Syllabus subtopic: Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

Prelims and Mains focus: about the mission and its significance; about technical textiles and their applications

News: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the establishment of a National Technical Textiles Mission to help India position itself as a “global leader” in technical textiles. This includes increasing exports of these “futuristic” segments of textiles by over 40 per cent in the next two years.

What are technical textiles?

Technical textiles are products used for functional purposes. They have various applications, ranging from agriculture, roads, railway tracks, sportswear and health on the one end, to bullet-proof and fire-proof jackets, high-altitude combat gear and space applications on the other end of spectrum.

Present scenario

- India’s technical textiles segment is estimated at $16 billion — approximately 6 per cent of the global market for this segment.

- The penetration-level of technical textiles is low in India, varying between 5-10 per cent as opposed to a level of 30-70 per cent in developed countries.

About National Technical Textiles Mission

- The Cabinet has approved a total outlay of Rs 1,480 crore for the project, which will be implemented over four years and aims to promote research, export and skill development in this sector.

- The Mission has four components to achieve these goals.

Component-I: Promoting both (i) fundamental research at fibre level and (ii) application based research in geo-textiles, agro-textiles, medical textiles, mobile...
textiles and sports textiles and development of biodegradable technical textiles.

**Component-II:** Promotion and Market Development.

**Component-III:** Export promotion of technical textiles and ensuring 10% average growth in exports per year upto 2023-24. An Export Promotion Council for Technical Textiles will be set up for this purpose.

**Component-IV:** Promoting technical education at higher engineering and technology levels related to technical textiles.

**Aim:** The Mission will aim at an average growth rate of 15-20 per cent per annum, taking the level of the domestic market size to $40-50 billion by the year 2024. The mission aims to do this through market development, market promotion, international technical collaborations, investment promotions and ‘Make in India’ initiatives.

**Other details**

- Around Rs 1,000 crore of the outlay is earmarked for “fundamental” research aimed at “path breaking” technological products in the fibres space, as well as application-based research in segments like agro-textiles, medical textiles and mobile textiles. It will also be used towards the development of biodegradable technical textiles.

- The government aims to enhance exports of technical textiles to Rs 20,000 crore by 2021-22 from approximately Rs 14,000 crore currently.

- The Mission’s export promotion component also aims for a 10 per cent average growth in exports per year up to 2023-24.

- The Mission will also aim at improving education, skill development and adequacy of human resources in the country, which the government feels is currently “not adequate to meet the technologically challenging and fast growing technical textiles segment”. Arrangements have been made for the skill development of 50,000 people in the technical textiles field. The target of the mission is to nullify the burden of this segment on the country’s trade
deficit over the course of one year.

- The Centre will focus on including the usage of technical textiles in “various” flagship missions and programmes of the country, like the Jal Jivan Mission, Swachh Bharat and Ayushman Bharat.

- A directorate in the Ministry of Textiles will be made operational for the implementation of this mission, but will move into a sunset phase after four years.