

Important Agri Current Affairs June - September 2023

JUNE AGRICULTURE CURRENT AFFAIRS

- 1) Government approves **Fair and Remunerative Price** of sugarcane payable by Sugar Mills to sugarcane farmer for sugar season 2023-24- highest ever Fair and Remunerative Price of Rs.315/qrtl approved for sugarcane farmers for sugar season 2023-24 (October - September) for a basic recovery rate of 10.25%.
 - The cost of production of sugarcane for the sugar season 2023-24 is Rs.157/qrtl. This FRP of Rs.315/qrtl at a recovery rate of 10.25% is higher by 100.6% over production cost. The FRP for sugar season 2023-24 is 3.28% higher than current sugar season 2022-23.
 - The FRP has been determined on the basis of recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) and after consultation with State Governments and other stake-holders.
 - India is now playing a crucial role in the global sugar economy as it is the second largest exporter of sugar in the world.
 - It is expected that India would become third largest ethanol producing country in the world by 2025-26.

- 2) Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare launches **PM Kisan Mobile App** with Face Authentication Feature. Benefit- Remote farmers can do e-KYC by scanning their face without OTP or fingerprint.
 - PM Kisan is one of the world's largest DBT schemes in which farmers get Rs 6,000 directly transferred through Aadhaar linked bank accounts in three installments in a year.

- 3) **Unique package** for farmers announced- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi today approved a unique package of innovative schemes for farmers with a total outlay of Rs.3,70,128.7 cr.
 - CCEA approves continuation of Urea Subsidy Scheme- Rs. 3,68,676.7 cr committed for urea subsidy for 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25). Rs. 1451 cr approved for Market Development Assistance (MDA) Scheme to exemplify model of wealth from waste.
 - Introduction of Sulphur coated Urea (Urea Gold) to address Sulphur deficiency of soil and save input costs for the farmers.
 - The CCEA approved continuation of Urea Subsidy Scheme to ensure constant availability of urea to the farmers at the same price of Rs 242/ 45 kg bag excluding taxes and neem coating charges.
 - This is apart from recently approved Nutrient Based Subsidy of Rs 38,000 cr for Kharif season for 2023-24. At present, the MRP of urea is Rs.242 per 45 kg bag of urea (exclusive of charges towards neem coating and taxes as applicable), whereas the actual cost of the bag comes around Rs. 2200.
 - In its endeavour to safeguard our farmers, Government of India has increased Fertilizer subsidy from Rs. 73,067 cr in 2014-15 to Rs. 2,54,799 cr in 2022-23.

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- By 2025-26, 8 Nano urea plants with production capacity of 44 cr bottles equaling to 195 LMT of conventional urea will be commissioned.
 - Setting up and revival of 6 urea production units at Chambal Ferti Ltd. - Kota Rajasthan, Matix Ltd. Panagarh West Bengal, Ramagundam- Telangana, Gorakhpur-UP, Sindri-Jharkhand and Barauni-Bihar since 2018 is helping to make the country Atmanirbhar in terms of urea production and availability. In 2022-23, production capacity has increased to 284 LMT. These along with nano-urea plants will reduce our current import dependency in urea and finally make us self-sufficient by 2025- 26.
 - Rs. 1451.84 cr have been approved for Market Development Assistance (MDA) for promoting Organic Fertilizers from Gobardhan Plants. This initiative will facilitate implementation of Budget announcement of establishing 500 new waste to wealth plants under GOBARdhan scheme for promoting circular economy, by increasing the viability of these BG/CBG plants.
- 4) About one lakh **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samruddhi Kendras** have come up in the country. The approved schemes will help in judicious use of chemical fertilizers, thereby reducing input cost of cultivation for the farmers. Promoting natural/ organic farming, innovative and alternate fertilizers like nano fertilizers and organic fertilizers will help in restoring fertility of our Mother Earth.
- 5) The increase in MSP for Kharif Crops for Marketing Season 2023-24 is in line with the Union Budget 2018-19 announcement of fixing the MSP at a level of at least 1.5 times of the All-India weighted average Cost of Production, aiming at reasonably fair remuneration for the farmers. The expected margin to farmers over their cost of production are estimated to be highest in case of bajra (82%) followed by tur (58%), soybean (52%) and urad (51%). As per Third Advance Estimates for 2022-23, total foodgrain production in the country is estimated at record 330.5 million tonnes which is higher by 14.9 million tonnes as compared to the previous year 2021-22. This is the highest increase in the last 5 years.

Minimum Support Prices for Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2023-24-
(Rs. per quintal)

Crops	MSP 2014-15	MSP 2022-23	MSP 2023-24	Cost* KMS 2023-24	Increase in MSP over 2022-23	Margin over cost in per cent
Paddy –Common	1360	2040	2183	1455	143	50
Paddy-Grade A^	1400	2060	2203	-	143	-
Jowar-Hybrid	1530	2970	3180	2120	210	50

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Jowar- Maldandi^	1550	2990	3225	-	235	-
Bajra	1250	2350	2500	1371	150	82
Ragi	1550	3578	3846	2564	268	50
Maize	1310	1962	2090	1394	128	50
Tur /Arhar	4350	6600	7000	4444	400	58
Moong	4600	7755	8558	5705	803	50
Urad	4350	6600	6950	4592	350	51
Groundnut	4000	5850	6377	4251	527	50
Sunflower Seed	3750	6400	6760	4505	360	50
Soybean (Yellow)	2560	4300	4600	3029	300	52
Sesamum	4600	7830	8635	5755	805	50
Nigerseed	3600	7287	7734	5156	447	50
Cotton (Medium Staple)	3750	6080	6620	4411	540	50
Cotton (Long Staple) ^	4050	6380	7020	-	640	-

6) Government of India has decided to allow 2000 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) to open **Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendras** across the country-

- 2000 PACS across the country will be identified to open Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendras, 1000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras will be opened by August and 1000 by December, this year. More than 9400 Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendras have been opened across the country till now. 1800 types of medicines and 285 other medical devices are available in these Jan Aushadhi Kendras.
- Medicines at Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendras are available at 50% to 90% lesser rate in comparison to the branded medicines. The Eligibility Criteria for the Individual applicants to open Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra is to have D. Pharma/B. Pharma. Any organization, NGO,

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charitable organization and hospital can apply for this by appointing B.Pharm / D.Pharm degree holders. For opening Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra at least 120 square feet space either privately owned or rental should be available. The application fee for Jan Aushadhi Kendra is Rs.5000. Women Entrepreneurs, Divyang, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Ex-Servicemen come under Special Category. Aspirational Districts, Himalayan Mountain Region, North-Eastern States and Islands are in Special Areas. The incentive amount for Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra is Rs.5 lakh (15% of monthly purchase or maximum of Rs.15,000 per month). One time additional incentive of Rs. 2 lakh as reimbursement for IT and infra expenditure in special categories and areas is also provided.

- 7) Department of Land Resources, Govt. of India, is implementing **Digital India Land Records Modernization Program** through State / UT Governments-
- The **Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN)** or **Bhu Aadhaar** system developed under DILRMP to uniquely assign to a land parcel has been rolled out in 26 States/UTs namely Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Goa, Bihar, Odisha, Sikkim, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Haryana, Tripura, Chhattisgarh, Jammu & Kashmir, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Kerala and Ladakh.
 - Bhu-Aadhaar (ULPIN) is a 14-digit alpha numeric number system which is of international standards.
 - The UT of Chandigarh on 7.6.2023 rolled out Bhu Aadhaar in their 3 villages Daria, Khuda Jasu and Raipur Khurd.
- 8) Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying launched **Nandi - NOC Approval for New Drug and Inoculation System** portal today at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi.
- With this portal, DAHD will facilitate the regulatory approval process with transparency to assess and examine veterinary product proposals will be more streamlined through seamless integration with the SUGAM portal of Central Drugs Standard Control Organization.
 - The launch of the NANDI portal is another notable undertaking following the animal vaccination coverage initiative and Mobile Veterinary Units (MVUs).
- 9) **Report Fish Disease App** developed by ICAR- National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBFGFR) under **National Surveillance Programme for Aquatic Animal Diseases (NSPAAD)** has been launched.
- App will be a central platform for connecting and will integrate fish farmers, field-level officers and fish health experts seamlessly.
 - Department of Fisheries has allocated Rs 33.78 cr for a period of three years for implementation of second phase of NSPAAD under PMMSY scheme.

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10) Key achievements and initiatives of the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying under various Schemes, programmes are as follows-

➤ **Livestock sector-**

- It is an important subsector of agriculture in the Indian economy. It grew at a Compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.93% during 2014-15 to 2020-21 (at constant prices).
- Livestock sector contributed 6.2% of total GVA in 2020-21.
- There are about 303.76 million bovines (cattle, buffalo, mithun and yak), 74.26 million sheep, 148.88 million goats, 9.06 million pigs and about 851.81 million poultry as per 20th Livestock Census in the country.

➤ **Dairy sector-**

- It is the single largest agricultural commodity contributing 5% of the national economy and employing more than 8 cr farmers directly.
- India is ranked 1st in milk production contributing 23% of global milk production. Milk production has increased by 51.05% over the past 8 years
- Milk production is growing at the annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.1% over the past 8 years whereas world milk production is growing at 1.2% per annum.
- The per capita availability of milk is 444 grams per day in 2021-22 as against the world average of 394 grams per day during 2021.

➤ **Egg and Meat sector-**

- According to Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Statistical Database (FAOSTAT) production data (2020), India ranks 3rd in Egg Production and 8th in meat production in the world.
- Egg production in the country has increased from 78.48 billion in 2014-15 to 129.60 billion in 2021-22.
- Egg production in the country is growing at the rate (CAGR) of 7.4% per annum.
- The per capita availability of egg is at 95 eggs per annum in 2021-22.
- Meat production in the country has increased from 6.69 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 9.29 million tonnes in 2021-22.

➤ **RASHTRIYA GOKUL MISSION-** For development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds.

- Nationwide Artificial Insemination Programme- Delivery of Artificial Insemination services at farmers doorstep.
- Promotion of IVF Technology in the country.

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- Sex sorted semen production- Under the programme, subsidy of Rs 750 or 50% of the cost of sorted semen on assured pregnancy is available to farmers.
 - National Dairy Development Board has developed INDUSCHIP for selection of elite animals of indigenous breeds and 25000 animals have been genotyped using the chip for creating referral population.
 - For the first time in the world, BUFFCHIP has been developed for genomic selection of buffaloes and so far, 8000 buffaloes have been genotyped for creating referral population.
 - Animal Identification and traceability- animals (cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats and pigs) are being identified and registered using polyurethane tags with 12 digit UID number.
 - Progeny testing and Pedigree selection- Progeny testing programme has been implemented for Gir, Shaiwal indigenous breed of cattle and Murrah, Mehsana indigenous breed of buffalo.
 - National Digital Livestock Mission- This will help in improving the productivity of the animals, control diseases that affect both animals and humans, ensure quality livestock and livestock both for domestic and export markets.
 - Breed Multiplication Farms- Subsidy of 50% (up to Rs 2 cr per farm) on capital cost (excluding land cost) is provided to private entrepreneurs under this scheme for establishment of breed multiplication farms.
- **NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR DAIRY DEVELOPMENT-** To create and strengthen infrastructure for quality milk including cold chain infrastructure linking the farmer to the consumer.
- **DAIRY PROCESSING & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT FUND (DIDF)** - To create/ modernize the milk processing, chilling and value addition infrastructure towards components milk processing, chilling and value-added products facilities.
- **NATIONAL LIVESTOCK MISSION-** The focus of the scheme is towards employment generation, entrepreneurship development; increase in per animal productivity and thus targeting increased production of meat, goat milk, egg and wool. The Central Government is providing direct 50% subsidies to the Individuals, SHGs, JLGs, FPOs, Section 8 Companies, FCOs to establish poultry farms with hatcheries and brooder mother units, sheep and goat breed multiplication farm, piggery farm and feed and fodder units.
- **ANIMAL HUSBANDRY INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT FUND-** For incentivizing investments by individual entrepreneurs, private companies, MSME, Farmers Producers Organizations (FPOs) and Section 8 companies to establish-
- (i) The dairy processing and value addition infrastructure.
 - (ii) Meat processing and value addition infrastructure.

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- (iii) Animal Feed Plant.
- (iv) Breed improvement Technology and Breed Multiplications farms for Cattle/ Buffalo/Sheep/Goat/ Pig and technologically assisted poultry farms.
- **LIVESTOCK HEALTH AND DISEASE CONTROL PROGRAMME-** For prevention, control and containment of animal diseases of economic and zoonotic importance by vaccination.
- **Livestock Census-** To provide information on livestock population, species-wise and breed-wise along with age, sex-composition up to household level in rural and urban areas. Recently, 20th Livestock Census has been completed in the year 2019 with the participation of Animal Husbandry Department of all the States/UTs.
- **KISAN CREDIT CARDS (KCC) FOR DAIRY FARMERS OF MILK COOPERATIVES AND MILK PRODUCER COMPANIES-** So far, more than 27.65 lakh fresh KCCs were sanctioned for AHD Farmers.

11) Union minister for Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala briefs the media on 9 years' key achievements of Department of Fisheries-

- This promising sector provides livelihood, employment and entrepreneurship to more than 2.8 cr fishers and fish farmers at the primary level and several lakhs along the value chain.
 - The sector also offers high returns. India is the 3rd largest fish producing country with around 8% share in global fish production.
 - Globally, India stands 2nd in aquaculture production and is one of the top shrimp producing and exporting nations.
 - Highest ever investments in fisheries sector- From 2015, the central government has approved or announced cumulative investments to the tune of Rs 38,572 cr.
- Rs. 5,000 cr investment under Blue Revolution Scheme.
 - Rs. 7,522 cr Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF).
 - Rs. 20,050 cr investment under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana.
 - Rs 6,000 cr sub-scheme under PMMSY, announced in Union Budget 2023-24.
- Record national fish production- During the last 9 years, the annual fish production of India has increased from 95.79 lakh tons (at the end of 2013-14) to an all-time record of 162.48 lakh tons (at the end of 2021-22) i.e. an increase of 66.69 lakh tons. Further, national fish production for the year 2022-23 is also expected to touch or exceed 174 lakh tons (provisional figures), an 81% increase when compared to 2013-14.
 - Doubling of Inland and Aquaculture production- Fish production from inland fisheries and aquaculture increased from mere 2.18 lakh tons in 1950-51 to 121.12 lakh tons in 2021-22.
 - Doubling of Seafood Exports- Seafood exports of India have more than doubled since 2013-14. While the

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seafood exports stood at Rs 30,213 cr in 2013-14, the same has increased to Rs. 63,969.14 cr during FY 2022-23 an increase of 111.73%.

- Doubling of Brackish Water Aquaculture Production: In the last 9 years there has been a boom in shrimp cultivation and export especially from the states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha and Tamil Nadu.
- **Accident Insurance Scheme** under **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana**- Union Minister informed that under PMMSY, fishers, fish farmers, fish workers and persons directly involved in fisheries related allied activities are provided with accidental insurance cover with the entire premium being shared by centre and state governments. Rs 5 lakh is provided against accidental death or permanent disability, Rs 2.5 lakh for accidental permanent partial disability and Rs 25,000 against hospitalization.
- Shri Rupala informed that the Government of India, under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, approved Rs 364 cr for installing satellite-based Vessel Communication and Support System on one lakh fishing vessels for implementation through New Space India Limited, a Central PSU under the Department of Space, Government of India. The technology has been indigenously developed by ISRO, Department of Space. These devices will ensure the safety and security of fishermen at sea, enabling them to stay connected with their families and seek assistance during cyclones and storms and while fishing near international borders.

12) **World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought** is being observed on June 17 every year.
Theme- Her land. Her rights.

13) **World Milk Day**, observed every year on 1st June, was created in the year 2001 by Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN). Theme- Showcasing how dairy is reducing its environmental footprint, while also providing nutritious foods and livelihoods.

14) A committee appointed by the Union rural development ministry has proposed a significant change in the allocation of funds for the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA)**.

- The committee, formed in October 2022 to evaluate the effectiveness of the program as a poverty alleviation tool, has recommended channelizing 70% of MNREGA funds to 3,500 blocks out of a total of 7,245 blocks across the country.
- The objective is to target the poorest blocks and address issues of water deficiency and poverty.
- Of the identified 3,500 blocks, the committee categorized 2,500 as water-deficient and 1,000 as poverty-ridden.
- It suggests that 70% of the budgetary outlay should be allocated to these blocks, ensuring a more focused and impactful distribution of resources.
- The committee headed by Rural Development Secretary **Amarjeet Sinha**, conducted a survey across 10 states.

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- Its findings emphasized the necessity of adopting a targeted approach tailored to the unique needs of different regions, rather than relying on a "one-size-fits-all" model.
 - The MNREGA, passed in 2005, is a demand-driven scheme that guarantees 100 days of unskilled work per year for rural households.
 - The recently announced Union Budget for 2023-24 allotted Rs 60,000 cr, marking a 32% decline from the revised estimate of Rs 89,400 cr for 2022-2023.

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1) **World Food Safety Day** was celebrated on June 7, 2023 which aims to address food-borne risks and promote food security, health, economic prosperity, and sustainable development. This global event is a collaborative initiative between the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Theme: "Food Standards Save Lives".

2) **National Fish Farmers Day** is celebrated in India on July 10 every year to commemorate the successful induced breeding of Indian Major Carps on this day in 1957. It is celebrated to commemorate the pioneering work of Professor Dr. Hiralal Chaudhury and his colleague Dr. K.H. Alikunhi in the Indian fisheries sector. On this day in 1957, they successfully guided induced breeding and reproduction in Indian Major Carps using the Hypophysation technique, which eventually led to a revolution in inland aquaculture.

3) **World Zoonoses Day** is celebrated on July 6 every year. It commemorates the day in 1885 when Louis Pasteur successfully administered the first vaccine against rabies.

4) The 95th **ICAR Foundation & Technology Day** was celebrated on 16th of July.

5) Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD) is implementing **National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD) scheme** across the country since Feb-2014. The scheme has been restructured in July 2021 for implementation from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with the following two components and their respective objectives-

- The Component "A" of NPDD focuses on strengthening of infrastructure for quality milk testing equipment as well as primary chilling facilities for State Cooperative Dairy Federations/ District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union/SHGs/Milk Producer Companies/Farmer Producer

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Organizations throughout the country.

- The Component 'B' of the NPDD scheme "Dairying through Cooperatives" aims to increase sale of milk and dairy products by increasing farmer's access to organized market, upgrading dairy processing facilities and marketing infrastructure and enhancing the capacity of producer owned institutions.

Scheme is implemented in 9 states namely Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttarakhand and West Bengal with the total outlay of Rs. 1568.28 crore including Rs. 924.56 crore as an Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Rs. 475.54 crore as Government of India's (GoI) contribution and Rs. 168.18 crore as State/Participating Institution's (PI) contribution.

- 6) Hardeep S. Puri, Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs and Petroleum and Natural Gas, lauded the **Prime Minister Street Vendor's Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme** on its three-year journey. Launched on June 1, 2020, the PM SVANidhi Scheme aims to restore self-employment, self-sustenance, and self-confidence among street vendors.

- The Minister launched a mobile app for street vendors under the PM SVANidhi scheme, simplifying the loan application process and providing essential information about the scheme.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), a facility for 'Udyam' registration and obtaining a 'Udyam Assist' certificate for street vendors on the portal was also introduced.
- The State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, and Union Bank of India were felicitated among the banks for providing a large number of loans to street vendors.
- Andhra Pradesh Grameen Vikas Bank and Street Nidhi Credit Cooperative Federation Ltd. were also honored among the Regional Rural Banks and State Cooperative Banks.

- 7) **eNAM** Revolutionizes Agricultural Trade: Surge of 41% in FY23.

- Trade between interstate mandis has experienced significant growth in the past year, according to recent data.
- In the financial year 2022-23, the trade volume increased by 36%.
- This surge in trade amounted to a total value of Rs 2.41 crore, marking a remarkable 117% increase from the previous year's Rs 1.11 crore.
- The integration of 1,260 mandis from 22 states and 3 Union Territories (UTs) with the e-NAM

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platform has been a crucial factor in promoting trade between mandis across the country.

- 8) In a recent meeting held, the Empowered Committee for **Scheme for Capacity Building in Textiles Sector (SAMARTH)** announced the inclusion of 43 new implementing partners and an additional target of training approximately 75,000 beneficiaries. The decision was made to enhance the skill development of the workforce in the textile sector.
- It is a demand-driven and placement-oriented umbrella skilling program formulated by the Ministry of Textiles, in line with the broader skilling policy framework adopted by the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship.
 - Aim is to incentivize and support the efforts of the industry in generating employment opportunities in the organized textile and related sectors. In addition to providing entry-level skilling, it also offers special provisions for up-skilling and re-skilling programs.
 - The funding pattern has been revised, increasing the cost norms by 5%.
 - The Ministry of Textiles has joined forces with a total of 157 Textile Industries/Industry Associations, 16 Central/State Government Agencies, and 3 Sectoral Organizations of the Ministry.
 - The scheme has covering 28 states and 6 union territories across the country. It focuses on training individuals from all sections of society, including SC, ST, and other marginalized categories.
 - More than 85% of the beneficiaries trained so far under the scheme are women. More than 70% of the beneficiaries who completed organized sector courses have secured placements.
- 9) The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying has initiated the implementation of the Credit Guarantee Scheme under the **Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund**.
- To strengthen the credit delivery system and promote the Livestock sector.
 - Under the scheme, the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying has established a Credit Guarantee Fund Trust worth Rs. 750.00 crores.
 - This trust will provide credit guarantee coverage of up to 25% of the credit facilities extended by eligible lending institutions to the MSMEs.
 - The Credit Guarantee Fund Trust, which was formed in collaboration with NAB Sanrakshan

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Trustee Company Private Limited, marks the nation's first-ever fund trust under the Credit Guarantee Scheme of AHIDF in the agriculture and animal husbandry sector.

- The establishment of the credit guarantee fund trust was approved as part of the Prime Minister's Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan stimulus package of Rs. 15,000 crores. Interest Subvention of 3%. Loan up to 90% of the total project cost from any Scheduled Bank, National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).

10) On 31st March 2021, the Union Cabinet approved the Central Sector Scheme - "**Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry (PLISFPI)**" with an outlay of Rs. 10,900 crores, to be implemented from 2021-22 to 2026-27.

The scheme consists of three components-

- Incentivizing manufacturing in four major food product segments (Ready to Cook/ Ready to Eat) foods, Processed Fruits & Vegetables, Marine Products and Mozzarella Cheese), promoting Innovative/Organic products of SMEs, and supporting branding and marketing abroad for Indian brands.
- The PLI Scheme for Millet-based Products (PLISMBP) was launched in the FY 2022-23 with an outlay of Rs 800 crore, utilizing the savings under PLISFPI.

11) Aquaculture scientists in India have achieved a significant breakthrough by decoding the genome of an indigenous variety of **white shrimp** known as **P. indicus**.

- This achievement is expected to not only make India self-reliant but also boost the country's export income, particularly in the seafood sector.
- India's seafood exports are currently estimated at a substantial Rs 42,000 crore.
- The aquaculture industry heavily relies on an imported species of Pacific white shrimp called Vannamei, which has been genetically improved over the years.
- Farmed shrimp contributes to approximately 70% of India's seafood export market.

12) The Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), located in Ludhiana, has shifted its research focus from quantity to quality and from food security to nutritional security.

- The institution has developed a new **wheat variety** called PBW RS1.
- This variety contains high levels of amylose starch, which is known to reduce the risk

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of type-2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. Unlike regular wheat, consuming chapatis made from PBW RS1 does not cause an immediate and rapid rise in glucose levels. The high amylose and resistant starch content in this wheat ensure that glucose is released more slowly into the bloodstream. The slower digestion process increases the feeling of satiety, so a person consuming chapatis made from PBW RS1 would feel full after having just two, compared to four chapatis made from normal wheat. PBW RS1 has a total starch content similar to other wheat varieties, around 66-70. However, it has a significantly higher resistant starch content of 30.3 percent compared to only 7.5-10 percent in other varieties.

13) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare launched several new technological initiatives under the **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana** to empower farmers and streamlining the operations.

- **YES-TECH** Manual is a comprehensive guide developed after extensive testing and piloting in 100 districts of India. It facilitates the implementation of YES-TECH, a technology-driven yield estimation system, offering methodologies, best practices and integration insights for accurate yield assessments at the Gram Panchayat level.
- **WINDS Portal** is a centralized platform that hosts, manages, and processes hyper-local weather data collected by Automatic Weather Stations and Rain Gauges at Taluk/Block and Gram Panchayat levels. The portal enhances risk assessment and decision-making in crop insurance, agriculture advisories, and disaster mitigation, supporting the agricultural sector and rural economy.
- The **AIDE app's** introduction on Android platform aims to revolutionize the enrolment process, bringing it directly to the doorstep of farmers. This door-to-door enrolment ensures a seamless and transparent process, making crop insurance more accessible and convenient for farmers.

14) Mobile App developed under **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana** for quick reporting of Fish Diseases and timely scientific advice to aqua-farmers-

- Foreseeing the immense potential for development in the sector and to bring Blue Revolution, the Government of India has implemented a flagship scheme PMMSY with investment of Rs. 20,050 crores, the highest ever investment in Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector in the country.
- Recognizing the importance of disease surveillance, an ambitious National Surveillance Programme for Aquatic Animal Diseases (NSPAAD) was supported by the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, through National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), Hyderabad in the year 2013.
- This programme was initiated in 14 states of aquaculture importance and involved 24

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collaborating centres and is being coordinated by ICAR-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources.

- To further strengthen the aquatic animal disease surveillance programme in the country, the 2nd phase of NSPAAD with a total cost of Rs 33.778 crores for a period of 3 years is supported under PMMSY with pan-India coverage and active involvement of the State Fisheries department and Marine Products Export Development Authority. Under the programme to further strengthen the farmer-based reporting a “**Report Fish Disease**” App has been developed. The app will be a central platform for connecting fish farmers, field-level officers and fish health experts. The App has been launched recently on June 28, 2023 by Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying. Using the innovative app, the farmers can report disease cases in finfish, shrimps and molluscs on their farms to the field level-officers and fish health experts and get scientific advice for quickly addressing the disease problem on their farms.

15) FSSAI launched an e-learning app called **Food Safety and Certification (FoSTaC)**, which contains learning and training modules on food safety guidelines, including proper food handling, storage, and hygiene practices, specifically catering to street vendors.

16) Union Minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, marked the first anniversary of the Rural WASH Partners' Forum (RWPF).

Theme- "Accelerating Progress towards a Swachh Sujal Bharat".

Objective- To expedite the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) and Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G).

17) The **OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2023-2032**- It has been revealed that greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture are anticipated to increase by 7.5% over the next ten years.

Report released by- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

- The report highlights that the livestock sector is expected to account for a staggering 86% of the overall increase in emissions.
- This emphasizes the urgent need for sustainable practices and innovative solutions in livestock management to mitigate the environmental impact of this sector.
- The report offers comprehensive decadal projections for various commodities including cereals, vegetable oils, dairy products, meat, sugar, fish, cotton, tropical fruits, pulses, and

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agricultural output used for bio-fuels.

- It also incorporates preliminary analyses of the role of food loss and waste, shedding light on the importance of addressing these issues in the context of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- FAO has taken a significant step forward in addressing the challenges posed by climate change with the launch of its Action Plan designed to support the implementation of the ambitious Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031.

18) Union Minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, has launched the Unified Registration Portal for GOBARdhan.

- Its primary objective is to streamline the process of setting up CBG/Biogas plants in the country.
- This portal will serve as a centralized repository for assessing investment and participation in the Biogas/CBG (Compressed Biogas) sector at a pan India level.
- The Unified Registration Portal allows any government, cooperative, or private entity operating or intending to set up a Biogas/CBG/Bio-CNG plant in India to obtain a registration number by enrolling in the portal.
- This registration number will enable them to avail a multitude of benefits and support from the Ministries and Departments of the Government of India.
- The Union Government has advised all states to prioritize the registration of their CBG/Biogas plant operators on the portal to take advantage of existing and upcoming support.
- It adopts a whole-of-government approach and aims to convert waste into wealth, thereby promoting a circular economy.
- The initiative is implemented in partnership with state governments and the private sector, including entrepreneurs and societies.

19) The Department of Fisheries has joined forces with Startup India hub and DPIIT to initiate the Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge.

Aim- To identify, reward, and acknowledge startups that have made a significant impact on the fisheries ecosystem.

- The selected startups, operating under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, will receive a cash grant of INR 2 lakhs to support and foster their innovative endeavors.

20) Government of India is promoting natural farming since 2019-20 under **Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Paddhti (BPKP)**, a sub scheme of Prampargat Krishi Vikas Yojna (PKVY).

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- Natural farming is chemical free farming based on the integrated agriculture and animal husbandry approach using livestock and local resources.
- It is largely based on on-farm biomass recycling with major stress on biomass mulching, use of on-farm cow dung-urine formulations from local livestock.
- About 4.09 lakh ha area under 8 states viz. Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are covered under the BPKP scheme.
- Government now intends promote natural farming in a mission mode with due focus on farm production of livestock based natural farming inputs like Beejamrut, Jeevamrut, Neemastra etc.
- In the Budget Speech 2023-24, it has been announced that "over the next 3 years, 1 crore farmers will be facilitated to adopt natural farming.
- For this, 10,000 **Bio-Input Resource Centres (BRC)** will be set-up". These BRCs will be set up for continuous supply of local livestock based natural farming inputs.

21) Karnataka, known as the largest **coffee** producer in India, has unveiled plans to focus on branding the Geographical Indication (GI) tagged Arabica varieties cultivated in the districts of Chikkamagaluru and Kodagu.

- Karnataka dominates the coffee production landscape, accounting for more than two-thirds of the coffee produced in India.
- Karnataka contributed 2.54 lakh tonnes, including 72,945 tonnes of Arabicas and 1.81 lakh tonnes of Robustas.
- Both coffee varieties are cultivated in the three key producing districts of Chikkamagaluru, Kodagu and Hassan.

22) **Rubber** production and consumption in India witnessed a steady growth in the 2022-23 fiscal year compared to the previous year, according to the latest data released by the Statistics Consultative Panel of the Rubber Board.

- During the 2022-23 fiscal year, natural rubber production in India increased by 8.3 percent.
- The demand for natural rubber within the country experienced significant growth of 9 percent during the mentioned fiscal year.
- The automobile tire segment remained the largest consumer of natural rubber, accounting for 70 percent of the total consumption in India.
- India ranks sixth among major rubber-producing countries, contributing 5.8 percent to the

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world's total NR production as of December 2022.

- India retained its position as the second-largest consumer of natural rubber, accounting for 9.3 percent of global consumption in 2022.

23) Andhra Pradesh contributed 56.84 lakh tonnes to the country's total **banana** production, topping the charts and making up 16.5% of the entire yield in the fiscal year 2021-22.

- According to the Food and Agriculture Organization's statistics for 2021, India held the title of being the world's largest banana producer, contributing 26.5 percent of the global banana production.
- To enhance horticulture development, the Central government has been implementing the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture, which includes a **cluster development programme (CDP)**.
- For the pilot project of CDP implementation, Anantapur in Andhra Pradesh was selected.
- To further strengthen banana production, the Department of Horticulture under the Central government is providing assistance in the form of 40 percent of the maximum cost (up to Rs 3 lakh per hectare) for planting expenses and the cost of drip irrigation.

24) ICAR collaborates with Amazon India to empower farmers with knowledge, technology, and market access, aiming to reduce crop failure and boost quality produce through precision farming practices.

- By leveraging the extensive network of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), ICAR aims to disseminate crucial information on precision farming techniques and other best practices to farmers across the country.

25) Under "**Sahakar Se Samridhi**," the Indian government has decided to identify Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) that are not currently functioning as fertilizer retailers.

Aim- To encourage these societies to take up the role of retailers.

26) Under the leadership of Prime Minister, the Cabinet on May 31, 2023 approved the constitution and empowerment of an **Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC)** for facilitation of the "**World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in Cooperative Sector**" by the convergence of various schemes of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

Aim- To address the shortage of agricultural storage infrastructure in the country thereby

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facilitating the establishment of go-downs.

- The Ministry of Cooperation will implement a pilot project in at least 10 selected Districts of different States/UTs in the country.
- The pilot project would provide valuable insights into the various regional requirements of the project, the learning from which will be suitably incorporated for the country-wide implementation of the plan.
- An Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) will be constituted under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Cooperation, with the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Minister of Food Processing Industries and Secretaries concerned as members.

The following schemes have been identified for convergence under the Plan-

(a) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare:

1. Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF).
2. Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure Scheme (AMI).
3. Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH).
4. Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM).

(b) Ministry of Food Processing Industries:

1. Pradhan Mantri Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PMFME).
2. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY).

(c) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution:

1. Allocation of food grains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA).
 2. Procurement operations at Minimum Support Price (MSP).
- The creation of decentralized storage capacity at the local level would reduce food grain wastage and strengthen the food security of the country.
 - By providing various options to the farmers, the distressed sale of crops would be prevented,

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enabling the farmers to realize better prices for their produce.

- It would hugely reduce the cost incurred in the transportation of food grains to procurement centers and again transporting the stocks back from warehouses to FPS.
- Through a 'whole-of-Government' approach, the plan would strengthen PACS by enabling them to diversify their business activities, thus enhancing the income of the farmers, as well.

27) The Union Minister for Jal Shakti, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat released the report on progress under the Jal Jeevan Mission: **Swachh Jal se Suraksha (SJSS) Campaign**.

Purpose- To impress upon the States/ UTs to make concerted efforts towards taking up water quality monitoring and surveillance activities as 'Supply of Safe Water' has been one of the key considerations under JJM.

- Water quality testing has been reported in 5.39 lakh (89.69%) villages for chemical and in 4.47 lakh (74.46%) villages for bacteriological contamination (post monsoon).
- Drinking water samples were tested in 6.58 lakh (67.63%) schools and 7.16 lakh (67.43%) anganwadi centres.
- 21.80 lakh women have been trained from 4.59 lakh (76.41%) villages for water quality testing using Field Testing Kits (FTKs).
- Remedial action has been taken for 90.34% of contaminated sample reported.
- Performance of states/UTs was also measured during the campaign. The states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh emerged as the best performing states during the Campaign.

28) **Farmers Distress Income** is initiated by the Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA), under the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) as it will help in reducing the agrarian distress of farmers.

- The aim of the index is to reduce agrarian distress, such as crop loss and income shock, due to extreme climate events and market fluctuations.
- By predicting and pre-warning stakeholders about future instances of farmers' distress, the index aims to prevent its spread and enable timely preventive measures to be taken.
- The index will measure the level of distress among farmers and will have values ranging from 0 to 1.
- Values below 0.5 indicate low distress, values between 0.5 and 0.7 indicate moderate distress and values above 0.7 indicate severe distress.

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29) Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare inaugurated a new campaign for banks under the Agri Infra Fund called **BHARAT (Banks Heralding Accelerated Rural & Agriculture Transformation)**.

- The campaign aims to raise Rs 7200 crore.
- The BHARAT campaign marks a significant step forward in accelerating rural and agricultural transformation in India.

30) The **Algae Store** is a new digital platform facilitating the seaweed sector in India, providing a one-stop solution for networking, buying, selling, and formalization.

Aim- To bridge the gap between demand and supply sustainably and increase the visibility and market access for cultivators and buyers.

Expected to launch in September, this online B2B marketplace will facilitate networking, buying, selling, and promoting the formalization of the sector.

- Seaweeds have diverse applications across industries such as agriculture, cosmetics, food, pharmaceuticals, and packaging.
- Despite India's extensive coastline of over 7,500 km, commercial seaweed cultivation is primarily limited to Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.
- Currently, the country has a small community of approximately 70-120 seaweed farmers, but efforts are underway to organize the sector and bridge the gap between demand and supply in a sustainable manner.
- To boost seaweed production, the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) has allocated Rs 640 crores.
- India is home to around 844 reported seaweed species, including red, green, and brown algae, only a limited number have achieved commercial success.
- According to FAO data, Asia accounts for 98% of global seaweed production, with China ranking first at 56.8%, followed by Indonesia at 28.6% and South Korea at 5%.
- India has yet to emerge as a major seaweed producer; there has been a significant increase in demand for seaweed biomass.

31) Indian Tractor of the Year Award (ITOTY) 2023 list of winners-

- Tractor of the Year is 'Kubota MU 4501'.
- Tractor exporter of the Year is 'Sonalika International Tractors Ltd.'.

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- Tractor Manufacturer of the Year winner is 'Mahindra Tractor'.
 - The Best Tractor for Agriculture winner is 'New Holland 3630 TX Super Plus'.
 - The Tractor of Commercial application of the year winner is 'Mahindra Arjun 555DI'.
 - The Sustainable Tractor of the year winner is 'Swaraj 744 XT'.
- 32) ITC Limited released an exclusive postal stamp on Millets in collaboration with India Post in order to commemorate the International Year of Millets and strengthen its initiative to educate, empower and encourage millet farming and consumption in India.
- ITC has developed a range of millet-based products in traditional and modern formats for all meal occasions including ready-to-eat food products, cookies, noodles, vermicelli, choco sticks, snacks, and staples such as 'Multi Millet Mix' and 'Ragi Flour'.
- 33) **MOVCDNER** scheme launched during 2015-16 has helped in bringing 1.73 lakh ha area under organic farming benefiting 1.89 lakh farmers.

During this period 379 FPOs/FPCs were formed involving creation of 205 Collection, Aggregation and Grading units, 190 Custom Hiring Centres and 123 processing unit and pack house. 7 Brands have also been developed.

AUGUST AGRICULTURE AFFAIRS

- 1) The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved a new Central Sector Scheme “PM Vishwakarma” with a financial outlay of Rs.13,000 crore for a period of five years (FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28).
~To strengthen and nurture the Guru-Shishya parampara or family-based practice of traditional skills by artisans and craftspeople working with their hands and tools.

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The infographic features logos for PIB, G20 India 2023, and 75th Anniversary at the top left. The title 'PM Vishwakarma' is prominently displayed. A central image shows a woman in traditional attire working with pottery. A blue box on the right states 'Cabinet Decision 16 August 2023'. Below the title, a list of 18 trades is provided, and a portrait of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is shown at the bottom right.

PM Vishwakarma

- Eighteen traditional trades will be covered in the first instance under PM Vishwakarma
- Carpenter (Suthar)
- Boat Maker
- Armourer
- Blacksmith (Lohar)
- Hammer and Tool Kit Maker
- Locksmith
- Goldsmith (Sanar)
- Potter (Kumhaar)
- Sculptor (Moortikar, stone carver), Stone breaker
- Cobbler (Chormkar)/ Shoemsmith/ Footwear artisan
- Mason (Rajmistri)
- Basket/Mat/ Broom Maker/Coir Weaver
- Doll & Toy Maker (Traditional)
- Barber (Nadi)
- Garland maker (Malakaar)
- Washerman (Dhobi)
- Tailor (Darzi)
- Fishing Net Maker

Cabinet Decision
16 August 2023



Objective- To support artist, craftsman and small business owner financially and help them to grow their business by providing them capital support.

- PM Vishwakarma Yojana was announced by Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitaramanduring her 2023-2024 budget speech.
- It is also known by another name i.e., "PM VIKAS Yojana" or "PM Vishwakarma Scheme".
- Under PM Vishwakarma scheme, the artisans and craftspeople will be provided recognition through PM Vishwakarma certificate and ID card, credit Support upto Rs.1 lakh (First Tranche) and Rs.2 lakh (Second Tranche) with a concessional interest rate 5%.
- The Scheme will further provide Skill Upgradation, Toolkit Incentive, Incentive for Digital Transactions and Marketing Support.
- The scheme will provide support to artisans and craftspeople of rural and urban areas across India.

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18 traditional trades will be covered in the first instance under PM Vishwakarma-

(i) Carpenter (Suthar); (ii) Boat Maker; (iii) Armourer; (iv) Blacksmith (Lohar); (v) Hammer and Tool Kit Maker; (vi) Locksmith; (vii) Goldsmith (Sonar); (viii) Potter (Kumhaar); (ix) Sculptor (Moortikar, stone carver), Stone breaker; (x) Cobbler(Charmkar)/ Shoesmith/Footwear artisan; (xi) Mason (Rajmistri); (xii) Basket/Mat/Broom Maker/Coir Weaver; (xiii) Doll & Toy Maker (Traditional); (xiv) Barber (Naai); (xv) Garland maker (Malakaar); (xvi) Washerman (Dhobi); (xvii) Tailor (Darzi); and (xviii) Fishing Net Maker.

2) The **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)**, a program for financial inclusion, was launched on August 28, 2014, and has been operational for nearly nine years.

- Recent bank data reveals that the total number of Jan Dhan accounts has exceeded 500 million by August 9, 2023.
- Around 56% of these accounts belong to women, with 67% located in rural or semi-urban areas.
- The cumulative deposits in these accounts have surpassed Rs. 2.03 lakh crore, accompanied by the distribution of around 34 crore RuPay cards without any cost.
- The average balance in PMJDY accounts is Rs 4,076, and over 55 million accounts are presently benefiting from Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) advantages.

3) A study conducted by IIM-Bangalore in collaboration with the International Labour Organization reveals that the mission has the potential to create a substantial 2.82 crore person-years of employment.

- The **Jal Jeevan Mission**, launched in 2019, aims to provide tap water to rural households, and its coverage has significantly increased in just 4 years.
- The Mission has also successfully addressed clean drinking water issues in areas affected by Arsenic and Fluoride.
- Nobel laureate Prof. Michael Kemer's research indicates that ensuring clean drinking water availability could prevent around 136,000 child deaths and reduce child mortality rates by one-third.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) underscores that achieving complete tap

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water coverage under JJM could avert over 400,000 deaths due to diarrheal diseases, leading to substantial economic savings and time conservation, especially benefiting women.

4) The Union Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala has unveiled the '**A-HELP**' (**Accredited Agent for Health and Extension of Livestock Production**) programme.

- The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, is spearheading these initiatives as part of the Pashudhan Jagrati Abhiyaan under Inclusive Development.

Aim- To empower women by engaging them as trained agents who contribute significantly to disease control, artificial insemination under the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM), animal tagging, and livestock insurance.

- The crux of this campaign lies in equipping farmers with knowledge and resources that address critical areas of livestock health, disease management and animal infertility concerns.

5) Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has released the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for use of drones in pesticide and nutrient application in public domain in December 2021.

- Financial assistance @ 100% for purchase of agricultural drones and its attachments (actual cost of expenditure and its attachments or Rs. 10.00 lakhs, whichever is lower) together with the contingent expenditure is extended under **Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)** to the Farm Machinery Training & Testing Institutes of Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) and State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) and @ 75% to FPO's for its demonstration on the farmer's fields.
- In order to provide agricultural services through drone application, financial assistance @ 40% of the basic cost of drone and its attachments or Rs. 4 lakhs, whichever is less also provided for drone purchase by existing and new Custom Hiring Centers (CHCs) and also a general category farmers and @ 50% of the basic cost of drone and its attachments or Rs. 5 lakhs for SC/ST/women/small and marginal farmers and the agriculture graduates.

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6) A component called “Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development” has been launched under **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY-RAFTAAR)** in 2018-19.

Objective- Promoting innovation and agri-entrepreneurship by providing financial support and nurturing the incubation ecosystem.

A total of 1176 start-ups have been selected in various areas of agriculture and allied sectors under this programme for providing financial support through Knowledge Partners and Agri Business Incubators appointed by the Department for implementation of this programme.

The Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) has been supporting Agri-based startups under the project called **National Agriculture Innovation Fund (NAIF)** initiated in year 2016-2017.

It has 2 components-

- Innovation Fund
- Incubation Fund and National Coordinating Unit (NCU)

Component I: 10 Zonal Technology Management Units and 89 Institutes.

Technology Management Units (ITMUs) established in 99 ICAR institutes provide a single-window mechanism to manage innovations, showcase intellectual assets, and pursue matters related to intellectual property (IP) management and transfer/commercialization of technologies in these institutes.

Component II: Agri-business Incubator Centres (ABICs) are set up to speed up the delivery of the new technologies to stakeholders.

The ABICs are the nodal point to provide the desired link for Agriculture Research & Development (R&D) Institutions for incubation/ commercialization of the validated technologies.

7) MoHUA Launches PM SVANidhi Scheme & Meri Life, Mera SwachhShahar.

Purpose- To offer collateral-free loans and to empower urban local bodies.

Aim- To revolutionize the lives of street vendors and urban local bodies, ushering in a new era of financial inclusivity and sustainable development.

The **Prime Minister Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme** was introduced by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020.

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Benefits- Initially offering loans up to Rs 10,000 for one year, the scheme later introduced higher loan amounts of Rs 20,000 and Rs 50,000 in subsequent tranches, which vendors can avail after repaying earlier loans.

To incentivize timely repayments, the scheme provides an interest subsidy of 7% per annum and cashback on digital transactions up to Rs 1,200 per year.

The 'Meri Life, Mera Swachh Shehar' campaign was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and ClimateChange (MoEFCC) on May 15, 2023.

Objectives- To empower Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to establish 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' (RRR) centres, where citizens, institutions, and businesses could deposit unused or used plastic items, clothes, footwear, books, and toys.

8) The Chairman of the Central Water Commission (CWC), introduced an innovative solution named **Flood Watch** to enhance flood information dissemination and preparedness.

- The content available in both English and Hindi languages.
- It will give real-time flood monitoring capability, enabling users to stay informed about the evolving flood scenario across the entire country.
- Users can access **CWC's Flood Forecast** (up to 24 hours) or **Flood Advisory** (up to 7days).

9) The e-Crop Based Smart Farming (e-CBSF) is an Internet of Things (IoT) device that provides real-time crop-specific agro-advisory services to increase yield to the potential level.

- e-Crop-based Smart Fertigation Facility at the ICAR-Central Tuber Crops Research Institute, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- It focuses on the importance of providing farmers with smart services for enabling them to gain more yield than traditional farming methods.

10) **Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana** has adopted 1782 villages after the launch of Saansad AdarshGram Yojana in the year 2014.

Aim- To create 'Adarsh Grams' that showcase local progress and effective governance, serving as models for other Gram Panchayats.

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- Each Member of Parliament adopts a Gram Panchayat under SAGY, overseeing its development in both social and infrastructure aspects.
- So far, 1782 Gram Panchayats have been adopted through SAGY in the past five years.
- After Phase-I (2014-16) of the Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY), nine universities conducted assessments for the Gram Panchayats (GPs) involved.

11) Statistics related to **animal husbandry** in India-

- It is providing livelihood support to more than 8 crore rural households engaged in dairying.
- As per National Account Statistics 2022, the value of output of milk has increased by 88.88% (from Rs.4.95 lakh crore to Rs. 9.35 lakh crore) between 2014-15 to 2021-22.
- As per Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics 2022 (BAHS-2022) the total milk production in the country is 221.06 million metric tonnes.
- Department had conducted a study on demand of milk and milk products in India under National Dairy Plan Phase I (NDP-I).
- As per the study the estimated demand projections of milk and milk products for the year 2030 at all India level is 266.5 million metric tonnes.

12) The Mega Oil Palm Plantation Drive was organized under the National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm, State Governments along with Oil Processing companies covering 49 districts in 11 states.

- The major aim was to promote and increase oil palm cultivation which will help the farmers of the country to become 'Atmanirbhar' in edible oils production.
- It also puts focus on achieving the target of bringing an additional area of 6.5 lakh hectares under oil palm production by 2025-2026.
- Through this drive, the companies and the states were able to reach out to more than 7000 farmers in 77 villages of 49 districts in 11 states.
- This covers approximately 3500 hectares of the area and plants more than 5 lakh planting material.

Mega Oil Palm Plantation Drive Organized in 11 States-

- Andhra Pradesh

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- Arunachal Pradesh
- Assam
- Goa
- Karnataka
- Mizoram
- Nagaland
- Odisha
- Tamil Nadu
- Telangana
- Tripura

13) Lifetime Achievement Award for Empowering Farmers in Agritech.

Sivakumar S. the distinguished Head of Agri and IT businesses at ITC Limited, has been honored with the esteemed Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Agritech by the India Startup Foundation.

14) 8 major states in the country are lagging behind in achieving the target of constructing 75 **Amrit Sarovars** in each district of the respective state.

- Out of 1,12,277 identified Amrit Sarovars, the work has been started for 81,425 Amrit Sarovars, and a total of 66,278 Amrit Sarovars have been successfully constructed/rejuvenated.
- However, West Bengal, Punjab, Telangana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Bihar, and Rajasthan are yet to meet their targets.

The Amrit Sarovar Mission was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on April 24, 2022.

The Amrit Sarovar Mission focuses on water conservation, people's participation, and proper utilization of soil excavated from the water bodies to boost infrastructural projects.

Objective- To achieve a national target of 50,000 Amrit Sarovars and provide sustainable water sources wherein every district is expected to construct/ rejuvenate a minimum of 75 Amrit Sarovar.

The Amrit Sarovar Mission is being implemented with a whole of government approach in which 8 Central Ministries/Departments are involved. It includes-

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- Department of Rural Development.
- Department of Land Resources.
- Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation.
- Department of Water Resources.
- Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change.
- Ministry of Railways.
- Ministry of Road, Transport & Highways.

- Every Amrit Sarovar will have a pond area of at least 1 acre with a water holding capacity of about 10,000 cubic meters.
- Every Amrit Sarovar will be surrounded by trees like Neem, Peepal, Banyan, etc.
- Every Amrit Sarovar site has been dedicated as a place for flag hoisting on every Independence Day. The Amrit Sarovar will also act as a social gathering point in that locality.

15) **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, AIF** introduces the **Bharat campaign** in order to bridge infrastructure gaps and to maximize agricultural investment. Presently, Rs 26,064 crores has been sanctioned for 33,369 projects, yielding a total agricultural investment of Rs 44,208 crores.

- The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) scheme was launched in 2020 aims to bridge infrastructure gaps and attract investment in agriculture.
- It sought to facilitate medium to long-term debt financing for viable post-harvest management and community farming projects through incentives.
- The scheme targeted Rs 1 Lakh crore from banks and financial institutions, offering loans with 3% interest subvention and credit guarantees for amounts up to Rs 2 crores.

- 16) As per Provisional Estimates of National Income, 2022-23 released by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, the share of agriculture and allied sectors in total Gross value added (GVA) for the last five years is as under

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Year	Share of GVA of Agriculture & Allied Sector in Total Economy (at current prices) (%)
2017-18	18.3
2018-19	17.6
2019-20	18.3
2020-21	20.3
2021-22	19.0

- No specific target has been set for the growth of agriculture sector by the Government.
- In last six years the agriculture and allied sector has been growing at 4.4% per annum.

17) The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD), has been granted \$25 million from the **G20 Pandemic Fund** for the "**Enhancing Animal Health Security for Pandemic Preparedness and Response in India**" project.

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB), with support from the World Bank and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), will lead the collaborative effort.
- The provided grant is expected to significantly enhance India's pandemic preparedness and the safety of humans and animals alike.
- During Indonesia's leadership of the G20, the G20 Pandemic Fund has approved.

18) The Government launched the sale of chana dal in retail packs under the brand name of **Bharat Dal** on 17.07.2023 at highly subsidized rates of Rs.60 per kg for 1 kg pack and Rs.55 per kg for 30 kg pack in order to make pulses available to consumers at affordable prices. It is being distributed through retail outlets of NAFED, NCCF, Kendriya Bhandar and Safal.

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19) **National Gopal Ratna Award -2023** to be conferred on the occasion of National Milk Day (26th Nov, 2023).

1. Best Dairy farmer rearing of the registered indigenous cattle/ buffalo breeds.
2. Best Dairy Cooperative Society (DCS)/ Milk producer Company (MPC)/ Dairy Farmer Producer Organization (FPO).
3. Best Artificial Insemination Technician (AIT).

The National Gopal Ratna Award 2023 consists of a Certificate of merit, a memento and cash prize in the first two categories i.e. Best Dairy Farmer and Best DCS /FPO/MPCs as under-

- Rs. 5,00,000/- (Rupee five lakh only) for 1st rank
- Rs. 3,00,000/- (Rupee three lakh only) for 2nd rank
- Rs. 2,00,000/- (Rupee two lakh only) for 3rd rank

In the case of Best Artificial Insemination Technician (AIT) category, for all the three ranks the award will consist of a Certificate of merit and a memento only.

20) The Centre has launched a pilot project called **Digital Crop Survey (DCS)** in 12 states during the kharif season to establish a reliable and verified source of data on crop cultivation.

- The primary objectives of the project are to create a reliable and verified source of "crop sown data" to facilitate accurate crop area estimation and the development of farmer-centric solutions.
- This is particularly crucial given the country's current challenges with wheat.
- States include: Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Assam.

21) The Union Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister, has informed that around 15.23 lakh pieces of agricultural machinery and equipment have been supplied to farmers as part of the "**Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization**" (**SMAM**) scheme.

- SMAM aimed at advancing agricultural mechanization across the nation, has been in operation since the fiscal year 2014-15, with its implementation carried out through the respective State governments.

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- The program has also led to the establishment of 43,954 custom hiring centres, hi-tech hubs, and farm machinery banks.

The statistics reveal significant positive impacts across multiple dimensions-

- Savings in seed expenditure ranging from 15% to 20%, reduction in fertilizer costs by 15% to 20%.
- Time savings of 20% to 30%, a substantial decrease in weed growth ranging from 20% to 40%.
- Labour reduction of 20% to 30%, enhancement in germination rates by 7% to 25%, augmentation of cropping intensity by 5% to 20%, and most remarkably, a notable increase in crop yields ranging from 13% to 23%.

22) **World Elephant Day** is a global yearly occasion observed on August 12th, with the primary focus being the conservation and safeguarding of elephants worldwide.

Theme- It revolves around the concept of "Ending the Illegal Wildlife Trade."

23) **National Watermelon Day** on August 3, 2023.

24) **National Mustard Day** is being celebrated on August 5, 2023.

The event was created by the National Mustard Museum, which commemorates it on the first Saturday of August each year.

25) Every year on August 7, **National Handloom Day** pays tribute to skilled handloom weavers across the country.

This day also commemorates the commencement of the Swadeshi Movement, which was initiated on the same date in 1905.

26) **World Biofuel Day** is observed every year on August 10 to raise awareness about the significance of non-fossil fuels as viable alternatives to traditional fossil fuels.

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SEPTEMBER AGRICULTURE AFFAIRS

- 1) Dr Swati Nayak or the Seed Lady aka Bihana Didi, an Indian scientist at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), has been bestowed with the prestigious 2023 Norman Borlaug for Field Research and Application. She became the third Indian to receive the Norman Borlaug Award. The other two include Aditi Mukherjee (2012) and Mahalingam Govindaraj (2022).
 - Dr Swati Nayak and her team developed an interesting strategy to establish a drought- tolerant variety of Shahbhagi Dhan rice in Odisha, ultimately gaining huge public attention.

- 2) Member of NITI Aayog, Professor Ramesh Chand officially launched the **Unified Portal for Agricultural Statistics** (UPAg Portal).
 - The UPAg Portal is a crucial component of the Digital Public Infrastructure for Agriculture, aimed at harnessing the diversity of the agriculture sector and using data as a catalyst for growth.
 - It is a pioneering initiative by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, to streamline data management in the agriculture sector.

- 3) AIC's **Shrimp Insurance** product was launched by Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying during Shrimp Farmers Conclave 2023 at Navsari Agricultural University Campus, Navsari Gujarat.
 - India is the 3rd largest fish-producing and 2nd largest aquaculture-producing nation in the world.
 - The Aquaculture Industry with a promising average growth rate of 7.37% is dominated by Shrimp Farming covering an area of 1.7 Lakh Ha fetching foreign exchange of around Rs 43000 Cr.
 - The aquaculture farmer is under constant threat by risks posed by natural calamities and diseases causing pecuniary losses to the farmers, along with other socio-economic and technological challenges.

- 4) The UNDP and NABARD have joined forces through a MoU to create data-driven innovations in

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agriculture and food systems for the benefit of smallholder farmers.

- They will collaborate by sharing open-source data to develop new products, transfer technology, and influence agricultural policies.
- The partnership involves improving and sharing collaborative digital resources like DiCRA, which provides open access to geospatial data for climate-resilient agriculture.

5) **M. S. Swaminathan** is often referred to as the Father of Agronomy in India and the Father of the Green Revolution in India.

- The Green Revolution was a period of rapid agricultural transformation characterized by the adoption of high-yielding crop varieties, improved irrigation practices, and the use of fertilizers and pesticides to increase crop yields.
- Dr. Swaminathan collaborated with other scientists, agronomists, and agricultural institutions to develop high-yielding varieties of wheat and rice including development of wheat varieties **Kalyan Sona**, **Sonara 64** and **IR8** (also known as "Miracle Rice").

6) The launch of the Sustainable Food System Platform (SusPNF) can be seen as an important move towards maximizing sustainable agriculture and helping traditional farmers' livelihoods. The initiative is a key part of a partnership between the University, the State Department of Agriculture's PK3Y, and NABARD.

7) Creating history in the global energy sector, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA) on the side-lines of the G20 Summit.

- 19 countries and 12 international organizations have already agreed to join the alliance. GBA is an India-led Initiative to develop an alliance of Governments, International organizations, and Industry to facilitate the adoption of biofuels.
- The global ethanol market was valued at USD 99.06 billion in 2022 and is predicted to grow at a CAGR of 5.1% by 2032 and surpass USD 162.12 billion by 2032.
- As per IEA, there will be 3.5-5x biofuels growth potential by 2050 due to net zero targets, creating a huge

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opportunity for India.

- 8) This initiative comes as part of the **Integrated Modern Coastal Fishing Villages** sub- activity under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) of the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), with a total investment of Rs 126 Cr.
- It focuses on the installation of artificial reefs and sea ranching programs in coastal waters, is poised to breathe new life into coastal fisheries and replenish fish stocks.
 - The projects are being executed with the technical expertise of the Fishery Survey of India (FSI) and the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).
 - All coastal states have completed the site selection process, with Kerala and Maharashtra advancing to the tendering phase for project execution.
 - It is anticipated that all these projects will reach completion by January 2024.
- 9) ICAR-IIHR celebrates its 57th Institute Foundation Day, with over five decades of pioneering horticultural research and agricultural progress.
- It was founded in New Delhi on September 5, 1967, and later moved to Hesaraghatta, Bengaluru, on February 1, 1968, incorporating the Fruit Research Station.
- 10) **World Coconut Day** is celebrated every year on September 2 to promote the importance of coconuts and their contributions to various aspects of life, including the economy, agriculture, and health.
- Theme- Coconuts: Transforming Lives.
- 11) **World Environmental Health Day** is celebrated annually on September 26th to raise awareness of the importance of environmental health and to promote actions to protect human health and the environment.
- Theme- Global environmental public health: Standing up to protect everyone's health each and every day.

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12) **World Rhino Day** occurs every year on September 22 to help save five special kinds of rhinoceros.

➤ There are five types of rhinos: Greater One-horned, Javan, Sumatran, Black, and White rhinos.

- World Rhino Day started in 2010 when WWF South Africa decided to raise awareness and protect these rare rhino species from disappearing. Since 2011, it's been celebrated all over the world every year.

13) Every year on September 16, **World Ozone Day** is celebrated to raise awareness about the importance of the ozone layer and the need to protect it.

- Theme- Montreal Protocol: Fixing the Ozone Layer and Reducing Climate Change.

14) **Startup India Seed Fund Scheme**, announced by Prime Minister Modi in January 2021.

- The DPIIT established a Rs 945 crore fund to assist startups, benefiting 3,600 entrepreneurs through 300 incubators over four years.
- An Expert Advisory Committee oversees the initiative's implementation.
- Initially, the seed fund amount is sanctioned by DPIIT and subsequently routed through the Expert Advisory Committee.
- These funds are channeled towards incubators that have been operational for a minimum of 2-3 years.
- These incubators then distribute the funds to startups recognized by DPIIT, provided they are no more than 2 years old.
- Startups must possess a viable business concept aimed at developing a market-fit product or service, which is primed for commercialization and holds substantial growth potential.
- It is imperative that startups employ technology within their product, service, business model, distribution method, or methodology to address problems effectively.
- Preference will be given to startups operating in sectors such as social impact, waste management,

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water management, financial inclusion, education, agriculture, food processing, biotechnology, healthcare, energy, mobility, defense, space, railways, oil and gas, and textiles.

- The startup should not have received more than Rs 10 lakh in financial aid from any Central or State Government scheme, excluding funds obtained through competition winnings or certain benefits like subsidized workspace, founder's monthly allowance, lab access, and prototyping facilities.
- Indian promoters must hold a minimum of 51 percent of the startup's shares.
- Startups can receive one-time support in the form of grant funding, debt, or convertible debentures.

15) Union Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India launched AI Chatbot for the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme at New Delhi.

- The AI Chatbot acts as a comprehensive guide for the beneficiaries, providing them with timely and accurate responses to their queries related to the scheme.
- It has been developed and improved with the support of EKstep foundation and Bhashini.
- The AI Chatbot, accessible through the PM KISAN mobile app, is integrated with Bhashini.
- It is available in English, Hindi, Bengali, Odia, and Tamil.

16) The Indian government is reviving the shrimp crop insurance scheme after a three-decade hiatus, benefiting numerous coastal shrimp farmers.

- The government's partner in this venture is the public sector insurance firm Oriental Insurance Company Ltd, with technical assistance from the Central Institute of Brackish-water Aquaculture.
- The estimated worth of this initiative is over Rs 1,000 crore.
- The previous shrimp crop insurance policy by Oriental was discontinued in 1995-96 due to a severe viral disease outbreak in the industry, leading to a flood of claims from affected farmers.
- Shrimp farming is considered a high-risk endeavour due to the susceptibility of crustaceans to various diseases like white spot disease, white faeces syndrome, white tail disease, loose shell, slow growth, and mortality syndromes.
- The majority of Indian shrimp farming is carried out by small and marginal farmers, with over 1.5 lakh farmers individually owning an average of 2-3 ponds each, covering approximately one million hectares.