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1. Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched PM Kisan mobile app with face authentication feature (June 23, 2023)

Agriculture-Minister-Narendra-Singh-Tomar-launched-PM-Kisan-mobile-app

On 22 June 2023, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched the PM Kisan mobile app with a face authentication feature for e-KYC.

An Overview of the News

- The app allows remote farmers to complete the KYC process by scanning their face, **without the need for OTP or fingerprint verification.**
- The scheme is comprehensive and ambitious and the central government in collaboration with the states can **provide installments to around 8.5 crore farmers after completing their KYC.**
- PM Kisan Yojana is one of the largest **DBT schemes in the world**, which provides **direct transfer of six thousand rupees per year to farmers in three installments.**
- So far, more than **11 crore farmers have received a total transfer of Rs 2.42 lakh crore through PM Kisan Yojana.**

PM Kisan Scheme:

- **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM KISAN)** is an initiative of the Government of India.
- The objective of this scheme is **to provide minimum income support to the farmers.**
- Farmers can receive up to **₹6,000 (US\$75) per year** through this program.
- The announcement about PM KISAN was made on **1 February 2019 by Piyush Goyal** during the **Interim Union Budget 2019 of India.**
- The primary objective of PM KISAN is **to reduce the financial burden faced by the farmers and support their livelihood.**

What is e-KYC?

- It is the **digital verification** of the identity of individuals or entities.
- It uses the **internet or digital platform for identity verification.**
- Verification of ID and address proof documents is done using special systems.
- The information provided is cross-checked with government databases such as the passport database.
- E-KYC simplifies the verification process, thereby saving time and cost.

This improves accuracy and reliability, reducing the risk of fraud and money laundering.

2. Karnataka's Anna Bhagya Scheme (June 20, 2023)

Karnataka's-Anna-Bhagya-Scheme

The **Karnataka government** is currently facing challenges in implementing the **Anna Bhagya scheme** starting from **July 1** due to the unavailability of the required amount of rice.

An overview of the news

- The **Food Corporation of India (FCI)** has halted the sale of rice to state governments, including Karnataka, since June 12.
- This discontinuation of rice supply has created difficulties for the implementation of the **Anna Bhagya scheme**.
- However, **Punjab** has in principle agreed to supply rice to Karnataka in the required quantity.
- FCI initially agreed to provide the required **2.28 lakh tonnes** of rice, but later refused to do so.
- **Telangana and Andhra Pradesh** expressed their inability to supply, while the Chhattisgarh government offered to supply **1.5 lakh tonnes**.

About Anna Bhagya Scheme

- The state government intends to increase the allocation of free rice from **5 kg to 10 kg per person on Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards** under the Anna Bhagya scheme.
- The aim of this increase in free rice allocation is to provide more support and **food security** to the persons belonging to **BPL category**.
- The implementation of this revised allocation is scheduled to begin from **July 1**.
- The increased allocation of free rice will cost the state government an estimated ₹840 crore per month.
- Annually, the scheme is expected to cost **Rs 10,092 crore** to the state exchequer.

3. Centre discontinues sale of rice, wheat under OMSS Scheme (June 19, 2023)

Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS)

The **central government has discontinued the sale of rice and wheat** from the central pool under the **Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS)** to state governments.

An overview of the news

- This decision will affect some states, including **Karnataka**, that provide free grains to the poor through their own schemes.
- The **Food Corporation of India (FCI)** has issued an order stating that the sale of **wheat and rice** under the OMSS for state governments is discontinued.
- However, the sale of rice under the OMSS will continue for **northeastern states, hilly states, and states facing law and order** situations or natural calamities at the existing rate of **Rs 3,400 per quintal**.
- FCI may sell rice under the OMSS to private parties from the **central pool stock to moderate market prices**.
- The central government had previously allowed states to buy rice and wheat from the FCI for their own schemes without participating in e-auctions as part of the **OMSS policy for 2023**.

Rice prices

- Rice prices have been increasing due to the slow progress of the monsoon and have risen by up to **10% in the last year** at the mandi level.
- The monsoon rains are crucial for rice production as about **80% of the country's total rice production** is grown during the kharif season.

Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS)

- **Nodal Agency**- Food Corporation of India (FCI)
- **Purpose**- To sell foodgrains, especially wheat and rice, at predetermined prices in the open market.
- **Mode of Selling**- Weekly auctions by FCI on the platform of the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited.
- **Quantity allowed in a bidding** - A bidder can purchase in a single bid range from 10-100 tonne.
- OMSS comprises **2 schemes**
- -Sale of wheat to bulk consumers/private traders through e-auction.
- -Sale of Raw Rice Grade 'A' to bulk consumers/private traders through e-auction.

About Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS)

- It is a government initiative launched with the aim of **reducing the excess stock of food grains**.
- **Nodal Agency**- Food Corporation of India (FCI)
- Its objective is to sell food grains, especially **wheat and rice**, in the open market at pre-determined prices.

- The sales are carried out through weekly auctions by FCI on the platform of **National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited**.
- Under this a bidder can buy in a single bid range of **10-100 tonnes**.
- Schemes for sale of wheat to bulk consumers/private traders through e-auction and sale of grade 'A' raw rice to bulk consumers/private traders through e-auction are included under OMSS.

About Food Corporation of India (FCI)

- It is a prominent **Public Sector Undertaking (PSU)** under the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution in India**.
- It was **established in 1965** to ensure food security and support the **nation's public distribution system**.
- FCI's primary mandate is to **procure, store, and distribute food grains** across the country.
- It aims to maintain an adequate buffer stock of essential commodities and provide timely and affordable food grains to the vulnerable sections of society.
- FCI undertakes the procurement of food grains from farmers at **Minimum Support Prices (MSPs)** declared by the government.
- It procures crops such as wheat, rice, and coarse grains directly from farmers through designated procurement centers.

4. Janaushadhi scheme has helped citizens to save around Rs 20,000 cr (June 18, 2023)

According to **Ravi Dadhich**, CEO of the **Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Bureau of India**, the **Jan Aushadhi scheme** has helped citizens save around **Rs 20,000 crore** on their medicine bills in the last **9 years**.

An overview of the news

- Over the past nine years, the number of **Janaushadhi Kendras** has increased significantly, growing by **100 times**.
- The sales of Janaushadhi Kendras have also experienced a remarkable increase, surpassing **150 times**.
- The government has set a target to further expand the number of Janaushadhi Kendras to **10,000 by the end of the current year**.
- Currently, there are over **9,400 functional Janaushadhi Kendras** across the country, where medications are sold at discounted rates ranging from **50 to 90 percent compared to branded medicines**.
- The product range of the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana includes **1,800 drugs and 285 surgical equipment** options.

About Jan Aushadhi Yojana

- The Jan Aushadhi scheme was started by the **UPA government in 2008**.
- The scheme was **relaunched in the year 2015** by the Prime Minister of India, **Narendra Modi**.
- This campaign was started across the country by selling generic medicines through "**Jan Aushadhi Medical Stores**".
- In 2015, the name of 'Jan Aushadhi Yojana' was changed to '**Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Yojana (PMJAY)**', but in **November 2016** it was changed to "**Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Yojana**".
- The Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Yojana (PMBJP) scheme was launched by the **Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers**, Government of India, with the objective of making quality generic medicines available to all at affordable prices.

5. Government of Madhya Pradesh launched Mukhyamantri Ladli Bahna Yojana (June 12, 2023)

Mukhya Mantri Ladli Bahna Yojana

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the '**Mukhya Mantri Ladli Bahna Yojana**'.

An Overview of the News

- The Ladli Bahna Yojana 2023 was officially inaugurated by **CM Chouhan**, who took the initiative to deposit the first instalment of **Rs 1,000 in the accounts of eligible women beneficiaries**.
- This scheme was launched in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh with the primary objective of empowering women and providing financial assistance to them.
- The chief minister outlined plans to increase the **monthly support to Rs 1,200, Rs 1,500, Rs 1,700** and eventually Rs 2,000, thereby increasing the financial assistance provided to beneficiaries.

About Ladli Behna Scheme

- It was started on **March 15** by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**.
- This scheme provides financial assistance to women in Madhya Pradesh.
- Under the scheme, an amount of **Rs 12,000 per year** ie **Rs 1,000 per month** is sent directly to the bank accounts of eligible women.
- The state government has allocated a budget of **Rs 60,000 crore** for the implementation of the scheme.

- The scheme is open to women belonging to various categories including **general, OBC, SC, ST, abandoned, or widowed women.**
- Eligible women will have to fulfill certain criteria including being economically weak and owning less than five acres of land.
 - The scheme targets women with an annual income of **less than Rs 2.5 lakh.**
 - The age of the woman should be between **23 to 60 years to be eligible for the scheme.**

About Madhya Pradesh

- It is the **second largest state** of India by area after Rajasthan.
- **Forests occupy 25.14 percent** of its area.
- Governor - **Mangubhai Patel**
- Chief Minister - **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**
- Capital - **Bhopal**

6. Centre sets up 733 One Stop Centres for women security across the country so far (June 8, 2023)

733-One-Stop-Centres-for-women-security

According to Union Minister **Smriti Irani** the government has set up **733 One Stop Centres** across the country so far and also sanctioned a budget for **300 more such centers for women security.**

An overview of the news

- These one stop centers are providing a range of integrated services including police facilitation, medical aid, legal aid, counseling and temporary shelter to women affected by violence or in distress.
- In the last nine years, more than **34 women helplines** are working in the country for the welfare of women in the country.

Anganwadi services

- Anganwadi services have been strengthened in the country and all **Anganwadi centers** have been linked through smart phone mobiles.
- So far **11 lakh smartphones** have been distributed to Anganwadi workers.

Poshan Tracker

- A system called Poshan Tracker has been set up and more than nine crore beneficiaries are taking advantage of it.

Maternity Benefit Scheme

- Maternity Benefit Scheme- Under the **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana**, about **3 crore 32 lakh women** in the country have received Rs 13,650 crore in their bank accounts through **DBT**.

Fast-track courts

- The government has set up **1,023 fast-track courts** in the country, of which **418 are exclusively POCSO courts**.
- More than **780 district-wise anti-human trafficking units** are functioning in the country.

Nirbhaya Fund

- In the last nine years, the NDA government has taken forward projects worth **Rs 12,000 crore**, including the Nirbhaya Fund.

One Stop Centres Scheme

- One Stop Center is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)** to address the problem of violence against women.
- It is a sub-scheme of the **National Mission for Empowerment of Women scheme**.
- One Stop Centers have been set up across the country to provide integrated support and assistance under one roof to women affected by violence in private and public spaces.
- The scheme is funded through **Nirbhaya Fund**.

7. Uttar Pradesh government launches Nand Baba Milk Mission scheme (June 8, 2023)

In a bid to make Uttar Pradesh a leading state in the field of milk development and milk production, the state government has launched the **Nand Baba Milk Mission scheme** on 6th June at a cost of **Rs 1,000 crore**.

An overview of the news

- The mission is implemented to facilitate milk producers to sell their milk at reasonable prices in villages through **dairy cooperatives**.
- Under this mission, it is proposed to form a **Dairy farmer producer organisation (Dairy FPO)** in order to facilitate sale of milk in producers' villages itself.
- There is a plan to set up **five dairy FPOs** in five districts of the state as a pilot project in the financial year 2023-24, in which women will also play a major role.

- Besides the opening of office of the Nand Baba Milk Mission at **Gomtinagar**, a '**Dairy Development Portal**' and **logo of Nand Baba Mission** has also been unveiled by Cabinet Minister, Livestock and Dairy Development Department, **Dharampal Singh**.

Indian Dairy Sector

- **India ranks first in milk production** and contributes **24% to global milk production**.
- The top 5 milk producing states are: **Uttar Pradesh (14.9%), Rajasthan (14.6%), Madhya Pradesh (8.6%), Gujarat (7.6%) and Andhra Pradesh (7.0%)**.
- Dairy is the single largest agricultural item **contributing 5% to the national economy**, which has been **6.4% in the last 5 years**.
- About **8 crore people** are directly or indirectly employed in the dairy industry.

Some important facts related to milk and milk products

- **India is the world's largest milk producer**, accounting for **23 percent of global production**. It is followed by the **United States, China, Pakistan and Brazil**.
- **Uttar Pradesh is the largest milk producing state** in India and accounts for more than **17% of the total milk production in India**.
- The per capita availability of milk in India is **406 grams per day**.
- Ordinary milk contains **85 percent water** and the remaining part consists of solid elements ie minerals and fat.
- Milk contains **protein, calcium and riboflavin (vitamin B-2)**.
- Milk also contains **vitamins A, D, K and E** including **phosphorus, magnesium, iodine** and many minerals and fat and energy.
- The purity of milk is measured by **lactometer**.
- National Milk Research Institute is located at **Karnal (Haryana)**.
- An organic compound called **lactose** is found in milk.
- The **pH value of fresh milk is 6**. When milk changes into curd, its **pH value becomes less than 6**.
- **Lactobacillus bacteria** help in curdling of milk.

8. MP Govt to launch CM Learn and Earn scheme (June 7, 2023)

In **Madhya Pradesh**, the **Chief Minister's Learn and Earn scheme** is set to be launched with the aim of providing employable skills to the youth.

An overview of the news

- Chief Minister's Learn and Earn scheme in Madhya Pradesh focuses on providing **training, financial support, and employment opportunities to the youth.**
- By identifying numerous work areas and involving various industries, the scheme aims to equip the young workforce with the necessary skills to enhance their employability and contribute to the state's development.

Salient Features of the Scheme

Work Areas Identification

- A total of **703 work areas** have been identified for training purposes under this scheme.
- These work areas cover a wide range of industries and sectors, ensuring diverse opportunities for skill development.

Allowance Provision

- A significant aspect of the Learn and Earn scheme is that it not only focuses on skill acquisition but also provides financial support to the youth.
- Participants in the scheme will receive a monthly allowance ranging from **Rs 8,000 to 10,000.**
- This allowance aims to assist the youth in meeting their financial needs while they learn and work.

Government's Commitment

- Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed the government's continuous efforts to bridge the gap between youth and employment.
- The Learn and Earn scheme is a proactive measure taken by the government to address the issue of unemployment by equipping young individuals with necessary skills.

Training Opportunities

- The scheme targets the training of **at least one lakh youth.**
- To facilitate this, the registration process will commence for establishments providing **training to the youth, starting today.**
- Simultaneously, registration for the youth interested in acquiring work-related skills will commence from 15th June.
- The selected youth will commence their work from 1st August, thereby creating a structured timeline for skill development and subsequent employment.

Madhya Pradesh

- In terms of area, it is the **second largest state of India after Rajasthan.**

- According to the Indian Forest Status Report-2021, Madhya Pradesh has the maximum forest cover in the country in terms of area.
- **25.14% of its area is covered by forests.**
- Governor - **Mangubhai Patel**
- Chief Minister - **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**
- Capital - **Bhopal**

9. Union Cabinet approves continuation of 'Exploration of Coal and Lignite Scheme' (June 7, 2023)

'Exploration-of-Coal-and-Lignite-Scheme

The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs**, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 7 June, has approved the continuation of the **Central Sector Scheme called "Exploration of Coal and Lignite scheme."**

An overview of the news

- The scheme will be implemented from **2021-22 to 2025-26**, aligned with the **15th Finance Commission cycle**, and will require an estimated expenditure of Rs 2980 crore.
- The scheme focuses on the exploration of coal and lignite through two main stages: **Promotional (Regional) Exploration and Detailed Exploration in Non-Coal India Limited (CIL) blocks.**
- The approved funding includes **Rs 1650 crore** for Promotional (Regional) Exploration and **Rs 1330 crore for Detailed Drilling in Non-CIL areas.**
- The scheme aims to cover approximately **1300 sq. km under Regional exploration and approximately 650 sq. km under Detailed exploration.**

Significance of the scheme

- Exploration for **Coal and Lignite** is essential to ascertain and estimate the available coal resources in the country.
- It plays a crucial role in preparing **detailed project reports** required to initiate coal mining operations.
- The geological reports generated through these exploration activities are utilized in the **auctioning of new coal blocks.**
- The cost of exploration is subsequently recovered from successful allocatees.
- The continuation of the Exploration of Coal and Lignite scheme will contribute to the assessment and **identification of coal and lignite reserves**, facilitating future coal mining operations.

- It ensures the availability of reliable geological data for the **auctioning process, promoting transparency and efficiency in the allocation of coal blocks.**

10. PM Modi launches Amrit Dharohar and MISHTI schemes for wetland, mangrove conservation (June 7, 2023)

-Modi-launches-Amrit-Dharohar

On the occasion of **World Environment Day (5 June)**, PM **Narendra Modi** launched **two schemes--Amrit Dharohar and MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes)**--aimed at reviving the country's wetlands and mangroves.

An overview of the news

- PM said in the **last nine years**, the number of **wetlands and Ramsar sites** in India has increased **almost three times** as compared to earlier
- India currently has **75 Ramsar sites** which are wetlands of international importance and have been designated under the norms of the **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.**
- India also has about **3% of South Asia's mangrove population.**
- Apart from Sundarbans in **West Bengal, Andaman region, Kutch and Jamnagar regions** in Gujarat have substantial mangrove cover.

Amrit Dharohar Yojana

- The scheme was first announced by the Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the **2023-24 Union budget.**
- The scheme will be implemented over the next three years to encourage optimum use of wetlands and enhance **biodiversity, carbon stock, ecotourism opportunities and income generation for local communities.**
- It will emphasise on the importance of **lakes and their conservation.**
- Amrit Dharohar aims to achieve **sustainable ecosystem development** over the next three years with the help of local communities.

MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes)

- The scheme was first announced by the Union finance minister **Nirmala Sitharaman in the 2023-24 Union budget.**
- This will facilitate **mangrove plantation on salt lands** along the sea coast of India.
- The scheme will operate through “**convergence between MGNREGS, Campa Fund and other sources**”.
- It aims at intensive afforestation of coastal mangrove forests.

- There are such forests on both the **east and west coasts of India**, with the
- **Sundarbans in Bengal** being one of the largest mangrove forests.
 - Initially the mangrove cover will be restored in **nine states across the country**.
 - The scheme envisages the development of mangroves covering nearly **540 sq km**, spreading **across 11 states and two union territories** over five years, starting from FY2023-24.
 - The **Centre will cover 80%** of the project cost, while **state governments** will contribute the **remaining 20%**.