

CURRENT AFFAIRS

PM-AASHA scheme approved by Union Cabinet

To give a major boost to the pro-farmer initiatives of the Government of India, the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved a new Umbrella Scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan' (PM-AASHA) on 12th September 2018.

Central government is committed to realizing the vision of doubling farmers' income by 2022. Government of India increased the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of kharif crops by following the principle of 1.5 times the cost of production. However MSP is not adequate and it is more important that farmers should get full benefit of the announced MSP.

For this, government realizes that it is essential that if price of the agriculture produce market is less than MSP, in that case State and Central Governments should purchase either at MSP or work in a manner to provide MSP for the farmers through some other mechanism. With this approach, Cabinet has approved the Umbrella Scheme of PM-AASHA with three sub-schemes. They are:

- 1) Price Support Scheme (PSS)
- 2) Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS) or Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana
- 3) Pilot of Private Procurement & Stockist Scheme (PPPS)

1) Price Support Scheme is a physical procurement of pulses, oilseeds, and 'copra' (kernel of coconut) will be done by Central Nodal Agencies with the proactive role of the state governments.

Further, in addition to NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India) the Food Cooperation of India (FCI) will take up PSS operations in states and districts. The procurement expenditure and losses due to procurement will be borne by the Union Government as per norms.

2) Price Deficiency Payment Scheme is proposed to cover all oilseeds for which minimum support price (MSP) is notified.

In this, direct payment of the difference between the MSP and the selling/ model price will be made to pre-registered farmers. All payments will be done directly into the registered bank account of the farmer.

3) Under Pilot of Private Procurement & Stockist Scheme (PPPS), the participation of private sector in procurement operation needs to be piloted on the basis of the learnings the ambit of private participation in procurement operations.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) will be open-ended scheme

Union Cabinet on 5th August 2018 had given its consent to turn the Pradhan Mantri JanDhan Yojana (PMJDY) into an open-ended scheme. This is being done to continue the scheme also known as the National Mission on Financial Inclusion beyond August 28th, 2018. Now the scheme will have higher insurance cover and more overdraft (OD) facility.

Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said that the government has shifted its emphasis from "each household" to "all adult individuals".

Now Jan Dhan Yojana account holders can avail the Over Draft (OD) facility of Rs.10,000. Earlier the limit was Rs.5,000 only. In addition, no condition will be attached for any overdraft up to Rs.2,000.

The more attractive point is that the age range for availing the OD facility has been revised from the 18-60 years to 18-65 years.

Accidental insurance cover for new Rupay card holders to be raised from Rs.1 lakh to Rs.2 lakh to new PMJDY accounts opened after 28th August 2018.

He further said that 32.41 crore accounts have been opened so far and garnered as much as Rs.81,200 crore deposits.

SCO Anti-Terror Drill in Russia

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) 'Peace Mission' exercise held between 24th August – 29th August 2018 at Chebarkul, Russia.

The opening ceremony of the peace mission exercise was conducted at the Combined Arms Range at Chebarkul, Russia. Approximately 3000 troops from the Forces of all eight SCO member states participated. The 200-member strong Indian contingent has 167 Indian Army personnel including four women officers and 33 personnel from the Indian Air Force.

The main aim of the exercise to enhance counter-terror cooperation among the eight SCO member countries. The scope of the exercise includes professional interaction, mutual understanding of drills & procedures, establishment of joint command and control structures and elimination of terrorist threat in urban counter terrorist scenario.

This is the first time since Independence that India and Pakistan were part of a military exercise, though the armies of the two nations have worked together in UN peace keeping missions. India and Pakistan were admitted as observers of the SCO in 2005 and were admitted as full members in SCO in 2017.

India feels that as an SCO member, it will be able to play a major role in addressing the threat of terrorism in the region. It is also keen on deepening its security related cooperation with the SCO and its Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) which specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence.

President of India three nation visit to Cyprus, Bulgaria & Czech Republic

President of India Ram Nath Kovind started his tour with Cyprus between 2nd – 4th September 2018. He and the president of Cyprus Nicos Anasrasiades exchanged views on economic cooperation and took decision on revision of the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement made in 2016.

Both leaders signed two agreements on money laundering and on cooperation in the field of environment. The MoU between Financial Intelligence Unit, India and Unit for Combating Money Laundering of Cyprus also made. It must be noted that the discussion on promotion of business collaboration in the fields of IT and IT enabled services, tourism, shipping and renewable energy also made.

President of India visited Bulgaria between 4th – 6th September 2018. He and Bulgarian President attended a business forum. Both made agreements in the fields of tourism, science and technology cooperation, civil nuclear research and cooperation and to promote Hindi studies. President Kovind and Bulgarian President Radev unveiled Mahatma Gandhi's statue in Sofia's South Park.

On September 6th, 2018, President Kovind addressed the Indian Community at Prague, Czech Republic as a part of his 3 nation's tour. He made 5 various agreements with Czech Republic in the fields of Science and Technology, Visas, Nuclear Energy partnership etc.

US Open 2018 concluded

138th edition of US Open tennis and the fourth and final Grand Slam event of the 2018 concluded on 9th September 2018 held on outdoor courts of USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York.

The tournament was an event run by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and was part of the 2018 ATP World Tour. Total prize-money compensation for the 2018 US Open is \$53 million, more than 5% increase on the same total last year. This makes the US Open the most lucrative and highest paying tennis grand slam in the world. Novak Djokovic produced superb performance to beat Juan Martin del Potro in the US Open final and win his 14th Grand Slam title. Naomi Osaka of Japan won her first Grand Slam title beating Serena Williams of USA.

India's top singles player Yuki Bhambri once again failed to clear the first round hurdle of a Grand Slam losing to Frenchman Pierre Hugues Herbert in straight sets at the U.S. Open.

World No.2 Roger Federer crashed out of the U.S. Open 2018 championship, losing to unseeded Australian John Millman. Mike Bryan of USA and Jack Sock of USA won the Men doubles. The women's doubles winners are Ashleigh Barty of Australia and CoCo Vandeweghe of USA.

Winners of US Open (tennis) 2018		
Category	Winner	Runner-up
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	Juan Martín del Potro (Argentina)
Women's Singles	Naomi Osaka (Japan)	Serena Williams (United States)
Men's Doubles	Mike Bryan (United States), Jack Sock (United States)	Lukasz Kubot (Poland), Marcelo Melo (Brazil)
Women's Doubles	Ashleigh Barty (Australia), CoCo Vandeweghe (United States)	Tímea Babos (Hungary), Kristina Mladenovic (France)
Mixed Doubles	Bethanie Mattek-Sands (United States), Jamie Murray (United Kingdom)	Alicja Rosolska (Poland), Nikola Pietrangeli (Croatia)

MODEL QUESTIONS

- Union Government declared its commitment to the vision of doubling farmers income by?
 - 2022
 - 2030
 - 2025
 - 2040
 - 2020
- As per the statement of Finance Minister how much percent of the PMJDY account holders are woman?
 - 53
 - 75
 - 71
 - 80
 - 100
- SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) anti-terror drill was held in Russia. Where is the head quarter of SCO?
 - Astana
 - Bishkek
 - Moscow
 - Beijing
 - Dushanbe
- President of India and with the President of Bulgaria, unveiled a statue of Mahatma Gandhi at South Park, Sofia. What is the currency of Bulgaria?
 - Lev
 - Lira
 - Lek
 - lilangeni
 - Pound
- First Japanese player ever to win a Grand Slam title is?
 - Naomi Osaka
 - Misaki Doi
 - Miyu Kato
 - Makoto Ninomiya
 - Kimiko Date

KEY: 1-1; 2-1; 3-4; 4-1; 5-1.

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