations applicable to, inter-alia, securitization and assignment of loans, asset reconstruction, Foreign Portfolio Investment and External Commercial Borrowings; and
5. Amendments in regulations issued by SEBI, IRDA and PFRDA to enable participation of non-banking entities such as mutual funds, insurance companies and pension funds.

The report is placed on the RBI website today for comments of stakeholders and members of the public.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/rbi-sets-up-committee-on-corporate-loans/article27296624.ece>

What are the recommendations of T. N. Manoharan committee?

- A. setting up a Central Loan Contract Registry
- B. setting up an online loan sales platform to conduct auctions/sale process of the secondary market loans
- C. Amending the extant regulations applicable Foreign Portfolio Investment and External Commercial Borrowings
- D. All of the above.

ANSWER-D

In ethanol, government's sugar solution

Government has hiked ethanol procurement price for blending with petrol, allowed conversion of old sugar into ethanol. How is the move expected to address problems of overproduction and unpaid dues?

Ethanol/ anhydrous ethyl alcohol having chemical formula of C_2H_5OH , can be produced from crops like sugarcane, maize, wheat, etc which have high starch content. In India, ethanol is mainly produced from sugarcane molasses by fermentation process. Since ethanol is produced from plants that harness the power of the sun, ethanol is also considered as renewable fuel. As the ethanol molecule contains oxygen, it allows the engine to more completely combust the fuel, resulting in fewer emissions and thereby reducing the occurrence of environmental pollution. Ethanol Blended Petrol programme was launched in 2003 on a pilot basis and has been subsequently extended to 21 states and 4 Union Territories. The programme sought to promote the use of alternative and environment friendly fuels and to reduce import dependency for energy requirements. The government has been notifying the administered price of ethanol since 2014. India has set a target of 10 percent ethanol blending in petrol by 2022.

Benefits of EBP: The move will encourage the production of ethanol and will thus reduce excess sugar in the country. It will increase the liquidity with the sugar mills and will help them settle the arrears of the farmers. It will incentivize ethanol output and will increase investment in capacity addition of the sugar mills. Being one of the biggest polluters in the world and a signatory of the Paris Climate deal India's ethanol dependence can certainly help it reduce the pollution problem. According to a Bloomberg New Energy Finance study 'Next-Generation Ethanol: What's in it for India?', the increase in ethanol production has the potential to create over 700,000 jobs when targeting only the base potential. India will save at least 120 billion through EBP, thus cutting down on its import bill.

Challenges of EBP: Sugar Mills will have to invest in distillery capacity and this will require investment which they might not afford. They will also have to invest in pollution control, storage and logistics which will require additional investment. Ethanol in India is derived from rectified spirit which in turn comes from cane molasses. Rectified spirit is also used for potable alcohol production. A higher ethanol

production could have an impact on the manufacture and sale of potable alcohol which is a major source of state revenue. The country's targets for ethanol-blended petrol continue to be missed largely on account of inadequate ethanol production.

The main challenge in ethanol business is its pricing: Since ethanol is a substitute for petrol from imported crude, its pricing should be linked to the import parity price of petrol (IMPP). IMPP represents the price that importers would pay in case of actual import of product at the respective Indian ports.

Criticism : The oil companies will want to pay lower for ethanol when the fuel prices in the market declines, thereby affecting Ethanol producers. The decline in ethanol price will reduce the profit margin of sugar mills, as the sugarcane purchase price remain fixed. If the government forces the oil companies to pay the same ethanol price even when the fuel prices fall, the oil companies will suffer losses. Bad weather can damage cane resulting in decline in sugar output and market price of sugar will thus increase. As per the estimates given in Auto Fuel Vision and Policy 2025 issued in May 2014, blended petrol is available only in 13 states and the average blend is 2%. During the sugar year 2014-15, OMCs have achieved a blending percentage of just 2.3%.

Why ethanol blending in petrol might not work for India: India might be able to save on oil import costs by going for a greater petrol-ethanol mix, but that could strain the country's water resources and affect food availability. While India has become one of the top producers of ethanol in recent years, it lags top producers, the US and Brazil, by a huge margin and remains inefficient in terms of water usage.

Impact on Net Sown Area: To raise the ethanol blend rate to 10% India will have to increase its net sown area from present 3% to 7%. In order to achieve 20% blend rate, almost one-tenth of the existing net sown area will have to be diverted for sugarcane production which will put a stress on other crops and might increase food prices.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-in-ethanol-govts-sugar-solution-5963229/>