

## PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojan

- PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana was announced as part of the first relief package during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The scheme was announced for a three-month period and ends on June 30.
- The scheme covered 80 crore ration card holders. Each household was provided 5 kg of foodgrains (rice or wheat) and 1 kg of pulses (only channa ) free of cost.

The salient features of the scheme are:

- Government of India would not allow anybody, especially any poor family, to suffer on account of non-availability of food grains due to disruption in the three months.
- 80 crore individuals, i.e, roughly two-thirds of India's population would be covered under this scheme.
- Each one of them would be provided double of their current entitlement over next three months.
- This additionality would be free of cost.
- According to Union Food and Public Distribution Ministry, 116.02 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have been lifted under the scheme.
- Around 21 States have appealed to the Centre to extend the scheme for another three months till September.
- Food Corporation of India has "sufficient stock of foodgrains".

## Kholongchhu Hydropower Project.

India and Bhutan have signed concession agreement on the 600 MW Kholongchhu Hydropower Project.

It will be the first-ever Joint Venture (JV) project between India and Bhutan.

The JV partners are Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN), and the Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC) from India and Bhutan respectively.

### **Description:**

- The Kholongchhu project is one of four additional projects agreed in 2008, as a part of India's





commitment to help Bhutan to create a total 10,000 MW of installed capacity by 2020.

- The 600 MW run-of-the-river project is located on the lower course of the Kholongchhu river in eastern Bhutan's Trashiyangtse district.
- The project is expected to be completed in the second half of 2025.
- The project will be constructed as a 50:50 joint venture.

### Significance:

- Concession Period: The Government of India will provide, as a grant, the equity share of the Bhutanese DGPC in the JV Company. Once the project is commissioned, the JV partners will run it for 30 years, called the concession period, after which the full ownership will transfer to the Bhutan government, which will receive power from the project as a royalty.
- Bilateral Cooperation: The tapping of hydropower in Bhutan would pave a way for successful bilateral cooperation and mutual engagement between India and Bhutan.
- Strategic Interest: Being a member of BIMSTEC, Bhutan holds geostrategic importance for India. The shared sense of support and help in terms of such development projects between the two countries can help India in executing its Act East-Look East Policy.
- Energy Trade: The project would act as a milestone in generation of energy and related trade.
- The project would aid in a clean and stabilising power source for India and also contribute to its renewable energy targets.
- Employment Opportunities: Commencement of construction activities of the project will create economic and employment opportunities in Bhutan.
- India needs to focus on the youth of Bhutan, as it is the youth only, which would take the people-to-people contact forward in the future.
- Economic Growth: The plant would drive economic growth and hence socio-economic development would be facilitated in Bhutan.

### Concerns:

- Power Tariffs: The project which started in 2014 was on halt since December 2016 over India's new power tariff guidelines on Cross Border Trade of Electricity - CBTE, until the government amended its guidelines after negotiations with the Bhutan government.
- Power tariff revision which includes the increase in the operations and maintenance charges may become a bone of contention.
- Risk of the JV-model: Another issue is regarding the risk of the JV-model for the project as Bhutan had expressed concern over a greater financial risk due to project delays.
- The delays had an impact on Bhutan's growth, as well as its exports and revenues. For example, the World Bank has attributed the decline in the country's growth rate directly to delays in hydropower construction and the dip in electricity generation.
- However, India has maintained that it prefers the more commercial model as it not only shares the risk, but also makes Indian PSUs show greater accountability on time and cost, as they become investors rather than contractors.



## India Bhutan Hydropower Projects

- So far, Government of India has constructed three Hydroelectric Projects (HEPs) in Bhutan totaling 1416 MW (336 MW Chukha HEP, 60 MW Kurichhu HEP and 1020 MW Tala HEP), which are operational and exporting surplus power to India.
- India has recently completed 720 MW Mangdechhu HydroElectric Power Project and both sides are in process of expediting the completion of other ongoing projects including the 1200MW Punatsangchhu-1 & 1020MW Punatsangchhu-2.

## Way Forward

- Both India and Bhutan have emphasised the importance of “hydro-power development” as one of the most important areas of mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation.
- Kholongchhu is a continuation of bilateral cooperation which epitomises the core of the friendship for a greater good.
- However, the delay in the implementation of the project has led to cost escalation and missed opportunities in terms of immediate benefits to the community. Therefore, all the details of a project should be thoroughly worked out before the construction commences.

## Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States (STARS)

The World Bank has approved the Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States (STARS) Programme.

- It will improve the quality and governance of school education in six Indian states of Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan through the Samagra Shiksha.
- STARS will assist India in participation in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).
- PISA is a worldwide study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in member and non-member nations.
- It measures 15-year-olds' ability to use their reading, mathematics and science knowledge and skills to meet real-life challenges.

## PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM FME)

Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) has launched the PM Formalization of Micro Food



Processing Enterprises (PM FME) scheme as a part of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan'.

The Scheme is expected to generate a total investment of Rs. 35,000 crore and 9 lakh skilled and semi-skilled employment.

### Features:

- One District One Product (ODOP) Approach:
- The States would identify food products for districts keeping in view the existing clusters and availability of raw material.
- The ODOP could be a perishable produce based or cereal based or a food item widely produced in an area. E.g. mango, potato, pickle, millet based products, fisheries, poultry, etc.

### Other Focus Areas:

- Waste to wealth products, minor forest products and Aspirational Districts.
- Capacity building and research: Academic and research institutions under MoFPI along with State Level Technical Institutions would be provided support for training of units, product development, appropriate packaging and machinery for micro units.

### Financial Support:

- Existing individual micro food processing units desirous of upgrading their units can avail credit-linked capital subsidy at 35% of the eligible project cost with a maximum ceiling of Rs.10 lakh per unit.
- Support would be provided through credit linked grants at 35% for development of common infrastructure including common processing facility, lab, warehouse, etc. through FPOs/SHGs/ cooperatives or state owned agencies or private enterprise.
- A seed capital (initial funding) of Rs. 40,000- per Self Help Group (SHG) member would be provided for working capital and purchase of small tools.
- Duration: It will be implemented over a period of five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25.

### Funding Details:

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme with an outlay of Rs. 10,000 crore.
- The expenditure under the scheme would be shared in 60:40 ratio between Central and State Governments, in 90:10 ratio with North Eastern and Himalayan States, 60:40 ratio with UTs with legislature and 100% by Centre for other UTs.

### Need:

- The unorganized food processing sector comprising nearly 25 lakh units contributes to 74% of



- employment in the food processing sector.
- Nearly 66% of these units are located in rural areas and about 80% of them are family-based enterprises supporting livelihood of rural households and minimizing their migration to urban areas. These units largely fall within the category of micro enterprises.
  - The unorganised food processing sector faces a number of challenges which limit their performance and their growth. The challenges include lack of access to modern technology & equipment, training, access institutional credit, lack of basic awareness on quality control of products; and lack of branding & marketing skills etc.

## **Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK)**

- Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) is a restructured and renamed form of the erstwhile Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP).
- The scheme was restructured on the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment headed by Ramesh Bais, which submitted its report on 'Implementation of Scheme of Multi-Sectoral Development Programme/Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram' on 9th August 2018.
- Implementation Period: The restructured scheme is to be implemented during the remaining period of the 14th Finance Commission i.e. 31st March 2020.

Funding: Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

### **Background:**

- In the year 2008-09, Government conceived the Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) as a centrally sponsored scheme.
- Initially, the MsDP scheme was launched in the 90 Minority Concentration Districts of the country.
- To sharpen the focus on the targeted communities, the scheme was restructured during 2013-14 and the unit of planning for implementation was changed to Minority Concentration Blocks (MCB), Minority Concentration Towns (MCT) and Clusters of Minority Concentration Villages (COV).
- Implementation Region: The PMJVK will continue to be implemented in MCBs, MCTs and COVs. A new area for implementation of PMJVK has been included namely Minority Concentration District Headquarters (MCD Hq).
- The identified areas namely MCBs, MCTs, MCD Hqs and COVs for implementation of PMJVK are collectively known as Minority Concentration Areas (MCA).
- Basis of Selection: On the basis of a substantial population of minority communities i.e. 25% of the minority population in the area and backwardness parameters (literacy rate, female literacy rate, work participation rate and female work participation rate) along with basic amenities indicators in the area concerned which are below the national average based on population data of Census 2011.



- As per the Census 2011, the percentage of minorities in the country is about 19.3% of the total population of the country.
- The population of Muslims are 14.2%, Christians 2.3%, Sikhs 1.7%, Buddhists 0.7%, Jain 0.4% and Parsis 0.006%.
- Minority Community: As far as PMJVK is concerned, the communities notified as minority communities under Section 2 (c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 would be taken as Minority Communities.
- At present six communities namely Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Zoroastrians (Parsis) and Jains have been notified as Minority Communities.

Other schemes which aim at the inclusive growth of the minority communities:

- Seekho Aur Kamao.
- Usttad.
- Garib Nawaz Kaushal Vikas Yojana.
- Nai Manzil.
- Nai Roshni.
- Begum Hazrat Mahal Girls scholarships.

## Minorities in India

- Constitutional Provisions: The term "Minority" is not defined in the Indian Constitution. However, the Constitution recognises only religious and linguistic minorities.
- Article 29: It provides that any section of the citizens residing in any part of India having a distinct language, script or culture of its own, shall have the right to conserve the same.
- It grants protection to both religious minorities as well as linguistic minorities.
- However, the Supreme Court held that the scope of this article is not necessarily restricted to minorities only, as use of the word 'section of citizens' in the Article that include minorities as well as the majority.
- Article 30: Under the article, all minorities shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
- The protection under Article 30 is confined only to minorities (religious or linguistic) and does not extend to any section of citizens (as under Article 29).
- Article 350-B: Originally, the Constitution of India did not make any provision with respect to the Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities. However, the 7th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1956 inserted Article 350-B in the Constitution.
- It provides for a Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities appointed by the President of India.
- It would be the duty of the Special Officer to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for linguistic minorities under the constitution.

## Parliamentary Provisions:



- National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992: The act defines a minority as “a community notified as such by the Central government”.
- Under this act, the government formed the National Commission for Minorities which consists of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and five members. The five members including the Chairperson shall be from amongst the minority communities.

### Minorities Rights Day in India

- The National Commission for Minorities observes the 18th December as Minorities Rights Day every year.
- The day marks the adoption of the “Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities” by the United Nations in 1992.
- The declaration states that States shall protect the existence of the National or Ethnic, Cultural, Religious and Linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity.