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'e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi' (Digital Gateway)

Why in News?

- Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Commerce and Industry and Textiles, Shri Piyush Goyal launched the 'e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi' (Digital Gateway) of Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA) in New Delhi on 4th March 2024.



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- The 'e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi' initiative with the help of technology will ease the farmers' warehousing logistics and aid the farmers in receiving fair prices for their produce.
- Digital Gateway initiative is an important stepping stone in our effort to make farming attractive.
- The 'e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi' with its no collateral, extra security deposit policy can prevent distress sale by farmers who often have to sell their entire harvest at cheaper rates due to poor post-harvest storage opportunities.
- The initiative with its simplified digital

process can ease the procedure of farmers' storage at any registered WDRA warehouse for a period of 6 months at 7% interest per annum.

- The 'e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi' and e-NAM, farmers will be able to utilise the technology of an interconnected market which benefits them above and beyond selling their produce to the Government at Minimum Support Price (MSP).

Bihar Climate Action Conclave 2024

Why in the News?

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar inaugurated the Bihar Climate Action Conclave on March 4, unveiling the draft of the "Climate Resilient and Low Carbon Development Pathway for Bihar," the first of its kind in the country.
- The event heralded the unveiling of the "Climate Resilient and Low Carbon Development Pathway for Bihar," a pioneering strategy in the nation's battle against climate change.

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- The conclave was not just a ceremonial event but a platform where transformative projects were introduced to the public. Among these, the National Dolphin Research Centre stands out, dedicated to the conservation of the Gangetic Dolphins - a move that places Bihar at the forefront of wildlife conservation in India and Asia.
- Over two years ago, the Bihar government embarked on a journey to build climate resilience of its people and systems along with achieving net zero by 2070 through an ambitious strategy development project titled "Climate-Resilient and Low-Carbon Development Pathway".



- Bihar Climate Action Conclave is being organized by World Resource Institute (WRI) India, in collaboration with UNEP and Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation, along with the Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bihar and the Bihar State Pollution Control Board, to launch the strategy document.
- It also seeks to facilitate discussions on Bihar's ambitious climate actions, including the strategies to move towards net zero, mainstream climate-friendly development, exploring climate finance opportunities, and initiating a new transformational climate governance structure.
- These efforts are geared towards furthering the state's commitment to climate action and accelerating its developmental trajectory by implementing suggested strategies.
- Key themes: Climate Change, Preparedness and Adaptation Climate Mitigation and Transition Climate Finance and Co-benefits Unlocking Bihar's Green Potential

Expected Outcomes:

- Strengthened partnerships and networks for climate action in Bihar.
- Increased awareness and capacity among stakeholders for implementing climate initiatives.

India's first and totally indigenous fast breeder reactor at Kalpakkam

Why in the News?

- In a historic milestone marking entry into the vital second stage of India's three stage nuclear program, Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi witnessed the commencement of "Core Loading" at India's first indigenous Fast Breeder Reactor (500 MWe) at Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu on 4th March 2024.

More About the News

- The breeder reactor, which produces more fuel than is consumed, will pave way for eventual utilization of India's vast thorium reserves.
- India has developed comprehensive capabilities spanning the entire spectrum of the nuclear fuel cycle. The government had approved in 2003, the creation of Bhartiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Ltd., (BHAVINI) to construct and operate India's most advanced nuclear reactor-Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR).



- The PFBR has been fully designed and constructed indigenously by BHAVINI with significant contributions from more than 200 Indian industries including MSMEs. Once commissioned, India will only be the second country after Russia to have commercial operating Fast Breeder Reactor.
- In terms of safety, the PFBR is an advanced third generation reactor with inherent

passive safety features ensuring prompt and safe shutdown of the plant in the event of emergency.

- Since it uses the spent fuel from the first stage, FBR also offers great advantage in terms of significant reduction in nuclear waste generated, thereby avoiding the need for large geological disposal facilities.
- Upon completion of the core loading, the first approach to criticality will be achieved, leading to generation of power subsequently. Despite the advanced technology involved, both the capital cost and the per unit electricity cost is comparable to other nuclear and conventional power plants.



- The growth of the Indian nuclear power programme is imperative to meet the twin goals of energy security and sustainable development. As a responsible nuclear power with advanced technology, India remains committed to expand peaceful applications of nuclear technology, both in power and non-power sector, while ensuring the security of nuclear and radiological materials.
- In line with the true spirit of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, PFBR has been fully designed and constructed indigenously by BHAVINI with significant contribution from more than 200 Indian industries including MSMEs. Once commissioned, India will only be the second country after Russia to have commercial operating Fast Breeder Reactor.
- The Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR) will initially use the Uranium-Plutonium Mixed Oxide (MOX) fuel. The Uranium-238 “blanket”

surrounding the fuel core will undergo nuclear transmutation to produce more fuel, thus earning the name ‘Breeder’.

- The use of Thorium-232, which in itself is not a fissile material, as a blanket is also envisaged in this stage. By transmutation, Thorium will create fissile Uranium-233 which will be used as fuel in the third stage. FBR is thus a stepping stone for the third stage of the program paving the way for the eventual full utilization of India’s abundant thorium reserves.
- In terms of safety, the PFBR is an advanced third generation reactor with inherent passive safety features ensuring a prompt and safe shut down of the plant in the event of an emergency. Since it uses the spent fuel from the first stage, FBR also offers great advantage in terms of significant reduction in nuclear waste generated, thereby avoiding the need for large geological disposal facilities.
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Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Ltd (HURL) fertilizer plant in Barauni

Why in the News?

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated and dedicated to the nation the Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Ltd (HURL) fertilizer plant in Barauni on 2nd March 2024.

More About the News

- Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Ltd (HURL) fertilizer plant in Barauni developed at more than Rs 9500 crore, the plant will provide affordable urea to farmers and lead to an increase in their productivity and financial



stability. This will be the fourth fertilizer plant to be revived in the country.

- Barauni Fertilizer Plant of Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Limited (HURL) started urea production in Oct 2022.
- The state-of-the-art gas based Barauni Plant is part of the initiative taken by the Government to revive the closed urea units of Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. (FCIL) and Hindustan Fertilizers Corporation Ltd (HFCL) in order to achieve self-sufficiency in urea sector.
- Revival of closed units of FCIL and HFCL had been the top priority agenda of the present Government to augment the availability of domestically produced urea.
- Government mandated Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Limited (HURL) to revive Barauni unit with an estimated investment of Rs. 9512 crores with urea production capacity of 12.7 LMTPA.
- The Project will not only improve the availability of fertilizer to farmers but also give a boost to the economy in the region including development of infrastructure like roads, railways, ancillary industry etc. besides ensuring food security to the nation.
- The operation of plants will lead to make country self-reliant in urea fertilizer, Saving in Foreign Exchange out due to reduced import and a giant step towards "Atamnirbhar Bharat in Fertilizers". It may be noted that the Gorakhpur, and Sindri Plant of HURL already commissioned and dedicated to the nation.

Moody's Raised India's 2024 GDP Forecast

Why in the News?

- Global Rating Agency Moody's on 4th March 2024 raised India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast for 2024 calendar year to 6.8% on "stronger than expected" economic data and said that the country will remain the fastest growing among G20 countries.

More About the News

- In its Global Macroeconomic Outlook for 2024, Moody's Investors Services said, with global headwinds fading, the economy should be able to register 6-7 per cent real GDP growth comfortably.
- For 2025, the GDP growth is estimated at 6.4%. Moody's had projected a 6.1 per cent growth for India in 2024 earlier.
- India's economy has performed well and stronger than expected data in 2023 has caused to raise its 2024 growth estimate to 6.8 per cent from 6.1 percent. India is likely to remain the fastest-growing among G-20 economies over Moody's forecast horizon.
- India's real GDP expanded by 8.4 per cent year on year in the fourth quarter of calendar year 2023, resulting in a 7.7 per cent growth for full year 2023.



- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measures the monetary value of final goods and services-that is, those that are bought by the final user - produced in a country in a given period of time (say a quarter or a year). It counts all of the output generated within the borders of a country.