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e-RUPI

- It will be India's electronic voucher based digital payment system. It will be a person-specific and purpose-specific digital payments system.
- It has been developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the National Health Authority.
- **Working** - This digital payments medium will be delivered to mobile phones of beneficiaries in form of an SMS-string or a QR code.
- This e-voucher will be redeemable at specific accepting centres without any credit or debit card, a mobile app or internet banking.
- e-RUPI will connect the sponsors of the services with the beneficiaries and service providers in a digital manner without any physical interface.
- **Issuing** - The system has been built by the NPCI on its UPI platform, and has on-boarded banks that will be the issuing entities.
- Any corporate or government agency will have to approach the partner banks (both private and public), with the details of specific persons and the purpose for which payments have to be made.
- Beneficiaries will be identified using their mobile number and a voucher allocated by a bank to the service provider in the name of a given person would only be delivered to that person.
- **Use cases** - e-RUPI will ensure a leak-proof delivery of welfare services.
- Even the private sector can leverage these digital vouchers as part of their employee welfare and corporate social responsibility programmes.
- **CBDC** - The RBI had said that it has been working towards a phased implementation strategy for a [Central Bank Digital Currency](#) (CBDC).

National Social Assistance Programme

- During the COVID time, the Government paid ex-gratia of Rs. 1000 (in two instalments) to the old aged, widows and divyangjan beneficiaries of NSAP

under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana Package (PMGKYP).

- NSAP is a social security and welfare programme that supports aged persons, widows, disabled persons and bereaved families on death of primary bread winner, belonging to **below poverty line** households.
- This program is implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development. It is implemented in rural areas as well as urban areas.
- It was brought within the umbrella of 'Core of Core' scheme in 2016.
- **Components** - NSAP at its inception in 1995 had three components,
 - a. National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS),
 - b. National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and
 - c. National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS).
- [In 2001, NMBS was subsequently transferred from the Ministry of Rural development to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.]
- **Schemes under NSAP** - Presently NSAP comprises of five schemes.
- IGNOAPS (Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme) - Monthly pension at the rate of Rs.300/- p.m to widows in the age group of 40 to 79 years.
- IGNWPS (Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme) - Monthly pension at the rate of Rs.200/- p.m to old age persons in the age group of 60 to 79 years.
- IGNDPS (Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme) - Monthly pension at the rate of Rs.300/- p.m to divyangjan in the age group of 18-79 years. Dwarfs will also be an eligible category for this pension.
- NFBS (National Family Benefit Scheme) provides a one-time lump-sum amount of Rs.20,000/- is paid to a bereaved family, on the death of primary breadwinner, aged between 18-60 years.
- Annapurna Scheme - Launched in 2000, this scheme provides food security to meet the requirement of those senior citizens who, though eligible, have remained uncovered under the IGNOAPS.
 - Under the Annapurna Scheme, 10 kgs of food grains (wheat or rice) is given p.m. per beneficiary.
- For the first three schemes (IGNOAPS, IGNWPS and IGNDPS), the amount of pension is increased to Rs. 500/- p.m in respect of these beneficiaries on reaching the age of 80 years and above.

National Population Policy 2000

- The first National Population Policy (NPP) was framed by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Planning in 1976.
- It suggested a wide spectrum of programmes including raising the statutory age of marriage, introducing monetary incentives, paying special attention to

improving female literacy, etc.

- Introduced in 2000, NPP 2000 provided a comprehensive framework to provide the reproductive and health needs of the people of India upto 2010.
- **Immediate objective** of the NPP is to address the unmet needs for contraception, health care infrastructure, and health personnel.
- It also aims to provide integrated service delivery for basic reproductive and child health care.
- **Medium-term objective** is to bring the Total fertility Rate (TFR) to replacement levels (TFR of 2.1) by 2010, by implementing inter-sectoral operational strategies.
- **Long-term objective** is to achieve a stable population by 2045, at a level consistent with the requirements of sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental protection.

National Programme for Family Planning

- India was the first country in the world to have launched a National Programme for Family Planning in 1952.
- National Programme for Family Planning has undergone transformation in terms of policy and actual programme implementation.
- Under this Programme, various initiatives have been taken providing broad range of services mentioned as given below,
- **Mission Parivar Vikas** has been introduced in 2017 for substantially increasing access to contraceptives and family planning services in 146 high fertility districts in 7 high focus states.
- **Expanded Contraceptive Choices** - Contraceptives basket has been expanded by including new contraceptives namely Injectable contraceptive (Antara programme) and Centchroman (Chhaya).
 - This basket already has contraceptives like condoms, Combined oral contraceptive pills, Emergency contraceptive pills, Intrauterine contraceptive uterine device (IUCD) and Sterilization.
- **Compensation scheme for sterilization acceptors** provides compensation for loss of wages to the beneficiary and also to the service provider team for conducting sterilisation.
- **PPIUCD** (Post-partum Intrauterine contraceptive device) services are provided post delivery.
- **FP-LMIS** (Family Planning Logistics Management Information System) is dedicated software that ensures smooth forecasting, procurement and distribution of family planning commodities across all levels of health facilities.

Achievement of the above initiatives

- TFR has declined from 2.9 (2005) to 2.2 (2018). 28 out of 36 States/UTs have achieved the replacement level fertility of 2.1 or less.
- Crude Birth Rate has declined from 23.8 (2005) to 20.0 (2018).
- India's Wanted Fertility Rate has declined from 1.9 (NFHS III) to 1.8 (NFHS IV).

Near-surface Shear Layer

- Astronomers from Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), and IISc, Bangalore, have given the explanation of the existence of a near-surface shear layer (NSSL) in the Sun.
- NSSL is a layer in the Sun, where the internal rotation profile of the Sun changes sharply. This layer exists very close to the solar surface, where there is an outward decrease in angular velocity.
- In this study, **Thermal wind balance equation** was used.
- This equation explains how the slight difference in temperature between solar poles and equator, called thermal wind term, is balanced by the centrifugal force appearing due to solar differential rotation.
- It was thought that this condition is true only in the interior of the Sun.
- However, in the study, this belief actually holds true near the surface as well.
- If this condition is true near the solar surface, it can explain the existence of NSSL, which is inferred in helioseismology (technique of using sound waves to peek inside the Sun) based observation.
- **Significance** - Understanding NSSL is crucial for the study of several solar phenomena like sunspot formation, solar cycle, and it will also help in understanding such phenomena in other stars.

Solar Differential Rotation

- This phenomenon is caused because different parts of the Sun rotate at different speeds.
- The Sun's rotation period varies with latitude on the Sun since it is made of gas. The Sun's equator spins faster than the poles.
 - a. Equatorial regions (latitude = 0 degrees) rotate in about 25.6 days.
 - b. Regions at 60 degrees latitude rotate in about 30.9 days.
 - c. Polar Regions rotate in about 36 days.
- The Sun rotates around an axis that is roughly perpendicular to the plane of the ecliptic; the Sun's rotational axis is tilted by 7.25° from perpendicular to the ecliptic.
- It rotates in the counter-clockwise direction (when viewed from the north),

the same direction that the planets rotate.

Amagarh Fort

- This fort in Jaipur is at the centre of a conflict between the tribal Meena community and local Hindu groups.
- **Dispute** - Members of the Meena community say the Amagarh Fort was built by a Meena ruler predating Rajput rule in Jaipur, and this has been their holy site for centuries where they worship Amba Mata.
- Meena (Meos or Mewati) community members accused Hindu groups of trying to appropriate tribal symbols into the Hindutva fold, and of changing the name of Amba Mata to Ambika Bhawani.
- [Like other tribal groups, Meenas too worship ancestors. Amba Mata was such an ancestor, and not a god. Amba Mata is not related to Ambika Bhawani or Durga.]
- **History** - The present form of the Amagarh Fort was given in the 18th century by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, founder of Jaipur.
- Prior to Rajput rule by the Kachhwaha dynasty, Jaipur and its nearby regions were ruled by Meenas, who had political control.
- It is believed that the fort was built by a Meena Sardar. Sardars from the Meena community ruled large parts of Rajasthan till around 1100 AD.

Source: PIB, The Indian Express



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