



## World Bee Day

**For Prelims:** [World Bee Day](#), [United Nations General Assembly](#), [National Bee Board](#), [Western Ghats](#), [Indian black honeybee](#), Sweet Revolution

**For Mains:** Significance of Bees, Threats and Challenges Related to Bees, Status of Beekeeping in India, Sweet Revolution.

### Why in News?

The **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW)**, recently celebrated **World Bee Day** on **May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023** at Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh.

- The event aimed to **promote and popularise beekeeping nationwide** through the [National Beekeeping & Honey Mission \(NBHM\)](#) under the Atma-Nirbhar Bharat initiative.
- The Theme of 2023 is **“Bee engaged in pollinator-friendly agricultural production”**.

### What is World Bee Day and Why is it Important?

- **About:**
  - **World Bee Day** is an annual event that is celebrated on **May 20<sup>th</sup>** to raise awareness about the importance of bees and other [pollinators](#) for the environment, food security and biodiversity.
  - The date was chosen to **commemorate the birthday of Anton Janša**, a pioneer of modern beekeeping from Slovenia.
  - The [United Nations General Assembly](#) declared **World Bee Day** in 2017, following a proposal by Slovenia and the support of **115 countries**.

**Note:** Pollinators are agents that assist in the process of pollination. Pollination is the **transfer of pollen grains from the male reproductive organs (anthers) of a flower to the female reproductive organs (stigma) of the same or a different flower**, leading to fertilization and the production of seeds.

- **Significance of Bees:**
  - **Pollination:**
    - Bees are vital for the **survival of many plants and animals**, as they pollinate about **one-third of the world’s crops and 90% of the wild flowering plants**.
    - They also produce **honey, wax, propolis and other valuable products** that have nutritional, medicinal and economic benefits.
  - **Tackling with Climate Change:**
    - Bees **help plants to grow faster and healthier**, which increases their carbon uptake and storage. Bees also reduce the **need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides, which emit harmful gases into the atmosphere**.

- They are also **indicators of the health of ecosystems**, as they respond to changes in the environment such as **climate change, pollution, habitat loss and [pesticides](#)**.
- **Enhancing Crop Productivity:**
  - They help in **enhancing crop productivity and quality** by providing pollination services to various crops such as fruits, vegetables, oilseeds, pulses etc.
  - It is estimated that **bee pollination can increase crop yields by 20-30% on average**.
- **Generating Employment Opportunity:**
  - Generating **income and employment opportunities for rural households by producing honey and other bee products** such as wax, propolis etc.
    - Honey is a high-value product that has a huge demand in domestic and international markets. It is also a source of **nutrition and health for consumers**.
  - It can also help in **empowering women and youth** by involving them in beekeeping activities as **entrepreneurs or [self-help groups](#)**.
- **Threats and Challenges:**
  - **Loss and fragmentation of natural habitats** due to urbanization, agriculture and deforestation
  - **Intensive and monoculture farming practices** that reduce floral diversity and expose bees to pesticides and herbicides
  - **Diseases, pests and invasive species** that affect bee health and productivity
  - **Climate change that alters the flowering seasons**, distribution and availability of plants.
  - **Lack of awareness, knowledge and support for beekeeping** among farmers and consumers

## What is the Status of Beekeeping in India?

- **Production Statistics:**
  - India is **one of the largest producers and consumers of honey in the world**, with an estimated annual production of **1.2 lakh metric tonnes**. India has a rich tradition and culture of beekeeping, dating back to ancient times.
  - At present, about **12,699 Beekeepers and 19.34 lakhs honey bees colonies** are registered with the [National Bee Board](#) and India is producing about 1,33,200 Metric tonnes of Honey (**2021-22 estimate**).
  - In **November 2022**, a new species of endemic honeybee named [Indian black honeybee \(Apis karinjodian\)](#) was discovered in the [Western Ghats](#) after a **gap of more than 200 years**.
- **Exports:**
  - India is one of the **major honey exporting countries in the World** and has exported 74,413 MT of Honey during 2021-22.
  - More than **50% of the honey production in India is being exported** to other countries.
  - India exports honey to about **83 countries**. The major markets for Indian honey are the **USA, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bangladesh, Canada, etc.**
- **Honey Producing States:**
  - As per the National Horticulture Board (NHB), **Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Punjab, Bihar, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka** were the **top ten honey-producing states in 2021-22**.

## What is National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM)?

- The NBHM, implemented through the **National Bee Board**, focuses on promoting **scientific beekeeping and entrepreneurship among small and marginal farmers**.
- It encompasses infrastructure development for post-harvest management, support for research and development, and aims to achieve the goal of a **"[Sweet Revolution](#)."**
- The scheme is aligned with the [Atma-Nirbhar Bharat initiative](#) and plays a crucial role in increasing farmer incomes and enhancing agricultural productivity.

# SWEET REVOLUTION



- An ambitious initiative of the Govt for **promoting apiculture**
- Launched in 2016 under **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)** (Ministry of MSME)
- Along its lines, the **Honey Mission** was launched in 2017

## BEEKEEPING IN INDIA (APICULTURE)

### About Beekeeping

- An agro-based activity undertaken by farmers/ landless labourers in rural areas as a part of **Integrated Farming System (IFS)**

### Significance

- **Useful in pollination** of crops
- **Increases income** of the farmers
- **High value beehive products** - honey, beeswax, bee pollen, etc.

### World Bee Day

- 20 May

## NATIONAL BEEKEEPING AND HONEY MISSION (NBHM)

### About

- Central Sector (CS) Scheme
- Announced as a part of **Atmanirbhar Bharat Scheme** (for 2020-21-2022-23)
- Implemented by the **National Bee Board (NBB)** (under MoA&FW)

### Objectives

- Development of scientific beekeeping to **achieve the goal of 'Sweet Revolution'**
- Enhance **agri/ horticulture production**
- Set up **Integrated Beekeeping Development Centre (IBDC)**, Api-therapy centres and Bee disease diagnostic labs
- **Empowerment of women** through beekeeping

## Way Forward

- **Awareness Among Farmers:** There is a need to create **awareness among farmers about the benefits of beekeeping through mass media campaigns, demonstrations, field visits etc.**
  - Also it's time to encourage farmers to adopt beekeeping as an **integral part of their cropping system through incentives, awards etc.**
- **Strengthening the Supply Chain:** There is a need to strengthen the supply chain of inputs such as **bee colonies, hives etc.** through **public-private partnerships, cooperatives etc.** Ensuring quality control of inputs through **standardization and certification mechanisms such as BIS marks etc.** Making inputs affordable to farmers through subsidies or vouchers etc.
- **Developing Market Linkages:** There is a need to develop market linkages for honey or other bee products through platforms such as **e-NAM (National Agriculture Market), APEDA (Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority)** etc.
  - Also, value added products can also be promoted for honey or other bee products through processing units such as **Honey Parks etc.**

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQ)

### Prelims:

Q. Consider the following kinds of organisms: (2012)

1. Bat
2. Bee
3. Bird

Which of the above is/are pollinating agent/agents?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

**Ans: (d)**

**Mains:**

**Q.** Assess the role of National Horticulture Mission (NHM) in boosting the production, productivity and income of horticulture farms. How far has it succeeded in increasing the income of farmers? **(2018)**

**Source: PIB**

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