



Rajasthan Government to Give Free Seed Kits to Boost Millets Production | Rajasthan | 15 Mar 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the Rajasthan government has decided to distribute **free seeds of millets** and coarse grains to the state's farmers in a bid to **boost millet production**.

Key Points

- The State government will provide free mini kits of **maize seeds** to 1.2 million farmers, **pearl millet (bajra) seeds** to 800,000 farmers, **mustard seeds** to 700,000 farmers, **moong seeds** to 400,000 farmers, and **sorghum (jowar) and moth seeds** to 100,000 farmers.
 - Rajasthan has a share of **26%** in total millet production of the country.
 - **Pearl millet and sorghum are the main millet crops produced in the state**, with Rajasthan accounting for the country's 41% bajra production.
- The state government had started the **Rajasthan Millet Promotion Mission** in 2022-23 and made a provision of Rs 40 crore to set up 100 primary processing units by farmers, entrepreneurs and voluntary organisations.
- The **PM Kisan Samman Nidhi** has been increased from Rs 6,000 to Rs 8,000 per year per farmer while the **minimum support price** on wheat has been increased to Rs 2,400 per quintal by giving an additional bonus of Rs 125 per quintal.

Rajasthan Millets Promotion Mission

- It was **announced in 2022** by the Rajasthan government.
- Under the mission, provisions have been made to establish the **Millets Centre of Excellence under Jodhpur Agricultural University**, with a view to provide free seeds of **advanced varieties, distribution of micronutrients and bio-insecticide kits** at a subsidized rate, grant on establishment of the first **100 processing units of millets**, promotion for the modification of Bajra and other millets, encouragement and latest technical information to small and marginal farmers.
- It is known that **Ragi, Kangni, Sawan, Cheena, Kodo, and Kutki crops** are included under Millets. Public awareness programs have been proposed regarding their nutritional quality.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

- The PM-KISAN was **launched on February 24 in 2019**.
 - It is a **Central Sector Scheme with 100% funding** from the Government of India.
 - It is being implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
 - Under the scheme, the **Centre transfers an amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal installments**, directly into the bank accounts of the **all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their land holdings**.
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Madhya Pradesh to Launch Aircraft Services | Madhya Pradesh | 15 Mar 2024

Why in News?

The Madhya Pradesh government will launch **air services to promote tourism in the State** by introducing **two twin-engine aircraft**.

Key Points

- These two air services for tourism will be named **'PM Shri Paryatan Vayu Sewa'** and **'Dharmik Paryatan Heli Sewa'**.
 - Under these services **two eight-seater twin-engine aircraft will be introduced**.
 - The operator would select the route from main airports like **Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur, Gwalior and Khajuraho**, besides other airstrips in the state.
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Madhya Pradesh Approves Ken-Betwa Link Project | Madhya Pradesh | 15 Mar 2024

Why in News?

The Madhya Pradesh cabinet approved the establishment of a **Chitrakoot Development for the holy town's development** and gave nod to the Rs 24,293 crore [Ken-Betwa link project](#).

Key Points

- After the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, Chitrakoot also witnessed a huge influx of devotees. **Lord Ram had spent 11 years in exile in Chitrakoot**.
 - The state cabinet has approved Rs 20 crore for the Chitrakoot Development authority.
- The **Ken-Betwa project** will benefit the three states- **Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan**.
 - The project will bring an additional 6,57,364 hectares of drought affected areas in Chhatarpur, Tikamgarh, Niwari, Panna, Damoh, Sagar, Datia and Vidisha, Shivpuri, Raisen under irrigation.
 - Drinking water facility can be extended to a population of 44 lakh people.
- The cabinet also approved extension of the **Chief Minister Solar Pump Scheme**, which will now be implemented as **"Pradhan Mantri Krishak Mitra Surya Yojana"**.
- The scheme will be implemented by the Madhya Pradesh Power Development Corporation as per the guidelines issued under the [Kusum 'B' scheme](#) of the Union government.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Surakshaevam Utthaan Mahabhiyan Yojana (PM-KUSUM)

- It was launched in March 2019 by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**, to subsidize farmers to install solar irrigation pumps for cultivation.
 - Each farmer will **receive a 60% subsidy** to set up tube wells and pump sets.
 - They will also get **30% of the total cost as a loan from the Government**.

- The **primary objective** of the PM-KUSUM Scheme is to make cutting-edge technology available to our farmers and provide sources for de-dieselized irrigation to the agricultural sector.
- The **main objectives** of this scheme are:
 - The solar pumps assist our farmers in much more effective and eco-friendly irrigation as these are capable of generating safer energy.
 - In addition, the pump sets comprise an energy power grid that generates more energy than diesel-driven pumps.
 - Farmers will be able to sell the extra power to our Government directly to enhance their income.
- **KUSUM** comprises 3 components that have **different features**:
 - **Component A:** Install a total of 10GV grid-connected stilt-mounted decentralized solar plants and other renewable energy-based power plants. Each plant is sized up to 500 KW to 2MV.
 - **Component B:** Install stand-alone solar pumps of up to 7.5HP individual capacity and worth 17.50 lakh.
 - **Component C:** Provide financial support to Solaris 10 lakh grid-connected agricultural pumps of 7.5HP of capacity each.

BPCL to Launch CBG Plants in Chhattisgarh | Chhattisgarh | 15 Mar 2024

Why in News?

Recently, **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)** has partnered with the **Chhattisgarh Biofuel Development Authority** and Municipal Corporations of Raipur and Bhilai to establish **Compressed BioGas (CBG)** plants in the state.

Key Points

- An investment of ₹100 crore each is earmarked for setting up state-of-the-art facilities in **Raipur and Bhilai**, aiming to convert municipal solid waste into **biofuel**.
 - The planned CBG plants, boasting a processing capacity of 100-150 tonnes per day, will utilize approximately 200-250 metric tonnes of municipal solid waste daily.
- This effort is not only aimed at fostering a **circular economy** but is also expected to generate about 60,000 man-days of employment annually, thereby contributing to the **region's economic development**.
 - A circular economy is **an industrial system** that is **restorative or regenerative** by intention and design.
- The initiative will produce organic fertilizer as a byproduct, supporting the state's push towards **organic farming** and **agricultural sustainability**.

Compressed BioGas (CBG)

- Waste/Biomass sources like agricultural residue, cattle dung, sugarcane press mud, municipal solid waste, sewage treatment plant waste, etc. **produce Biogas** through the process of **anaerobic decomposition**.
- The Bio-Gas is purified to remove **hydrogen sulphide (H₂S)**, **carbon dioxide (CO₂)**, water vapour and compressed as **Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG)**, which has methane (**CH₄**) content of more than 90%.
- CBG has **calorific value** and other properties similar to CNG and hence can be utilized as **green**

renewable automotive fuel.

- Thus it **can replace CNG** in automotive, industrial and commercial areas, given the abundance of biomass availability within the country.

Biofuels

- Any hydrocarbon fuel that is **produced from an organic matter** (living or once living material) in a short period of time (days, weeks, or even months) is considered a biofuel.
- Biofuels may be solid, liquid or gaseous in nature.
 - **Solid:** Wood, dried plant material, and manure
 - **Liquid:** Bioethanol and Biodiesel
 - **Gaseous:** Biogas
- These **can be used to replace or can be used in addition** to diesel, petrol or other fossil fuels for transport, stationary, portable and other applications. Also, they can be **used to generate heat and electricity.**
- Some of the main reasons for shifting to biofuels are the rising prices of oil, emission of **greenhouse gases** from fossil fuels and the interest in obtaining fuel from agricultural crops for the benefit of farmers.

Uttar Pradesh to Rename 8 Railway Stations | Uttar Pradesh | 15 Mar 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Ministry of Home Affairs** has given its approval to the Uttar Pradesh government's proposal to rename **eight railway stations** in **Amethi district**.

Key Points

- The purpose of this decision is to preserve the **cultural identity and heritage of the region.**
 - The proposal, forwarded by the government suggests renaming Kasimpur halt as Jais City and renaming several intermediate stations like Jais as Guru Gorakhnath Dham, Bani as Swami Paramhans, Misrauli as Maa Kalikan Dham, Nihalgarh as Maharaja Bijli Pasi, Akbarganj as Maa Ahorwa Bhawani Dham, Warisganj as Amar Shahid Bhale Sultan, and Fursatganj as Tapeshwarnath Dham.

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