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1 MINISTRY OF AYUSH SIGNED MOU

CONTEXT:

- Ministry of AYUSH (MOA) and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) have signed MoU for collaborating with each other for digitization of AYUSH Sector.

ABOUT:

- In pursuance to the National Health Policy 2017 and e-governance initiative of Ministry of AYUSH aims to digitize the entire AYUSH leading to transformation in field of health care delivery at all levels
- MeitY has also sponsored a number of R&D projects for the development of medical electronics devices and systems such as medical and imaging equipment, establishing a centre of excellence in medical electronics.

Background

- Earlier the Ministry of AYUSH, which was formed in 2014, was known as the Department of Indian System of Medicine and Homeopathy (ISM&H) and renamed as Department of AYUSH in 2003.
- AYUSH is one of the 12 champion services sectors that the government seeks to promote by offering soft loans and interest subsidies to AYUSH establishments as well as allowing 100 per cent foreign direct investment.

Objectives

- To upgrade the educational standards of Indian Systems of Medicines and Homoeopathy colleges in the country.
- To strengthen existing research institutions and to ensure a time-bound research programme on identified diseases for which these systems have an effective treatment.
- To draw up schemes for promotion, cultivation and regeneration of medicinal plants used in these systems.
- To evolve Pharmacopoeia standards for Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy drugs.

2 ASSET MONETISATION OF PUBLIC SECTOR ENTERPRISES

CONTEXT:

- The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) is working on restructuring and asset monetisation of public sector enterprises for better management and competitiveness in the present world

Institutional framework for monetization

- Identified non-core assets of CPSEs under strategic disinvestment;
- Immovable Enemy Property under the custody of Custodian of Enemy Property (CEPI), MHA as per sub section 6 of section 8A of the Enemy Property Act, 1968;
- This framework is also available for use to monetize assets of other CPSEs/PSUs/other Government Organizations with the approval of the Competent Authority;
- Sick/Loss making CPSEs under closure normally follow the DPE closure guidelines dated 14.06.2018

in this regard. However, any sick/loss making CPSE can also adopt this framework with the approval of Competent Authority.

Objective of the initiative

- The objective of the asset monetization programme of the Government of India is to unlock the value of investment made in public assets which have not yielded appropriate or potential returns so far.

3 NATIONAL COMMON MOBILITY CARD (NCMC)

CONTEXT:

- NCMC has been launched in India with the tagline of 'One Nation One Card'

ABOUT:

- It has 2 instruments on it – a regular debit card which can be used at an ATM, and a local wallet (stored value account), which can be used for contactless payments, without the need to go back to the server or additional authentication.
- It is envisioned that a single card will be usable for all local travel needs across the country.
- This is aimed at low value payments for various segments e.g. Transit, Smart cities, Toll, Parking and other low value merchant payments, in addition to the normal day to day retail payments.
- The vision behind the introduction of this card is to have interoperability, based on open standards.
- The wallet where money is stored is referred as Global/Card wallet.
- Also, any refund pertaining to the transactions done using global/card wallet will be credited in the replica of the wallet maintained at bank's end, which further can be added to Global/Card Wallet by the customer.

4 COAL SUPPLY RATIONALIZATION SCHEME

CONTEXT:

- As per the existing framework, under various applicable laws, all banks including Public Sector Banks (PSBs) are required to have their annual financial statements approved by their respective Board of Directors, transparently disclose the same to stock exchanges, furnish copy thereof to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and present these at the annual general meeting of their shareholders for approval and adoption after discussion.

ABOUT:

- Financial performance and operational efficiency of banks is objectively reflected in their annual financial statements.
- As part of this, bank's Board and shareholders discuss and review the bank's performance and, in addition, markets and the regulator also take note of the performance, which serves to strengthen accountability by subjecting the bank to market discipline and regulatory supervision.
- Further, bank-wise performance regarding implementation of reforms in PSBs for enhanced efficiency and strengthened arrangements for accountability is being tracked and measured through an independent agency, using an objective, transparent and publicly reported 'Enhanced Access and Service Excellence (EASE)' Reforms Index.
- Government has issued 'Framework for timely detection, reporting, investigation etc. relating to large value bank frauds' to Public Sector Banks (PSBs).

- Central Fraud Registry (CFR), based on Fraud Monitoring Returns filed by banks and select financial institutions, has been set up by RBI as a searchable online central database for use by banks;
- Government has formed an inter-agency coordination committee to look into the large value bank frauds.
- Further, all PSBs have a well-established vigilance mechanism headed by a Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) directly appointed by the Government of India.
- CVOs of banks keep a close watch on various aspects of the bank's functioning. RBI has issued various guidelines on examining staff accountability under various circumstances.
- As per RBI instructions on the internal control and inspection/audit system in banks, banks are advised regarding fixing of staff accountability aspect of irregularities, malpractices etc., at all levels, at the appropriate time.
- Further, as per inputs received from PSBs, PSBs impose penalty against erring employees after due process including dismissal/removal from service/ compulsory retirement from service etc. and complaint is lodged with the police or the Central Bureau of Investigation

National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)

- ▶ The need for establishing NFRA has arisen on account of the need felt across various jurisdictions in the world, in the wake of accounting scams, to establish independent regulators, independent from those it regulates, for enforcement of auditing standards and ensuring the quality of audits to strengthen the independence of audit firms, quality of audits and, therefore, enhance investor and public confidence in financial disclosures of companies.
- ▶ It is an Indian body proposed in Companies Act 2013 for the establishment and enforcement of accounting and auditing standards and oversight of the work of auditors.

5

NPA ACCOUNTS

CONTEXT:

- In terms of Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s master circular on **Prudential norms on Income Recognition, Asset Classification and Provisioning pertaining to Advances**, an asset becomes non-performing when it ceases to generate income for the bank.

ABOUT:

When an asset is treated as NPA?

- In respect of a term loan, interest and/or instalments of the principal remain overdue for a period of more than 90 days;
- In respect of an Overdraft/Cash Credit, the account remains 'out of order';
- In respect of bills purchased and discounted, the bill remains overdue for a period of more than 90 days;
- In respect of agricultural loans, the instalment of principal or interest thereon remains overdue for:
 - Two crop seasons for short-duration crops, and
 - For one crop season for long-duration crops.
- The amount of liquidity facility remains outstanding for more than 90 days, in respect of a securitisation transaction;

- In respect of derivative transactions, the overdue receivables representing positive mark-to-market value of a derivative contract, if these remain unpaid for a period of 90 days from the specified due date for payment.

Steps taken to expedite and enable resolution of NPAs

- Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (IBC) has been enacted, which has provided for taking over the management of the affairs of the corporate debtor at the outset of the corporate insolvency resolution process.
- Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act has been amended to make it more effective, with provision for three months' imprisonment in case the borrower does not provide asset details
- Suits for recovery of dues are also filed by banks before Debts Recovery Tribunals. Six new Debts Recovery Tribunals have been established to expedite recovery.
- Under the **PSB Reforms Agenda**, PSBs have created **Stressed Asset Management Verticals** to focus attention on recovery, segregated monitoring from sanctioning roles in high-value loans.

6 RASHTRIYA AVISHKAR ABHIYAN (RAA)

CONTEXT:

- RAA was launched by Late Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Former President of India.

ABOUT:

- Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan (RAA) is a unique concept developed by the **Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD)**.
- It is a convergent framework across **School Education and Higher Education** to motivate children of the age group from 6-18 years both through inside and outside classroom activities and processes.
- It seeks to create curiosity, excitement and **spirit of innovation and exploration** amongst school children by encouraging higher education institutions assist secondary and elementary schools in the study of **Science and Mathematics**.
- Major interventions under RAA provided under Integrated scheme for School Education – **Samagra Shiksha**, include conduct of Science Exhibition, Book Fair, etc.
- It is an effort to take forward the Prime Minister's vision of Digital India, 'Make in India' and 'Teach in India'.

Digital Platforms by MHRD

- ▶ Shodhganga: It is a digital repository for research scholars across Universities and Institutes to deposit, re-use & share their Theses & Dissertations in digital formats including scanned documents. It is in open access to the world-wide academic community.
- ▶ Shodhgangotri: Under this initiative, research scholars / research supervisors in universities could deposit an electronic version of approved synopsis submitted by research scholars to the universities for registering themselves under the Ph.D. programme.
- ▶ National Digital Library (NDL): It aims to collect, preserve and disseminate entire intellectual output of our country and provide online access from school level to postgraduate level, including technical education.

7

STRIDE**CONTEXT:**

- **University Grants Commission (UGC)** has approved '**Scheme for Trans-disciplinary Research for India's Developing Economy' (STRIDE)** to boost research culture and innovation in colleges and universities, that will help students and faculty to contribute towards India's developing economy with collaborative research.

ABOUT:**More on news:**

- STRIDE will provide an opportunity to build multi-sectorial linkages between university-government-community-industry for national development and wellbeing of people.
- To encourage high quality high impact research in humanities, there is a provision to identify experts and invite them to develop a proposal.
- UGC also set up an Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of Bhushan Patwardhan to oversee the entire scheme. UGC is also proposing to provide a grant of Rs 2 lakh for developing proposals.

STRIDE components• **Component-1**

- It will endeavour to identify the motivated young talents with research and innovation aptitude in universities and colleges.
- The scheme will provide research capacity building in diverse disciplines by mentoring, nurturing and supporting young talents to innovate pragmatic solutions for local, regional, national and global problems.
- This component is open to all disciplines for grant upto 1 crore.

• **Component-2**

- It will be mainly to enhance problem-solving skills with the help of social innovation and action research to improve the wellbeing of people and contribute to India's developing economy.
- Collaborations between universities, government, voluntary organizations, and industries are encouraged under this scheme.
- This component is open to all disciplines for grant upto 50 lakh – 1 crore.

• **Component-3**

- It will fund high impact research projects in the identified thrust areas in humanities and human sciences through a national network of eminent scientists from leading institutions.
- Disciplines eligible for funding under this component include philosophy, history, archaeology, anthropology, psychology, liberal arts, linguistics, Indian languages and culture, Indian knowledge systems, law, education, journalism, mass communication, commerce, management, environment and sustainable development.
- Grant available for this component is upto 1 crore for one HEI and upto 5 crores for multi institutional network.

STRIDE Objectives

- To identify young talent, strengthen research culture, build capacity, promote innovation and support trans-disciplinary research for India's developing economy and national development
- To fund multi-institutional network high-impact research projects in humanities and human sciences.

STRIDE will support

- Research projects those are socially relevant, locally need-based, nationally important and globally significant.
- Research capacity building as well as basic, applied and transformational action research that can contribute to the national interest.
- Creation, development, and integration of new ideas, concepts, and practices for the public good and strengthening civil society.
- Trans-disciplinary research between humanities and human sciences, which will boost quality research on Indian languages and knowledge systems.
- New conceptual, theoretical, methodological innovations that integrate and transcend beyond discipline-specific approaches to address a common problem.

8

IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY OF THE YOUTH

CONTEXT:

- Employment generation coupled with improving employability of the youth is the priority concern of the Government. Thus, Government of India has initiated many initiatives.

ABOUT VARIOUS INITIATIVES:

- **Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME)** is implementing **Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)**, which is a major credit-linked subsidy programme aimed at generating self-employment opportunities.
- **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)** has also been initiated by Government inter alia for facilitating self-employment.
- Government encourages private sector of the economy, fast tracking various projects involving substantial investment and increasing public expenditure on schemes like **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA)**, **Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)** scheme run by **Ministry of Rural Development** and **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM)** by **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs**.
- **Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY)** has been launched by the **Ministry of Labour and Employment** for incentivising employers for promoting employment generation.
- Besides these initiatives, flagship programmes of the Government such as Make in India, Digital India, Swachh Bharat Mission, Smart City Mission, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation, Housing for All, Infrastructure development and Industrial corridors have the potential to generate productive employment opportunities.
- Ministries/ Departments/ States run skill development schemes across various sectors to improve the employability of youth and also facilitate placements.
- Schemes such as the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) wherein Government reimburses 25 % of the stipend payable to apprentices also enhances employability of the youth to access employment.

9

JAL SHAKTI ABHIYAN

CONTEXT:

- Union Jal Shakti Minister, announced the commencement of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan – a campaign for water conservation and water security.

ABOUT THE ABHIYAN:

- According to Jal Shakti ministry, there is no additional funding or specific targets for Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) to achieve. There was plenty of money already allocated for existing schemes under the Central and State budgets. They can be converted into a single scheme, with a focussed approach.
- A large-scale communications campaign has also been planned alongside the JSA involving mass mobilisation of different groups including school students, college students, swachhagrahis, Self Help Groups, Panchayati Raj Institution members, youth groups (NSS/NYKS/NCC), defence personnel, ex-servicemen and pensioners, among various others.
- The conservation efforts will be supplemented by initiatives like developing block and district water conservation plans and 'krishi vigyan kendra melas' to promote efficient water use for irrigation and better crop choices.

Jal Shakti Abhiyan

- The campaign would run from July 1 to September 15 in States receiving rainfall during the south-west monsoon, while States receiving rainfall in the retreating or north-east monsoon would be covered from October 1 to November 30.
- It is a collaborative effort of various ministries of the Government of India and state governments, being coordinated by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) that comes under the Jal Shakti Ministry.
- An important part of this Abhiyan is that it will focus on five aspects - water conservation and rainwater harvesting, renovation of traditional and other water bodies, reuse of water and recharging of structures, watershed development, and intensive afforestation.

Objective of Jal Shakti Abhiyan

- to "bring sensitivity on the subject of water conservation, and give it a focussed approach"
- to create a baseline of water
- to increase awareness among people to conserve water

10**PRICE FIXATION OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES****CONTEXT:**

- The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has taken important measures to check the prices of drugs, under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO).

ABOUT:**What is an Essential Medicine?**

- According to World Health Organization (WHO), Essential medicines are the medicines that "satisfy the priority health care needs of the population". People should have access to these medicines at all times in sufficient amounts. The prices should be at generally affordable levels.

NPPA:

- Established in: 1997
- It has been set up as per executive order and thus not a statutory body.
- It is a government regulatory agency which performs the following functions
 - Controlling the prices of pharmaceutical drugs in India
 - Enforce the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO), 2013
 - Advising the Government of India in matters of drug policies and pricing.
- Parent agency: Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers

What is Drugs Price Control Orders (DPCO), 2013?

- ▶ It is an order issued by the Central Government having power under section 3 of the Essential Commodity Act, 1955 which enables it to fix the prices of essential bulk drugs and their formulations mentioned under the NLEM.
- ▶ The formulations which are included in NLEM i.e. first Schedule of the DPCO 2013 are known as Scheduled Formulations.
- ▶ Any person acting in contravention of the DPCO 2013 is punishable under section 7 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955

11 m-KISAN PORTAL

CONTEXT-

- Information and services available on m-kisan portal i.e. <https://mkisan.gov.in> are crop specific advisories to farmers through SMS and Voice;

ABOUT mKISAN

- mKisan SMS Portal for farmers enables all Central and State government organizations in agriculture and allied sectors to give information/services/advisories to farmers by SMS in their language, preference of agricultural practices and location.
- As part of agricultural extension (extending research from lab to the field), under the National e-Governance Plan – Agriculture (NeGP-A), various modes of delivery of services have been envisaged.
- This portal provides value added services such as IVRS(Interactive Voice Response System), USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data) and Pull SMS which are value added services to receive broadcast messages and attain web based services without access to internet.
- The prime objective is to make SMS and other mobile based services a tool of 2 way agricultural extension wherein not only are farmers given information, but they can also raise queries through Pull SMS or USSD.

12 LINKING OF ORGANIC FARMING WITH PROCESSING

CONTEXT:

- Government of India has been promoting traditional farming in the States through dedicated Schemes, namely, Mission Organic Value Chain Development North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER) and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY).

ABOUT:

- Under these schemes assistance is provided to the farmers for on-farm and off-farm input production/ procurement, creation of post-harvest infrastructure and connecting it through production to processing by the following ways :
 - **Market linkage** of producer clusters with some major agri-business, phytochemical and online grocery stores have been established under MOVCDNER.
 - Providing incentives for **infrastructure creation**, storage, grading, packaging, branding, publicity, transportation, value addition, development of integrated value chain and organic fairs.

- Promoting **formation** of Farmer Producers Companies (FPCs)/ Organizations (FPOs)/ Clusters, thereby assisting member farmers to receive remunerative prices for their organic produce due to improved economies of scale, value addition and access to market for their organic produce.
- Government has launched a **www.jaivikkheti.in portal** acting both as a knowledge as well as marketing platform. Details of farmers involved in Organic farming input suppliers, certification agencies (PGS) and marketing agencies are available for smooth implementation from production to marketing.
- PKVY/PGS groups can take the advantage of this portal for capacity building, technical know-how, communicating with marketing channels/ other groups and direct marketing of their produce to prospective buyers and consumers.

13**KISAN CREDIT CARD (KCC)****CONTEXT:**

- KCC Scheme has been extended to fisheries and animal husbandry by **Ministry of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying**

ABOUT:**More on news:**

- The extension of KCC will include both inland and marine fisheries to meet the short term credit requirements of rearing of animals, birds, fish, shrimp, other aquatic organisms, capture of fish'.
- Banks have been instructed to extend credit facilities to individual fishermen, fishermen groups, self-help groups and women self-help groups engaged in inland and marine fisheries.
- It will prevent fishermen from taking loans from local moneylenders at exorbitant interest rates
- The District-Level Technical Committee would fix the scale of finance and the banks would fix the repayment period.

KCC Scheme

- To fulfil the financial requirements of the farmers at various stages of farming through institutional credit, it was prepared by **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** on the recommendation of **R.V. Gupta committee** in 1998-99.
- Small and Marginal farmers, share croppers, lessee and tenant farmers and self-help groups (SHGs) or Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) are eligible to get the benefits of the KCC Scheme.
- KCC is valid for 5 years subject to annual review and performance of the borrower.

Objectives of KCC Scheme

- To provide institutional credit to the farmers at the cheap rate of interest
- To provide credit at the time of requirement
- To support Post-harvest expenses
- Working capital for maintenance of farm assets and activities allied to agriculture
- Investment credit requirement for agriculture and allied activities (land development, pump sets, plantation, drip irrigation etc.)
- Consumption requirements of farmers

Who implemented this scheme?

- It is being implemented by the all Co-operative banks, Regional Rural Banks and public sector banks throughout the country. NABARD monitors the scheme in terms of the Cooperative Banks & RRBs and RBI in respect of Commercial Banks.

- A new feature is started in the KCC scheme by the RBI and NABARD which provides ATM card to farmers which can be used at all ATMs and point of sale terminals.

About the initiative

The criteria for eligible beneficiaries under KCC for Animal Husbandry and Fisheries are as follows:

- **Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture:**
 - Fishers, Fish Farmers (individual & groups/partners/share croppers/tenant farmers), Self Help Groups, Joint Liability Groups and Woman groups.
 - The beneficiaries must own or lease any of the fisheries related activities such as pond, tank, open water bodies, raceway, hatchery, rearing unit, possess necessary license for fish farming and fishing related activities, and any other State specific fisheries and allied activities.
- **Marine Fisheries**
 - Beneficiaries as listed at 1.1 above who own or lease registered fishing vessel, boat, possess necessary fishing license/permission for fishing in estuary and sea, fish farming/Mari culture activities in estuaries and open sea and any other State specific fisheries and allied activities
- **Poultry and small ruminant**
 - Farmers, poultry farmers either individuals or joint borrower, Joint Liability Groups or Self Help Groups including tenant farmers of sheep/goats/pigs/poultry/birds/rabbit and having owned/rented/leased sheds.
- **Dairy**
 - Farmers and Dairy farmers either individuals or joint borrower, Joint Liability Groups or Self Help Groups including tenant farmers having owned/rented/leased sheds.

14

REDUCTION IN TOBACCO PRODUCTION IN INDIA

CONTEXT:

- Every year, **Tobacco Board** lays down the production policy and fixes crop size for **Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka** separately.

ABOUT:

- The Tobacco Board has taken the following steps to reduce **Flue Cured Virginia** (FCV) tobacco production:
 - The Board had resolved that there shall be a gradual phase out of tobacco cultivation. The reduction shall be gradual and uniform in both Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka without affecting the farmers' interests.
 - Board is not granting registration to new growers and not issuing any licenses for construction of new barns, creating additional curing infrastructure and no expanding FCV tobacco cultivation in new areas and thereby restricting horizontal expansion of tobacco.
 - Board has been advising the bankers and co-operative societies not to finance for unauthorised construction of barns/unauthorised cultivation by registered growers.
 - To discourage excess and unauthorized production, Government of India, under the **Tobacco Board Act, 1975**, permits sale of excess and unauthorized tobacco on the auction platform subject to levy of penalties.
 - Tobacco Board is working continuously in collaboration with the **Central Tobacco Research Institute (CTRI)** to provide economically sustainable alternatives to tobacco growing farmers.

- Tobacco Board in co-ordination with State Agricultural Department of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka is creating awareness about the scheme of Crop Diversification Programmes (CDP) under **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana** (R.K.V.Y).

15 PENSION COVERAGE TO TRADING COMMUNITY

CONTEXT:

- The Government has approved a pension scheme for shopkeeper's/ retail traders and self-employed persons for providing monthly minimum assured pension of Rs. 3000/- for the entry age group of 18-40 years.

ABOUT:

- As per **Indian Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF)** analysis, 2019, retail industry contributes 10 % to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and around 8 % to employment.

Features of the scheme

- All shopkeepers/retail-traders/ self-employed persons in the age group of 18-40 years are eligible to be the member, on self-declaration.
- A shop keeper/ retail-trader /self-employed person if registered with GSTN, his/ her firm's annual turnover should not exceed Rs. 1.5 crore.
- He/she should not be an income tax payee.
- He/she should not be a member of EPFO/ESIC/NPS/PM-SYM.
- The Central Government's share will be matching to the subscriber's contribution.

16 STATUS OF TECHNOLOGY HUBS

CONTEXT:

- **Department of Science and Technology** has been implementing **Technology Development Programmes (TDP)** to facilitate conversion of proof-of-concepts for into advance prototypes for validation and demonstration.

ABOUT:

Technology Development Programmes (TDP) objectives:

- Support R&D for development of innovative technologies in identified areas.
- Promote application of advanced technology for improving the performance and value addition to existing technology.
- Capacity building in the area of technology development in terms of human resource and infrastructure.

Sub schemes of TDP:

- Advanced Manufacturing Technologies (AMT) aligning to Make in India
- Biomedical Device and Technology Development Program (BDTD) aligning to Swasth Bharat
- Device Development Program (DDP) aligning to Make in India
- Science and Heritage Research Initiative (SHRI)

- Technology Development Program (TDP) aligning to Make in India
- Technology Mission for Indian Railways (TMIR) aligning to Make in India
- Waste Management Technologies (WMT) aligning to Swachh Bharat and Smart City.

17 DEFENCE PRODUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE

CONTEXT:

- Government has taken various steps for defense production under **Make in India**

ABOUT:

- Capital procurement of defence equipment is undertaken from various domestic as well as foreign vendors as per extant **Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP)**.

Steps taken by the government

- Defence Production in India is led by Ordnance Factories and Defence Public Sector Undertakings which have played a huge role in making our country a defence production hub.
- Industrial Licenses are issued for manufacturing of tanks and other armoured fighting vehicles, defence aircraft, space craft and parts thereof, warship, arms and ammunition and allied items of defence equipment, parts and accessories thereof.
- An innovation ecosystem for Defence titled Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) has been launched in April, 2018.
- iDEX is aimed at creation of an ecosystem to foster innovation and technology development in Defence and Aerospace by engaging Industries including MSMEs, Start-ups, Individual Innovators, R&D institutes and Academia
- In order to expand the manufacturing infrastructure, Government has decided to establish two defence industrial corridors to serve as an engine of economic development and growth of defence industrial base in the country.
- DPP has been revised in 2016 wherein specific provisions have been introduced for stimulating growth of the domestic defence industry.
- A new category of procurement 'Buy {Indian-IDD (Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured)}' has been introduced in DPP-2016 to promote indigenous design and development of defence equipment.
- The 'Make' Procedure has been simplified with provisions for funding of 90% of development cost by the Government to Indian industry and reserving projects not exceeding development cost of Rs.10 Crore
- FDI Policy has been revised and under the revised policy, FDI is allowed under automatic route upto 49% and beyond 49% through Government route wherever it is likely to result in access to modern technology or for other reasons to be recorded.

18 MOU SIGNED BETWEEN UPSC AND CIVIL SERVICE COUNCIL OF MONGOLIA

CONTEXT:

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and the Civil Service Council of Mongolia

ABOUT MOU

- The MoU primarily aims to facilitate sharing and promoting best practices through bilateral exchanges, which includes:
 - Exchange of experience in use of Information Technology in examination processes,
 - Modern approach to public service reforms,
 - Exchange of resource persons for conducting specialised training programs,
 - Seminars or workshops in areas of mutual interest.

19**RISAT-2B****CONTEXT:**

- The highly agile satellite, RISAT-2B is capable of operating in different modes including Very High Resolution RADAR imaging modes of 1m x 0.5m resolution and 0.5m x 0.3m resolution.

ABOUT:

- The RISAT has been equipped with a sensor known as '**synthetic aperture radar**', which takes what are known as 'radar images'.
- It is equipped with an active sensor, the synthetic aperture radar (SAR), which can sense or 'observe' Earth in a special way from space day and night, rain or cloud.
- This all-weather seeing feature is what makes it special for security forces and disaster relief agencies.
- The SAR send out hundreds of radio signals every second towards the subject (in this case, the earth) and capture the reflected signals to create a radio image, which can then be used by computers to build a real image.
- RISAT-2B was launched from Sriharikota and this marked the resumption of a vital ring of Indian all-seeing radar imaging satellites after seven years.

Benefits

- It sends much heavier data than plain remote sensing satellites.
- This satellite picks up structures, new bunkers very well, and sometimes helps to count them, too.
- In India, this will be used for crop estimation because main crop growing season of kharif is in May-September when it rains and gets cloudy. This data is extensively used for forestry, soil, land use, geology and during floods and cyclone. So it can be used for applications in agriculture, forestry and disaster management support.

20**ELECTRICITY GENERATION THROUGH ATOMIC ENERGY****CONTEXT:**

- Government has taken several steps to increase the nuclear power capacity and to provide adequate quantity of fuel and to increase the share of nuclear power generation.

ABOUT:

- The share of atomic energy in the overall electricity generation in the country was about 2.93% in the year 2017-18.

- Nuclear share has remained around 3% of the total electricity generation in the country. The main reason for low share has been the low installed capacity base. The reasons for low capacity base are:
 - Technology development and international embargo regime that persisted from 1974 to 2008. As a result, all the technologies for nuclear power including the fuel cycle technologies had to be developed within the country, thus took time.
 - Another constraint faced during the first two decades was availability of financial resources, as it had to solely depend on budgetary support. However, the earlier constraints have now been overcome and nuclear power programme is poised for rapid expansion.
- To increase the share of nuclear power generation, the Government has taken several steps to increase the nuclear power capacity and to provide adequate quantity of fuel. These include:
 - Resolution of issues related to Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (CLND) Act & Creation of Indian Nuclear Insurance Pool (INIP).
 - Accord of administrative approval and financial sanction of - ten (10) indigenous 700 MW Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) to be set up in fleet mode & two (02) units of Light Water Reactors (LWRs) to be set up in cooperation with Russian Federation.
 - Amendment of the Atomic Energy Act to enable Joint Ventures of Public Sector Companies to set up nuclear power projects.
 - Entering into enabling agreements with foreign countries for nuclear power cooperation including supply of fuel.

21

DIGITAL LEARNING

CONTEXT:

- Various initiatives have been taken to promote digital learning under 'National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology' (NMEICT).

ABOUT:

- Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development is administering a programme '**National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology**' (NMEICT) to leverage the potential of ICT to make the best quality content accessible to all learners in the country, free of cost.

Programs under the initiative NMEICT

- **SWAYAM**
 - The 'Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds' (SWAYAM) is an integrated platform for offering online courses and covering school (9th to 12th) to Post Graduate Level.
 - The online courses are being used not only by the students but also by the teachers and non-student learners, in the form of lifelong learning.
- **SWAYAM Prabha**
 - SWAYAM Prabha is an initiative to provide 32 High Quality Educational Channels through DTH (Direct to Home) across the length and breadth of the country on 24X7 basis.
 - It has curriculum-based course content covering diverse disciplines. This is primarily aimed at making quality learning resources accessible to remote areas where internet availability is still a challenge.
- **National Digital Library (NDL)**
 - NDL is a project to develop a framework of virtual repository of learning resources with a single-window search facility. There are more than 3 crore digital resources available through the NDL

- The contents cover almost all major domains of education and all major levels of learners including life-long learners.
- **Spoken Tutorial**
 - They are 10-minute long, audio-video tutorial, on open source software, to improve employment potential of students. It is created for self learning, audio dubbed into all 22 languages and with the availability of online version.
 - The Spoken Tutorial courses are effectively designed to train a novice user, without the support of a physical teacher.
- **Free and Open Source Software for Education (FOSSEE)**
 - FOSSEE is a project promoting the use of open source software in educational institutions
 - It does through instructional material, such as spoken tutorials, documentation, such as textbook companions, awareness programmes, such as conferences, training workshops, and Internships.
 - Textbook Companion (TBC) is a collection of code for solved examples of standard textbooks.
- **Virtual Lab**
 - The Virtual Labs Project is to develop a fully interactive simulation environment to perform experiments, collect data, and answer questions to assess the understanding of the knowledge acquired.
 - In order to achieve the objectives of such an ambitious project, it is essential to develop virtual laboratories with state-of-the-art computer simulation technology to create real world environments and problem handling capabilities.
- **E-Yantra**
 - e-Yantra is a project for enabling effective education across engineering colleges in India on embedded systems and Robotics.
 - The training for teachers and students is imparted through workshops where participants are taught basics of embedded systems and programming.

22

IMPLEMENTATION OF CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES**CONTEXT:**

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing two Centrally Sponsored Umbrella schemes – Umbrella ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services) and Mission for Empowerment and Protection for Women across the country.

ABOUT:**Umbrella ICDS:**

- The **Anganwadi Services Scheme** is a unique programme for early childhood care and development. It offers a package of six services, viz. Supplementary Nutrition, Pre-School Non-Formal Education, Nutrition and Health Education, Immunization, Health Check-Up and Referral Services. The beneficiaries under the Scheme are children in the age group of 0-6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- **Poshan Abhiyaan** (National Nutrition Mission) targets to reduce the level of stunting, under-nutrition, anemia and low birth weight babies by reducing mal-nutrition/under nutrition, anemia among young children as also, focus on adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)** scheme provides cash incentive amounting to Rs.5,000 in three installments directly to the Bank/Post Office Account of Pregnant Women and

Lactating Mother (PW&LM) in DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer) Mode during pregnancy and lactation in response to individual fulfilling specific conditions.

- Scheme for **Adolescent Girls** aims at out of school girls in the age group 11-14, to empower and improve their social status through nutrition, life skills and home skills. The scheme has nutritional and non-nutritional components which include nutrition; iron and folic acid supplementation; health check-up and referral service; nutrition and health education; mainstreaming out of school girls to join formal schooling bridge course/ skill training; life skill education, home management etc.; counselling/ guidance on accessing public services.
- **National Creche Scheme** provides day care facilities to children of age group of 6 months to 6 years of working women. The facilities are provided for seven and half hours a day for 26 days in a month. Children are provided with supplementary nutrition, early childcare education, and health and sleeping facilities.
- Child Protection Services Scheme aims to contribute to the improvement and the well-being of children in difficult circumstances, as well as, reduction of vulnerabilities to situation and actions that leads to abuse, neglect, exploitation, abandonment and separation of children from parent. The Scheme aims to spread awareness regarding the ways and means to prevent all children from child abuse of any kind including child sexual abuse.

Mission for Empowerment and Protection for Women

- Mahila Shakti Kendra scheme empowers rural women through community participation by involvement of Student Volunteers. The scheme is envisaged to work at various levels and at the national and state level technical support to the respective government on issues related to women is provided.
- Swadhar Greh scheme targets the women victims of unfortunate circumstances who are in need of institutional support for rehabilitation so that they could lead their life with dignity.
- Ujjawala is a comprehensive scheme to combat trafficking with the objective to prevent trafficking of women and children for commercial sexual exploitation, to facilitate rescue victims and placing them in safe custody, to provide rehabilitation services by providing basic amenities/needs, to facilitate reintegration of victims into the family and society, to facilitate repatriation of cross border victims.
- Working Women Hostel aims at providing safe and affordable accommodation to working women. These hostels have Day care facility for the children of inmates too. The Ministry provides financial support for establishing such hostels by NGOs or State Governments.
- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme is a tri-ministerial initiative of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development with a focus on awareness and advocacy campaign for changing mindsets, multi-sectoral action in select districts, enabling girls' education and effective enforcement of Pre-Conception & Pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PC&PNDT) Act. The specific objectives of the scheme is to address declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) by preventing gender biased sex selective elimination; ensuring survival and protection of the girl child and ensuring education and participation of the girl child.
- One Stop Centre (OSC) facilitates access to an integrated range of services including police, medical, legal, psychological support and temporary shelter to women affected by violence. The Scheme is funded through Nirbhaya Fund.
- Women Helpline – The Scheme is being implemented since 1st April, 2015 to provide 24 hours emergency and non-emergency response to women affected by violence through referral and information about women related government schemes/programmes across the country through a single uniform number (181).
- Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs) Scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs. It envisages engagement of Mahila Police Volunteers in States/UTs who act as a link between police and community and facilitates women in distress.

23

PRADHAN MANTRI UJJWALA YOJANA (PMUY)**CONTEXT:**

- Under PMUY, deposit free LPG connection is provided in the name of an adult woman member of a poor family and the beneficiary has an option to avail connection with 14.2 kg or 5 kg cylinder. The existing beneficiary with 14.2 kg LPG cylinder has an option to swap with 5 kg cylinder also.

ABOUT:

- **Mantra:** Swacch Indhan, Behtar Jeevan – Mahilaon ko mila samman
- More than 10.27 crore prospective consumers filled their **Know Your Customer (KYC)** forms under PMUY, out of which more than 7.30 crore connections have been released.
- More than one crore LPG consumers have given up their subsidy under **“GiveItUp”** campaign.

PMUY

- **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas** had launched this scheme to provide 5 Crore deposit-free LPG (clean cooking fuel) connections to women belonging to the **Below Poverty Line (BPL)** households, which were subsequently increased to 8 Crore with a budgetary allocation of Rs. 12800 crore.

PAHAL

- Government has introduced well targeted system of subsidy delivery to LPG consumers through PAHAL. This initiative of the Government was aimed at rationalizing subsidies based on approach to cut subsidy leakages, but not subsidy per se.
- Applicable subsidy is directly transferred into the bank account of the beneficiaries. PAHAL has helped in identifying ‘ghost’ accounts, multiple accounts and inactive accounts.
- This has helped in curbing diversion of subsidised LPG to commercial purposes.

24

THE DNA TECHNOLOGY (USE AND APPLICATION) REGULATION BILL – 2019**CONTEXT:**

- The DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2018 has been approved in the Parliament, with a view to creating a **national DNA database** for solving crimes and identifying missing persons.

ABOUT THE BILL:

- The purpose of the bill is to expand the application of DNA-based forensic technologies to support and strengthen the justice delivery system of the country.
- The Bill includes provisions for the destruction of DNA samples and removal of innocent people’s DNA profiles from the database.
- The utility of DNA based technologies for solving crimes, and to identify missing persons, is well recognized across the world.
- By providing for the mandatory accreditation and regulation of DNA laboratories, the Bill seeks to ensure that the DNA test results are reliable and the data remain protected from misuse or abuse in terms of the privacy rights of our citizens.
- Bill’s provisions will enable the cross-matching between persons who have been reported missing on the one hand and unidentified dead bodies found in various parts of the country on the other, and also for establishing the identity of victims in mass disasters.

- The Bill provides for the establishment of a DNA Regulatory Board, which will supervise the DNA Data Banks and DNA laboratories.

25

CODE ON OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY, HEALTH AND WORKING CONDITIONS BILL, 2019

CONTEXT:

- Union Cabinet has approved for introduction of the Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Bill, 2019 in the Parliament.

ABOUT:

More on news:

- This proposal would enhance the coverage of the safety, health and working conditions provisions manifold as compared to the present scenario.
- While the code will be applicable to all trades, including IT establishments and service sector, where more than 10 workers are employed, it will be applicable to mines and docks that employ even one worker.
- The code makes it mandatory for employers to provide free annual medical check-ups and issue appointment letters to all employees.
- The New Code has been drafted after amalgamation, simplification and rationalisation of the relevant provisions of the 13 Central Labour Acts:
 - The Factories Act, 1948;
 - The Mines Act, 1952; The Dock Workers (Safety, Health and Welfare) Act, 1986;
 - The Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996;
 - The Plantations Labour Act, 1951;
 - The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970;
 - The Inter-State Migrant workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979;
 - The Working Journalist and other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service and Misc. Provision) Act, 1955;
 - The Working Journalist (Fixation of rates of wages) Act, 1958;
 - The Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961;
 - Sales Promotion Employees (Condition of Service) Act, 1976;
 - The Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966; and
 - The Cine Workers and Cinema Theatre Workers Act, 1981. After the enactment of the Code, all these Acts being subsumed in the Code will be repealed.

Benefits

- Safety, Health, welfare and improved Working Conditions are pre-requisite for well-being of the worker and also for economic growth of the country as healthy workforce of the country would be more productive and occurrence of less accidents and unforeseen incidents would be economically beneficial to the employers also.
- Code enhances the ambit of provisions of safety, health, welfare and working conditions from existing about 9 major sectors to all establishments having 10 or more employees.

26

CHALLENGES FACED BY THE DAIRY INDUSTRY**CONTEXT:**

- **Department of Animal Husbandry And Dairying** has received representations from stakeholders like **Indian Dairy Association** and **Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Limited**, to reduce GST on some dairy products like ghee, butter oil and flavoured milk and to reduce import duty on some dairy machinery.

ABOUT:**More on news:**

- As per Goods and Services Tax (GST) Act 2017, the current rate of GST applicable on dairy products ranges from 5% to 18%.
- Indian cattle and buffaloes have among the lowest productivity in the world. Similarly there is a shortage of organized dairy farms and there is a need of high degree of investment to take dairy industry to global standards.

Steps taken by Department of Animal Husbandry And Dairying

- To improve low productivity of indigenous bovine breeds, Department has been implementing **Rashtriya Gokul Mission** with aim of development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds and enhancing production and productivity thereby making milk production more remunerative to the farmers.
- In order to promote organized dairy farming and investment, Department has been supplementing the efforts of State Governments by implementing following dairy development schemes for creation/ strengthening of infrastructure for production of quality milk, procurement, processing and marketing of milk and milk products across the country:
 - National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD)
 - Dairy Entrepreneurship Development Scheme (DEDS)
 - National Dairy Plan-I (NDP-I)
 - Dairy Processing and Infrastructure Development Fund (DIDF)
 - Supporting Dairy Cooperatives and Farmer Producer Organizations engaged in dairy activities (SDCFPO)

27

SETTING UP OF NEUTRINO OBSERVATORY**CONTEXT:**

- Government of India has approved a project to build the **India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO)** at Pottipuram in the Theni District of Tamil Nadu.

ABOUT:**More on news:**

- The project aims to set up a 51000 ton Iron Calorimeter (ICAL) detector to observe naturally occurring atmospheric neutrinos in a cavern at the end of an approximately 2 km long tunnel in a mountain.
- The **Tata Institute of Fundamental Research** is the nodal institution. The observatory is to be built jointly with the **Department of Atomic Energy** and the **Department of Science and Technology**.

- This will help to reduce the noise from cosmic rays that are ever present over-ground and which would outnumber the rare neutrino interactions even in a detector as large as ICAL.
- The INO project does not disturb the ecosystem around the site and does not release any radiation, as it does not have any radioactive substance. It measures cosmic rays.
- There is no other neutrino detector anywhere in India at present. ICAL at INO would be the first of its type.

Why are the locals opposing it?

- Locals fear that the excavation and blasts needed to bore the tunnel in the mountains will endanger the biodiversity of the Western Ghats.
- Some of the concerns voiced range from radiation, structural damage to the mountain to emission of hazardous chemicals.

What is a neutrino?

- ▶ Neutrinos are the smallest particles that form the universe.

Who else has a neutrino facility?

- ▶ **Underground:** Canada, Kamioka in Japan and Gran Sasso, Italy
- ▶ **Underwater:** Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, Antarctica. Antares - under Mediterranean Sea off coast of Toulon, France.

28

CHILD LABOUR

CONTEXT:

- As per information received from the **District Project Societies** set up under the **National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme**, a total number of 320488 children were rescued from all forms of child labour, and were rehabilitated and mainstreamed to formal education system during the last five years.

ABOUT:

- Child Labour is an outcome of various socio-economic problems such as poverty, economic backwardness and illiteracy.

Steps taken by government

- The Central Government has taken cognizance of the practice of child labour still going on in various parts of the country, in spite of a ban on it and is committed to eradicate the problem of child labour from all parts of the country.
- **Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016** provides for complete prohibition of work or employment of children **below 14 years** in any occupation and process and prohibition of adolescents in the age group of 14 to 18 years in hazardous occupations and processes.
- The Amendment Act also provides stricter punishment for employers for violation of the Act and has made the offence as cognizable.
- The Government is also implementing the **National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme** since 1988 for **rehabilitation of child labour**.
- Under the NCLP Scheme, children in the age group of 9-14 years are enrolled in the NCLP Special Training Centres, where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training, mid-day meal, stipend, health care, etc. before being mainstreamed into formal education system.

- Children in the age group of 5-8 years are directly linked to the formal education system through a close coordination with the **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan** (SSA).
- To ensure effective enforcement of the provisions of the **Child Labour Act** and smooth implementation of the NCLP Scheme, a separate online portal **PENCIL** (Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour) has been launched on 26 September 2017.
- As per Section 2 (14) (ii) of **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) act, 2015** (JJ Act), a child who is found living in contravention of labour laws for the time being in force is included as a 'child in need of care and protection', the JJ Act, 2015 mandates a security net of service delivery structures to provide institutional and non-institutional care to these children. The primary responsibility of execution of the Act, as such, lies with the State/UTs.
- Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing '**Child Protection Services**' (CPS) (erstwhile Integrated Child Protection Scheme), for care, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of children in difficult circumstances.
- Under CPS, financial assistance is provided to State Governments/UT Administrations, for, inter alia, undertaking a situational analysis of children in difficult circumstances, for setting up and maintenance of various types of Child Care Institutions (CCIs).

29

NATIONAL TRANSLATION MISSION**CONTEXT:**

- 40 Knowledge Text translations have been published in 16 languages under National Translation Mission (NTM)

ABOUT:

- NTM is a scheme launched in 2008 which is being implemented through the **Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL)**, Mysore to establish translation as an industry in general and to facilitate higher education by making knowledge texts accessible to students and academics in Indian languages.
- Under the scheme, the books of knowledge texts mostly text books of various subjects prescribed in Universities and Colleges are being translated in all Languages of the **8th Schedule** of the Constitution of India.
- NTM has so far published 40 Knowledge Text translations in 16 languages (Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Dogri, Hindi, Kannada, Maithili, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu).
- NTM has published 6 bilingual dictionaries (English to Indian languages) in collaboration with **Pearson Education, India**.
- The Mission has trained about 1400 budding translators through 3-week intensive courses (21 days) on '**Introduction to translation**' and '**Research Methodology in Translation**'.

30

OPERATION THIRST**CONTEXT:**

- RPF launched "Operation Thirst", an All India Drive to crack down selling of unauthorised Packaged Drinking Water.

ABOUT:

- To curb the menace of unauthorized PDW (Packaged Drinking Water) in Railway premises, an all India drive named “**Operation Thirst**” was launched on 08th & 09th July 2019 on the direction of DG/RPF, Railway Board, New Delhi where all the Zonal Principal Chief Security Commissioners (PCSC) were asked to crackdown these unauthorised activities.
- Almost all major stations over Indian Railway were covered during this operation.
- During the drive, 1371 persons were arrested for selling of packaged drinking water of unauthorised brands under different sections.

31 SWADHAR GREH SCHEME

CONTEXT:

- The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** is implementing the Swadhar Greh Scheme for rehabilitation of women in difficult circumstances.
- About the scheme:
- The scheme covers women who are deserted and without any social and economic support, women victims of domestic violence, family tension and natural disaster.
- Besides the above, Ministry is also implementing **Universalisation of Women Helpline Scheme** which is envisaged to provide 24 hours emergency and non-emergency response to women affected by violence, both in public and private spaces by linking them with appropriate authorities such as police, One Stop Centres, hospital and legal services.
- Under the ‘**One Stop Centre Scheme**’, One Stop Centres for violence affected women across the country as part of the **Nirbhaya Framework**, are established with the help of States/UTs for providing legal and psycho-social counselling along with other facilities including temporary shelter, police facilitation and medical support to the women needing the same under one roof in an integrated manner.

32 ECONOMICALLY WEAKER SECTIONS (EWS) BILL

CONTEXT:

- Articles 15(6) and 16(6) have been inserted in the Constitution, vide the Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Act, 2019.

ABOUT:

- This enables the State to provide the benefits of reservation on preferential basis to the Economically Weaker Sections (EWSs) in civil posts and services in the Government of India and admission in Educational Institutions.
- Accordingly, the provision for 10% reservation to the EWS was implemented by the Government in January 2019.
- 10% reservation under EWS category is applicable to those persons who are not covered under the existing scheme of reservations for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Socially and Educationally Backward Classes.
- Instructions have been issued by the Ministry of HRD for increasing the total number of seats over a period of two years, to provide for 10% EWS reservation, without adversely affecting the proportionate seats of SCs, STs and OBCs.

33 FEMINIZATION IN AGRICULTURE

CONTEXT:

- As per Agriculture Census conducted at an interval of every five years by the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, the percentage of female operational holdings in the country have increased from 12.78 % during 2010-11 to 13.78 % during 2015-16.

ABOUT:

- In line with the provisions of National Policy for Farmers (NPF) (2007), the **Department of Rural Development**, Ministry of Rural Development is already implementing a programme exclusively for women farmers namely, **Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)**, which is a sub-component of **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM)**.
- The primary objective of MKSP is to empower women by enhancing their participation in agriculture and to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for them.
- Funding support to the tune of up to 60% (90% for North Eastern States) for such projects is provided by the Government of India.
- Department of Agriculture Cooperation and Farmers Welfare** is also promoting mainstreaming of Gender Concerns in agriculture by ensuring flow of funds and benefits to the tune of 30% for women farmers under its beneficiary oriented Schemes and Programmes.

34 LAQSHYA

CONTEXT:

- Government of India has launched "**LaQshya**" (**Labour room Quality improvement Initiative**) to improve quality of care in labour room and maternity operation theatres in public health facilities.

ABOUT:

- Aim:**
 - To reduce preventable maternal and newborn mortality, morbidity and stillbirths associated with the care around delivery in Labour room and Maternity Operation Theatre and ensure respectful maternity care.
 - It's a multipronged approach focused at Intrapartum and immediate postpartum period
- Objectives:**
 - To reduce maternal and newborn mortality & morbidity due to hemorrhage, retained placenta, preterm, preeclampsia and eclampsia, obstructed labour, puerperal sepsis, newborn asphyxia, and newborn sepsis, etc.
 - To improve Quality of care during the delivery and immediate post-partum care, stabilization of complications and ensure timely referrals, and enable an effective two-way follow-up system.
 - To enhance satisfaction of beneficiaries visiting the health facilities and provide Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) to all pregnant women attending the public health facilities.

Following types of healthcare facilities have been identified for implementation of LaQshya program

- Government medical college hospitals.

- District Hospitals & equivalent health facilities.
- Designated FRUs and high case load CHCs with over 100 deliveries/month (60 in hills and desert areas)

35 MURAL PAINTINGS

CONTEXT:

- **Archeological Survey of India (ASI)** and **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)**, an autonomous organization) under the **Ministry of Culture** are actively involved in the Government's endeavour for conservation of Mural Paintings and ancient folk paintings which are on the verge of extinction.

ABOUT:

More on News:

- IGNCA has signed MOU with **Central Institute of Buddhist Studies** (a Deemed University), Leh, Ladakh to explore, research, and for field work and capacity building programme in this domain.
- The project titled '**The Condition of Buddhist Wall Painting Sites in Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh (Tribal and Backward Areas)**' aimed to develop a laboratory in Ladakh in collaboration with the partner institute especially for Himalayan material – thangka and manuscript, with wall painting as a super specialty.
- In Jammu and Kashmir, the conservation work of **Karsha Monastery**- Nyingm/lakhangand, **Gonkhang**- Thiksey monastery and in Himachal Pradesh, conservation work of Maitreay Temple (Hunder- Nurba), Saboo and Diskit monasteries has been done by IGNCA.
- **Saboo and Diskit Monasteries** have a sizeable collection of tangkha that are not in use for puja.

36 NATIONAL ELECTRIC MOBILITY MISSION PLAN (NEMMP) 2020

CONTEXT:

- **Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises** has implemented **National Electric Mobility Mission Plan**

ABOUT:

NEMMP 2020

- It is a **National Mission document** providing the vision and the roadmap for the faster adoption of electric vehicles and their manufacturing in the country.
- This plan has been designed to enhance national fuel security, to provide affordable and environmentally friendly transportation and to enable the Indian automotive industry to achieve global manufacturing leadership.
- As part of the NEMMP 2020, Department of Heavy Industry formulated a Scheme viz. **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India) Scheme** in 2015 to promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology and to ensure sustainable growth of the same.

37 INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

CONTEXT

- **Department of Consumer Affairs** under the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution** has launched a new Central Sector scheme namely “**Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IM-PDS)**”.
- It is operational in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana and Tripura, wherein a beneficiary can avail his share of food-grain from any district in the state.

Background

- The food rationing and PDS system was begun during the famine of 1940, and was revived in 1970 as a universal food entitlement programme for Indian citizens.
- Post-liberalisation, in 1997, the universal food scheme was made a targeted one, covering poor and vulnerable people.
- Later, in 2013, due to civil society and judicial influence, the landmark National Food Security Act (NFSA) was passed by Parliament. It made the right to food a legal entitlement for two-thirds of poor households in India.

Objectives of the scheme

- To integrate the existing PDS systems/portals of States/UTs with the Central Systems/portals
- Implementation of nation-wide portability of ration cards to lift foodgrains from any fair price shop (FPS) across the country, moving towards ‘one nation one ration card’.
- **One Nation, One Ration Card** will mostly assist seasonal and circular migrant workers to have better access to PDS, both, at source and destination.
- It is based on two important guiding principles: Aadhar and digitalisation of ration cards.
- National level de-duplication of ration cards/beneficiary. It will bring more transparency and efficiency in distribution of food grains as it will improve the mechanism to identify duplicate ration cards.

Challenges of the scheme

- The authorities can be expected to encounter hard-hitting ground realities for designing and implementing the scheme.
- The first hurdles will be to have exact data on the mobility of poor households migrating to work, locating intra- and inter-state destinations and sectors employing the workers.
- Secondly, the domicile-based legislation for accessing government schemes and social security needs serious rethinking before making ‘One Nation, One Ration Card’ portable.
- Portability of Integrated Child Development Services, Mid-Day Meals, immunisation, health care and other facilities for poor migrant households can’t be neglected and should be made portable.
- It is feared that both Aadhar and digital ration card may exclude either a person who migrates alone, or migrates with his family or the left-behind vulnerable family member who stays back in the village.
- The Rastriya Sawthya Bima Yojna (RSBY), the national health insurance scheme of the Indian government, had an interesting component of splitting the unique insurance card to help both migrants and those left behind.
- This component from RSBY may be adopted in devising PDS access to both migrants and those left behind. Moreover, Aadhar seeding and the biometric authentication of eligible migrant workers at the destination may create obstacles for hassle-free access to PDS both, at source and destination.
- Finally, there are multiple social security, welfare, food and anti-poverty schemes in India, in addition to an array of labour laws.

- Therefore, the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' should create inclusion in food schemes, both, at source and destination, without negating the very spirit of ensuring household food security of the migrant family.

38 PRICE RISE OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES

CONTEXT:

- Government has taken various measures from time to time to stabilize prices of essential food

Factors affecting the prices of food:

- Mismatch in demand and supply,
- Shortfall in production owing to adverse weather conditions and seasonality,
- Increased transportation costs,
- Supply chain constraints like lack of storage facilities,
- Artificial shortage created by hoarding and black marketing, etc.

Steps taken by Government

- Appropriately utilizing trade and fiscal policy instruments like import duty and export management through instruments like Minimum Export Price, export restrictions, etc, to regulate domestic availability and moderate prices
- Imposition of stock limits and advising States for effective action against hoarders & black marketers
- Promulgation of appropriate Minimum Support Prices to incentivize farmers for increasing production.
- Government is also implementing Schemes like Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), National Food Security Mission (NFSM), etc. for increasing agricultural production and productivity through appropriate interventions.
- Besides, Government is also implementing Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) and Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) is implementing scheme "Operation Greens"

Price Stabilization Fund (PSF)

- It was set up in 2014-15 under the **Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW)** to help regulate the price volatility of important agri-horticultural commodities like onion, potatoes and pulses were also added subsequently.
- It was transferred from DAC&FW to the Department of Consumer Affairs (DOCA)
- It provides for maintaining a strategic buffer of aforementioned commodities for subsequent calibrated release to moderate price volatility and discourages hoarding and unscrupulous speculation.
- It is utilized for granting interest free advance of working capital to Central Agencies, State/UT Governments/Agencies to undertake market intervention operations.
- Apart from domestic procurement from farmers/wholesale mandis, import may also be undertaken with support from the Fund.

Objectives of Operation Greens

- Enhancing value realisation of TOP farmers by targeted interventions to strengthen TOP production clusters and their FPOs, and linking/connecting them with the market.
- Price stabilisation for producers and consumers by proper production planning in the TOP clusters and introduction of dual use varieties.

- Reduction in post-harvest losses by creation of farm gate infrastructure, development of suitable agro-logistics, creation of appropriate storage capacity linking consumption centres.
- Increase in food processing capacities and value addition in TOP value chain with firm linkages with production clusters.
- Setting up of a market intelligence network to collect and collate real time data on demand and supply and price of TOP crops.

39

FREE LIFE-SAVING AND GENERIC DRUGS

CONTEXT

- Under **Free Drugs Service Initiative (FDSI)** of **National Health Mission**, financial support and technical support is provided to States / UTs for provision of free essential medicines in public health facilities based on the requirements posted by them in their **Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs)** within their overall resource envelope.
- Public health being a State subject, the number of essential medicines to be provided free of cost is decided by the States and varies from State to State.
- However, the Ministry has provided illustrative list of essential medicines that should be provided at Sub Centres, Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres and District Hospitals.
- The list serves as a reference document for correct dosage form and strength for prescribing.

Drug and Vaccine Distribution Management System (DVDMS)

- Availability of the drugs is being monitored through **Drug and Vaccine Distribution Management System (DVDMS)**.
- It is a **web-based Supply Chain Management System** that deals in purchase, supply, distribution and inventory management of various drugs, sutures, surgical and consumable items.
- It has an in-built provision of monitoring and checking the availability of medicine at all facilities at district and state level.
- It has the functionality for distribution of drugs to patients, thus enabling tracking of consumption till last mile.

Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)

- It was launched by the **Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers** with an objective of making quality generic medicines available at affordable prices to all.
- Dedicated outlets known as **Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras (PMBJKs)** are opened to sell generic medicines at affordable rates under this umbrella scheme.

The National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM)

- It is one of the key instruments in healthcare delivery system of a country which includes accessible, affordable quality medicine at all the primary, secondary, tertiary levels of healthcare.
- It promotes rational use of medicines considering the three important aspects i.e. cost, safety and efficacy and prescription by generic names.

40

STRINGENT PUNISHMENT FOR SEXUAL CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN

CONTEXT

- Cabinet approves Amendment in the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012**

Amendments

- It will make punishment more stringent for committing sexual crimes against children including death penalty.
- The amendments also provide for levy of fines and imprisonment to curb child pornography.

Expected outcome

- The amendment is expected to discourage the trend of child sexual abuse by acting as a deterrent due to strong penal provisions incorporated in the Act.
- It intends to protect the interest of vulnerable children in times of distress and ensures their safety and dignity.
- The amendment is aimed to establish clarity regarding the aspects of child abuse and punishment thereof.

About the act

- The POCSO Act, 2012 was enacted to Protect the Children from Offences of Sexual Assault, Sexual harassment and pornography with due regard for safeguarding the interest and well-being of children. The act is gender neutral.
- The Act defines a child as any person below eighteen years of age, and regards the best interests and welfare of the child as matter of paramount importance at every stage, to ensure the healthy physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of the child.

41

CABINET APPROVES THE TRANSGENDER PERSONS BILL 2019

CONTEXT

- The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal to introduce The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019.

Background

- Transgender community is among one of the most marginalized communities in the country because they don't fit into the stereotypical categories of gender of 'men' or 'women'.
- Consequently, they face problems ranging from social exclusion to discrimination, lack of education facilities, unemployment, lack of medical facilities and so on.
- The Bill shall empower the transgender community socially, educationally and economically.

Impact

- It will benefit a large number of transgender persons, mitigate the stigma, discrimination and abuse against this marginalized section and bring them into the mainstream of society.
- This will lead to inclusiveness and will make the transgender persons productive members of the society.

42

INTER-STATE RIVER WATER DISPUTES BILL, 2019

CONTEXT

- The Union Cabinet has approved the Inter-State River Water disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2019 for adjudication of disputes relating to waters of inter-State rivers and river valley.

Impact

- Constitution of a single tribunal with different benches along with fixation of strict timelines for adjudication will result expeditious resolution of disputes relating to inter-state rivers.
- The amendments in the Bill will speed up the adjudication of water disputes referred to it.
- Central government is of the opinion that the water dispute cannot be settled by negotiations, the Central Government constitutes a Water Disputes Tribunal for the adjudication of the water dispute.

43

PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA-III (PMGSY-III)

CONTEXT

- In a major boost to rural road connectivity across the country, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval for the **launch of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-III (PMGSY-III)**.

Impact of the scheme

- This would facilitate easy and faster movement to and from Gramin Agricultural Markets (GrAMs), Higher Secondary Schools and Hospitals.
- Roads constructed under PMGSY would also be maintained properly.
- Misuse of Export Promotion Schemes

Background

- Foreign Trade Policy of the Government contains certain export promotion schemes which are primarily aimed at
- providing customs duty exemption on import of capital goods for promotion of exports
- providing customs duty exemption on raw materials, components and consumables for manufacturing goods for exports
- providing compensation for neutralizing the disadvantages suffered on the goods and services exported.
- All these schemes have inbuilt obligations/terms and conditions which are required to be complied by the persons availing such schemes. The Government regularly monitors such obligations.

Action against defaulters

- In case of non-compliance, action is taken against the defaulters.
- Such actions may include suspension, cancellation of the authorization, black listing the defaulter from availing any export promotion scheme, imposition of fiscal penalty, cancellation/suspension of Importer and Exporter Code number and initiating criminal proceedings.
- Such penal provisions are contained in the Foreign Trade Policy/ Hand Book of Procedures, Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992 and Foreign Trade (Regulation) Rules 1993.

44

PROMOTION OF AGRO EXPORTS

CONTEXT

- To promote agricultural exports, the Government has introduced a comprehensive Agriculture Export Policy

Objectives

- To diversify our export basket, destinations and boost high value- and value-added agricultural exports, including focus on perishables.
- To promote novel, indigenous, organic, ethnic, traditional and non-traditional Agri products exports.
- To provide an institutional mechanism for pursuing market access, tackling barriers and dealing with sanitary and phytosanitary issues.
- To strive to double India's share in world agri exports by integrating with global value chains.
- Enable farmers to get benefit of export opportunities in overseas market.

45 BANNING OF UNREGULATED DEPOSIT SCHEMES BILL

CONTEXT

- The Union Cabinet has approved the banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2019.

Expected outcome

- The Bill will help tackle the menace of illicit deposit taking activities in the country, which at present are exploiting regulatory gaps and lack of strict administrative measures to dupe poor and gullible people of their hard-earned savings.

46 CREATION OF GAGANYAAN NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONTEXT

- A Gaganyaan National Advisory Council has been created with members from different institutions and industries

Gaganyaan

- It is an Indian crewed orbital spacecraft intended to be the basis of the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme.
- The spacecraft is being designed to carry three people, and a planned upgraded version will be equipped with rendezvous and docking capability.
- In its maiden crewed mission, Indian Space Research Organisation's largely autonomous 3.7-tonne capsule will orbit the Earth at 400 km altitude for up to seven days with a three-person crew on board.
- The crewed vehicle is planned to be launched on ISRO's GSLV Mk III in December 2021.

47 IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL CRECHE SCHEME

CONTEXT

- National Crèche Scheme is being implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme through the States/UTs

ABOUT THE SCHEME

- A crèche is a facility which enables parents to leave their children while they are at work and where children are provided stimulating environment for their holistic development.
- Crèches are designed to provide group care to children, usually up to 6 years of age, who need care, guidance and supervision away from their home during the day.

Objectives

- To provide day-care facilities for children (6 months to 6 years) of working mothers in the community.
- To improve nutrition and health status of children.
- To promote physical, cognitive, social and emotional development (Holistic Development) of children.
- To educate and empower parents /caregivers for better childcare.

48

WORLD FOOD INDIA 2019

CONTEXT:

- World Food India 2019 is one of the largest food industry events in the world, which is held by the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI)**.
- The event, held biennially, is designed to offer a peek into India's food and culture as well as opportunities to invest and prosper from one of the world's largest consumer markets.
- The second edition will be held in New Delhi from 1st to 4th November 2019. The first edition was held in 2017.
- There will be seminars and exhibitions, and more than 75000 business delegates from over 60 countries will be attending.
- It is expected to be attended by more than 50 global CEOs.

Objective

- The intention is to increase investments into India in the food and food processing sector. The event will showcase opportunities in India in its growing food processing industry.
- **World Food India 2019 Theme is "Forging Partnerships for Growth"**

Need for the event

- The processing level in India is low at 7.7% and is behind economies such as China, Malaysia and the United States.
- India's share of processed food exports globally is only 2%.
- Food processing is vital in achieving the PM's vision of doubling farmers' income in India and reducing food wastage.

49

GROUP WORK SHED SCHEME FOR POWER LOOM SECTOR

CONTEXT:

- The Government is implementing Group Work shed Scheme for Power loom sector under Power Tex India. It is in operation since 2017.

Objectives

- To establish Group Work sheds for installation of modern looms in an existing or new cluster, which will provide required scale of economies for business operations.
- To organize power loom units in a cluster.
- To provide improved working condition in terms of more space, work environment, improve the work efficiency to enhance their competitiveness in the global market.
- Eligible beneficiaries would include weaver(s) and entrepreneur(s) associated with power loom units, including master weaver(s), registered co-operative societies of power loom weavers or any new entrepreneur(s) individually or in-group.
- Power loom unit would include weaving preparatory such as Warping, Sizing, Twisting (Two-for-one Twister and Three-for-one Twister), Texturising, Testing Laboratory and Common Facilities such as Sample Display room including stand-alone unit.

50

COMPREHENSIVE LEGISLATION ON CHILD ABUSE

CONTEXT:

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development has drafted the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018 as a comprehensive legislation to deal with issues of various aspects of trafficking of persons including trafficking of children.

ABOUT:

- The Bill aims to prevent trafficking of persons, to provide care, protection and rehabilitation to the victims of trafficking, to prosecute offenders and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- The bill was passed by the 16th Lok Sabha but could not be considered in the Rajya Sabha. Hence, it lapsed. Now the government has taken it up.
- The bill relates to issues of sexual exploitation etc. only in the context of those victims, who may also be children, who have been trafficked.

51

IWAI SHIP

CONTEXT:

- Ministry of State for Shipping (Independent Charge) and Chemical & Fertilizers flagged-off a ship of the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), carrying stone from Bhutan to be delivered in Bangladesh.

ABOUT:

- This is for the first time ever that an Indian waterway is being used for transport of cargo between two countries, using India for transit.
- The ship – MV AAI – has set sail from Dhubri in Assam and will travel to Narayanganj in Bangladesh, over river Brahmaputra and the Indo Bangladesh Protocol Route.
- Till now, Bhutan has been exporting significant quantity of stone aggregates to Bangladesh through the land route.

Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)

- It is the apex statutory body created in 1986 for the development and regulation of inland waterways has been designated as the Project Implementing Agency by the ministry of shipping.
- Headquartered in Noida, it is under the Ministry of Shipping.

52 FAST TRACK SPECIAL COURTS**CONTEXT:**

- The Government of India enacted "The Criminal (Law) Amendment Act, 2018" through which amendments were effected in the Indian Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, the Indian Evidence Act and The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.

ABOUT:

- This was done to bring in stringent provisions for expeditious trial and disposal of cases exclusively pertaining to sexual offences involving girls and women.
- A Scheme on the lines of other Centrally Sponsored Schemes for setting up Fast Track Special Courts for expeditious trial and disposal of rape cases has been formulated by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice.

53 INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF INDIA (IFF)**CONTEXT:**

- IFFI marks the Golden Jubilee Edition

ABOUT IFFI

- It is organized by the Government of India from 20th to 28th November every year in Goa.
- It aims at providing a common platform to the world of cinema to project the excellence of the art of filmmaking.
- It is India's most prestigious Film Festival and also the first International Film Festival held anywhere in Asia. It has been hosted by the state of Goa in 2004.
- The key sections at IFFI include International Competition, Festival Kaleidoscope, World Panorama, Indian Panorama, Masterclasses, In-conversations, Special Retrospectives, Homages, Open Air Screenings, Film Bazaar - organized by NFDC, etc.

54 COMPLIANCE OF GOOD SAMARITAN GUIDELINES**CONTEXT:**

- **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** has issued guidelines in pursuance of order of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India to protect the Good Samaritans in case of road accidents.

ABOUT:

- In the last ten years, road crashes have killed over 13 lakh people in India. According to the Law Commission of India, 50% of these victims died of preventable injuries and could have been saved if they had received care on time.
- A **Good Samaritan** is a bystander, who voluntarily comes forward to administer immediate assistance or emergency care to a person injured in an accident, or crash, or emergency medical condition, or emergency situation.
- On March 30, 2016, the Supreme Court of India gave "force of law" to the guidelines for the protection of Good Samaritans issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Guidelines lay down for the 'Good Samaritans

- The Good Samaritans will be treated respectfully and without any discrimination on the ground of the gender, religion, nationality and cast.
 - Any individual, except an eyewitness, who calls the police to inform of an accidental injury or death, need not reveal his or her personal details such as, full name, address, or the phone number.
 - The police will not compel the Good Samaritans to disclose his/her name identity, address and other such details in the police record form or log register and in procuring information or anything else.
 - The police will allow the Good Samaritans to leave after having provided the information available to him or her, and no further questions will be asked of him or her if he or she does not desire to be a witness.

55 SKILL INDIA MISSION CELEBRATES 4TH ANNIVERSARY

CONTEXT:

- **Skill India Mission** celebrates 4th Anniversary on **World Youth Skills Day**.

ABOUT SKILL INDIA

- It is a campaign launched by Prime Minister in 2015, which aims to train over 40 crore people in India in different skills by 2022.
- It includes various initiatives of the government like "**National Skill Development Mission**", "**National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015**", "**Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)**" and the "**Skill Loan scheme**".

PMKVY

- It is the flagship scheme of the **Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship**. The objective is to enable a large number of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in securing a better livelihood.
- It is applicable to any candidate of Indian nationality who is unemployed, school or college dropout, or as identified by the **Sector Skill Council (SSC)** for their respective job roles.

56 LIFESPAN OF SCHEDULED TRIBE PEOPLE

CONTEXT:

- According to the report of the expert committee of Tribal Health, the **International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai** analysed data from the national Census 2011 to estimate, by indirect methods, the life expectancy for the Scheduled Tribes (STs) and non-ST population in India.

ABOUT:

More on news:

- These estimates, as published in the Lancet, 2016, show that life expectancy at birth for ST population in India is 63.9 years, as against 67 years for general population.
- The reasons for shorter lifespan include gaps in various health and nutritional indicators, education level, poverty level, between ST and non-STs, traditional life styles, remoteness of habitations & dispersed population.

Steps taken by Government

- Under National Health Mission (NHM), support is being provided to States for strengthening their healthcare system including for upgradation of existing and setting up new public health infrastructure based on requirements posed by the States/UTs.
- All tribal districts whose composite health index is below the State average have been identified as High Priority Districts(HPDs) and receive more resources per capita under the NHM as compared to the rest of the districts in the State.
- As per the budget announcement 2017-18, 1.5 lakh Health Sub Centres and Primary Health Centres are being transformed into Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)
- The Ayushman Bharat – Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs) aim to provide an expanded range of services to include care for non – communicable diseases, palliative and rehabilitative care, Oral, Eye and ENT care, etc
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs supplements the efforts of Central line Ministries as well as State Governments for addressing needs of education, health and nutrition, skill development, livelihood etc. of tribals/ tribal areas by way of critical gaps filling.
