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1. Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi Launches Two New Schemes on World MSME Day in New Delhi (June 28, 2024)

Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Jitan Ram Manjhi, launched two new schemes on World MSME Day in New Delhi on June 27.

An Overview of the News

- Majhi launched two new schemes MSME Team and Yashaswini Abhiyan.
- **MSME Team:**
 - Launched MSME Team initiative to facilitate inclusion of micro and small enterprises on Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), with focus on women-owned enterprises.
 - It aims to help five lakh micro and small enterprises join the Open Network for Digital Commerce.
- **Yashaswini Abhiyan:**
 - Launched Yashaswini Abhiyan to formalise and empower women-owned micro enterprises through training, guidance and awareness campaigns.
 - Focuses on raising mass awareness to formalise informal micro enterprises owned by women and provide necessary support.
- During the Udyami Bharat event, Mr. Manjhi emphasized the importance of MSMEs adopting digital and technological solutions in a rapidly changing industrial landscape.

International MSME Day

- International Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Day or World MSME Day is observed across the world on 27 June every year.
- This year, the theme for MSME Day 2024 is **“Leveraging Power and Resilience of Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) to Accelerate Sustainable Development and Eradicate Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises.”**
- The United Nations (UN) designated June 27 as Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Day and this was done through a resolution passed in the **United Nations General Assembly in April 2017.**

2. Uttar Pradesh government to organize three-day 'Shri Anna Mahotsav' (Oct. 19, 2023)

The Uttar Pradesh government is organizing a three-day event called Shri Anna Mahotsav in Lucknow from October 27 to 29, which aims to promote the use of millets.

An Overview of the News

- It will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at Indira Gandhi Pratishthan.
- Farmers from different divisions will participate each day to create awareness about millet cultivation and consumption.
- The event will have around 40 stalls showcasing millet-based food products.

About Shree Anna:

- Origin: 'Shri Anna' is a word that combines 'Shri', meaning divine grace, and 'Anna', meaning food grains. It represents a grain associated with divine grace.
- Nutritional Value: Millets are small-grain cereal crops known for their adaptability and rich nutrients. India plays a leading role in promoting millets globally.
- Varieties: Large and small millets provide essential nutrients and dietary fiber.
- Benefits: Millet fights malnutrition and provides economic benefits to farmers.

Shree Anna Yojana:

- Introduction: Launched in Budget 2023-24 to encourage millet cultivation and increase farmers' income.
- Target: The scheme promotes millet cultivation, economic well-being and food security while eliminating malnutrition.

Importance of Millet:

- Nutritional Features: Millets are known for their exceptional nutrition, which includes complex carbs, dietary fiber and medicinal compounds.
- Key Nutrients: They are rich in iron, zinc, calcium, vitamin B and other essential minerals.
- Adaptability: Millet thrives in a variety of conditions, requiring minimal fertilizers and pesticides.
- Global Leadership: India is a leader in promoting millets recognized for its nutritional and economic benefits.

3. Sagar Parikrama, Phase-9 launched in Tamil Nadu (Oct. 9, 2023)

Sagar Parikrama, Phase-9 started on October 7, 2023 at Tiruvandanai, Tamil Nadu.

An Overview of the News

- Sagar Parikrama, Phase-9 program was inaugurated by Union Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Parshottam Rupala in the presence of Dr. L. Murugan, Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and other dignitaries.

Inauguration of Fish Farmer Producer Cooperative Society:

- Union Minister Parshottam Rupala also inaugurated the Fish Farmers Producers Cooperative Society Limited at Manamelkudi in Pudukkottai district.

Matsya Sampada Jagrukta Abhiyan:

- Government of India launched "Matsya Sampada Jagrukta Abhiyaan" along with Sagar Parikrama, Phase-9.
- This strategic initiative aims to increase awareness among fishermen and stakeholders across the country.

About Sagar Parikrama

- Sagar Parikrama is a navigational voyage organized in all the coastal states/union territories.
- Its objectives include demonstrating solidarity with fishermen, disseminating information on fisheries-related schemes, promoting best practices and encouraging responsible fisheries.
- Sagar Parikrama focuses on connecting with fishermen at the grassroots level, understanding their challenges, promoting sustainable fishing practices and ensuring government subsidies and initiatives reach the targeted beneficiaries.
- Eight phases of Sagar Parikrama have been completed in the coastal states/UTs.

Major stages of Sagar Parikrama:

- Phase 1: Started from Mandvi, Gujarat on March 5, 2022 with the theme 'Revolution to Peace'.
- Phase 2: Covering seven locations in Gujarat and Diu and Daman from September 23 to 25, 2022.
- Phase 3: Started from Surat-Hazira port, Gujarat on February 19, 2023 and covers five locations in North Maharashtra.

Status of Fisheries in India:

- India is the second largest aquaculture fish producer globally.
- India ranks fourth in global fish exports, contributing about 7.7% of global fish production.
- India leads the world in inland fish production and ranks third in overall fish production.
- The fishing sector provides livelihood to more than 2.8 crore people in the country.

4. PM Modi unveils development projects in Chhattisgarh (Oct. 3, 2023)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a series of development projects in Jagdalpur, the administrative center of the tribal Bastar division of Chhattisgarh.

An Overview of the News

These projects with a **total estimated cost of more than Rs 26 thousand crore include:**

- Inauguration of NMDC's Greenfield Steel Plant built at a cost of approximately Rs 24 thousand crore in Nagarnar, Bastar. This integrated steel plant is expected to produce high-quality steel, create employment opportunities for thousands of people and increase the prominence of the region in the global steel industry.
- Laying of foundation stone for the upgrade work of Jagdalpur Railway Station.
- Inauguration of the new rail line between Antagarh and Taroki, as well as the inauguration of the double rail line project between Jagdalpur and Dantewada.
- Flagged off-train service between Taroki and Raipur, which aims to improve rail connectivity and boost economic development in the tribal region.
- Inauguration of the new road constructed between Kunkuri and Chhattisgarh-Jharkhand border on National Highway-45.
- These initiatives are expected to enhance connectivity, stimulate economic growth and provide significant opportunities for the local population in the Bastar region.

About Bastar:

- Bastar is a district of Chhattisgarh, known for its lush green forests and rich tribal culture.
- The region has a predominantly tribal population, including groups such as Gond, Maria, Muria, Bhatra, Halba and Dhruva.
- The Indravati river flowing through this region holds cultural importance.
- Jagdalpur serves as a cultural and handicrafts center, with notable attractions such as the Anthropology Museum and the Dancing Cactus Art Centre.
- Bastar is a popular tourist destination with historical sites like Bastar Palace, and Bastar Dussehra, waterfalls like Chitrakote and Tirathgarh, and Danteshwari Temple.

Greenfield Project:

- A greenfield project is a venture that lacks any restrictions imposed by previous work.
- This can be compared to constructing a building on a piece of land that has not had prior development, where there is no need to demolish or renovate existing structures.
- Greenfield investing involves investing in a physical company-related structure, such as an office or manufacturing facility, in an area where no previous facilities exist. The term is derived from the concept of building a facility on a piece of untouched land such as a forest or farmland.
- Greenfield projects involve the construction of entirely new power plants, airports and factories that are built from the ground up on undeveloped land.

- In contrast, projects that involve upgrading or modifying existing facilities are called
- brownfield projects. This difference arises from the fact that already existing sites or facilities may be contaminated or polluted.

5. Winter action plan unveiled by Delhi Chief Minister (Oct. 1, 2023)

On 29 September 2023, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal introduced a 15-point 'Winter Action Plan' to tackle air pollution in the upcoming winter season.

An Overview of the News

- The 15-point 'Winter Action Plan' includes measures to tackle pollution and improve air quality in Delhi.
- Steps have been taken in Punjab to diversify crops, promote short-duration paddy varieties and encourage the conversion of stubble into energy or fertilizer.

Factors contributing to air pollution:

- The article highlights the factors that contribute to air pollution in NCR during winter, including low wind speeds, cold temperatures, stubble burning, vehicle emissions and industrial pollutants.
- Analysis last winter showed that Delhi had the highest levels of PM2.5 among 27 NCR towns and cities.

Pollution control measures and expert opinion:

- Pollution control measures in Delhi include enforcing dust pollution norms at construction sites, anti-smog guns, mechanized cleaning, PUC certificate checking and monitoring air pollution hotspots.
- Experts stress the need for long-term emission reduction efforts, not just temporary measures, to effectively deal with air pollution.
- The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has permitted the use of diesel generator (DG) sets for emergency services in NCR even during the GRAP restrictions till December 31 this year.

6. Union Minister launches UDAN 5.2 and HeliSeva App at 5th Heli Summit in Khajuraho (Sept. 25, 2023)

On July 25, 2023, Union Minister of Civil Aviation and Steel, Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurated the 5th Heli Summit (Helicopter and Small Aircraft Summit) in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh, in which he introduced UDAN 5.2 and HeliSeva App.

An Overview of the News

- The 5th Helicopter and Small Aircraft Summit was jointly organized by the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Government of Madhya Pradesh, Pawan Hans Limited and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

- The central theme of the 5th Helicopter and Small Aircraft Summit was **"Reaching the Last Mile: Regional Connectivity through Helicopters and Small Aircraft."**

Udaan 5.2 and HeliSeva App:

- During the 5th Heli Summit, Jyotiraditya Scindia unveiled the next phase of the "Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik" scheme.
- UDAN 5.2 aims to establish air connectivity to remote areas of the country using aircraft with a seating capacity of less than 20 passengers.
- Jyotiraditya Scindia also introduced the Heliseva mobile application, which is designed to simplify the approval process for helicopter operators by providing a single-window service platform for government officials.

Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) Scheme:

- The Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) known as UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) was launched by the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation on 21 October 2016.
- The inaugural flight under the UDAN scheme took place in April 2017, connecting Shimla to Delhi.
- The primary objective of UDAN is to increase access to air travel by capping airfares on regional routes, with the government also providing Viability Gap Funding (VGF) to compensate airline operators for losses incurred due to low fares.
- As of now, the UDAN scheme covers 148 airports across India.

About Khajuraho:

- Khajuraho, located in the Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh, is famous for its Hindu and Jain temples.
- Built by the Chandela rulers between 950-1050 AD, these temples are known for the grandeur of their architecture.
- UNESCO granted the temples of Khajuraho World Heritage Site status in 1986 due to their remarkable architectural beauty.

About Madhya Pradesh

- Governor - Mangubhai Patel
- Chief Minister - Shivraj Singh Chauhan
- Capital - Bhopal

7. PM Narendra Modi launches Sankalp Saptah (Sept. 30, 2023)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a week-long program called "Sankalp Saptah" for aspirational blocks in New Delhi on 30 September 2023.

An Overview of the News

- The objective of the Sankalp Saptah is **to effectively implement the Aspirational Block Programme, which aims to improve governance at the block level and enhance the quality of life of the citizens.**
- About three thousand panchayat and block level representatives and officials from across the country will participate in this program to be held at Bharat Mandapam in the national capital.
- Additionally, around two lakh people including block and panchayat level officials and farmers will join the program virtually.
- Sankalp Saptah will be celebrated in all 500 aspirational blocks of 329 districts of the country from 3rd to 9th October.
- During this week each day will focus on a specific development theme on which all the Aspirational Blocks will work.

The topics for the first six days are as follows:

1. Sampurna Swasthya (Comprehensive Health)
2. Suposhit Pariwaar (Well-nourished Family)
3. Swachhta (Cleanliness)
4. Krishi (Agriculture)
5. Shiksha (Education)
6. Samridhi Diwas (Prosperity Day)

The final day of the week will be dedicated to celebrating the work done throughout the week, known as Sankalp Saptah - Samavesh Samaroh".

8. Champawat and Pithoragarh districts included in the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme to promote tourism (Sept. 23, 2023)

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has included two frontier districts of Uttarakhand, Champawat, and Pithoragarh, in the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme.

An Overview of the News

- The objective of the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme is **to promote tourism activities and develop these areas from a tourism point of view, providing basic facilities to visitors.**
- As part of the Swadesh Darshan scheme, Gunji, a place in Pithoragarh district, is set to take up development work in the tourism sector, with an allocated budget of Rs 75 crore.

Swadesh Darshan Scheme:

- Swadesh Darshan Scheme is a central sector scheme launched by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
- It aims **to develop theme-based tourism circuits while enhancing the potential of India's tourism sector.**
- The scheme is aligned with other national programs such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill India, and Make in India to harness the potential of tourism for employment generation and economic growth.

15 theme-based circuits under Swadesh Darshan:

1. Buddha Circuit: Covers important Buddhist pilgrimage sites in states like Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.
2. Coastal Circuit: It aims to promote India as a "Sun, Sea and Surf" destination covering the states along the coastline.
3. Desert Circuit: Focuses on showcasing the deserts of India including the Thar Desert, Kutch and areas like Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh.
4. Eco Circuit: Develops eco-friendly and natural destinations in states like Kerala, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Mizoram and Jharkhand.
5. Heritage Circuit: Preserves and promotes cultural heritage at UNESCO World Heritage sites in many states.
6. North East Circuit: Promotes tourism development in the North Eastern states.
7. Himalayan Circuit: Extends to the northern border states including Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and the North-East region.
8. Sufi Circuit: Celebrates Sufi practices and cultural heritage.
9. Krishna Circuit: Focuses on religious tourist destinations.
10. Ramayana Circuit: Centers around places associated with the stories of Lord Rama, mainly in Uttar Pradesh.
11. Rural Circuit: It aims to revive rural economies and provide an authentic Indian experience to tourists.
12. Tirthankara Circuit: Jain Tirthankaras and their teachings are commemorated through various pilgrimage sites across the country.
13. Wildlife Circuit: Focuses on wildlife tourism, especially in states like Assam and Madhya Pradesh.
14. Tribal Circuit: Provides insight into the tribal traditions of India, covering states like Chhattisgarh, Nagaland and Telangana.
15. Spiritual Circuit: Attracts spiritual tourists, focusing on states like Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Bihar, Rajasthan and Puducherry, which are known for their spiritual significance.

9. Mukhyamantri Atmanirbhar Asom Scheme launched by the Chief Minister of Assam (Sept. 22, 2023)

Mukhyamantri Atmanirbhar Asom Scheme is a government initiative launched by the Chief Minister of Assam, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma.

An Overview of the News

- Mukhyamantri Atmanirbhar Asom Scheme aims **to provide employment opportunities and financial assistance to the unemployed youth of the state.**
- Its primary goal is **to connect 2 lakh eligible individuals in two years, with a focus on assisting 1 lakh people in the financial year 2023-2024 and another 1 lakh people in the financial year 2024-2025.**
- The eligibility standards and other restrictions will be made public on September 23, 2023, when the scheme officially launches.
- The scheme will have an online registration portal **launched on September 23, 2023.**

Mukhyamantri Atmanirbhar Asom Scheme: Financial assistance for 2 lakh recipients with interest-free loan and training:-

- Assam Atmanirbhar Yojana aims **to provide assistance to 2 lakh individuals in the next two years.**
- In the financial year 2023-2024, 100,000 recipients will receive an amount of Rs 1 lakh, and an additional 100,000 will receive the same amount in the next financial year, depending on their performance.
- Since the loan is funded by the government, no interest will be charged on the principal amount.
- Beneficiaries are not required to repay the loan for a period of five years. The specific loan tenure and repayment schedule have not yet been determined.
- Selected applicants will undergo a one-month training program to enhance their skills in management, accounting, and business.

10. ACKO unveils 'Platinum Health Plan' (Sept. 20, 2023)

ACKO, a leading insurance company, has introduced a new health insurance product known as "ACKO Platinum Health Plan".

An Overview of the News

"ACKO Platinum Health Plan" offers several notable features including:

- **100% Bill Payment:** It guarantees payment of the entire medical bill, reducing the financial burden during a health crisis.

- **No limit on room rent:** There is no restriction on room rent, giving greater flexibility to policyholders.
- **Zero waiting period:** Policyholders get instant coverage without any waiting period.

Promotion Strategy:

- To promote this new health insurance scheme, ACKO has brought back the popular characters Munna Bhai and Circuit played by Sanjay Dutt and Arshad Warsi from the iconic Bollywood film series.
- The title of the ad campaign is "**Health Insurance ki Subah Ho Gayi Mamu.**"
- The campaign is directed by renowned filmmaker Rajkumar Hirani, who is known for his storytelling abilities.

Alignment with company goals:

- Ashish Mishra, EVP-Marketing at ACKO, noted that the characters of Munna and Circuit align with the company's mission to challenge traditional health insurance norms and simplify the process for customers.

Educational Focus:

- The campaign aims **to educate the audience about the key aspects of ACKO Platinum Health Plan**, including **zero waiting period, 100% bill payments, importance of full disclosure for stress-free claims and ease of filing claims.**