

PLUTUS IAS



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1. “Go Electric Campaign” of BEE: AP to set up 400 EV charging stations

The “Go Electric” campaign was launched by the Bureau

Key Highlights

The main step is to attract investment in the EV sector by setting up charging stations and electric vehicle infrastructure.

What is the plan?

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh is to undertake performance study on Electric vehicles. In order to achieve this, testing facilities are to be set up for vehicles and auto components. The New and Renewable Energy Development Corporation of Andhra Pradesh (NREDCAP) is the nodal agency to establish charging stations in Andhra Pradesh. It has coordinated with the International Centre for Automotive Technology to set up testing facilities with an investment of Rs 250 crores.

Rule

By the rule of the Government of India, every 3 km of roadways in cities should have a charging infrastructure. On national highways, a charging station should be established for every 25 km.

Benefits

The charging stations will increase energy security, improve air quality and control air pollution.

BEE

It is a statutory body working under the Ministry of Power. It assists in developing strategies to reduce energy intensity of Indian Economy. BEE is the nodal agency to promote Electric Vehicle Charging stations.

AP Government Initiatives

The NREDCAP signed a MoU with the Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) to deploy electric cars. More than 300 electric cars have so far been deployed at various government organizations. Also, NREDCAP has signed agreements with Rajasthan Electronic and Instruments Limited (RIEL) and NTPC (National Thermal Power Corporation) for charging infrastructure. Under the FAME II scheme, around 460 chargers are to be installed in 83 locations across Andhra Pradesh.

of Energy Efficiency (BEE) in coordination with the Andhra Pradesh State Energy Conservation Mission.

The Andhra Pradesh State Government is to set up 400 Electric Vehicle charging vehicles all over the state to promote the usage of electric vehicles. This is to be achieved in coordination with the “Go Electric” campaign of BEE.

2. West Bengal announced several initiatives for SC and ST people in the state

The West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced a number of initiatives for the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and refugee population. This included land pattas and setting up of cultural and development boards.

Key Highlights

- The initiatives have included all the refugees in the colonies spread across the state. Around 1,25,000 land pattas are to be provided. The State Government will also provide 25,000 land pattas to the refugees.
- Rs 10 cores has been allocated to the newly announced Matua Development Board. Matuas are Dalit refuges from Bangladesh. They are spread over 50 Assembly seats in the State of West Bengal.
- Also, development and cultural boards are to be created for the three ST communities in the state namely Bauri (Dhule), Majhis and Bagdis. This is being done to preserve their cultural heritage.
- A community hall is to be constructed for the Chau dancers of Purulia. Also, the Dhokra artists are to be brought under Swasthya Sathi Scheme.
- Loans are to be facilitated to two lakh people through cooperative banks to buy two wheelers.

Swasthya Sathi Scheme

The scheme was launched in 2016. Around 50 lakh families are benefitted under the scheme. The scheme provides health insurance up to Rs 1.5 lakh per annum. The illness such as cancer, cardiothoracic surgeries, neuro surgeries, blood disorders, liver diseases are covered under the scheme. The entire premium of the scheme is borne by the State Government.

What is Dhokra Art?

It is an ancient technique to produce non-ferrous metal ware using a metal casting process. The process is believed to be 5,000 years old. The artisans make animals, jewellery, deities and figurines using the art.

Matua Development Board

In 2018, the West Bengal Government set up two development boards for the Matua community and Namasudra community. The development boards were called the Matua Development Board and Matua Development Board. These boards will help improve the socio-economic condition of the respective communities.

3. CARAT: Joint Naval Exercise by Bangladesh and US

Bangladesh and the United States held a joint Naval Exercise CARAT. CARAT is Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training. The exercise was held at Chittagong.

Highlights

Historically, the exercise involves people-to-people interactions, a variety of professional exchanges, community relations projects, Subject Matter Expert exchanges and social events. Due to COVID-19, the exercise was held virtually.

About the Exercise

Certain events of the exercise are to be held virtually. It includes Maritime Domain Awareness, Replenishment at Sea training, legal regulations at sea and aviation best practices of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. This is the first year the exercise is supported by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime and the Bali Process Regional Support Office.

Role of UNODC in the exercise

The UNODC will offer education on technical assistance to combat maritime crime, smuggling of migrants.

CARAT

It is a series of annual bilateral military exercises conducted by the US Pacific fleet with countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Singapore and Thailand. The focus of the exercise is mainly on ASEAN. However, it is also held with non-ASEAN members such as Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

This year, Bangladesh was the second to hold the exercise after Brunei. CARAT Brunei was held in the South China sea between October 5 and October 9, 2020.

Significance of Chittagong to India

The port is highly important for North East India.

In 2015, India and Bangladesh signed agreements to use the Chittagong port for transshipment of goods from and to India. In October 2018, the countries signed agreements to use Mongla port for transshipment of goods.

Eight routes were provided under the agreement to enable access to the North East Region via Bangladesh.

This will help reduce time, distance and logistical cost for transportation of goods from India to the North Eastern region.

4. DRDO: Advanced Version of Pinaka Rocket test fired successfully

The Defence Research Development Organization test fired the advanced version of Pinaka rocket successfully. The rocket was test fired in Chandipur, Odisha.

Key Highlights

The enhanced version is to achieve longer range as compared to the earlier version. This is to replace the current version of Pinaka Mk-1 system deployed along the borders of Pakistan and China.

The Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launcher system called the Shiva's bow can fire 12 rockets in 44 seconds. One single battery of the Pinaka system consists of six launch vehicles. They are accompanied by command posts, links with network-based systems and radar. A battery can neutralize an area of 1 km by 1 km.

The Pinaka Mark-1, that is currently being used by the Army has a range of 38 km. On the other hand, the current tested version, enhanced Pinaka Mark-1 has a range of 45 km.

The Pinaka Mk-II has a range of 60 km and the Guided Pinaka system has a range of 75 km. The Guided Pinaka has an integrated control, navigation and guidance system. It is guided by the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System.

About the Test

A total of six rockets were launched. The rockets tested were manufactured by the Economic Explosives Limited, Nagpur. DRDO had transferred the technology to the manufacturer. The test was tracked by instruments such as Electro-Optical Tracking System, radar.

Background

DRDO began development of a multi-barrel rocket system in the late 1980s. It is an alternative to the Russian Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System called "Grad". Pinaka was first used in the Kargil war.

Recent Tests

The other recently conducted missile test fires of India are as follows

- RUDRAM anti-radiation missile
- A new version of shaurya missile
- LASER guided anti-tank missile
- Brahmos missile with an indigenous booster
- Prithvi II missile
- Test fire of RUSTOM II
- TORPEDO SMART
- Flight test of ABHYAS
- Test fire of Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle
- Flight Test of Naval Version of BRAHMOS
- Test fire of PRITHVI II
- Failed test of Nirbhay
- SANT Missile test
- Nag Missile
- Brahmos Supersonic Cruise Missile

5.MoU signed between Bhaskaracharya National Institute of Space Applications and Prasar Bharti

The Prasar Bharati and Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-Informatics signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Under the MoU, all the 51 DTH education channels will be available as DD co-branded channels to all DD Fresh Dish viewers.

Key Highlights

The 51 DTH channels includes Swayamprabha, E-Vidya for Class 1 to 12, DigiShala, Vande Gujarat, etc. The channels are to provide quality educational programmes to rural and remote households. These services are available free of cost for all the viewers 24/7. This will aid the GOI to achieve its target of providing “Education to all”.

Swayam and Swayam Prabha

SWAYAM is Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM). It was launched in 2017. The webs were launched by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (now Ministry of Education). It provides an integrated platform and portal for online courses. The main aim of SWAYAM is to ensure that every student in the country gets access to the best quality education at affordable cost.

SWAYAM Prabha

The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of HRD. It provides 32 high quality education channels. The channel streamline curriculum-based course content. It was mainly launched to make quality learning resources to remote areas where internet is still a challenge.

The DTH channels under the programme use the GSAT-15 satellite programme for telecast.

DigiShala

It is a TV channel launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to promote cashless transactions. It is a channel that informs citizens about the digital payment ecosystem, processes and benefits. It is a satellite channel managed by Door darshan and is made available through GSAT15.

The channel will inform citizens about digital payment options through step by step demos using UPI, e-wallets, USSD and Aadhaar-enabled payment systems and cards. The services of the channel are available in English and Hindi.

6.PRASAD Scheme: Tourist Facilitation Centre at Guruvayur, Kerala inaugurated

The Union Minister of State (IC) for Tourism and Culture Shri Prahlad Singh Patel inaugurated the “Tourist Facilitation Centre” at Guruvayur, Kerala. The centre was constructed under the PRASAD Scheme of the Ministry of Tourism.

Key Highlights

The centre was constructed at a cost of Rs 11.57 crores. The centre was constructed under the “Development of Guruvayur” project of PRASAD scheme. Around 45.36 crores of rupees were allocated for the project under the scheme. Under the project, the components such as CCTV Network infrastructure, multi-level car parking and tourist amenities centre were constructed.

PRASAD

The scheme aims at infrastructure development such as last mile connectivity, entry points, eco-friendly modes of transport, interpretation centres, ATM/Money exchanges, and other basic tourism facilities. This is different from that of the HRIDAY scheme. HRIDAY Scheme is Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana. It preserves and revitalises heritage cities. It makes the heritage cities more accessible, appealing. The scheme focuses on street lights, footpaths, roads, drainage, water supply, waste management and security. On the other hand, the PRASAD scheme focuses on infrastructural developments in pilgrimage sites.

PRASAD is Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive. It was launched in 2015.

Recent Developments

The Ministry of Tourism had recently undertaken infrastructure related developmental activities at various Buddhist sites. This is to be implemented through PRASAD scheme and Swadesh Darshan Scheme. Around 30 infrastructural development projects have

been identified under the PRASAD scheme. This includes Buddhist sites such as Ajanta and Ellora, Bodhgaya. Developing Buddhist heritage is not only important in tourism point of view, it is also in line with Act East Policy.

Cities

Around 12 cities were identified under the scheme. They were

- Kamakhya (Assam)
- Amaravati (Andhra Pradesh)
- Gaya (Bihar)
- Dwarka (Gujarat)
- Ajmer (Rajasthan)
- Kedarnath (Uttarakhand)
- Puri (Odisha)
- Mathura (Uttar Pradesh)
- Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh)
- Velankanni (Tamil Nadu)
- Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu)
- Amritsar (Punjab).

Funding

The PRASAD scheme is 100% funded by the Central Government.