

1. Telangana has witnessed a surge in rice production in recent years. Analyze the contributing factors and highlight the key challenges associated with this growth.

Introduction

Over the past decade, Telangana has emerged as a significant rice-producing state. The area under cultivation has increased from **1.31 crore acres** to **2.20 crore acres**, and **paddy production** has risen from **68 lakh metric tonnes** to **2.7 crore metric tonnes**. The state now contributes to **over 60% of the Food Corporation of India's (FCI) paddy procurement**, transforming it into a modern-day rice bowl of India.

Factors Contributing to the Surge in Rice Production

1. Free Electricity Supply

- ✓ Continuous and **uninterrupted power supply** has enabled farmers to pump groundwater and expand rice cultivation.

2. Rythu Bandhu Scheme

- ✓ Investment support of **₹10,000 per acre per year** has eased capital constraints, helping farmers purchase inputs like seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides.

3. Irrigation Infrastructure Expansion

- ✓ Post-state formation, projects like **Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation**, **Mission Kakatiya**, and rejuvenated tank systems have significantly increased **irrigated acreage**.

4. Government Procurement at MSP

- ✓ State-supported **Minimum Support Price (MSP)** procurement has incentivized paddy cultivation.
- ✓ For instance, **37.59 lakh metric tonnes** of paddy were procured in a single recent season.

5. Loan Waivers and Subsidies

- ✓ Periodic **farm loan waivers** have improved farmers' liquidity, while **input subsidies** reduce production costs.

Challenges Arising from Excessive Focus on Rice

1. Monoculture Dominance

- ✓ **Over 44 lakh acres** under paddy have led to **neglect of other crops** such as millets, pulses, and oilseeds.
- ✓ Hampers food diversity and agricultural resilience.

2. Environmental Concerns

- ✓ **High methane emissions** from flooded paddy fields contribute to greenhouse gases.
- ✓ **Overuse of water and fertilizers** leads to soil degradation and groundwater depletion.

3. Lack of Crop Diversification

- ✓ Districts like **Suryapet and Karimnagar** have the **lowest crop diversification index**, leading to regional imbal
- ✓ Neglect of vegetables and oilseeds affects **food inflation** and supply chain stability.

4. Intergovernmental Conflicts

- ✓ Disputes over paddy procurement quotas and WTO compliance create federal tensions between the Centre and State.

Conclusion

While Telangana's rise in rice production showcases the success of pro-farmer policies, it also highlights the **risks of unsustainable crop patterns**. Going forward, promoting **crop diversification**—especially through **incentives for oil palm, millets, and horticulture**—is critical to ensuring long-term **food security, environmental sustainability, and agricultural resilience**.

2. Provide an overview of the traditional handicrafts industry in Telangana. What are the key issues hindering its sustainability and global competitiveness?

Introduction

Telangana has a rich legacy of traditional handicrafts that reflect its cultural depth and artisanal excellence. These crafts are not only a source of **livelihood for rural and tribal communities**, but also act as **living repositories of heritage and creativity**. Spread across various districts, these crafts have earned national and international recognition.

Overview of Major Handicrafts in Telangana

1. Wood Carvings

- Known for intricate designs and traditional motifs.
- **Nirmal wooden furniture** and **Nizamabad panels** are popular examples

2. Traditional Paintings

- Include **Cheriyal scroll paintings**, **Nirmal paintings**, and **Batik art**.
- Rich in storytelling and folk themes, these are integral to Telangana's visual culture.

3. Metal Crafts

- Include **Bidriware**, **Pembarthi brassware**, **Dokra casting**, and **Karimnagar silver filigree**.
- These crafts require skilled labor and are often passed down through generations.

4. Textile and Fabric Arts

- Telangana is known for **Pochampally Ikat**, **Gadwal saris**, **Narayanpet handlooms**, and **Siddipet Gollababa weaves**.
- Cotton durries and handwoven garments symbolize a blend of utility and artistry.

5. Toys and Jewellery

- **Nirmal toys**, pearl jewellery, and **lac bangles** represent vibrant folk art traditions.

Key Issues Hindering Sustainability and Global Competitiveness

1. Lack of Access to Credit and Capital

- ✓ Artisans face difficulty accessing **institutional finance** to expand or modernize production.

2. Erosion of Skilled Manpower

- ✓ Young generations are moving away from crafts due to **lack of economic viability**.
- ✓ Example: Only two **Bidri artisans remain** in Hyderabad today.

3. Raw Material Shortages

- ✓ Rising **cost of inputs** and **GST imposition** on essential materials affect production costs.

4. Weak Marketing and Branding Capabilities

- ✓ Limited knowledge of **digital marketing** and **e-commerce** impedes wider market access.
- ✓ Crafts often suffer from **poor visibility** and **weak brand identity**.

5. Competition from Industrial Goods

- ✓ Cheap **plastic**, **synthetic fabrics**, and mass-manufactured alternatives undercut traditional goods.

6. Vulnerability to Market Shocks

- ✓ Events like **COVID-19** severely affected sales and disrupted artisan livelihoods.

7. Inadequate Infrastructure and Policy Support

- ✓ Lack of **artisan clusters**, **design labs**, and **export facilitation centers** weakens competitiveness.

Conclusion

To ensure sustainability and global recognition, Telangana's handicrafts sector must be supported through **financial access**, **infrastructure**, **digital skill training**, and **strong branding initiatives**. Government efforts like **Nethannaku Cheyutha**, **Textile Park in Warangal**, and **GI tagging** are steps in the right direction, but long-term revival demands a **comprehensive ecosystem** that protects artisans while aligning with modern market demands.