

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana for 2021-26

❖ Context

- The Cabinet has given its approval to extend its umbrella scheme for irrigation, water supply, groundwater and watershed development projects for another five years.

Key Highlights

- Less than half of the identified irrigation projects have been completed since the scheme:- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY):- began in 2015.
- The extension of PMKSY till 2026 will cost ₹ 93,068 crore.
- It will benefit 22 lakh farmers
- It fund dams critical for water supply to Delhi and five other States in the upper Yamuna basin, said the Cabinet Committee for Economic Affairs.

About PMKSY

- PMKSY is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (Core Scheme) launched in 2015.
- Centre- States will be 75:25 . In the case of the north-eastern region and hilly states, it will be 90:10.
- Objectives:-
 - Convergence of investments in irrigation at the field level
 - Expand the cultivable area under assured irrigation (Har Khet ko pani)
 - Improve on-farm water use efficiency to reduce wastage of water,
 - Enhance the adoption of precision-irrigation and other water saving technologies (More crop per drop),
 - Enhance recharge of aquifers and introduce sustainable water conservation practices by exploring the feasibility of reusing treated municipal based water for peri-urban agriculture and attract greater private investment in a precision irrigation system.

Scheme Components

PMKSY consists of three major components implemented by various ministries. They are as follows:-

Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti

- Component : Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP)
- Component : Har Khet Ko Pani (HKKP)
 - Sub component : Command Area Development (CAD)
 - Sub component : Surface Minor Irrigation (SMI)
 - Sub component : Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of Water Bodies
 - Sub component : Ground Water Development Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development
- Component : Watershed Development Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
- Component : Per Drop More Crop



PRADHAN MANTRI KRISHI SINCHAI YOJANA (PMKSY)

A NATIONAL MISSION TO PROVIDE WATER TO EVERY FIELD

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Total area brought under precision irrigation system is 2.36 lakh ha and 18750 water harvesting structures have been created having 27835 ha potential for protective irrigation.
- During 2016-17, funds allocated to PMKSY is Rs. 2340 cr and 8 lakh ha has been targeted under micro irrigation.
- Farmers can contact District Agriculture/Horticulture officer for obtaining subsidy on drip/ sprinkler irrigation technique.
- Priority is given to projects which are close to completion so that farmers can get immediate benefit.

Governor's Role in State Universities

❖ Context

- A controversy has erupted in Kerala over the reappointment of Gopinath Ravindran as the Vice Chancellor of Kannur University
- The appointment was against the decision of the Governor as the Chancellor of State Universities.
- Governor role in appointing the Vice Chancellors has often triggered disputes with the political executive.



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As per Kerala Governor's official portal :

- In most cases, the Governor of the state is the **ex-officio chancellor of the universities** in that state.
- While as Governor he functions with the **aid and advice of the Council of Ministers**, as Chancellor he acts **independently** of the Council of Ministers and takes his own decisions on all University matters.

As per Rajasthan Rajbhawan Website:

- Governor appoints the Vice Chancellor **on the advice/ in consultation** with the State Government".

Case of Central Universities:

- Under the **Central Universities Act, 2009**, and other statutes, the **President of India shall be the Visitor** of a central university.
- With their role limited to presiding over convocations, **Chancellors in central universities are titular heads**, who are appointed by the President in his capacity as Visitor.
- **The Vice Chancellor too are appointed by the Visitor from panels of names** picked by search and selection committees formed by the Union government.
- The Act adds that the **President, as Visitor, shall have the right to authorise inspections of academic and non-academic aspects** of the universities and also to institute inquiries

Articles Related to Governor:

- **Governor has a dual role vis-s vis State Government:**
 - He is the **constitutional head of the state**, bound by the advice of his **council of ministers (CoM)**.
 - He **functions as a vital link between the Union Government and the State Government**.
- **Article 153** says that there shall be a Governor for each State. One person can be appointed as Governor for two or more States.
- **Article 163:** There is a CoM with the CM at the head to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions, except some conditions for discretion.
- **Article 200:** Governor assents, withholds assent, or reserves the bill for the consideration of the President passed by the Legislative Assembly.
- **Article 213:** Governor may promulgate the Ordinances under certain circumstances.

Zero Budget Natural Farming(ZBNF):

❖ Context

- Zero budget natural farming (**ZBNF**) is back on **top of the Government's agricultural agenda**, with the Prime Minister set to highlight it at a national conclave in Gujarat. The **Centre has sanctioned support for converting four lakh additional hectares of crop land** in eight States to **using ZBNF techniques** this year.

❖ Key Highlights

- The Centre has **sanctioned the proposals of eight States for support under the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana scheme** this year.
- **Andhra Pradesh** has the biggest ambition to bring **one lakh additional hectares of land under ZBNF** under the scheme, followed by **Chhattisgarh, with 85,000 additional hectares** and **Gujarat, with 71,000 additional hectares**.

About ZBNF

- ZBNF technology **uses locally available resources** to manage soil nutrition, fertility, pests, and weeds.
- The **technology completely avoids the use of inorganic fertilisers, pesticides, and herbicides**.
- It **emphasises the effective utilisation of water** through specified methods and recommends **less tilling**, to produce higher yields.
- This farming practice asserts that ZBNF is **resilient to climate change, reduces the cost of cultivation, and increases farmers' income**.

Four Wheels of ZBNF

- **Jiwamrita:**
 - It is a **mixture of fresh cow dung and aged cow urine, jaggery, pulse flour, water and soil**. This is a fermented microbial culture that adds nutrients to the soil and acts as a catalytic agent to promote the activity of microorganisms and earthworms in the soil
- **Bijamrita:**
 - It is a **mix of desi cow dung and urine, water, bund soil and lime** that is used as a seed treatment solution prior to sowing.
- **Mulching:**
 - It is **covering the plants with a layer of dried straw or fallen leaves**, is meant to **conserve soil moisture** and keep the temperature around the roots at 25-32 degrees Celsius, which allows the microorganisms to do their job
- **Waaphasa:**
 - It is **providing water to maintain the required moisture-air balance**, and also achieves the same objective.

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Semiconductor Industry in India

❖ Context

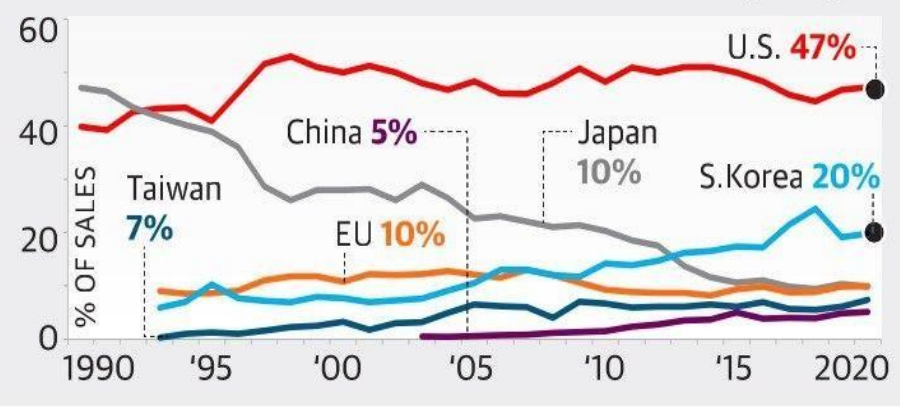
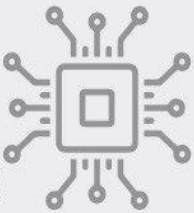
- The Union **Cabinet approved** the comprehensive programme for the development of a sustainable semiconductor and display ecosystem to position India as the global hub for electronics manufacturing with semiconductors as the foundational building block.
- The programme aims to provide attractive **production linked incentives** support to companies/consortia engaged in Silicon Semiconductor Fabs, Display Fabs, Compound Semiconductors/Silicon Photonics/Sensors Fabs, Semiconductor Packaging and Semiconductor Design.
- The scheme envisages investment of around **₹76,000 crore in semiconductor production** over the next five-six years.

➤ Key Highlights

- Scheme would provide **fiscal support of upto 50% of the project cost** for setting up of semiconductor and display fabrication units
- Central Government will also closely work with States to establish **High tech clusters** with requisite infra in terms of land, semiconductor grade water, logistics and research ecosystem
- In order to drive long term strategies for developing the ecosystem for semiconductors and display, **India semiconductor Mission**, led by global experts, will be set up.
- In addition, PLI incentives of **₹98,000 crore** are approved for **allied sectors** comprising of ACC battery, auto components, telecom and networking products, solar PV modules and white goods.

Leading chip makers

U.S. firms form 47% of the global semiconductor sales in 2020. Japan's dominance has waned while South Korea's share has increased



SOURCE: SEMICONDUCTOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Bank-NBFC co-lending

❖ Context

- SBI, signed a deal with Adani Capital, a small NBFC of a big corporate house, for co-lending to farmers to help them buy tractors and farm implements.
- SBI's giant network includes 22,230 branches, 64,122 automated teller machines (ATMs) and cash deposit machines (CDMs), and 70,786 business correspondent (BC) outlets across the country while Adani Capital has a network of just 60 branches and has disbursed around Rs 1,000 crore, according to its website.
- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** in Nov-20 **permitted banks to "co-lend with all registered NBFCs (including HFCs) based on a prior agreement"**.

❖ What is Co-lending?

- Co-lending or co-origination is a set-up where banks and non-banks enter into an arrangement for the joint contribution of credit for priority sector lending. To put it simply, under this arrangement, both banks and NBFCs share the risk in a ratio of 80:20 (80 percent of the loan with the bank and a minimum of 20 percent with the non-banks).

❖ Benefits	❖ Criticism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Symbiotic effect of advantage of lower cost funds with banks and greater rural reach of NBFCs will result in improving the access of credit to the unserved and underserved sector of the economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In case of default, banks will take the major hit due to the 80:20 arrangement. ➤ RBI guidelines provide NBFCs to be the single point of interface for customers, and to enter into loan agreements with borrowers. In effect, while the banks fund the major chunk of the loan, the NBFC decides the borrower & the terms of agreement.

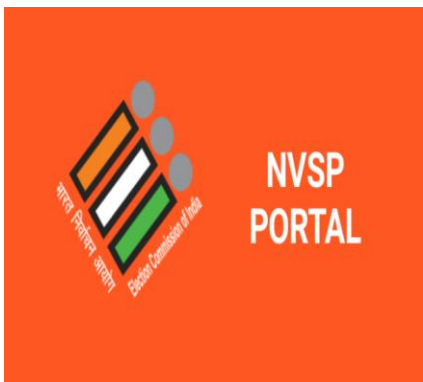
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➤ While the RBI hasn't officially allowed the entry of **big corporate houses** into the banking space, NBFCs — mostly floated by corporate houses — were already accepting public deposits. They now have more opportunities on the lending side through direct co-lending arrangements.

News in Between the Lines

National Voter Service Portal (NVSP) and CERT-In



❖ Context

➤ An independent security researcher has come across a **critical vulnerability in the National Voters Service Portal (NVSP)** and alerted the Computer Emergency Response Team (**CERT**) that worked with technical experts to plug the loophole.

❖ Key NVSP

- In a bid to **provide all possible support services to electors with the help of IT tools**, the Election Commission of India (ECI) created the National Voter Service Portal (NVSP).
- **The sole aim of NVSP is to provide single window services to electors.**
- **Services provided by NVSP**
 - **Search the name, deletion/objection, correction of entries** and application for transposition of entry in electoral roll.
 - **Apply online** for new registration, registration of overseas voter, Enrolment, Modification, Deletion and change of address in electoral roll.
 - **View details** of Polling booth, Assembly Constituency and Parliamentary constituency, Booth Level officer, Electoral Registration Officer and other Election officer.

❖ About CERT-In

- CERT-In stands for **Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)**
- CERT-In is a **nodal government agency that deals with cyber security threats** like hacking and phishing in India.
- It comes under the aegis of the Union Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.
- Established in 2004
- **Headquarters: New Delhi**

Parker Solar Probe



❖ Context

➤ Parker Solar Probe **becomes first human-made object to touch the Sun.**

❖ Key Highlights

- **NASA's Parker Solar Probe** has now flown through the Sun's upper atmosphere — the corona — and sampled particles and magnetic fields there.
- Parker Solar Probe was **launched in 2018.**
- The **spacecraft will fly close enough to the Sun to watch the solar wind speed up from subsonic to supersonic**, and it will fly through the birthplace of the highest-energy solar particles.
- The spacecraft and instruments are being protected from the Sun's heat by a **4.5-inch-thick carbon-composite shield**, which can withstand temperatures outside the spacecraft that reach nearly **1,377 degrees Celsius.**
- Parker Solar Probe will use **Venus' gravity** during seven flybys over nearly seven years to gradually bring its orbit closer to the sun.
- The spacecraft will fly through the sun's atmosphere as close as **3.9 million miles** to our star's surface, well within the orbit of Mercury and more than seven times closer than any spacecraft has come before.

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S-gene Kits



❖ Context

- Amid the rising concerns over Omicron, the new variant of coronavirus, researchers are pitching for genome sequencing of positive samples using RT-PCR kits that **employ SGTF strategy to detect the variant.**

❖ Key Highlights

- Formally known as the **S-gene Target Failure (SGTF) test**
- The test **detects the absence of the S-gene**, which is an indicator of the presence of Omicron variant in a Covid positive patient.
- **S gene is not present in the Omicron variant.** This is the result of the multiple mutations that the variant has undergone and is a marker to identify the variant

MALE-UAV



❖ Context

- The DRDO's indigenous programme, **Medium Altitude Long Endurance - UAV**, reached milestone capability of altitude of 25000 feet and endurance of 10 hours

❖ Key Highlights

- Designed and developed by **Aeronautical Development Establishment** (Bengaluru) in partnership with HAL & BEL.
- To carry out surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) roles, carry different combination of payloads and to be capable of auto landing
- Target to meet armed forces requirement of 30,000 feet and 18 hours endurance
- A programme for more capable **High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) UAV** is also in the works - high priority of armed forces in standoff with China in Eastern Ladakh
- **Currently, armed forces rely heavily on Israeli Searcher and Heron Drones**

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Index



❖ Context

- **Economic Advisory Council-PM** released report on State of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy i.e. basic reading, writing and mathematical skill of children **below 10 years**, in India

❖ Key Highlights

- Prepared by Institute for Competitiveness
- Include **5 pillars - Educational Infrastructure, Access to education, Basic health, Learning Outcomes & Governance**
- Rankings were done under different categories - Large States, Small states, UTs & North East
- **West Bengal** topped while **Bihar** bottomed, under Large category
- **Kerala** topped while **Jharkhand** bottomed, under Small category
- **Lakshadweep** topped while **Ladakh** bottomed, under UT category
- **Mizoram** topped while **Arunachal Pradesh** bottomed, under NE category
- More than **50% of the states** scored **below national average** i.e. 28.05.

DIKSHA



❖ Context

- Government informed Rajya Sabha that DIKSHA complies with World wide web consortium (W3C) Web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG).
- This **enables people with visual impairments to access** the website using assistive technologies.

❖ Key Highlights

- **One Nation One Digital Platform**
- It provides quality e-content for school education in states/UTs and QR coded **"Energized"** textbooks. QR codes are attached to physical textbooks and related content is created on DIKSHA.

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