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SATYABHAMA Portal

- Union Ministry of Mines has launched a portal "SATYABHAMA (Science and Technology Yojana for Atmanirbhar Bharat in Mining Advancement)".
- Its aim is to promote research and development in the mining and minerals sector.
- It has been launched to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the Science and Technology Programme Scheme.
- Under the Science and Technology Programme Scheme, the Ministry of Mines promotes research in applied geosciences, mineral exploration, mining and allied areas, mineral processing, optimum utilization and conservation of the mineral resources of the country.
- The portal has been designed, developed and implemented by the National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- The portal is also integrated with NGO Darpan Portal of NITI Aayog.

NGO-DARPAN

- NGO-DARPAN is a platform that provides space for interface between Non-Government organizations (NGOs)/Voluntary Organizations (VOs) and key Government Ministries / Departments / Government Bodies.
- It is an e-governance application offered by NITI Aayog to electronically maintain data and transparency regarding NGOs/VOs in the country.
- The NGO-DARPAN was earlier maintained by erstwhile Planning Commission, which has been replaced by the NITI Aayog in 2015.

Sickle Cell Disease

- It is a blood disorder that arises when both parents have the problem gene and pass it on to their child.
- If only one parent has the problem gene, then the child will not have symptoms but will have the gene called the ‘sickle cell trait’.
- With sickle cell disease, the red blood cells have an abnormal crescent shape, taking the shape of a sickle, hence, its name.
- The sickle shape results in the red blood cells becoming rigid and sticky, getting stuck in the smaller blood vessels as they circulate in the body.
- This disrupts the supply of oxygen to parts of the body and results in

symptoms such as anemia, episodes of pain due to bone and joint damage, swelling in the extremities, increased risk of infections, hampering of normal growth, and problems with the vision.

- In India, it is more common in south Gujarat, north Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and western Odisha with a smaller concentration in the southern regions in India.
- In 2008, the UN General Assembly recognized it as a public health problem and "one of the world's foremost genetic diseases".
- World Sickle Cell Day is observed on 19th June each year to raise awareness of sickle cell at a national and international level.

NDRF

- The NDRF was set up in accordance with Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- It is meant to "meet the expenses for emergency response, relief and rehabilitation" for any threatening disaster situation.
- Although Section 46 includes a clause regarding grants made by any person or institution, provisions for such donations had not been made.

Contribution to NDRF

- Recently the Supreme Court sought a response from the Centre to a plea that contributions made to the PM CARES Fund to fight coronavirus (COVID-19) should be transferred entirely to the NDRF.
- Following this, Finance Ministry has given approval to a proposal to allow individuals and institutions to contribute directly to the National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF).
- According to recent procedure laid out by the Finance Ministry "receipts in the form of grants/donations made by any person for the purpose of disaster management may be taken as receipts of GoI under a new minor head" being created for the purpose.
- Similar procedures may be followed for contributions to the State Disaster Relief Funds as well.
- This is a significant development at a time when many have expressed concerns about donations sent to the PM CARES Fund or the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund, as both claim they are not public authorities subject to questions under the Right to Information Act.

PM SVANidhi

- PM SVANidhi was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, on

June 01, 2020.

- Its objective is to provide affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown.
- Under the Scheme, the vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year.
- On timely/ early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy @ 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer on quarterly basis.
- There will be no penalty on early repayment of loan.
- SIDBI will implement the PM SVANidhi Scheme under the guidance of Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- It will also manage the credit guarantee to the lending institutions through Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE).

China's Tariff Exemption to Bangladesh

- Recently, China has announced tariff exemption for 97% of exports from Bangladesh.
- Bangladesh had requested China to exempt its export items from tariffs in the background of the economic hardship triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- China considered Bangladesh's request and has granted the tariff exemption to Bangladesh on account of its Least Developed Countries (LDCs) status.
- The move will help Bangladesh to remove the economic impact of the pandemic and also emerge as a possible beneficiary alongside Vietnam and Chile of the U.S.-China trade war.
- The supply chain disruption caused by the U.S.-China trade war is likely to be filled by a boost in export of tariff-exempted goods from Bangladesh.
- It will also help Bangladesh to reduce its trade deficit with China.
- As a result of the latest announcement, a total of 8256 goods from Bangladesh will be exempted of Chinese tariffs.
- Earlier, Bangladesh used to receive tariff-exemption for 3095 items under the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA).

Asia Pacific Trade Agreement

- Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), previously the *Bangkok Agreement*, is a preferential tariff arrangement that aims at promoting intra-regional trade through the exchange of mutually agreed concessions by member countries.
- Its current Members are Bangladesh, China, India, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR and Sri Lanka.

Least Developed Countries

- LDCs are low-income countries designated by the United Nations, confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development.
- They are highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks and have low levels of human assets.

Source: PIB, the Hindu

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