

Current Affairs search results for: "Millets"

1. Nirmala Sitharaman announces 'Millet Challenge' for startups (Aug. 30, 2022)

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on August 27 announced 'Millet Challenge' for startups engaged in coarse cereals.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- Nirmala Sitharaman also announced Rs 25 crore funding for the University of Agricultural Sciences at Raichur, Karnataka under NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development).
- This amount will be used for value addition and capacity building to promote coarse cereals and for setting up of incubation centers for coarse cereals value chain and processing.
- She attended the Millet conclave 2022 which was held at the agricultural university, Raichur, Karnataka.

What is the 'Millet Challenge' for startups ?

- NITI Aayog will soon announce this challenge for startups related to coarse cereals.
- In this, any startup providing solutions in **innovative ways** will be able to participate.
- The names of the winners will be announced before **December**.
- A basic grant of **Rs 1 crore** each will be given to three winners, **Rs 20 lakh** each to 15 selected candidates and **Rs 10 lakh** each to other 15 selected candidates.
- The Union Finance Minister asked the major millet processing companies to focus on Karnataka to make the state a brand in this sector.

About Millets :

- Millets are **high nutrient cereal crops** and are classified as small seeded grasses.
- They include **jowar (sorghum), ragi (finger millet), korra (foxtail millet), arke (kodo millet), sama (little millet), bajra (pearl millet), chena/barr (proso millet) and sanwa (barnyard millet)**.
- India is one of the major producers of millets in the world with an estimated share of about **41%** in the global production.
- Major producers of millets are **Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Haryana**.
- Millet has been notified as a **nutritional cereal** by the government in April 2018.
- They are a rich source of **protein, fiber, minerals, iron, and calcium and have a low glycemic index**.

- The production of millets in India has increased by **16 % to 17.26 million tonnes (MT)** in the 2019-20 crop year (July-June) from 14.5 MT in 2015-16.
- In March 2021, India led a UN General Assembly resolution to declare **2023 as the International Year of Millets.**
- India's proposal was supported by **72 countries.**
- India is the **5th largest** exporter of Millets globally.

2. NITI Aayog & WFP launched Initiative to promote millets in Asia & Africa (July 19, 2022)

On July 19, 2022, NITI Aayog and the World Food Program (WFP), India launched an initiative 'Mapping and Exchange of Good Practices' to mainstream millet in Asia and Africa.

Important facts

- NITI Aayog and WFP will prepare a set of good practices for increasing the production and consumption of millets in India and abroad.
- The Government of India has proposed to the United Nations to declare the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets (IYoM).
- It aims to generate domestic and global demand for millets.

International Year of Millets

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted India's resolution and declared 2023 as the International Year of millets in March 2021.
- India's proposal received the support of 72 countries.
- In 2021, NITI Aayog signed a letter of intent with the United Nations World Food Program (WFP).
- The partnership focuses on mainstreaming millets and helping India take a global lead in promoting its health benefits.
- The objective of this partnership is to build resilient livelihoods for smallholder farmers and to build adaptability to climate change and changing food systems.

Why is millet called a superfood?

- India is the 5th largest exporter of Millets globally.
- Millets are one of the oldest food items in the country.
- Known as a superfood, Millets can address issues related to nutritional security, food system security and farmers' welfare.
- These are a rich source of protein, fibre, minerals, iron, calcium and have a low glycemic index.

- They are known for their nutrient rich content and certain characteristics like drought tolerance, photo-insensitivity, resilience to climate change etc.
- They can be cultivated with less water and less cost.
- It can also grow well in dry areas or on land with low fertility.

What are Millets?

- They include jowar (sorghum), ragi (finger millet), korra (foxtail millet), arke (kodo millet), sama (little millet), bajra (pearl millet), chena/barr (proso millet) and sanwa (barnyard millet).

3. Asia's biggest international food and hospitality fair - AAHAR 2022 (April 26, 2022)

Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) in association with India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) is organising Asia's largest International Food and Hospitality Fair AAHAR-2022 between 26 to 30 April 2022 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

- More than 80 exporters from different segments of agricultural products including Geographical Indication products, processed food, organic and frozen food products will participate in the fair.
- This is the 36th edition
- APEDA has set up stalls for exporters, women entrepreneurs, farmer producer organisations, start-ups and exporters of millets from North Eastern Region and Himalayan states like Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

• About AAHAR

- It is a flagship event organised by India's premier trade promotion organisation, India Trade Promotion Organisation.
- This is the 36th edition.
- It is Asia's most renowned brand in food and hospitality.
- The show is now a well-known destination for global vendors as well as sourcing professionals.
- AAHAR is divided into 3 Major Categories-

1. Food Sector
2. F&B Equipment Sector (Preparation /Processing / Packaging)
3. Hospitality & Décor Sector.

4. UNION BUDGET 2022-23 (Feb. 2, 2022)

The Union Budget was presented in the Lok Sabha by the Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman on 1 February 2022. Like last year, this year's budget was also a paperless budget .

The Highlights of the Budget

- India's economic growth is estimated at **9.2%** in 2021-22 and it is the highest growth rate among all large economies.
- **60 lakh new jobs** to be created under the Productivity Linked Incentive(PLI) scheme in 14 sectors.
- PLI Schemes have the potential to create an **additional production of Rs 30 lakh crore.**
- Entering Amrit Kaal, the 25 year long lead up to India @100, the budget provides impetus for growth along **four priorities**. These priorities are as follows:
 - **PM GatiShakti**
 - **Inclusive Development**
 - **Productivity Enhancement & Investment, Sunrise opportunities, Energy Transition, and Climate Action.**
 - **Financing of investments**

PM GatiShakti

- PM GatiShakti is a transformative approach for economic growth and sustainable development.
- The seven engines that drive PM Gati Shakti are **Roads, Railways, Airports, Ports, Mass Transport, Waterways and Logistics Infrastructure.**

Road Transport

- National Highways Network to be expanded by **25000 Km** in 2022-23.
- **Rs 20000 Crore** to be mobilized for National Highways Network expansion.

Multimodal Logistics Parks

- Contracts to be awarded through Public Private Partnership(PPP) mode in 2022-23 for implementation of Multimodal Logistics Parks at four locations.

Railways

- **Railway will popularise the "One Station One Product"** concept to help local businesses & supply chains.
- **2000 Km of railway network to be brought under Kavach**, the indigenous world-class technology for safety and capacity augmentation in 2022-23
- **400 new generation Vande Bharat Trains** to be manufactured during the next three years.
- **100 PM GatiShakti Cargo terminals for multimodal logistics** to be developed during the next three years.

Parvatmala: National Ropeways Development Programme

- As an alternative to surface road, ropeways will be developed in difficult hilly areas and congested urban areas as a means of transportation.
- In 2022-23 the government will award contracts for **8 ropeway projects of 60 Km length.**

Inclusive Development**Agriculture**

- The procurement of wheat in Rabi 2021-22 and the estimated procurement of paddy in Kharif 2021-22 will cover 1208 lakh metric tonnes of wheat and paddy from 163 lakh farmers.
- The government will transfer an estimated Rs 2.37 lakh crore direct payment of MSP value to the farmers' accounts.
- Chemical free Natural farming to be promoted throughout the country. Initial focus is on farmer's lands in 5 Km wide corridors along river Ganga.
- **2023 has been announced as the International Year of Millets.** The government will support post harvest value addition, branding and consumption of millets nationally and internationally.
- Government will promote 'Kisan Drones' for crop assessment, digitization of land records, spraying of insecticides and nutrients.

Ken Betwa project

- Government will implement the linking of Ken Betwa river projects which is expected to cost Rs 44,605 crores. This is aimed at providing irrigation benefits to 9.08 lakh hectare of farmers' lands, drinking water supply for 62 lakh people, 103 MW of Hydro, and 27 MW of solar power.
- The budget has allocated **Rs 1400 crore** for implementation of the Ken - Betwa link project.
- Government has identified Damanganga-Pinjal, Par-Tapi-Narmada, Godavari-Krishna, Krishna-Pennar and Pennar-Cauvery projects for interlinking of rivers..

Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)

- **Udyam, e-shram, NCS and ASEEM portals to be interlinked.**
- 130 lakh MSMEs provided additional credit under Emergency Credit Linked Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS)
- ECLGS to be extended up to March 2023.
- Guarantee cover under ECLGS to be expanded by **Rs 50000 Crore to total cover of Rs 5 Lakh Crore.**
- **Rs 2 lakh Crore** additional credit for Micro and Small Enterprises to be facilitated under the Credit Guarantee Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE).
- **Raising and Accelerating MSME performance (RAMP) programme** with outlay of Rs 6000 Crore to be rolled out.

Skill Development

- **Digital Ecosystem for Skilling and Livelihood (DESH-Stack e-portal)** will be launched to empower citizens to skill, re skill or upskill through on-line training.

- Startups will be promoted to facilitate '**Drone Shakti**' and for **Drone-As-A-Service** (DrAAS).

Education

- '**One class-One TV channel**' programme of **PM eVIDYA** to be expanded to 200 TV channels.
- Virtual labs and skilling e-labs to be set up to promote critical thinking skills and simulated learning environments.
- High-quality e-content will be developed for delivery through Digital Teachers.
- The Government will set up a Digital University for world-class quality universal education with personalised learning experience to be established.

Health

- An **open platform** for the National **Digital Health Ecosystem** to be rolled out.

A '**National Tele Mental Health Programme**' for quality mental health counselling and care services will be launched.

- A network of **23 tele-mental health centres** of excellence will be set up, with National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) being the nodal centre and International Institute of Information Technology-Bangalore (IIITB) providing technology support.

Saksham Anganwadi

- Government has launched Mission Shakti, Mission Vatsalya, Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 to provide integrated benefits to women and children .
- Saksham Anganwadis are a new generation anganwadis that have better infrastructure and audio-visual aids, powered by clean energy and providing improved environment for early child development.
- **Two lakh anganwadis are** to be upgraded to Saksham Anganwadis.

Har Ghar, Nal Se Jal

- **Rs. 60,000 crore** allocated to cover **3.8 crore households** in 2022-23 under Har Ghar, Nal se Jal.
- The current target of the government under this scheme is to provide tap drinking water to 8.7 crore households . 5.5 crore households were covered in the last two years .

Housing for All

- **Rs. 48,000 crore** allocated for completion of **80 lakh houses** in 2022-23 under PM Awas Yojana.

Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-East Region (PM-DevINE)

- New scheme PM-DevINE launched to fund infrastructure and social development projects in the North-East. The scheme will be implemented by North -Eastern Council.

- An initial allocation of **Rs. 1,500 crore has been made** to enable livelihood activities for youth and women under the scheme.

Vibrant Villages Programme

- Government of India will launch a Vibrant Villages Programme for development of Border villages with sparse population, limited connectivity and infrastructure on the northern border.

Banking

- **100 percent of 1.5 lakh post offices** to come on the **Core Banking System(CBS)**.
- To mark the 75 years of Independence ,Scheduled Commercial Banks will set up **75 Digital Banking Units (DBUs) in 75 districts of the country..**

e-Passport

- The Union External Affairs Ministry will issue e-Passports with embedded chips and futuristic technology.to enhance the convenience for the citizens for International travel.

Land Records Management

The government will encourage the state government to adopt Unique Land Parcel Identification Number to facilitate IT-based management of records.

Accelerated Corporate Exit

- The Government will set up the “**Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (C-PACE)**” to facilitate and speed up the voluntary closing up of the companies from the currently required 2 years to less than 6 months.

AVGC Promotion Task Force

- The Government will set up a promotion task force for the development of **animation, visual effects, gaming, and comic (AVGC) sectors..**

Export Promotion

- **Special Economic Zones Act to be replaced with a new legislation** to enable States to become partners in ‘**Development of Enterprise and Service Hubs**’.

AtmaNirbharta in Defence:

- In order to reduce imports in the defence sector and to promote AtmaNirbharta in equipment for the Armed Forces , **68 per cent of the capital procurement budget will be earmarked for domestic industry in 2022-23, up from 58 per cent in 2021-22**
- Defence R&D to be opened up for industry, startups and academia with 25% of defence R&D budget earmarked for this purpose.

- Independent nodal umbrella body to be set up for meeting testing and certification requirements.

Defence

The allocation for defence has been increased for 2022-23 to Rs 5.25 lakh crores. Last year the allocation for defence was Rs 4.79 lakh crore.

Sunrise Opportunities

- Government contribution to be provided for R&D in Sunrise Opportunities like Artificial Intelligence, Geospatial Systems and Drones, Semiconductor and its eco-system, Space Economy, Genomics and Pharmaceuticals, Green Energy, and Clean Mobility Systems.

Energy Transition and Climate Action:

- Additional allocation of **Rs. 19,500 crore for Production Linked Incentive for manufacture of high efficiency solar modules** to meet the goal of 280 GW of installed solar power by 2030.
- In order to become a carbon neutral economy, five to seven per cent biomass pellets are to be used in thermal power plant along with coal for production of power.

Benefits

- It will result in reducing the production of 38 MMT per year of carbon dioxide
- It will provide an extra source of income to farmers and job opportunities to locals,
- Help avoid stubble burning in agriculture fields.
- **Four pilot projects to be set up for coal gasification and conversion of coal into chemicals** for the industry

Public Capital Investment:

- To support the economy and to pull in private sector investment the government will continue to invest in the economy
- **Outlay for capital expenditure stepped up sharply by 35.4% to Rs. 7.50 lakh crore in 2022-23** from Rs. 5.54 lakh crore in 2021-22..
- Outlay in 2022-23 to be **2.9% of GDP**.
- **‘Effective Capital Expenditure’** of the Central Government is estimated at **Rs. 10.68 lakh crore in 2022-23**, which is about **4.1% of GDP**.

GIFT-IFSC

- World-class foreign universities and institutions to be allowed in the Gujarat International Financial Tech-City (GIFT- City).
- An **International Arbitration Centre** will be set up in GIFT-City to be set up for timely settlement of disputes under international jurisprudence.

Mobilising Resources

- **Data Centres and Energy Storage Systems** to be given infrastructure status.
- Venture Capital and Private Equity invested more than Rs. 5.5 lakh crore last year facilitating one of the largest start-up and growth ecosystems. Measures to be taken to help scale up this investment.

Blended funds to be promoted for sunrise sectors.

Government will issue **Sovereign Green Bonds** for mobilizing resources for green infrastructure.

Digital Rupee

- Introduction of **Digital Rupee by the Reserve Bank of India starting 2022-23.**

Providing Greater Fiscal Space to States

- Government of India will provide a 50-year, interest-free loan of ₹1 lakh crore to states to enable them to spend on capital investments, especially in infrastructure, under the PM GatiShakti Master Plan during 2022-23 under the **‘Scheme for Financial Assistance to States for Capital Investment’**:
- In 2021-22 the total outlay for the scheme was Rs 15,000 crore.

In 2022-23, States will be allowed a fiscal deficit of 4% of Gross State Domestic Product(GSDP), of which 0.5% will be tied to power sector reforms

Fiscal Management

The total expenditure in 2022-23 is estimated at Rs. 39.45 lakh crore, while the total receipts other than borrowings are estimated at Rs. 22.84 lakh crore.

The total Market Borrowings of the government for 2022-23 are estimated to be at Rs. 11,58,719 crore.

Deficits

Fiscal Deficit

The expected Fiscal Deficit in 2021-22 has been revised to 6.9% of GDP. It is expected to be of ₹ 15,91,089 crore.

The target fiscal deficit for 2022-23 is 6.4% of GDP. It is estimated to be at ₹ 16,61,196 crore.

Revenue Deficit

The revenue deficit in 2021-22 is expected to be 4.7% of the GDP.

The target Revenue Deficit for 2022-23 is 3.8% of GDP.

Primary Deficit

The primary deficit for 2021-22 is expected to be 3.3% of GDP

The target primary deficit for 2022-23 is 2.8% of GDP.

[For understanding the concept of deficits kindly see our blogs and click on this link.](#)

Tax Proposals

DIRECT TAXES

- There has been no changes in the Income Tax slabs.

Cooperative societies

- Alternate Minimum Tax paid by cooperatives brought down from **18.5 per cent to 15 per cent**.
- Surcharge on cooperative societies reduced from **12 per cent to 7 per cent** for those having total income of more than Rs 1 crore and up to Rs 10 crores.

Tax relief to persons with disability

- Payment of annuity and lump sum amount from insurance scheme to be allowed to differently abled dependent during the lifetime of parents/guardians, i.e., on parents/guardians attaining the age of 60 years.

Parity in National Pension Scheme Contribution

- Tax deduction limit increased from **10 per cent to 14 percent** on employer's contribution to the NPS account of State Government employees.
- This measure will bring the state government employees at par with central government employees.

Incentives for Start-ups

- Period of incorporation extended by **one year, up to 31.03.2023** for eligible start-ups to avail tax benefit. Earlier startups were offered tax incentives for the first three years of their incorporation by the government and now it has been extended by another year.

Scheme for taxation of virtual digital assets

- Specific tax regime for virtual digital assets introduced.
- Any income from transfer of any virtual digital asset to be taxed at the rate of **30 per cent**.
- No deduction in respect of any expenditure or allowance to be allowed while computing such income except cost of acquisition.
- Loss from transfer of virtual digital asset cannot be set off against any other income.
- To capture the transaction details, TDS to be provided on payment made in relation to transfer of virtual digital asset at the rate of 1 per cent of such consideration above a monetary threshold.
- Gift of virtual digital asset also to be taxed in the hands of the recipient.

Tax incentives to IFSC

- Subject to specified conditions, the following to be **exempt from tax**
 - Income of a non-resident from offshore derivative instruments.

- Income from over the counter derivatives issued by an offshore banking unit.
- Income from royalty and interest on account of lease of ship.
- Income received from portfolio management services in IFSC.

Health and Education Cess

- Any surcharge or cess on income and profits **not allowable** as business expenditure.

INDIRECT TAXES

Special Economic Zones

- Customs Administration of SEZs to be fully IT driven and function on the **Customs National Portal** – shall be implemented by 30th September 2022.

Project imports and capital goods

- Gradually phasing out of the concessional rates in capital goods and project imports; and applying a moderate tariff of **7.5 percent** – conducive to the growth of the domestic sector and 'Make in India'.

Gems and Jewellery

- Customs duty on cut and polished diamonds and gemstones being reduced **to 5 per cent**; Nil customs duty to simply sawn diamond - To give a boost to the Gems and Jewellery sector
- Customs duty of at least Rs 400 per Kg to be paid on imitation jewellery import - To disincentivise import of undervalued imitation jewellery.

MSME

- Customs duty on umbrellas being raised to 20 per cent. Exemption to parts of umbrellas being withdrawn.

Tariff measure to encourage blending of fuel

- Unblended fuel to attract an additional differential **excise duty of Rs 2/ litre** from the 1st of October 2022 - to encourage blending of fuel.

5. 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.](#)