



drishti

News Analysis (14 Nov, 2018)

[drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/14-11-2018/print](https://drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/14-11-2018/print)

## Two New Initiatives of Ministry of Human Resource Development

Recently, the **Ministry of Human Resource Development** launched two new initiatives viz. **Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP)** and **Annual Refresher Programme In Teaching (ARPIT)**.

### Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP)

- It is a three weeks Flagship **leadership development training programme** (2 weeks domestic and one week foreign training) for second level academic functionaries in **public funded higher education institutions**.
- The main objective is to prepare second tier academic heads who are potentially likely to assume leadership roles in the future.
- The programme would provide senior faculty, with high academic credentials, the required leadership and managerial skills including skills of problem-solving, handling stress, team building work, conflict management, developing communication skills, understanding and coping with the complexity and challenges of governance in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), financial & general administration.
- The implementation of LEAP Programme will be **through 15 National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) top ranked Indian Institutions and foreign Universities within the top 100 in the world global rankings**.

### Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching (ARPIT)

It is an initiative for **online professional development of 15 lakh higher education faculty** using the Massive open online courses (MOOCs) platform SWAYAM.

#### Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)

MOOC is a **free Web-based distance learning program** that is designed for the

participation of large numbers of geographically dispersed students.

## SWAYAM

- SWAYAM is a programme initiated by Government of India and designed to achieve the **three cardinal principles** of Education Policy viz., **access, equity and quality**.
- The objective of this effort is to take the best teaching learning resources to all, including the most disadvantaged.
- SWAYAM seeks to **bridge the digital divide for students** who have hitherto remained untouched by the digital revolution and have not been able to join the mainstream of the knowledge economy.
- SWAYAM platform is indigenously **developed by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)** with the help of **Microsoft**.
  
- For implementing ARPIT, 75 discipline-specific institutions have been identified and notified as **National Resource Centres (NRCs)**.
- NRCs will prepare online training material with focus on latest developments in the discipline, new & emerging trends, pedagogical improvements and methodologies for transacting revised curriculum.
- NRCs are **located in a mixed range of institutions** such as, Central Universities, IISc, IUCAA, IITs, IISERs, NITs, State Universities.
- ARPIT will be an ongoing exercise so that every year NRCs will continuously develop new refresher module in their earmarked discipline each year.
- The training materials will be uploaded and made available through SWAYAM. NRC will also publish the list of the faculty who have been certified.

---

## Ease of Doing Agribusiness Index

Ministry of Agriculture has proposed **a new index to gauge the performance of states** in implementation of policies and programs of government of India in the field of agricultural reforms.

- The concept is to consider **farming not solely as a production-oriented activity** carried out to achieve food security for the country but as **a business activity carried out by farmer as entrepreneur**.
- The index will measure performance of state on various sub-parameters
  - Marketing Reforms
  - Reducing cost of inputs
  - Governance and Land reforms
  - Risk Mitigation
  - Increasing production/productivity

- Investment in and for agriculture

## Significance of Initiative

---

- It will help in developing **competitive spirit among the states** and develop their performance to the highest level.
- It will **allow central government to plug the gaps in schemes and programmes** and bring the states lagging behind in implementation up.
- By this index, Ministry of Agriculture will be able to **reward high performing states**, by linking their performance with allocation of funds.

## Measures taken by Government for Farm Sector Reforms

---

- **Marketing Reforms**
  - **The Model “The Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2017”**
    - This is a model law **seek to end the monopoly of Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC).**
    - This act has provision that **entire state would be treated as a single market, which will remove area limitations of APMC.**
    - It will enhance farmers produce by providing conditions for creation of private wholesale markets along with farmers-consumer market yards.
    - **It will enable direct contact between farmers and consumers or other end-user categories.**
    - APLM act will also give **freedom to the farmer to sell his property to any person or agency** at his place of choice, making him get a better return.
    - This is a model act state can adopt it fully or partially in their own acts as Agriculture is a state subject
  - **National Agriculture Market Scheme (e-NAM)**
    - National Agriculture Market (NAM) is a **pan-India electronic trading portal** which **networks the existing APMC mandis** to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.
    - NAM Portal provides **a single window service for all APMC** related information and services.
- **Reducing Input Cost**
  - **“Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)”**
    - PKVY aims to **increase the area under organic farming as it ensures higher income to farmers** due to comparatively lower cost of cultivation and premium price of organic.
  - **Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER)**

This was launched for realising the **potential of organic farming in the North Eastern Region of the country**. It is a central sector scheme which has been launched to develop **North East as organic hub of India**.

- **Soil Health Card**  
Soil Health Card is one of the **largest universal Soil Health Card Schemes in the world**. It aims to provide **information about fertility of land** to farmers based on testing soil samples for 12 parameters.
- **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)**  
**PMKSY is being implemented to expand cultivated area with assured irrigation, reduce wastage of water and improve water use efficiency.** Focus of the program is to provide end-to-end solution to irrigation supply chain through
  - development of the water resources
  - creation of an efficient distribution network
  - improvement of farm level management
  - water-use efficiency.
- **Governance and Structural Reforms**
  - **Encouraging Contract Farming**  
The government has approved **Model Contract Farming Act** which will help farmers to enter pre-season price agreement on their produce
  - **Right of Lease Farming**
    - NITI Aayog has developed **Draft Model Agriculture Land Leasing Act** and has circulated it to states for adoption.
    - This act has provisions which recognizes land leasing and ensure complete ownership of land ownership right while recognizing the lease holders.
- **Risk Mitigation**  
**Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)**
  - **PMFBY aims to provide insurance at lowest premium rate to farmers with added benefits.**
  - Under the PMFBY, a uniform maximum premium of only 2 per cent will be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops and 1.5 per cent for all Rabi crops and 5 percent for annual commercial and horticultural crops.
  - The premium rates to be paid by farmers are very low and balanced premium will be paid by the Government, shared equally by State and Central Government.
  - The scheme covers risk from pre-sowing to post harvest stages and there is no upper limit on Government subsidy.

## **Agricultural Marketing & Farm Friendly Reforms Index**

- This Index was launched by **NITI Aayog**.
- NITI Aayog has launched this index to **rank States and UTs** based on implementation

of seven provisions related to farm sector reforms.

- This indicator reveal **ease of doing agribusiness** as well as **opportunities for farmers to benefit from modern trade and commerce** and have wider option for sale of her/his produce.

---

## Important Facts for Prelims (14th November 2018)

---

### IONS Anniversary Celebrations

---

- The 10th-anniversary celebrations of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) commenced with the release of the 'Special Cover' in Kochi.
- The commemorative Special Cover of IONS 10th Anniversary celebrations depicts a map of the Indian Ocean and littoral countries of the IOR, signifying the geopolitical importance of the region.
- IONS is a voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime cooperation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion of regionally relevant maritime issues.
- There are 36 littoral in the Indian Ocean which have been geographically grouped into the following four sub-regions.
  - **South Asian Littorals** - Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Seychelles and Sri Lanka
  - **West Asian Littorals** - Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Yemen
  - **East African Littorals** - Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, France, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan and Tanzania
  - **South East Asian and Australian Littorals** - Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Timor Leste
- The inaugural edition of **IONS-2008 was held in New Delhi**. The theme of the IONS-2008 was "Contemporary Transnational Challenges – International Maritime Connectivities".
- The 2nd edition i.e. IONS-2010 was held in Abu-Dhabi. The theme of IONS-2010 was "Together for the Reinforcement of Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean".

---

### INDO-Russian joint exercise INDRA 2018

---

- The joint military **exercise between Indian and Russia** EXERCISE INDRA 2018 on combating insurgency under the aegis of United Nations (UN) is being conducted at Babina Military Station, Jhansi (UP).
- The aim of the exercise is to practice joint planning and conduct to enhance

interoperability of the two Armies in the peacekeeping/ enforcement environment.

## Exercise Samudra Shakti

---

- The inaugural edition of **Indian Navy - Indonesian Navy Bilateral Exercise 'Samudra Shakti'** is scheduled from 12 to 18 Nov 18.
  - The aim of the exercise is to strengthen bilateral relations, expand maritime co-operation, enhance interoperability and exchange best practices.
-