UPSC Daily Current Affairs | Prelim Bits 09-08-2024

National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission (NSCAEM)

A total of 3.85 crore people have been screened in 17 identified States for sickle cell anaemia as of July 31.

- **Launch in** – 2023, in Madhya Pradesh.

Sickle Cell Disease
• **Sickle cell disease** – A genetic blood disease affecting red blood cells. • **Transmitted by** – Parents carrying a defective *'beta globin' gene*. • **Spread** – It is more common in the *tribal population* of India. • **Symptoms** – The disease *starts early in life* causing anemia, pain crises, reduced growth, low energy. • It affects *many organs* like lungs, heart, kidney, eyes, bones and the brain.

- **Mission -** To improve care of all Sickle Cell Disease patients
- To lower the prevalence of the disease through multi-faced coordinated approach towards screening and awareness strategies.
- **Vision –** To eliminate sickle cell disease as a public health problem in India ***before 2047***.
- **Objectives –** To reduce the prevalence of SCD and to provide affordable, accessible and quality care for SCD patients.
- **Target** – To cover 7 crore people in three and half years 17
- **Implementation** – Initially *focus is on high prevalence and tribal states/UT* and then to cover the *entire population from zero to 18 years of age* and incrementally covering population up to 40 years.

  Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Bihar and Uttarakhand are the high prevalent Sickle Cell Disease states.

- **Implementation strategies** – It emphasizes on *3 pillars*.
  - **Health promotion**- Awareness generation & pre-marital genetic counselling
  - **Prevention** - Universal screening and early detection
  - **Holistic management & continuum of care** - Management of persons with sickle cell disease at primary, secondary and tertiary health care levels.
  - Treatment facilities at tertiary health care facilities.
  - Patient support system and Community adoption
- **Integrated approach** - Counselling through collaborative efforts of Central ministries

and State governments.

- **Diagnosis** - ICMR-National Institute of Research In Tribal Health (NIRTH), Jabalpur provides training on diagnosis of SCD in States.
- **Treatment -** *Hydroxyurea* treats SCD by helping to prevent formation of sickle-shaped red blood cells.

***Hydroxyurea** has been included in the National Health Mission (NHM) Essential Drugs List at Sub-Health Centres thus making it available at Primary Health Centres (PHC) and Urban PHC, Community Health Centres (CHC) and District Hospitals.*

- **Gene Therapy** - CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), Delhi has been working in gene editing therapies for advanced treatment options for SCD.

References

1. The Hindu | Sickle Cell Disease
2. National Health Mission | NSCAEM

Employment-Linked Incentive Scheme

The Union Minister of Labour and Employment has called for the swift, mission-mode implementation of the Employment-Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme.

- **Launched in** - ***Union Budget 2024***.
- **Umbrella scheme** – Prime Minister's package of 5 schemes announced in the budget.
- **Nodal Ministry-** Ministry of Labour and Employment
- **Aim –** To boost *employment in the formal sector*.
- To *recognise first-time employees* and provide comprehensive support to *both employees and employers*
- **Target** – *4.1 crore youth* over a five-year period.
- **Budget allocation-** Rs 2 lakh crore allocated as part of the Prime Minister's package for five key schemes and initiatives.
- **3 ELI Schemes**
  - **Scheme A -** First-time employment
  - **Scheme B -** Job creation in manufacturing
  - **Scheme C** - Support to employers

Scheme A - First-time employment
• **Benefit-** One-month salary as a direct benefit transfer to first-time workforce entrants in all formal sectors. • **Payment-** Up to Rs. 15,000, disbursed in three instalments. • **Eligibility-** Employees earning up to Rs. 1 lakh per month. • **Impact-** Expected to benefit approximately 2.1 million young people.
Scheme B - Job creation in manufacturing

• **Benefit-** Specified incentive for EPFO contributions for both employees and employers during the first four years of employment. • **Eligibility-** Aims to support 3 million new employees and their employers by reducing EPFO contribution burden.
Scheme C - Support to employers
• **Benefit-** Government reimbursement of up to Rs. 3,000 per month for two years towards EPFO contributions for new employees. • **Eligibility-** For employees hired at a salary of up to Rs. 1 lakh per month. • **Impact-** Expected to encourage the hiring of 5 million additional workers.

- **Significance-** Along with employment creation, also promote women's workforce participation, support MSMEs in creating jobs, and strengthen capital infrastructure.

References

1. The Hindu | Employment-Linked Incentive Scheme
2. DD news | Employment-Linked Incentive scheme

Scholarship Schemes for Minorities

The 2024 Union budget for education empowerment of minorities was slightly decreased.

Minorities in India
• The central government under *National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992* had ***notified 6 communities*** which are Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jain and Zorastrians (Parsis). • **Population** - As per the Census 2011, they are about 19.3% of the total population of the country - Muslims - 14.2% - Christians - 2.3% - Sikhs - 1.7% - Buddhists - 0.7% - Jain - 0.4% - Parsis - 0.006%.

- **Existing scholarship schemes** – During last five years, the Minorities ministry has implemented *3 Scholarship schemes*
  - Pre-metric Scholarship
  - Post-Matric Scholarship
  - Merit-cum means Scholarship
- **2024 Union Budget** – It had *modified all the 3 scholarship schemes* and *cancelled the Maulana Azad National Fellowship* (MANF).
- **New Pre-metric scholarship** – It is *now only for students studying in classes IX and X as* free and compulsory elementary education (classes I to VIII) is provided to each and every child under Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009.
- **New Post-matric scholarship** – It will cover all the technical and/or professional courses of *UG/PG level*, *except the listed institutes*.
- **New Merit-cum-Means scholarship** – It will cover all the technical and/or professional courses of *UG/PG level* *only for the top listed institutions.*
- **Discontinuation of MANF** – It was scrapped as *it overlaps with various other*

fellowship schemes for higher education like
    - *UGC and CSIR Fellowship Schemes* are open for candidates of all social categories and communities including minorities.
    - *Other Ministerial Fellowship Schemes* like Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Ministry of Tribal Affairs for SCs and OBCs and STs

Ministry	Fellowship Schemes
Social Justice & Empowerment	• National Fellowship for OBC Students • Dr. Ambedkar Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Educational Loan for Overseas Studies for OBCs & EBCs • National Fellowship for Scheduled Caste Students • National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) Scheme for SC etc. candidates • SHREYAS - Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (OBC &Others) • PM YASASVI - PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme For Vibrant India For OBCs And Others.
Tribal Affairs	• National Fellowship and Scholarship for Higher Education of ST Students

References

1. PIB | Minority welfare scheme
2. Union Social Justice Ministry | Schemes

Global Traditional Medicine Centre (GTMC)

The Ministry of Ayush and the World Health Organization signed a Donor Agreement that outlines the financial terms for implementing the activities of the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre.

- It is a knowledge centre for traditional medicine.
- **Established by** - ***World Health Organization*** (WHO), at *Jamnagar, Gujarat*.
- **Aim** – To focus on evidence and learning, data and analytics, sustainability and equity, and innovation and technology *to optimize the contribution of traditional medicine* to global health and sustainable development.

  WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre (GTMC) first and only global out-posted Centre (office) for traditional medicine across the globe.

- **Guiding principle** – *Respect for local heritages*, resources and rights.
- **Activities** – Develop tools and methodologies for data collection, analytics, and impact assessment.
- Create a *collaborative network* with existing traditional medicine data banks, virtual libraries, and research institutions.
- Offer training programs in traditional medicine in collaboration with the WHO Academy and other partners.
- **Strategic Importance** – ***Around 80%*** of the world's population and *170 WHO*

member states report the use of traditional medicine.
- Natural products account for around *40% of all pharmaceutical products.*
- It has potential to *become a trillion-dollar industries* considering the demand for herbal medicines, beauty products and wellness centres.
- **Significance for India** – It enhances the *recognition and integration of AYUSH* (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) systems on the global stage.

References

1. PIB | Agreement between Ministry of Ayush and WHO
2. WHO | Global Traditional Medicine Centre

PM-KUSUM scheme

According to a CSE study, the PM-KUSUM scheme needs urgent recalibration to meet its 2026 targets.

- **PM-KUSUM -** Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan.
- **Launched in -** 2019.
- **Nodal Ministry-** Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).
- **Objectives –** To provide *financial and water security to farmers* through the installation of solar pumps & other renewable energy projects.
- To promote the *use of solar energy* in the agricultural sector and to *reduce dependence on grid electricity*, and
- To increase *farmers' income* by enabling them to sell surplus solar power.
- **Components**
  - **Component A-** Install a total of 10GV grid-connected stilt-mounted decentralized solar plants and other renewable energy-based power plants.
  - Each plant is sized up to 500KW to 2MV.
  - **Component B-** Install stand-alone solar pumps of up to 7.5HP individual capacity and worth 17.50 lakh.
  - **Component C-** Provide financial support to Solaris 10 lakh grid-connected agricultural pumps of 7.5HP of capacity each.
- **Significance –** It can reduce carbon emissions by ***5.2 million tonnes***, making its success vital for India's climate goals.
- With targeted adjustments, it can meet 2026 targets and promote sustainable agriculture nationwide.
- **Recent recommendations -** Local implementing agencies with on-ground knowledge should manage the scheme to better cater to farmers' needs.
- Offering farmers the option to pay upfront costs in instalments.
- Increased central assistance tailored to state-specific needs and fluctuating prices of solar modules to alleviate the financial burden on farmers.

References

1. Down to Earth | PM-KUSUM scheme
2. Vikaspedia | PM KUSUM scheme



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