



## Current Affairs of the Day

### Center launches water reuse project

1. Centre launched a countrywide project to reuse greywater, or run-offs from kitchens, bathing and laundry, and said the country was on track to realizing its “dream” of connecting every rural household with tap water by 2024.
2. Govt launched the ‘Sujalam 2.0’ greywater recycling project. A staggering 31,000 million tonnes of grey water a day is discharged by rural India alone, which goes waste, according to official data, enough to tide over drought if evenly stored across the country.
3. Of India’s 190 million rural households, 90 million households had a tap-water connection as of date, the Jal Shakti minister said. That’s about 47.3%.
4. The country’s groundwater recharge scheme, Atal Bhujal Yojana, 81 water-scarce districts are on course to getting 10.42 million recharge units to capture 1.85 billion cubic metres of monsoon rains.



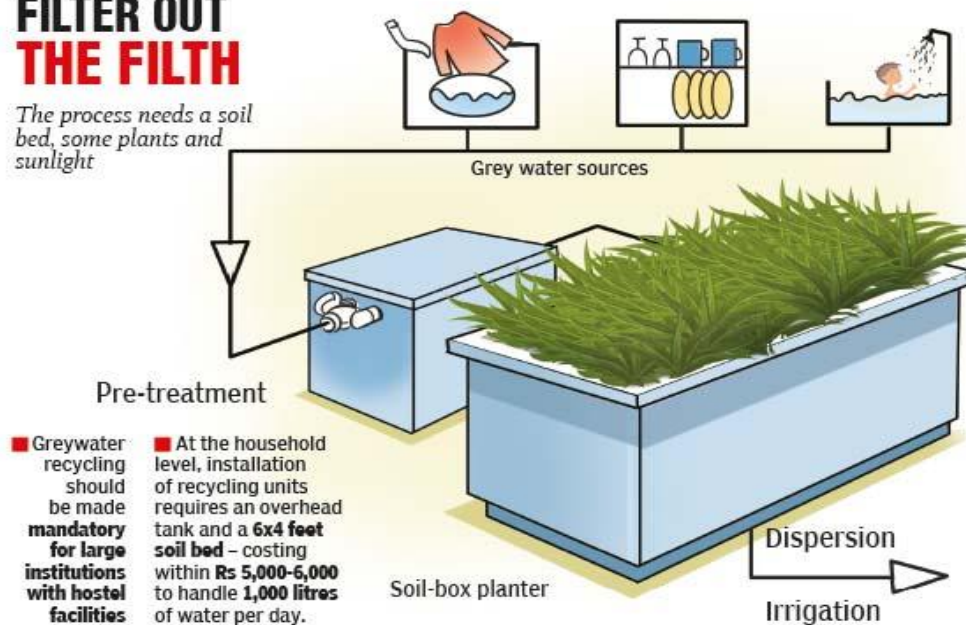


## The real culprit: Mismanagement of Water

1. Yet, a bad monsoon isn't the real culprit. It's about how water is utilised in a country with only 4% of the world's water resources and 16% of the global population.
2. In Meghalaya, one of the rainiest places on Earth, residents faces shortages. The country's public water-supply systems are leaky.
3. Urban demand is currently 135 litres per person per day, three times as much as rural India's 40 litres, excluding agricultural use.
4. Agriculture's demand for water is disproportionately huge. One of the reasons is free electricity and a lot of incentives for crops such as paddy.

### FILTER OUT THE FILTH

The process needs a soil bed, some plants and sunlight



## War and prices

The surge in fertiliser prices, amid the crisis in Ukraine, affects India. But it can act to mitigate the impact on farmers.

### Highlights:

1. Indian farmers may well be collateral beneficiaries of the disastrous Russian invasion of Ukraine.



2. Soaring international prices of agri-commodities, thanks to shipping disruptions in the Black Sea, have improved crop realisation prospects even as a bumper rabi harvest of wheat, mustard, maize and barley is in the offing. The outlook for the ensuing Kharif cropping season seems equally promising.
3. If current prices hold or don't significantly fall, farmers will have the incentive to plant more area under cotton, maize, soya bean, groundnut, sesamum and sunflower. That would help promote crop diversification, especially weaning farmers away from paddy and sugarcane.

### Elephant in the room: Fertilisers

1. India is an importer of plant nutrients, whether in finished form or as raw material and intermediates. Urea and di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) is currently trading at \$1,200 and \$1,300 per tonne, respectively, as against their corresponding year-ago levels of \$400 and \$500.
2. The landed price of muriate of potash (MOP) imported into India has, likewise, surged from \$247 to \$592 per tonne; so have those of inputs such as phosphoric acid (from \$795 to \$1,530), sulphur (\$225 to \$450) and ammonia (\$475 to \$1,150).
3. The reason is simple: Russia is the world's largest urea exporter and, together with its strategic partner Belarus, accounts for around 40 per cent of the global trade in MOP. Russia also figures among the top five DAP-exporting countries.
4. With a crucial supply source getting cut off by a combination of war-linked suspension of cargo movements and financial sanctions, the entire international fertiliser trade has been thrown into jeopardy.

### Way Forward:

1. The first is to rely less on floating import tenders, which will only further drive up global prices in a seller's market. A better option is to contract directly – with Canada, Israel and Jordan for potash and Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia, Togo and Egypt for phosphates — using government channels.
2. Similar sourcing of, say, 1.5-2 million tonnes each of urea and DAP is possible even with China. With Kharif sowings starting from mid-June, there is a reasonable time window to tie up supplies.





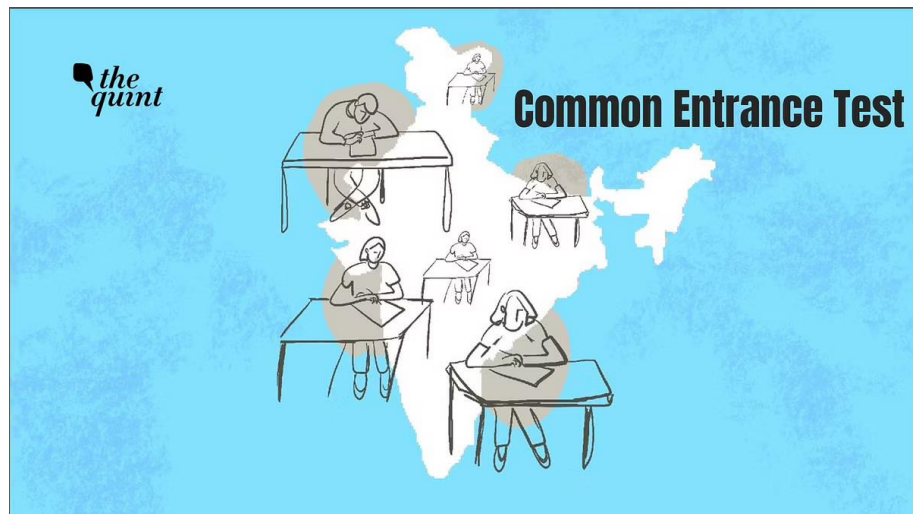
3. The second is to initiate a campaign, well ahead of the season, to induce farmers to reduce consumption of urea, DAP and MOP and replace these with complex fertilisers having less, but more balanced, nutrient content.
4. Third, the maximum retail price of urea has been unchanged since November 2012. A minimum 25 per cent hike is in order now — to prepare farmers for eventual price decontrol and a flat per-acre subsidy regime.

## The real test

Common entrance test for central universities is welcome. But supply crisis in higher education needs urgent attention.

### Problems that plague universities:

The irrationality of a system of high marks, higher cut-offs and an assessment system that rewards unimaginative, rote learning has, for long, taken a toll on students and educators.



### The Common University Entrance Test (CUET)

1. The compulsory common entrance test for admission to undergraduate courses and colleges under central universities is, therefore, a welcome first step in fixing a broken system.
2. For one, the Class XII board examination results will no longer have a bearing on admission to these 45 universities, flattening out the differences in assessment practices across various boards.
3. Second, students can opt to write the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) in any of 13 languages, which levels the field significantly.



4. Third, it spares students from the expense and hassle of writing multiple entrance examination tests. But, for all those pluses, the entrance test is not a magic bullet to the complex challenge of equality and quality in higher education.

### Concerns:

1. The apprehension that the CUET can be gamed by a super-nimble coaching industry is not unfounded.
2. The National Testing Agency (NTA)'s task will be to ensure a less mechanical way of screening applicants and assessing the aptitude for college education. The unreasonable cut-off must not be replaced by another test score.
3. Neither, after all, is a foolproof measure of ability. Nor should 12 years of schooling be completely disregarded in the admission process or reduced to the performance in a make-or-break examination. The government and the school boards must find a way to give weightage to a child's schooling career.

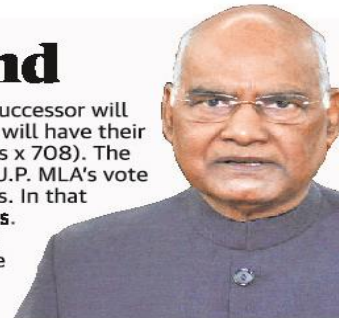
### Way forward:

1. A single piece of reform must not obscure the larger, structural reasons for the crisis.
2. In a young country, where education is tied up with the aspirations of people across classes, the demand for higher education is growing, as is evident in the 11 per cent rise in gross enrolment between 2015 and 2020.
3. The number of quality higher education institutes has not kept up, resulting in lakhs of applicants for a few universities and elite colleges — and leaving out vast numbers without the education they deserve.
4. For the government, that's an urgent task that demands attention and resources.
5. Without an expansion in education infrastructure, more private and public investment in colleges and universities, the majority of young people will continue to be saddled with sub-par education that sets them up for unemployability and frustration.

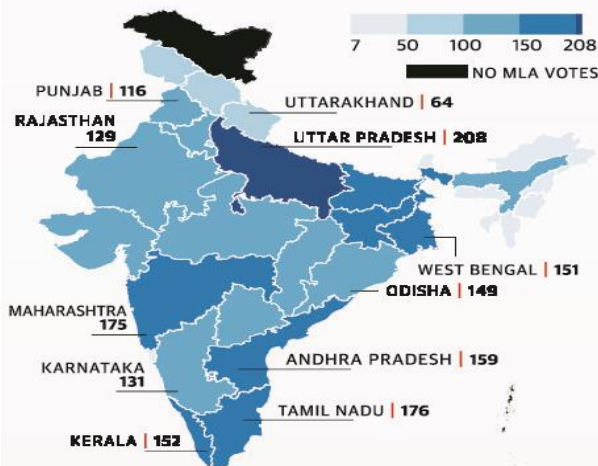


## President polls: As things stand

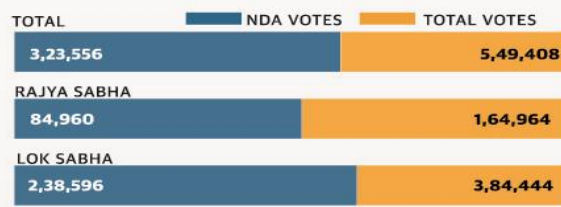
The current Indian President Ram Nath Kovind's tenure will end in July 2022. His successor will be elected through an electoral college system wherein each MP and MLA in India will have their say. Each MP's vote carries a value of 708 votes, totalling 5,49,408 votes (776 MPs x 708). The value of an MLA's vote is determined by the population of a State. For instance, a U.P. MLA's vote carries a value of 208 votes, whereas a Goa's MLA's vote carries a value of 20 votes. In that way, the total value of votes carried by all MLAs in India amounts to 5,49,495 votes. In total, the MPs and MLAs have a vote value of 10,98,903 votes. In the upcoming presidential election, the ruling National Democratic Alliance's MPs and MLAs have a combined vote value of 5,39,827 votes, which falls short of the 50% mark by around 9,625 votes. By Venkataram Srinivasan



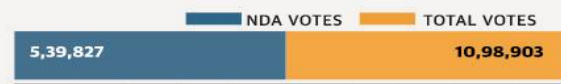
**1. VOTE VALUE OF EACH MLA** | Each MP carries a vote value of 708. However, the number of votes each MLA carries differs based on the State's population. The map shows the number of votes one MLA carries in a State



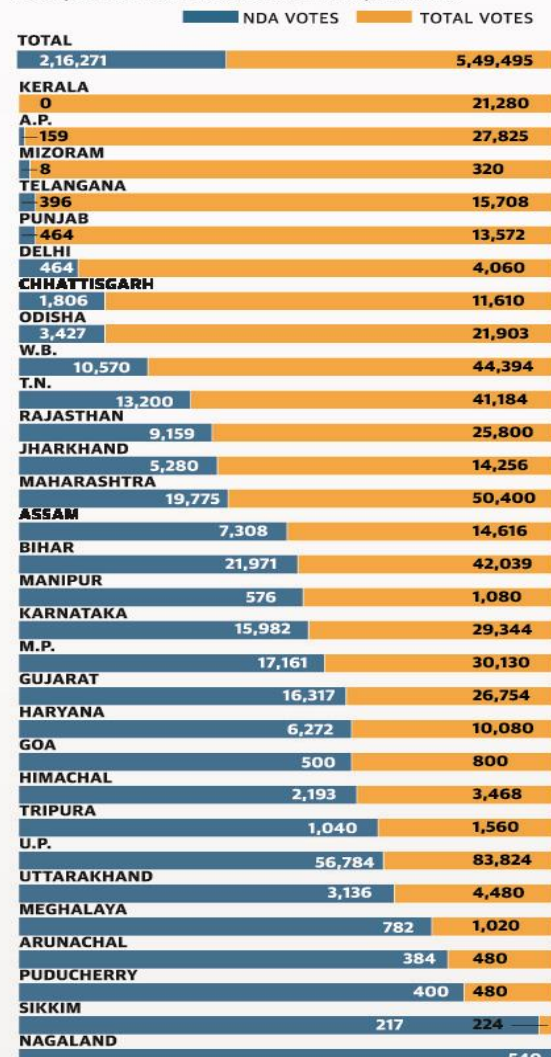
**3. NDA'S SHARE IN MP VOTES** | The chart shows the number of votes for all MPs in both Houses and the number of votes MPs in the NDA can secure. For instance, in the Lok Sabha, if all the MPs vote, a total of 3,84,444 votes can be cast. Of these, the MLAs in the NDA can secure 2,38,596 votes



**4. NDA'S SHARE IN TOTAL VOTES** | The chart shows the number of votes for all MPs and MLAs and the number of votes MPs and MLAs in the NDA can secure. If all the MPs and MLAs vote, a total of 10,98,903 votes can be cast. Of these, the MPS and MLAs in NDA can secure 5,39,827 votes. The majority mark is around 5,49,452, around 9,625 votes more



**2. NDA'S SHARE IN MLA VOTES** | The chart shows the number of votes for all MLAs in each State and the number of votes MLAs in NDA can secure. For instance, in U.P., if all the MLAs vote, a total of 83,824 votes can be cast. Of these, the MLAs in NDA can secure 56,784 votes



SOURCE: ELECTION COMMISSION





## MAINS DAWP

Q1. Critically discuss the need for the Common University Entrance Test (CUET).

Q2. Reuse of greywater is one best practice in decentralized water conservation and management. Discuss.

Q3. *“At a time when India is rapidly emerging as the start-up capital of the world, it’s critical to fix the inadequacies in our corporate governance system to pave the way for future growth.”* Comment.

## MCQs

Q1. Consider the following statements about the presidential election in India

1. The combined value of all the MPs’ votes is roughly equal to the combined value of all the MLAs’
2. The values of vote of All MPs and MLAs is the same

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2