

PM SURYA GHAR MUFT BIJLI YOJANA

Prime Minister of India launched PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana to provide free electricity to its beneficiaries.



About PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana:

- In this scheme, the **central government** will provide **300 units of free electricity per month** to its beneficiaries by investing worth ₹75,000 crores.
- The free electricity scheme was earlier announced by the Finance Minister in an interim budget speech.

Target: It aims to light up 1 crore households.

- Under the scheme, **Urban Local Bodies and Panchayats** shall be incentivised to promote **rooftop solar systems** in their jurisdictions.
- The Central Government will guarantee no financial burden on the people by providing significant **subsidies directly to their bank accounts** and offering highly **concessional bank loans**.

Expected benefits:

- Savings of up to **fifteen to eighteen thousand rupees** annually for households from free solar electricity and selling the surplus to the distribution companies;
- Charging of electric vehicles;
- Entrepreneurship opportunities for a large number of vendors for supply and installation;
- Employment opportunities for the youth with technical skills in manufacturing, installation and maintenance.

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES

The Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (COP14) will be hosted by the Government of Uzbekistan, in Samarkand from 12-17 February 2024.



About the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species:

- It also known as the **Bonn Convention**, is an environmental treaty under the aegis of the **United Nations Environment Programme**.
- It provides a global platform for the **conservation and sustainable** use of migratory animals and their habitats.
- It was signed in Bonn, Germany, on 23 June 1979.
- It is the only global and UN-based intergovernmental organisation established exclusively for the conservation and management of terrestrial, aquatic and avian migratory species throughout their range.
- The parties to the convention acknowledge the importance of conserving migratory species, and the need to pay special attention to species whose conservation status is unfavourable.
- Activities by CMS Parties may range from **legally binding treaties**(called Agreements) to less formal instruments, such as Memoranda of Understanding.
- The **Conference of Parties (COP)** is the **decision-making organ** of this convention.

It has two Appendices.

- **Appendix I** lists **endangered migratory species** and includes prohibitions regarding the take of these species.
- **Appendix II** lists species that have an **‘unfavourable conservation status’** (as per the conditions set out in the Convention) and encourages range states to draft range-wide agreements for the conservation and management of these species.

CUSCUTA DODDER

An invasive weed Cuscuta dodder is slowly choking the Chengalpet forests and Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary, threatening the local vegetation, ecology and habitat of migratory birds.



- It is native to **North America**.
- It is a **parasitic vine without roots**, has already infested acres of trees in the reserve forests and has begun to spread inside India's oldest bird sanctuary.
- It is the **holoparasitic plant** that builds a canopy on the host plant and casts thousands of tendrils to form a dense spectacle before it strangles and eventually kills it.
- As per a technical paper published by the National Research Centre for Weed Science, in India, Cuscuta poses a serious **problem in oilseeds, pulses and fodder crops** in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Orissa, West Bengal and parts of Madhya Pradesh under **rain fed as well as irrigated conditions**.
- Legislation in 25 countries has listed the dodder as a '**declared noxious weed**' with seeds and plant material denied entrance. In the United States, it is the only weed seed whose movement is prohibited in every state.
- The seeds of Cuscuta are spheroid and have a hard coat, which aids them to **survive up to 50 years** in dry storage and at least 10 years in the field.
- Unlike root parasites, Cuscuta seeds **do not require** a specific **stimulant to induce germination**.

WHAT IS E-JAGRITI PORTAL?



The Consumer Affairs Secretary recently asserted that integration of artificial intelligence in the 'e-Jagriti' portal will help reduce the number of pending cases in consumer courts.

e-Jagriti Portal is an initiative of the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution.

- It is a **portal for consumer commissions**.
- It provides a **simple, fast, and cost-effective consumer dispute redressal software** solution at all levels.
- It is envisaged to **integrate consumer grievance platforms, namely**, the Online Case Monitoring System (OCMS), E-Daakhil, the National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (NCDRC) Case Monitoring System, **CONFONET website**, mediation application, **on a single platform**.
- The e-Jagriti platform has **case filing, online fee payment, case monitoring modules** for seamless disposal of cases by all the Commissions, has **Smart search facility** on archived consumer complaints/cases/judgements using AI technology for metadata and keyword creation, and **Voice-to-text conversion of judgements**, case history and other details using AI / ML technology.
- The portal will **integrate a Virtual court facility** for a convenient and accessible resolution of consumer complaints, **reducing the time of disposal, multiple hearings, and physical court appearances**, bringing effective and fast decisions & disposals in all Consumer Commissions.

Key Facts about the National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (NCDRC):

- It is a **quasi-judicial commission** in India which was set up in **1988** under the **Consumer Protection Act of 1986**.
- Its **head office is in New Delhi**.
- The Commission is **headed by a sitting or retired Judge of the Supreme Court of India or a sitting or retired Chief Justice of the High Court**.
- Section 21 of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, posits that the National Commission shall **have jurisdiction to entertain a complaint valued at more than two crores**.
- **Any person aggrieved by an order of NCDRC may prefer an appeal against such an order to the Supreme Court of India within 30 days**.

WORLD GOVERNMENT SUMMIT (WGS) 2024

The Indian Prime Minister will attend the World Government Summit 2024 as a guest of honour in the UAE.



About World Government Summit (WGS):

- It is an **annual global gathering** that brings together **world leaders, policymakers, experts,** and thought leaders from various fields to **discuss and address pressing global issues.**
- It was **established in 2013** under the leadership of the Vice President and **Prime Minister of the UAE.**
- It is **annually held in Dubai, UAE.**
- The Summit, in its various activities, explores the agenda of the next generation of governments, focusing on harnessing innovation and technology to solve universal challenges facing humanity.
- Since its inception, the Summit has championed the mission of shaping future governments and creating a better future for humanity.

World Government Summit (WGS) 2024:

- **Theme: “Shaping Future Governments”**
- It will focus on **six main themes:**
 - Government Acceleration and Transformation
 - Artificial Intelligence and the Next Frontiers
 - Reimagining Development and Future Economies
 - Future Societies and Education
 - Sustainability and The New Global Shifts
 - Urbanisation and Global Health Priorities

WHAT IS MARKET CAPITALISATION?

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) became the first Indian company to surpass Rs 20 lakh crore in market capitalisation.



- Market Capitalization, or **Market Cap**, is a term used to **represent the market value of a company** based on its current share price and the total number of its outstanding shares.
- It can be **calculated by multiplying the number of outstanding shares** of a company by **the current price of its shares**.
- It **represents the market's perception of a company's worth** and indicates its size and significance in the financial markets.
- On the basis of market cap, companies may be classified as large-cap, mid-cap, or small-cap companies.
 - **Large-cap companies** are usually stable, reputable, and well-established businesses that have a significant market share. They have **market caps of INR 20,000 crore or more**.
 - **Mid-cap companies** have a market cap ranging from **INR 5,000 crore to INR 20,000 crore**.
 - **Small-cap companies** operate at a smaller scale than large-cap and mid-cap companies. Consequently, their market cap is also lower (**less than INR 5,000 crore**).
- **Why is market capitalization important?**
 - It **allows potential investors** to understand the true value of companies and the size of one company in relation to another.
 - It **helps investors predict the future performance of the stock** of a company because it reflects what the market is willing to pay for the stock.

REVISED POLICY GUIDELINES FOR SETTING UP COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS (CRS) IN INDIA

Why in News?

- With a view to ensure the growth of the community radio sector, the Information and Broadcasting Minister released revised policy guidelines for setting up CRSs in India on the occasion of World Radio Day (February 13th).
- The guidelines were released during the Regional Community Radio Sammelan (South) at Anna University, Chennai, to celebrate 20 years of Community Radio in India.

What are Community Radio Stations (CRS)?

- Community Radio is an **important third tier** in Radio Broadcasting, distinct from Public Service Radio broadcasting and Commercial Radio.
- **CRSs are low power Radio Stations**, which are meant to be set-up and operated by **local communities**.
- **In 2002**, the Government of India approved a policy for the grant of licence, for setting up of CRSs, to well established educational institutions.
- **The Policy Guidelines were amended in 2006** permitting community-based organisations such as ICAR institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Registered Societies; Public charitable Trusts; etc., to own and operate CRSs.
 - This was to allow greater participation on issues relating to development and social change.

Significance of the Community Radio:

- They provide a platform to communities **to air local voices on issues concerning Health, Nutrition, Education, Agriculture,**
- Since the Community Radio broadcast is in **local languages and dialects**, people are able to relate to it instantly.

- Community Radio also has the **potential to strengthen people's participation in development programmes** through its holistic approach.
- In a country like India, where every state has its own language and distinctive cultural identity, **CRSs are also a repository of local folk music and cultural heritage.**
- The unique position of CRS is an instrument of positive social change, which makes it an ideal tool for **community empowerment.**

Establishment of CRS in India:

- **The first Community Radio** in India was started on 1st February 2004 at Anna University, Chennai.
- Later, licences were granted for setting up **CRSs at well-established educational institutions** including IITs/IIMs.
- The Government decided to broaden the policy **by bringing 'Non-profit' organisations like civil society and voluntary organisations under its ambit.**
- The Government has been taking several proactive steps enabling **ease of registration** by making the process for submission of applications completely online.
- The sector has grown substantially and the number of CRSs has increased from 140 in 2014 to **481** in 2023 (out of which 155 were added in the last two years).
- In the next three years the target is to create more than 1000 CRSs in India.

About the Revised Policy Guidelines:

- The guidelines include **an increase in advertising rate** to ₹74 per 10 seconds and advertising time to 12 minutes per hour.
- The licensee will set up an **advisory and content committee** comprising members of the local community, with 50% representation for women.
- The guidelines provide that an eligible organisation operating in multiple districts **would be allowed to set up a maximum of six CRS' in different districts of operation,** provided it fulfils certain conditions laid by the Ministry.
- The revised policy guidelines are expected to fuel growth of the community radio sector.

SWACHHATA GREEN LEAF RATING

Swachhata Green Leaf Rating system for the hospitality sector is yet to take off as there has been no response from States despite the Union Tourism Ministry sending three communiques so far.



About Swachhata Green Leaf Rating:

- A government-initiated rating system for **the hospitality sector** which aims to ensure world-class hygiene and sanitation in hotels, resorts and homestays has become a non-starter with no State opting for it as of now.
- **Objective:** The objective is to prevent pollution in water bodies and keep the environment clean.
- **Target group:** The target groups are hotels, lodges, homestays, ‘Dharamshalas’ and camps which have portable toilets. The rating will be based on compliance with the safe sanitation practices outlined in the guidelines.
- The ranking scheme was launched in November 2023 by the **Union Tourism Ministry** in collaboration with the **Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation**.
- As part of the initiative, the State teams of **Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin** (rural) and the tourism department will organise workshops on the concept, process and desired outcomes for the stakeholders.

Implementation: A three-tiered committee system has been proposed for implementation, beginning with a Verification Sub-Committee formed by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) for the on-ground verification, followed by a District Committee, which the District Collector will chair and then a State-level committee, headed by the Chief Secretary of the State.