SHORTNEWS:

1.STATE S&T COUNCIL

Context: The **NITI Aayog** has recommended that the Department of Science and Technology (DST) cut its **'core grant support'** for State Science and Technology Councils and **pare them down to 'project-based support'.**

- These are part of the recommendations in the report ***"Roadmap for Strengthening State Science and Technology Councils".***

Key Challenges Facing State Science & Technology (S&T) Councils

- **Weak Governance Structure:** Most State S&T Councils do not conduct regular governing council meetings, leading to delays in decision-making and fragmented policy implementation.
- **Funding Constraints and Poor Utilization**: Councils rely heavily on central grants, with irregular fund releases and under-utilization due to cumbersome approval processes.
- **Shortage of Skilled Manpower:** Many sanctioned positions remain vacant, affecting research output and project implementation.
- Limited Institutional Collaboration and Low Industry Engagement
- **Regulatory and Administrative Bottlenecks:** Rigid rules and complex procedures hinder timely fund utilization and project implementation.

Recommendations

- **Financial Support and Resource Mobilization**
    - **Adequate State Funding**: States to allocate at least **0.5% of GSDP** for S&T.
    - **Project-Based Central Grants**: Shift from core to performance-driven funding (except for NE & UTs).
    - **Performance-Based Incentives**: Introduce outcome-driven funding linked to defined KPIs.
- **Human Resources and Capacity Building**
    - **Balanced Workforce**: Maintain **70:30 scientific to non-scientific ratio**.
    - **Regularized Staff**: State to support core positions financially and structurally.
- **State-Focused Role and Sub-Structures**
    - **State S&T Mapping**: Identify local needs and build sectoral policies.
    - **Create Sub-Structures**: Establish patent cells, incubation hubs, TRL units, tech transfer units, etc.

- **Revamping Programs and Activities**
    - **R&D Project Support**: Prioritize state academic/R&D institutions; support central institutions only for state-relevant projects.
    - **Awards**: Launch annual awards in line with Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar.
    - **Fellowships & Grants**: Offer scholarships, internships, and travel grants to nurture young talent.
- **Collaboration and Ecosystem Linkages**
    - **Central Government Linkages**: Build active collaborations with departments like DBT, MEITY, CSIR, MOE, DPIIT, etc.
    - **Industry & PSU Networks**: Engage local industries and public sector enterprises to co-fund programs.

2.NATIONAL FISH FARMERS DAY

Context: India's fish production has more than doubled from **95.79 lakh tonnes to 195 lakh tonnes** over 11 years, attributed to the success of the **'Blue Revolution'** launched by the Centre.

- The **Department of Fisheries, MoFAH&D, GoI**, celebrated **National Fish Farmers Day** on **10 July 2025** at **ICAR-CIFA, Bhubaneswar.**

Growth and Achievements

- **Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture**: A **140% growth** was recorded in inland fisheries and aquaculture, showcasing the effective use of India's water resources.
- **Shrimp Production and Exports**: Shrimp production saw a **270% jump** in the last decade.
    - Seafood exports **surpassed ₹60,500 crore**, with India retaining global leadership in shrimp exports.

Key Initiatives Launched

- **17 Fisheries Clusters** (total number of clusters – **34**)
    - **Existing examples**: Pearl (Hazaribagh), Seaweed (Lakshadweep), Tilapia (Chhattisgarh), Brackish-water (Andhra Pradesh), etc.
- **ICAR Training Calendar**
- **Seed certification and hatchery operation guidelines** (to ensure quality and standardization)

Blue Revolution

- The “Blue Revolution” refers to the **rapid and sustainable development** of aquaculture and fisheries, aiming to increase fish production and improve the livelihoods of fishers and fish farmers