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**DAILY EDITORIAL
ANALYSIS**

TOPIC

**Poultry Industry Needs
Urgent Reforms**

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POULTRY INDUSTRY NEEDS URGENT REFORMS

Context

- The current outbreaks of avian influenza have caused devastation in animal populations, including poultry.

Do you know?

- The term "Poultry" indicates all domesticated species of birds like chicken, duck, emu, geese, guinea fowl, ostrich, pigeon, quail and turkey reared for producing **eggs and meat** to be used by consumers and this will ultimately lead to income generation too.

About the Sector

- India has a vast resource of livestock and poultry, which plays a vital role in improving the **socio-economic conditions of rural masses**.
- India is the **largest producer of Milk and Buffalo Meat, the 2nd largest producer of Goat meat** and the **8th largest in overall Meat Production** in the world.
- Poultry is one of the fastest-growing segments of the agricultural sector in India today.
- The total egg production in the country is 138.38 billion numbers during 2022-23.
 - ♦ India ranks 3rd in the world in terms of total Egg production (Source: FAO).
 - ♦ **Areas of Production** :Top 5 egg producing States are Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, West Bengal and Karnataka

Importance

- In India, Poultry contributes a major share in terms of **protein supplementation** from **eggs and meat in human diets**.
 - ♦ It has played a crucial role in meeting protein and nutritional needs.
- Poultry can play a very important role in the diversification of agriculture, particularly in view of the fact that with ever increasing population, there is tremendous pressure on land.
 - ♦ Poultry can help to harness triple benefits i.e. additional employment income with least investment in backyard production,
 - ♦ It can revert the trends of migration of rural youth.
- Over the past two decades, it has evolved into a mega-industry, positioning India as a major global producer of eggs and broiler meat.
 - ♦ The production of crops has been rising at a rate of **1.5 to 2 percent per annum**, that of **eggs and broilers** has been rising at a rate of 8 to 10 percent per annum.

Concerns

- **Animals are heavily stocked in unsanitary conditions**.
 - ♦ This has a detrimental effect on the **welfare of animals** and the health of those who consume the food derived.
 - ♦ The faecal matter generated at these facilities is collected periodically by local farmers for use as fertilizer.
 - The amount of piled-up manure exceeds the carrying capacity of the land and becomes a **pollutant**.
 - ♦ Almost all cases of human infection with avian influenza A (H5N1) have been linked to close contact with infected birds, or contaminated environments.
- Due to contract farming, **large debts and a very specialised skill set**, poultry farmers often find it difficult to exit the industry, despite the losses.
 - ♦ However, the myriad problems faced by these farmers often push them out of business.
- The **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)** has classified poultry units with more than 5,000 birds as a **polluting industry** that requires compliance and regulatory consent to establish and operate.

- The **farmers suffer due to market volatility** and the **prevalent practices pushed by industry giants**.
 - ♦ India's decision to reduce import duties on frozen turkey and duck from the US has raised concerns among domestic poultry producers, who fear that the move could lead to the collapse of the sector

Related initiatives

- Under **National Livestock Mission**, for development of Entrepreneurs in Rural Poultry, the central Government is providing **50% subsidy** upto Rs 25.00 Lakh to establish Parent Farm, Rural Hatchery, brooder cum mother unit for Production of Hatching Eggs .
- Keeping animals in intensive confinement constitutes a crime under the provisions of the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960**.
- The **269th Law Commission of India Report** in 2017 placed on record a representation by the Tata Memorial Centre that contained evidence that non-therapeutic antibiotics given to poultry cause antibiotic resistance since living conditions are unhygienic.
 - ♦ It further said that with more open, cleaner, and ventilated living spaces, animals are less likely to need constant antibiotics, making their eggs and meat safe for consumption.

Conclusion and Way Forward

- Poultry is one of the fastest-growing segments of the agricultural sector in India today.
- There is a need for **strengthening the Indian poultry sector, improving the ease of doing business**, addressing challenges in poultry product exports, and strategizing the integration of units in the informal sector and further cementing poultry sectors position on the world stage.
- There is a need to formulate robust strategies for the sustainable growth of the Indian Poultry sector.
- More R&D needed to bring advancements in all sectors
- **Strict oversight for compliance** and enforcement of environmental regulations is the need of the hour, given the CPCB's reclassification of the **poultry industry as a highly polluting 'orange category' industry**.
 - ♦ In light of the bird flu public health crisis and the climate emergency, it is crucial for the situation to be addressed.
- **India's environmental laws and regulations** must reflect what the public health crisis is showing us: that animal welfare is closely interlinked with public health, ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation — the One Health principle.

Mains Practice Question

[Q] The Indian poultry industry has the inherent potential to become the world- leader. In light of the above statement, discuss the Challenges and Opportunities in India's Poultry Sector .

