

# PLUTUS IAS



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## 1. Maha Awas Yojana launched in Maharashtra

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddav Thackeray launched “Maha Awas Yojana”. The project aims to build 8.82 lakhs of rural houses in 100 days. The project includes construction of toilets as well. The cost of the project has been estimated as Rs 4,000 crores.

The Government of India recently announced Affordable housing Scheme for the migrant workers affected by COVID-19. This was launched under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

### Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

The main objective of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana is to help rural people Below the Poverty Line in construction of dwelling units. The beneficiaries of the scheme are chosen from Socio-Economic Caste Census, 2011. It includes urban poor living in slums as well.

The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban is being implemented between 2015-222. It will provide assistance to Urban Local Bodies who are the nodal agencies in implementing the scheme.

The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin is being implemented by Ministry of Rural Development. It aims to provide pucca houses to all the houseless householders by 2022. It aims to construct 2.95 crores of houses by 2022. The scheme also trains rural masons.

### Affordable Rental Housing Complex

It is a part of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. It was launched under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. The scheme mainly targeted the migrant workers who lost their jobs and livelihood due to COVID-19. Under the scheme, Technology Innovation Grant was

announced. Under this, an expenditure of Rs 600 crores will be provided to projects (of PMAY) that uses innovation technologies for construction.

### **Key Features**

The scheme includes Middle Income Groups with annual income above Rs 6 lakhs and below Rs 18 lakhs as well. The tenure of loan is 20 years.

### **Progress of the scheme**

As of August 2020, around 1.07 crores of houses have been sanctioned. The number of houses completed under the scheme are 36.08 lakhs. The Government of India has spent a total of Rs 6.42 lakh crores.

## **2.Gol releases Rs 3,971 crores for micro-irrigation projects**

The Government of India sanctioned a loan of 3,971 crores of rupees for micro irrigation projects in Tamil Nadu. This is one of the biggest loans being sanctioned for the state of Tamil Nadu. The loan has been sanctioned at subsidised interest rate under micro irrigation fund. The micro irrigation fund was created within the National bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, NABARD. The micro irrigation funds are used only to implement micro irrigation projects.

### **Background**

In 2019-20 the Government of India created the micro irrigation Fund with a Corpus of 5,000 crores of Rupees. The fund was created to provide subsidized loan to the states to expand their coverage of micro irrigation.

So far under this fund, 1,357 crores of Rupees has been approved to Tamilnadu. The other states that have received the funds are Haryana of 790 crores of Rupees, Gujarat of 764 crores of Rupees, Andhra Pradesh of 616 crores and West Bengal of 276 crores. Also, Punjab and Uttarakhand have received financial support under the funds. Under the micro irrigation funds financial assistance is being extended to the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana. The scheme is also called per drop more crop scheme that encourages farmers to adopt micro irrigation systems.

### **Micro irrigation**

India is currently working under the target of bringing 100 lakh hectares of land under micro irrigation in 5 years. Though, there are several options of micro irrigation systems, the Government of India mainly focuses on drip irrigation and sprinkler irrigation systems. In the year 2019-20, more than 11 lakh farmers were benefited from drip and sprinkler irrigation systems.

### **Funds under NABARD**

Apart from the micro irrigation fund, there are several other funds being operationalised by NABARD. They are rural infrastructure development fund, alternative investment funds, long term irrigation fund, funds to provide loans to warehouses, cold storage, loans for food parks, etc.

### **3.National Newborn Week celebrated**

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is celebrating National Newborn Week between November 15, 2020 and November 21, 2020. The main objective of celebrating National Newborn Week is to create awareness about the importance of newborn child survival and development.

#### **Why is it important to celebrate National Newborn Week?**

Every year around 2.6 million babies die in the first 28 days. The first 28 days are considered crucial for child survival.

#### **What is the scenario of newborn survival in India?**

In 2013, around 0.75 million neonates died in India. The numbers are higher in spite of the fact that the Neonatal Mortality Rate in India has declined from 44 per 1000 live births in 2000 to 28 per 1000 livebirths in 2013.

India has set a goal of reducing the under-five mortality to 20 per 1000 live births by 2035.

#### **What are essential cares of Newborn according to Ministry of Health?**

According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the newborns should receive birth dose of Oral Polio Vaccine, BCG vaccine and Hepatitis vaccine. In the first hour of life, the newborns should receive eye care and Vitamin K. The other basic needs of new born are mother's milk and prevention of infection.

#### **What are the causes of newborn deaths in India?**

The major causes of newborn deaths in India are pre-maturity (35%), intra-partum related complications (20%), neonatal infections (33%) and congenital malformations (9%).

#### **What is India Newborn Action Plan?**

The India Newborn Action Plan was launched in response to global Every Newborn Action Plan (of WHO) in 2014. The India Newborn Action Plan aims to reduce preventable newborn deaths. The programme is built on six pillars namely pre-conception and antenatal care, immediate newborn care, care during labour and child birth, care of healthy newborn, care beyond newborn survival and care of small and sick newborn.

#### **What is Mothers Absolution Affection programme?**

It is a breastfeeding promotion programme launched in 2016.

#### **4. Seismic Survey for Oil and Gas Exploration launched in Mahanadi basin**

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Steel has launched the Seismic Survey campaign of Oil India Limited in the Mahanadi basin of Odisha. According to the ministry, the oil and gas exploration will be a game changer in the socio-economic development of Odisha. The estimated cost of the seismic survey is Rs 220 crores.

##### **About the Seismic Survey Campaign**

The estimated cost of the exploration campaign in the region is Rs 1,248 crores. Of this, the seismic survey will require Rs 220 crores. Mahanadi basin was chosen as the first location to roll out the National Seismic Programme.

##### **National Seismic Programme**

The National Seismic Programme was launched in 2016 to trace hydrocarbon resources such as oil and natural gas. The programme aims to undertake fresh appraisal of sedimentary basins in the country. The National Seismic Programme will conduct high resolution seismic acquisition, processing and interpretation survey.

##### **What is a Seismic Survey?**

Seismic survey is a low impact method that gathers information about the location and characteristics of geological structures. During the survey, acoustic sound signals are transmitted to the earth surface. Different geographical layers reflect the sound differently. Based on the returning sound waves received and recorded by microphones, availability of oil and gas is determined.

##### **Mahanadi basin**

Mahanadi is the eighth largest basin in the country. Mahanadi river flows through Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha. Hirakud dam has been constructed across river Mahanadi. Around fourteen districts in the basin are covered under Drought Prone Area Programme.

##### **Drought Prone Area Programme**

It was launched in 1973-74. The Drought Prone Area programme tackles special problems faced by the fragile areas that are constantly affected by droughts. The areas under the programme are identified based on the human and cattle population it holds. The human and cattle population are continuously putting pressure in these areas that are already fragile. These areas face continuous depletion of vegetative cover, fall in ground water level, increase in soil erosion.

#### **5. World Fisheries Day: November 21**

Every year, the World Fisheries Day is celebrated on November 21.

### **Why is it important to celebrate World Fisheries Day?**

According to the United Nations, more than two-thirds of the world fisheries are overfished. Therefore, it is important to celebrate the day to create awareness about sustainable fishing.

### **What is the theme of the World Fisheries Day?**

The World Fisheries Day is to be celebrated under the theme

Theme: Social Responsibility in the fisheries value chain

### **Why is the Fisheries sector important?**

Small scale fisheries employ more than 90% of people employed in fisheries. Around 65% of fish caught from inland fisheries are from low-income food deficit countries. More than 25% of world dietary protein is provided by the fish. The total fish consumption in the world is 100 million tonnes. Therefore, it is important to focus on changing the way the world manages global fisheries in order to ensure sustainable fish stocks.

### **How is World Fisheries Day celebrated in India?**

For the first time, the Department of Fisheries operating under the Ministry of Fisheries is celebrating World Fisheries Day. The Department is to confer best performing states in Fisheries award on World Fisheries Day. Assam has won the award among Hilly and North East States. The best performing state award among inland states is to be provided to Uttar Pradesh and Odisha.

### **What are the efforts of Govt to develop the fisheries sector?**

The Government of India had launched the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana at Rs 20,050 crores. The programme aims to achieve 22 million tonnes of fish production by 2024-25. Also, it is expected to create employment opportunities for 55 lakh people.

### **How important is the Fisheries Sector in India?**

Around 28 million people are employed in the fisheries sector in India. India ranks fourth in global export of fish. Also, India accounts to 7.7% global fish production.

## **6. Project Kirana launched by Mastercard and USAID**

Mastercard and the United States Agency for International Development launched "Project Kirana". The programme will enable women entrepreneurs to grow, launch and thrive.

### **What is the plan?**

Under Project Kirana, a two-year programme is to be rolled out in selected cities such as Kanpur, Lucknow and Varanasi of Uttar Pradesh. The project will work to increase revenue, digital payments and expand financial inclusion.

### **Why was Uttar Pradesh chosen?**

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous states of India. A large number of people are engaged in informal sector. Also, more than 10.3% of women population in the state are employed in MSME. Also, the state has the largest number of MSME in India. Around 14% of MSME of the country is located in the country.

### **What are the key features of the Project Kirana?**

The project aims to build digital literacy and financial literacy of the women in the state. It will improve business management skills of women.

### **Why is the Project Kirana important?**

It is estimated that the GDP of the country will grow between 12% and 25% in the next five years by bringing in more women. The women owned business in India have tremendous untapped potential that is capable of transforming the economies.

India is one of the countries with highest gender gap in the world. As Project Kirana is designed to support women and increase their financial access in the country, it will help solve gender parity issues.

### **Background**

In July 2020, Mastercard announced that it will commit Rs 250 crores to reboot SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises). In line to the commitment, Master card had launched a host of initiatives. One such is Project Kirana.

### **USAID**

USAID is United States Agency for International Development. It is an independent agency that is responsible to administer foreign aid and development assistance.