

India has been traditionally an agrarian country. Besides having traditional sources of income such as - agriculture, traditional handlooms and handicrafts of India like weaving, pottery, etc. - development in the non-farm sectors of rural India is slowly taking place.

What is Rural Non-Farm Sector?

- The Rural Non-Farm Sector (RNFS) encompasses all non-agriculture activities: mining and quarrying, household and non-household manufacturing, processing, etc.

Need for Rural Non-Farm Sector

- Over the years, the economic **contribution of agriculture** to India's GDP is steadily declining.
- As per the **tenth agricultural census**, the **average size of agriculture** landholding **declined to 1.08 hectare** in 2015-16 from **1.15 hectare in 2010-11**.
- This explains the rise of employment in non-farm sector. It is observed that **64 per cent of rural employment is in the agriculture sector**, while the share of agriculture in rural output is 39 per cent.
- Hence, **reducing the dependence** of rural masses on agriculture as a source of income will help improve the overall income of the rural population.

Non-Farm Job Status: Statistics

- According to different international studies on India's labour market, **between 2011 and 2015**, the number of agriculture jobs fell by 26 million while **non-farm ones rose by 33 million**.
- The **top four sectors contributing to the non-farm jobs** between financial years 2011 and 2015 are **Trade and Hospitality**(15.6 per cent), **Construction**(14.3 per cent), **Transport**(5.7 per cent) and **Education and Health**(1.6 per cent).

How Can RNFS Be Developed?

In order to develop Rural Non-Farm Economy, **heavy investments are needed** for inclusive, sustainable and diversified rural development along with the **right governance system**. For proper implementation of same, the government of India has introduced a large number of schemes over the years to diversify the rural population into non-farm activities. These are:

- a) **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)**: Starting off in 2005, this scheme intended to provide at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult member volunteers to do unskilled manual work.
- b) **Deendayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushal Yojana**:
 - According to census 2011, India has 55 million potential workers between the ages of 15 and 35 years in rural areas. At the same time, the world is expected to face a **shortage of 57 million workers by 2020**. This presents a historic opportunity for India to **transform its** demographic surplus into a demographic dividend.
 - The **Ministry of Rural Development** implements **DDU-GKY** to drive this national agenda for inclusive growth, by developing skills and productive capacity of the rural youth from poor families.
 - There are **several challenges** preventing India's rural poor from competing in the modern market, such as the **lack of formal education and marketable skills**.
 - DDU-GKY **bridges this gap** by funding training projects benchmarked to global standards, with an emphasis on placement, retention, career progression and foreign placement.

- c) **Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission:** It seeks to reach out to **8-9 crores rural poor households** and organize **one-woman member** from each household into affinity-based women SHGs and federations at village level and at higher levels.
- d) **Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY):** The government of India has launched a new sub-scheme named "**Aajeevika Gramen Express Yojana (AGEY)**" as part of the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). The Self-Help Groups under DAY-NRLM will **operate road transport service in backward areas**. This will help to provide safe, affordable and community-monitored rural transport services to connect remote villages with the key services and amenities for the overall economic development of backward rural areas. This will also provide an additional avenue of livelihoods for SHGs.
- e) **Development of Rural Tourism:** The Union Government, in the Budget Speech of 2014-15 decide to **create tourist circuits around specific themes**. Besides, Ministry of Tourism is promoting **Farm Tourism** as niche products and is also encouraging Home Stay Facilities in rural areas.

Strength in Rural Non-Farm Sectors:

- The introduction of **JAM Trinity** – Jan Dhan, Aadhar and Mobile has **increased the share of total disbursement of money in the non-farm sectors**.
- This is in addition to the existing financial institutions like **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)**, State Khadi Boards, **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** etc., which have helped in the development of agro-industries, domestic marketing channels for rural non-farm production as well as government support in export promotion.

Challenges in Rural Non-Farm Sectors

1. **Infrastructure:** The most significant bottleneck is the quantity, quality and reliable of infrastructure.
2. **Regulatory restriction on small sectors:**
 - In the initial stages, **capital investment restrictions** were imposed to protect the small-scale sector, from predation by large industry.
 - **Reservation of products** for the sector was initiated to create a domestic market and **quantities restrictions imposed** to protect them from competition from imports.
 - Capital investment limits have **discouraged economies of scale**, and *concessions offered to small industry have created adverse incentives against re-investment*. Reservation of products for the small-scale sector has gradually reduced in significance.
 - The decision of the government to put all the reserved items in the open general license category from April 2005 meant free import of such items at the prevailing tariff rate.
 - With the latter slated to come down over time to around 20 per cent as per the WTO norms, this will effectively signal the end of protection for the small-scale industry.
3. **Education and Awareness:** High levels of illiteracy in rural India have hampered the growth of the rural non-farm sector.
4. **Migration of skilled laborers** from rural to urban regions also creates shortfall of workforce in the rural small-scale industries.

Conclusion:

- With increased urbanization and decrease in the agriculture land, Non-Farm Sector in rural India is gradually gathering momentum.

- This is supported by the implementation of different schemes of the union government like Skill India, Make in India, Digital India, etc.
- **More livelihood and poverty alleviation programmes** will bring in more participation in the non-farm activities, thus reducing the dependence on agriculture.

NON-FARM SECTOR FOR EMPLOYMENT GENERATION

- The rural non-farm sector (RNFS) has been named differently in India's development trajectory. This has been the **main source of supply of non-agricultural goods and services** to rural households.
- Many small-scale industries proliferated in rural areas. However, with trade liberalization, reservations for small-scale industries were replaced with Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Act. It is to promote MSME enterprises but it is reported to have urban biases.
- In India with low transition of workforce and complex land laws for agriculture, small and marginal farmers dominate rural economy. Income from agriculture (cultivation and livestock) is not enough for their livelihood.

Status of Rural Employment

- There has been a **steep fall in share of agriculture** in rural workforce after 1990s. It shows the **increase in importance of non-agriculture sectors**
- Traditionally, **manufacturing** has been the most important of non-agricultural sectors; however its share has declined in recent period in both rural and urban sector.
- **Construction is now the largest employing industry** of rural worker, its share has been increasing since 1990s.
- In non-agriculture sectors, services are playing important role, though this has largely been confined to the urban areas.
- Employment is **low in mining and utilities**. These sectors are largely under public domain and government often attempts to downsize it.
- **Women account for around 30 per cent of rural workforce**; bulk of them are in agriculture. However, there is **significantly high level (one-third) of disguised unemployment** among female workers in rural sector.

Rural Non-Farm Sector:

- The RNFS actually **consists of several heterogeneous industries** and employment growth in each of these industries is influenced by a host of separate factors. These can broadly be grouped as **development or distress related factors of RNFE growth**.
- In several development-related factors, **productivity-led growth in agriculture** has been the most important.
- This hypothesis in Indian context was followed by the **growth of urban center as a stimulant for growth of RNFS**. However this needs to be integrated with rural sector with adequate infrastructure.
- The **residual sector hypothesis** for growth of employment in RNFS states that where labour absorptive capacity of agriculture becomes limited and urban industrial sector is not able to accommodate ever-growing labour force, the **RNFS tends to act as a sponge for surplus labour**.
- The growth of RNFS in a region is propelled by either of the above development or distress-related factors.

- **Development-induced** growth of RNFS results in **increase of wages of workers** and this must be targeted for betterment of rural workers.

Conclusions

- Construction along with trade and transport has propelled growth of employment in RNFFS in the recent period. However, productivity growth in these sectors remains important for a better life of rural workers.
- The study based on development experience argues that productivity growth in agriculture, manufacturing and tourism are important to trigger growth of productive employment in other sectors of rural economy.
- Manufacturing in particular is important for a broad-based growth of productive employment in rural India. Therefore, sufficient incentives should be given to encourage manufacturing in rural vicinity.
- These incentives can be in the form of creating suitable infrastructure like common facility centres (CFCs) and incentives like cheap electricity. Rural industrialization must adopt a cluster-based approach wherein large and medium size enterprises based on local resources are linked with the micro-small enterprises.

RURAL TOURISM: AN ASSET TO NON-FARM SECTOR

- India is a predominantly a rural country with two-third population and 70 percent workforce residing in rural areas.
- Despite the rise of urbanization, population projections indicate that **India will continue to be predominantly rural till the year 2050**; after which urban population is estimated to overtake rural population (United Nations 2012).
- Thus, growth and development of rural economy is key to overall inclusive development.

Transition from Agricultural to Non-Agriculture Activities:

- A NITI Aayog paper published in the year 2017 states that, about **two-third of rural income is now generated in non-agriculture activities**.
- Rural India is, therefore, witnessing a transition from agriculture to more productive non-farm sectors. Share of agriculture in rural output is merely 39 per cent.

Importance of Rural Non-Farm Sector

- It may facilitate employment growth.
- It may prevent many rural people from migrating to urban areas.
- It offers more remunerative activities to supplement agriculture income.
- It provides a means for the rural poor to cope when farming fails.

Role of Rural Tourism

- As per Ministry of Tourism (MoT), *any form of tourism that showcase rural life, art, culture, and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between tourists and locals for a more enriching tourism experience* can be termed as rural tourism.

- Rural tourism has certain **typical characteristics** like it is **experience oriented**, the **locations are thinly populated**, it is **predominantly in natural environment**, it **engages local events** and is **based on preservation of culture, heritage and traditions**.
- India's **National Tourism Policy 2002** identified rural tourism as one of its focus areas. A collaborative effort, termed as **Endogenous Tourism Project-Rural Tourism Scheme**, between **MoT and United Nations Development programme** was initiated in 2003.
- **Rural circuit development** has been included among the thirteen thematic circuits identified under '**Swadesh Darshan**' (Central Government scheme for integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits).
- Vision statement of national tourism policy (drafts) 2015 aims to develop and position India as a "**MUST EXPERIENCE**" and "**MUST REVISIT**" destination.

Mapping the Rural Resources for Tourism

MoT has attempted to divide the rural resources into three categories:

1. Resources by Virtue of geographical and climatic characteristics of the region.
2. Aspects of the rural culture like village folklore, handicrafts, textile products, social bonds etc.
3. Farm produce and practices like sowing, harvesting etc.

Following are the examples of some of the numerous rural tourism initiatives that fall in the aforesaid categories:

1. Geographical and Climate Attribute (Eco-Tourism/Responsible Tourism)

- Homestays in Kalap Village (Uttarakhand):
- Fireflies Festival in Purushwadi Village (Maharashtra): Purushwadi is a tribal village, situated in Western Ghats, in the Akole district of Maharashtra.

2. Culture Facet (Cultural Tourism)

- **Stone Craft and Pattachitra in Raghurajpur Village (Odisha):** Raghurajpur is a heritage crafts village located in Puri district of Odisha. It has a long lineage of artists specializing in a unique painting style known as '**patachitra**'.
- **Tribal Cultural Trails in Bishnoi Village (Rajasthan):** Bishnoi tribe follows a set of principles related to the protection of animals and conservation of trees. It is to be noted that social and psychological consequences of tribal tourism are often more detrimental than beneficial for the tribals therefore proper management is needed.
- **Textile Village Tour in Sarai Mohana Village (Varanasi,UP) and Pochampalli (Telangana)**

3. Farm Produce and Practices (Farm/Agro/Horti Tourism)

- **Mangoes in malihabad (UP), Ratnagiri (Maharashtra)**
- **Almonds , saffron, walnut, Apple etc. in Kashmir (J&K)**
- **Vineyards in Nasik (Maharashtra), Nandi Hills (Karnataka)**
- **Spices in Kumily Village, Idukki district(kerala)**

Capacity Building and Government Schemes

- Hospitality and accommodative spirit are the core virtues of rural India: a basic orientation with respect to operational aspects of tourism is enough to make villagers embrace tourists.

- Schemes of central government like **National Rural Livelihood Mission, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen kaushal Yojana** and similar schemes of the state governments can offer significant help in conducting training programs in hospitality, housekeeping, catering, basic accounting etc.
- **Hunar Se Rozgar Schemes** and **regional level tourist guides training programme** executed by MoT can also assist in capacity building.

Co-ordination Among Stakeholders

- There has to be sync between attractions (rural resources), accessibility, accommodation and amenities. Therefore, necessary infrastructural facilities such as transport to access the rural destinations, facilities to stay, healthcare facilities, ATMs, telecommunication facilities, internet connectivity are equally essential. Schemes of e-tourist visa that allows visa approval on the email through e-application within 72 hours of the application has eased foreign tourist entry in India.
- **Hodka village Resort in Rann of Kutch, Gujarat** is one of the most successfully implemented rural tourism initiatives. Hodka story signifies the **role of the Village Tourism Committee (Paryatan Samiti)** headed by the district collector of the concerned rural tourism site.
- There is a need to **make Panchayat functionaries aware** about the concept and benefits of the rural tourism site. There is a need to make panchayat functionaries aware about the concept and benefits of the rural tourism.

Marketing Strategies for Rural tourism

- Rural communities have very little resources for marketing of the products. Hence, with the help of different stakeholders, different tools and techniques can be used for this purpose.
- *Familiarization trips* to rural sites can be organized for travel writers and bloggers. Social media platforms should also be used.
- **In-flight magazines** should have write-ups of success stories in this area. MoT has contributed by prominently displaying the rural tourism sites on its main website.
- Many state tourism departments **like Kerala tourism showcase rural tourism** emphatically.
- Involvement of artisans in Dilli Haat, mega craft melas in different cities across the country has also been facilitated by MoT. Ministry of Rural Development and collaborative convergence of various stakeholders can work wonders in marketing.

Conclusion:

- Rural tourism resources could be instrumental in bringing out the much needed turnaround of rural communities and at the same time provide visitors a wholesome tourism experience.
- When developed to its fullest potential, it could provide jobs to villagers who otherwise are increasingly migrating to cities.

NGOS AND PRIVATE SECTOR IN NON-FARM SECTOR

- Mahatma Gandhi once said, "the soul of India lives in its villages". This quote is relevant even today.
- According to the 2011 census of India, 68.84 per cent of Indians (around 83.3 crore people) still live in around 6.4 lakh villages.
- Finding of a survey revealed that 89 per cent of the bottom 20 per cent of poorest people in our country live in rural areas.

Need for RNFS: A statistical view

- Since the land available to each family has remained the same and the number of members in a family has grown, supporting all of them through agriculture alone is becoming difficult. Further, rural India has **witnessed a sharp decline in its workforce at 6.4** per cent compared to the 4.7 per cent reduction in urban Indian workforce.
- The **working women population of rural India** has witnessed a decline of 22 million during 2004-05 to 2011-12. There is also a continuous increase in the population which is adding to the labour force.
- It is in this context that finding an alternative employment opportunity is imperative, activities which are not based on agriculture alone, known as non-farm activities, can become a game changer.

RNFS: A Game Changer

- These non-farm activities can provide **forward and backward linkage** to agricultural activities. This would result in growth of both farm and non-farm sectors, boosting income and growth in the rural areas.
- This would also **reduce the migration**. A proper integration of farm and non-farm activities in rural areas would also **enhance the quality of life** in rural areas and contribute significantly to the national income.
- By providing supplement and non-seasonal employment to small and marginal farmers in rural areas, the non-farm activities can help **reduce income inequality**.
- It can also help rural households **diversify their economic income streams**. Diversification of income also gives a household more options to improve their livelihood and raise their living standard.
- Growth in employment in the formal sector has been lagging behind the general growth and employment in the country. In this context, rural non-farm sector, which is sustainable and less capital intensive, appears more appealing to people. It would also **reduce the rural-urban income gap**.
- According to a paper report quoting McKinsey global institute, between 2011 and 2015, the non-farm sector contributed an additional 33 million jobs. The report further says that this increase partly compensated reduction in agricultural jobs, which had reduced by 26 million.

Government Programme and Policies

- The Government of India has launched programmes like **Skill India** (a campaign launched in 2015 to train 40 crore people in different skills by 2022), **National Skill Development Mission**, the **National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF)**, **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna**, **National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme** (to promote apprenticeship) and **Community Colleges** (offering short-term and long-term job-oriented courses).
- The **National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) also known as Aajeevika**, is going to create platforms to enable rural poor to access sustained livelihood opportunities and financial services. Its flagship scheme **Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gramin Kaushal Yojana** trains youths under BPL category in various skills with a view to make them employable.
- **NRLM aims** at reducing rural poverty. The idea is to enable poor households have an access to self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities. The central objective of the mission is to **"establish efficient and effective intuitional platforms** for the rural poor which would enable them to increase household incomes through livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial and public services".

- **Young Professionals (YPs)** scheme was developed under the NRLM with an objective to provide a *well-structured exposure to young professionals in different thematic operations of NRLM.*
- "**Aajeevika skills**" was introduced to skill rural people who are poor and to provide them with jobs. The focus of this programme is on skilling and placement of poor rural population in the formal sector.
- This is very relevant in the present scenario of India for around 430 million people, who are in the age group 15-34 and who constitute 35 per cent of the population (census 2011). This age group is projected to increase to 464 million by 2021.
- **Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY)** is introduced to provide loans up to Rs 10 lakh to the non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises.
- Under the guidance of PMMY, three products have been created viz, 'Shishu', 'Kishore' and 'Tarun', to signify the stage of growth/development and funding needs of the beneficiary and also provide a reference point for the next phase of graduation/growth.

Challenges:

- Factors like lack of education and infrastructure, poor access to finance, poverty, lack of fundamental resources etc., account for the problem of unemployment among the rural people.
- Government organizations are not very flexible in their programmes apart from the fact they are also not well equipped to deal with such an enormous administrative-social issue.
- To make these programmes successful, there is a need to rope in other organizations committed to give something back to the society.

Non-Governmental Organizations:

NGOs are increasingly playing an important role in the development of rural non-farm sector.

- Self Help Group (SHG) movement, initiated in 1980s, has been a movement of empowerment. Many of these SHGs are also in the non-farm sector. NGOs play an important role in nurturing different SHGs in India.
- NGOs can provide training in soft skills with the help of digital tools to rural population, which would help them in accessing quality inputs and crop advisory for many of the non-farm activities.
- The **National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR)** and Syngenta Foundation India (SFI) are working on **Agri-Entrepreneurship (AE) model**, which includes certain non-farm activities, to address the problem of unemployment among rural youth.
- NGOs and private sectors can provide demand driven skill training.
- NGOs and private organizations are expected to join hands to help government in its mission. NGOs can help create direct link with the Government for marketing of goods produced by rural youth.
- NGOs can also help in **establishing cooperative societies** so that the economic activities which require larger resources, can be pooled together. The cooperative societies would also be helpful in managing forward and backward linkages with the banks, financial institutions and the consumer markets.

CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)

- Private organizations owe to the people their social and economic successes. The profit making business houses have been mandated to spend 2 percent of their net profit to the charity areas. Such initiatives can also promote the non-farm sector.

Private sector

- Private sector companies with trained social workers possess requisite skill to assess the problems of the rural people and to quickly plan suitable interventions.
- They can organize community development programmes, empower the community members by providing educational and employment opportunities, can help them improve their work efficiency and assist them with the knowledge of utilizing resources in an optimum way.
- Responding to the need of creating employment opportunities in NFS, the private sector has come forward and they have set up **Kaushal Vikas Kendra** to provide vocational training to semi-literate youth from poor economic and social background in a variety of trades, which are in great demand in the industry.

Conclusion

- The Non-farm activities have a potential to provide alternate economic resources, especially in those activities which are based on locally available resources.
- However, there is a need to identify institutional set up for development of non-farm sector policy, so that more employment opportunities can be created in the rural areas. It is also necessary to improve rural road transportation.
- The **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana** (PMGSY), aimed at improving connectivity to the unconnected villages, has changed the livelihood pattern of many villages.
- It is important that all stakeholders come together and develop an integrated farm and non-farm sector development plan with a common goal of enhancing the rural household income.
- They can help identify viable non-farm activities with the farm activities already being undertaken in the rural areas.

HANDLOOMS AND HANDICRAFTS: POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS IN NON – FARM SECTOR

- Non – farm sector in the rural context implies the activities are not associated with agriculture and taken up in non- agricultural season.
- Handlooms and handicrafts may be named among such skills or occupations of non- farm sector of rural areas. Passed on from generation to generation as a legacy, these activities took an economic form and went on to become an alternative livelihood for the farmers and rural people in off seasons .

Few Examples of Famous Handicrafts:

- Phanek of Manipur, Kullu Shawls of Himachal Pradesh, Naga Shawls of Nagaland, Kalamkari of Andhra Pradesh, Mysore silk of Karnataka, Bhagalpuri silk of Bihar, Chanderi of Madhya Pradesh, Eri silk of Meghalaya, Kasavu of Kerala
- Bamboo crafts of Assam, Zari and Chikankari works and Gulabi Meenakari of Uttar Pradesh, Mirror work and Puppets of Rajasthan, Phulkari embroidery of Punjab, Bandhej of Gujarat, Coconut shell craft of Kerala, Rosewood inlay of Karnataka, Thanjavur paintings of Tamil Nadu, Madhubani painting and sujni art of Bihar etc.

Importance of Handlooms & handicrafts:

- The weavers and artisans earn directly through production of the artefacts and handloom articles.

- Various sub-segments like production of raw materials, their supply and marketing of finished goods also provide indirect income to them and associated people.
- The fact is proved by the figures of the Annual Report of the Ministry of textiles, Government of India for the year 2017-18. The report says that handloom provides employment to more than **43 lakh weavers and other associated people** directly and indirectly. Out of this figure, approximately **77per cent are women** and allied workers.
- Handloom and handicrafts are important tools of bringing women's empowerment in rural areas.
- These sectors also contribute significantly in the **export domain** and thus become a means of foreign exchange.
- The report further says that export of handicrafts (excluding gems and jewellery) was worth 3494.0 crore rupees in the year 2016-17 and that of handlooms was worth 2392.23 crore rupees in the said year.

Challenges:

- Consumers' changing preferences, challenges from the international market, availability of low-cost alternatives and lack of interest in the younger generation to sustain the traditional craftsmanship are some of the concerns for these enterprises.

Different Initiatives:

- **Office of the Development commissioner – Handloom and office of the Development commissioner –Handicrafts**, Ministry of Textile are nodal agencies of Government of India to implement the schemes, for the growth of handloom and handicrafts sector, respectively.
- **National Handloom Development Programme** is an umbrella Scheme consisting of two major components, i.e., *overall development of the handloom sector and welfare of the handloom weavers*.
- '**Weavers Mudra scheme** ', a concessional credit scheme for the weavers was launched in the year 2015 as one of the major components of this umbrella. Under this scheme, loans are provided at a concessional rate of 6per cent for a period of three years . It also provides margin money assistance up to an amount of Rs.10000/-per weaver and credit guarantee.
- A **common facility centre** is a package with various components for technical and professional assistance in handloom production.
- **Marketing assistance** is also provided directly to weavers or through agencies like **State Handloom corporation** with a view to link the buyers and sellers and thus encourage direct marketing.
- **Bunkar Mitra Helpline** was introduced in the year 2017 as a solution to weavers' professional queries.
- **Deendayal Upadhyaya Hastkala Sankul**, Varanasi is worth mentioning among handloom and handicrafts' promotion related initiatives.
- The '**India Handloom' Brand (IHB)** is an initiative to create market for premium handloom products. Launch of the IHB in the year 2015 marked the **first 'Handloom Day'** on August **07, 2015**.
- Similarly, '**Handloom Mark**' has also been launched to assure quality and genuineness of handloom products to the consumers.
- **Enterprise Resource planning (ERP)** system and **e- Dhaga mobile App** may also be named in the context of use of technology in this traditional domain.

- The Government has also taken some steps to encourage the weavers and their ancestral livelihood. **Sant Kabir Award, National Award and National Merit certificates** are such motivational efforts.
- As a long-term measure, **professional course in handloom technology** have been introduced through six central '**Indian Institutes of Handloom Technology**' (IIHTs) in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Salem (Tamil Nadu), Jodhpur (Rajasthan), Guwahati (Assam), Bargarh (Odisha) and Fulia- Shantipur (West Bengal).
- **Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana** (MGBBY) and **Health Insurance Scheme** (HIS) are significant among Health welfare measures for the weavers.
- Government is also striving for integrating the children of handloom weavers in formal education through **Indira Gandhi National of Open Schooling** (NIOS).
- The Ministry of Textiles provides **75 per cent of the fee** in case of SC, ST, BPL and women weaver families.
- The '**National Handicraft Development programme**' (NHDP) strives for integrated development of handicrafts sector whereas '**Comprehensive Handicrafts Cluster Development Scheme**' (**Mega Cluster scheme**) has three – fold objectives viz. **infrastructure development , technology up gradation and product diversification** at certain unorganized handicraft cluster.
- Marketing and promotion of the artefacts through events like *Gandhi shilp Bazaar, crafts Bazaar, Suraj Kund, Bharat Parv* etc. have been useful
- Affordable **Mudra loan** is another step envisaging handicrafts sector as a flourishing and independent cottage industry.
- **Integrated Development and promotion of Handicrafts projects**' have been sanctioned.
- Some safeguarding and quality assurance measures include 'Handicraft Mark', a trademark certification to assure authenticity of the product and to provide collective identity to the artefacts.
- Launched in the year 2016, '**Pehchan**', aims at facilitating artisans' smooth access to their due benefits.
- **Aam Admi Bima yojana** (AABY) , support in indigent circumstances, **Interest Subvention Scheme** etc. are some of the welfare measures for the artisans . On the pattern of motivational efforts in handloom sector, Government has introduced similar measures in the handicrafts sector as well.

Conclusion

The efforts are diverse, need – based and driven by vision of the Government. The vision is to convert this twin sector as a sustainable venture and as a potential employer contributing towards minimization of poverty and unemployment in rural and semi-urban areas.

FOOD PROCESING FOR NON – FARM SECTOR

- Food processing sector in India plays an important role in linking Indian farmers to consumers in domestic as well as international markets.
- During the last decade, food processing sector in India has grown significantly and moved from a situation of insufficiency to surplus in food production which is expected to be doubled in the next ten years.
- For this reason, there is a prospect for huge investments in food and food processing activities.
- Currently, India stands **second in terms of global food production** and has good status in producing numerous food products like milk, ginger, banana, guava, mango and papaya.

Food Processing Sector: Current Scenario

- Major areas holding possibility for value-added processing are packaging, canning, frozen food, dairy, food processing and thermo-processing industries.
- The food processing sector in India accounts for almost **one – third of the total food market** in India. The food processing sector is valued at 258 billion US dollars (USD), and **it is the fifth largest sector domestically** in terms of production, export and expected growth in the country.
- It contributes to around **14 per cent of manufacturing GDP** and **13 per cent of India 's total food exports**.
- The sector engages approximately 1.77.million people. Major industries constituting the food processing sector are grains, sugar, edible oils, beverages and dairy products.
- As per Department of Industrial policy and promotion (DIPP), the food processing sector in India has received around 7.54 billion USD worth of FDI during the period April 2000-march 2017.
- Further, Indian government aims to boost growth in the food processing sector by leveraging reforms such as **100 percent FDI in marketing of food products**.

Food Processing for Livelihood Sustainability

- Food processing is an activity that changes the raw food stuff into a suitable form for marketing purpose. It is the major source of employment and income for rural areas and holds the key to reduction of waste in the fragile supply chain avoids food wastage and also helps in attaining food security
- Food processing sector primarily engages a major share of workers from the agriculture sector, who face disguised unemployment.
- Processed food occupies less space for storage and can be exported for foreign exchange. Growth in food processing sector will help in creating new employment opportunities, enhance agricultural yields, improve productivity and enhance the quality of standard of living of the people across the country, especially of rural people.

Well-developed Food Processing Sector: Need of the Hour

- A well-developed food processing sector further helps in crop diversification, commercialization of agriculture reduction of wastage, role in enhancing shelf life, improves value addition, ensures better return to the farmers, promotes employment as well as creates markets for exports of agro foods. In the process, the farmers will be able to raise their own level of income and employment.
- The broader idea behind the food processing activities is to bring together farmers, processors and retailers and link agricultural production to the market so as to guarantee maximization of value addition, minimization of wastages and improving enhancing farmer's income.
- Another important factor for the rising habits of processed food is the change in the food habits of the working class who prefer readily available convenient foods.

Government Initiatives for food Processing Sector

- The Government of India through the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries** has also taken steps to boost investments in this sector through **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samapada Yojana (PMKSY)**.
- Major activities covered under the Yojana are establishment of mega food parks, integrated cold chains and value addition infrastructure, expansion of food processing & preservation capacities, infrastructure for agro-processing, creation of backward and forward Linkages, food safety and quality assurance infrastructure, generation of human resources and Institutions.

- Till now, the government has sanctioned **42 mega food parks** to be set up in the country under the **Mega Food Parks Scheme**.
- Government has identified food processing sector as one of the **priority sector under Make in India campaign**.

Future in Rural India

- Food and beverages companies are persistently exploring better ways to augment their sales and market share by the means of adding new products in markets as by modernizing more professional promotional campaigns.
- It can be said that India has an advantage of huge agriculture land and this can help potentially to become an ideal sourcing destination for food products internationally.

Challenges and Way Forward

- The key challenges identified overall for the food processing sector in India are capital intensive functions, poor supply chain linkages, infrastructure bottlenecks, lack of skilled manpower and low competition.
- These challenges can be minimized by making **awareness programmes** related to food processing to rural farmers who are primarily engaged in agricultural activities, which in turn will help them to improve their livelihood mechanism and hence economic status.
- Therefore, there is a need to **frame such policies**, which would focus on the involvement of rural farmers in this sector as they play an important role in management of Indian food ecosystem.

SWACHH BHARAT MISSION (GRAMIN): TRANSLATING MISSION INTO MILESTONE

- Swachh Bharat Mission was launched on October 2, 2014 on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti to achieve "**Clean India**" by 2019.
- It has got a Nation-wide acceptance and has mobilized masses and public-private sector corporations alike. The Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin has become a **people's movement**, through which a sense of responsibility among the people towards Clean India was evoked.
- The mission is a **community-led movement** focused on **building toilets and educating people** about the importance of sanitation and cleanliness.

Swachh Bharat Mission- Gramin

- Sanitation is not only about building toilets but also includes **safe management and appropriate disposal of waste**. The concept includes a planned approach towards **dealing behavior issues, providing proper infrastructure** and coming up with **appropriate policies and delivery of services** which helps in safe sanitation.
- The rural sanitation had been a concern ever since the **first rural sanitation program** was introduced in 1954 as **part of the First Five Year Plan**. But the growth had been slow.
- Finally, the government recognized that the sanitation problem is not limited to inadequate infrastructure, but is seeped deep in minds and behavior.
- Thus to attain better sanitation, Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G) was launched focusing on **'transforming and changing behaviors in rural India.'**
- The SBM-G is administered by the **Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS)**.

Overview of Rural Sanitation- Achievement (2014-19)

- According to the recent data, except Odisha, Goa, Telangana and West Bengal, all the other states had been covered 100 percent by individual Household Latrines.
- **99.86 percent people** now have toilet facility in their premises. In addition, 5,50,295 villages, 2,46,146 Gram Panchayats, 602 districts and 28 states are declared as ODF.
- Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin plays a crucial role in improving the situation of sanitation and is making a significant impact on public health.

Funding SBM-G

- The funding for SBM-G is provided by Central and State Government and **Swachh Bharat Kosh** while some funding comes through multilateral agencies.
- The Swachh Bharat Kosh has been established to collect and mobilize funds from non-governmental agencies and corporate sectors.

Social and Economic Impact of SBM-G

- According to a study conducted in 2017 by **UNICEF**, average household in ODF villages, accrued of Rs. 50,000 per year; there was a probable increase of Rs. 19,000. In other words, the **total benefit bagged by household exceeded the cost by 4.7 times**.
- It is hard to measure the intangible benefits of SBM-G campaign but the **impact on the dignity of both nation and individual is remarkable**.
- It strengthens the safety of women girls and children and increases their workforce participation because of better health and hygiene.
- Due to decline in open defecation, the overall health situation improved resulting in great substantial reduction in the medical expenses and a drop in mortality.
- According to WHO, attainment of 100 percent toilet coverage would prevent 3 lakh deaths due to various waterborne diseases.
- The biggest achievement of the mission has become '**making sanitation everyone's business**'.

Sustainable Concerns and Future Strategy

- Just building a toilet is not enough; it also needs to be maintained. There should be water availability and proper knowledge about waste disposal in order to maintain the toilets.
- **Sanitation campaigns** need to be organized regularly in order to educate the people the hygienic use of toilets and economic use of water.
- People look forward for good quality latrine suiting to their requirement. So, to promote defecation free environment **government should make the provision for interest free loan** to these beneficiaries.
- Recognizing efforts through **appreciation and awards to various** social workers, villages, Gram Panchayats, Blocks and districts could build long term investment towards promoting sanitation awareness.
- **Communicating for changes in behaviours** of public is a key to education and behavioral changes.
- **Emphasizing the role of rural youth** and social workers and motivating them is pivotal in continuing the urge for rural sanitation awareness.

Conclusion

- A better and healthier tomorrow is not only the government responsibility but also a collective duty to be equally shared between the citizens and government.

- The outcome and achievement of sanitation initiatives should not be assessed only in terms of number of toilets constructed but should ensure that there is proper and regular use of it and thus, leading to cleanliness and hygiene in the mind.