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Market Intelligence and Early Warning System

- Union Ministry of Food Processing has launched Market Intelligence and Early Warning System (MIEWS) Portal for Monitoring prices of TOP Crops (Tomato, Onion and Potato).
- MIEWS portal would help in planning and timely intervention for price stabilization and generating alerts
- The MIEWS Dashboard and Portal is a 'first-of-its-kind' platform for 'real time monitoring' of prices of tomato, onion and potato (TOP) and for simultaneously generating alerts for intervention under the terms of the Operation Greens (OG) scheme.
- The portal would disseminate all relevant information related to TOP crops such as Prices and Arrivals, Area, Yield and Production, Imports and Exports, Crop Calendars, Crop Agronomy, etc in an easy to use visual format.
- A dashboard that would indicate low price and high price alerts as well as price forecasts for 3 month forward.
- Prices and arrivals of TOP crops across the country including interactive charts and comparisons with previous seasons
- This portal is a novel initiative of MoFPI leveraging IT tools and furthering the goals of Digital India.

Operation Greens Scheme

- In the budget speech of Union Budget 2018-19, a new Scheme "Operation Greens (OG)" was announced on the line of "Operation Flood".
- The scheme provides an outlay of Rs.500 crores to promote Farmer Producers Organizations (FPOs), Agri-logistics, processing facilities and professional management.
- Accordingly, the Ministry has formulated a scheme for integrated development of Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP) value chain.
- As per the terms of the OG Scheme, during a glut situation, evacuation of surplus production from producing areas to consumption centers will be undertaken as determined by the following:

1. When the prices fall below preceding 3 years' average market price at the

time of harvest;
2. When the prices fall more than 50% compared to last year's market price at the time of harvest;
3. When the prices fall less than the benchmark, if any, fixed by the State / Central Government for a specified period.

National Technical Textiles Mission

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, has given its approval to set up a National Technical Textiles Mission with a total outlay of Rs 1480 Crore, with a view to position the country as a global leader in Technical Textiles.
- The Mission would have a four year implementation period from FY 2020-21 to 2023-24.
- Technical Textiles are futuristic and nice segment of textiles, which are used for various applications ranging from agriculture, roads, railway tracks, sportswear, health on one end to bullet proof jacket, fire proof jackets, high altitude combat gear and space applications on other end of spectrum.
- The Mission will have four components:
- **Research, Innovation and Development** - which promotes fundamental research at fiber level aiming at path breaking technological products in Carbon Fiber, Aramid Fiber, Nylon Fiber, and Composites
- The fundamental research will be conducted in various Centre for Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) laboratories, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and other scientific/industrial/academic laboratories of repute.
- **Promotion and Market Development -** Through market development, market promotion, international technical collaborations, investment promotions and 'Make in India' initiatives.
- **Export Promotion -** An Export Promotion Council for Technical Textiles will be set up for effective coordination and promotion activities in the segment.
- **Education, Training, Skill Development -** The Mission will promote technical education at higher engineering and technology levels related to technical textiles and its application areas.
- The Mission will focus on usage of technical textiles in various flagship missions, programmes of the country including strategic sectors.

Technical Textiles

- Technical textiles are textiles materials and products manufactured primarily for technical performance and functional properties rather than aesthetic characteristics.
- Technical Textiles products are divided into 12 broad categories (Agrotech, Buildtech, Clothtech, Geotech, Hometech, Indutech, Mobiltech, Meditech, Protech, Sportstech, Oekotech, Packtech) depending upon their application areas.
- India shares nearly 6% of world market size of 250 Billion USD.
- However, the annual average growth of the segment is 12%, as compared to 4% world average growth.

Measuring Poverty in India

- Poverty can be defined as a condition in which an individual or household lacks the financial resources to afford a basic minimum standard of living.
- Economists and policymakers estimate "absolute" poverty as the shortfall in consumption expenditure from a threshold called the "poverty line".
- Poverty is measured using the Tendulkar poverty line.
- As per this, 21.9% of people in India live below the poverty line.
- The official poverty line is the expenditure incurred to obtain the goods in a "poverty line basket" (PLB).
- Poverty can be measured in terms of the number of people living below this line (with the incidence of poverty expressed as the head count ratio).
- The "depth" of poverty indicates how far the poor are below the poverty line.
- The PLB comprises goods and services considered essential to a basic minimum standard of living — food, clothing, rent, conveyance, and entertainment.
- The price of the food component can be estimated using calorie norms or nutrition targets.
- Until the 1990s, the calorie norms method was used, It was based on the minimum number of calories recommended by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for a household of five members.
- However, this method does not consider the different food groups that are essential for health — this is why the Tendulkar Committee targeted nutritional outcomes.
- Following schemes use the definition of poverty given by the NITI Aayog or the erstwhile Planning Commission.

1. Antyodaya Anna Yojana (which provides subsidided foodgrains to households living below the poverty line)

2. Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (health insurance for BPL households)

- The Centre allocates funds for these schemes to states based on the numbers of their poor.

Committees on Poverty

- Six official committees have so far estimated the number of people living in poverty in India

1. The working group of 1962 (did not consider age and gender-specific calorie requirements)
2. V N Dandekar and N Rath in 1971.
3. Y K Alagh in 1979.
4. D T Lakdawala in 1993 (excluded health and education expenditure from the consumption basket)
5. Suresh Tendulkar in 2009 (Included Health, education expenditures along with targeted nutritional outcomes)
6. C Rangarajan in 2014 (selected food component arbitrarily , excluding sanitation, healthcare, access to clean water, and prevalence of pollutants)

- The government did not take a call on the report of the Rangarajan Committee.

Multidimensional Poverty Index

- In 2011, Oxford University researchers devised the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) to capture poverty using 10 indicators: nutrition, child mortality, years of schooling, school attendance, ownership of assets, and access to proper house, electricity, drinking water, sanitation, and clean cooking fuel.
- Poverty is measured in terms of deprivation in at least a third of these indicators.
- The MPI is a more comprehensive measure of poverty because it includes components that capture the standard of living more effectively.

UKIERI-UGC Program

- Union HRD Ministry has launched UKIERI-UGC Higher Education Leadership Development Programme for Administrators.
- It is a joint initiative of UGC and British Council under the auspices of UK India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI), which aims to deliver a

leadership development programme for middle and senior level administrative functionaries in Indian Universities.

- The programme will lead to developing a more global outlook and promote learning for inclusive and internationally connected higher education systems that support the economic and social growth in UK and India.
- The Minister also said that the programme will serve as a stimulant for the functionaries to improve their performance and capabilities which consequently shall enhance institutional profile and reputation of Universities in India.
- The University Grants Commission (UGC) will conduct this programme in collaboration with Advance HE as the training partner with globally recognized institutional expertise and leadership excellence from the UK, which is being enabled by the British Council in India.

Indradhanush - V 2020

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) and Royal Air Force (RAF) jointly commenced the fifth edition of Ex Indradhanush at Air Force Station Hindan.
- The focus of this edition of the exercise is 'Base Defence and Force Protection'.
- This theme is of significance considering the recent threats to military establishments from terror elements.
- Ex Indradhanush provides a platform for the IAF and RAF to share and jointly validate strategies and tactics to counter terror threats to their installations.

ICoSDiTAUS-2020

- International Conference on Standardization of Diagnosis and Terminologies in Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha Systems of Medicine (ICoSDiTAUS-2020), held in New Delhi.
- Sixteen countries which came together for the cause of Traditional Medicine at this conference, which includes Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Serbia, Curacao, Cuba, Myanmar, Equatorial Guinea, Qatar, Ghana, Bhutan, Uzbekistan, India, Switzerland, Iran, Jamaica and Japan.
- ICoSDiTAUS-2020 is the biggest ever international event dedicated to standardization of Diagnosis and Terminologies of Traditional Medicine in terms of the broad level of participation covering virtually all the continents.
- New Delhi Declaration on Collection and Classification of Traditional Medicine (TM) Diagnostic Data was made in the conference.

- The New Delhi declaration emphasized the commitment of the countries to Traditional Medicine as a significant area of health care.
- It sought the opportunity for including traditional systems of medicine like Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha in the International Classification of Diseases of WHO which is the standard diagnostic tool for health management across the world.

Source: PIB, Indian Express

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