



Prime Minister's 15 Point Programme

Why in News

Recently, the **Union Minister of Minority Affairs** shared information about the **Prime Minister's New 15 Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities (PM's New 15 PP)**, in the Lok Sabha.

Key Points

- PM's New 15 PP is an **overarching programme covering various schemes/initiatives** of the participating Ministries/Departments and is **implemented throughout the country**.
- **Aim:**
 - To **ensure that the benefits of various government schemes for the underprivileged reach the disadvantaged sections of the minority communities**.
 - It also provides that, wherever possible, **15% of targets and outlays under various schemes should be earmarked for minorities**.
- The **performance** of schemes/initiatives is **continuously evaluated** by the concerned Ministries/Departments.
- **In the context of the PM's New 15 PP, Substantial minority population**, has been used for identification of districts which are relatively backward.
 - Districts with **at least 25% of the total population belonging to minority communities** have been identified as the **Minority Concentration Districts (MCDs)**
- **The programme has four objectives** further divided into focus areas with schemes under them. These are as follows:

A. Enhancing Opportunities for Education

1. Equitable availability of **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)** Services
2. Improving access to School Education
 - a. [Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan](#).
 - b. **Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme, etc.**
3. Greater resources for teaching Urdu by Central assistance for recruitment and posting of Urdu language teachers.
4. Modernizing Madarsa Education
 - a. Central Plan Scheme of Area Intensive and Madarsa Modernization Programme.
5. Scholarships for meritorious students from minority communities.
6. Improving educational infrastructure through the Maulana Azad Education Foundation.

B. Equitable Share in Economic Activities and Employment

7. Self-Employment and Wage Employment for the poor

a. Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY).

b. Swarn Jayanti Shahari Rojgar Yojana (SJSRY).

c. Sampurna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY).

8. Upgradation of skills through technical training

a. Locate technical institutions in areas predominantly inhabited by minority communities and upgrade them to '**Centres of Excellence**'.

9. Enhanced credit support for economic activities

a. Strengthening the National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC).

b. Ensuring an appropriate percentage of the priority sector lending targeted for the minority communities.

10. Recruitment to State and Central Services

C. Improving the Conditions of Living of Minorities

11. Equitable share in rural housing scheme

a. Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)

12. Improvement in **condition of slums** inhabited by minority communities

a. Integrated Housing & Slum Development Programme (IHSDP)

b. [Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation \(AMRUT\)](#) which was earlier Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM).

D. Prevention and Control of Communal Riots

13. Prevention of communal incidents

a. Posting of efficient, impartial and secular record in communally sensitive and riot prone areas.

14. Prosecution for communal offences

15. Rehabilitation of victims of communal riots

Minorities

- **Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains and Zoroastrians (Parsis)** have been notified as minority communities under **Section 2 (c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992.**

- **Constitutional Provisions:**

- The term "**minority**" is not defined in the Indian Constitution. However, the Constitution **recognises only religious and linguistic** minorities.
- **Article 29:** It provides that any section of the citizens residing in any part of India having a **distinct language, script or culture** of its own, shall have the **right to conserve the same.**
- **Article 30:** Under the article, all minorities shall have the **right to establish and administer educational institutions** of their choice.

- Article 350-B: Originally, the Constitution of India did not make any provision with respect to the **Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities**. But, the **Seventh Constitutional Amendment Act of 1956** inserted Article 350-B in the Constitution.
- **Parliamentary Provisions:**
 - [National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992](#)
 - It defines a minority as “a community notified as such by the Central government.”

[Source: PIB](#)

School Health Programme : Ayushman Bharat

Why in News

Recently, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) informed the Rajya Sabha about the implementation of **School Health Programme (SHP)**.

Key Points

▪ About the Programme:

- The School Health Programme (SHP) **under [Ayushman Bharat](#)** was launched in **2018** by the Prime Minister in Bijapur, Chhattisgarh.
- It is a **joint collaborative** programme of the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** and the **Ministry of Human Resource Development**.

▪ Vision:

- The initiative **targets both Education and Health** and intends to facilitate an **integrated approach to health programming** and more **effective learning** at the school level.

▪ Major Roles:

- Under the programme **teachers** act as “**Health and Wellness Ambassadors**” and disseminate various key information by organising culturally sensitive activity based sessions for one hour per week for 24 weeks in a year to promote joyful learning.
- Further, the **students act as Health and Wellness Messengers** in the society. And **every Tuesday** is dedicated as **Health and Wellness Day** in the schools.

▪ Objectives:

- Awareness about age appropriate information about health and nutrition to the children in schools.
- Detection and treating diseases early in children and adolescents including identification of malnourished and anemic children.
- Usage of safe drinking water in schools.
- Promotion of safe menstrual hygiene practices by girls.
- Promotion of yoga and meditation through Health & Wellness Ambassadors.
- Encouragement for research on health, wellness and nutrition for children.

▪ Themes:

- The Programme is based on the **11 identified themes**
- Some of them are emotional wellbeing, interpersonal relationships, responsible citizenship, gender equality, reproductive health, HIV prevention, safety and security against violence and promotion of safe use of the internet.
- **Linked with SDGs:**
 - The Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) **along with National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** have also developed **curriculum framework and training material for training of nodal teachers**, in line with [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG- 3\)](#).
 - SDG 3 aspires to ensure health and well-being for all.
- **Integration with Other Initiatives:**
 - The initiative is also linked with other government initiatives such as [Fit India movement](#), [Eat Right campaign](#), [Poshan Abhiyaan](#) for an all-round and holistic development model of health for the school children.
 - Additionally, the government is implementing a few schemes on the similar lines namely, [Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Program](#) and [Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Programme](#).
 - Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Program intends to ensure holistic development of the adolescent population.
 - Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Programme is aimed at early identification and intervention of diseases in children from their birth to 18 years of age.

[Source: PIB](#)

India: 3rd Largest Producer of Electricity

Why in News

- As per **the Key World Energy Statistics 2019**, India is the 3rd largest producer of electricity in the world.
 - India was 106th in terms of per capita consumption in 2017.

Key Points

- With a generation of 1,497 Terawatt-hour (TWh), India is the third largest producer and the third largest consumer of electricity in the world after the US and China.
- Although power generation has grown more than 100-fold since independence, growth in demand has been even higher due to accelerating economic activity.
- Electricity is also one of the [eight core industries](#) of India.

- Electricity use and access are strongly correlated with economic development.

▪ Related Government Initiatives

- **Saubhagya Scheme:** The 'Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana' was launched by the Government of India with the aim of providing electricity access to **over 40 million families** in the country.
- **The Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana:** UDAY was launched by the Ministry of Power to help turn around the poor financial situation of state discoms. It also envisages development of renewable energy sector and availability of **24*7 Power For All at an**

affordable price.

- **Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA):** It aims to promote efficient lighting, enhance awareness on using efficient equipment which reduce electricity bills and help preserve the environment. The project is spearheaded by the **Energy Efficiency Services Limited**.

International Energy Agency

- The IEA was **created in 1974** to help coordinate a collective response to major disruptions in the supply of oil.
 - It was established in the wake of the 1973 (set up in 1974) oil crisis after the **OPEC** cartel had shocked the world with a steep increase in oil prices.
- It is made up of **30 member countries**. It also includes 8 association countries.
 - **India became an associate member** of International Energy Agency in 2017.
- It is an **autonomous inter-governmental organisation** within the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** framework, headed by its Executive Director.
- The IEA has four main areas of focus, i.e. 4Es:
 - Energy security,
 - Economic development,
 - Environmental awareness and
 - Engagement worldwide.
- It is headquartered in **Paris, France**.

Key World Energy Statistics

- KWES is published by the **International Energy Agency**.
- It is an introduction to energy statistics, providing top-level numbers across the energy mix, from supply and demand, to prices and research budgets, including outlooks, energy indicators and definitions.
- It is part of the IEA's annual edition of the world's most comprehensive series of energy databases and data services, which include World Energy Statistics and Balances and the full range of fuel information data services.

Source: PIB

Role of Lipids in Infectious Diseases

Why in News

Researchers at IIT-Bombay are using biologically active lipid molecules as chemical biology tools to understand their biological disease-causing function.

- Researchers are using **lipids from *Mycobacteria tuberculosis (Mtb)***.

Lipids

- Lipids are molecules that contain **hydrocarbons** and make up the building blocks of the structure

and function of living cells.

- They are responsible for maintaining the **integrity of our cell membrane, which allows nutrients and drugs to pass through the cell.**
- They play a major role in **altering properties** of the cell membrane.
- During infection and in diseases, the lipids are breached and membranes are harnessed by pathogens for their survival and infection

Key Points

- The role of lipids in critical mechanisms involved in host-pathogen interplay is being explored.
- The mechanism of action of Mtb lipids on human host membrane and related cellular events represents a golden opportunity to deepen the understanding of the function of Mtb lipids in membrane-dictated bacterial survival, pathogenesis, and drug resistance.
- Scientists are also investigating the role of Mtb lipids in drug-membrane interactions, underscored by the fact that lipids critically dictate the molecular interactions of drugs with membranes influencing drug diffusion, partitioning, and accumulation.
- Membrane structures specific to mycobacterial lipids have also been developed which can act as 'cell-free' platforms for **anti-tubercular (relating to TB) drug interactions.** They would help in:
 - Investigating antibiotic interactions with mycobacterial (causative agent of Tuberculosis) specific membranes for **future antibiotic design.**
 - Shaping the **effectiveness** of already existing anti-TB drug molecules and fostering development of new ones.
 - Investigation of host **cellular pathways** rewired by pathogenic factors and elucidate possible **therapeutic targets in Tuberculosis.**

[Source: PIB](#)

National Aquifer Mapping and Management Programme

- The National Aquifer Mapping and Management program (NAQUIM) is being implemented by the **Central Ground Water Board (CGWB).**
- NAQUIM envisages **mapping of aquifers** (water bearing formations), their **characterization** and **development of Aquifer Management Plans** to **facilitate [sustainable management of groundwater](#) resources.**
- NAQUIM was initiated as a part of the **Ground Water Management and Regulation Scheme** to delineate and characterize the aquifers to develop plans for ground water management.

Aquifers

- The rocks in which groundwater is stored are called aquifers. They are typically made up of gravel, sand, sandstone or limestone.

Ground Water Management and Regulation Scheme

- It is a **[Central Sector Scheme](#)** of the **Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation.**

Central Ground Water Board

- It is a subordinate office of the **Ministry of Water Resources** and is the **National Apex Agency**

entrusted with the responsibilities of providing scientific inputs for management, exploration, monitoring, assessment, augmentation and regulation of groundwater resources of the country.

- It was **established in 1970** by renaming the Exploratory Tubewells Organization under the Ministry of Agriculture and later on **merged** with the Groundwater Wing of the [Geological Survey of India](#) during **1972**.

[Source: PIB](#)

IUSSTF

India-US Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF) was established under an agreement between the Governments of India and the United States of America in **March 2000**.

- It is an **autonomous bilateral organization** jointly funded by both the Governments that promote Science, Technology, Engineering, and Innovation through substantive interaction among government, academia, and industry.
- **IUSSTF's vision** is to ensure excellence in Science, Technology and Innovation space through collaborative initiatives between India and the United States of America.
- **Its mission is to act as a catalyst** to promote long-term scientific collaborations between India and the U.S. through partnerships amongst individual scientists, scientific institutions and the scientific community at large.
- The **Department of Science & Technology (DST), Governments of India**, and the **U.S. Department of State** are respective nodal departments for this program.

Other India-US Engagement on Education

- The **Fulbright program**- It offers international educational and cultural exchange programs.
- The **Higher Education Dialogue**- It laid out the road map for promoting strategic institutional partnerships, deepening collaboration in research and development, fostering partnerships in vocational education and focusing on junior faculty development.
- **Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN)**- It is launched by India, under this upto 1000 American academics will be invited and hosted each year to teach in Indian universities at their convenience.
- The two sides are also collaborating to **establish a new Indian Institute of Technology in Ahmedabad**.
- India is also learning from the U.S. experience in community colleges in order to meet our demands for skill-development and has agreed to collaborate with U.S. institutions in the area of Technology Enabled Learning and **Massive Open On-line Courses (MOOCs)** to extend the reach of education in India.

[Source: PIB](#)

GreenCo Rating System

- The Green Companies (GreenCo) Rating System has been developed by the **Confederation of**

Indian Industry (CII).

- The system evaluates the companies on **10 broad green parameters**, including GreenHouse Gases (GHG) reduction, renewable energy use etc.
 - Accordingly, **ratings** are provided which remain valid for **three years**.
- It is the **"first of its kind in the world"** holistic framework that evaluates companies on the environmental friendliness of their activities using a **life cycle approach**.
 - The life cycle approach considers product design, materials used, procurement, vendor management, logistics, packaging, manufacturing, distribution, product use, disposal and recycling.
- Its **mission is to facilitate** Indian industry to make a substantial improvement in their environmental performance thereby saving both natural and financial resources.
- It has been acknowledged in India's [Intended Nationally Determined Contribution \(INDC\)](#) document, submitted to the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** in 2015, as a proactive voluntary action of Indian industry/ private sector towards combating climate change.

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)

- CII is a **non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization**. It was founded in 1895.
- It works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering industry, Government, and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes.

[Source: PIB](#)

World Consumer Day

Why in News

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs observed the **World Consumer Day (15th March)** by organizing a webinar on, 'The Sustainable Consumer'.

- **Every year 15th March** is celebrated as World Consumer Rights Day.
- However, **India** celebrates **24th December** as [National Consumer Day](#) every year.
 - On this day the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 had received the assent of the President and came into effect.
- The webinar was organized in place of a physical event to maintain social distancing in the wake of [COVID19 pandemic](#).

Key Points

- **Theme:**
 - The **theme for World Consumer Rights Day 2020** is **'The Sustainable Consumer'**.
 - The theme aims to focus on the need for sustainable consumption globally, as well as highlighting the important role that consumer rights and protection can play.
- **Objectives:**

- It signifies solidarity in the international consumer movement, demanding that consumer rights are to be respected and protected.
- The event also gives a chance to protest against the market abuses and social injustices which undermine those rights.

▪ **Background:**

- World Consumer Rights Day was inspired by **US President John F Kennedy**, who sent a special message to the US Congress on 15th March 1962, in which he formally addressed the issue of consumer rights. **He was the first world leader to do so.**
- The consumer movement first marked that date in 1983 and now uses the day every year to mobilise action on important issues and campaigns.

[Source: PIB](#)

Light Machine Guns (LMG)

Why in News

- Recently, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed a contract with the Israeli Weapon Industries (IWI) for procuring Light Machine Guns (LMG).

Key Points

- LMG is designed to be employed by an individual soldier, with or without an assistant, as an infantry support weapon.
- It is often called the squad automatic weapon.
- Some examples of LMG:
 - **Negev 7.62X51 mm** - Israeli LMG
 - **SIG-716 assault rifles**- American LMG
 - **AK-203 assault rifles** -Russian LMG

[Source: TH](#)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/20-03-2020/print>