

National

Cabinet approves continuation of PM Fasal Bima Yojana, weather crop insurance scheme



About News:-

- ❖ The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the continuation of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and the Restructured Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) until 2025-26, with an overall outlay of Rs. 69,515 crore from 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- ❖ The decision aims to provide crucial risk coverage for crops affected by non-preventable natural calamities, benefiting farmers nationwide.
- ❖ The Cabinet has also approved the establishment of the Fund for Innovation and Technology (FIAT) with a corpus of Rs. 824 crore.
- ❖ This fund will support large-scale technological infusion, ensuring greater transparency and improved claim calculation and settlement under the scheme.

Technological advancements for crop insurance

- ❖ The YES-TECH (Yield Estimation System using Technology) initiative will play a key role in enhancing the scheme's implementation.
- ❖ YES-TECH utilizes remote sensing technology for yield estimation, giving at least 30% weightage to technology-based yield estimates.

- ❖ At present, nine major states, including Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka, have adopted this system, with additional states being onboarded quickly. With the wider rollout of YES-TECH, traditional crop-cutting experiments will be phased out.
- ❖ For the 2023-24 season, claim calculation and settlement have already been completed under YES-TECH. Madhya Pradesh has fully adopted technology-based yield estimation.

Focus on northeastern states

- ❖ The government is prioritizing the saturation of crop insurance coverage for farmers in the northeastern states.
- ❖ The Centre will continue to share 90% of the premium subsidy for these states.
- ❖ However, due to the voluntary nature of the scheme and the relatively low gross cropped area in these regions, the government has provided flexibility for states to reallocate funds to other development projects and schemes, avoiding the surrender of unused funds.

State

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin inaugurates India's first glass bridge over the sea in Kanniyakumari



About News:-

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Monday inaugurated India's first glass bridge over the sea, connecting Tiruvalluvar Statue and Vivekananda Rock Memorial in Kanniyakumari.

Key Points:-

- ❖ The bridge constructed at Rs37 crore is 77 metres long and 10 metres wide with a glass floor 2.5 metres wide. The chief minister honoured 22 Thirukural scholars during the event.
- ❖ Located in Kanniyakumari, this major architectural marvel, connects two iconic landmarks, the Vivekananda Rock Memorial and the 133-foot Thiruvalluvar statue.
- ❖ Stalin arrived at the Poompuhar ferry jetty at Kanyakumari in the evening and took a ferry to Thiruvalluvar Statue.

Economic

Small savings scheme interest rates constant for a fourth consecutive quarter of January-March

About News:-

- ❖ The government has decided to keep the interest rates on various small savings schemes unchanged for the fourth consecutive quarter, starting from January 1, 2025, and continuing through to March 31, 2025.



Key Points:-

- ❖ A notification issued by the finance ministry confirmed: "The rates of interest on various small savings schemes for the fourth quarter of FY 2024-25, starting from January 1, 2025, and ending on March 31, 2025, shall remain unchanged from those notified for the third quarter (October 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024) of FY 2024-25."
- ❖ The notification further added that the interest rate on deposits under the Sukanya Samriddhi Scheme will remain at 8.2 percent. The rate for a three-year term deposit continues at 7.1 percent, in line with the current quarter.

- ❖ For the popular Public Provident Fund (PPF) and post office savings deposit schemes, the interest rates will stay at 7.1 percent and 4 percent, respectively. The Kisan Vikas Patra will offer an interest rate of 7.5 percent, with investments maturing in 115 months. The National Savings Certificate (NSC) will continue to provide an interest rate of 7.7 percent for the January-March 2025 period.
- ❖ Similarly, the Monthly Income Scheme will maintain an interest rate of 7.4 percent, as it has in the current quarter.
- ❖ This marks the fourth consecutive quarter where the interest rates have been unchanged. The government last made adjustments to some of the schemes for the fourth quarter of the previous fiscal year.
- ❖ These small savings schemes, which are majorly operated by post offices and banks, have their interest rates notified by the government every quarter.

Appointment

Sh. Bhuvnesh Kumar assumes charge as Chief Executive Officer of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)



About News:-

- ❖ Shri Bhuvnesh Kumar assumed charge as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on Wednesday. He is an officer of the 1995 batch IAS from the Uttar Pradesh cadre.

Key Points:-

- ❖ A graduate and gold medalist from the National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra, he held several important positions both at the Centre and in his cadre state.

- ❖ Along with CEO UIDAI, he continues to be an Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India. Earlier, he has also served as the Joint Secretary in MeitY.
- ❖ In Uttar Pradesh, he served as the Principal Secretary in the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development, and Fisheries. Previously he was the Secretary of Finance, Secretary of MSME, Secretary of Technical Education, and Divisional Commissioner Department of Land Revenue in the Government of Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ He was also the Secretary in charge of Sports and Youth Welfare, Planning, and Vocational Education among many other important positions in his cadre.

Defence

Indian Navy Set To Commission Three Frontline Fleet Assets Nilgiri, Surat And Vaghsheer

About News:-

- ❖ 15 Jan 25 is set to become a landmark day in India's history as the Indian Navy prepares to commission three frontline combatants - Nilgiri, the lead ship of the Project 17A stealth frigate class; Surat, the fourth and final ship of the Project 15B stealth destroyer class; and Vaghsheer, the sixth and final submarine of the Scorpene-class project - together at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai.



Key Points:-

- ❖ This historic event will provide a significant boost to the Indian Navy's combat potential while underscoring the country's pre-eminent status in indigenous shipbuilding.

- ❖ All three platforms have been designed and constructed entirely at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai, a testament to India's growing self-reliance in the critical domain of defense production.
- ❖ The successful commissioning of these advanced warships and submarines highlights the rapid progress made in warship design and construction, cementing India's position as a global leader in defense manufacturing.
- ❖ Nilgiri, the lead ship of Project 17A, is a major advancement over the Shivalik-class frigates, incorporating significant stealth features and reduced radar signatures through state-of-the-art technology.
- ❖ The Project 15B destroyer, Surat, is the culmination of the follow-on class to the Kolkata-class (Project 15A) destroyers, featuring substantial improvements in design and capabilities. Both ships were designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and are equipped with advanced sensors and weapon packages developed primarily in India or through strategic collaborations with leading global manufacturers.
- ❖ Equipped with modern aviation facilities, Nilgiri and Surat can operate a range of helicopters, including Chetak, ALH, Sea King, and the newly inducted MH-60R, during both day and night operations. Features such as a Rail-Less Helicopter Traversing System and a Visual Aid and Landing System ensure seamless operations under all conditions.
- ❖ These ships also include specific accommodations to support a sizeable complement of women officers and sailors, aligning with the Navy's progressive steps toward gender inclusion in frontline combat roles.
- ❖ Vaghsheer, the sixth Scorpene-class submarine under the Kalvari-class Project 75, is one of the most silent and versatile diesel-electric submarines in the world.

- ❖ It is designed to undertake a wide range of missions, including anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, area surveillance, and special operations. Armed with wire-guided torpedoes, anti-ship missiles, and advanced sonar systems, the submarine also features modular construction, allowing for future upgrades such as the integration of Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) technology.
- ❖ The combined commissioning of Nilgiri, Surat, and Vaghsheer demonstrates India's unparalleled progress in defense self-reliance and indigenous shipbuilding.
- ❖ The vessels have undergone rigorous trials, including machinery, hull, fire-fighting, and damage control assessments, as well as proving all navigation and communication systems at sea, making them fully operational and ready for deployment.

Award

DARPG issues the guidelines for the 28th National e-Governance Awards Scheme 2025

About News:-

- ❖ The DARPG issued the scheme guidelines for the 28th National Awards for e-Governance (NAeG) 2025. Nominations for the 28th National Awards for e-Governance can be submitted on the web portal (<http://www.nceg.gov.in>) from 1st January 2025.



Key Points:-

- ❖ The web portal was launched by the Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) Shri V. Srinivas, and presented the guidelines under which nominations can be submitted. Secretary Ministry of Panchayati Raj Shri Vivek Bharadwaj addressed the Senior officials of Central Ministries/Departments, AR and IT departments of States/UTs, and the DCs/DMs of States/ UTs in hybrid mode.
- ❖ 3 Gold Awardees of NAeG 2024 presented their experiences. The nominations under the six categories can be submitted upto 5 pm on 15th February 2025.
- ❖ The National Awards for e-Governance Scheme is recognized amongst the most competitive and prestigious digital governance awards schemes in the country and the objective of the Scheme is to recognize and promote excellence in the implementation of e-Governance initiatives.
- ❖ The NAeG Awards, 2025 will consist of: (i) a Trophy, (ii) a Certificate, and (iii) an incentive of Rs 10 lakh for Gold Awardees and Rs 5 Lakhs for Silver Awardees to be awarded to the District/organization for being utilized for implementation of project/programme or bridging resources gaps in any area of public welfare.
- ❖ This year 16 Awards are being conferred under the NAeG 2025. Of these 10 will be Gold Awards and 6 will be silver Awards.
- ❖ For the year 2025, there are six categories under which the National Awards for e-Governance 2026 will be conferred.
- ❖ These categories are (i) Government Process Re-engineering by use of technology for Digital Transformation(ii) Innovation by Use of AI and other new age technologies for providing Citizen-Centric Services, (iii) Best e-Gov. Practices/Innovation in Cyber Security (iv)Grassroot Level Initiatives for Deepening/ Widening of Service Delivery with focus on initiatives by Districts/ ULBs/Gram Panchayats (v) Replication and Scaling up of Successful National Awarded Projects like NAeG, Prime Minister Awards in Excellence, Awards conferred by other Central Ministries by State/UT/ District The NAeG 2024 (vi)Digital transformation by use of data analytics in digital platforms by Central Ministries/States/UTs

Sport

Bengal beat Kerala 1-0 to win Santosh Trophy for 33rd time



About News:-

- ❖ West Bengal extended their supremacy in the National Football Championship for Santosh Trophy with a 1-0 win over Kerala in the summit showdown here on Tuesday, claiming the title for an unprecedented 33rd time.

Key Points:-

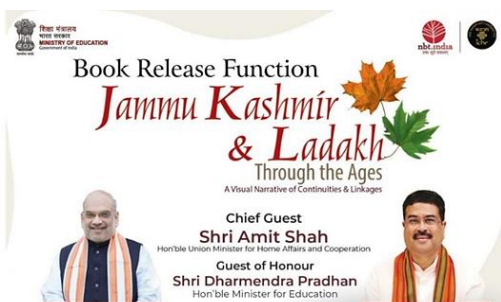
- ❖ Robi Hansda scored the only goal of the match in the added time of the second half at the GMC Balayogi Athletic Stadium.
- ❖ Robi found the back of the net with an easy finish from point-blank range after Aditya Thapa headed the ball into the box.

Award winners:

- ❖ Winners - West Bengal, Santosh Trophy, and a cash prize of Rs 5 Lakhs.
- ❖ Runners Up - Kerala, Kamla Gupta Trophy, and a cash prize of Rs 3 lakhs.
- ❖ Peter Thangaraj Player of the Championship - Robi Hansda of West Bengal.
- ❖ Tulsidas Balaram Player of the Final Match - Robi Hansda of West Bengal.

Book

Shri Amit Shah to release a book, titled 'Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh: Through the Ages' in New Delhi



About News:-

- ❖ Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, will preside over a book release function on 2nd January 2025 in New Delhi as the Chief Guest.
- ❖ Union Minister for Education, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan will be the Guest of Honour.
- ❖ Eminent authors, academicians, officials of the Ministry, and other dignitaries will also be present at the event

Key Points:-

- ❖ The book, titled 'Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh: Through the Ages' seeks to present the story of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh.
- ❖ The title attempts to document the story of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh from a perspective and format that enables an overview for both the subject specialist and those less conversant.
- ❖ It is presented in seven sections that cover over three thousand years of the region's history.
- ❖ Each illustration selected for inclusion has been done with care, being representative of age, its importance, and its contribution to the larger historical canvas of Indian history.
- ❖ Published in Hindi and English, this book is the result of collaborative efforts of the National Book Trust, India, and the Indian Council of Historical Research.

Important Day

Lokpal Day Celebration on 16th January 2025



About Day:-

- ❖ The first such commemoration of the Lokpal Day is scheduled on 16th January 2025, in the auspicious presence of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India Shri Justice Sanjiv Khanna as the Chief Guest, at Zorawar Auditorium, Manekshaw Centre, Delhi Cantt, New Delhi.

Key Points:-

- ❖ The Lokpal of India in its meeting held on 14.03.2024, resolved that owing to the establishment of the Body called the Lokpal of India to vide Notification issued on 16.01.2014 under Section 1(4), 16th January of every year will be observed as the 'Lokpal Day'.
- ❖ Shri Justice A. M. Khanwilkar has been administered the oath of office on 10.03.2024, as the second Chairperson of the Lokpal of India. Presently, the Body consists of the Chairperson and six Members, since March 2024.
- ❖ The program will start at 6 PM with the arrival of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India and other dignitaries including Judges of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, Chief Justices and Judges of the High Courts, Executive Chairpersons and Member Secretary of Legal Services Authority, Lokayuktas and Up-Lokayuktas of States, Secretaries of Government of India, Heads of Investigating Agencies, CEOs, Law Officers and CVOs of PSUs/Public Banks.
- ❖ During the ceremony, the Hon'ble Attorney General of India Shri R Venkatramani, Hon'ble Shri Justice N. Santosh Hegde former Judge Supreme Court of India, and Padma Bhushan Shri Anna Hazare will be felicitated. The Hon'ble Chief Justice of India will address the gathering, including on the role and functions of the Ombudsman and the way forward.

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