

# INSIGHTS PT 2019 EXCLUSIVE (GOVERNMENT SCHEMES)

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## Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

### 1. Menstrual Hygiene for Adolescent Girls Schemes

- To address the need of menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls residing primarily in **rural areas**, Government of India is supporting the Menstrual Hygiene Scheme.
- **Under the Menstrual Hygiene Scheme –**
  - **Funds are provided to States/UTs through National Health Mission for decentralized procurement of sanitary napkins packs** for provision primarily to rural adolescent girls at subsidized rates.
  - **This scheme is encompassing the following:**
    - **Increasing awareness** among adolescent girls on Menstrual Hygiene
    - **Improving access** to and use of high quality sanitary napkins by adolescent girls in rural areas.
    - **Ensuring safe disposal** of Sanitary Napkins in an environmentally friendly manner.
    - **Provision of funds to ASHAs** to hold monthly meeting with adolescents to discuss issues related to menstrual hygiene.
- **Information Education and Communication (IEC) Material Developed:**
  - A range of IEC material has been developed, using a 360 degree approach to create awareness among adolescent girls about safe & hygienic menstrual health practices including audio, video and reading materials for adolescent girls and job-aids for ASHAs and other field level functionaries for communicating with adolescent girls.
  - ASHAs across the country are trained and play a significant role in promotion of use and distribution of the sanitary napkins.
  - **Department of Health Research, under the Ministry of Health, is involved in assessment of all newer, alternative, environment friendly menstrual hygiene products** to look into their safety and acceptability features.

#### **About Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA)**

- One of the key components of the **National Rural Health Mission** is to provide every village in the country with a trained female community health activist ASHA.
- Selected from the village itself and accountable to it, the ASHA will be trained to work as an **interface between the community and the public health system.**

#### **Other Information of Menstrual Hygiene Scheme –**

- The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** has been implementing this scheme for promotion of menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls in the **age group of 10-19 years** primarily in rural areas as part of the **Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram.**

### 2. Mission Indradhanush

- ‘Mission Indradhanush’ has been selected as one of the 12 best practices globally and has been featured in a special issue of the British Medical Journal titled ‘**Improving vaccination coverage in India: lessons from Intensified Mission Indradhanush, a cross-sectoral systems strengthening strategy**’.
- Mission Indradhanush was showcased during the ‘**Partner’s Forum**’ held at New Delhi on 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 which was attended by around 1200 international and national delegates working on Maternal, New-born, Child and Adolescent Health.
- **Background:**
- **Mission Indradhanush –**

- To strengthen and re-energize the programme and achieve full immunization coverage for all children and pregnant women at a rapid pace, the Government of India launched “**Mission Indradhanush**” in December 2014.
- **Mission Indradhanush’s Goal –**
  - The ultimate goal is to ensure full immunization with all available vaccines for **children up to two years of age and pregnant women** against **seven vaccine preventable diseases**.
  - The diseases being targeted are **diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, measles and Hepatitis B**.
  - In addition to these, vaccines for **Japanese Encephalitis and Haemophilus influenzae type B** are also being provided in **selected states**.
  - In 2016, **four new additions** have been made namely **Rubella, Japanese Encephalitis, Injectable Polio Vaccine Bivalent and Rotavirus**.
  - In 2017, **Pneumonia** was added to the Mission by incorporating Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine under Universal Immunization Programme.
  - The Government has identified 201 high focus districts across 28 states that have the highest number of partially immunized and unimmunized children.
- **Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) –**
  - To further intensify the immunization programme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Intensified Mission (IMI) on October 8, 2017.
  - Government of India aims to reach each and every child up to two years of age and all those pregnant women who have been left uncovered under the routine immunization programme/UIP.

### 3. Ayushman Bharat–PM Jan Arogya Yojana

- Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**.
- It is an umbrella of two major health initiatives, namely **Health and wellness Centres and National Health Protection Scheme**.
- **Health and Wellness Centres:**
  - Under this 1.5 lakh existing sub centres will bring health care system closer to the homes of people in the form of Health and wellness centres.
  - These centres will provide **comprehensive health care, including for non-communicable diseases and maternal and child health services**.
  - **List of Services to be provided at Health & Wellness Centre**
    - Pregnancy care and maternal health services
    - Neonatal and infant health services
    - Child health
    - Chronic communicable diseases
    - Non-communicable diseases
    - Management of mental illness
    - Dental care
    - Eye care

- Geriatric care Emergency medicine
- National Health Protection Mission (AB-PMJAY)
- **Benefits:**
  - AB-PMJAY provides a defined benefit cover of **Rs. 5 lakh per family per year**. This cover will take care of **almost all secondary care and most of tertiary care procedures**.
  - To ensure that nobody is left out (especially women, children and elderly) there will be no cap on family size and age in the scheme.
  - The benefit cover will also include **pre and post-hospitalisation expenses**. A defined transport allowance per hospitalization will also be paid to the beneficiary.
  - Benefits of the scheme are **portable across the country** and a beneficiary covered under the scheme will be allowed to take **cashless benefits** from any public/private empanelled hospitals across the country.
- **Eligibility**
  - AB-PMJAY is an entitlement-based scheme with entitlement decided on the basis of deprivation criteria in the SECC database.
  - AB-PMJAY will target about 10.74 crore poor, deprived rural families and identified occupational category of urban workers' families as per the latest **Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) data covering both rural and urban**.
- **Implementation**
  - At the national level to manage, a **National Health Agency** has been set up.
  - States/ UTs are advised to implement the scheme by a dedicated entity called **State Health Agency (SHA)**.
- **Expenditure**
  - The expenditure incurred in premium payment will be shared between Central and State Governments.

#### 4. Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY)

- The Union Cabinet has approved setting up of a **new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Deoghar, Jharkhand** under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).
- The setting up of new AIIMS at Deoghar will serve the dual purpose of providing **super speciality health care** to the population while also helping to create a large pool of doctors and other health workers in this region to be available for primary and secondary-level institutions/facilities being created under the National Health Mission (NHM).
- **Significance of the scheme:**
  - **Setting up of new AIIMS** would not only transform health education and training but also address the shortfall of health care professionals in the region.
  - Construction of new AIIMS is fully funded by the Central Government.
  - The Operations & Maintenance expenses on new AIIMS are also fully borne by the Central Government.
- **Employment Generation:**
  - Setting up new AIIMS in various states will lead to employment generation for nearly 3000 people in various faculty & non- faculty posts in each of the AIIMS.

##### **About PMSSY:**

The Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) was announced in 2003 with objectives of correcting regional imbalances in the availability of affordable/ reliable tertiary healthcare services and also to augment facilities for quality medical education in the country.

- It is a central sector scheme.
- The scheme has two components:  
**Setting up of new AIIMS and upgradation of government medical colleges.**



- The upgradation programme is carried out in selected Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) by agencies appointed by the Government of India under the direct supervision of the Central Government.

**NOTES**

## Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

### 1. National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP)

- The **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** has recently launched Rs 1100 crore ambitious *National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP)*.
- **Key highlights:**
  - *Aim:* To attract talent and strengthen higher agricultural education in the country.
  - *Funded by* the **World Bank** and the Indian Government on a 50:50 basis.
  - *The objective of the NAHEP* for India is to support participating agricultural universities and ICAR in providing more relevant and higher quality education to Agricultural University students.
  - In addition, a four-year degree in Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries and Forestry has been declared a professional degree.

### 2. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana

- Parliament's committee on estimates has in its latest report called for re-formulation of the **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)**, seeking transparency in its working and asking for more financial allocations to attract increasing participation from farmers.
- The committee has observed that ***there are fundamental flaws in the design of the scheme that renders it rather ineffective.***
- **Background:**
  - Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), launched in 2016, has run into rough weather. With both the area covered and the number of enrolled farmers declining, the country's premium crop insurance scheme is certainly in need of an overhaul.
- **About PMFBY:**
  - In April, 2016, the government of India had launched Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) ***after rolling back the earlier insurance schemes viz. National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (NAIS), Weather-based Crop Insurance scheme and Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS).***
  - **Premium:** It envisages a uniform premium of only 2% to be paid by farmers for Kharif crops, and 1.5% for Rabi crops. The premium for annual commercial and horticultural crops will be 5%.
  - The difference between premium and the rate of insurance charges payable by farmers is provided as subsidy and shared equally by the Centre and State.
  - ***The scheme is mandatory for farmers who have taken institutional loans from banks.*** It's optional for farmers who have not taken institutional credit.
- **Objectives:**
  - Providing financial support to farmers suffering crop loss/damage arising out of unforeseen events.
  - Stabilizing the income of farmers to ensure their continuance in farming.

- Encouraging farmers to adopt innovative and modern agricultural practices.
- Ensuring flow of credit to the agriculture sector.
- **Gram Sabhas** across the country have been asked to inform the farmers about the enrolment and benefits of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojan (PMFBY) at the beginning of the Rabi Season.
- **Union Government has decided to cover damages to crops in wild animal attacks under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna** in select districts on an experimental basis.
  - In this regard, Government has amended provisions of crop insurance scheme in consultation with various stakeholders. The amended provisions of the scheme have been implemented from October 2018.
  - **As per the new provisions:**
    - Certain **horticultural crops** have been brought under ambit of PMFBY on experimental basis.
    - Damages due to individual fields due to **incidents of localised disasters** like water logging, land slide, cloud bursts, hailstorms and fire too are brought under scheme.
    - Henceforth, insurances firms will also have to spend 0.5% of their earnings from annual premium to **advertise provisions of the scheme**.
    - **Fines in cases of delay in clearing insurance claims** for crop damages have been proposed.
    - In case firm delays insurance clearances beyond two months, it will have to pay an annual interest of 12%.
    - Similarly, State government too will have to pay interest of 12% in case of delay in release of state's share of subsidy in premium to insurance firms.

### 3. Online Portal "ENSURE"

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare launched a portal ENSURE – National Livestock Mission-EDEG developed by NABARD and operated under the **Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries**.
- **Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation (EDEG):**
  - Under the Mission's component EDEG, subsidy payment for activities related to poultry, small ruminants, pigs etc., through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) goes directly to the beneficiary's account.
  - To make it better, simpler and transparent, the NABARD has developed an online portal "ENSURE" which makes the information related to beneficiary and processing of application readily available.
- **Benefits:**
  - The flow of information/funds will be quicker and more accountable.
  - The burden of extra interest due to delay in the disbursal of the subsidy would now be reduced.
  - Accessing the portal will be on real-time basis and list of beneficiaries can be easily prepared.

#### 4. Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)

- The Union Cabinet approved a new Umbrella Scheme “Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan’ (PM-AASHA). The Scheme is aimed at **ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers** for their produce as announced in the Union Budget for 2018.
- **The umbrella scheme ‘PM-AASHA’ comprises three sub-schemes:**
  - Price Support Scheme (PSS).
  - Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS).
  - Pilot of Private Procurement & Stockist Scheme (PPPS).
- **Price Support Scheme (PSS):**
  - Under the scheme, the **physical procurement** of pulses, oilseeds and Copra will be done by Central Nodal Agencies with the proactive role of the state governments.
  - Further, in addition to NAFED, the Food Cooperation of India (FCI) will take up PSS operations in states and districts.
  - The procurement expenditure and losses due to procurement will be borne by the Union Government as per norms.
- **Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS):**
  - Under the scheme, it is proposed to cover **all oilseeds** for which minimum support price (MSP) is notified.
  - In this, **direct payment of the difference between the MSP and the selling/modal price** will be made to pre-registered farmers selling his produce in the notified market yard through a transparent auction process.
  - All payments will be done directly into the registered bank account of the farmer.
  - This scheme does not involve any physical procurement of crops as farmers are paid the difference between the MSP price and sale or modal price on disposal in the notified market.
- **Pilot of Private Procurement & Stockist Scheme (PPPS):**
  - For oilseeds, the states will have the option to roll out Private Procurement Stockist Scheme (PPSS) on pilot basis in selected districts and Agricultural Produce Market Committee’s (APMC) of district involving the participation of private stockiest.
  - The pilot district and selected APMC(s) will cover one or more crop of oilseeds for which MSP is notified.
  - Since this is similar to the PSS scheme, as it involves physical procurement of the notified commodity, the scheme shall substitute PSS/PDPS in the pilot districts.
  - The selected private agency shall procure the commodity at MSP in the notified markets during the notified period from the registered farmers in accordance with the PPSS Guidelines, whenever the prices in the market fall below the notified MSP and whenever authorised by the state or UT government to enter the market. The maximum service charges up to 15% of the notified MSP will be payable.

## Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship

### 1. Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS)

- The government has unveiled new **guidelines for Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS)** aligning them to the **National Skills Qualification Framework** with an aim to providing standardised training across sectors.
- **New guidelines:**
  - Alignment of JSS course and curriculum with National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) to standardize training.
  - Decentralization of powers for JSSs by providing accountability and independence to district administration.
  - To identify and promote traditional skills in the district through skilling / upskilling.
  - Evidence-based assessment system.
  - Easy Online certification.
  - Linking JSS to Public Finance Management system to maintain transparency and accountability of the ecosystem.
  - Creating livelihood linkages.
  - Training of Trainers to develop the capacity through National Skills Training Institutes.
- **About Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS):**
  - Formerly under the Ministry of Human Resources Development, **Jan Shikshan Sansthan was transferred to the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship in 2018.**
  - **Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) were established to provide vocational training** to non-literate, neo-literate, as well as school dropouts by identifying skills as would have a market in the region of their establishment.

## Ministry of Human Resources Development

### 1. Institutes of Eminence Scheme

- The University Grants Commission has deferred a decision on which institutions should be granted the prestigious ***Institutes of Eminence*** tag as an expert committee has recommended more names than the government scheme allowed for.
- **Background:**
  - The empowered expert committee headed by former Chief Election Commissioner N. Gopalaswami had initially recommended 11 institutions for the tag in July 2018. In December, the committee recommended 19 more names, taking the total list to 30.
- **Institutions of Eminence scheme:**
  - The institutes of eminence scheme ***under the Union human resource development (HRD) ministry*** aims to project Indian institutes to global recognition.
  - The scheme was rolled out by **University Grants Commission (UGC)**.
  - It aimed to help 20 higher education (10 public and 10 private) institutions from country break into top 500 in at least one internationally reputed ranking framework in 10 years, and then eventually break into top 100 over time.
  - The selected institutes will enjoy ***complete academic and administrative autonomy***.
  - They will be exempted from approvals of government or UGC for academic collaborations with foreign institutions, except institutions in MEA and MHA's list of negative countries.
  - They will be free to decide their fee for domestic and foreign students and have flexible course duration and structure.
  - They will have complete ***flexibility in fixing of curriculum and syllabus***.
  - ***Eligibility:*** Only higher education institutions currently placed in the top 500 of global rankings or top 50 of the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) are eligible to apply for the eminence tag.
  - ***The private Institutions of Eminence can also come up as greenfield ventures*** provided the sponsoring organisation submits a convincing perspective plan for 15 years.

### 2. Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)

- The Union Human Resources Development Ministry has signed an agreement with ***Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*** for India's Participation in Programme for International Student Assessment- PISA 2021.
- The students will be selected by PISA through random sampling. ***The schools run by Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) and schools in the UT of Chandigarh would be participating.***
- **Significance:**

- India's participation in PISA- 2021 would lead to recognition and acceptability of Indian students and prepare them for the global economy in the 21st century.
- **Background:**
  - India had taken part in **Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)** in 2009 and bagged the 72nd rank among 74 participating countries. The then government had boycotted PISA, blaming "out of context" questions for India's dismal performance.
  - Later, the HRD Ministry, revisited this decision in 2016 and the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) had set up a committee to review the matter and submitted its report in December 2016.
  - The report recommended for participation in test in 2018. However, India missed the application deadline for the 2018 cycle.
- **About the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA):**
  - It is **an international assessment that measures 15-year-old students' reading, mathematics, and science literacy every three years.**
  - **First conducted in 2000**, the major domain of study rotates between reading, mathematics, and science in each cycle. PISA also **includes measures of general or cross-curricular competencies, such as collaborative problem solving.**
  - By design, **PISA emphasizes functional skills that students have acquired as they near the end of compulsory schooling.**
  - **PISA is coordinated by** the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an intergovernmental organization of industrialized countries, and is conducted in the United States by NCES.
  - **In 2012 PISA test, schools of Shanghai in China topped reading, mathematics and science test, followed closely by Singapore. In 2015, Singapore, Japan and Estonia were ranked as top three countries, in that order.**

### 3. Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS)

- The Government has approved "**Revitalizing Infrastructure and Systems in Education by 2022**", accordingly the scope of institutions to be funded through **Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)** has been enlarged to encompass School Education and Medical Education institutions, apart from Higher Education.
- The Government of India, in August 2018, had sanctioned the scheme "**Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS)**" at a total cost of Rs. 414 Cr for implementation up to 31.03.2021.
- **Highlights of the Scheme:**
  - 1500 research projects will be awarded for 2 years to support the social science research in the higher educational and to enable research to guide policy making.
- **Implementing Agency:**
  - Indian Council of Social Science and Research (ICSSR)
- **Objectives of the Scheme:**
  - To **identify and fund research proposals in social sciences with maximum impact on the governance and society.**

- To ensure selection of projects through a transparent, competitive process on online mode.
- To provide opportunity for social science researchers in any institution in the country, including all **Universities (Centre and State)**, private institutions with 12(B) status conferred by UGC.
- **ICSSR funded/recognized research institutes will also be eligible to submit research proposals on the given themes and sub-themes.**
- **About ICSSR –**
  - **Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)** was established in the year of 1969 by the Government of India to promote research in social sciences in the country.
  - ICSSR **provide grants** for projects, fellowships, international collaboration, capacity building, survey, publications etc. to promote research in social sciences in India.
- **About HEFA –**
  - **Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)** is a joint venture of MHRD Government of India and Canara Bank **with an agreed equity participation in the ratio of 91% and 9% respectively.**
  - It is for financing **creation of capital assets in premier educational institutions** in India as part of rising 2022.
  - HEFA's scope is greatly expanded to cover school education, educational institutes under Ministry of Health, etc.
  - HEFA is registered under Section 8 [Not-for-Profit] under the Companies Act 2013 as a Union Govt company and as Non-deposit taking NBFC (NBFC-ND-Type II) with RBI.
  - HEFA helps in **channelizing CSR and donations from corporate and philanthropists** as grants to these institutions to support their research and development initiatives.
  - It aims to **lend low-cost funds** to IITs, IIMs, the National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and such other institutions for promoting research and innovation.

#### 4. Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)

- Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched the web portal of the Scheme "***Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)***".
- The Government in August 2018 had sanctioned the scheme "Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)" at a total cost of Rs.418 Cr for implementation up to 31.3.2020.
- **Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur is the National Coordinating Institute** to implement the SPARC programme.
- The scheme aims at **improving the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions** by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the world.
- Under this Scheme, 600 joint research proposals will be awarded for 2 years to facilitate strong research collaboration between Indian research groups with the best in class faculty and renowned research groups in the leading



universities of the world, in **areas that are at the cutting edge of science or with direct social relevance to the mankind**, specifically India.

NOTES

## Ministries of Women and Child Development

### 1. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

- Ministry of Women & Child Development (MWCD) had issued a clarification note stating that the **BBBP scheme has no provision for individual CASH TRANSFER COMPONENT by Government of India.**
- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme focuses on:**
  - **Challenging mindsets and deep-rooted patriarchy** in the societal system,
  - **Strict enforcement of PC&PNDT Act,**
  - **Advancing education of the girl child**
  - **Focus on issues of women empowerment** on a life cycle continuum.
- It is not a DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer) scheme.
- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme was launched in January, 2015 at Panipat in Haryana.
- The scheme is aimed at **promoting gender equality** and the significance of **educating girls.**
- The Scheme is targeted at **improving the Child Sex Ratio** through multi sectoral interventions including **prevention of gender biased sex selection** and **promoting girls' education** and her holistic empowerment.
- It is a **tri-ministerial effort** of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development.
- In the first phase, 100 districts with low Child Sex Ratio were selected.

### 2. Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs)

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs has envisaged engagement of **Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs)** in the States and Union Territories who will act as a **link between police and community** and help women in distress.
- All Chief Secretaries of States/UTs have been requested to adopt this initiative in their respective States.
- **Background:**
  - **Haryana is the first state to adopt the initiative at Karnal and Mahendergarh District on a pilot basis under Nirbhaya Fund** during the financial year 2016-2017.
- **About the scheme:**
  - **Originally conceived by the Union Ministry of Women & Child Development,** Mahila Police Volunteer is **a joint initiative with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.**
  - The Mahila Police Volunteers scheme envisages **creation of a link between the police authorities and the local communities in villages through police volunteers** who will be women specially trained for this purpose.
  - Their primary job will be **to keep an eye on situations where women in the village are harassed or their rights and entitlements are denied or their development is prevented.**

- **One Mahila Police Volunteer (MPV) is envisaged per Gram Panchayat across the country.**
- MPV must be at least 21 years old and possess at least class 12<sup>th</sup> certificate.
- These will be selected through a laid-out procedure from among the empowered, responsible, socially aware women who will facilitate police outreach on gender concerns.

### 3. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana

- As per the latest data released by the **Centre for Digital Financial Inclusion (CDFI)** that uses technology for financial inclusion, the government has transferred over Rs 1,600 crore to eligible mothers under **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana** through direct benefit transfer so far.
- **CAS (Common Application Software) System:**
  - **CDFI is a non-profit organisation.** It had conceptualised, designed and implemented the PMMVY-CAS (Common Application Software) System through which disbursements were made.
- **About PMMVY:**
  - Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) is **a maternity benefit rechristened from erstwhile Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY).** The IGMSY was launched in 2010.
  - PMMVY provides **partial compensation for the wage loss** in terms of cash incentives so that the woman can take adequate rest before and after delivery of the **first living child.**
  - It is implemented in all the districts of the country in accordance with the provision of the **National Food Security Act, 2013.**
- **Exceptions:**
  - The maternity benefits under Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) are available to all **Pregnant Women & Lactating Mothers (PW&LM)** except those in regular employment with the Central Government or State Government or Public Sector Undertaking or those who are in receipt of similar benefits under any law for the time being in force.
- **Funding:**
  - The scheme is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** under which cost sharing ratio between the Centre and the States & UTs with Legislature is 60:40 while for North-Eastern States & three Himalayan States; it is 90:10.
  - It is 100% Central assistance for Union Territories without Legislature.

### 4. SHe- Box

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development has linked SHe- Box, the **online portal to report complaints of Sexual Harassment at Workplace**, to all the Central Ministries, Departments and 653 districts across 33 States/Union Territories.
- For prompt disposal of complaints on SHe-Box, each case goes directly to the central/ state authority concerned having jurisdiction to take action in the matter.
- **About SHe-box:**

- **What is it?** It is an online complaint management system for registering complaints related to sexual harassment at workplace.
- It was launched by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**.
- The complaint management system has been developed to ensure the effective implementation of **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (the SH Act), 2013**.
- **How it works?** Once a complaint is submitted to the portal, it will be directly sent to the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) of the concerned Ministry/Department/PSU/Autonomous Body etc. having jurisdiction to inquire into the complaint.
- Through this portal, WCD as well as complainant can monitor the progress of inquiry conducted by the ICC.
- **Significance of the portal:**
  - Any woman working in any office of Central Government / State Government / Private organisation can file complaint related to sexual harassment at workplace through this SHe-Box.
  - Those who had already filed a written complaint with the concerned Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) constituted under the SH Act are also eligible to file their complaint through this portal.
- **Background:**
  - The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 seeks to protect women from sexual harassment at their place of work.
  - This **statute superseded the Vishakha Guidelines** for prevention of sexual harassment introduced by the Supreme Court of India.
  - Under the Act, which also **covers students in schools and colleges** as well as **patients in hospitals**, employers and local authorities will have to set up grievance committees to investigate all complaints.

## 5. Krishna Kutir

- Union Ministry of Women and Child Development recently inaugurated **widows' home 'Krishna Kutir'** at Vrindavan in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh.
- The construction of the home was funded by Central Government and it will be managed by the Uttar Pradesh Government.
- **Krishna Kutir:**
  - Krishna Kutir is **a special home for 1000 widows set under Swadhar Greh scheme** and is the largest ever facility of its kind created by government organization.
  - It was constructed to mitigate the plight of widows living in pathetic condition in Vrindavan.
- **About Swadhar Greh Scheme:**
  - The Swadhar scheme was launched by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2002 for **rehabilitation of women in difficult circumstances**.
  - Swadhar Greh will be **set up in every district** with capacity of 30 women with the following objectives:

- To provide shelter, food, clothing and care to the **marginalized women/girls** who are in need.
- To provide them with **legal aid and guidance** to enable them to take steps for their readjustment in family/society.
- To **rehabilitate them economically and emotionally**.
- **The benefit of the scheme could be availed by women above 18 years of age.** Girls up to the age of 18 years and boys up to the age of 8 years would be allowed to stay in the Swadhar Greh with their mothers.
- The beneficiaries include **widows** deserted by their families and relatives, **women prisoners** released from jail and without family support, **women survivors of natural disasters**, **women victims** of terrorist/extremist violence etc.
- **Implementation of the scheme:**
  - The implementing agencies are mainly **NGOs**. Other implementing agencies are State Government agencies, Central or State autonomous bodies, Municipal Bodies, Cantonment Boards, Panchayati Raj Institutions and Cooperative institutions.

## 6. Poshan Maah

- The Government is celebrating the month of September, 2018 as the **National Nutrition Month under the Poshan Abhiyan**.
- **About Poshan Maah (National Nutrition Month):**
  - The **primary objective** of the celebration of Poshan Maah is to take the messages of POSHAN to the grass root level.
  - The programme- **an initiative of WCD Ministry and NITI Aayog** is supported by 18 line Ministries/Departments/Government Organizations.
  - It **seeks to synergise all efforts** by leveraging technology and intends to take nutrition awareness to the level of Jan Andolan or People's Movement.
  - The programme **focuses on several themes** – Antenatal Care, Optimal Breastfeeding (Early & Exclusive), Complementary Feeding, Anemia, Growth Monitoring, Girls-education, diet, right age of Marriage, Hygiene & Sanitation, Food Fortification.
- **About POSHAN Abhiyan:**
  - POSHAN stands for **Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition**.
  - POSHAN Abhiyaan is a **multi-ministerial convergence mission** with the vision to ensure attainment of **malnutrition free India by 2022**.
  - The objective of POSHAN Abhiyaan to **reduce stunting** in identified Districts of India with the highest malnutrition burden by improving **utilization of key Anganwadi Services** and **improving the quality of Anganwadi Services delivery**.
  - Its aim to ensure holistic development and adequate nutrition for pregnant women, mothers and children.
  - It targets to **reduce level of under-nutrition** and other related problems by ensuring convergence of various nutrition related schemes.
  - It also targets stunting, anaemia (among young children, women and adolescent girls) and low birth rate.

- Its large component involves gradual scaling-up of interventions supported by on-going World Bank assisted Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Systems Strengthening and Nutrition Improvement Project (ISSNIP) to all districts in the country by 2022.
- **KEY NUTRITION STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS**
  - These are key Nutrition strategies and interventions: IYCF (Infant and Young child feeding), Food and Nutrition, Immunization, Institutional Delivery, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene), De-worming, ORS-Zinc, Food Fortification, Dietary Diversification, Adolescent Nutrition, Maternal Health and Nutrition, ECD (Early childhood development)/ECCE (Early Childhood care and Education), Convergence, ICT-RTM (Information and Communication. Technology enabled Real Time Monitoring) and Capacity Building etc.
- **Implementation strategy**
  - POSHAN Abhiyaan targets to reduce stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia (among young children, women and adolescent girls) and reduce low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum respectively.
  - Although the target to reduce Stunting is at least 2% p.a., Mission would strive to achieve reduction in Stunting from 38.4% (NFHS-4) to 25% by 2022 (Mission 25 by 2022).

## Ministry of Rural Development

### 1. National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)

- The NSAP is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Ministry of Rural Development**. It came into effect from 15th August, 1995.
- It represents a significant step towards the **fulfilment of the DPSP in Article 41** of the Constitution.
- Article 41 of the Constitution of India directs the State to provide public assistance to its citizens in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and in other cases of undeserved want within the limit of its economic capacity and development.
- It aims to provide **financial assistance to the elderly, widows and persons with disabilities in the form of social pensions**.
- **Coverage:** It currently covers more than three crore people who are below the poverty line (BPL), including about 80 lakh widows, 10 lakh disabled and 2.2 crore elderly.
- **Presently NSAP comprises of five schemes, namely:**
  - Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS).
  - Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS).
  - Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS).
  - National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS).
  - Annapurna

### 2. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (Gramin)

- As per the latest study conducted by the Rural Development Ministry, the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana- Gramin (PMAY-G)** is in doldrums with over 12 lakh pending houses and land being provided to only 12 per cent of the beneficiaries.
- The government launched **“Housing for All” in rural areas** under which the Government will provide an **environmentally safe and secure pucca house to every rural household by 2022**.
- Named the **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (Gramin)**, in its first phase the target is to complete one crore houses by March 2019.
- Minimum support of nearly Rs. 1.5 lakh to Rs. 1.6 lakh to a household is available. There is also a provision of Bank loan upto Rs. 70,000/-, if the beneficiary so desires.
- **Cost sharing:** The cost of unit assistance in this scheme is shared between Central and State Governments in the **ratio 60:40** in plain areas and **90: 10** for North Eastern and Himalayan States.
- The **selection of beneficiaries** has been through the **Socio-Economic Census 2011** data and validating it through the Gram Sabha.
- The houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana would be allotted to **preferably the female member of the family**.
- The programme provides for **skilling 5 lakh Rural Masons** by 2019.
- A large-scale **use of local materials** is envisaged along with a complete home with cooking space, electricity provision, LPG, toilet and bathing area, drinking water etc through convergence.

- The programme uses **ICT and space technology** to further confirm correct selection of beneficiaries and progress of work.

### 3. Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM)

- The **Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM)** is under implementation across the country (launched in 2016).
- It is a unique programme, designed to deliver catalytic interventions to rural areas on the threshold of growth.
- **Funding Support:**
  - There is a funding support of up to 30% of the estimated investment for each Rurban cluster, given as **Critical Gap Funding (CGF)**, while 70% of the funds is mobilized by the States through convergence with synergic State and Central programmes and private investment and institutional funding.
  - **The CGF is now shared between the Centre and the State in a ratio of 60:40 for Plain area States and 90:10 for Himalayan and NE States.**
- **Various Provisions:**
  - **Provision of basic amenities –**
    - Provision of 24/7 Water Supply to all households,
    - Solid and Liquid Waste Management facilities at the household and cluster level.
  - **Provision of Inter and Intra village roads –**
    - Adequate Street Lights and Public Transport facilities using green technologies.
  - **Provision of Economic Amenities –**
    - Various thematic areas in the sectors of Agri Services and Processing, Tourism, and Skill development to promote Small and Medium Scale Enterprises.

### 4. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana

- The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) announced the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), on 25th September 2014.
- DDU-GKY is a part of **the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)**, tasked with the dual objectives of adding diversity to the **incomes of rural poor families** and cater to the **career aspirations of rural youth**.
- DDU-GKY is uniquely **focused on rural youth between the ages of 15 and 35 years** from poor families.
- **Gram Panchayat** will play a key role in generating awareness about the programme, facilitate mobilization of candidates, and assist in job melas and in tracking candidate placements.
- **Mandatory coverage of socially disadvantaged groups** (SC/ST 50%; Minority 15%; Women 33%).
- Guaranteed Placement for at least 75% trained candidates.
- Greater emphasis on projects for poor rural youth in **Jammu and Kashmir (HIMAYAT)**, the **North-East region** and **27 Left-Wing Extremist (LWE) districts (ROSHINI)**.



- It plays an instrumental role in **supporting the social and economic programs of the government** like the Make In India, Digital India, Smart Cities, Start-Up India and Stand-Up India campaigns.

## 5. Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM)

- The Union Cabinet has approved the extension of timeline for implementation of the Special Package under **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)** for Jammu & Kashmir for another period of one year during 2018-19.
- The Cabinet also approved allocation of funds to the State under DAY-NRLM on a need basis for implementation of the Special Package without linking it with poverty ratio.
- **About Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM):**
  - The Government is implementing DAY-NRLM across the country in all States and Union Territories (except Delhi and Chandigarh).
  - It is supported by **World Bank**.
  - The scheme aims to **organize the poor into Self Help Groups (SHGs)** and make them capable for self-employment.
  - Organizing **at least one-woman member from each rural poor household into SHGs**.
  - The financial support under the programme is mainly in the form of **Revolving Fund and Community Investment Funds**, given as grants to the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and their federations.
  - DAY-NRLM also focuses on **bank linkage of the institutions**.
  - The programme has a special focus on **women empowerment** including a dedicated component for promoting farm and non-farm based livelihoods for women farmers in rural areas.
  - In addition, **start-up enterprises at village levels** are also supported to promote entrepreneurial activities in those areas.
  - It is one of the world's largest initiatives to improve the livelihood of poor.

## Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation

### 1. Swachhta Pakhwada

- Swachhata Pakhwada started in April 2016 with the objective of bringing a **fortnight of intense focus on the issues and practices of Swachhata** by engaging GOI Ministries/Departments in their jurisdictions.
- An annual calendar is pre-circulated among the Ministries to help them plan for the Pakhwada activities.
- The Ministries observing Swachhata Pakhwada are monitored closely using online monitoring system of **Swachhata Samiksha** where action plans, images, videos related to Swachhata activities are uploaded and shared.
- After observing Swachhata Pakhwada, Ministries/ Departments announce their achievements through a press conference and other communication tools.
- For the Pakhwada fortnight, observing ministries are considered as **Swachhata Ministries** and are expected to bring qualitative Swachhata improvements in their jurisdictions.

### 2. Ganga Gram Project

- Ganga Gram project was launched under the clean Ganga mission-**Namami Gange Programme** to have a **holistic sanitation development in villages on the banks of River Ganga**.
- The project was launched at the Ganga Gram Swachhata Sammelan.
- **Ganga Gram** aims to transform banks of the village of River Ganga into ideal villages with emphasis on the following:
  - Open Defecation Free (ODF)
  - Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM)
  - Water Conservation
  - Ground Water Recharge
  - Modern crematorium
  - Tree plantation
  - Organic and medicinal plant agriculture

### 3. Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently conferred Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2018 to top ranked states and districts.
- The rankings were based on the **National Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018** of the Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.
- Haryana was ranked as **best State**.
- Satara District of Maharashtra was ranked as **best district**.
- Uttar Pradesh was rewarded for **maximum citizens' participation**.
- **About Swachh Survekshan Grameen:**
  - **The objective of SSG 2018** is to undertake ranking of states and districts on basis of their performance attained on key quantitative and qualitative Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G) parameters.
  - The rankings will be based on taking into account set of comprehensive cleanliness parameters.

- **The criteria of SSG-2018** include survey of public places, citizens' perspective of cleanliness, their recommendations and data from SBM-G.
- As part of it, more than 6000 villages in 698 districts across India were covered. It covered nearly 30,000 public places namely schools, anganwadis, public health centres, haat/bazaars/religious places in these villages.
- **Weightage:**
  - The SSG 2018 assigned 65% weightage to findings and outcome and 35% to service level parameters to be obtained from Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) of the MDWS.
  - The weights to different elements of SSG are direct observation of sanitation in public places (30%), citizen's feedback on sanitation parameters (35%), service level progress on sanitation progress in the country as per SBMG-MIS (35%).
- **Survey:**
  - The SSG 2018 was conducted by independent survey agency in all districts from 1st to 31st August 2018.
  - It also took feedback from over 50 lakh citizens on SBM related issues through direct interaction as well as online feedback.

#### 4. Swachhata Hi Seva Movement

- 'Swachhata Hi Seva' movement has been launched across the country on September 15, 2018.
- Swachhata Hi Seva movement aims to ensure a **high standard of cleanliness across the country**, which was Mahatma Gandhi's dream for the nation.
- **About the campaign:**
  - The campaign is being coordinated by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, the convening Ministry for the Swachh Bharat Mission.
  - The objective of the campaign is to **mobilise people and reinforce the "Jan Aandolan" for sanitation** to contribute to Mahatma Gandhi's dream of a Clean India.
  - It will see large scale mobilisation of people from all walks of life to undertake shramdaan for cleanliness and construction of toilets and to make their environments free from open defecation.
  - There will be targeted cleaning of public and tourist places.
  - Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has made elaborate plans along with the State Governments to involve people from various walks of life and make this an unprecedented people's campaign.
  - Reaching out to the poor and marginalised and providing them with sustainable sanitation services would be the hallmark of this campaign.

## Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

### 1. National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction

- The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has drafted **National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (2018-2023)** for addressing the problem of drug and substance abuse in the country.
- **Drug menace:**
  - India is vulnerable to narcotic drug trafficking as it is located between two largest Opium producing regions of the world i.e. **Golden Crescent in the west and Golden Triangle in the east.**
  - Drug trafficking and abuse also pose serious threat to our societies.
  - Estimates suggest that there are 40 lakh drug addicts in the country. The most common drugs of abuse are 'ganja', 'hashish', 'opium' and 'heroin'.
  - The abuse of pharmaceutical preparations like 'buprenorphine', codeine based cough syrups and painkillers like 'proxivon' has also assumed serious proportions.
  - In certain regions of the country, drug abuse has already become a severe social-economic problem affecting the vulnerable age groups.
- **What has the government done in this regard?**
  - The Government has taken several policy and other initiatives to deal with drug trafficking problem.
  - It constituted **Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD)** in November, 2016 and revived the scheme of **"Financial Assistance to States for Narcotics Control"**.
  - In 2017, the government approved **new Reward Guidelines with increased quantum of reward for interdiction or seizure of different illicit drugs.**
  - For effective coordination with foreign countries, **India has signed 37 Bilateral Agreements/Memoranda of Understanding.**
  - **Narcotics Control Bureau has been provided funds for developing a new software i.e. Seizure Information Management System (SIMS)** which will create a complete online database of drug offences and offenders.
  - The government has constituted a fund called **"National Fund for Control of Drug Abuse"** to meet the expenditure incurred in connection with combating illicit traffic in Narcotic Drugs; rehabilitating addicts, and educating public against drug abuse, etc.
  - The government is also conducting **National Drug Abuse Survey** to measure trends of drug abuse in India through Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment with the help of National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre of AIIMS.

### 2. Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana Camp

- A Distribution camp for free of cost distribution of Aids and Assistive Living devices under **Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY)**, a scheme of Social Justice & Empowerment Department for Senior Citizen under BPL category, was recently organized in Delhi by **Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India**

**(ALIMCO), a PSU working under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.**

- **About Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana:**

- The Scheme aims at **providing Senior Citizens, belonging to BPL category and suffering from any of the age-related disability/infirmity** Low vision, Hearing impairment, Loss of teeth and Locomotor disability, with such assisted-living devices which can restore near normalcy in their bodily functions, overcoming the disability/infirmity manifested.

- This is **a Central Sector Scheme**, fully funded by the Central Government.

The expenditure for implementation of

the scheme will be met from the **“Senior Citizens’ Welfare Fund “**.

- Under the scheme, **free of cost distribution of the devices**, commensurate with the extent of disability/infirmity that is manifested among the eligible senior citizens will take place.
- In case of multiple disabilities/infirmities manifested in the same person, the assistive devices will be given in respect of each disability/impairment.
- Beneficiaries in each district will be identified by the State Governments/UT Administrations through a Committee chaired by the Deputy Commissioner/District Collector.
- As far as possible, **30% of the beneficiaries in each district shall be women**.



**ASSISTING LESS PRIVILEGED, ELDERLY CITIZENS**

**Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana** - Providing assistive devices to BPL Senior Citizens launched today

- ◆ Implemented through 'Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO) (PSU under M/o SJ&E)
- ◆ First of its kind in the country
- ◆ To address disabilities like low vision, hearing impairment, Loss of teeth and Locomotor disability
- ◆ Beneficiaries will get walkers, crutches, hearing aids, tripods, wheelchair, Artificial Dentures & Spectacles
- ◆ Devices are of high quality and conforming to BIS standards

## Ministry of Minority Affairs

### 1. Hunar Haats

- Hunar Haats are organised by Ministry of Minority Affairs under **USTTAD (Upgrading the Skills & Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development) scheme**.
- The USTTAD scheme aims at preserving & promoting the rich heritage of the traditional arts & crafts of the Minority communities. This is one of the flagship programmes of the Ministry.
- **Significance of Hunar Haats:**
  - Hunar Haats have become a successful mission to provide **employment and income generation opportunities** with platforms for marketing the products of master artisans, craftsmen and culinary experts belonging to the **minority communities**.
  - It envisages at boosting the skill of craftsmen, weavers and artisans who are already engaged in the traditional ancestral work.

## Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

### 1. PARIVESH (Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub)

- It is an environmental single window hub for **Environment, Forest, Wildlife and CRZ clearances**.
- This **Single-Window Integrated Environmental Management System** has been developed in pursuance of the spirit of 'Digital India' and capturing the essence of Minimum Government and Maximum Governance.
- **Key features:**
  - "PARIVESH" is a workflow-based application, based on the concept of web architecture.
  - ***It has been rolled out for online submission, monitoring and management of proposals submitted by Project Proponents to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC), as well as to the State Level Environmental Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAA).***
  - It seeks **to give various types of clearances** (e.g. Environment, Forest, Wildlife and Coastal Regulation Zone Clearances) from Central, State and district-level authorities.
  - ***The system has been designed, developed and hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, with technical support from National Informatics Centre, (NIC).***
  - **It provides** single registration and single sign-in for all types of clearances (i.e. Environment, Forest, Wildlife and CRZ), unique-ID for all types of clearances required for a particular project and a single Window interface for the proponent to submit applications for getting all types of clearances.
- **Significance and benefits of the platform:**
  - PARIVESH offers a framework to generate economic growth and strengthens **Sustainable Development through e- Governance**.
  - With automatic highlighting of non-compliance by the system, PARIVESH helps in improving the overall **performance and efficiency** of the whole appraisal process.
  - It also helps the processing authorities, as it has a Single Window System for Central, State and District level clearances.
  - The **facility of Geographic Information System (GIS) interface** for the Appraisal Committee will help them in analyzing the proposal efficiently, automatic alerts (via SMS and emails) at important stages to the concerned officers, committee members and higher authorities to check the delays, if any.
  - It also enables project proponents, citizens to view, track and interact with scrutiny officers, generates online clearance letters, online mailers and alerts to state functionaries in case of delays beyond stipulated time for processing of applications.



## Ministry of Commerce & Industry

### 1. Womaniya on Government e Marketplace

- It is ***an initiative launched by the Government eMarketplace (GeM)*** to enable women entrepreneurs and self-help groups to sell different products at the platform.
- ***Key features of the initiative:***
  - The initiative – Womaniya on GeM – seeks ***to develop women entrepreneurship on the margins of society to achieve gender-inclusive economic growth.***
  - The initiative would enable women entrepreneurs and women self-help groups ***to sell handicrafts and handloom, jute and coir products, home décor and office furnishings, directly to various government ministries, departments and institutions.***
  - Womaniya on GeM will address goals and objectives under ***United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.***
- ***About GeM:***
  - It is ***an online marketplace to facilitate procurement of goods and services by various Ministries and agencies of the Government.***
  - ***The platform offers online, end to end solution for procurement of commonly used goods and services*** for all Central government and State Government Ministries/Departments including its attached/subordinate offices, Central and State autonomous bodies, Central and State Public Sector Units and local bodies etc.
  - The ***“Seller(s)” on GeM*** will be the OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers) and/or their authorized channel partner(s)/ resellers (having any general authorization / dealership of the OEM to sell their product in open market) and e- Marketplaces.
  - It aims ***to enhance transparency, efficiency and speed in public procurement of goods and services and eliminate corruption.***
  - Government e Marketplace is ***a 100% government owned company setup under the aegis of Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry*** for procurement of common use goods and services by Government ministries, departments and CPSEs.

### 2. National Mission on Government e-Market (GeM) Portal

- The government has launched the ***National Mission on Government eMarketplace (GeM)*** for increasing awareness and accelerating the use of (GeM).
- ***The National Mission will cover*** all central government departments, states and public sector undertakings in a mission mode.
- ***It is aimed at creating awareness*** about GeM, train the buyers and sellers, get them registered in GeM and increase the procurement through GeM.
- ***It also aims to promote inclusiveness*** by empowering various categories of sellers and service providers such as MSMEs, start-ups, domestic manufacturers, women entrepreneurs, and Self-Help Groups.



- The mission also aims to give a boost to cashless, contactless, paperless transactions in line with Digital India objectives.

## Ministry of Mines

### 1. Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)

- The programme is meant to provide for the **welfare of areas and people affected by mining** related operations, using the funds generated by **District Mineral Foundations (DMFs)**.
- **Objectives of the scheme:**
  - To implement various **developmental and welfare projects** in mining affected areas that complement the existing ongoing schemes/projects of State and Central Government.
  - To **minimize/mitigate the adverse impacts**, during and after mining, on the environment, health and socio-economics of people in mining districts.
  - To ensure **long-term sustainable livelihoods** for the affected people in mining areas.
- **Areas of focus:**
  - High priority areas like drinking water supply, health care, sanitation, education, skill development, women and child care, welfare of aged and disabled people, skill development and environment conservation will get at least 60 % share of the funds.
  - Balance funds will be spent on making roads, bridges, railways, waterways projects, irrigation and alternative energy sources.
- **About DMFs:**
  - **DMFs were instituted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (MMDR) Amendment Act 2015** as **non-profit trusts** to work for the interest and benefit of persons and areas affected by mining-related operations.
  - **The objective of District Mineral Foundation is to** work for the interest of the benefit of the persons and areas affected mining related operations in such manner as may be prescribed by the State Government.
  - **Jurisdiction:** Its manner of operation comes under the jurisdiction of the relevant State Government.
  - In case of all mining leases executed before 12th January, 2015 (the date of coming into force of the Amendment Act) miners will have to contribute an amount equal to 30% of the royalty payable by them to the DMFs.
  - Where mining leases are granted after 12.01.2015, the rate of contribution would be 10% of the royalty payable.

## Ministry of Power

### 1. Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA)

- Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana – ‘Saubhagya’ was launched in September, 2017.
- Under Saubhagya **free electricity connections** to all households (both APL and poor families) in rural areas and poor families in urban areas will be provided.
- **Rural Electrification Corporation (REC)** has been designated as **nodal agency** for the Saubhagya scheme.
- The scheme aims to achieve universal household electrification in all parts of the country.
- All DISCOMs including Private Sector DISCOMs, State Power Departments and RE Cooperative Societies shall be eligible for financial assistance under the scheme in line with Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY).
- **Eligibility:** The prospective beneficiary households for free electricity connections under the scheme would be identified using **SECC 2011 data**.
  - However, un-electrified households not covered under SECC data would also be provided electricity connections under the scheme on payment of Rs. 500 which shall be recovered by DISCOMs in 10 instalments through electricity bill.
- **Award Scheme under Saubhagya:**
  - An award scheme has been instituted with awards of more than Rs. 300 crore to be won by States/Discoms.
  - The first DISCOM/Power Departments who complete 100% household electrifications will be felicitated with **cash award of Rs. 50 Lakh for the employees** and **100 crore grants for distribution infrastructure**.

#### **Scope of the Scheme:**

- **Providing last mile connectivity and electricity connections** to all un-electrified households in rural areas.
- Providing **Solar Photovoltaic (SPV) based standalone system** for un-electrified households located in remote and inaccessible villages / habitations, where grid extension is not feasible or cost effective.
- Providing last mile connectivity and electricity connections to all remaining economically poor un-electrified households in urban areas. **Non-poor urban households are excluded from this scheme.**

### 2. Street Lighting National programme (SLNP)

- **Energy Efficiency Services Limited** has installed over 76.77 lakh LED street lights in 28 States and Union Territories till January 3, 2019.
- The target under SLNP is to replace 1.34 crore conventional street lights with energy efficient LED street lights by March 2019.
- Energy Efficiency Services Limited, a **Public Energy Services Company** under the administration of Ministry of Power, Government of India (GoI) is the implementing agency for SLNP.
- EESL also undertakes **social audits** in all states post the completion of the project.
- It is **world's Largest Street Light Replacement Programme**.
- **Significance:**
  - The installation of LED-based street lighting system is essential, since LED lighting offer **higher efficiency, better illumination and life expectancy** apart from being environmentally

#### **Objectives:**

- Mitigate climate change by implementing energy efficient LED based street lighting.
- Reduce energy consumption in lighting which helps DISCOMs to manage peak demand.
- Provide a sustainable service model that obviates the need for upfront capital investment as well as additional revenue expenditure to pay for procurement of LED lights.
- Enhance municipal services at no upfront capital cost of municipalities.

sustainable.

- **EESL:**
  - Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), under the administration of Ministry of Power, Government of India, is working towards mainstreaming energy efficiency and is implementing the world's largest energy efficiency portfolio in the country.
  - Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) is **a joint venture of NTPC Limited, Power Finance Corporation, Rural Electrification Corporation and POWERGRID.**
  - It was set up under **Ministry of Power** (India) to facilitate implementation of energy efficiency projects.
  - It acts as the **resource centre for capacity building of State DISCOMs.**
  - It leads market-related actions of National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency (NMEEE).
  - Driven by the mission of Enabling More – more transparency, more transformation, and more innovation, EESL aims to create market access for efficient and future-ready transformative solutions that create a win-win situation for every stakeholder.
  - By 2020, EESL seeks to be a US\$ 1.5 billion (INR 10,000 crore) company.
  - EESL has begun its operations in UK, South Asia and South-East Asia.

### 3. INSPIRE 2018

- The second edition of **International Symposium to Promote Innovation & Research in Energy Efficiency (INSPIRE)** was held in New Delhi.
- It was organised by **Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) and World Bank.**
- The symposium focuses on enhancing grid management, e-Mobility, financial instruments and technologies for energy efficiency in India.
- **About INSPIRE 2018:**
  - INSPIRE 2018 has been organised in collaboration with the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), The Energy & Resources Institute (TERI), Asian Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), and the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI).
  - The event is bringing together policy-makers, influencers, innovators, thought leaders, researchers, leading energy-efficient companies, government agencies, business leaders and other stakeholders to deliberate on key energy policies, market transformation strategies, and sustainable business models that will help leverage the full potential of energy efficiency and bring its multiple co-benefits to the fore.
- **About Energy Efficiency Revolving Fund (EERF):**
  - Alongside, to support investments in new, innovative and scalable business models, EESL and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed an agreement for a Global Environment Facility (GEF) grant of USD 13 million to establish an Energy Efficiency Revolving Fund (EERF).
  - EERF aims to expand and sustain investments in the energy efficiency market in India, build market diversification, and scale up existing technologies.

## Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA)

### 1. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U)

- Government has launched the **Global Housing Technology Challenge**.
- The challenge is undertaken under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U).
- **Key features of the Global Housing Technology Challenge (GHTC) are:**
  - GHTC aims to **fast-track the construction of affordable housing** and meet the target of constructing 1.2 crore houses by 2022.
  - GHTC focuses on identifying and mainstreaming proven demonstrable technologies for lighthouse projects and spotting potential future technologies for incubation and acceleration support through **ASHA (Affordable Sustainable Housing Accelerators)** — India.
- **Objectives:**
  - To enable adoption of construction techniques for housing that are affordable and takes minimum time as less as three months instead of the conventional three years for construction.
  - Bring a paradigm shift in technology transition using large-scale construction under the PMAY-U as an opportunity to get the best available construction technologies across the globe.

### Home solution

The Global Housing Technology Challenge is aimed at introducing best technologies to construct houses quickly and at a lower cost



- 6 winners will design and build projects of 1,000 housing units each
- The State and the Centre each will provide assistance of ₹1.5 lakh
- The Centre will give an additional technology grant of ₹2.5 lakh for each house
- Incubation facilities will be provided to develop building technologies with support from four IITs
- The approved technologies will be displayed by Central Public Works Department along with the rates

### **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban):**

- The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) Programme envisions **Housing for All by 2022**.
- The Mission seeks to address the housing requirement of urban poor including slum dwellers through following programme verticals:

- **Slum rehabilitation of Slum Dwellers** with participation of private developers using land as a resource
- Promotion of Affordable Housing for weaker section through **credit linked subsidy**
- Affordable

"In situ" Slum Redevelopment	Affordable Housing through Credit Linked Subsidy	Affordable Housing in Partnership	Subsidy for beneficiary-led individual house construction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using land as a resource</li> <li>- With private participation</li> <li>- Extra FSI/TDR/FAR if required to make projects financially viable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Interest subvention subsidy for EWS and LIG for new house or incremental housing</b></li> <li>- EWS: Annual Household Income Up to Rs. 3 lakh and house sizes upto 30 sq.m</li> <li>- LIG: Annual Household Income Between Rs. 3-6 lakhs and house sizes upto 60 sq.m</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>with private sector or public sector</b> including Parastatal agencies</li> <li>- Central Assistance per EWS house in affordable housing projects where <b>35% of constructed houses are for EWS category</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For individuals of EWS category requiring individual house</li> <li>- State to prepare a separate project for such beneficiaries</li> <li>- No isolated/ splintered beneficiary to be covered.</li> </ul>

Housing in Partnership with Public & Private sectors

- Subsidy for beneficiary-led individual house construction /enhancement.
- Beneficiaries include economically weaker section (EWS), low-income groups (LIGs) and Middle-Income Groups (MIGs).
- **The scheme is divided into three phases.**
  - In the first phase, a total of 100 cities will be covered from April 2015 to March 2017.
  - In phase two, 200 cities will be covered from April 2017 to March 2019.
  - In the third phase, the leftover cities will be covered from April 2019 to March 2022.
- The government is providing **an interest subsidy** of 6.5% on housing loans which can be availed by beneficiaries for 15 years from start of loan date.
- The government will grant Rs 1 lakh to all the beneficiaries of the scheme. In addition, Rs 1.5 lakh will be given to all eligible urban poor who want to construct their houses in urban areas or plan to go for renovation in their existing houses.
- One can also avail loans under this scheme to build toilets in existing houses.
- The houses will be allocated preferably in the name of Women in the family.



## Ministry of Finance

### 1. National Pension Scheme

- The government has approved a slew of measures under the National Pension Scheme (NPS).
- **Changes approved in the National Pension System:**
  - **Mandatory contribution by the Central Government enhanced** by 4 percent from the existing 10 percent to 14 percent for employees covered under NPS Tier-I.
  - Central government employees will be provided with **freedom of choice for selection of Pension Funds and pattern of investment**.
  - **Payment of compensation for non-deposit or delayed deposit** of NPS contributions during 2004-2012.
  - Contribution by Government employees under Tier-II of NPS will now be covered under Section 80 C for deduction up to Rs 1.50 lakh for the purpose of income tax at par with schemes such as General (PF), Contributory PF, Employees PF and Public PF, with lock-in period of 3 years.
  - **The entire withdrawal will now be exempt from income tax** as the tax exemption limit for lump sum withdrawal on exit has been enhanced to 60 percent.
- **Implications:**
  - The move is set to benefit around 36 lakh subscribers, including approximately 18 lakh Central government employees covered under NPS.
- **What is National Pension System (NPS)?**
  - National Pension System (NPS) is **a government-sponsored pension scheme**. It was launched in January 2004 for government employees. However, in 2009, it was opened to all sections.
  - The scheme allows subscribers to contribute regularly in a pension account during their working life.
  - On retirement, subscribers can withdraw a part of the corpus in a lumpsum and use the remaining corpus to buy an annuity to secure a regular income after retirement.
  - This system is **managed by PFRDA** (Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority).
  - **National Pension System Trust (NPST)** established by PFRDA is the registered owner of all assets under NPS.
- **Who can join NPS?**
  - Any individual citizen of India (both resident and Non-resident) in the age group of 18-65 years (as on the date of submission of NPS application) can join NPS.
- **Can a Non-Resident Indian (NRI) join NPS?**
  - Yes, an NRI can join NPS. However, the account will be closed if there is a change in the citizenship status of the NRI.
  - Contributions made by NRI are subject to regulatory requirements as prescribed by RBI and FEMA from time to time.

- However, OCI (Overseas Citizens of India) and PIO (Person of Indian Origin) card holders and HUFs are not eligible for opening of NPS account.

## 2. Atal Pension Yojana (APY)

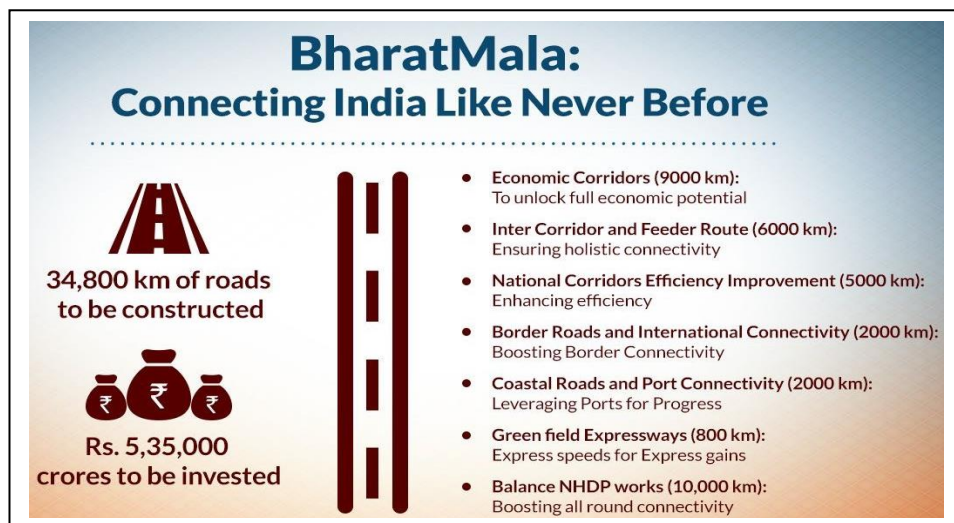
- The Finance Minister had announced a new initiative called Atal Pension Yojana (APY) in his Budget Speech for 2015-16.
- The APY will be focussed on all citizens in the **unorganised sector** and who are not members of any statutory social security scheme.
- Under the APY, subscribers would receive a fixed minimum pension of Rs. 1000 per month, Rs. 2000 per month, Rs. 3000 per month, Rs. 4000 per month, Rs. 5000 per month, at the age of 60 years, depending on their contributions, which itself would vary on the age of joining the APY.
- ***The Central Government would also co-contribute 50% of the total contribution or Rs. 1000 per annum***, whichever is lower, to each eligible subscriber account, for a period of 5 years, that is, from 2015-16 to 2019-20.
- ***The minimum age of joining APY is 18 years and maximum age is 40 years.*** The benefit of fixed minimum pension would be guaranteed by the Government.



## Ministry of Road Transport & Highways

### 1. BharatMala Project

- Bharatmala is a name given to **road and highways project** of Government of India.
- The total investment for the Bharatmala plan is estimated at Rs10 trillion, which is the **largest ever outlay for a government road construction scheme**.
- Bharat Mala will provide **easier access to border areas for armed forces** and boost trade via the land route.
- Roads will be built along borders with Bhutan and Nepal.
- Road connectivity to small industries will be ensured and manufacturing centres will be connected with national highways.
- The project will be executed through Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways (MoRTH), NHAI, National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) and State Public Works Department (PWDs).
- Bharatmala is the largest highways project after the National Highways Development Programme.



## Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas

### 1. Saksham (Sanrakshan Kshamta Mahotsav) 2019

- Saksham (Sanrakshan Kshamta Mahotsav) is an annual flagship event of **Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA)** under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India.
- Saksham actively involves the Oil & Gas PSUs along with other stakeholders like State Governments,
  - To create focused attention on fuel conservation through people centric activities and
  - To sensitize the masses about the conservation and efficient use of petroleum products leading to better health and environment.
- **About PCRA (established in 1978)–**
  - Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) is a **registered society** set up under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India.
  - As a non-profit organization, PCRA is a national government agency engaged in promoting energy efficiency in various sectors of economy.
  - PCRA aims at making oil conservation a national movement.
  - As part of its mandate, PCRA is entrusted with the task of **creating awareness amongst the masses** about the importance, methods and benefits of conserving petroleum products & emission reduction.
  - It **sponsors R&D activities** for the development of fuel-efficient equipment / devices and organizes multi-media campaigns for creating mass awareness for the conservation of petroleum products.
  - To take the message to the people, PCRA uses all possible and effective media for mass communication.
  - To give impetus to the oil conservation movement, PCRA utilizes various platforms like the World environment day, World energy day, various festivals etc.
  - It functions as a **Think Tank to the Govt. of India** for proposing policies and strategies on petroleum conservation and environment protection aimed at reducing excessive dependence on oil.
  - For the benefit of various target groups of petroleum products, PCRA has developed literature containing simple ready to implement conservation tips and techniques.
  - **Special low cost green leaflets** have also been developed to educate the masses on the ill effects of pollution caused due to incomplete combustion and its impact on health.

### 2. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has achieved the 5-crore mark.
- Through PMUY, initially, 5 crore BPL households were targeted for providing deposit free LPG connections to BPL households by 31st March, 2019.
- In a record time of 28 months for its launch, PMUY achieved the initial target of providing 5 crores LPG connection to BPL households.

- In 2018, considering the huge success of the Scheme, target was revised to 8 crores with budgetary allocation of Rs 12,800 crore.
- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana aims to provide **LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) connections to poor households.**
- **Who is eligible?** Under the scheme, an adult woman member of a below poverty line family identified through the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) is given a deposit-free LPG connection with financial assistance of Rs 1,600 per connection by the Centre.
- **Identification of households:** Eligible households will be identified in consultation with state governments and Union territories.
- The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- This is the **first time** in the history of the country that the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas **implementing welfare scheme** benefitting crores of women belonging to the poorest households.

## Ministry of Tourism

### 1. Adopt a Heritage Project

- The government recently handed over a Memorandum of Understanding to Resbird Technologies under the '**Adopt a Heritage**' project for the development of a mobile audio guide application for five iconic sites.
- **The five iconic sites are as follows:**
  - Rajasthan – Amer Fort.
  - Assam – Kaziranga.
  - Goa – Colva Beach.
  - Kerala – Kumarakom.
  - Bihar – Mahabodhi Temple.
- **Significance:**
  - The shortlisted agencies would become '**Monument Mitras**' through the innovative concept of 'Vision Bidding', which will give them the opportunity to associate their CSR activities with a heritage site if the Vision Bid is selected.
- **Adopt a Heritage Project:**
  - **What is it?** The '**Adopt A Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan**' of Ministry of Tourism was launched on World Tourism Day i.e. 27th September, 2017.
  - This project is a key initiative of **Ministry of Tourism in close collaboration with Ministry of Culture and Archeological Survey of India (ASI)**, to develop the heritage sites / monuments and making them tourist-friendly to enhance the tourism potential and their cultural importance in a planned and phased manner.
  - **How it works?** The project plans to entrust heritage sites/monuments and other tourist sites to private sector companies, public sector companies and individuals for the development of tourist amenities. The project aims to develop synergy among all partners.
  - **Monument Mitras:** Successful bidders selected for adopting heritage sites / monuments by the Oversight and Vision Committee shall be called as Monument Mitras.
  - The basic and advanced amenities of the tourist destinations would be provided by them. They would also look after the operations and the maintenance of the amenities.
  - The 'Monument Mitras' would associate pride with their CSR activities.
- **Aim of the Project:**
  - The aim of the project is to **provide basic amenities that include cleanliness, public conveniences, safe drinking water, ease of access for tourists, signages, illumination, Wi-fi etc.**
- **Funding of the Project:**

#### Archaeological Survey of India –

- **Founder: Alexander Cunningham**
- The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, under **Ministry of Culture**, is the premier organization for the archaeological researches and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.

#### Prime Objective of ASI:

- The prime objective is maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
- It regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per the provisions of the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958** along with the **Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972**.

- The project envisages involvement of Private/Public Companies/Organizations and Individuals to adopt Monuments, Natural Heritage Sites and other Tourist Sites, primarily under CSR. **No fund is given by Ministry of Tourism.**
- **Significance of this project:**
  - Adopt a Heritage project is meant to address the challenges that the Archaeological Survey of India and other government bodies are facing in operating tourism infrastructure at heritage sites.
  - By allowing private players to build, operate and maintain “tourist-friendly” and “world class amenities at these sites, the expectation is that the project will boost domestic and international tourism.
- **Other Information:**
  - Archaeological Survey of India has identified 100 monuments as “**Adarsh Smarak**” for upgradation of existing facilities/amenities like Wi-Fi, cafeteria, interpretation centre, brail signage, modern toilets etc.

Sl.No.	Name of Monument	State
1.	Red Fort	Delhi
2.	Gandikota Fort	Andhra Pradesh
3.	Area surrounding Gangotri Temple and Trail to Gaumukh	Uttarakhand
4.	Mt. Stok Kangri Trek, Lakakh	Jammu and Kashmir
5.	Jantar Mantar	Delhi
6.	Surajkund	Haryana
7.	Qutub Minar	Delhi
8.	Ajanta Caves	Maharashtra
9.	Leh Palace, Leh	Jammu & Kashmir
10.	Hampi (Hazara Rama Temple)	Karnataka

## 2. Swadesh Darshan Scheme

- The Tourism Ministry had launched 'Swadesh Darshan' scheme (Central Sector Scheme) with an objective to **develop theme-based tourist circuits** in the country.
- These tourist circuits will be developed on the principles of high tourist value, competitiveness and sustainability in an integrated manner.
- The scheme is **100% centrally funded** for the project components undertaken for public funding.
- To leverage the voluntary funding available for **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** initiatives of Central Public Sector Undertakings and corporate sector.
- Funding of individual project will vary from state to state and will be finalised on the basis of detailed project reports prepared by **PMC (Programme Management Consultant)**.
- A **National Steering Committee (NSC)** will be constituted with Minister in charge of M/O Tourism as Chairman, to steer the mission objectives and vision of the scheme.
- In January 2015 Ministry of Tourism launched the Swadesh Darshan Scheme with following five circuits **Himalayan Circuit, North East Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Buddhist Circuit and Coastal Circuit**.
- Later during 2015, 2016 and 2017, 10 more thematic circuits namely **Desert Circuit, Tribal Circuit, Eco Circuit, Wildlife Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual Circuit, Ramayana Circuit, Heritage Circuit, Tirthankar Circuit and Sufi Circuit** were added in the scheme making it to 15 thematic circuits.

## 3. Ramayana Circuit

- The **Shri Ramayana Express**, a special tourist train to run on the Ramayana circuit to cover major spots related to the Hindu epic was recently flagged off from Safdarjung Railway Station in Delhi.
- The train will complete its journey till Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu, in 16 days covering all important destinations associated with the life of Lord Ram.
- **Ramayana Circuit:**

- Ramayana Circuit is one of the fifteen thematic circuits identified for development under Swadesh Darshan scheme of Ministry of Tourism.
- Sitamarhi, Buxar, Darbhanga in Bihar are among the fifteen sites identified initially for development under this circuit in the country.
- The destinations are chosen according to the places where Lord Ram is believed to have travelled across India.
- The 15 destinations are — Ayodhya, Shringeripur and Chitrakoot in Uttar Pradesh, Sitamarhi, Buxar and Darbhanga in Bihar, Chitrakoot in Madhya Pradesh, Nandigram in West Bengal, Mahendragiri in Odisha, Jagdalpur in Chhattisgarh, Bhadrachalam in Telangana, Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu, Hampi in Karnataka and Nashik and Nagpur in Maharashtra.



## Ministry of Defence

### 1. National Integration Tour

- The National Integration Tours are **educational and motivational tours for youth of Jammu & Kashmir and North Eastern States.**
- **Aim of the National Integration Tour:**
  - It aims to provide an **insight into the rich heritage of the country** as well as various developmental and industry initiatives that are underway.
  - This initiative will expose them to various career options and enable them to interact with renowned personalities.
- **Background:**
  - The National Integration Tour has been initiated as part of the Indian Army's ongoing outreach programme to foster the spirit of National Integration across the entire swathe of the country.

## Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports

### 1. Khelo India Programme

- The Khelo India programme has been introduced to revive the sports culture in India at the grass-root level by building a strong framework for all sports in India and establish India as a great sporting nation.
- To accomplish the above objectives, Khelo India programme has been divided into **12 verticals**, namely:
  - Play Field Development
  - Community Coaching Development
  - State Level Khelo India Centres
  - Annual Sports Competition
  - Talent Search and Development
  - Utilization and Creation/Upgradation of Sports Infrastructure
  - Support to National/Regional/State Sports Academics
  - Physical fitness of school children
  - Sports for Women
  - Promotion of sports amongst people with disabilities
  - Sports for Peace and Development
  - Promotion of rural and indigenous/tribal games
- Talented players identified in priority sports disciplines at various levels by the High-Powered Committee will be provided **annual financial assistance of INR 5 lakh per annum for 8 years**.
- **Khelo India School Games** are a part of the Khelo India programme. There are 16 disciplines as follows:
  - Archery, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Football, Gymnastics, Hockey, Judo, Kabaddi, Kho-Kho, Shooting, Swimming, Volleyball, Weightlifting, and Wrestling.

### 2. Target Olympic Podium (TOP) Scheme

- The **Mission Olympic Cell** has included the entire Indian hockey team in the Target Olympic Podium Scheme.
- Athletes from different sports have been included in Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) individually but it is first instance that an entire team has been made beneficiary of the financial assistance scheme.
- **Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS):**
  - It was launched by Ministry of Sports within the ambit of **National Sports Development Fund (NSDF)**.
  - It aims at identifying and supporting potential medal prospects for upcoming Olympic Games.
  - It will provide selected sportspersons customized training at institutes having world class facilities and also other necessary support is being provided to the elite athletes.
  - It will also provide a benchmark for selection of athletes on par with international standards.
  - Under it, Sports Authority of India (SAI) and federations, which are members of Mission Olympic Cell (MOC), will be nodal agencies for

disbursal for fund. They will make payments directly to beneficiary person and institution concerned on behalf of athletes.

- **Facts for Prelims:**

- **Abinav Bindra Committee** was constituted to identify and support potential medal prospects for 2020 and 2024 Olympic Games under the scheme.
- The **Mission Olympic Cell** is a dedicated body created to assist the athletes who are selected under the TOP Scheme.
  - The MOC is under the Chairmanship of the Director General, Sports Authority (DG, SAI).
  - The idea of the MOC is to debate, discuss and decide the processes and methods so that the athlete receives best assistance.
  - The MOC also focuses on selection, exclusion and retention of athletes, coaches, training institutes that can receive TOPS assistance.

## Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs

### 1. National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) Project

- The Government gave details on the status of implementation of **National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) Project**.
- **e-Vidhan:**
  - It is a **Mission Mode Project (MMP)** comes under the **Digital India Programme**.
  - **Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MoPA)** is the '**Nodal Ministry**' for its implementation in all the 31 States/UTs with Legislatures.
  - The funding for e-Vidhan is provided by the MoPA and **technical support by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MietY)**.
  - The funding of NeVA is through Central Sponsored Scheme i.e. 60:40; and 90:10 for North East & hilly States and 100% for UTs.
- **Aim of NeVA:**
  - It aims to bring all the legislatures of the country together, in one platform thereby creating a massive data depository without having the complexity of multiple applications.
- **Highlights of NeVA:**
  - Paperless Assembly or e-Assembly is a concept involving of electronic means to facilitate the work of Assembly.
  - It **enables automation of entire law-making process, tracking of decisions and documents, sharing of information**.
  - Through the cloud technology (Meghraj), data deployed can be accessed anywhere at any time.
  - **The live webcasting of Lok Sabha TV and Rajya Sabha TV is also available on this application.**
  - Doordarshan has already been enabled with provision to incorporate similar facility in respect of State Legislatures.
- Himachal Pradesh is already the first Digital Legislature of the country.
- **Central Project Monitoring Unit (CPMU) and Detailed Project Report (DPR):**
  - The CPMU under MoPA, is responsible for reviewing the financial and technical progress of the project. The State will prepare **detailed project report (DPR)** and gap analysis report.
  - State level project monitoring committee will carry out the technical scrutiny and financial scrutiny of the DPR and after final approval of the same will be send to the MoPA for approval.
  - **After the technical and financial scrutiny, funds will be released for project implementation.**
- **State Government's Role in the implementation of e-Vidhan:**
  - The State Government will appoint a **Secretary level officer** to be designated as the nodal officer/representative for e-Vidhan implementation in the State Legislature(s).
  - State Government will bear the funds required for running of e-Vidhan MMP after 3 years.

- The State Government will ensure capacity building for the effective implementation of e-Vidhan MMP module.
- **State Government/Legislature will undertake maintenance and replacement of ICT equipment after 3 years.**
- Release of next instalment would not be made in case the utilization certificate and confirmation of release of funds by the state government of their share is not received by the CPMU.

## Ministry of Tribal Affairs

### 1. Eklavya Model Residential Schools

- In the context of establishing quality residential schools for the **promotion of education, Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) for ST students** are set up in States/UTs with provisioning of funds through **“Grants under Article 275(1) of the Constitution”**.
- The establishing of EMRSs is based on demand of the concerned States/UTs with availability of land as an essential attribute.
- As per the budget 2018-19, every block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons will have an Eklavya Model Residential School by 2022.
- **What is Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS)?**
  - EMRS is a Government of India scheme for model residential school for Indian tribals (Scheduled Tribes, ST) across India.
  - Eklavya Model Residential School Scheme was started in **1998** and **first school was started in the year 2000 in Maharashtra**.
  - EMRSs have been functioning as institutions of excellence for tribal students.
  - As per existing EMRS Guidelines of 2010, at least one EMRS is to be set up in each Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) / Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) having 50% ST population in the area.
  - State Government/ UT Administration is solely responsible for the management and effective functioning of the EMRSs, school admissions, appointment of teachers/staff and personnel matters.
- **Objectives of EMRS:**
  - Comprehensive physical, mental and socially relevant development of all students enrolled in each and every EMRS.
  - Students will be empowered to be change agent, beginning in their school, in their homes, in their village and finally in a larger context.
  - Focus differentially on the educational support to be made available to those in Standards XI and XII, and those in standards VI to X, so that their distinctive needs can be met,
  - Support the annual running expenses in a manner that offers reasonable remuneration to the staff and upkeep of the facilities.
  - Support the construction of infrastructure that provides education, physical, environmental and cultural needs of student life.

## 2. Aadi Mahotsav

- Aadi Mahotsav” a National Tribal Festival is being organized in New Delhi by the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED** to celebrate, cherish and promote the spirit of tribal craft, culture, cuisine and commerce.
- **The theme of the festival is:** “A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Craft, Cuisine and Commerce”.
- About Aadi Mahotsav:
  - The Mahotsav comprises of **display and sale of items of tribal art and craft**, tribal medicine & healers, tribal cuisine and display of tribal folk performance, in which tribal artisans, chefs, folk dancers/musicians from 23 States of the country participate and provide glimpse of their rich traditional culture.
  - The festival will feature exhibition-cum-sale of tribal handicrafts, art, paintings, fabric, jewellery and much more through 100 stalls. Over 200 tribal artisans and artists from different States creating a Mini- India will participate in the festival.

## Ministry of Food Processing Industries

### 1. Operation Greens

- Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) has approved the operationalisation strategy for Operation Greens.
- The Strategy will comprise of a series of measures as decided by the Ministry:
 

**Short term Price Stabilisation Measures:**

  - **(NAFED)** National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd will be the Nodal Agency to implement price stabilisation measures.
  - MoFPI will provide 50 percent of the subsidy on transportation of Tomato Onion Potato (TOP) Crops from production to storage; and hiring of appropriate storage facilities for TOP Crops.

**Long Term Integrated value chain development projects:**

  - Capacity Building of FPOs & their consortium.
  - Quality production.
  - Post-harvest processing facilities.
  - Agri-Logistics.
  - Marketing / Consumption Points.
  - Creation and Management of e-platform for demand and supply management of TOP Crops.
- **About Operation Greens:**
  - Operation Greens was announced in the Budget speech of 2018-19 with an outlay of Rs 500 crores to **stabilize the supply of Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP) crops** and to ensure availability of TOP crops throughout the country round the year without price volatility.
- **Major objectives of “Operation Greens” are as under:**
  - **Enhancing value realisation of TOP farmers** by targeted interventions to strengthen TOP production clusters and their FPOs, and linking/connecting them with the market.

- **Price stabilisation** for producers and consumers by proper production planning in the TOP clusters and introduction of dual use varieties.
- **Reduction in post-harvest losses** by creation of farm gate infrastructure, development of suitable agro- logistics, creation of appropriate storage capacity linking consumption centres.
- **Increase in food processing capacities** and value addition in TOP value chain with firm linkages with production clusters.
- Setting up of a **market intelligence network** to collect and collate real time data on demand and supply and price of TOP crops.
- **Significance of Operation greens:**
  - Operation Green (OG) wants to replicate the success story of **Operation Flood**, in fruits and vegetables, starting with three basic vegetables— tomatoes, onions and potatoes (TOP).
  - The main objective of OG is to reduce price volatility in these commodities, and thereby helping farmers augment incomes on a sustainable basis, as also provide these basic vegetables to consumers at affordable prices.

## 2. Mega Food Park

- Ministry of Food Processing Industries is implementing Mega Food Park Scheme in the country.
- **The Scheme of Mega Food Park aims** at providing a mechanism to **link agricultural production to the market** by bringing together farmers, processors and retailers so as to ensure maximizing value addition, minimizing wastages, increasing farmers' income and creating employment opportunities particularly in rural sector.
- **These food parks give a major boost to** the food processing sector by adding value and reducing food wastage at each stage of the supply chain with particular focus on perishables.
- **A maximum grant** of Rs.50 crore is given for setting up a MFP, in minimum 50 acres of contiguous land with only 50% contribution to the total project cost.
- **Mode of operation:**
  - The Scheme has **a cluster based approach based on a hub and spokes model**.
  - It includes creation of infrastructure for primary processing and storage near the farm in the form of Primary Processing Centres (PPCs) and Collection Centres (CCs) and common facilities and enabling infrastructure at Central Processing Centre (CPC).
  - The PPCs are meant for functioning as a link between the producers and processors for supply of raw material to the Central Processing Centres.
  - CPC has need based core processing facilities and basic enabling infrastructure to be used by the food processing units setup at the CPC. The minimum area required for a CPC is 50 acres.
  - The scheme is demand-driven and would facilitate food processing units to meet environmental, safety and social standards.



## Ministry of Heavy Industries

### 1. FAME India Scheme

- To promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology and to ensure sustainable growth of the same, **Department of Heavy Industry** is implementing **FAME-India Scheme Phase – I** [Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India] from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.
- The Union cabinet has approved the proposal for implementation of '**Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India Phase II (FAME India Phase II)**' for promotion of Electric Mobility in the country.
  - The scheme with total outlay of Rs 10000 Crores over the period of three years will be implemented with effect from 1st April 2019.
- **FAME-India Scheme Phase – II:**
  - The scheme proposes to give a push to **electric vehicles (EVs)** in public transport.
  - It seeks to encourage adoption of EVs by way of **market creation** and **demand aggregation**.
- **Automobile Sector:**
  - **100% FDI by automatic route is permitted in the automobile sector.**
  - Further, the sector is deregulated, both **private sector and public sector are free to carry out investment** in the automobile sector, including for manufacturing of **Electric Vehicles and E-Buses**.
- **Background:**
  - **FAME India is a part of the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan.** Main thrust of FAME is to encourage electric vehicles by providing subsidies.
  - Vehicles in most segments – two wheelers, three wheelers, electric and hybrid cars and electric buses obtained the subsidy benefit of the scheme.
  - FAME focuses on 4 areas i.e. Technology development, Demand Creation, Pilot Projects and Charging Infrastructure.

## Ministry of Shipping

### 1. PCS 1x System

- **Indian Ports Association (IPA)** under the guidance of Ministry of Shipping launched the **Port Community System 'PCS1x'**.
- **Significance:**
  - The platform has the potential to revolutionize maritime trade in India and bring it at par with global best practices and pave the way to improve the Ease of Doing Business world ranking and Logistics Performance Index (LPI) ranks.
- **About PCS 1x:**
  - 'PCS 1x' is a **cloud based new generation technology**, with user-friendly interface.
  - This system seamlessly **integrates stakeholders from the maritime trade on a single platform**.
  - **The platform offers value added services** such as notification engine, workflow, mobile application, track and trace, better user interface, better security features, improved inclusion by offering dashboard for those with no IT capability.
  - Another major feature is **the deployment of a world class state of the art payment aggregator solution** which removes dependency on bank specific payment eco system.
- **Other Features:**
  - It is an initiative that supports **green initiatives by reducing dependency on paper**.
  - It has been **developed indigenously** and is a part of the '**Make in India**' and '**Digital India**'.
- **Indian Ports Association (IPA):**
  - **IPA was constituted in 1966 under Societies Registration Act**, with the idea of fostering growth and development of all Major Ports which are under the supervisory control of **Ministry of Shipping**.

### 2. Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP)

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated **India's first multi-modal terminal on the Ganga river** in Varanasi and received the country's first container cargo transported on inland waterways from Kolkata.
- The Jal Marg Vikas Project seeks to facilitate plying of vessels with capacity of 1,500-2,000 tonnes in the **Haldia- Varanasi stretch of National Waterway-1 (NW1) on Ganga River**.
- JMVP was announced by Government in 2014-15 Budget.
- The project envisages the **development of waterway** between Allahabad and Haldia on Ganga River that will cover a distance of 1620 km.
- The major works being taken up under JMVP are development of fairway, Multi-Modal Terminals, strengthening of river navigation system, conservancy works, modern River Information System (RIS), Digital Global Positioning System (DGPS), night navigation facilities, modern methods of channel marking etc.

- The **World Bank** has provided technical assistance and financial support to the project.
- **NW 1:**
  - Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system from Allahabad to Haldia was declared as National Waterway No.1.
  - The NW-1 passes through Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal and serves major cities and their industrial hinterlands.

## Ministry of Civil Aviation

### 1. UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik)

- UDAN is an innovative scheme to **develop the regional aviation market**. It is a **market-based mechanism** in which airlines bid for seat subsidies.
- This first-of-its-kind scheme globally will **create affordable yet economically viable** and profitable flights on regional routes so that flying becomes affordable to the common man even in small towns.
- The scheme would be in operation for a period of 10 years.
- The UDAN scheme will be applicable on flights which cover between 200 km and 800 km with no lower limit set for hilly, remote, islands and regions which are security sensitive.
- The state governments would reap the benefit of **development of remote areas; enhance trade and commerce and more tourism expansion**.
- The scheme provides connectivity to un-served and under-served airports of the country through **revival of existing air-strips and airports**.
- The operators could seek a **Viability Gap Funding (VGF)** apart from getting various concessions.
- The scheme aims to **boost air travel in Tier II and Tier III cities** by capping fares at Rs 2,500 per one hour flight.
- The **Airports Authority of India** is the implementing authority of the scheme.
- As per the scheme, the Union Government will subsidise the losses incurred by airlines flying out of dormant airports.
- About 80% of the subsidy will be collected by charging a levy of up to Rs. 8,500 on each departing flight of domestic airlines and the rest 20% will come from the respective state governments.
- State government are bound to provide free security and fire service and utilities at concessional rates.

### 2. Digi Yatra

- Union Ministry of Civil Aviation has released policy on **biometric based digital processing of passengers at airports** called Digi Yatra.
- With this initiative, ticket booking, airport entry and boarding pass security check-in will be made digital.
- The initiative seeks to promote **paperless and hassle-free air travel**. It will be operational by end of February, 2019 at Bengaluru and Hyderabad airports. In later phase, Airports Authority of India (AAI) will roll out this initiative at Kolkata, Varanasi, Pune and Vijayawada airports by April 2019.
- Under it, there will be one-time verification at departure airport while travelling for first time using ID. After successful verification, facial recognition biometric will be captured and stored in Digi Yatra ID.
- For this system, passengers will be registered through centralized system and will be given **Digi Travel ID**. This ID will include details such as names of passengers, their e-mail id, mobile number and any other identity card in case of non-basis. Travelers can also use this ID when booking tickets.

## Ministry of Earth Sciences

### 1. Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS) Scheme

- The Cabinet Committee has approved continuation of the nine sub-schemes of the umbrella scheme ***“Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)”*** during 2017- 2020.
- **Background:**
  - The Ministry of Earth Sciences has a mandate to carry out research and development activities to develop and improve capability to forecast weather, climate and natural hazard related phenomena.
  - Towards this direction, MoES has taken several initiatives to formulate specific schemes like weather and climate modelling, monsoon-research, climate change science & climate services etc.
  - As a result, all these schemes with specific objectives and budget are implemented in an integrated manner and are put together under the umbrella scheme “ACROSS”.
- **ACROSS Scheme:**
  - ACROSS scheme pertains to the **atmospheric science programs** of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).
  - It addresses different aspects of weather and climate services, which includes warnings for cyclone, storm surges, heat waves, thunderstorms etc.
  - The ACROSS scheme consists of nine sub-programmes which are multi-disciplinary and multi institutional in nature and will be implemented in an integrated manner.
  - As the objective of the ACROSS scheme is to provide a **reliable weather and climate forecast for betterment of society**, the scheme will aim at improving skill of weather and climate forecast through sustained observations, intensive R & D.
- **Benefits of the Scheme:**
  - The scheme will provide improved weather, climate and ocean forecast and services, thereby ensuring transfer of commensurate benefits to the various services.
  - It will also provide a sizable number of scientific and technical staff along with requisite administrative support, thereby generating employment.
  - To ensure last-mile connectivity of the weather-based services to the end -user, a large number of agencies like the Krishi Vigyana Kendras of ICAR, Universities and local municipalities are roped in thus generating employment opportunities to many people.

## Ministry of Home Affairs

### 1. Border Area Development Programme

- The **Department of Border Management**, Ministry of Home Affairs has been implementing the Border Area Development Programme (BADP) through the State Governments as part of a comprehensive approach to Border Management.
- The programme aims to **meet the special development needs of the people living in remote and inaccessible areas** situated near the international border and to saturate the border areas with the essential infrastructure through convergence of Central/State/BADP/Local schemes and participatory approach.
- BADP was initiated in the border areas of the western region during that **Seventh Five Year Plan** period for ensuring balanced development of border areas through development of infrastructure and promotion of a sense of security among the border population.
- The programme now covers 394 border blocks of 111 border districts in 17 States, which includes 167 border blocks in 55 districts of 8 North East States (including Sikkim), located along the international land border.
- The States covered are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.
- Under this programme **priority is given to the areas closer to the border**.
- BADP is an important intervention of the Central Government to bring about development of border areas by supplementing the State Plan Funds to bridge the gaps in socio- economic infrastructure on one hand and improving the security environment in border areas on the other.

### 2. Bharat Ke Veer

- The government has granted the **status of a trust to 'Bharat Ke Veer'**, a private initiative which aids families of paramilitary personnel killed in action.
- **Support by the government:**
  - The initiative has now been **formalized into a registered trust** for providing a platform for all citizens to contribute and provide assistance to the families of martyred personnel.
  - **The public can visit** the 'Bharat Ke Veer' application and website, **and contribute** to support the families of jawans who die in the line of duty.
  - Contributions to Bharat Ke Veer have been **exempted from Income Tax**.
- About Bharat ke Veer:
  - **What is it?** It is a **fund-raising initiative by the Ministry of Home Affairs**, Government of India on behalf of members of the Indian Armed Forces.
  - It aims to enable willing donors to contribute towards the family of a braveheart who sacrificed his/her life in line of duty.
  - This website is technically supported by National Informatics Centre (NIC) and powered by State Bank of India.
  - **How it works?** It allows anyone to financially support the bravehearts of his choice or towards the "Bharat Ke Veer" corpus.

- The amount so donated will be credited to the account of 'Next of Kin' of those Central Armed Police Force/Central Para Military Force soldiers.
- To ensure maximum coverage, a cap of 15 lakh rupees is imposed and the donors would be alerted if the amount exceeds, so that they can choose to divert part of the donation to another braveheart account or to the "Bharat Ke Veer" corpus.
- **Who will manage the fund?** "Bharat Ke Veer" corpus would be managed by a committee made up of eminent persons of repute and senior Government officials, who would decide to disburse the fund equitably to the braveheart's family on need basis.



## Ministry of Chemical and fertilizers

### 1. Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)

- Central Warehouse of Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana has been set up at Bilaspur, Gurugram. It has been setup by the **Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI)**.
- The hi-tech Central Warehouse would facilitate seamless distribution of Jan Aushadhi generic medicines to all PMBJP Kendra functional across the country.
- **About PMBJP:**
  - 'Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana' is a campaign launched by the **Department of Pharmaceuticals**, Govt. Of India, to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses through special kendra's known as Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra.
  - **Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra (PMBJK)** have been set up to provide generic drugs, which are available at lesser prices but are equivalent in quality and efficacy as expensive branded drugs.
  - **Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI) is the implementing agency of PMBJP.**
  - BPPI (Bureau of Pharma Public Sector Undertakings of India) has been established under the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Govt. of India, with the support of all the CPSUs.

#### What is a Generic Medicine?

- Generic medicines are unbranded medicines which are equally safe and having the same efficacy as that of branded medicines in terms of their therapeutic value.
- The prices of generic medicines are much cheaper than their branded equivalent.

## Ministry of Labour & Employment

### 1. Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna

- The **Employee's State Insurance (ESI)** has approved a scheme named 'Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna' for Insured Persons (IP) covered under the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948.
- **About Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna:**
  - **Aim:** It aims to financially support those who lost their jobs or rendered jobless for whatsoever reasons due to changing employment pattern.
  - **Its beneficiaries** will be insured persons covered under Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 for period of two years continuously.
- **Key features:**
  - **Cash assistance:** Under the scheme, relief will be payable in cash directly to bank account of insured persons in case of unemployment.
  - This financial assistance will be given to insured persons even while they search for new engagement.
  - Beneficiary insured workers will be paid money, from their own contribution towards ESI scheme, in cash through bank account transfer.
  - Under this scheme, workers will be able to draw 47% of their total contributions towards ESIC after remaining unemployed for at least three months from date of leaving their previous jobs.
  - They can choose to receive the cash at one go or in instalments. It will be applicable to all factories and establishments employing at least 10 workers.
- **About ESI:**
  - ESI is self-financing social security and health insurance scheme for Indian workers.
  - It is autonomous corporation by statutory creation under **Ministry of Labour and Employment**, Government of India.
  - It is managed by Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) according to rules and regulations stipulated there in the ESI Act 1948.

## Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

### 1. Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS)

- The Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) is an ongoing Central Sector Scheme which was launched in 1993-94.
- The Scheme enables the Members of Parliament to recommend works for creation of durable community assets based on locally felt needs to be taken up in their constituencies in the area of national priorities namely drinking water, education, public health, sanitation, roads etc.
- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has been responsible for the policy formulation, release of funds and prescribing monitoring mechanism for implementation of the Scheme.
- **Works under the scheme:**
  - Works, developmental in nature, based on locally felt needs and always available for the use of the public at large, are eligible under the scheme.
  - Preference under the scheme is given to works relating to national priorities, such as provision of drinking water, public health, education, sanitation, roads, etc.
- **Funds:**
  - Funds are released in the form of grants in-aid directly to the district authorities.
  - The funds released under the scheme are non-lapsable.
  - The liability of funds not released in a particular year is carried forward to the subsequent years, subject to eligibility.
- **Execution of works:**
  - The **MPs have a recommendatory role** under the scheme.
  - They recommend their choice of works to the concerned district authorities who implement these works by following the established procedures of the concerned state government.
  - The district authorities get the works executed through the line departments, local self-governments or other government agencies.
  - In some cases, the district authorities get the works executed through reputed non-government organisations.
- **Recommendation of works:**
  - The Lok Sabha Members can recommend works in their respective constituencies.
  - The elected members of the Rajya Sabha can recommend works anywhere in the state from which they are elected.
  - Nominated members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha may select works for implementation anywhere in the country.

### Socially Oriented Insurance Schemes

- The socially oriented insurance schemes are currently being operated or partially sponsored by the Central Government targeted at vulnerable sections of the society.
- **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY):**
  - Launched on 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2015.
  - These schemes are offered/administered through both public and private sector insurance companies, in tie up with scheduled commercial banks, regional rural banks and cooperative banks.
- **PMJJBY:**
  - It offers a renewable **one-year term life cover** of Rupees Two Lakh to all account holders in the age group of 18 to 50 years, covering death due to any reason, for a premium of Rs. 330/- per annum per subscriber, to be auto debited from subscriber's bank account.
- **PMSBY:**
  - It offers a renewable **one-year accidental death cum disability cover** to all subscribing bank account holders in the age group of 18 to 70 years for a premium of Rs. 12/- per annum per subscriber to be auto debited from subscriber's bank account.
  - It provides a cover of Rs. Two Lakh for accidental death or total permanent disability and Rs One Lakh in case of permanent partial disability.
- **The above schemes are on self-subscription basis and involves no Government contribution.**

## NITI Aayog

### 1. Aspirational Districts Programme

- NITI Aayog has released the Second Delta Ranking of the Aspirational Districts Programme.
- The ranking details the incremental progress achieved by the districts during June to October 2018 across six key development sectors.
- **How are districts ranked?**
  - The districts have been ranked in a transparent basis **on parameters across various performance indicators like Health and Nutrition, Education, Skill Development and Basic Infrastructure among others.**
  - The rankings are based on the data that is publicly available through the Champions of Change Dashboard, which includes data entered on a real-time basis at the district level.
- **Performances of various districts:**
  - **Top performers:** Virudhunagar district in Tamil Nadu has shown the most improvement overall, followed by Nuapada district in Odisha, Siddarthnagar in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar's Aurangabad and Koraput in Odisha.
  - These districts have championed the development narrative in fundamental parameters of social progress.
  - **Least performers:** Meanwhile, Nagaland's Kiphire district, Jharkhand's Giridih, Chatra in Jharkhand, Hailakandi in Assam, and Pakur in Jharkhand have shown least improvement.
- **About Aspirational Districts Programme:**
  - The '**Transformation of Aspirational Districts**' programme launched in January 2018, aims to quickly and effectively transform some of the most underdeveloped districts of the country.
  - The broad contours of the programme are Convergence (of Central & State Schemes), Collaboration (of Central, State level 'Prabhari' Officers & District Collectors), and Competition among districts driven by a Mass Movement or a Jan Andolan.
  - With States as the main drivers, this program will focus on the strength of each district, identify low-hanging fruits for immediate improvement, measure progress, and rank districts.
- **Focus of the programme:**
  - To enable optimum utilization of their potential, this program focuses closely on improving people's ability to participate fully in the burgeoning economy.
  - Health & Nutrition, Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development, and Basic Infrastructure are this programme's core areas of focus.
- **Significance of the scheme:**
  - If these districts are transformed, there would be tremendous improvement in the internal security environment of the country.
  - If Prabhari officers can bring convergence in the development efforts of different Ministries and state Governments and the schemes specially

launched by Home Ministry in these districts, it would serve as a great opportunity to ensure rapid development in the country.

## 2. Young Champions Awards

- NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission and UNICEF have announced Young Champions Awards on occasion of Children's Day.
- The awards were presented to the top six most innovative solutions from across the country, which were shortlisted through the Atal Tinkering Marathon.
- **Background:**
  - AIM's Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) had launched a six month long nationwide challenge called the **Atal Tinkering Marathon**, across six different thematic areas, namely, clean energy, water resources, waste management, healthcare, smart mobility and agri-technology.
  - The objective was to encourage students to observe community problems and develop innovative solutions.
- **What are ATLs?**
  - With a vision to '**Cultivate one Million children in India as Neoteric Innovators**', Atal Innovation Mission is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) in schools across India.
  - **Objective:** The objective of this scheme is to foster curiosity, creativity and imagination in young minds; and inculcate skills such as design mindset, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing etc.
  - **Financial Support:** AIM will provide grant-in-aid that includes a one-time establishment cost of Rs. 10 lakh and operational expenses of Rs. 10 lakh for a maximum period of 5 years to each ATL.
  - **Eligibility:** Schools (minimum Grade VI – X) managed by Government, local body or private trusts/society can set up ATL.
- **Significance of ATLs:**
  - Atal Tinkering Labs have evolved as epicenters for imparting these 'skills of the future' through practical applications based on self-learning.
  - Bridging a crucial social divide, Atal Tinkering Labs provide equal opportunity to all children across the spectrum by working at the grassroot level, introducing children to the world of innovation and tinkering.

## 3. Atal Innovation Mission

- NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) aims to **promote innovation and entrepreneurship** nationwide in schools, universities and industry.
- AIM includes establishing **Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs)** and **Atal Incubation Centers (AICs)**, for providing support to established Incubation Centers.
- It promotes a network of world-class innovation hubs, Start-up businesses and other self-employment activities, particularly in technology driven areas.
- Entrepreneurship promotion through **Self-Employment and Talent Utilization**, wherein innovators would be supported and mentored to become successful entrepreneurs.

## State Government Schemes

### 1. One Family One Job Scheme

- Sikkim has announced the ***One family one job scheme*** to provide employment to the youth of Sikkim.
- **About the Scheme:**
  - One family one job scheme entitles ***one government job for every family in the state.***
  - **Eligibility:** Only members of those families which do not have a government job at present are eligible for government employment under the scheme.
  - The government has announced that ***the nature of the job*** is not temporary and would be regularised after five years.
- **Significance:**
  - ***Sikkim is the first state in the country to launch an exclusive programme which entitles every family in the state with a government job*** and Sikkim earmarks 70% of its revenues towards salaries for state government employees.

### 2. Ama Ghare LED Scheme

- Odisha has launched the '***Ama Ghare LED' scheme***, under which about 95 lakh families in the State will each get four LED bulbs free of cost.
- **Key features of the scheme:**
  - Under the scheme, ***9-watt LED bulbs will be distributed to the beneficiaries registered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and the State Food Security Scheme (SFSC).***
  - ***Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Ltd (OPTCL) will implement the scheme*** and the bulbs will be distributed through camps and PDS outlets across the State.
  - ***Biometric authentication:*** The beneficiaries will have to produce biometric authentication to get the benefits of the scheme.

### 3. Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation or KALIA Scheme

- KALIA scheme, launched by Odisha state government, has completed its first phase of registration.
- **Key features of Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation or KALIA Scheme:**
  - Involves payments to encourage cultivation and associated activities.
  - Primary targets are small farmers, cultivators and landless agricultural labourers.
  - All farmers will be provided Rs 10,000 per family as assistance for cultivation.
  - Each family will get Rs 5,000 separately in the kharif and rabi seasons, for five cropping seasons between 2018-19 and 2021-22.
  - Targets 10 lakh landless households, and specifically SC and ST families. They will be supported with a unit cost of Rs 12,500 for activities like



goat rearing, mushroom cultivation, beekeeping, poultry farming and fishery.

- A critical trade, dairy production, has deliberately been kept out because keeping a cow is more expensive, while milk production needs to have a collection route or agency that processes and refines this low shelf-life product.
- It will assist the elderly, sick and differently-abled population who are unable to take up cultivation, by providing Rs 10,000 per household per year.
- The scheme includes a life insurance cover of Rs 2 lakh and additional personal accident coverage of the same amount for 57 lakh households. Crop loans up to Rs 50,000 are interest-free.
- This is also going to be an area-specific scheme in the sense that an input support for a particular trade, say mushroom cultivation, will be provided if it is prevalent throughout that locality so that there is aggregation of produce.
- **How different will KALIA be from a loan waiver?**
  - Unlike a loan waiver, (through which) banks appease a few farmers, KALIA's main targets are rural activities as a whole.
  - It will support farming on a small scale, sharecropping, fishing, animal herding, which are not covered under bank loans, but are caught in debt traps set up by local moneylenders.
  - Also, a farm loan waiver will reduce credit available to farmers in the long term, while income support can be used to make a repayment or at least activate a bank account which can then receive a loan."

#### 4. Rythu Bandhu Scheme

- Telangana government launched 'Rythu Bandhu' investment support scheme for farmers.
- The Rythu Bandhu (Agriculture Investment Support Scheme) takes care of **initial investment needs of every farmer**.
- Aimed at relieving farmers of debt burden and cease them from falling into the debt trap again, **the scheme provides a grant of Rs 4,000 per acre per farmer each season for the purchase of inputs** like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, labour and other investments in the field operations of farmer's choice for the crop season.

#### 5. Jiban Sampark Project

- **Odisha has launched Jiban Sampark project** for the welfare of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.
- The Project is being undertaken **in association with UNICEF**.
- It aims **to generate awareness among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) in Odisha** on various development and welfare initiatives of State Government, especially on women and child welfare.
- **The focus areas of the Project** are skill development, empowering communities, cooperation and innovation among the groups.
- **About 'Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)'**:
  - PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups.

- In 1975, the Government of India initiated to identify the most vulnerable tribal groups as a separate category called PVTGs and declared 52 such groups, while in 1993 an additional 23 groups were added to the category, making it a total of 75 PVTGs out of 705 Scheduled Tribes, spread over 17 states and one Union Territory (UT), in the country (2011 census).
- **Among the 75 listed PVTG's the highest number are found in Odisha (13), followed by Andhra Pradesh (12).**

## 6. Atal Solar Krishi Pump Yojana

- To reduce losses due to non-payment of electricity bills and also promote solar energy, **Maharashtra state government has launched Atal Solar Krishi Pump Yojana.**
- Under the scheme, the government of Maharashtra has decided **to give two LED bulbs, a DC fan and a mobile charging socket as freebies to farmers.**
- The scheme provides **a subsidy of up to 95% on solar pumpsets.** The State plans to install one lakh solar pumps.
- **Eligibility:** Under the Scheme, farmers with less than five acres will have to pay 5% of the cost of a 3 HP solar pump while farmers with more than five acres will get a 5 HP solar pump for Rs 30000.
- The Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co Ltd (Msedcl) is **the implementing agency.**
- The scheme would be beneficial to farmers who reside in remote areas where the agricultural feeder is not possible.

## 7. Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra Yojana

- **Delhi state government has launched the 'Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra Yojana'** which offers free travel packages for senior citizens from Delhi to five religious circuits.
- **Who can avail this offer?**
  - 1,100 senior citizens from every constituency of Delhi will be able to avail this facility at one go.
  - Under this free pilgrimage scheme, a Delhi resident above 60 years will be eligible to take free pilgrimage along with his or her spouse.
  - There is no income criterion but preference will be given to those from economically weaker sections on first-come-first-serve basis.
  - Employees of central, state and local government or autonomous bodies are not eligible for the scheme.
- **Benefits:**
  - The applicant can also take along an attendant above the age of 20 years, if he or his spouse is above 70 years. The expenditure of the attendant will also be borne by the Delhi government.
  - Those selected for pilgrimage will be covered with an insurance of Rs 1 lakh each.
  - The applicant will have to give a self-certificate that all information being given by them is correct and they have not availed the scheme in the past.
- **Selection of pilgrims:**

- The selection of pilgrims will be done through draw of lots and respective area MLAs will certify whether the intended beneficiaries belong to Delhi or not.

## 8. State of Maharashtra's Agribusiness and Rural Transformation (SMART) Project

- Maharashtra Government has launched World Bank assisted ***State of Maharashtra's Agribusiness and Rural Transformation (SMART) Project*** to transform rural Maharashtra.
- **Aim:** to revamp agricultural value chains, with special focus on marginal farmers across 1,000 villages.
- **State of Maharashtra's Agribusiness and Rural Transformation (SMART) Project:**
  - The objective of project is to create and support value chains in post-harvest segments of agriculture, facilitate agribusiness investment, stimulate SMEs within the value chain.
  - **Focus:** It will also support resilient agriculture production systems, expand access to new and organised markets for producers and enhance private sector participation in the agribusiness.
- **Coverage:**
  - It will cover almost one-fourth of Maharashtra. Its focus is on villages which are reeling under worst agriculture crisis compounded by lack of infrastructure and assured value chains to channelize farm produce.
- **Significance:**
  - The project is giant step towards transformation of rural economy and empowerment of farmers and also sustainable agriculture through public-private partnership (PPP) model.
  - It seeks to ensure higher production of crops and create robust market mechanism to enable farmers to reap higher remunerations for the yield. It unites agriculture-oriented corporates and farmers by providing them common platform.

## 9. Saura Jalnidhi Scheme

- Odisha Government has launched Saura Jalnidhi scheme to encourage use of solar energy in irrigation by farmers.
- **Key features of the scheme:**
  - The beneficiary of this scheme will be farmers who have valid farmer identity cards and have minimum 0.5 acres of agricultural land.
  - Under this scheme, farmers will be given 90% subsidy and 5,000 solar pumps. This will provide irrigation benefits in 2,500 acres of the state.
  - In the first phase, this scheme will be available in those areas where electricity is not available for running the pump set.
- **Significance of the scheme:**
  - The scheme will generate 1.52 lakh human day employments annually and provided livelihood to around 5,000 families and also reduce carbon footprints.
  - Under this scheme, farmers will be provided with a well-equipped solar pump irrigation system in convergence mode.

- It will help to reduce burden of input cost on farmers and also increase agricultural income. It will promote the use of green energy and reduce pollution.

### 10. Samruddhi scheme

- Karnataka has launched **Samruddhi scheme for aspiring SC/ST rural entrepreneurs**.
- It is a rural entrepreneurship programme for Scheduled Castes (ST) and Scheduled Tribes (SC) in Karnataka.
- Through this rural employment and **skill development programme**, the government will partner with private organisations to provide training free of cost.
- The industry partners would invest up to 10 percent or more in retail management, taxation policies and GST, inventory management, soft skills, logistics, etc.”
- The government has also set up a seed grant of up to Rs 10 lakh to help the beneficiaries set up their own franchises or retail outlets. It hopes to create 10,000 SC/ST rural entrepreneurs over the next three years.
- As part of the Samruddhi scheme, the government will also provide a seed grant to deserving youth to start their own franchises or retail outlets after they receive the required training and certification.

## Miscellaneous

### 1. Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana

- Governmentt has launched the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana.
- Under the scheme, a group of **Indian diasporas** will be taken on a government-sponsored tour of religious places in India twice a year.
- The group will be taken to the religious places of all major religions in India.
- The tour would be **completely government sponsored**.
- Under the eligibility criteria, all people of Indian-origin, aged between 45 and 65 can apply and a group will be selected out of them.
- The first preference will be given to people from '**Girmitiya countries**' such as Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica.
- Who are Girmityas?
  - Girmityas or Jahajis are descendants of indentured Indian labourers brought to Fiji, Mauritius, South Africa, East Africa, the Malay Peninsula, Caribbean and South America (Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname) to work on sugarcane plantations for the prosperity of the European settlers and save the Fijians from having to work on these plantations and thus to preserve their culture.
  - The term Girmitiya was coined by Mahatma Gandhi who referred to himself as first Girmitiya.
  - The countries where these indentured Indian labourers settled are known as Girmitiya countries.

### 2. Project ReWeave

- **Microsoft** India has launched a new **e-commerce platform 're-weave.in'** under project ReWeave to help **handloom weavers**.
- **About Project ReWeave:**
  - Initiated by Microsoft India (R&D) Pvt. Limited in 2016 as part of its Philanthropies efforts.
  - Aim: To revive the handloom weaving ecosystem in India.
  - Features: Under the initiative, Microsoft is working closely with NGO partner, Chaitanya Bharathi to provide infrastructure, financing and marketing support to help weaver families keep their weaving traditions alive by sustaining livelihoods.

### 3. Floating Solar Plants

- A 50MW floating solar plant will be set up in the country's largest reservoir **Rihand dam** in Sonbhadra district in UP.
- The largest floating solar plant to date is a 2MW one in Vishakhapatnam. Another is a 500-kWh plant built by the Kerala State Electricity Board at the Banasura Sagar Dam.

### 4. India's Longest Railroad Bridge

- The **Bogibeel bridge** is India's longest railroad bridge. It was inaugurated recently.

- The bridge is 4.94 km long in length. The double decker rail and road bridge, on the Brahmaputra river, will cut down the train-travel time between Tinsukia in Assam to Naharlagun town of Arunachal Pradesh by more than 10 hours.
- Built by the Indian Railways, the double-decker bridge is strong enough to withstand movement of heavy military tanks.
- The Bogibeel bridge will connect the south bank of the Brahmaputra river in Assam's Dibrugarh district with Silapathar in Dhemaji district, bordering Arunachal Pradesh. The railways have reduced the distance between Dhemaji and Dibrugarh from 500 Kms to 100 kms with the completion of the project.

## 5. Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) Programme

- To ensure energy security, the Government of India had decided to set up 5 million metric tons (MMT) of strategic crude oil storages at three locations namely, **Visakhapatnam**, **Mangalore** and **Padur** (near Udupi).
- These strategic storages would be in addition to the existing storages of crude oil and petroleum products with the oil companies.
- In the 2017-18 budget, it was announced that two more such caverns will be set up **Chandikhole** in Jajpur district of **Odisha** and **Bikaner** in **Rajasthan** as part of the second phase.
- The construction of the Strategic Crude Oil Storage facilities is being managed by **Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL)**, a Special Purpose Vehicle, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.
- The Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd (ISPRL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) in Abu Dhabi to explore the possibility of storing ADNOC crude oil at ISPRL's underground oil storage facility at Padur in Karnataka, which has a 2.5 million tonne capacity.
  - ISPRL is an Indian government-owned company mandated to store crude oil for emergency needs.
  - ADNOC is the only foreign oil and gas company, so far, to invest by way of crude oil in India's strategic petroleum reserves program.
  - ISPRL has already built 5.33 million tonnes of underground storage capacity at three locations – Visakhapatnam (1.33 million tonnes), Mangalore (1.5 million tonnes) and Padur (2.5 million tonnes), that can meet around 9.5 days of the country's oil needs.

## 6. Yuva Sahakar-Cooperative Enterprise Support and Innovation Scheme

- To cater to the needs and aspirations of the youth, the **National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)** has come up with a youth-friendly scheme '**Yuva Sahakar-Cooperative Enterprise Support and Innovation Scheme**' for attracting them to cooperative business ventures.
- Key facts:
  - The scheme would encourage cooperatives to venture into new and innovative areas.
  - NCDC has created **a dedicated fund** with liberal features enabling youth to avail the scheme.
  - The scheme will be linked to Rs 1000 crore '**Cooperative Start-up and Innovation Fund (CSIF)**' created by the NCDC.

- It would have more incentives for cooperatives of North Eastern region, Aspirational Districts and cooperatives with women or SC or ST or PwD members.
- **The funding for the project** will be up to 80% of the project cost for these special categories as against 70% for others.
- The scheme envisages 2% less than the applicable rate of interest on term loan for the project cost up to Rs 3 crore including 2 years moratorium on payment of principal.
- All types of cooperatives in operation for at least one year are eligible.
- About NCDC:
  - National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1963 as **a statutory Corporation under Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare**.
  - It has many regional centres to provide the financial assistance to Cooperatives/Societies/Federations.

## 7. PaISA – Portal for Affordable Credit & Interest Subvention Access

- **PAiSA** – A centralized electronic platform for processing interest subvention on bank loans to beneficiaries under **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM)**.
- It is designed and developed by **Allahabad Bank (Nodal bank)**.
- **Benefits of PAiSA:**
  - Another effort by the government to **connect directly with the beneficiaries** for ensuring **greater transparency and efficiency** in delivery of services.
  - DBT of subvention on monthly basis under DAY-NULM will give the necessary **financial support to small entrepreneurs** in a timely manner.
  - All 35 States/UTs & all scheduled commercial banks, RRBs and Cooperative Banks are expected to be on board the PAiSA portal the year end.

## 8. Swasth Bharat Yatra National Campaign

- Union Government has launched national campaign 'Swasth Bharat Yatra' on occasion of World Food Day (16 October) to **sensitise people about eating safe food and be healthy**.
- The campaign has been launched in association with states and led by **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**.
- **About Swasth Bharat Yatra national campaign:**
  - Under it, pan-India cycle rally is being organized to create consumer awareness about eating safe and nutritious food for becoming healthy and combating food adulteration.
  - This campaign will not only mobilise masses but also create large pool of local community to sustain this movement.
- **World Food Day:**
  - World Food Day is celebrated on October 16 every year to raise awareness on the issues of poverty and hunger.
  - World Food Day was established by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in November 1979 and since then the day is



celebrated worldwide by many organisations that are concerned with food security.

- **2018 theme:** "OUR ACTIONS ARE OUR FUTURE. A #ZERO HUNGER WORLD BY 2030 IS POSSIBLE".

## 9. National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET)

- The Union Cabinet has approved the merger of the existing regulatory institutions in the skills space – National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) and the National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) into the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET).
- **Functions:**
  - NCVET will regulate the functioning of entities engaged in vocational education and training, both long-term and short-term and establish minimum standards for the functioning of such entities.
  - The primary functions of NCVET will include:
    - Recognition and regulation of awarding bodies, assessment bodies and skill related information providers.
    - Approval of qualifications developed by awarding bodies and Sector Skill Councils (SSCs).
    - Indirect regulation of vocational training institutes through awarding bodies and assessment agencies.
    - Research and information dissemination.
    - Grievance redressal.
- **Composition:**
  - The Council would be headed by a Chairperson and will have Executive and Non-Executive Members.
- **Benefits:**
  - This institutional reform will lead to **improvement in quality and market relevance** of skill development programs lending credibility to vocational education and training, encouraging greater private investment and employer participation in the skills space.
  - This in turn will help **achieve the twin objectives of enhancing aspirational value of vocational education and of increasing skilled manpower** furthering the Prime Minister's agenda of making India the skill capital of the world.
  - Being a regulator of India's skill ecosystem, NCVET will have **a positive impact on each individual who is a part of vocational education and training in the country.**
  - This is also expected to **facilitate the ease of doing business** by providing a steady supply of skilled workforce to the industry and services.
- **Facts for Prelims:**
  - **The National Skill Development Agency (NSDA)** is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
  - It coordinates and harmonizes the skill development efforts of the Indian government and the private sector to achieve the skilling targets of the 12th Plan document and beyond.



- The NSDA's role is also to anchor the **National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF)** and facilitate the setting up of professional certifying bodies in addition to the existing ones.

### 10. #Self4Society App

- #Self4Society app, developed by MyGov, has been launched by the government to **help coordinate volunteer work undertaken by professionals**.
- This platform will help to create better synergies among so many CSR and other initiatives and lead to a much better outcome of the efforts of professionals.
- Companies have observed that a spirit of service and volunteering improves employee satisfaction and reduces employee attrition.
- The app will have incentives, gamification and intra- and inter-company competitions, and social networking.
- The volunteer time for the government's flagship programmes such as Swachh Bharat is expected to increase.

### 11. Strategic Policy Group

- The government has set up Strategic Policy Group or SPG to help the National Security Council, which advises the Prime Minister on matters of national security and strategic interests.
- **About the Strategic Policy Group (SPG):**
- Composition:
  - It will be **headed by National Security Advisor**.
  - Its members include the NITI Aayog vice chairman, cabinet secretary, the chiefs of the three defence services, the RBI governor, the foreign secretary, the home secretary, the finance secretary and the defence secretary.
  - The secretary of the Department of Defence Production and Supplies, the scientific adviser to the defence minister and the secretary, cabinet secretariat will also be members of the panel.
  - The other members are secretary, department of revenue; secretary, department of atomic energy; secretary, department of space; director, Intelligence Bureau, and secretary, National Security Council Secretariat.
  - Representatives of other ministries and departments will be invited to the meetings of the group as and when necessary.
- **Functions:**
  - It will assist the National Security Council and undertake among other tasks, a long-term strategic review of country's security affairs.
  - It will be the principal mechanism for inter-ministerial coordination and integration of relevant inputs in the formulation of national security policies.
- **Meetings:**
  - The NSA will convene the meetings of the SPG and the cabinet secretary will coordinate implementation of the group's decisions by union ministries and departments, and state governments.

### 12. Mobilise Your City (MYC) Programme

- India and France have signed an implementation agreement on "MOBILISE YOUR CITY" (MYC) programme.

- Based on a proposal made by AFD in 2015, the European Union has agreed to provide funds of Euro 3.5 million through the AFD to contribute to specific investments and technical assistance components within the Mobilise Your City (MYC) programme in India.
- **About Mobilise Your City (MYC):**
  - MobiliseYourCity (MYC) is **a global climate initiative** for integrated urban mobility planning, and one of 15 international transport initiatives of the UN Global Climate Action Agenda (GCAA).
  - Mobilise Your City (MYC) is **part of an international initiative** which is supported by the French and the German Governments and was launched at 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) meeting in December, 2015.
  - The MYC is **an initiative combining urban mobility objectives and climate considerations**.
  - It aims at providing solutions in a fully integrated manner, analysing different modes of transportation within the urban fabric, with the objective of providing people long-term, sustainable, adequate, reliable and cost-efficient transportation opportunities.
  - **The project seeks to back 100 cities worldwide in three years**, which are engaged in sustainable urban mobility planning to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
  - In India, **the MYC aims at supporting three pilot cities viz. Nagpur, Kochi and Ahmedabad** in their efforts to reduce their Green House Gas (GHG) emissions related to urban transport by implementing urban mobility plans at local level and to help India at national level to improve their sustainable transport policy.
  - The three pilot cities selected under the programme as well as MoHUA will benefit from the Technical Assistance activities.
- **The main components of the proposed assistance are:**
  - To support planning and implementation of sustainable urban transport projects.
  - Support to strengthening institutional capacity for regulating, steering and planning urban mobility.
  - Learning and exchange formats with other cities across India for exchanges on best practices.