



Daily Current Affairs

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Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan

Why in news?

Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM) will be rolled out by the Ministry of Labour and Employment tomorrow i.e. 15.02.2019.

Highlights:

- The scheme announced in the Interim Budget was notified by the Ministry recently. As many as 42 crore workers are estimated to be engaged in the unorganized sector of the country.
- The unorganised workers mostly engaged as home based workers, street vendors, mid-day meal workers, head loaders, brick kiln workers, cobblers, rag pickers, domestic workers, washer men, rickshaw pullers, landless labourers, own account
- workers, agricultural workers, construction workers, beedi workers, handloom workers, leather workers, audio- visual workers and similar other occupations whose monthly income is Rs 15,000/ per month or less and belong to the entry age
- group of 18-40 years are eligible for the scheme.
- They should not be covered under New Pension Scheme (NPS), Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) scheme or Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). Further, he/she should not be an income tax payer.

Salient Features of PM-SYM:

Minimum Assured Pension: Each subscriber under the PM-SYM, shall receive minimum assured pension of Rs 3000/- per month after attaining the age of 60 years.

Family Pension: During the receipt of pension, if the subscriber dies, the spouse of the beneficiary shall be entitled to receive 50% of the pension received by the beneficiary as family pension. Family pension is applicable only to spouse.

If a beneficiary has given regular contribution and died due to any cause (before age of 60 years), his/her spouse will be entitled to join and continue the scheme subsequently by payment of regular contribution or exit the scheme as per provisions of exit and withdrawal.

Contribution by the Subscriber: The subscriber's contributions to PM-SYM shall be made through 'auto-debit' facility from his/ her savings bank account/ Jan- Dhan account. The subscriber is required to contribute the prescribed contribution amount from the age of joining PM-SYM till the age of 60 years.

Matching contribution by the Central Government: PM-SYM is a voluntary and contributory pension scheme on a 50:50 basis where prescribed age-specific contribution shall be made by the beneficiary and the matching contribution by the Central Government as per the chart. For example, if a person enters the scheme at an age of 29 years, he is required to contribute Rs 100/ - per month till the age of 60 years. An equal amount of Rs 100/- will be contributed by the Central Government.

Enrolment Process under PM-SYM: The subscriber will be required to have a mobile phone, savings bank account and Aadhaar number. The eligible subscriber may visit the nearest CSCs and get enrolled for PM-SYM using Aadhaar number and savings bank account/ Jan-Dhan account number on self-certification basis.

Later, facility will be provided where the subscriber can also visit the PM-SYM web portal or can download the mobile app and self-register using Aadhar number/ savings bank account/ Jan-Dhan account number on self-certification basis.

Enrollment agencies: The enrolment will be carried out by all the Community Service Centers (CSCs). The unorganised workers may visit

their nearest CSCs along with their Aadhar Card and Savings Bank account passbook/Jandhan account and get registered themselves for the Scheme. Contribution amount for the first month shall be paid in cash for which they will be provided with a receipt.

Minimum Support Price for Raw Jute

Why in news?

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval for the increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Raw Jute for 2019-20 season.

Background:

The increased MSP is based on recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) which while recommending MSP takes into account the cost of production, overall demand-supply, domestic and international prices, inter-crop price parity, terms of trade between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors and the likely impact of MSP on user industries and a minimum 50% as the margin over the weighted average cost of production.

Impact:

The MSP would yield returns of 55.81 percent over the all India weighted average cost of production. The MSP of Raw Jute is expected to ensure appropriate minimum prices to the farmers and step up investment in Jute cultivation and thereby production and productivity in the country.

Historical perspective of MSP

- The Price Support Policy of the Government is directed at providing insurance to agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices. The minimum guaranteed prices are fixed to set a floor below which market prices cannot fall. Till the mid 1970s, Government

announced two types of administered prices :

- Minimum Support Prices (MSP)
- Procurement Prices
- The MSPs served as the floor prices and were fixed by the Government in the nature of a long-term guarantee for investment decisions of producers, with the assurance that prices of their commodities would not be allowed to fall below the level fixed by the Government, even in the case of a bumper crop.
- Procurement prices were the prices of kharif and rabi cereals at which the grain was to be domestically procured by public agencies (like the FCI) for release through PDS. It was announced soon after harvest began. Normally procurement price was lower than the open market price and higher than the MSP.
- This policy of two official prices being announced continued with some variation upto 1973-74, in the case of paddy. In the case of wheat it was discontinued in 1969 and then revived in 1974-75 for one year only.
- Since there were too many demands for stepping up the MSP, in 1975-76, the present system was evolved in which only one set of prices was announced for paddy (and other kharif crops) and wheat being procured for buffer stock operations

Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)

- In formulating the recommendations in respect of the level of minimum support prices and other non-price measures, the Commission takes into account, apart from a comprehensive view of the entire structure of the economy of a particular commodity or group of commodities, the following factors:-
 - Cost of production
 - Changes in input prices
 - Input-output price parity
 - Trends in market prices
 - Demand and supply
 - Inter-crop price parity
 - Effect on industrial cost structure
 - Effect on cost of living
 - Effect on general price level

- International price situation
- Parity between prices paid and prices received by the farmers.
- Effect on issue prices and implications for subsidy

The Commission makes use of both micro-level data and aggregates at the level of district, state and the country. The information/data used by the Commission, inter-alia include the following :-

- Cost of cultivation per hectare and structure of costs in various regions of the country and changes there in;
- Cost of production per quintal in various regions of the country and changes therein;
- Prices of various inputs and changes therein;
- Market prices of products and changes therein;
- Prices of commodities sold by the farmers and of those purchased by them and changes therein;
- Supply related information - area, yield and production, imports, exports and domestic availability and stocks with the Government/public agencies or industry;
- Demand related information - total and per capita consumption, trends and capacity of the processing industry;
- Prices in the international market and changes therein, demand and supply situation in the world market;
- Prices of the derivatives of the farm products such as sugar, jaggery, jute goods, edible/non-edible oils and cotton yarn and changes therein;
- Cost of processing of agricultural products and changes therein;
- Cost of marketing - storage, transportation, processing, marketing services, taxes/fees and margins retained by market functionaries; and
- Macro-economic variables such as general level of prices, consumer price indices and those reflecting monetary and fiscal factors.

MoU between India and Finland on Cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of outer space

Why in news?

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its approval for Memorandum of Understanding between India and Finland on cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of outer space.

Highlights:

The Memorandum of Understanding shall enable the following potential interest areas of cooperation such as,

- Remote sensing of the earth
- Satellite communication and satellite based navigation
- Space science and planetary exploration
- Development, testing and operation of space objects and ground system
- Launching of Finnish Space objects by Indian launch vehicles
- Processing and use of space data
- Developing innovative applications and solutions based on space technologies and use of artificial intelligence
- Cooperation around emerging New Space opportunities and data ecosystems and sustainable used of outer space.

Implementation Strategy and Targets:

- The Participants will each nominate a coordinator for the purpose of coordinating cooperative activities under this MoU. In order to facilitate the implementation of this MoU, the Participants could meet on mutual decision alternately in India or in Finland or through videoconference.
- The Participants or, upon their authority, the implementing agencies, may set up project teams if necessary, to manage specific cooperative projects taken up under implementing arrangements.

Impact:

- The signed MoU will provide impetus to explore newer research activities and application possibilities in the field of remote sensing of the earth; satellite communication; satellite navigation; space science and exploration of outer space.
 - Cooperation with the Government of Finland would lead to develop a joint activity in the field of application of space technologies for the benefit of humanity.
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GSAT-11

Why in news?

Recently Union Minister of State to Space provided information about GSAT-11 in Lok Sabha.

Key Facts:

- Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) heaviest and most-advanced high throughput communication satellite GSAT-11 was successfully launched from the Spaceport in French Guiana on Dec 5, 2018.
 - The 5854-kg GSAT-11 will provide high data rate connectivity to users of Indian mainland and islands through 32 user beams in Ku-band and 8 hub beams in Ka-band.
 - GSAT-11 will boost the broadband connectivity to rural and inaccessible Gram Panchayats in the country coming under the Bharat Net Project, which is part of Digital India Programme.
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Coastal Security Scheme

Why in news?

Recently Minister of State for Home Affairs provided information about development regarding Coastal Security Scheme.

Highlights:

- The Government of India is implementing Coastal Security Scheme in all coastal States/UTs including Karnataka, in phases with the objective of strengthening infrastructure of Coastal Police for patrolling and surveillance of coastal areas, particularly shallow waters close to the coast.
 - Under the Coastal Security Scheme, coastal States/Union Territories have been sanctioned with 204 coastal police stations, 60 jetties, 429 boats, 284 four-wheelers, 554 two-wheelers, 97 check posts, 58 outposts and 30 barracks.
 - Phase-I of the Scheme was implemented during 2005-2011 based on the requirements projected by the coastal States/Union Territories.
 - Phase-II of the Scheme is underway with effect from 01.04.2011 till 31.03.2020 on the basis of vulnerability/gap analysis carried out by coastal States/Union Territories which projected additional requirements for strengthening the coastal security infrastructure.
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National Policy for Domestic Workers

Why in news?

Recently Minister of State (I/C) for Labour and Employment explained government initiatives regarding protection and welfare of domestic workers.

Draft National Policy on Domestic Workers:

The salient features of the proposed draft National Policy on Domestic Workers

- Inclusion of Domestic Workers in the existing legislations.
 - Domestic workers will have the right to register as unorganized workers. Such registration will facilitate their access to rights & benefits.
 - Right to form their own associations/unions
 - Right to minimum wages, access to social security
 - Right to enhance their skills
 - Protection of Domestic Workers from abuse and exploitation
 - Domestic Workers to have access to courts, tribunals for grievance redressal
 - Establishment of a mechanism for regulation of private placement agencies.
 - Establishment of a grievance redressal system for domestic workers.
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‘Uncover’ project of the Geological Survey of India

Context: state-of-the-art project to be implemented in 2 selected areas in the country is focused on probing for deep seated/ concealed mineral deposits

Relevance: This programme is also one of the important action points of the draft National Mineral Exploration Policy (NMEP)

Main components:

- Characterizing India’s geological cover
 - Investigating lithospheric architecture
 - Resolving 4D geodynamic and metallogenic evolution
 - Detecting and characterizing the distal footprints of ore deposits.
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Contempt of court

Why in News?

SC holds former CBI chief Nageswara Rao guilty of contempt.

What is it?

- Contempt of court, often referred to simply as "contempt", is the offense of being disobedient to or disrespectful toward a court of law and its officers in the form of behavior that opposes or defies the authority, justice and dignity of the court.
- A very similar attitude towards a legislative body is termed contempt of Parliament or contempt of Congress.

Contempt of Court Act (1971)

- For the concept of Contempt of Court, the Contempt of Court Act, 1971 was passed which dealt with such a concept.
- Article 129 and 215 of the Constitution of India empowers the Supreme Court and High Court respectively to punish people for their respective contempt.
- Section 10 of The Contempt of Courts Act of 1971 defines the power of the High Court to punish contempt of its subordinate courts.
- Power to punish for contempt of court under Articles 129 and 215 is not subject to Article 19(1)(a).

In India contempt of court is of two types:

1. Civil Contempt: Under Section 2(b) of the Contempt of Courts Act of 1971, civil contempt has been defined as willful disobedience to any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other process of a court or willful breach of an undertaking given to a court.
2. Criminal Contempt: Under Section 2(c) of the Contempt of Courts Act of 1971, criminal contempt has been defined as the publication (whether by words, spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise) of any matter or the doing of any other act whatsoever which:
 - I. Scandalizes or tends to scandalize, or lowers or tends to lower the authority of, any court, or
 - II. Prejudices, or interferes or tends to interfere with the due course of any judicial proceeding, or
 - III. Interferes or tends to interfere with, or obstructs or tends to

obstruct, the administration of justice in any other manner.

Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)

About

- Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) is one type of ad hoc Parliamentary committee constituted by the Indian parliament.
- Joint Parliamentary Committee is formed when motion is adopted by one house and it is supported or agreed by the other house.
- Another way to form a Joint Parliamentary committee is that two presiding chiefs of both houses can write to each other, communicate with each other and form the joint parliamentary committee
- The Lok Sabha members are double compared to Rajya Sabha. For e.g. If Joint Parliamentary committee has 10 Lok Sabha Members than 5 members will be from Rajya Sabha and total member of JPC will be 15.
- The strength of a JPC may be different each time.

JPCs so far

1. Bofors scandal (1987)
 2. Harshad Mehta Stock market scam (1992)
 3. Ketan Parekh share market scam (2001)
 4. Soft drink pesticide issue (2003)
 5. 2G spectrum case (2011)
 6. VVIP Chopper scam (2013)
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