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15 June, 2024

Digital Health Incentive Scheme

Context: *The central government has extended the Digital Health Incentive Scheme (DHIS) for a year to digitize health records and link them with Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Accounts (ABHA IDs).*

Launch Date and Objective

- Launched on January 1, 2023, as part of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission.
- Aims to digitize health records and link them to Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) numbers.

Incentives and Eligibility

- Health facilities (hospitals, diagnostic labs) and digital solution companies can earn up to ₹4 crores.
- Financial incentives are based on the number of digital health records created and linked to ABHA numbers.
- Hospitals, diagnostic labs, and providers of digital health solutions (HMIS, LMIS) are eligible.
- Must be registered with ABDM's Health Facility Registry (HFR).

Extension and Fund Utilization

- Initially launched on January 1, 2023, the scheme is now extended till June 30, 2025.
- The Centre has requested states and union territories to report on fund utilization.

Payment Structure

- Government and private hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, diagnostic labs, and pharmacies receive ₹20 per additional digital record beyond 100 transactions per month.
- Applicable to both public and private entities.

Reason for Extension

- The National Health Authority (NHA) extended the scheme to promote digital health transactions and support healthcare providers in adopting digital health.
- April 2023 updates reduced transaction limits to further incentivize digital adoption.

Participation and Disbursements

- 4,005 healthcare facilities, including 1,085 private, and 41 DSCs, including 36 private companies, registered.
- 584 healthcare facilities and 12 DSCs have availed the scheme.
- ₹34.5 crore disbursed, with ₹24.91 crore to healthcare facilities and ₹9.59 crore to DSCs.
- Public DSCs include NIC and C-DAC, which provide eHospital and eSushrut solutions.
- Incentives apply to both public and private hospitals and digital solution companies.

Government Support and Relaxations

- NHA has introduced relaxations such as reduced transaction limits to make the scheme more accessible.
- Aims to provide affordable software solutions for digitization.

Benefits for Patients

- **Improved Healthcare Services -** Enhances service quality and convenience with digitized health records.
- **Cost and Efficiency -** Reduces repeated tests and prevents hospitals from passing digitization costs to patients.
- **Enhanced Record Accessibility -** Allows patients to access their medical history from anywhere.
- **Continuity of Care -** Ensures seamless sharing of health records among different providers for better coordination.
- **Data Security and Privacy -** Secures digital records, giving patients control over access to their information.
- **Quality of Care -** Improves diagnostic accuracy and treatment with comprehensive records.
- **Efficiency in Healthcare Delivery -** Streamlines administrative tasks, enhancing overall efficiency.
- **Support for Healthcare Workers -** Reduces administrative burdens, allowing more focus on patient care.
- **Nationwide Impact -** Builds a comprehensive digital health infrastructure, supporting a digital India.
- **Boost to Health IT Industry -** Fosters innovation and growth in health information technology

Clemency Powers of President

Context: *President Draupadi Murmu has turned down the mercy petition of Pakistani national Mohammed Arif, who was convicted for the terrorist attack at the Red Fort on December 22, 2000.*

- Courts apply the "rarest of rare" standard in death sentence cases, established by the Supreme Court in 1980 (Bachan Singh v. State of Punjab).
- The 262nd Law Commission Report in 2015 recommended "absolute abolition" of the death penalty for all crimes except terrorism-related offenses and waging war.

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Pardoning Power in India:

- **Definition and Purpose:**
  - Pardoning Power, a critical component of the Criminal Justice System, refers to the authority vested in the government executive, typically the President or Governor, to grant clemency or leniency to individuals convicted of a crime or facing punishment.
  - Its primary purpose is to intervene in the administration of justice to mitigate punishment severity, rectify potential miscarriages of justice, and address humanitarian concerns.
- **Objectives in India:**
  - Correct judicial errors.
  - Provide relief from sentences deemed unduly harsh by the President or Governor.
- **Constitutional Provisions:**
  - **Article 72 –** Pardoning Power of President: Empowers the President to pardon, commute, or reprieve sentences for offenses against Union Law, Court Martial, or death sentences.
  - **Article 161 –** Pardoning Power of Governor: Grants Governors similar authority for offenses against State laws.
- **Types of Pardon:**
  - **Pardon:** Removes both sentence and conviction, absolving the convict from all sentences, punishments, and disqualifications.
  - **Commutation:** Substitutes a harsher punishment with a milder one.
  - **Remission:** Reduces the sentence period without changing its character.
  - **Respite:** Awards a lesser sentence due to special circumstances.
  - **Reprieve:** Temporarily stays execution to enable the convict to seek further action.
- **Comparison:**
  - **Death Sentence:** President can pardon, reprieve, respite, remit, suspend, or commute a death sentence, while Governors can only suspend, remit, or commute it.
  - **Court Martial:** President can grant pardon, reprieve, respite, suspension, remission, or commutation with respect to punishment or sentence by a court martial (military courts), whereas the Governor does not possess such authority.
- **Key Judicial Precedents:**
  - **Maru Ram vs Union of India Case (1980):** The Supreme Court held that Pardoning Powers of President and Governors are not entirely subject to judicial review.
  - **Kehar Singh vs. Union of India Case (1988):** Established guidelines for the President's exercise of power, outlining circumstances where judicial review is permissible.

Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) Results

Context: *MoSPI has released key results of ASUSE for April 2021 to March 2022 and October 2022 to September 2023.*

- **Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE):**
  - Conceptualized by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) to measure economic and operational characteristics of unincorporated non-agricultural establishments in manufacturing, trade, and other services sectors (excluding construction).
  - Data from ASUSE helps in compiling National Accounts Statistics and gauging demand-side employment scenarios.
  - Essential for various Ministries such as MSME, Textile, Labour and Employment, and policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders to understand and support this sector.

Key Findings from ASUSE 2021-22 and ASUSE 2022-23:

- **Resilient Growth Amid Pandemic Impact:**
  - Total establishments increased from 5.97 crore in 2021-22 to 6.50 crore in 2022-23, demonstrating a notable 5.88% annual growth rate.
  - Despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the unincorporated sector showed resilience, with the number of establishments gradually rising.
- **Sector-wise Expansion:**
  - Other services sector witnessed a robust annual growth of 15.12%, indicating a significant expansion.
  - Manufacturing establishments also increased by 2.22% annually, reflecting a gradual recovery and opening up post-pandemic.
- **Labour Market Growth:**
  - Employment in the unincorporated non-agricultural sector increased from 9.8 crore to 11 crore workers between October 2022 and September 2023, showing a healthy annual growth rate of 7.84%.
  - The highest growth in employment was observed in the other services sector at 13.42%, followed by manufacturing at 6.34%.
- **Improvement in Informal Worker Earnings:**
  - Average annual earnings for informal workers rose from Rs. 1,06,381 in 2021-22 to Rs. 1,10,982 in 2022-23, indicating an improvement in wage conditions.
  - This reflects positive trends in income growth and livelihoods for informal workers in the sector.
- **Enhanced Productivity:**
  - Gross Value Added (GVA) per worker increased to Rs. 1,41,769 in 2022-23 from Rs. 1,38,207 in 2021-22, showcasing improved labor productivity.
  - Gross Value of Output (GVO) per establishment also increased, indicating more efficient resource utilization and productivity gains.

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NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Raj Parb Festival

Recently, the President of India attended the Raja Parb celebration at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.

About the Raj Parb Festival:

- The Raja Parb is one of the most **celebrated festivals of Odisha**.
- The festival's name, **Raja Parba**, comes from "**Raja**" referring to "**Rajaswala**," a term for **menstruating women** and "**Parba**," meaning festival.
- The **three-day-long agricultural festival** is celebrated **during the onset of monsoons**, dedicated to celebrating **womanhood**.
- During the festival, women are revered as embodiments of Mother Earth and receive special care and attention.
- Women are encouraged to rest and refrain from **walking barefoot**, symbolizing their honored status.
- During Raja Parba, **Bhudevi, the wife of Lord Jagannath**, **is worshipped**; women wear sarees or new clothes on the first day called **Pahili**; and the second and third days are known as **Mithun Sankranti** and **Basi Raja**, respectively.

Mayurbhanj Chhau Dance

Various cultural performances, including Raja geet, Mayurbhanj Chhau dance, Sambalpuri dance and Karma dance were performed recently on the occasion of Raj Parb Festival.

Mayurbhanj Chhau Dance:

- Mayurbhanj Chhau is a **martial arts dance** form from Mayurbhanj district in Odisha.
- It's a **dramatic, rhythmic dance** that combines dance and is **performed by men** at **night in open spaces**.
- The dance is set to **traditional folk music** played on the shehnai and **mohuri reed pipes.**
- Mayurbhanj Chhau has its **own distinct style** and has influenced other dance forms, including **Kathak**, **Bharat Natyam**, **Kathakali**, **Phar Khanda Kela**, **Amdalia Jamdalia, Jhumar and Udaya Shankar.**
- Chhau exists in **three distinct styles**, each named after its place of origin: the **Purulia Chhau of Bengal**, **the Seraikella Chhau of Jharkhand** and the **Mayurbhanj Chhau of Odisha**.
- A notable difference among these **subgenres is the use of masks**.
- While the **Seraikella** and **Purulia styles incorporate masks** in their performances, the Mayurbhanj Chhau does not use any.
- In **2016**, the state government launched **Project Chhauni** to revive Mayurbhanj Chhau by establishing a performing unit and selecting 100 dancers through auditions.

United Nations Security Council

Recently, the UN Security Council demanded that Sudanese paramilitary forces end their eight-week siege of El Fasher in Darfur.

About the United Nations Security Council:

- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is **an organ of the United Nations** (UN) and is **responsible for maintaining international peace and security**.
- It was **established by the UN Charter in 1945** and is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations.
- It **can make decisions** that member states are required to implement, such as **establishing peacekeeping operations**, enacting international sanctions and **authorizing military action.**
- Besides the UNSC, the United Nations has five other principal organs, which are the **General Assembly** (UNGA), the **Trusteeship Council**, the **Economic and Social Council**, the **International Court of Justice and the Secretariat**.
- The UNSC **consists of 15 members** including **five permanent members** (P5) and **ten non-permanent members** elected for **two-year terms** and **each member has one vote.**
- The five permanent members are **China**, **France**, **Russian Federation**, **the United Kingdom** and the **United States** and **they have veto power**.
- Its headquarter in in **New York, USA.**

Kheer Bhawani Temple

Recently, in Jammu and Kashmir, thousands of Kashmiri Pandits thronged the revered Kheer Bhawani temple dedicated to Ragnya Devi on the occasion of Mela Kheer Bhawani festival.

About the Kheer Bhawani Temple:

- The Kheer Bhawani Temple, also known as the **Ragnya Devi temple**, is a **Hindu shrine** in the village of Tulmulla, Ganderbal, Jammu and Kashmir.
- It is **dedicated to** the **goddess Kheer Bhavani** and is built above a sacred spring.
- The temple is **built in the middle of a waterfall,** surrounded by large stones and has a floor of smooth stones.
- The temple area is also home to **ancient chinar trees**, where pilgrims can sit or sleep on grass mats.
- The current structure of the temple, pond and spring was **built in the 1910s under Maharaja Pratap Singh of Jammu and Kashmir** and was later **renovated by Maharaja Hari Singh.**
- References to Kheer Bhawani can be found in ancient texts such as **Kalhana's Rajtarangini** and the **Bhrigu Samhita**.

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Environmental DNA

Recently, a 2022 World Wildlife Fund report highlighted an 83% decline in global freshwater vertebrate populations since 1970, emphasizing the urgent need for enhanced monitoring and conservation efforts using environmental DNA (eDNA) analysis.

About the Environmental DNA:

- Environmental DNA (eDNA) refers to the DNA fragments **shed by organisms** into their environment through sources like **mucus**, **feces**, **mucus** and **tissue particles**.
- It provides **detailed insights into ecosystem** biodiversity and health without causing harm to the environment.
- It is **collected by filtering water samples** to capture the DNA fragments.
- It extracted from filters is analyzed for specific **taxonomic groups**, sequenced and **cross-referenced** with databases to identify the organisms present.
- It analysis is easily standardized and automated, can detect a wide range of organisms, involves citizen scientists, and is non-destructive to the environment.

Place in News

Armenia

Recently, NASA Administrator Bill Nelson welcomed Armenia as the newest signatory to the Artemis Accords during a ceremony at NASA Headquarters in Washington

Armenia: (Capital: Yerevan)

Location: Armenia is a **landlocked country** situated in the Armenian Highlands of West Asia.

Political Boundaries: Armenia shares its borders with **Azerbaijan** (East), **Turkey** (West), **Georgia** (North) and **Iran** and the **Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhchivan** (South).

Physical Features:

- The highest point in Armenia is **Mount Aragats.**
- Armenia's major rivers include the **Aras**, **Debed, Hrazdan**, and **Vorotan**, each playing significant roles in the country's geography and water resources.
- Armenia possesses various minerals, including **copper**, **molybdenum**, **gold**, etc.

Membership: Armenia is a member of various international organizations, including the **United Nations**, the **Commonwealth of Independent States** (CIS) and the **Collective Security Treaty Organization** (CSTO).

POINTS TO PONDER

- Recently, which city-based company introduced Zero-knowledge Proofs (ZKP) blockchain technology in India for the first time? **– Hyderabad**
- The Empowered Programme Committee of the National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM) recently approved 7 startup proposals under which scheme? **– GREAT scheme**
- Recently, the winners of the 2024 Kavli Prize were announced for their contributions to which fields? **– Astrophysics, neuroscience and nanoscience**
- According to a study released on June 11, 2024, which ozone-depleting substances (ODS) have shown the first significant decrease in atmospheric concentrations? **– Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs)**
- Scientists recently discovered frost on which prominent feature of Mars, indicating an active water cycle on the planet? **– Olympus Mons**