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1. Government approves Green Energy Corridor Phase-II (Jan. 7, 2022)

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, today approved the Green Energy Corridor (GEC) Phase-II for Intra-State Transmission System (InSTS).

- The scheme will facilitate grid integration and power evacuation of approximately 20 GW of Renewable Energy (RE) power projects in seven States namely, **Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.**
- The transmission line is approximately 10,750 circuit kilometres (ckm).

Funding cost

- The scheme is targeted to be set up with a total estimated cost of Rs. 12,031.33 crore .
- The contribution of the Central Government **will be 33% of the cost** of around Rs 3970.34 crore .

Target date of completion

The transmission systems will be created over a period of five year from Financial Year 2021-22 to 2025-26.

- **The scheme will help in achieving the target of 450 GW installed RE capacity by 2030.**

Green Energy Corridor Phase-I

This scheme is in addition to GEC-Phase-I which is already under implementation in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu for grid integration and power evacuation of approx. 24 GW of RE power and is expected to be completed by 2022.

2. US records million daily new cases of Covid (Jan. 6, 2022)

The United States became the first country in the world to report more than a million new cases of covid .

- It reported 1,080,211 cases on 3 January 2022.
- The Omicron variant of the coronavirus , accounts for the majority of cases in the US.
- The Covid-19 case was first detected in Wuhan, China .

3. Russia-led military alliance CSTO to send peacekeeping forces to Kazakhstan (Jan. 6, 2022)

The Russian Led military alliance ,Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), has said that it will dispatch peacekeeping forces to Kazakhstan after the country's **President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev** asked for help in controlling protests that escalated into violence in various parts of Kazakhstan and rioting in its largest city Almaty.

- The protest started after the government doubled the cost of liquefied petroleum gas which is used in vehicles as it was cheaper than other fuels .
- The protest later spread to many parts of the country with broader demands for increased political representation and improved social benefits.
- **Prime Minister Askar Mamin resigned amid the protest and the government has imposed an emergency in the country .**
- Alikhan Smailov has been appointed acting Prime Minister.
- Kazakhstan is an oil rich country but its rulers are considered to be corrupt and autocrats

Kazakhstan

The capital of Kazakhstan is Nur-Sultan

Currency Tenge

President : **Kassym-Jomart Tokayev**

CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organisation)

- It is a military alliance of the former Soviet Union countries .
- It was set up in 1992 as Unified Armed Forces , which was later renamed as CSTO in 2002.
- At present the member countries are Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.
- The Headquarter of CSTO is Moscow, Russia

4. Logo and Mascot of the 25th National Youth Festival unveiled (Jan. 6, 2022)

Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Anurag Thakur and Lt. Governor of Puducherry Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan unveiled the Logo and Mascot of the 25th National Youth Festival on 5 January 2021 in Puducherry.

- The 25th National Youth Games will be held in Puducherry from 12th -16th January 2022.
- The festival will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi .
- The tag-line or theme of the National Youth Festival is , **Shaksham Yuva Shashakth Yuva meaning Capable Youth- Forceful Youth, Able Youth- Strong Youth.**

National Youth Festival

- National Youth Festival is organized by the Government of India every year in collaboration with one of the States from **January 12th to 16th to** commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda i.e. 12th January.
- It was started in 1995 as a major activity under the programme of National Integration Camp (NIC)
- The 24th National Youth Festival was held in Virtual mode due to Covid.

Swami Vivekananda's birthday on January 12 is always celebrated as National Youth Day and the week commencing from that day is known as the National Youth Week

5. Government of India launches SAAR (Jan. 6, 2022)

As part of the Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav (AKAM) celebrations across the country, the Smart Cities Mission, Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has launched “Smart cities and Academia Towards Action & Research (SAAR)” program’

- It is a joint initiative of MoHUA, National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) and 15 leading Indian academic institutions of the country.
- Under the program, 15 premier architecture & planning institutes of the country will be working with Smart Cities to document landmark projects undertaken by the Smart Cities Mission.
- The compendium will act as a first point of reference for future research in the field, help disseminate learnings from projects under the Mission, act as a repository for Urban Projects, and contribute to dissemination of best practices and peer-to-peer learning.
- The 75 projects covered in the compendium are distributed across 47 Smart Cities. The partner institutes documenting the projects include *inter alia* Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, Center for Environment Planning and Technology, Ahmedabad, Jamia Milia Islamia, Delhi, and School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal.

The SAAR project includes **75 urban projects** distributed **across 47 Smart cities**.

The cities include: Agra, Ajmer, Chandigarh, Dehradun, Dharamshala, Faridabad, Jaipur, Jammu, Kanpur, Saharanpur, Shimla, Srinagar, Belgavi, Bengaluru, Chennai, Coimbatore, Erode, Kakinada, Kochi, Manguluru, Shivamogga, Thanjavur, Thiruchirapalli, Thiruvananthapuram, Tumakuru, Ahmedabad, Dahod, Nagpur, Nashik, Pune, Surat, Thane, Vadodara, Bhubaneswar, New Town Kolkata, Ranchi, Vishakhapatnam, Bhopal, Gwalior, Indore, Raipur, Sagar, Ujjain, Jabalpur, Agartala, Gangtok, and Namchi.

6. Six One District One Product brands launched under the PMFME scheme (Jan. 6, 2022)

Union Minister for Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Shri Pashupati Kumar Paras and Minister of State, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel launched six, One District One Product (ODOP) brands under the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme at New Delhi.

- The Ministry of Food Processing Industries has signed an agreement with NAFED for developing 10 brands of selected ODOPs under the branding and marketing component of the PMFME scheme. Out of these, six brands namely Amrit Phal, Cori Gold, Kashmiri Mantra, Madhumanthra, Somdana, and Whole Wheat Cookies of Dilli Bakes were launched on 5 January 2022.

Launched Brands :-

- **Amrit Phal** : It is an Amla juice extract exclusively developed under the ODOP concept for Gurugram, Haryana.
- **Cori Brand: It has been** developed for coriander powder which is the identified ODOP for Kota, Rajasthan
- **Kashmiri Mantra Brand** : It is a spice brand of Kulgam, Jammu and Kashmir.

- **Madhu Mantra Brand: It has been** developed under the ODOP concept for honey from Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh.
- **Whole wheat cookies: It is** the second product developed under the brand Dilli Bakes for Delhi.
- **Somdana Brand** has been developed under the ODOP concept of millets from Thane, Maharashtra.

All the products will be available at National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) Bazaars, E-commerce platforms, and prominent retail stores across India.

[For more information about PMFME Scheme click here.](#)

[To know more about One District One Product Scheme click here.](#)

7. Sri Lanka Cabinet clears Trincomalee oil tank farm deal with India (Jan. 5, 2022)

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's government in Colombo has approved a proposed deal with India to develop and modernize most of its strategic petroleum storehouses from the World-War-II-era in Trincomalee on the north-east coast of the island nation.

- The pre-WWII era oil storage facility covers **an area of 850 acres and has a capacity of nearly 1 million tonnes, which far outstrips the demand in Sri Lanka. Trincomalee is also the nearest port to Chennai and can be used for developing it as a refueling facility for small ships.**
- The Sri Lankan Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal to allocate 14 oil tanks of the Lower Oil Tank Complex already in use by the **Lanka Indian Oil Corporation, a subsidiary of the Indian Oil Corporation**, for the company's business activities.
- It also approved the allocation of the 61 tanks to joint venture company, Trinco Petroleum Terminal Private Limited, with **51% stakes to be owned by the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation and 49% by the Lanka IOC. The arrangement is for the next 50 years.**
- Talks were being held intermittently since the agreement between **then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President J R Jayewardene as part of the annexure to the India-Sri Lanka Accord of July 29, 1987 — that the tank farm would be developed jointly.**
- India was initially reluctant to heavily invest in Trincomalee. India's interest in Trincomalee got boosted after China heavily invested in Hambantota port.

8. Centre ask States to share intelligence on a common grid (Jan. 5, 2022)

In a recent high-level meet with the Directors General of Police(DGP) of all states, **chaired by Union Minister of Home Affairs Mr. Amit Shah, the central government has asked the States to share more intelligence inputs through the Multi-Agency Centre (MAC).**

- The **Multi Agency Centre (MAC), is a common counter-terrorism grid under the Intelligence Bureau that was made operational in 2001 following the**

Kargil War as per suggestions of Kargil Review Committee Report and Group of Ministers (GoM) Report.

- **The Multi-Agency Centre (MAC) functions under Intelligence Bureau (IB) and is headquartered in New Delhi.**
- **The state offices have been designated as subsidiary MACs (SMACs).**
- As many as 28 organizations, including the **Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW)**, armed forces, and State police, are part of the platform.
- **Various security agencies share realtime intelligence inputs on the MAC**
- At the MAC level, the meeting of all these agencies is convened almost every day where the intelligence of the last 24 hours is brought on to the table, discussed and followup action is devised or agreed upon
- As per the **parliamentary standing committee report in 2020**, one of the major hurdles in the functioning of MAC is that states are often reluctant to share information on the platform, thus creating several gaps in sharing critical information at the right time.
- The Union Home Ministry, along with the IB, was contemplating to extend the connectivity of SMAC to the districts in a phased manner.

9. ICMR approves indigenous kit to detect Omicron (Jan. 5, 2022)

The **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** has approved an **indigenous testing kit** for detecting the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV2.

- The kit is manufactured **by Tata Medical and Diagnostics and is named 'OmiSure'**.
- The kit can detect the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV2 as well as other variants of SARS-CoV2 in nasopharyngeal / oropharyngeal specimens during the RT-PCR tests.
- The test kit is compatible with all standard Real-Time PCR Machines. The first target is based on S-gene dropout or S-gene target failure (SGTF), and the second target is based on S-gene mutation amplification (SGMA).
- The company has applied for a license with the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), once the license is approved by the CDSCO, the kit will be manufactured by TATA MD at its Sriperumbudur facility in Tamil Nadu.

Currently the kit that is being used to detect the Omicron variant in India is developed by US-based scientific instrumentation company Thermo Fisher. It uses the S Gene Target Failure (SGTF) strategy to detect the variant.

10. PM Modi's visit to Manipur and Tripura, to launch several development projects worth over 4,800 crore rupees (Jan. 4, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Manipur and Tripura on 4th January 2022.

Highlights of PM's visit to Manipur:

- The PM inaugurated 13 projects worth around 1,850 crore rupees and laid foundation stone of 9 projects around 2,950 crore rupees.
- These projects are related to diverse sectors such as:
 - Road Infrastructure

- Drinking Water Supply
- Health
- Urban Development
- Housing
- Information Technology
- Skill Development, among others
- The inaugural and foundation laying program was held at Hatta Kangjeibung in Imphal where he also addressed a public gathering.

Highlights of PM's visit to Agartala (Tripura):

- The PM inaugurated the **New Integrated Terminal Building of Maharaja Bir Bikram (MBB) Airport** built at a cost of about 450 crore rupees, and
- Launched Key Initiatives:-
 - **Mukhyamantri Tripura Gram Samridhhi Yojana**- which aims to achieve the benchmark standards for service delivery in core development sectors at the village level.
 - **Project Mission 100 of Vidyajyoti Schools**- which aims to improve the quality of education in the state by converting 100 existing High/Higher secondary schools to Vidyajyoti Schools with state of art facilities and quality education. The project will cover about 1.2 Lakh students from Nursery to class XII and will cost around 500 crore rupees in the next three years.

The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for various projects which include Manipur Institute of Performing Arts at Gurgaon, 72 projects to be taken up under the PM Jan Vikas Karyakram, 13 projects related to diverse sectors, five National Highway Projects with a cumulative length of more than one hundred ten kilometers, a Cancer Hospital along with a Covid Hospital.