Prelim Bits 10-07-2019

Kisan Suvidha Mobile App

- It is an **omnibus mobile app** developed to help farmers by providing relevant information to them quickly.
- The following services and information are available on the App -

    i. Weather Forecast
    ii. Extreme Weather Alert
    iii. Market Price of commodities
    iv. Dealers - Fertilizer, Seeds, Pesticide, Seeds etc.
    v. Plant protection for 12 major crops
    vi. Agro advisories
    vii. Soil Health card
    viii. Soil testing labs
    ix. Cold Stores &Godowns
    x. Vet Labs & Diagnostic Centres
    xi. Crop Insurance
    xii. Government Schemes

- A farmer can also get extreme weather alerts like hailstorms or unseasonal rains.
- It is developed by Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- The app is available in 9 languages, English, Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati, Oriya, Punjabi, Marathi, Bengla and Telugu.

Pusa Krishi Mobile App

- It disseminates information about the latest technologies developed by the **Indian Agricultural Research Institute**.
- It will help farmers to take the technology to farm fields.
- Details of 185 technologies are available in the App.
- It is developed by Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- It is available in two languages, Hindi and English.

IM-PDS

- Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IM-PDS) is a new Central Sector scheme.
- It is launched by Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.
- The key objectives of the scheme are,
- to integrate the existing PDS systems(portals) of States/UTs with the Central System(portals).
- Introduction of **National Portability of ration card** to lift foodgrains from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) across the country.
- National level de-duplication of ration cards/beneficiary.
- It will bring more transparency and efficiency in PDS as it will improve the mechanism to identify fake/duplicate ration cards.
- With this government is all set to implement **"One nation-One ration card"** scheme throughout India by 2020.

Menstrual Hygiene Scheme (MHS)

- It is a scheme for promotion of menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls in the age group of 10-19 year in **rural areas**.
- It comes under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- The major **objectives** of the scheme are,
- To increase awareness among adolescent girls on Menstrual Hygiene
- To increase access to and use of high quality sanitary napkins to adolescent girls in rural areas.
- To ensure safe disposal of Sanitary Napkins in an environmentally friendly manner.
- Funds are provided to States/UTs through National Health Mission **(NHM).**
- The funds are for decentralized procurement of sanitary napkins packs primarily to rural adolescent girls at a subsidized rate of Rs 6 for a pack of 6 napkins.
- The **ASHA** will be responsible for distribution of napkins.
- They will receive an incentive of Re 1 per pack sold and a free pack of napkins every month for her own personal use.
- A range of **IEC** (Information Education and Communication) material has been developed around MHS.
- It is a 360 degree approach to create awareness about safe and hygienic menstrual health practices.
- It includes audio, video and reading materials for adolescent girls.
- **MHS** is a part of **Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram**, which is to ensure holistic development of adolescent population.

HT Bt cotton – GM Cotton

- **Herbicide-tolerant Bt** (HT Bt)**Cotton** is genetically modified cotton crop.
- It is also known as **BG-III cotton**, an advanced version of **Bt Cotton,** as it takes care of weeds problem.
- Herbicide is like a poison which is used to destroy unwanted vegetation.
- They are designed to tolerate specific broad-spectrum herbicides, which kill the surrounding weeds, but leave the cultivated crop intact.
- The herbicide-tolerant trait was developed and commercialised by US-based multinational seed giant Monsanto.
- Currently, **Bt-Cotton** is the only GM crop allowed to be grown in India.
- **Herbicide-Tolerant Bt-cotton** has unapproved genes which is not permissible in India.
- The herbicide-resistant gene in HT cotton can spread through pollen into biodiversity system leading to transformation of weeds into super weeds.
- It will threaten growth and yields of all crops in future and leads to health hazards.
- But farmers in Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Maharashtra cultivates the unapproved HTBT cotton, as they want improved seeds and technology for better crops.
- In the absence of government approval, production of **HT Bt cotton** is illegal.

Source: Indian Express, PIB

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