



Water Hyacinth

Why in News?

Recently, West Bengal has made an outstanding example by utilising Water Hyacinth, an obnoxious aquatic weed plant to develop small-scale cottage industry that is both financially rewarding as well as environmentally friendly in approach. [//](#)



What are the Key Facts about Water Hyacinth?

- **About:**
 - **Water hyacinth**, scientifically known as ***Eichhornia crassipes Mart. (Pontederiaceae)***, is an **aquatic weed common in waterbodies across South Asia, including India**.
 - This is **not an indigenous species** but was **introduced to India during the British colonial rule** as an **ornamental aquatic plant from South America**.
 - The plant **produces beautiful purple flowers** that have **high aesthetic value**.
- **Issues:**
 - This simple, floating aquatic plant, unfortunately, is also an **obnoxious weed** that has been **suffocating surface freshwater sources** like rivers, rivulets, streams, ponds, dams, lakes and bogs, **making the waterbodies unsuitable for commercial fishery, transportation and recreation**.
 - The plant is a **prolific vegetable matter-producer** and has the ability to choke out any closed waterbody at an astonishing rate.
 - A plant that is **prolific produces a large number of young plants, or fruit**.
 - This **cuts off sunlight** as well as **reduces oxygen level in the water**, making it unfit for commercial use.
 - It is an **expensive and labour-intensive process to remove this weed from time to time**.
 - This water hyacinth has **become a serious problem plant for the ecosystem**.
- **Significance:**
 - The plant has been **used as a [bio-fertiliser](#) in some organic agriculture practises**.
 - This plant is a **good phytoremediation species**, suggesting it has the **ability to trap**

and remove toxic metabolites and harmful heavy metals from water.

[Source: DTE](#)

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