

One District One Product



- The Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) under Centrally Sponsored Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PM FME Scheme), provides financial, technical and business support for upgradation of existing micro food processing enterprises.
- The scheme adopts One District One Product (ODOP) approach to reap the benefits of scale in terms of procurement of inputs, availing common services and marketing of products.
- ODOP for the scheme has framework for value chain development and alignment of support infrastructure.
- This scheme is being implemented for a period of five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25 with an outlay of Rs. 10,000 crores.
- ODOP for 707 districts of 35 State/UTs have been approved by the MOFPI.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare through One District One Focus Produce (ODOFP) for 728 districts of 36 States/UTs converge resources towards ODOP from ongoing centrally sponsored schemes such as Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), schemes of Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
- The scheme envisages strengthening backward and forward linkages, provision of common facilities, incubation centres, training, research and development (R&D), marketing and branding.
- The enhanced capacity of processing and value addition in agriculture and allied sector products will lead to a better price realization for the farmers.
- The identified products have potential for both domestic demand and export and will be promoted in a cluster approach through the converged resources of the Government of India.

Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India



- Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI), a sub scheme of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), launched in 2010-11, is being implemented in seven eastern states namely Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Eastern Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
- Under the programme, assistance is being provided to the farmers for organizing cluster demonstrations on rice and wheat, seed production and distribution, nutrient management and soil ameliorants, integrated pest management, cropping system-based training, asset-building such as farm machineries & implements, irrigation devices, site specific activities and post harvest & marketing support, etc.
- Under the programme, Government of India allocates fund to the State and further allocation to district is made by the respective State Government.
- BGREI programme is intended to address the constraints limiting the productivity of “rice based cropping systems” in eastern India.
- Under these systems, the other crops like wheat, coarse-cum-nutri cereals, pulses & oilseeds are already covered.

NAFED e- Kisan Mandis



- NAFED e-Kisan mandis (NeKM) is electronic trading platform with physical infra-structure at each proposed location in partnership with local Farmer Producer Organisations (FPCx and Cooperatives) to be integrated with a National Level Digital Marketing Platform
- The mandi has both physical and virtual infrastructure and it is based on spoke & hub model.
- The physical infra-structure will include digital platform with auctioning facility, pack-house (including sorting-grading, packing and pre-cooling facilities), warehouse and cold storages if required.
- FPOs will get funding support through Agriculture Infra-structure Fund (AIF) and subsidies available under various Central and State Government schemes.
- The mandis are made at farm gate bringing buyers to farmers.
- Locations of NeKMs in which NAFED has entered into agreement with FPOs:
- Vashi-Maharashtra, Kachrod-Madhya Pradesh, Morbi-Gujarat, Dholbare-Maharashtra , Gultekdi -Maharashtra.

Doorstep Delivery of Seeds



- The States are primarily responsible to ensure production, availability and distribution/ supply of quality seeds to the farmers through its Department of Agriculture, state farms, State Seeds Corporation, State Agricultural Universities (SAUs), Cooperatives and Private Seed Companies etc.
- The Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments by providing breeder seeds for seed chain and coordinating seeds requirement and availability through the mechanism of Zonal Seeds Review Meetings prior to each sowing season and weekly video conferences.
- The steps taken/being taken for making available quality seeds to the farmers are as under:
 - The Government of India is providing financial assistance for production and distribution of seeds of High Yielding Varieties (HYVs) of different crops to the States and implementing agencies through various ongoing crop development programmes/ schemes viz.
 - National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Bringing Green Revolution in Eastern India (BGREI), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), Sub-Mission on Seeds & Planting Material (SMSP) etc.
 - The states are encouraged by the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers' Welfare (DAC&FW) to develop a Seed Rolling Plan in advance as per the estimated requirement of seeds in their state, so that the seeds of required variety could be made available at right time to the farmers.
 - DAC&FW also ensures fixation of uniform breeder seeds price in consultation with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for minimization of foundation and certified seed costs.
 - Indian Institute of Seed Science, ICAR is also coordinating the production of quality seed in the country through the network of 63 cooperating centres under National Seed Project of ICAR.
 - Single window system for effective planning and implementation of seed production programme and computerized seed sale outlets has been established to guarantee ease in accessibility of quality seeds to farmers at all centres.
 - In some states quality seed is being made available at every village within the reach of farmers and farmer is facilitated to purchase seed of choice from the desired outlets.
 - Similarly, procurements centres at villages have been established to facilitate procurement by the marketing department.

INS Jalashwa reaches Madagascar's Port Ehoala with 1000 MT rice, one lakh Hydroxychloroquine tablets



- Mission Sagar' builds on the excellent relations existing between the two countries to battle the natural calamities and its resultant difficulties.
- The deployment also resonates the vision of Prime Minister of Security and Growth for All in the Region 'SAGAR' and highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with the countries in the IOR.

India welcomes initiative announced by Saudi Arabia for fostering peace in Yemen



- India has welcomed the initiative announced by Saudi Arabia for fostering peace in Yemen.
- External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said that India has noted that the initiative proposes a comprehensive ceasefire across Yemen under the supervision of the United Nations.
- It also provides for consultations between the Yemeni parties to reach a political resolution under the auspices of the UN.
- He said, India supports all efforts to find a political solution to the Yemeni crisis.
- India has hoped that all parties in Yemen would be able to come together to the negotiating table soon to end the conflict.

Bangladesh celebrating historic event of liberation from Pakistan, birth centenary of its founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman



- This year also marks 50 years of the liberation of Bangladesh from Pakistan
- The language movement played a crucial role in the birth of Bangladesh. On the 21st of February, 1952 Pakistani forces killed students protesting against Urdu imposition.
- The day has since been observed as a tribute to martyrs.
- Professor Muhammad describes the prevalent sentiment in the country at the time against the imposition of Urdu and the calls for preservation of the Bangla identity.

Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO)



- The Government of India had set up a Committee on Corporate Governance under the Chairmanship of Shri Naresh Chandra, former Cabinet Secretary.
- The Naresh Chandra Committee inter-alia recommended the setting up of a Corporate Serious Fraud Office.

- Following are the are the recommendations of the committee which explain the role of SFIO:
- A Corporate Serious Fraud Office should be set up in the Department of Company Affairs with specialists inducted on the basis of transfer/deputation and on special term contracts.
- This should be in the form of a multi-disciplinary team that not only uncovers the fraud, but able to direct and supervise prosecutions under various economic legislations through appropriate agencies.
- There should be a Task Force constituted for each case under a designated team leader
- In the interest of adequate control and efficiency, a Committee each, headed by the Cabinet Secretary should directly oversee the appointments to, and functioning of this office, and coordinate the work of concerned departments and agencies.
- Later, a legislative framework, along with the lines of the SFO in the UK, should be set up to enable the CSFO to investigate all aspects of the fraud, and direct the prosecution in appropriate Courts.
- It is a multi-disciplinary organisation under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, consisting of experts in the field of accountancy, forensic auditing, banking, law, information technology, investigation, company law, capital market and taxation etc. for detecting and prosecuting or recommending for prosecution white collar crimes/ frauds.

Mankidia tribals of Simlipal



- The Similipal Tiger Reserve has been on fire since February 11, 2021. Among the communities affected are two of the 13 particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTG) in Odisha — Mankidias and Khadias — that have lost their livelihoods to the inferno.
- Mankidia tribals of Simlipal
- Found in Odisha Lives in Simlipal Tiger Reserve Mankidia is one of the 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) Mankidia, a marginalised group that critically depends on making rope with siali fibre that's richly available in Similipal.

- List Orissa state houses 13 Primitive Tribal Groups namely

1. Birhor

2. Bondo Poraja

3. Didayi

4. Dongria Khond:

5. Juang

6. Kharia

7. Kutia Khond

8. Lanjia Soura

9. Lodha

10. Paudi Bhuyan

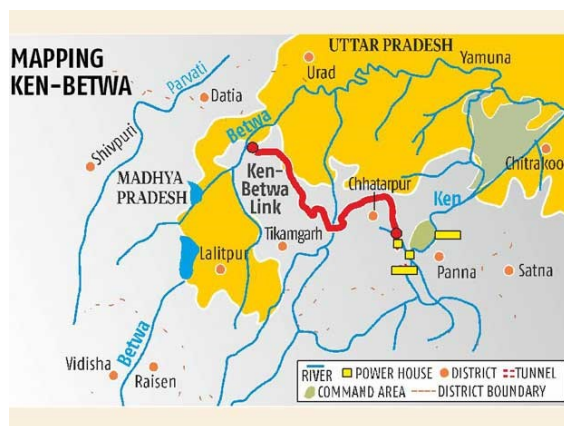
11. Soura

12. Chuktia Bhunjia

13. Mankidia

- The Mankidia (also known as Mankidi, Mankirdia) are a nomadic tribal group found mainly in many districts of Odisha, India – particularly Mayurbhanj, Sambalpur, Kalahandi and Sundergarh.
- According to the 2011 census, the population of Mankidia was 2,222. They are classified as a Scheduled Tribe by the Indian government.

Ken Betwa river link project



- A memorandum of agreement has been signed between the Union Minister of Jal Shakti and the chief ministers of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh to implement the Ken-Betwa Link Project
- It is the first project under the National Perspective Plan for interlinking of rivers.
- Under this project, water from the Ken river will be transferred to the Betwa river through a canal.

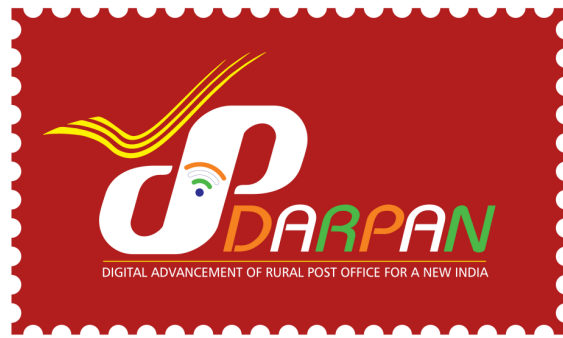
- Both these rivers are tributaries of river Yamuna.
- Cost: As per the Comprehensive Detailed Project Report, the cost of Ken-Betwa Link Project is estimated at Rs 35,111.24 crore at 2017-18 prices.
- It would benefit the Bundelkhand region , a drought-prone region, which spreads across 13 districts of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
- The project will benefit to the water-starved region of Bundelkhand, especially in the districts of Panna, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Sagar, Damoh, Datia, Vidisha, Shivpuri and Raisen of Madhya Pradesh and Banda, Mahoba, Jhansi and Lalitpur of Uttar Pradesh.
- The project is expected to provide annual irrigation of 10.62 lakh hectares, drinking water supply to about 62 lakh people and also generate 103 MW of hydropower.

New Defence Production Policy To Boost Make In India Initiative



- A Draft 'Defence Production & Export Promotion Policy (DPEPP)' 2020 was placed in the public domain by the Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence.
- This draft policy is positioned as the Ministry of Defence's overarching guiding document to provide a focused, structured and significant thrust to defense production capabilities of the country for self-reliance and exports.
- It envisions to make India amongst the top countries of the world in the Defence sector, including the Aerospace and Naval Shipbuilding sectors, from design to production, with the active participation of the public and private sector.
- This policy, inter alia, aims to create an environment that encourages R&D, rewards innovation, creates Indian Intellectual Property (IP) ownership, and promotes a robust and self-reliant defense industry
- DAP-2020 is a product of extensive analysis, deliberations, interactions and focused formulations.
- It aims to further 'Self Reliance' of the country in the defence sector by promoting indigenization and bring 'Ease of Doing Business' with emphasis on Simplification, Delegation, Reduced Timelines and make the process as Industry friendly.

DARPAN

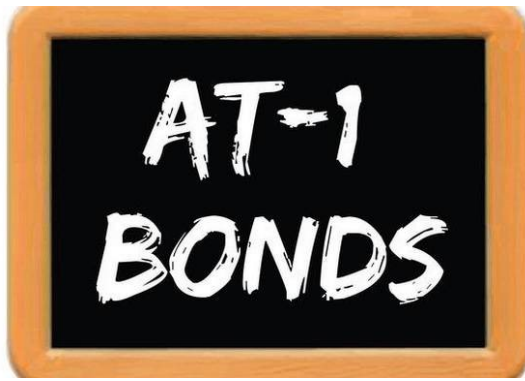


- DARPAN stands for The Digital Advancement of Rural Post Office for A New India
- DARPAN is Information Technology (IT) modernisation project aimed at realising financial inclusion of un-banked rural population.
- It offers core banking services to the account holders.

Project:

- The project intends to provide low power technology solution to each branch postmaster (BPM).
- It aims to increase rural reach of Department of Posts (DoP) and enable BOs to increase traffic of all financial remittances, savings accounts, Rural Postal Life Insurance and Cash Certificates.
- It also aims to improve mail operations processes by allowing for automated booking and delivery of accountable article.
- It will also increase revenue using retail post business and provide third party applications and make disbursements for social security schemes such as MGNREGS.
- The NGO DARPAN was earlier maintained by erstwhile Planning Commission, which has been replaced by the NITI Aayog w.e.f. 1st January, 2015.
- The Portal, therefore, is being maintained at present under the aegis of NITI Aayog.
- NITI Aayog invites all Voluntary Organizations (VOs)/ Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to Sign Up on the Portal.
- VOs/NGOs play a major role in the development of the nation by supplementing the efforts of the Government.
- This portal enables VOs/NGOs to enrol centrally and thus facilitates creation of a repository of information about VOs/NGOs, Sector/State wise.
- The Portal facilitates VOs/NGOs to obtain a system generated Unique ID, as and when signed.
- The Unique ID is mandatory to apply for grants under various schemes of Ministries/ Departments/Governments Bodies.

What are AT1 bonds?



- These are unsecured bonds which have perpetual tenure—or no maturity date.
- They have a call option, which can be used by the banks to buy these bonds back from investors.
- AT1 bonds are subordinate to all other debt and only senior to common equity.

- Mutual funds are among the largest investors in perpetual debt instruments, and hold over Rs 35,000 crore of the outstanding additional tier-I bond issuances of Rs90,000 crore.

What's the impact on banks?

- AT1 bonds have emerged as the capital instrument of choice for state banks as they strive to shore up capital ratios.
- If there are restrictions on investments by mutual funds in such bonds, banks will find it tough to raise capital at a time when they need funds in the wake of soaring bad assets.
- A major chunk of AT1 bonds is bought by MFs.
- State banks have cumulatively raised around \$ 2.3 billion in AT1 instruments in 2020-21, amid a virtual absence of such issuance by private banks (barring one instance) in the aftermath of Yes
- Bank's AT1 write-down in March 2020.
- For banks, the latest Sebi relaxation doesn't give any major relief as they are likely to find it difficult to get investors for AT1 bonds

IMD launches portal to aid climate change mitigation in India



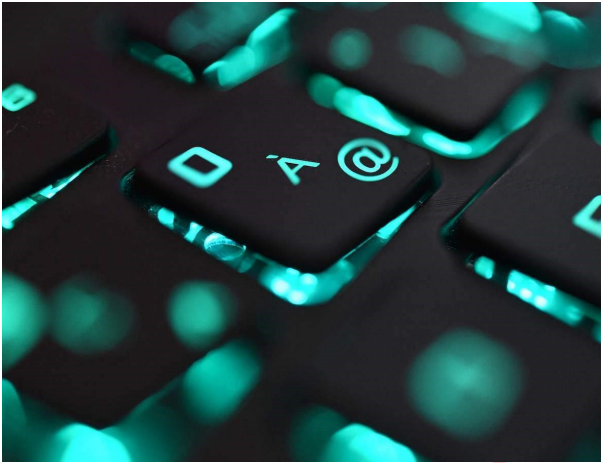
- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) launched the Climate Data Service Portal (CDSP) on the occasion of World Meteorological Day on March 23.
- According to IMD, CDSP will help researchers and the government in climate change studies, planning and mitigation strategies and offer early warning to people.
- Statistical analysis of meteorological data on the portal is still under development.

Indian astronauts complete training for 'Gaganyaan' in Russia



- Four Indian astronauts, who were undergoing training in Russia for India's first human space flight mission 'Gaganyaan', have completed the training.
- The training began on February 10, 2020, but it was temporarily interrupted due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- Russian state space corporation head Dmitry Rogozin said Russia discussed future bilateral space projects with the Indian ambassador.

Nearly 193% rise in cyber attacks in India in 2020: CERT-In data



- Cyber attacks in the country rose by 193.5% last year amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Union Home Ministry told the Lok Sabha on Tuesday citing data from Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In).
- As many as 11,58,208 incidents were reportedly recorded in 2020, compared to 3,94,499 in 2019.
- Cyber experts blamed a lack of cybersecurity awareness for phishing and malware attacks.

World's first ship tunnel to be built in Norway for \$330 million



- Norway has received the go-ahead to construct the world's first ship tunnel to help vessels navigate the treacherous Stadhavet Sea.
- First announced a few years ago by the Norwegian Coastal Administration, the 118-foot-wide tunnel will be built under the mountainous Stadhavet peninsula in northwestern Norway.
- It will cost around \$330 million to build the tunnel expected to complete in 2025-2026.

Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)



- The Election Commission has decided to use Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) along with Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) at all the Polling Stations in the upcoming assembly elections in four states and Union territory.
- Voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) is a method of providing feedback to voters using EVMs.
- A VVPAT is intended as an independent verification system for voting machines designed to allow voters to verify that their vote was cast correctly, and to provide a means to audit the stored electronic results.
- It contains the name of the candidate for whom vote has been cast and symbol of the party/individual candidate.
- The VVPAT helps to detect potential election fraud or malfunction in the Electronic Voting Machine.
- It provides a means to audit the stored electronic results. It serves as an additional barrier to change or destroy votes.
- The EVMs with VVPAT system ensure the accuracy of the voting system with fullest transparency and restores the confidence of the voters.
- EVMs and VVPATs also speed up the election process as counting votes on EVMs takes much lesser time than counting paper ballots.

Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products (RODTEP) scheme



- The scheme was announced in 2020 as a replacement for the Merchandise Export from India Scheme (MEIS), which was not compliant with the rules of the World Trade Organisation.
- The scheme would refund to exporters the embedded central, state and local duties or taxes that were so far not being rebated or refunded and were, therefore, placing

Significance:

- Indian exporters will be able to meet the international standards for exports as affordable testing and certification will be made available to exporters within the country instead of relying on international organizations.

- Also under it, tax assessment is set to become fully automatic for exporters.
- Businesses will get access to their refunds for GST via an automatic refund-route. This would increase the economy for the country and working capital for the enterprise.

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2021



- The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2021 represents one of the world's largest annual gatherings of the 'ICT for development' community.
- It is co-organized by International Telecommunications Union (ITU), UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD.
- Indian scenario:
- The telecom minister mentioned that under the flagship program Bharat Net, nearly 6,00,000 villages are being connected through laying of more than 4,00,000 Km length of optical fiber cable and use of satellite communication services.
- Through submarine cable networks small and remote islands of Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep and other inaccessible areas are being connected with funding from Government.
- Establishment of ITU Area office and Innovation Centre in India with involvement of SMEs, Academia and Startups in the region will go a long way in development of technologies, standards and solutions best suited for rural and remote areas of developing nations.

The Gandhi Peace Prize



- The Gandhi Peace Prize is an annual award instituted by the Government of India since 1995, the 125th birth anniversary commemoration year of Mahatma Gandhi.
- The Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2020 is being conferred on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
- The prestigious prize for the year 2019 is being conferred on late Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman in recognition of his vision to strengthen relations with India, and his efforts to promote peace and non-violence in the Gulf region, the ministry said.

- The Gandhi Peace Prize is an annual award instituted by the Government of India since 1995, the 125th birth anniversary commemoration year of Mahatma Gandhi
- The award is open to all people regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or sex.
- The jury for Gandhi Peace Prize is chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and comprises of two ex-officio members, namely the chief justice of India and leader of the single largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha.
- Two eminent members are also part of the jury -- Om Birla, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, and Bindeshwar Pathak, Founder of Sulabh International Social Service Organisation.

Bacteria found on International Space Station named after Indian scientist Seyed Ajmal Khan



- Four species of bacteria have been discovered onboard the International Space Station (ISS), one of which has been named after Indian biodiversity scientist Seyed Ajmal Khan.
- Researchers from the University of Hyderabad, working with NASA, have described the discovery and isolation of four strains of bacteria belonging to the family Methylo bacteriaceae from different locations aboard the ISS.
- The rod-shaped bacteria found in ISS are involved in nitrogen fixation, plant growth and biocontrol activity against plant pathogens.
- According to the researchers, this bacteria may hold the key to growing crops in space.
- However, further experimental biology is needed to prove that it is, indeed, a potential game-changer for space farming.
- To grow plants in extreme places where resources are minimal, isolation of novel microbes that help to promote plant growth under stressful conditions is essential.