



Maharashtra Reduces Women's Welfare Aid | Maharashtra | 17 Apr 2025

Why in News?

The **Maharashtra government** has reduced stipends for around eight lakh beneficiaries of the [Mukhya Mantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana](#) as they also receive benefits under the **Namo Shetkari Mahasanman Nidhi (NSMN)** scheme.

Key Points

- **Reduction in Monthly Assistance:**
 - Under the revised structure, **affected women will now receive Rs 500 per month instead of Rs 1,500** under the Mukhya Mantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana.
 - The **reduction applies to those already receiving Rs 1,000 monthly under the NSMN scheme.**
 - As per the scheme's guidelines, the **total government aid per woman cannot exceed Rs 1,500.**
- **Mukhya Mantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana:**
 - **About:**
 - Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, **launched in 2024**, is a flagship welfare programme aimed at supporting women financially across Maharashtra.
 - **Benefits:**
 - The original Rs 1,500 monthly payout was designed to **empower women economically and enhance their social security.**
 - Beneficiaries receive **three free LPG cylinders each year.**
 - Poor girls from [Other Backward Classes \(OBC\)](#) and [Economically Weaker Sections \(EWS\)](#) are eligible for fee waivers during college admissions.
 - **Eligibility:**
 - The scheme covers **women aged 21 to 65** including married, widowed, divorced, abandoned, and destitute women.
- **Namo Shetkari Mahasanman Nidhi (NSMN) Scheme:**
 - **About:**
 - **Introduced in 2023** by the Maharashtra government, it aims to provide **additional financial support to small and marginal farmers.**
 - It complements the Central government's [Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi \(PM-KISAN\) scheme.](#)
 - **Eligibility:**
 - Farmers must be registered under **PM-KISAN.**
 - Must meet Maharashtra's criteria for small or marginal farmers.
 - **Benefits:**
 - Provides **Rs 6,000 annually in three equal installments of Rs 2,000.**
 - This is over and above the Rs 6,000 received under PM-KISAN, totaling Rs 12,000 annually.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

- Under the scheme, the Centre **transfers an amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal installments**, directly into the bank accounts of **all landholding farmers irrespective of the**

size of their land holdings.

- It was launched in **February 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**.
- The entire responsibility of **identification of beneficiary farmer families rests with the State / UT Governments**.
- **Objective:**
 - To **supplement the financial needs of the Small and Marginal Farmers** in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income at the end of each crop cycle.
 - To **protect them from falling in the clutches of moneylenders** for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming activities.

Exercise DUSTLIK-VI | Maharashtra | 17 Apr 2025

Why in News?

[India and Uzbekistan](#) began the **6th edition of Joint Military Exercise DUSTLIK-VI** at Aundh, Pune. The exercise will take place from **16 to 28 April 2025**.

- The previous edition took place in **Termez District, Uzbekistan, in April 2024**.



Key Points

- **Exercise Theme and Focus:**
 - The **core theme** is **Joint Multi-Domain Sub-Conventional Operations in a Semi-Urban Scenario**.
 - The focus is on **responding to terrorist actions** involving the capture of a defined territory.
 - A Joint Operations Centre will be established at the battalion level for continuous coordination.
- **Participation and Representation:**
 - The Indian contingent includes 60 personnel from a battalion of the **JAT Regiment** and

the [Indian Air Force \(IAF\)](#).

- The Uzbekistan Army is representing the Uzbek side.

▪ **Strategic Objectives:**

- The joint drill will promote **interoperability, tactical cooperation, and mutual learning** in sub-conventional warfare.
- It aims to enhance **defence cooperation and deepen bilateral military relations** between India and Uzbekistan.
- The exercise **fosters camaraderie and trust between both armies** through shared training and strategic alignment.

Uzbekistan



▪ **About:**

- Landlocked country in Central Asia, situated between the **Syr Darya (northeast)** and **Amu Darya (southwest)** rivers.
- Lies in the **Northern and Eastern hemispheres**.
- **One of only two doubly landlocked countries** in the world (the other is Liechtenstein).
- **Neighbouring Countries:**

- Kazakhstan (north and northwest)
- Kyrgyzstan (northeast)
- Tajikistan (southeast)
- Afghanistan (south)
- Turkmenistan (southwest)

▪ **Topographical Features:**

- Around **80% of the land is sandy desert**, mostly the **Kyzyl Kum Desert**.
- Lowlands dominate the west; foothills and mountains (**Tian Shan range**) rise in the northeast and southeast.
- The highest peak is **Adelunga Toghi (4,301 m)** in the northeast.
- **Fergana Valley** is the most fertile and agriculturally productive region.

▪ **Rivers and Lakes:**

- **Major rivers:** Amu Darya and Syr Darya.
 - **The Aral Sea**, shared with Kazakhstan, is a major environmental disaster due to water mismanagement.
- **Important lakes:** Lake Aydarkul and Lake Sarykamish.

▪ **Vegetation and Climate:**

- Dominated by **desert scrub** in arid zones.
- Fertile valleys, especially Fergana, support intensive agriculture.

▪ **Natural Resources:**

- Rich in natural gas, oil, coal, and minerals like **gold, uranium, and copper**.
- Holds the **4th largest gold reserves globally**.

