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National Agriculture Code

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has begun the process of formulating a National Agriculture Code (NAC), on the lines of the existing National Building Code and National Electrical Code.

- The NAC will cover the entire agriculture cycle, and will also contain a guidance note for future standardization.
- The NAC will serve as a guide for farmers, agriculture universities, and officials involved in the field.
- The first part will contain general principles for all crops, and the second will deal with crop-specific standards for paddy, wheat, oilseeds, and pulses.
- The NAC will also cover all agriculture processes and post-harvest operations, such as
    - Crop selection,
    - Land preparation,
    - Sowing/transplanting,
    - Irrigation/drainage,
    - Soil health management,
    - Plant health management,
    - Harvesting/threshing,
    - Primary processing,
    - Post-harvest, sustainability, and
    - Record maintenance.
- It will also include standards for input management, like use of chemical fertilisers, pesticides, and weedicides, as well as standards for crop storage and traceability.
- The NAC will cover all new and emerging areas like natural farming and organic farming, as well as the use of Internet-of-Things in the field of agriculture.
- **Objectives -** To create a code covering recommendations for agriculture practices taking agro-climatic zones, crop type, socio economic diversity of the country and all aspects of agrifood value chain into consideration.
- To act as an enabler of quality culture in agriculture by providing the required reference to policy makers, agriculture departments and regulators for incorporating the provisions of NAC.
- To create a comprehensive guide for the farming community to ensure effective decision making in agricultural practices;
- To integrate relevant Indian Standards with recommended agricultural practices.
- To address the horizontal aspects of agriculture such as SMART farming, sustainability, traceability and documentation; and
- To aid in the capacity building program organized by agriculture extension services and civil society organisations.

- **Deadline -** The panels will draft the code, with a tentative deadline for the NAC set as October 2025.

Reference

The Indian Express | What is the National Agriculture Code?

World Animal Day

World Animal Day is celebrated worldwide recently.

- World Animal Day is observed ***annually on October 4th.***
- **Theme, 2024 -** "The world is their home too".
- It was first celebrated on 24th March 1925 by Heinrich Zimmermann, a German writer and animal welfare activist.
- The day is later celebrated yearly on October 4th to align with the feast day of Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology and animals.
- It is a global celebration that shines a light on animal rights, welfare, and conservation.
- This special day, dedicated to raising awareness about the protection and care of animals, encourages people to take action in safeguarding the creatures we share this planet with.
- It is a reminder of the vital role animals play in our world and our responsibility to ensure their safety and well-being.
- **Significance- Raising Awareness -** World Animal Day draws attention to the plight of animals across the world, especially those affected by habitat destruction, poaching, and climate change.
- It encourages people to learn about the challenges animals face and take steps to protect them.
- **Promoting Animal Rights -** The day advocates for the fair treatment of animals, pushing for stronger laws and regulations to prevent cruelty and exploitation.
- It also emphasises the importance of recognising animals as sentient beings deserving of respect and compassion.
- **Encouraging Positive Action -** From grassroots campaigns to high-level initiatives, World Animal Day inspires everyone to take concrete steps in improving animal welfare.
- **Fostering Compassion-** World Animal Day promotes the message that humans have a responsibility to care for the creatures with whom we share the planet.

References

1. Money Control | World Animal Day 2024
2. Business Standard | World Animal Day 2024

Prime Minister's Internship Scheme

Union Finance Minister recently launched the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme.

- **Aim** - The PM Internship Scheme will enhance youth employability in India by offering them hands-on exposure to real-world business environments.
- The scheme represents a transformative opportunity to bridge the skills gap and drive sustainable growth in India.
- It will be implemented through an online portal developed by the ***Ministry of Corporate Affairs.***
- **Target** - The PM Internship Scheme aims to provide internship opportunities to one crore youth in the ***top 500 companies over the next 5 years.***
- The ministry has partnered with government-owned BISAG-N to run the project.
- **Duration -** The internship will be for ***12 months.***
- **Financial Assistance** - The interns will be provided financial assistance of Rs 5,000 per month and out of the total amount,
    - Rs 4,500 will be disbursed by the government and
    - Rs 500 will be paid by the company from its CSR funds.
- Also, a one-time grant of Rs 6,000 for incidentals will be disbursed by the ministry to each intern, upon joining the place of internship.
- The participation of companies in the scheme is voluntary and an internship will be offered for 12 months, with at least half of the period to be spent in the actual job environment and not in the classroom.
- Existing reservations will be applicable in selecting the candidates under the scheme, the sources said and emphasised that the scheme is only for providing internships and not for jobs.
- **Eligibility -** Candidates aged between 21 and 24 years who are not engaged in full-time employment are eligible for the one-year internship programme.
- Internships are available to those who have passed class 10 or higher.
- Individuals from families with government jobs are excluded.
- The scheme is not open to post-graduates.
- A candidate who graduated from premier institutes such as IIT, IIM, or IISER, and those who have CA, or CMA qualification would not be eligible to apply for this internship.
- Anyone from a household that includes a person who earned an income of Rs. 8 lakh or more in 2023-24, will not be eligible.

References

1. The Hindu | PM Internship Scheme
2. Hindustan Times | Centre launches internship scheme
3. Economic Times | Govt rolls out internship scheme

Charon

Researchers recently discovered that Carbon dioxide, hydrogen peroxide detected on Pluto's

largest moon 'Charon'.

- Charon is the ***largest of the 5 known moons of Pluto***.
- **Discovered by** - Charon was discovered in June 1978 by James Christy and Robert Harrington at the U.S. Naval Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona.
- This moon is remarkably similar to Pluto, earning it the nickname ***"Pluto's smaller twin."***
- **Size -** Half the size of Pluto, Charon is the largest known satellite relative to its parent body.
- The same surfaces of Charon and Pluto always face each other, a phenomenon called ***mutual tidal locking.***
- **Orbit -** Charon's orbit around Pluto takes 6.4 Earth days, and one Pluto rotation (a Pluto day) takes 6.4 Earth days.
- Charon neither rises nor sets, but hovers over the same spot on Pluto's surface, and the same side of Charon always faces Pluto.
- Compared with most of the planets and moons, the Pluto-Charon system is tipped on its side, like Uranus.
- **Rotation -** Pluto's rotation is retrograde - it rotates backward, from east to west (Uranus and Venus also have retrograde rotations).
- **Possibility of life** - Being extremely cold, there's practically no chance for life to exist on Pluto and water, essential for life, is present as ice.

Recent Findings

- The study explains that hydrogen peroxide forms when ice is broken down by charged particles, releasing hydrogen and oxygen atoms that combine.
- The presence of the chemical suggests Charon's icy surface is altered by ultra-violet light and solar wind from the distant Sun.
- The discovery sheds new light on Charon's composition and chemical processes, offering valuable insights into the Pluto system's mysterious and icy landscape.

Pluto
• It is the largest known dwarf planet in the solar system. • Pluto was discovered in 1930 by astronomer Clyde Tombaugh. • Pluto, once hailed as the ninth and final planet in our Solar System, underwent a reclassification in 2006. • The International Astronomical Union (IAU) convened to establish a formal definition of a planet, resulting in Pluto's demotion to dwarf planet status.

References

1. Business Standard | Pluto's largest moon 'Charon'
2. NASA | Charon

Indian Wolf

Indian wolves are sacred beings for Koppal's Kuruba shepherds by removing diseased

sheep, prevent spread of infection, saving most of the flock.

- **Scientific Name** - Canis lupus pallipes.
- It is a subspecies of Grey wolf.
- They are also relatively less vocal and have rarely been known to howl.
- Indian wolves are territorial and hunt during the night. One wolf usually is acting as a decoy while the other attacks from behind.
- **Habitat** - lives in semi-arid and arid areas.
- **Size -** The Indian wolf is intermediate in size between the Arabian and Himalayan wolves.
- It lacks the Himalayan wolf's thick winter coat because it lives in warmer conditions.
- **Distribution** – Found in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Israel, Turkey, Iran, and Syria.
- **Population** – There are approximately 400-1,100 wolves living in the Himalayan Region and 4,000-6,000 wolves in the Peninsular Region.
- **Diet** - Indian wolves are carnivores and prey mainly on antelopes, rodents, hares, and raccoons.
- Indian wolves are monogamous and mate for life.
- **Conservation status**
    - **Wildlife Protection Act of 1972** - Schedule I.
    - **IUCN -** Endangered.
    - **Threats** - Habitat loss, unregulated hunting, and loss of prey.



Reference

Down to Earth | Indian grey wolf (Canis lupus pallipes)



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