

Indian Express News Analysis (IENA)

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Cabinet nod for inter-ministry panel to set up 'largest' grain storage plan in co-op sector

[#GrainStoragePlan](#) [#CooperativeSector](#) [#GovernmentScheme](#) [#Governance](#) [#GS2](#)

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved forming and empowering an **Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC)** to create the “**world’s largest grain storage plan in the cooperative sector**” by converging **eight ongoing schemes** of three ministries.

Briefing the media on the Cabinet decision, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said, “We will start the world’s largest grain storage scheme in the cooperative sector with an **outlay of around Rs 1 lakh crore.**”

an inter-ministerial committee (IMC) will be formed under the **chairmanship of Minister of Cooperation, with ministers of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Food Processing Industries, and secretaries as members.**

8 SCHEMES IDENTIFIED FOR CONVERGENCE

Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare

- Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)
- Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure Scheme (AMI)
- Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)
- Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)

Ministry of Food Processing Industries

- Pradhan Mantri Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme
 - Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)
- ##### Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
- Allocation of food grains under the Food Security Act
 - Procurement ops at MSP

Cabinet approves scheme for circular economy in Smart Cities

[#CITIIS2.0](#) [#SmartCities](#) [#CircularEconomy](#) [#WasteManagement](#) [#GovernmentScheme](#)
[#Governance](#) [#GS2](#)

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the **City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain (CITIIS) 2.0** to **promote circular economy** in **18 smart cities** to be selected through a competition.

The **total funding for the scheme — Rs 1,760 crore —** will come from loans from **French Development Agency (AFD)** and **Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW)**, a German development bank; and a grant of Rs 106 crore from the European Union.

The programme **starts this year and will run until 2027**, with the support of the **National Institute of Urban Affairs**.

The programme envisages to support competitively selected projects promoting circular economy with focus on **integrated waste management at the city level, climate-oriented reform actions at the state level, and institutional strengthening and knowledge dissemination at the National level**.

The first iteration of the programme, CITIIS, was launched in 2018 by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), AFD, the EU and the NIUA with a total outlay of Rs 933 crore. Twelve cities out of the 100 smart cities were selected for this.

According to a source in MoHUA, the projects likely to be funded through the scheme would be **collection and transportation of waste, including transfer stations; automated recovery facilities; bio-methanation plants; construction and demolition waste processing plants; and sanitary landfills**.

A **circular economy** entails markets that give incentives to reusing products, rather than scrapping them and then extracting new resources. In such an economy, all forms of waste, such as clothes, scrap metal and obsolete electronics, are returned to the economy or used more efficiently, according to the **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**.

At least one city would be selected from each region — **north, north-east, east, central, west and south — of the country**.

World No Tobacco Day: Govt makes display of tobacco warnings mandatory on OTT platforms

#TobaccoWarning #WorldNoTobaccoDay #OTTplatforms #DigitalMediaRegulations #DigitalIndia #Economy #GS3

The Government has made it mandatory for OTT platforms to display tobacco-linked health warnings before and during the middle of the streamed content.

The Union Health Ministry made the announcement in a notification Wednesday, which was observed as **World No Tobacco Day**.

Such health spots and tobacco-related warnings are already displayed by movie theatres during screenings.

We already have guidelines on restrictions on depiction of tobacco products in TV and films and now we have it for OTT platforms as well. Efforts such as these are important as nearly **13.5 lakh deaths** every year in the country can be linked in some way to tobacco consumption.

The **theme for this year's World No Tobacco Day — “we need food, no tobacco”** — counters the argument that tobacco control will lead to loss of livelihood for farmers.

According to the notification, **all publishers of online curated content — other than news and current affairs content — will have to display a health spot for a minimum of 30 seconds in the beginning and middle** of the programmes.

When a tobacco product appears on the screen, it will have to be accompanied with a prominent static health warning at the bottom of the screen.

The platforms have also been asked to run an **audio-visual disclaimer of a minimum of 20 seconds** on the ill-effects of using tobacco, at the beginning and in the middle of programmes.

The health spots and the disclaimers will have to be in the **same language as that of the content**.

According to the notification, an **inter-ministerial committee with representatives from the Health Ministry, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**, will be authorised to take action against violators, either **suo motu or upon receiving a complaint**.

Maharashtra's Ahmednagar to be renamed Ahilyanagar

#Ahilyanagar #AhmednagarRenamed #StateNews #Polity #GS2

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde announced the renaming of Ahmednagar to commemorate the **298th birth anniversary of Maratha queen Ahilyabai Holkar**. To understand the significance of this renaming, it is important to know the history behind the name Ahmednagar.

Ahmednagar, located in Maharashtra, has a rich historical background. References to the region can be traced back to the **Mauryan Emperor Ashoka in 240 BC**. In the medieval period, the area was ruled by various dynasties such as the **Rashtrakutas, the Western Chalukyas, and the Delhi Sultanate**. It was during this time that a revolt by **Alladin Hasan Gangu, an Afghan soldier**, led to the establishment of the Bahmani kingdom in the Deccan.

From the Bahmani kingdom emerged five independent kingdoms, one of which was **Nizamshahi**, which later became known as Ahmednagar. In **1486, Malik Ahmad Nizam Shah** became the prime minister of the Bahmani Sultanate. He successfully defended his position against the king of the Bahmani kingdom in 1490 and founded a city near the site of his victory, on the left bank of the **Sina river**. This city was named Ahmednagar in his honor. Nizam Shah later captured the fort of Daulatabad and stationed his army there.

Ahilyabai Holkar, on the other hand, was **born in Chondi village** in Ahmednagar. She received education, which was rare for women at that time, thanks to her father, Mankoji Shinde, who was the village head. Ahilyabai caught the attention of Malhar Rao Holkar, the army commander to Peshwa Bajirao, when she was just eight years old. Impressed by her devotion and character, he arranged for his son, **Khande Rao, to marry her**. After her husband's death in the **Battle of Kumbher** in 1754, Ahilyabai took control of Malwa. Under the guidance of her father-in-law, she displayed exceptional administrative and military skills. She believed in leading her people and did not follow the practice of Sati after Khande Rao's demise.

Following the deaths of her father-in-law and son, Ahilyabai sought the support of her army and petitioned the Peshwa to become the ruler of Malwa. Ahilyabai Holkar is remembered as a visionary ruler who implemented various reforms and initiatives for the welfare of her people. Renaming Ahmednagar after her is a tribute to her significant contributions and to honor her legacy as a respected queen and administrator.

Additional joint logistics nodes on the cards for Army, Navy, Air Force

#JointLogisticNodes #Defence #GS3

The armed forces are planning to set up additional joint logistics nodes across the country to boost integration in their logistical needs and streamline their supply chains.

So far, India had three joint logistics nodes which were made operational in 2021 for logistics integration of the three services. The Joint Operations Division under the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff has been responsible for establishing the nodes.

While the last joint logistics node was operationalised in Mumbai in April 2021 by former Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Bipin Rawat, the ones in **Guwahati and Tri-Services, Andaman and Nicobar Command, Port Blair** were operationalised in January 2021.

There are now plans to establish three more joint logistics nodes which are **likely to be established at Leh, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu** soon.

These nodes will provide integrated logistics cover to the armed forces for their small arms ammunition, rations, fuel, general stores, civil hired transport, aviation clothing, spares and engineering support, thus integrating their operational efforts, especially during a conflict or a war.

Locations were selected keeping in mind their proximity to rail and air infrastructure while ensuring that adequate space is available for the stores to be spread out in case of any contingency.

The stocking policy for these nodes would be drafted keeping in mind the number of troops deployed in the region, as well as any increase that may need to be carried out especially in the mountains. It would also look at weather and other challenges leading to certain areas getting cut off thus affecting resupply. The policy will take into account the timely turnover of ammunition so as to ensure they are used within their specified shelf life.

What subjects Class 11-12 students choose in different parts of the country

#SchoolSubjects #SchoolEducation #PARAKH #NCERT #Education #Economy #GS3

The Union government conducted a study to understand the regional variations in the choice of academic streams at the high school level in India. The study focused on the preference for **Science, Arts, and Commerce streams** in different states, particularly in South India. The findings of the study revealed that Science is the preferred stream in most southern states, while Arts has limited popularity in these regions. The government established the **PARAKH division under the NCERT** to address such disparities and promote balanced educational opportunities across regions.

The study identified the **top states where the Science stream is popular, including Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Kerala**. In the **Northeast, Manipur stood out with a high percentage of students opting for Science**. On the other hand, **Arts was the preferred choice in states like Gujarat, West Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan**. In the **Northeast, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Nagaland had a significant preference for Arts**.

The study also highlighted the stagnant growth of the Commerce stream over the past decade, with a relatively low percentage of students choosing this discipline nationally.

Furthermore, the study examined higher education trends and indicated that South India demonstrates a strong preference for Science education. The region has a **large number of AICTE-approved engineering and technological institutions**, with Tamil Nadu having the highest number of students pursuing engineering and technical courses. In terms of **medical education**, the southern states of

Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, and Andhra Pradesh have a significant presence, accounting for a considerable proportion of medical colleges in the country.

The performance of students in competitive examinations like JEE Advanced and JEE Main also reflected the preference for Science education in South India, with notable achievements and high scores from students in the region.

The government chose to conduct this study to address disparities in educational opportunities and promote equitable development across regions. It aimed to **bring equivalence in assessment among different education boards** and understand the factors **influencing the choice of academic streams among students**.

The personal and the political: From Nepal, reading Prachanda's visit to India

#IndiaNepalRelations #BilateralRelations #IndiaanditsNeighbours #InternationalRelations #GS2

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' of Nepal has arrived in New Delhi for a four-day visit. During his visit, he will meet with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss cooperation in energy, trade, and connectivity between the two countries.

Prior to his departure from Kathmandu, **President Ram Chandra Poudel** approved a **controversial amendment to Nepal's citizenship law**. This amendment grants almost instant citizenship and political rights to foreign women married to Nepalis. The move is expected to make Nepal's citizenship law one of the most liberal in the world. However, it may also upset China, which has expressed concerns about the law potentially granting citizenship and property rights to descendants of Tibetan refugees.

Historically, reciprocal visits by heads of state/government between Nepal and India were a bilateral tradition. However, **since 1997, India has hosted Nepali leaders without making reciprocal visits**. This has resulted in an increased role of Western countries in Nepal and China taking steps to enhance its presence and influence in the country. **Prachanda, who was once perceived as being pro-China**, is now expected to assure India of his willingness to align with them in order to counter China's influence. He seeks to strengthen the bilateral relationship with India and has included visits to important Hindu religious sites in his itinerary to demonstrate respect for Nepali Hindu sentiments.

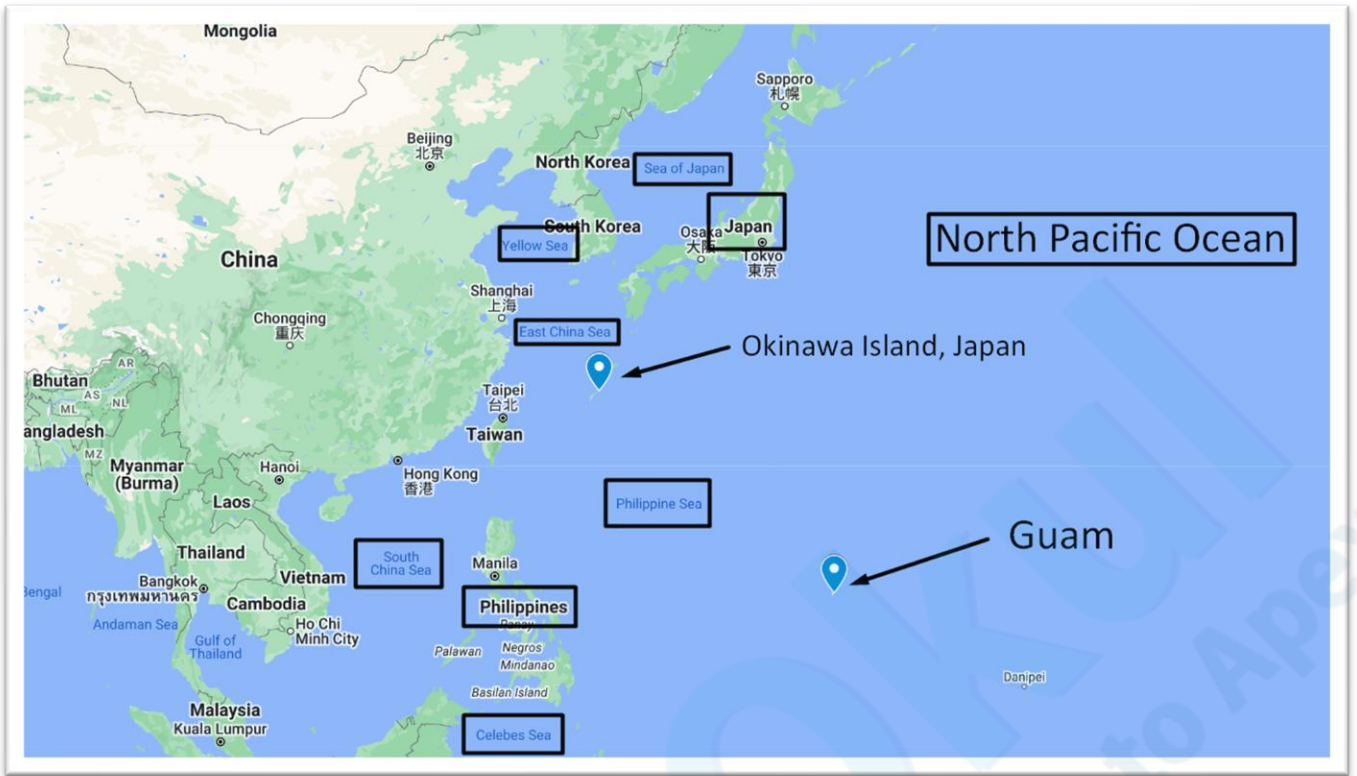
Efforts have been made to address points of friction surrounding hydropower projects executed by India in Nepal. The current Prime Minister, like his predecessor, has been cautious about projects under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) that Nepal agreed to six years ago. Dahal aims to portray himself as a friend to India and prioritize the bilateral relationship over his previous alignment with China.

Typhoon Mewar losing muscle on way to Okinawa

#TyphoonMewar #OkinawaIsland #GuamIslands #InternationalAffairs

Typhoon Mewar appeared to be losing force as it headed Wednesday towards **Japan's Okinawa Islands**, where the United States maintains a significant military presence, after largely skirting Taiwan and the Philippines.

After tearing across **Guam** last week, Mewar passed by Taiwan on Tuesday with sustained winds of 155 kph and gusts up to 190 kph, sending high waves crashing on the island's east coast.



Govt's fiscal deficit narrows to 6.4% of GDP in 2022-23

#FiscalDeficit #GDP #Economy #GS3

The Centre's fiscal deficit narrowed to **6.4 percent of the GDP in 2022-23** from **6.71 per cent in FY22**.

In the Union Budget, the government aimed to further bring down the fiscal deficit - a key indicator of borrowing, during the **current financial year 2023-24 to 5.9 per cent** of the gross domestic product (GDP).

Unveiling the revenue-expenditure data of the Union government for 2022-23, the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) said the fiscal deficit in absolute terms was **Rs 17,33,131 crore** (provisional), marginally down from the amount projected in the Revised Estimates (RE) in the Budget.

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