EChO Network launched

**Syllabus subtopic:** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

**Context:** EChO Network, a national program to provide a template for cross-disciplinary leadership in India with the specific focus of increasing research, knowledge, and awareness of Indian ecology and the environment was launched yesterday in New Delhi by Prof. K Vijay Raghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India.

**Why was it needed?**

- India has recently embarked on a number of national-level efforts to promote ecological and environmental research on the subcontinent; however, there remains a lacuna of trained scientists with interdisciplinary skills and collaborative mindset.

- There is a need to train a new generation of educators and students who can identify and solve problems in an interdisciplinary manner and who can listen to our natural world and tackle real-world problems in medicine, agriculture, ecology, and technology. Hence, this network will inspire an entirely new approach to Indian education and exploration necessary for the post-technological world.

- India faces unprecedented threats to its human environmental and ecosystems, solving which requires a confluence of India’s strong technological expertise and knowledge of the natural world itself.

**How will it work?**
• Through interactive sessions with citizens, industry, academia, and the government, the Network will **identify gaps in knowledge** regarding **selected topics in human and environmental ecosystems**.
• The program will then train postdoctoral leaders in research and outreach on these topics, while also incorporating current public and private efforts into a national network.
• It would then go on to establishing nation-wide awareness in these issues through public discourse and education for citizens, industry, and government with information exchange at all educational levels.
• Over time EChO Network intends to create an international distributed institute comprising individuals housed within industry, government, private, and academic sectors, combining their expertise and resources collectively to tackle large scale problems.

**Significance of EChO**

EChO Network would develop a national network to catalyse a new generation of Indians who can **synthesize interdisciplinary concepts** and **tackle real-world problems** in **medicine, agriculture, ecology**, and **technology**. With no precedent for such a network anywhere in the world, EChO Network establishes a **new platform to change how science is embedded in our modern society**.