



# कौटिल्य एकेडमी

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# CURRENT AFFAIR

**10<sup>th</sup> JULY 2023**



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## Permanent Court of Arbitration

- **The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)** has rejected India's objections in the case of Kishanganga and Ratle hydropower projects, saying that the PCA has the right to hear the matter.
- **Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project:** It is a run-of-the-river hydroelectric project. Under this project, the water flow of the Kishanganga river will be diverted to a power plant in the Jhelum River basin.
- **Ratle Hydroelectric Project (Chenab River):** It is a hydroelectric power plant with a capacity of 850 MW under construction by India.
- India has opposed the intervention of the PCA in the above dispute. India has said that the PCA's intervention in this matter is in violation of the provisions of the **Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)**.
- India and Pakistan signed the IWT in 1980. It was mediated by the World Bank.
- Under the IWT, India has been granted full control over the use of the waters of the three eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) of the Indus River system.

- ➔ Pakistan has been given the right to use the waters of three western rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab).
- ➔ **In case of future disputes, a three-stage dispute resolution mechanism has been provided under the IWT:**
  - **Step 1 (Formation of Permanent Indus Commission):** Having at least one meeting every year for dispute resolution is mandatory.
  - **Step 2 (Appointment of neutral expert):** These may be appointed to deal with unresolved differences in water sharing.
  - **Stage 3 (Court of Arbitration):** This is a seven-member arbitration tribunal constituted to settle disputes.
- ➔ **Permanent Court of Arbitration**
  - The establishment was done in the year 1899. Its headquarter is located in The Hague, Netherlands.
  - Purpose: It is an intergovernmental organization dedicated to arbitration and dispute resolution between states.
  - Its organizational structure is divided into three parts:

1. **Administrative Council** – It is dedicated to overseeing its own policies and budget.
2. **Court Members** – This is a panel of independent potential arbitrators.
3. **International Bureau** – This is the secretariat of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, which is headed by the Secretary-General.



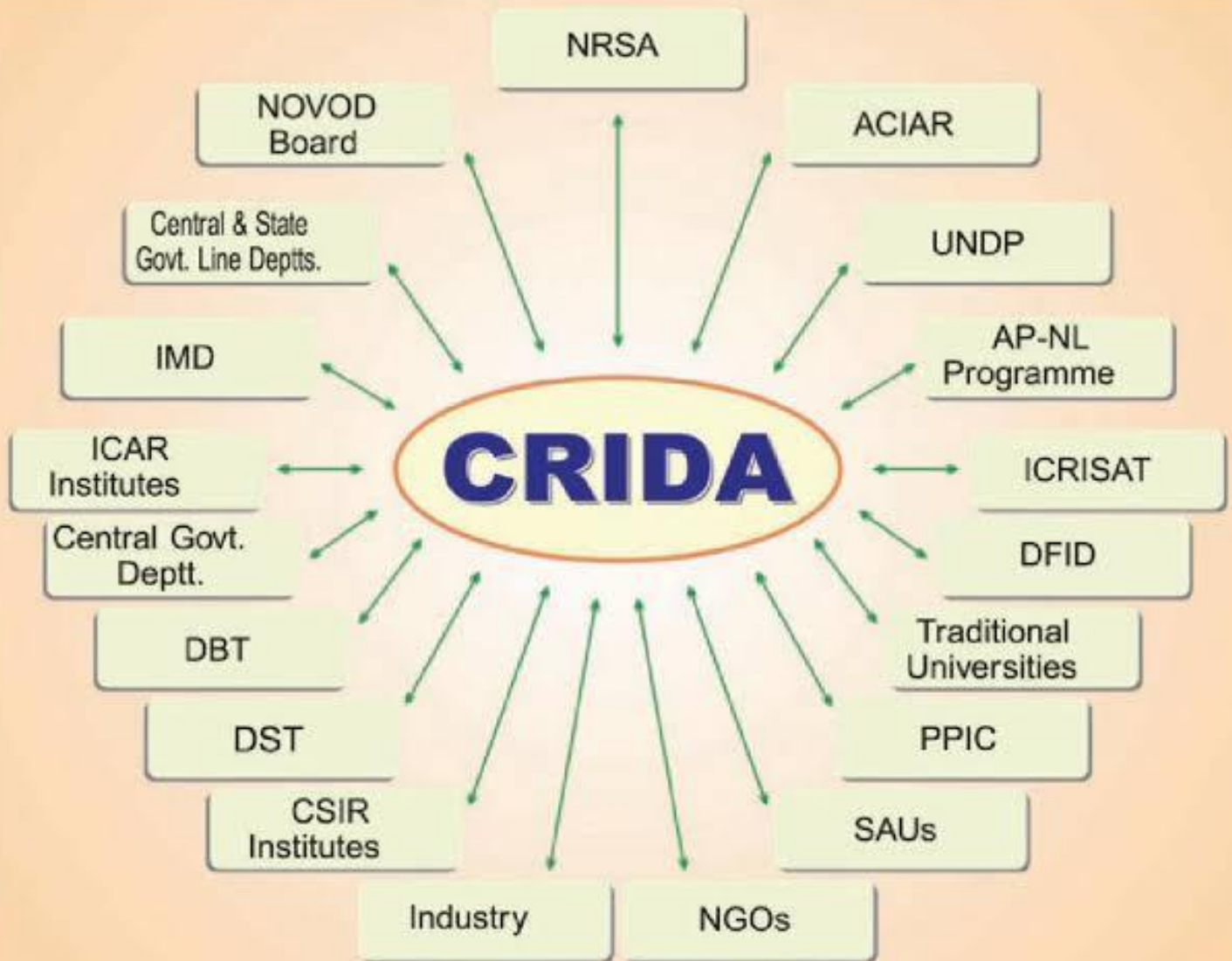


## Farmer Distress Index

- The **Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA)** in India has developed a unique early warning system known as the **"Farmer Distress Index"**.
- The index attempts to predict agrarian distress and prevent any distress propagation from the grassroots level to the **village** or **block level**.
- With the help of this, various institutions like Central Government, State Governments, Local bodies and non-governmental agencies will get an early warning about the impending distress of farmers so that proactive intervention and necessary steps can be taken.
- The methodology of the index involves monitoring local newspapers, news platforms and social media for reports of distress. This is followed by telephonic interviews with small and marginal farmers to assess early signs of distress using standardized questions.
- The index allows for targeted interventions, such as focusing on improving women's income if the crisis is gender-based.

- ➔ Based on the data collected and responses, the index will assign a value between 0 and 1 to indicate the level of distress.
  - **0 to 0.5:** low distress
  - **0.5 to 0.7:** Moderate distress
  - **above 0.7:** severe crisis
- ➔ The solutions currently being considered include direct money transfers, mid-term release of claims under the government's crop insurance scheme in case of crop failure, etc.
- ➔ **Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture:**
  - It is an institute of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. It was established in 1985 and is located in Hyderabad.
  - The institute was established with the intention of undertaking agricultural research activities in low-rainfall areas.
  - The mission of the Central Dryland Agricultural Research Institute is to conduct basic and applied research to improve the productivity of natural resources in dryland areas.

- To develop technologies and systems for the long-term conservation and efficient use of the **dryland environment**.



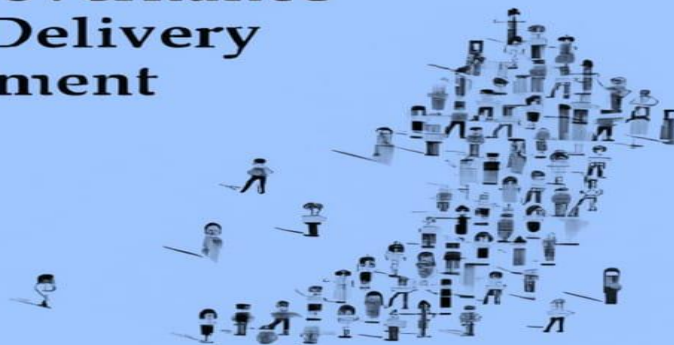
## NeSDA Portal

- ➔ **The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)** has developed the NeSDA framework with the overall objective of ascertaining the depth and effectiveness of existing e-governance service delivery mechanisms from the perspective of citizens.
- ➔ The framework, based on the Online Services Index (OSI) of the United Nations e-Government Survey, has been adapted to the Indian federal structure and the e-governance landscape of the states and union territories.
- ➔ The NeSDA Framework, launched in **August 2018**, was conceptualized with the overall objective of measuring the depth and effectiveness of existing e-governance service delivery mechanisms.
- ➔ The department has successfully released 2 versions of NeSDA Portal, namely **NeSDA Portal 2019** and **NeSDA Portal 2021**.



- ➔ The framework is based on the Online Services Index (OSI) of the United Nations e-Government Survey.
- ➔ This framework includes six sectors, Finance, Labor and Employment, Education, Local Government and Utilities, Social Welfare (including agriculture and health) and Environment (including fire) sectors.
- ➔ The **NeSDA** study assesses states, union territories (UTs) and focuses central ministries on the effectiveness of e-governance service delivery.
- ➔ **NeSDA** helps the respective Governments in improving the delivery of citizen-centric services and shares best practices across the country for emulation by all States, Union Territories and Central Ministries.

## National eGovernance Services Delivery Assessment



## Performance Grading Index-2021-22

- The Ministry of Education released the Performance Grading **Index-2021- 22 on 7 July**, an index for an evidence-based comprehensive analysis of the school education system in India.
- The revised **Performance Grading Index in 2021-22** given the National Education Policy has classified the States/UTs into ten grades.
- The highest attainable grade is proficient, which is for states/UTs scoring more than 940 out of 1000. Subsequent grades are Utkarsh (881-940), Ati Uttam (821-880), Uttam (761- 820), Prachesta 1 (701-760), Prachesta 2 (641-700), Prachesta 3 (581-640), Akanshi 1 (521-580), Akanshi 2 (461-520) and Akanshi 3 (401-460).
- **Punjab** and **Chandigarh**, though toppers in the latest report, have been ranked in the sixth grade (Prachesta - 2), while six states have managed to make it to the seventh grade (Prachesta - 3).
- The three worst-performing states/UTs are Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram.

- In 2019-20, Punjab, Chandigarh, Tamil Nadu, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Kerala topped the index, while Kerala, Maharashtra and Punjab were ranked as the best-performing states in the index during the Covid period (2020-21).
- According to the Ministry of Education, several indicators in the index had become redundant and hence they were clubbed with the new initiative of NEP-2020 to include those related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- PGI 2.0 has 73 indicators related to the educational achievement of States/UTs in six domains.

Grades attained by States/UTs – 2021-22

## Performance Grading Index 2.0



Grade Colour	Grade Name	Grade Score	Number of States/UTs attaining the Grade
	Daksh	941-1000	NIL
	Utkarsh	881-940	NIL
	Atti-Uttam	821-880	NIL
	Uttam	761-820	NIL
	Prachesta -1	701-760	NIL
	Prachesta -2	641-700	2
	Prachesta -3	581-640	6
	Akanshi-1	521-580	13
	Akanshi-2	461-520	12
	Akanshi-3	401-460	3

## Spratly Islands

- ➔ Recently, the **Second Thomas Shoal**, located in the northeastern part of the **Spratly Islands**, has emerged as a disputed area in the **South China Sea**.
- ➔ The recent incident near the Second Thomas Shoal has increased tensions between China and the Philippines.
- ➔ The Philippine Coast Guard accused the China Coast Guard of harassment and dangerous manoeuvres. China, on the other hand, claims that the Philippine Coast Guard intruded into its territorial waters without permission.
- ➔ This ongoing diplomatic standoff underscores the complex nature of territorial disputes in the South China Sea.
- ➔ Second Thomas Shoal is a teardrop-shaped atoll characterized by coral reefs and a surrounding lagoon with a depth of **up to 27 meters (89 ft)**.
- ➔ The shoal is located in an area where China, Brunei, the Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam make territorial claims to parts of the Spratly Islands.



- ➔ China claims sovereignty over almost the entire South China Sea through the depiction of a **"nine-dash line"** on its maps. This line extends to the Exclusive Economic Zones of neighbouring countries.
- ➔ However, in 2016 the Permanent Court of Arbitration declared that China's **"nine-dash line"** claim has no legal basis, challenging China's expansive territorial claims.

