

Organic Cotton Production

❖ Context

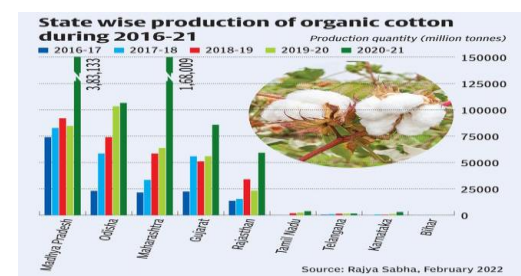
- According to the Ministry of Textiles data, the **production of organic cotton** during 2020-21 has been **8,10,934 tonnes** against 3,35,712 tonnes during 2019-20 and 3,12,876 tonnes during 2018-19.

❖ Key Highlights

- The **production of organic cotton in India is 1.23 million tonnes (mt)**, which is **51 per cent of global organic cotton production** of 2.40 mt.
- The other organic cotton-producing countries are **China, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Tajikistan, Tanzania, USA, Uganda, Greece, Benin, Peru, Burkina Faso, Pakistan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Brazil, Mali, and Argentina.**
- India's cotton production of over 360 lakh bales (about 6.12 million tonnes) accounts for around 25 per cent of the global output of the fibre .
- **Organic Cotton Production in Various States.**
 - Organic cotton production is **limited to a few States** owing to the high production cost, lower demand and farmers turning to illegal GM seeds.
 - In the **last five years**, organic cotton production has seen a rise even with the proliferation of illegal herbicide-tolerant Bt (HTBt) cotton seeds in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and other States.
 - **Madhya Pradesh (38%) > Odisha (20 %) > Maharashtra (19%) > Gujarat (15%) > Rajasthan (8%).**
- The **Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** is implementing a cotton development programme under **National Food Security Mission (NFSM)** in 15 major cotton-growing States to enhance production and productivity.
- But as per the government data, only eight States have produced organic cotton in the last five years.

❖ Significance of Organic Cotton Production

- Organic cotton is grown by causing
 - **Low damage to the environment** as the production methods replenish and maintain soil fertility.
 - **Expand biologically diverse agriculture.**
 - **Prohibit the use of synthetic toxic and persistent pesticides and fertilizers.**



Para States

❖ Context

- Russia has told Ukraine it is ready to halt military operations "in a moment" if Kyiv meets a list of conditions - Ukraine cease military action, change its constitution to enshrine neutrality, acknowledge Crimea as Russian territory, and recognise the separatist republics of Donetsk and Lugansk as independent states.

❖ Key Highlights

❖ What are Para states:

- **Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria** are generally described as **de facto or para states** which have **internal sovereignty but not external sovereignty.**
- They are **not de jure states** and are **not recognised by the global community.**
- While South Ossetia and Abkhazia broke away from their parent state, **Georgia**, Transnistria broke away from **Moldova.**
- Abkhazia and South Ossetia are recognised by Russia and some of its allies like Syria, Nauru, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. **Transnistria, however, is not recognised as independent even by Russia.**
- But these three regions recognise each other and have their own governments, parliaments, armed forces, constitutions, flags, anthems, etc.



❖ Russia's relations with the states:

- All three territories have Russia as their **patron state** and cannot survive without economic, political, and military support from Moscow.
- They are seen as **client states of Russia**
- South Ossetia and Transnistria are more pro-Russian than Abkhazia. Their **economies and banking systems are all linked to Russia.** Most people speak Russian, at least as a second language. They have Russian passports and enjoy social security benefits from Russia like pensions.

Internal vs External sovereignty

Internal sovereignty	External sovereignty
Absolute authority within one's own territory	Ability of state to act independently and autonomously in the face of external forces
Involves relationship between state and citizens	Involves states and other states
Involve rights and freedom of subjects	Involves right of state to govern own territory without interference from other states

❖ Solution to crisis:

- One of the solutions to settle the crisis over Russia's invasion of Ukraine is for the Donbass republics to follow the model of these de facto states.
- They would get recognition from Russia, get a security guarantor and exist as de facto states.

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News in Between the Lines

Away From Reactor (AFR)



❖ Context

- Recently, Kudankulam village panchayat has unanimously passed a resolution opposing the establishment of the 'away from reactor' (AFR) spent fuel storage facility of Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KKNPP).

❖ Key Highlights

- Ward members said the KKNPP was operating 2X1,000 MWe nuclear reactors, besides constructing four more reactors with a similar capacity.
- The KKNPP administration, for the first time in the country, had commenced **excavation work at the site for building the AFR facility for permanently storing the spent fuel generated in the reactors.**
- **Threats:**
 - It would take **70 crore years for half decay of uranium-235.**
 - It would pose a serious threat to the people living in this region over the next 70 crore years,
 - Even though the highly radioactive spent fuel was buried 15 metres below the ground level, **the radioactivity would spread, spoiling the groundwater, the drinking water being supplied through pipes and the water being used for irrigation.**

❖ About KKNPP:

- KKNPP is the **largest nuclear power station** in India.
- It is situated in Koodankulam in the **Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu.**
- It is scheduled to have six VVER-1000 reactors with an installed capacity of 6,000 MW of electricity.
- It has been **built in collaboration with Atomstroyexport, the Russian state company and NPCIL.**

RSETIs (Rural Self Employment Training Institutes)



❖ Context

- Recently, **new batches of women-centric courses** were started by **RSETIs (Rural Self Employment Training Institutes)** across the country.

❖ Key Highlights

- A total of **39.9 lakh candidates** have been trained under RSETIs in 64 courses and **28.11 lakh candidates** have been settled into **self-employment till 31st January 2022.**
- The programme is currently being **implemented in 28 States and 7 UTs** with 585 functioning RSETIs sponsored by 23 leading Banks.

❖ About RSETIs

- **Nodal Agencies:**
 - RSETI programme is a three-way partnership between the **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), GoI, State Governments and Sponsor Banks.**
- **Mandate:**
 - The **Banks are mandated to open at least one RSETI in their lead district** to provide training to rural youth to take up self-employment/entrepreneurship ventures. RSETI program runs with an **approach of short-term training & long-term handholding of entrepreneurs.**
- **Eligibility:**
 - Rural poor youth between the age group of 18-45 years are eligible to join the training.
- **Significance:**
 - The RSETIs have become established as **pioneers in capturing the aspirations of the rural poor youth** and turning them into **profitable entrepreneurs** by training them in the domain and entrepreneurial skills.

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MSME Innovation Scheme



❖ Context

- The Ministry of MSME launched the MSME Innovative Scheme (Incubation, Design and IPR) along with the MSME IDEA HACKATHON 2022.

❖ Key Highlights

- MSME Innovative is a new concept for MSMEs with a **combination of innovation in incubation, design intervention and by protecting IPR in a single mode** approach to create awareness amongst MSMEs about India's innovation and motivate them to become MSME Champions.
- Details of the sub-schemes are:
 - **Incubation:** To promote **adoption of latest technologies** in MSMEs that seek the validation of their ideas at the **proof-of-concept level**, financial assistance up to **Rs. 15 lakh per idea** and up to **Rs. 1.00 crore** for relevant plant and machines will be provided.
 - **Design:** To bring Indian manufacturing sector and Design expertise/ Design fraternity on to a common platform, it aims to provide **expert advice and cost-effective solutions on real time design problems for new product development**, its continuous improvement and value addition in existing/new products. Financial assistance up to **Rs. 40 lakh for design projects and up to Rs. 2.5 lakh for student projects** will be provided.
 - **IPR (Intellectual Property Rights):** To improve the IP culture in India, to enhance the awareness of IPRs amongst the MSMEs, to take suitable measures for the protection of ideas - Financial assistance upto Rs. 5 lakh for Foreign Patent, Rs. 1.00 lakh Domestic Patent, Rs. 2.00 lakh for GI Registration, Rs. 15,000/- for Design Registration, Rs.10,000/- for Trademark in the form of reimbursement.

Strengthening of Pharmaceutical Industry Scheme



❖ Context

- **Department of Pharmaceuticals** has released the guidelines for the scheme "Strengthening of Pharmaceutical Industry (SPI)", with a total financial outlay of Rs.500 Cr for the period from FY 21-22 to FY 25-26.

❖ Key Highlights

- The objectives of the scheme are to strengthen the existing infrastructure facilities in order to make India a global leader in the Pharma Sector.
- The Scheme has 3 components / sub-schemes:
 - **Assistance to Pharmaceutical Industry for Common Facilities (APICF)** - to strengthen the **existing pharmaceutical clusters' capacity** for their sustained growth by creating common facilities - R&D Labs, Testing Laboratories, Effluent Treatment Plants, Logistic Centres and Training Centres.
 - **Pharmaceutical Technology Upgradation Assistance Scheme (PTUAS)** - to facilitate MSMEs of proven track record to meet national and international regulatory standards - support of maximum of **5% per annum** (6% in case of units owned and managed by SC/STs) of **interest subvention** or through **Credit linked Capital subsidy of 10%**.
 - **Pharmaceutical & Medical Devices Promotion and Development Scheme (PMPDS)** - to promote knowledge and awareness about the Pharmaceutical and MedTech Industry by undertaking studies, building databases and bringing industry leaders, academia and policy makers together to share their knowledge and experience.

Interoperability Of PPI

❖ Context

- **Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI)** issuer LivQuik said it has achieved full Interoperability as mandated by the Reserve Bank of India for their Prepaid payments Instruments.

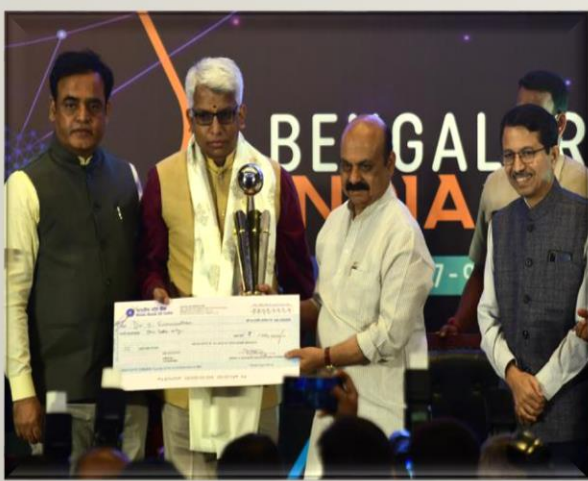
Face to Face Centres



❖ Key Highlights

- RBI guidelines released in May-21 mandate PPI Issuers to facilitate interoperability for full-KYC wallets by March 31, 2022.
- While UPI is interoperable, PPI e-wallets are not yet interoperable.
- **Prepaid Payment Instruments** are preloaded cards or digital wallets. For instance, Paytm, Phonepe, Mobikwik etc. are payment apps that permit customers to add funds into the app in order to spend the funds through the app itself.
- **Interoperability** means that regardless of who issues the PPI card or the e-wallet, customers can use their PPI card or e-wallet at any payment acceptance point.
- Through interoperability, a customer would be able to transfer their Paytm wallet funds to a Phonepe or a Mobikwik wallet if they wish.

Nano Technology Based Urea



❖ Context

- Recently, Nano Urea, a fertilizer based on nanotechnology has been tested in many universities and is found to be successful.

❖ Key Highlights

- The **applications of nanotechnology**, enabling the manufacturing of products at nano ranges, would bring in disruptive changes in the coming years.
- Nanotechnology has encompassed all the vital areas such as **water, health, energy, agriculture** and is set to become a **\$300 billion economy in the next five years**.

❖ About Nano Urea

- Nano Urea is a **nutrient to provide nitrogen to plants** as an alternative to the conventional urea.
- Nano Urea Liquid **can curtail the requirement of the same by at least 50%**.
- It contains 40,000 ppm of nitrogen in a 500 ml bottle which is equivalent to the impact of nitrogen nutrient provided by one bag of conventional urea.
- Nano nitrogen (Nano Urea) **can enhance farmer's crop yields beside nitrogen saving to the extent of 50%**.

National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID)



❖ Context

- The **National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID) Bill, 2021**.

❖ Key Highlights

- The Bill seeks to establish the NBFID as the principal **Development Financial Institution (DFIs)** for infrastructure financing.
- DFIs are set up for providing long-term finance for such segments of the economy where the risks involved are beyond the acceptable limits of commercial banks and other ordinary financial institutions. Unlike banks, DFIs do not accept deposits from people.
- They source funds from the market, government, as well as multi-lateral institutions, and are often supported through government guarantees.
- **NBFID**: will be set up as a corporate body with **authorised Shares of NBFID** may be held by: (i) Central government, (ii) Multilateral institutions, (iii) Sovereign wealth funds, (iv) Pension funds, (v) Insurers, (vi) Financial institutions, (vii) Banks, and (viii) any other institution prescribed by the central government.
- Initially, the central government will own **100% shares** of the institution which may subsequently be reduced up to 26%.
- **All India Financial Institution (AIFI) under the RBI Act, 1934**. NBFID will be regulated and supervised by RBI as an AIFI under **Sections 45L and 45N** of the **Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934**.