



## 1. Primary Agriculture Credit Societies

Topic: Agriculture



**In News:** Govt allows 2000 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies to open PM Jan Aushadhi Kendras.

### More on the Topic:

- Objective of the new initiative is to increase the income of PACS and create employment opportunities.
- It will also make medicines available at affordable prices to the people, especially those living in rural areas.

### About Primary Agriculture Credit Societies:

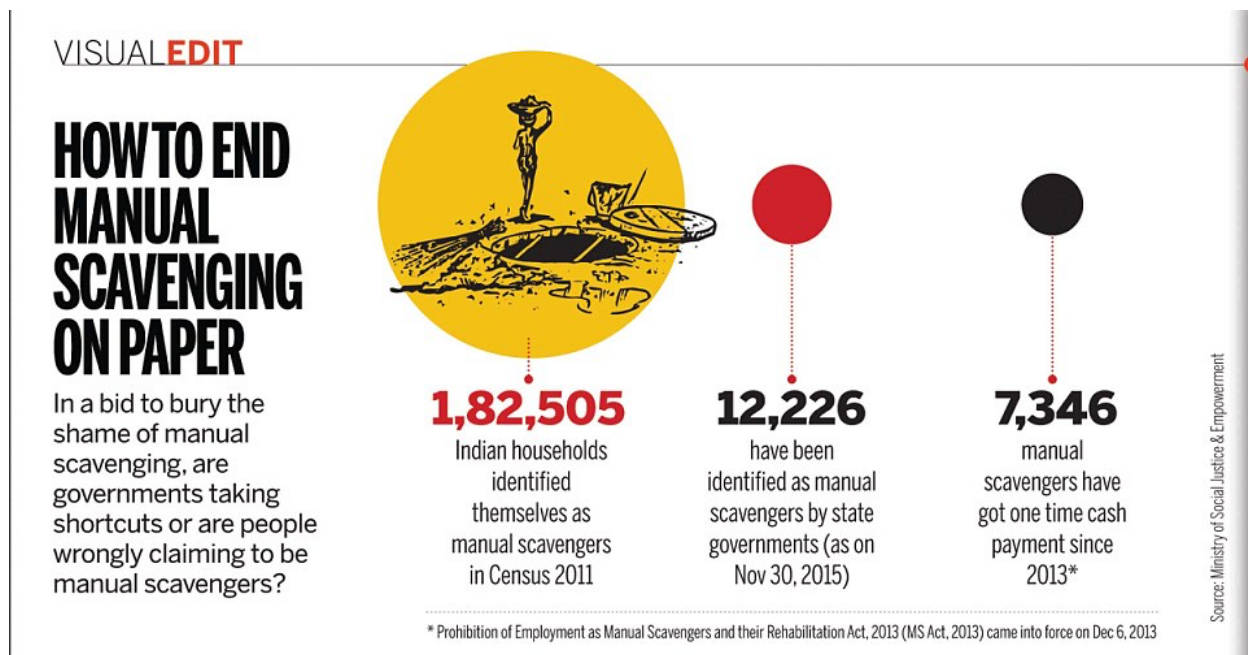
- Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), around 98,995 in number and having a member base of 13 crore, constitute the lowest tier of the Short-Term Cooperative Credit (STCC) structure in the country.
- They provide **short-term and medium-term credit and other input services, like seed, fertilizer, pesticide distribution, etc.** to member farmers.
- These are **refinanced by NABARD through 352 District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs) and 34 State Cooperative Banks (StCBs).**
- **Primary dairy cooperative societies**, around 1,99,182 in number and having around 1.5 crore members, are engaged in procurement of milk from the farmers, providing milk testing facilities, cattle feed sale, extension services, etc. to the members.
- **Primary fishery cooperative societies**, around 25,297 in number and having around 38 lakh members, cater to one of the most marginalized sections of the society, providing them marketing facilities, assisting in procuring fishing equipment, fish seed and feed, and also providing credit facilities to the members on a limited scale.

### Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana:

- Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) is a **campaign launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses.**
- PMBJP stores have been set up **to provide generic drugs**, which are available at lesser prices but are equivalent in quality and efficacy as expensive branded drugs.
- It was launched by the **Department of Pharmaceuticals** in November 2008 under the name **Jan Aushadi Campaign.**
- Pharmaceutical & Medical Devices Bureau of India (PMBI) is the implementation agency for PMBJP.

Source: Indian Express

## 1. Manual Scavenging



**Topic: Social Justice**

**In News:** The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has now said that only 508 districts out of the total 766 districts in the country have declared themselves manual-scavenging free.

**More on the Topic:**

- Manual scavenging includes the disposal of human excreta manually from dry latrines, and public streets and the maintenance and sweeping of septic tanks, sewers and gutters.



- Any person who has been employed to handle un-decomposed human waste from an insanitary latrine, open drain or pit or railway track is a manual scavenger.
- The person could have been employed by any one - say, someone from their village or by an agency or contractor.
- Exception - Any person who has been employed to clean human waste and does so with the help of the appropriate protective gear and equipment will not be considered a manual scavenger under Manual Scavenger and construction of dry latrines prohibition law.

#### Initiatives by Government to Eliminate Manual Scavenging:

- According to the scheme for rehabilitation of manual scavengers, the 58,000 identified sewer workers have been given a one-time cash pay-out of ₹40,000 each.
- In addition, around 22,000 of them (less than half) have been connected to skills training programmes.
- Subsidies and loans are available to any of them wishing to set up their own business.

#### Why Manual Scavenging is Prevalent in India:

- **Social and caste system:** Manual scavenging is closely tied to India's deeply ingrained social and caste system. Dalits, formerly known as "untouchables," have traditionally been assigned the degrading and unhygienic task of manual scavenging. This practice continues to be perpetuated by social discrimination, prejudice, and the hierarchical nature of Indian society.
- **Gender Aspect:** Most of the provisions for the rehabilitation under the scheme were **not gender sensitive and directed towards men**, although around 95-98% of the individuals involved in manual scavenging are women.
- **Fault in Focus of the Scheme:** According to SRMS Survey, around 60% of those involved in manual scavenging are in rural areas (larger villages and settlements). However, the focus of the **scheme was on urban areas**.
- **Economic factors:** Poverty and limited employment opportunities contribute to the persistence of manual scavenging. Many individuals engaged in this practice come from marginalized and economically disadvantaged communities.
- **Lack of enforcement and implementation:** Despite legislation banning manual scavenging, enforcement and implementation have been weak. The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, prohibits the engagement of individuals in manual scavenging and provides for their rehabilitation. However, due to inadequate monitoring and enforcement, the practice continues clandestinely.

#### Way Ahead:

- Addressing the issue of manual scavenging requires a multifaceted approach involving awareness campaigns, investment in sanitation infrastructure, promotion of alternative livelihoods, strict law enforcement, and efforts to dismantle the social prejudices associated with caste-based discrimination.
- While progress has been made, eradicating manual scavenging completely remains a significant challenge for India.

Source: Hindu

### 3. Price Support Scheme



#### Topic: Economy

**In News:** The Union government has removed procurement ceilings on some pulses in a move to curb inflationary pressures and boost supply.

#### More on the Topic:

- The procurement ceiling of 40% for tur, urad and masoor under the Price Support Scheme operations for 2023-24 have been removed.
- Price Support Scheme (PSS) is a part of Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan (AASA) scheme.
- The AASHA scheme has three components, and these will complement the existing schemes of the Department of Food and Public Distribution for procurement of paddy, wheat and other cereals and coarse grains where procurement is at MSP now.

#### Price Support Scheme (PSS):

- In this part physical procurement of pulses, oilseeds and copra will be done by Central Nodal Agencies. Besides NAFED, Food Cooperation of India will also take up procurement of crops under PSS.
- The expenditure and losses due to procurement will be borne by the Centre.

#### Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS):

- Under this, the Centre proposes to cover all oilseeds and pay the farmer directly into his bank account the difference between the MSP and his actual selling/modal price.

- Farmers who sell their crops in recognised mandis within the notified period can benefit from it.

#### Private Procurement & Stockist Scheme (PPSS):

- In the case of oilseeds, States will have the option to roll out PPSSs in select districts where a private player can procure crops at MSP when market prices drop below MSP.
- The private player will then be compensated through a **service charge that will be up to a maximum of 15 per cent of the MSP of the crop.**

Source: Hindu

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## 4. Hyper Sonic Missile



**Topic: Science and Technology**

**In News:** Iran has unveiled Fattah, a hypersonic ballistic missile.

#### More on the Topic:

- Hypersonic missiles are projectiles that can move at a speed of at least Mach 5, or five times the speed of sound. That is 1.7km (1.05 miles) per second or 6,174km (3,836 miles) per hour.
- Some ballistic missiles already reach these speeds, but this new class of weapon separates itself from the pack as it can take a more random path to its intended target after plunging back into the earth's atmosphere.
- This makes it far more difficult to be detected by radar systems and to be destroyed by defence shields.

**Which countries possess hypersonic weapons?**



- While the US, Russia and China are in advanced stages of hypersonic missile programmes, **India, France, Germany, Japan and Australia too are developing hypersonic weapons.**

#### Indian Hypersonic Missile Programme:

- India is also developing an indigenous, dual capable (conventional as well as nuclear) hypersonic cruise missile as part of its Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle Programme and has successfully tested a Mach 6 scramjet in June 2019 and September 2020.

Source: HT

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## 5. Suriname

Topic: Places in News



**In News:** President Droupadi Murmu conferred Suriname's highest civilian award.

#### More on the Topic:

- The report provides an overview of global and regional unemployment, the impact of rising debt levels on labour markets and analyses social protection policy gaps in developing countries.
- **Suriname** is officially known as the **Republic of Suriname**.
- Most of the country's population are the descendants of the slaves and labourers brought in from Africa and Asia.
- **It is bordered by;** The Atlantic Ocean in the North, French Guiana in the East, Guyana in the West and Brazil in the South.
- It is the smallest sovereign state in South America.
- **Major rivers:** Commewijne River, the Coppename River, the Courantyne River, Marowijne (Moroni) River etc.

### India and Suriname:

- On June 5, 1873, the first group of Indians reached the shores of Suriname, on board the ship Lalla Rookh.
- The Indo-Surinamese form the largest ethnic group in the country, making 27.4% of the population.
- Descendants of these workers in Suriname primarily speak Sarnami Hindustani, a language that arose from the confluence of Awadhi and Bhojpuri.

Source: Hindu

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## 6.OPEC+

### OPEC Membership, 2019



### Topic: International Relations

**In News:** The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies including Russia, a group known as OPEC+ which pumps around 40% of the world's crude, agreed on a new oil output deal.

### More on the Topic:

- OPEC+ countries include 13 OPEC member countries and Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.



- The objective of the organisation is to **“coordinate and unify the petroleum policies of its Member Countries** and ensure the **stabilisation of oil markets in order to secure an efficient, economic and regular supply** of petroleum to consumers, a steady income to producers and a fair return on capital for those investing in the petroleum industry.
- OPEC Member countries are: Algeria, Angola, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela.
- **Headquarter:** Vienna, Austria.

Source: Hindu

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## 7. Dashboard Antardrishti

Topic: e Governance



**In News:** RBI Governor launches financial inclusion dashboard Antardrishti.

### More on the Topic:

- As the name suggests, the dashboard will provide **the required insight to assess and monitor the progress of financial inclusion by capturing relevant parameters.**
- This facility will also **enable to gauge the extent of financial exclusion at granular levels across the country** so that such areas can be addressed.

### RBI Financial Inclusion Measures:

- The Reserve Bank has been promoting financial inclusion through various policy initiatives.
- To measure the extent of financial inclusion the central bank had constructed the **Financial Inclusion (FI) Index in 2021**, based on **three dimensions of financial inclusion -- 'Access', 'Usage' and 'Quality'**.
- The FI-Index has been conceptualised as a comprehensive index incorporating details of banking, investments, insurance, postal as well as the pension sector in consultation with the government and respective sectoral regulators.

Source: Hindu

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