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Cabinet approves modified scheme to enhance ethanol distillation capacity in the country



CCEA has approved a modified scheme to enhance ethanol distillation capacity in the country for producing 1st Generation, 1G ethanol from feed stocks such as cereals like rice, wheat, barley, corn and sorghum and sugarcane, sugar beet etc. An interest subvention of Rs 4,573 crore will also be provided for production of ethanol, which can be used for doping in petrol.

Key Points:

–India will need about 1,000 crore litres of ethanol for doping in petrol by 2030 to cut dependency on imports for meeting oil needs.
–The nation currently has a capacity of 684 crore litres.
–Government has a fixed target of 10% blending of fuel-grade ethanol with petrol by 2022, 15% blending by 2026 and 20% blending by 2030.
–Government would bear interest subvention for five years including one year moratorium against the loan availed by project proponents from

banks @ 6% per annum or 50% of the rate of interest charged by banks whichever is lower.
–Interest subvention would be available to only those distilleries which will supply at least 75% of ethanol produced from the added distillation capacity to OMCs for blending with petrol.

Additional Info: There has been surplus production of sugar in India since 2010-11 (except reduction due to drought in sugar season 2016-17). The production is likely to remain in surplus in coming years due to the introduction of improved varieties of sugarcane.

Cabinet approved Minimum Support Price of Copra for 2021 season

Based on the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has given its approval for the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of copra for 2021 season.
• In this regard, Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) of milling copra is increased by
Rs.375 to Rs. 10335/- per quintal for 2021 season from Rs. 9960/- per quintal in 2020.

• The MSP for ball copra has been increased by Rs.300/-, to Rs. 10,600/- per quintal for 2021 season from Rs.
10300/- per quintal in 2020.

Key Points:
–The increase in MSPs will ensure a return of 51.87% for milling copra and 55.76% for ball copra.
–The move will benefit farmers in 12 coastal states.
–The increase is on line with the principle of fixing the MSP at a level of at least 1.5 times the all India weighted
average cost of production.

–This increase will assure a minimum of 50 percent as margin of profit in order to double the farmers' incomes by
2022.

Additional Info:

–The Central Nodal Agencies for price support operations at the MSP in the coconut growing States are National
Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) and National Cooperative Consumer
Federation of India Limited (NCCF).

— For 2020 season, Government Procured 5053.34 tonnes of ball copra and 35.58 tonnes of milling copra.

What is Minimum Support Price (MSP)?

The minimum support price is an agricultural product price, set by the Government of India to purchase directly from
the farmer. This is not enforceable by law. By definition, this rate is to safeguard the farmer to a minimum profit for
the harvest, if the open market has lesser price than the cost incurred.

Recent Related News:

i.CCEA approved an assistance of Rs 3,500 crore for sugarcane farmers or Ganna Kisan that will be directly credited
into farmers' accounts on behalf of sugar mills against cane price dues and subsequent balance.

Which National Park/ Wildlife Sanctuary (NP/WLS) secured top score in the 'Management Effectiveness Evaluation(MEE) of 146 National Parks & Wildlife Sanctuaries in India, 2018-19' report?

1) Great Himalayan NP
2) Jaldapara NP
3) Tirthan WLS
4) Both 1 & 2
5) Both 1 & 3

Answer- 5) Tirthan WLS

Explanation:

On January 11, 2021, Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Prakash Javadekar released the 'Management Effectiveness Evaluation(MEE) of 146 National Parks & Wildlife Sanctuaries in India, 2018-19' report. MEE is a framework for testing the effectiveness of Protected Areas in India.

Which Bank recently signed an MoU with Jai Kisan, a rural-focused fintech platform to provide financial services to farm and non-farm entrepreneurs, in January, 2021?

1) Seva Vikas Co-Op Bank
2) Andhra Pradesh Grameena Vikas Bank
3) Andhra Pragathi Grameena Bank
4) Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank
5) Assam Gramin Vikash Bank

Answer- 4) Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank

Explanation:

On January 12, 2021 Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB) has signed an MoU with Jai Kisan, a rural-focused fintech platform of Greenizon Agritech Consultancy Pvt Ltd to expand access to financial services for individuals and businesses in Karnataka, including farm and non-farm entrepreneurs.
Jai Kisan will procure a wide range of clients for KVGB enabling end-to-end operations and facilitation of credit and other financial services for customers through its technology capabilities.

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Ministry of Tribal Affairs includes 14 New MFP items under MSP scheme to provide fair prices to Tribal Gatherers



The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has included 14 additional Minor Forest Produce (**MFP**) items under the Minimum Support Price (**MSP**) Scheme to ensure that Tribal Gatherers get fair prices for their Forest Produces.

• The 14 items are Tasar Cocoon, Cashew Kernel, Elephant Apple Dry, Bamboo Shoot, Malkangani Seed, Mahul Leaves, Nagod, Gokhru, Pipla/Uchithi, Gamhar/Gamari, Oroxylumindicum, Wild Mushroom dry, Shringraj & Tree Moss.

• The 14 new items have been added to MSP under the '**Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce through Minimum Support Price (MSP) & Development of Value Chain for MFP**' scheme.

i.The Central Government introduced MSP for certain products of MFP through the 'Mechanism for Marketing of MFP' scheme in 2011.
• Objective – To provide a safety net to underprivileged forest dwellers.

• The scheme has been conceptualised and implemented by TRIFED with State Agencies across 21 States of India.
• It has injected around **INR 3000 crores** into the **tribal economy** since April 2020.

• **Van Dhan tribal start-ups** are also part of the scheme, Van Dhan along with Mechanism for Marketing of MFP scheme has emerged as a source of employment generation for tribal gatherers, Forest dwellers & Indigenous tribal artisans.

ii. In the times of Pandemic, this has further helped in improving the livelihoods of disadvantaged tribes across the country.

Recent Related News:
i.On 17th August 2020, Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda inaugurated the first of its kind e-portal "Swasthya", a tribal health and nutrition portal.

About Ministry of Tribal Affairs:
Union Minister – Arjun Munda
Minister of State (MoS) – Renuka Singh Saruta

India's Tea Output Drops 9.7% in 2020 Due to Flood & COVID Restriction; Lifts Average Prices to Record High

The production of tea in India dropped by **9.7%** in 2020 due to the flood and movement restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The reduction in the tea production increased the price of tea by **31%** from the price of 2019, to a record price of **Rs.184.69 per Kg.**
This increase in price has supported the Indian tea industry which was under severe stress due to the rising production cost.

Production of tea in India:

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i.India has produced around 1255.60 million kilogram of tea in 2020, which is around 9.7% lesser than the production in 2019.
ii. The production dropped since the flood has damaged the tea gardens in Assam, which produces around 50% of India's tea production and the output also reduced due to the lack of labour movement due to the lockdown imposed due to COVID-19.
iii. The north-eastern parts of the country are expected to produce a higher output in 2021 due to high rainfall in that region.

Export of Tea:
i.India exports CTC(Crush-tear-curl) grade tea to Egypt and Britain and orthodox varieties tea to Iraq, Iran and Russia.
ii. The Tea export of India during the first 11 months of 2020 has fallen to 18.2% from the previous years 187.92 million Kg.
iii. The price of tea in Sri Lanka and Kenya didn't rise.

Recent Related News:
On May 15, 2020 According to Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare's 3rd Advance Estimates of production of major crops for 2019-20, the total food grain production in the country is estimated to achieve a record of all-time high 295.67 million tonnes in 2019-20 for the 4th consecutive year since 2016-17 crop year (July-June).

About Tea Board India:
Chairman- Prabhat Kamal Bezboruah
Headquarters- Kolkata, West Bengal

Where was the National Tribal Festival 'Aadi Mahotsav' 2021 held?

1) New Delhi
2) Mumbai, Maharashtra
3) Jaisalmer, Rajasthan
4) Indore, Madhya Pradesh

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5) In TRIFED's Virtual Platform

Answer- **1) New Delhi**

Explanation:

On February 1, 2021, Vice President of India, Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the National Tribal Festival 'Aadi Mahotsav' 2021 at Dilli Haat, New Delhi.

The festival will be held from February 1-15, 2021 will showcase Tribal art, crafts, medicine, cuisine & folk performances from Tribal Artists and chefs from more than 20 states of India.

The festival is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs & Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED).

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