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Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has provided an enhanced allocation of Rs. 2250 Crore for the year 2021-22 for 'Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture' (MIDH).
- MIDH is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by the Agriculture Ministry from 2014-15 under Green Revolution - Krishonnati Yojana.
- **Objective** - MIDH aims for the holistic growth of the horticulture sector covering fruits, vegetables, root & tuber crops, mushrooms, spices, flowers, aromatic plants, coconut, cashew, cocoa and bamboo.
- **Funding pattern** - The Government of India (GOI) contributes 60% for developmental programmes in all the states except in North East and Himalayan states, 40% share is contributed by State Governments.
- In the case of North Eastern States and Himalayan States, GOI contributes 90%.
- In case of National Horticulture Board (NHB), Coconut Development Board (CDB), Central Institute for Horticulture (CIH), Nagaland and the National Level Agencies (NLA), GOI contributes 100%.

S.No.	Sub-schemes of MIDH	Target group / area of operation
1.	National Horticulture Mission (NHM)	It is implemented by State Horticulture Missions in all states & UTs except states in NE and Himalayan Region.
2.	Horticulture Mission for North East & Himalayan States (HMNEH)	All states in NE and Himalayan Region - Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Jammu & Kashmir
3.	National Bamboo Mission (NBM)	All states & UTs
4.	National Horticulture Board (NHB)	All states & UTs focusing on commercial horticulture
5.	Coconut Development Board (CDB)	All States and UTs where coconut is grown

6.	Central Institute for Horticulture (CIH)	NE states, focusing on HRD and capacity building.

MLA-LAD Fund

- Rajasthan Government to provide ₹3 crore each from the Member of Legislative Assembly Local Area Development (MLA-LAD) Fund to vaccinate people in the age group of 18 to 44 years against COVID-19.
    - For meeting the expenses, the fund for each legislator has been increased from ₹2.25 crore to ₹5 crore a year.
- The State Governments have been implementing MLALAD Fund on the lines of Member of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) Fund.
- MLA-LAD Fund enables each MLA to undertake small developmental works in his/her constituency through the funds allocated each year.
- Under this scheme, funds will be provided in the State's Plan Budget every year. The MLALAD Scheme is intended to be utilised for small but essential projects/works based on the felt needs of the local public.
- MLAs do not receive any money under this scheme. The government transfers it directly to the respective local authorities.
- MLAs can only recommend works in their constituencies based on a set of guidelines.
- Amounts per MLA and the guidelines for use of MLA-LAD funds differ across the states.

Lithuania quits China’s 17+1

- Lithuania quitted China’s 17+1 Cooperation between forum China and Central and Eastern European Countries (China-CEEC).
- It has also urged fellow EU members to pursue a much more effective 27+1 approach and communication with China.
- China-CEEC was founded in 2012 in Warsaw. Earlier, it was known as 17+1, but after Lithuania quits it in May 2021 it is known as 16+1.
- **Objectives** - China-CEEC is an initiative by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote business and investment relations between China and 16 CEEC countries.
- It also focuses on infrastructure projects such as bridges, motorways, railway lines and modernisation of ports in the member states.
- It is seen as an extension of China’s Belt and Road initiative (BRI).
- **Members of the initiative** - 12 EU member states and 5 Balkan states.
- They are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

CoviSelf

- India’s first Covid-19 self-use Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) kit CoviSelf has been approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). The test is developed in India by Mylab.
- [Rapid Antigen Test is a point-of-care test on swabbed nasal samples that detects antigens in the SARS-CoV-2 virus.
- RAT is done outside the usual lab setting, and it gives quick results.]
- CoviSelf can be used by symptomatic individuals and immediate contacts of confirmed cases as per ICMR guidelines.
- CoviSelf gives results within 15 minutes. This test is synced with a mobile app, which directly feeds the positive case’s report on the ICMR portal.
- ICMR has reiterated that all symptomatic individuals who test negative by RAT should get themselves immediately tested by RTPCR.

National Institute of Social Defence

- The Social Justice Ministry would give transgender persons a one-time financial assistance of ₹1,500 through direct benefit transfer, as their livelihoods have been affected due to the pandemic.
- For the immediate subsistence assistance to trans-persons, the beneficiaries can register with the National Institute of Social Defence.
- **Origin of NISD** - National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) is an Autonomous Body registered under Societies Act XXI of 1860 with the Government of National Capital Territory (NCT), Delhi.
- NISD was set up originally as the Central Bureau of Correctional Services in 1961, under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- In 1964, the Bureau was transferred to the then Department of Social Security. Since 1975, the Institute was a subordinate office under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- **Mandate** - To provide inputs for the social defence programmes of the Government of India through training, research & documentation.
- It is a central advisory body for the Social Justice Ministry. It is the nodal training and research institute in the field of social defence.
- It currently focuses on human resource development in the areas of drug abuse prevention, welfare of senior citizens, beggary prevention, transgender and other social defence issues.

Truenat KFD Point of Care Test

- The microchip-based Truenat KFD Point of Care Test (PoCT) has been found to be highly sensitive in the rapid diagnosis of Kyasanur forest disease (KFD), also known as monkey fever.

- This test, which was developed by ICMR-National Institute of Virology (ICMR-NIV), will be useful in quick patient management and controlling further spread of the virus.
- It includes a portable battery-operated Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) analyser, which is a universal cartridge-based sample pre-treatment kit and nucleic acid extraction device.

Kyasanur Forest Disease

- This disease was first identified in Kyasanur forest of Shimoga district, Karnataka during an investigation of monkey mortalities in 1957.
- It is caused by Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD) virus, which primarily affects humans and monkeys.
- **Transmission** - In nature, the virus is maintained mainly in hard ticks, monkeys, rodents and birds.
- It is transmitted via the bite of Haemaphysalis ticks and contact with carcasses of dead monkeys.
- **Symptoms** - The disease causes chills, frontal headache, body ache, and high fever for 5 to 12 days with a case fatality rate of 3 to 5%.
- **Severity** - Since its identification in 1957 and up to 2012, several cases and outbreaks have been reported every year, especially in five districts of Karnataka with average cases of about 400 to 500 per year.
- After 2012, the KFD has also been reported from adjoining states - Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Maharashtra. Eventually, KFD emerged as a grave public health problem spreading through the entire Western Ghats.
- To know more about Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD), click here.

Increased Subsidy on DAP

- The government has announced a 137% increase in the subsidy on di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) - A Nutrient-Based Subsidy Scheme.
- DAP is the second most commonly used fertiliser in India, next only to urea. DAP contains 46% phosphorus (P) and 18% nitrogen (N).
- This is similar to urea and muriate of potash (MOP), which again have very high N and potassium (K) content of 46% and 60%, respectively.
- Farmers normally apply DAP just before or at the time of sowing, as it is high in phosphorus that stimulates root establishment and development.

Nutrient Based Subsidy Scheme

- Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) Scheme for Fertilizers was initiated in 2010. It is implemented by the Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers.

- Under the scheme, a fixed amount of subsidy is provided on each grade of subsidized Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers, except for Urea, based on the nutrient content (N, P, K & S) present per kg.
- Additional subsidy is also given to the fertilizers which are fortified with secondary and micronutrients such as molybdenum (Mo) and zinc.
- The subsidized rates of the P&K fertilizers are determined by the Government annually based on the international and domestic prices of P&K fertilizers, exchange rate, inventory level in India etc.
- NBS policy intends to increase the consumption of P&K fertilizers so that optimum balance (N:P:K= 4:2:1) of NPK fertilization is achieved.
- In India, urea is the only controlled fertilizer and is sold at a statutory notified uniform sale price.

Source: PIB, The Hindu, The Indian Express

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