

PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)

❖ Context

- Recently, the Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs informed the parliament that the PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme has been extended beyond March, 2022.

Key Highlights

- The extension is with following provisions-
 - Extension of lending period till December 2024,
 - Introduction of **3rd loan of upto ₹50,000** in addition to 1st & 2nd loans of ₹10,000 and ₹20,000 respectively.
 - To extend '**SVANidhi Se Samriddhi**' component for all beneficiaries of PM SVANidhi scheme across the country.
- 42 lakh street vendors are to be provided benefits under PM SVANidhi Scheme by December, 2024.

About PM SVANidhi

- **Launched By**
 - Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- **Implementing Agency**
 - Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)
- **Objectives**
 - To **provide affordable Working Capital loans** to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely **affected due to Covid-19 lockdown**.
 - It has been extended till December 2024 with focus on **enhanced collateral free affordable loan** corpus, increased **adoption of digital transactions** and **holistic socio-economic development of the Street Vendors and their families**.

• Target Beneficiaries

- Over 50 lakh people, including vendors, **hawkers, thelewalas etc. who supply vegetables, ready-to-eat foods, fruits etc.**
- It also includes service providers like **barber shops, cobblers, pan shops, laundry services etc.**
- Scheme is available for beneficiaries belonging to only those States/UTs which have notified Rules and Scheme under **Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014**.

• Scheme Benefits

- Vendors can avail a **working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000**, which is **repayable in monthly installments in the tenure of one year**.
- On timely/ early repayment of the loan, an **interest subsidy @ 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts** of beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer on quarterly basis.
- There will be **no penalty on early repayment of loan**.
- The scheme **promotes digital transactions through cash back incentives** up to an amount of Rs. 100 per month.
- The vendors can avail the facility of escalation of the credit limit on timely/ early repayment of loan.

News in Between the Lines

Badri Cow



❖ Context

- **Uttarakhand** is now planning for **genetic enhancement** of indigenous petite Badri cows to increase the productivity.

❖ Key Highlights

- The officials of the animal husbandry department of the hill State proposed to use **sex-sorted semen technology** to improve production of Badri cattle.
- They also proposed to opt for the **embryo transfer method** in order to produce more cattle of high genetic stock.
- The state decided to opt for Multiple Ovulation Embryo Transfer (MOET), a conventional embryo flush, which is the most common procedure used in advanced cattle breeding.
- **Ovum pickup in vitro fertilisation (IVF)** is the other technology that will be used to increase the yield per animal.
- The proposal to introduce **Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART)** for the project, to generate employment and entrepreneurship through native



Badri cattle productivity enhancement, will cost ₹50 crore.

➤ **Badri Cow**

- Badri cow **grazes on the medicinal herbs** of the Himalayas.
- This breed is comparatively more **resistant to diseases**, mostly due to its eating habits.
- Badri cow is the **first registered cattle breed of Uttarakhand** which has been **certified by the National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR)**.
- Apart from Badri ghee, the State is also looking at the marketing potential of gaumutra ark (distilled cow urine), cow dung, and Panchgavya (the five products of the cow, including milk, curd, ghee, dung and urine).

Aichi Targets



❖ **Context**

- Delegates from 196 countries — **Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** — are meeting in Montreal, Canada from December 7-21 with the **aim to hammer out a new global agreement on halting environmental loss**.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- Many of the 24 conservation targets under discussion at the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) aim to avoid past mistakes and improve on the world's last set of conservation goals — the Aichi Biodiversity Targets that expired in 2020.
- **No single country met all 20 Aichi Targets** within its own borders, according to a September 2020 UN assessment.

❖ **Aichi Targets**

- The Aichi Targets were **adopted during the 2010 CBD Summit** in Nagoya, located in Japan's Aichi prefecture.
- It included goals such as **reducing deforestation by at least half during the coming decade and curbing pollution** so that it no longer harmed ecosystems.
- Many of the targets, however, included vague language and did not hold countries to a specific action.
- After parties adopted the Aichi Targets, they were expected to devise their own national biodiversity strategies that would mimic the goals laid out by Aichi.
- Nearly all parties created these strategies, but most were never fully implemented.

Circular Trading



❖ **Context**

- The issue of circular trading could be taken up by the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council in its upcoming meeting.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- The issue has been a bone of contention.
- The CBIC has issued a circular that circular trading is not a case of tax evasion and so arrests should not be made.
- However, detention in these cases continues.

❖ **About Circular Trading**

- Circular trading refers to **fraudulently availing input tax credit by traders by issuing of invoices without availing any real goods or services**.

- In simple words, circular trading refers to the transaction of selling and buying of goods (without actual movement of goods) through shell companies.
- Circular trading is a circular which is being formed by a group of companies engaging themselves in fake sales transactions by producing fake sale invoices.
- **Objectives of Circular Trading**
 - To **increase the valuation** of the company/business.
 - To **benefit higher loans** from the Banks or Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFC).
 - To **bring black money into the system** & to avail fake input tax credit.

❖ Context

- Three medicinal plant species found in the Himalayas have made it to the IUCN Red list of Threatened species.

❖ Key highlights

- ***Meizotropis pellita*** has been assessed as **critically endangered** based on its limited area of occupancy (less than 10 sq. km).
 - Commonly known as **Patwa**.
 - It is a **perennial shrub** with restricted distribution endemic to **Uttarakhand**.
 - The essential oil extracted from the leaves possess strong **antioxidants properties**.
 - The species is threatened by deforestation, habitat fragmentation & forest fires.
- ***Fritillaria cirrhosa*** has been assessed as **vulnerable**.
 - Commonly known as Himalayan fritillary.
 - It is a **perennial bulbous herb**.
 - 30% of its population has declined over 22-26 years.
 - In China, the species is used for the **treatment of bronchial disorders and pneumonia**.
 - The plant is a strong cough suppressant.
- ***Dactylorhiza hatagirea*** has been assessed as endangered.
 - The plant is extensively used in Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani and other alternative systems of medicines **to cure dysentery, gastritis, chronic fever, cough and stomach aches**.

❖ Context

- The **17th Asia and Pacific Regional Meeting** of the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** adopted the declaration.

❖ Key highlights

- The declaration set **ten-point priorities of national action** for the member countries to deal with the issue of **dwindling wages, inflation & unemployment**.
- It agreed that **social dialogue** was essential to address labour market challenges.
- It urged governments to ensure **labour protection** through promotion of **freedom of association** and the effective recognition of the **right to collective bargaining**.
- It called for closing gender gaps in the world of work through measures like women's labour force participation, promoting equal pay for work for equal value, balance work and responsibilities and promoting women's leadership.

Three Himalayan Plant Species in IUCN Red List



Singapore Declaration



CCFUGP



❖ Context

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) is expected to announce a new framework for undergraduate programmes.

❖ Key highlights

- The new framework will be called the **Curriculum and Credit Framework for the Undergraduate Programme (CCFUGP)**.
- It will replace the three year **Choice Based Credit System**.
- The framework is **recommendatory** and not compulsory in nature. It will prescribe **courses on understanding India, modern Indian languages and yoga**.
- It will allow students multiple entries and exits -
 - First year completion will fetch a student a certificate.
 - Two years completion will get them a diploma.
 - Three years completion will get students a bachelor's degree.
 - Four years completion will fetch a bachelor's degree with honours after completing 160 credits.
- If students decide to exit, they would be **allowed to rejoin to complete their remaining years within three years of their exit**. Students would be required to complete their degrees within 7 years since their enrollment.
- Students who secure 75% of marks and above in the first six semesters and wish to undertake research at the undergraduate level can choose to do so in their fourth year.

Supplementary demand for grants (SDG)



❖ Context

- The government sought Parliament's approval for supplementary spending of over **Rs 3.25 lakh crore**, primarily due to **higher payouts for food and fuel subsidies**.

❖ Key highlights

- SDG refers to a **statement of supplementary demands** laid before the parliament, showing the estimated amount of further expenditure necessary for a financial year, over and above the expenditure authorised in the Annual Financial Statement for that year.
- The demand for supplementary may be **token, technical or substantive/cash**.
- It is laid before Parliament in pursuance of sub-clause (a) of **clause (1) of Article 115 of the Constitution** after obtaining **President's recommendation**.
- **Token** refers to a symbolic amount (₹1 lakh or so) to be allocated for any scheme.
- **Technical** means savings of a Ministry/Department to be used for a different purpose or for a scheme where more funds are required.
- **Substantive/cash** implies fresh allocation beyond what is provided in the budget and to be met through fresh withdrawal from the Consolidated Fund of India.

Vanikaran

❖ Context

- The Forest Department, Kerala in association with Noolpuzha grama panchayat, Wayanad district, has launched a new project titled Vanikaran.

❖ Key highlights





- The project aims to root out invasive plants, especially ***Senna spectabilis***, and restore natural forests. The other invasive species in focus are ***Eupatorium*, *Mikania micrantha*, and *Lantana camara***.
- According to the Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI) there are nearly 22 invasive species in Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary.
- ***Senna S.*** is very hardy and survives under challenging conditions.
- The **native species of Tropical America** was introduced to India as an ornamental plant.
- It can grow 7 - 18 metres tall and produces yellow flowers.
- It is evergreen in climates with rain all year round, but can become deciduous in some regions.

Salaam Aarati



❖ Context

- The Karnataka government is going to issue a circular renaming the Salaam Aarati ritual as Aarati Namaskara.

❖ Key highlights

- It is believed that the ritual was named by the 18th century Mysore king Tipu Sultan during his visit to temples.
- The local narratives often use these as metaphors for greatness of the temple.

NACAE



❖ Context

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) has recently set up two sub-committees.

❖ Key highlights

- The two sub-committees comprising election officials and representatives of disability rights groups were formed under the poll panel's **National Advisory Committee on Accessible Elections (NACAE)**.
- They have been formed
 - To study ways to improve accessibility features of its websites, apps and other communications.
 - To make registration of persons with disabilities as electors easier.
- NACAE has been constituted at the national level to review and evaluate the work of State, District and Assembly Constituency level committees constituted in pursuance of the EC's directions.
- The committees are formed to make the entire electoral process accessible and inclusive for all persons with disabilities.
- The **Chief Electoral Officer**, the **District Election Officer** and the **Electoral Registration Officer** are the chairpersons of the committee at State, District and Assembly constituency level respectively.

Americium - 241



❖ Context

- The European Space Agency (ESA) is funding a project to develop batteries containing americium-241.

❖ Key highlights

- It is a **radioactive isotope** which is a **by-product of plutonium decay**.
- It is extracted from power plants' spent fuel.
- The batteries can be used to power space missions to the far reaches of the Solar System which are too dark for solar panels to work.

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