



18 December 2024

National and International News

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| <p><b>National Testing Agency (NTA)</b></p> | <p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A high-level committee of experts, led by the former Chairperson of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), K. Radhakrishnan, has suggested a restructuring of the National Testing Agency (NTA).</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NTA was <b>established in 2017 by the Ministry of Education</b> as a <b>premier, specialist, autonomous and self-sustained testing organization</b> to conduct entrance examinations for admission/fellowship in higher educational institutions.</li> <li><b>Functions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Conducting entrance examinations</b> for admission to higher educational institutions</li> <li><b>Creating a question bank</b> using modern techniques</li> <li><b>Establishing a strong research and development culture</b></li> <li><b>Collaborating with international organizations like ETS</b> (Educational Testing Services)</li> <li><b>Undertaking any other examination entrusted to it by the Ministries/Departments of Government</b> of India/State Governments</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <p><b>MGNREGA</b></p>                       | <p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A parliamentary panel has strongly advocated for raising the wages of workers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), stating that the current payment is not in line with the increasing cost of living.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MGNREGA is the abbreviation for the <b>Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005</b>.</li> <li>It is a law passed by the Indian government in 2005 that guarantees the <b>"right to work"</b> to rural citizens of India.</li> <li>Under this, the government assures a <b>minimum of 100 days of unskilled manual work to an adult member of an eligible rural household</b>.</li> <li>The main objective of the MGNREGA is to <b>provide employment to rural citizens and improve their economic conditions</b>.</li> <li><b>Eligibility Criteria:</b> For receiving the benefits of the MGNREGA Scheme, the following eligibility criteria are to be met by the</li> </ul>   |



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|   | <p>applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Citizen of India</li> <li>○ 18 years of age at the time of application</li> <li>○ Rural Household</li> <li>○ Willing to do unskilled work</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Guaranteed Employment:</b> The MGNREGA program guarantees 100 days of unskilled employment to all willing rural citizens, at the government-set minimum wage.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)</b></p> | <p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Government's MSP policy for major agricultural commodities seeks to ensure remunerative prices to the growers for their produce with a view to encourage higher investments in farming and boost production and productivity.</li> <li>● The government fixes MSP for 24 crops at 1.5 times the Cost of Production (CoP). Department of Agriculture &amp; Farmers Welfare implements the umbrella scheme of Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan" (PM-AASHA).</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is an <b>umbrella scheme aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce.</b></li> <li>● PM AASHA has three components, and states can choose whichever one they wish to implement. The three components are</li> <li>● <b>Price Support Scheme (PSS):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In PSS, physical procurement of pulses, oilseeds, and copra will be done by Central Nodal Agencies with the proactive role of state governments.</li> <li>○ In addition to the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), Food Corporation of India (FCI) will take up PSS operations in states/districts.</li> <li>○ The procurement expenditure and losses due to procurement will be borne by the Central Government as per norms.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Under PDPS, it is proposed to cover all oilseeds for which MSP is notified.</li> <li>○ Direct payment of the difference between the MSP and the selling/model price will be made to pre-registered farmers selling his produce in the notified market yard through a transparent auction process.</li> <li>○ All payments will be done directly into the registered bank account of the farmer.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Pilot of Private Procurement and Stockist Schemes (PPPS):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In addition to PDPS, for oilseeds, states have the option to roll out PPSS on a pilot basis in selected districts/Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMCs) of districts involving the participation of private stockists.</li> <li>○ This scheme will allow private players to participate in the procurement of crops.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |



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| <p><b>PM Kisan Maandhan Yojana</b></p>                 | <p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojna (PM-KMY) has been providing social security to all <b>land-holding Small and Marginal Farmers (SMFs) across the country..</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The scheme is <b>voluntary and contributory for farmers</b> in the entry age group of <b>18 to 40 years.</b></li> <li>A monthly pension of <b>Rs. 3000/-</b> will be provided to them upon <b>attaining the age of 60 years.</b></li> <li>The farmers will have to make a <b>monthly contribution of Rs.55 to Rs.200, depending on their age of entry, in the Pension Fund</b> till they reach the retirement date i.e. the <b>age of 60 years.</b></li> <li>The <b>Central Government will also make an equal contribution of the same amount to the pension fund.</b></li> <li>The <b>spouse is also eligible to get a separate pension of Rs.3000/-</b> upon making separate contributions to the Fund.</li> <li>The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) shall be the Pension Fund Manager and responsible for Pension pay-out.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)</b></p> | <p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crop Damage Evaluation System for the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).</li> <li>Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) envisages use of improved technology including satellite imagery, drones, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and remote sensing for various applications such as crop area estimation and yield disputes and also promote the use of remote sensing and other related technology for Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs) planning, yield estimation, loss assessment, assessment of prevented sowing and clustering of districts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A scheme of the <b>Ministry of Agriculture &amp; Farmers Welfare, PMFBY is an insurance service for farmers for their yields, launched in 2016.</b></li> <li>The new Crop Insurance Scheme is in line with the <b>One Nation One Scheme theme.</b></li> <li>The PMFBY replaced the previous two schemes: <b>the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and the Modified NAIS.</b></li> <li><b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide insurance coverage and financial support to the farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crops as a result of natural calamities, pests and diseases.</li> <li>To stabilise the income of farmers to ensure their continuance in farming.</li> <li>To encourage farmers to adopt innovative and modern agricultural practices.</li> <li>To ensure flow of credit to the agriculture sector.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |



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