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Rural Development Ministry Conducts Survey under Mission Antyodaya

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The Rural Development Ministry has done a gap analysis of more than 3.5 lakh villages, in more than 1.6 lakh panchayats under the Mission Antyodaya convergence scheme.

- Gap analysis involves the comparison of actual performance with potential or desired performance.
- **Kuligod in Karnataka's Belagavi district** is the country's best developed village, but more than a third of the gram panchayats ranked in the top 10 are in Andhra Pradesh.
- In October 2017, an initial baseline survey was carried out in 50,000 gram panchayats, in 2018, the exercise is expected to cover all of the country's 2.5 lakh panchayats by the end of November. The rankings will be updated as more panchayats are included.

Survey Analysis

- A team of officials surveyed and scored village level facilities and amenities using parameters related to infrastructure, economic development and livelihood, irrigation facilities, health, nutrition and sanitation, women's empowerment, and financial inclusion.
- About a quarter of all villages have more than 75% of households using clean energy, such as LPG or biogas which should be further increased in alignment with the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana.
- More than 73% of the villages are connected with an all-weather road which needs to be speeded up as Government has brought forward the target date by three years from 2022 to 2019 to achieve complete rural connectivity through all-weather roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.
- The survey indicates moderate progress in the rural housing scheme as less than 10% of the villages have more than 80% of their houses with kachha walls and roofs, indicating temporary structures.

- Financial inclusion which is the most vital link for village empowerment still has long way to go, with less than 15% of villages having banks, while just more than 10% have ATMs.
- At the national level, the data shows progress in some areas and also spotlights discrepancies in respect of targets met under some other government schemes.
- For example, the survey reveals that more than 95% of villages have electricity available for domestic use, while the government had earlier this year claimed that 100% of villages had power connections.
- Similarly with regard to sanitation, the survey shows only 58% of villages, slightly more than 2 lakh of the 3.5 lakh surveyed villages are open defecation free (ODF). However, according to the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan-Gramin, about 5 lakh out of India's 6 lakh villages are already ODF.

The survey result is significant for the outcomes achieved from various schemes but since it shows the gap between the claimed achievements and outcomes, it should be taken up seriously by the Government to remove the discrepancies in the targets met.

Mission Antyodaya

Mission Antyodaya is a mission mode project envisaged by the Ministry of Rural Development. It is a convergence framework for measurable effective outcomes on parameters that transform lives and livelihoods.

Significance of Mission Antyodaya

- In India, 8.88 crore households are found to be deprived and poor households as per Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC) of 2011 from the perspective of multi-dimensional deprivations such as shelterlessness, landlessness, households headed by single women, SC/ST household or disabled member in the family.
- These households require targeted interventions under government's various schemes and programmes in areas such as wage creation, skill generation, social security, education, health, nutrition and livelihood creation. In this context, 'Mission Antyodaya' seeks to converge government interventions with Gram Panchayats as the basic unit for planning by pooling resources - human and financial - to ensure sustainable livelihoods.
- It facilitates identification of gaps in a quest for poverty free gram panchayats and drive economic activities.
- Since this scheme is expected to encompass schemes from ministries of health, education, employment and social security (insurance schemes under financial services), the recipient can access varied benefits under one umbrella.
- The transmission due to such a convergence is likely to be high and could also enable extensive coverage. This can go a long way in helping the government achieve its aim of reaching the poorest of the poor and the disenfranchised.

- The convergence of multiple schemes under a single scheme could enable the government to migrate all these to the digital Aadhar-enabled platform thereby contributing further to the Digital India mission aims.