PM asks Gram Panchayats to use digital platforms for better prices for village produce

Part of: GS-II- Governance and Decentralized governance (PT-MAINS-PERSONALITY TEST)

On National Panchayati Raj Day 24th April, the Prime Minister launched the e-Gramswaraj Portal and Mobile app as a portal to prepare and plan Gram Panchayat Development Plans. He said that the portal will ensure real time monitoring and accountability. The portal is a major step towards digitization down to the Gram Panchayat level.

The Swamitva scheme was also launched in pilot mode in 6 states to map rural inhabited lands using drones and latest survey methods. The Prime Minister said that the scheme will ensure streamlined planning, revenue collection and provide clarity over property rights in rural areas. This will open up avenues for applying for loans from financial institutions by the owners. Disputes related to property would also be settled through the title deeds allotted through this scheme.

The interaction was an opportunity to establish direct dialogue between the Prime Minister and the Gram Panchayat representatives. The PM said that the progress of Panchayats will ensure the development of the nation and democracy.

The Prime Minister also interacted with Panchayat representatives from across the country. Speaking to a Panchayat representative from Maharashtra he urged the use digital platforms such as e-NAM and GEM portal to reach out to larger markets for better prices for village produce.

He remembered Mahatma Gandhi’s conception of Swaraj as being based on Gram Swaraj. Quoting the Shastras, he reminded the people that the source of all strength is unity.

**e-NAM**

- It was launched on 14th April 2016 as a pan-India electronic trade portal linking Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) across the States.
- It provides for contactless remote bidding and mobile-based anytime payment for which traders do not need to either visit mandis or banks for the same.
- Already 585 mandis in 16 States and 2 Union Territories have been integrated on e-NAM portal and will be soon expanded to cover additional 415 mandis, which will take the total number of e-NAM mandis to 1,000.

**Negotiable Warehouse Receipt System**

- It was launched in 2011 but the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.
- Farmers can seek loans from banks against the warehouse receipts issued to them against their storage.
- These receipts issued by the warehouses registered with the WDRA would become a
fully negotiable instrument backed by a Central legislation. 
- The **Electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipt (e-NWR) System** was launched in 2017.

**Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority**

- It was constituted on 26th October 2010 under the **Warehousing (Development and Regulation) Act, 2007**.
- It is a **statutory authority** under the Department of Food and Public Distribution, Government of India.
- It is headquartered in **New Delhi**.
- The Act provides for the establishment of the WDRA to exercise the powers conferred on it and to perform the functions assigned to it under the Act, Rules and Regulations for the development and regulation of warehouses, negotiability of warehouse receipts and promote orderly growth of the warehousing business in the country.

**Government e-Marketplace (GeM)**

- GeM is a one-stop **National Public Procurement Portal** to facilitate online procurement of common use **Goods & Services** required by various Central and **State** Government Departments / Organizations /Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- It was launched in **2016** to bring transparency and efficiency in the government buying process.
- It operates under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
- The procurement of goods and services by Ministries and the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) is **mandatory** for goods and services available on GeM.
- It also provides the tools of **e-bidding** and **reverse e-auction** to facilitate the government users achieve the best value for their money.
- At present, GeM has more than 15 lakh products, around 20,000 services, and more than 40,000 Government buyer organizations.