



Daily Current Affairs

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UNNATI-- Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training programme of ISRO

Why in news?

Recently Government inaugurates UNNATI-- Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training programme of ISRO in Bengaluru.

About UNNATI:

- UNNATI, a capacity building programme on Nanosatellite development, is an initiative by ISRO to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space (UNISPACE-50).
- The programme provides opportunities to the participating developing countries to strengthen in assembling, integrating and testing of Nanosatellite.
- UNNATI programme is planned to be conducted for 3 years by U.R. Rao Satellite Centre of ISRO in 3 batches and will target to benefit officials of 45 countries.

Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC)

Why in news?

Recently India celebrated 25th year of Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC).

About Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC):

- The Government established Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC) as a Society in 1994 to facilitate agri-business ventures by catalyzing private investment through Venture Capital Assistance (VCA) Scheme in close association with financial institutions.
- The setting up of State level SFAC as counterpart agency of Central SFAC for agribusiness projects was part of the Scheme.
- The Scheme envisaged a corpus contribution from Central SFAC of Rs. 50.00 lakh to each State which establishes a State Level SFAC. So far, 21 States have received funds for Central SFAC for setting up of State SFAC.
- The role of State SFACs is to aggressively promote agribusiness project development in their respective States.

Major Functions:

1. Promotion of development of small agribusiness through VCA scheme;
2. Helping formation and growth of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) / Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs);
3. Improving availability of working capital and development of business activities of FPOs/FPCs through Equity Grant and Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme;
4. Implementation of National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) Electronic Trading platform.

At present, SFAC is implementing the following schemes:

1. Agri-Business Development (ABD) through Venture Capital Assistance (VCA) and Project Development Facility (PDF).

- The Scheme aims to facilitate the promotion of agri-business projects establishing backward linkages with farmers, providing assured market to their produce, thereby generating employment and enhancing farmers' income.
- SFAC partnership with various PSU banks has so far helped support 1674 projects across the country, investing a total of Rs. 495.36 Crores in venture and helping to leverage Rs. 5950.76 Crores in total

project investment.

- This has created 81396 direct employment and linked approximately 1.53 lakhs Farmers to these units.

2. Equity Grant and Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme for Farmer Producer Companies:

The scheme has two components as given below:

- A grant of upto Rs. 10.00 lakh to each registered Farmer Producer Company is given to match the member equity raised by the institution.
- This enhances the equity base of the FPC and enable it to approach financial institutions for raising working capital.
- SFAC has been sanctioned Equity Grant to 127 Farmer Producer Companies amounting to Rs.7.04 Crore to enable them to leverage working capital from financial institutions.
- Credit Guarantee Fund (CGF) has been set up in SFAC with a corpus of Rs. 100.00 Crores. The CGF will offer a cover of 85% to loans extended by banks to Farmer Producer Companies without collateral, upto a maximum of Rs. 1.00 Crore.

3. Price Stabilisation Fund:

- SFAC is one of the Central Procurement Agencies for pulses and oilseeds under Price Stabilisation Fund of Department of Consumer Affairs.
- SFAC has made substantial impact in the agriculture sector. SFAC has emerged as a developmental Institution with its core aim and objective focused on increased production and productivity, value addition, provision of efficient linkages between producers and consumers.
- This has resulted in enhancing the yields and incomes of farmers/producers groups as well as created jobs in the rural areas.
- The Government has reviewed the functioning of SFAC from time to time. Based on the review the annual action plans are formulated and associated budgets are released.

Competition Commission of India

Why in news?

Recently The Competition Commission of India ('CCI') passed a Final Order imposing penalty on Panasonic Energy India Co. Limited ('Panasonic') and Godrej and Boyce Manufacturing Co. Limited ('Godrej') for colluding to fix prices of zinc-carbon dry cell batteries in India.

About Competition Commission of India:

- Competition Commission of India is a statutory body of the Government of India responsible for enforcing The Competition Act, 2002 throughout India and to prevent activities that have an appreciable adverse effect on competition in India.
- It was established on 14 October 2003.

The Competition Act, 2002:

- The idea of Competition Commission was conceived and introduced in the form of The Competition Act, 2002 by the Vajpayee government. A need was felt to promote competition and private enterprise especially in the light of 1991 Indian economic liberalisation.
- The Competition Act, 2002, as amended by the Competition (Amendment) Act, 2007, follows the philosophy of modern competition laws.
- The Act prohibits anti-competitive agreements, abuse of dominant position by enterprises and regulates combinations (acquisition, acquiring of control and Merger and acquisition), which causes or likely to cause an appreciable adverse effect on competition within India.
- The objectives of the Act are sought to be achieved through the Competition Commission of India (CCI), which has been established by the Central Government with effect from 14 October 2003.
- CCI consists of a Chairperson and 6 Members appointed by the

Central Government. It is the duty of the Commission to eliminate practices having adverse effect on competition, promote and sustain competition, protect the interests of consumers and ensure freedom of trade in the markets of India.

- The Commission is also required to give an opinion on competition issues on a reference received from a statutory authority established under any law and to undertake competition advocacy, create public awareness and impart training on competition issues.

Objectives:

Preamble to the Competition Act

An Act to provide, keeping in view of the economic development of the country, for the establishment of a Commission to prevent practices having adverse effect on competition, to promote and sustain competition in markets, to protect the interests of consumers and to ensure freedom of trade carried on by other participants in markets, in India, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

To achieve its objectives, the Competition Commission of India endeavors to do the following:

- Make the markets work for the benefit and welfare of consumers.
 - Ensure fair and healthy competition in economic activities in the country for faster and inclusive growth and development of the economy.
 - Implement competition policies with an aim to effectuate the most efficient utilization of economic resources.
 - Develop and nurture effective relations and interactions with sectoral regulators to ensure smooth alignment of sectoral regulatory laws in tandem with the competition law.
 - Effectively carry out competition advocacy and spread the information on benefits of competition among all stakeholders to establish and nurture competition culture in Indian economy.
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Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Protsahan Yojana

Why in news?

Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY), the flagship scheme of the Central Government for employment generation has crossed the milestone of one crore beneficiaries as on January 14, 2019.

About Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Protsahan Yojana:

- The PMRPY Scheme aims to incentivise employers for employment generation by the Government paying the employers' EPS contribution of 8.33%, for the new employees, for the first three years of their employment and is proposed to be made applicable for unemployed persons that are semi-skilled and unskilled.
- The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and is operational since August, 2016.

Objectives

- The Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY) is a scheme to incentivise employers registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) for job creation by the Government paying the 8.33% contribution of employers to the Employee Pension Scheme (EPS) in respect of new employees having a new Universal Account Number (UAN).
- For the textile (apparel) sector, the Government will also be paying the 3.67% Employees Provident Fund (EPF) contribution of the eligible employer for these new employees.

Benefits:

- This Scheme has a dual benefit, where, on the one hand, the employer is incentivised for increasing the employment base of workers in the establishment, and on the other hand, a large number of workers will find jobs in such establishments.
- A direct benefit is that these workers will have access to social

security benefits of the organized sector.

- The entire system is online and AADHAR based with no human interface in the implementation of the scheme.
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Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram

Why in news?

Recently Minister for Minority Affairs explained the importance and achievements of Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram.

Highlights:

- Under Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram constructed schools, colleges, ITIs, skill development centres, multi-purpose community centres “Sadbhav Mandap”, “Hunar Hub”, hospitals, business centres etc on waqf properties across the country.
- For the first time after the Independence, a campaign has been started on war-footing to provide basic amenities to ensure educational empowerment of girls belonging to Minority communities in 308 districts across the country.
- During the last about four-and-a-half years, under PMJVK, 16 Degree Colleges, 2080 School Buildings, 37,744 Additional Classrooms, 1207 Hostels, 178 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), 48 Polytechnics, 39,501 Anganwadi Centres, 3,48,624 IAY(PMAY) houses, 386 Sadbhavna Mandaps, 79 Residential Schools, 508 Market sheds, 17,397 drinking water facilities etc have been constructed by the Government in the Minority concentrated areas.

About Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK):

- Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) seeks to provide better socio economic infrastructure facilities to the minority communities particularly in the field of education, health & skill development which would further lead to lessening of the gap between the national

average and the minority communities with regard to backwardness parameters.

- The erstwhile Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) has been restructured and renamed as Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram for effective implementation.
- The restructured scheme is to be implemented during the remaining period of the 14th Finance Commission ie. March 31, 2020.

Beneficiaries of PMJVK:

- As far as PMJVK is concerned, the communities notified as minority communities under Section 2 (c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 would be taken as Minority Communities. At present 6 (six) communities namely Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Zoroastrians (Parsis) and Jains have been notified as Minority Communities under Section 2 (c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992.
- The Programme aims to address development deficits in the identified minority concentration areas. The identification of minority concentration areas has been done on the basis of presence of substantial population of notified Minority Communities based on Census, 2011.
- The inclusion of Minority Concentration District Headquarters along with the Minority Concentration Towns having population more than 25,000, Minority Concentration Blocks and Cluster of Villages as per Census, 2011 data, will extend the coverage of population of minority communities.

Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme

Why in news?

Recently Regional Conference on “Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)” Held at Mumbai.

About Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme:

The umbrella Central Sector Scheme of this Ministry called the "Scheme to Promote Voluntary Action for Persons with Disabilities" was revised w.e.f. 01.04.2003 and was renamed as the "Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)".

Objectives:

The objectives of the scheme are:

- To create an enabling environment to ensure equal opportunities, equity, social justice and empowerment of persons with disabilities.
- To encourage voluntary action for ensuring effective implementation of the People with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities and Protection of Rights) Act of 1995.

Approach and Strategy

- The approach of this Scheme is to provide financial assistance to voluntary organizations to make available the whole range of services necessary for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities including early intervention, development of daily living skills, education, skill-development oriented towards employability, training and awareness generation.
- With a view to inclusion of persons with disabilities in the mainstream of society and actualizing their potential, the thrust would be on education and training programmes.

In order to achieve the objectives of the scheme the key strategies will be as follows:

- To enhance educational opportunities at all levels and in all forms and enlarge the scope of vocational and professional opportunities, income generation and gainful occupations.
- To support all such measures as may be necessary for promoting formal as well as non formal employment and placement opportunities.

- To implement outreach and comprehensive Community Based Rehabilitation programmes in urban and rural environments.
 - To support manpower development activities to train required personnel at different levels for all programmes/ projects/activities for persons with disabilities.
 - To support the development, publication and dissemination of information, documentation and training materials.
 - To set up well equipped resource centres at different levels. To promote and support the development of self-help groups, parent organizations and independent living.
 - To encourage coordination, cooperation and networking and multi-sectoral linkages.
 - To support people with disabilities in projects which are environment friendly and eco promotive.
 - To support construction and maintenance of buildings, provision of furniture and fixtures and installation and maintenance of machinery and equipment.
 - To establish and support facilities for sport, recreation, leisure-time activities, excursions, creative and performing arts, cultural and socially inclusive activities.
 - To support and facilitate the availability of appropriate housing, homes and hostel facilities.
 - To support the conduct of surveys and other forms of epidemiological studies.
 - To promote research in various development areas, innovative strategies, assistive devices and enabling technologies and support production of such devices ensuring quality control.
 - To support effort to ensure protection of human, civil and consumer rights of persons with disabilities.
 - To support legal literacy, including legal counseling, legal aid and analysis and evaluation of existing laws.
 - To support such other measures, which may meet the needs of the persons with disability and fulfill the obligations as prescribed in the People with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities and Protection of Rights) Act of 1995.
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