

02 July 2019: PIB Summary & Analysis

Price Fixation of Essential Medicines

Context

- The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has taken important measures to check the prices of drugs, under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO).

About NPPA

- National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) was constituted vide Government of India Resolution dated 29th August, 1997 as an attached office of the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers.
- NPPA is an independent Regulator for pricing of drugs and to ensure availability and accessibility of medicines at affordable prices.

Functions and Responsibilities

- To implement and enforce the provisions of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order in accordance with the powers delegated to it.
- To deal with all legal matters arising out of the decisions of the Authority.
- To monitor the availability of drugs, identify shortages, if any, and to take remedial steps.
- To collect/ maintain data on production, exports and imports, market share of individual companies, profitability of companies etc, for bulk drugs and formulations.
- To undertake and/ or sponsor relevant studies in respect of pricing of drugs/ pharmaceuticals.
- To recruit/ appoint the officers and other staff members of the Authority, as per rules and procedures laid down by the Government.
- To render advice to the Central Government on changes/ revisions in the drug policy.
- To render assistance to the Central Government in the parliamentary matters relating to the drug pricing.

m-KISAN PORTAL

Context

- Information and services available on mkisan portal i.e. <https://mkisan.gov.in> are crop specific advisories to farmers through SMS and Voice;

mKisan

- mKisan SMS Portal for farmers enables all Central and State government organizations in agriculture and allied sectors to give information/services/advisories to farmers by SMS in their language, preference of agricultural practices and location.
- As part of agricultural extension (extending research from lab to the field), under the National e-Governance Plan - Agriculture (NeGP-A), various modes of delivery of services have been envisaged.
- SMS Portal for Farmers has empowered all Central and State Government Organizations in Agriculture & Allied sectors to give information/services/advisories to farmers
- USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data), IVRS and Pull SMS are value added services which have enabled farmers and other stakeholders not only to receive broadcast messages but also to get web based services on their mobile without having internet.
- Pull SMS service for farmers to register themselves and give feedback on the service
- Interactive Voice Response System service and extreme weather alert for farmers.
- Advisories to the farmers registered on this portal, can be sent in 12 languages viz., Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu and English.

Linking of Organic Farming With Processing

Context

- Government of India has been promoting traditional farming in the States through dedicated Schemes, namely, Mission Organic Value Chain Development North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER) and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY).

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY).

- “Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana” is an elaborated component of Soil Health Management (SHM) of major project National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA).
- Under PKVY Organic farming is promoted through adoption of organic village by cluster approach and PGS certification.

Objective

- Promotion of commercial organic production through certified organic farming.
- The produce will be pesticide residue free and will contribute to improve the health of

consumer.

- It will raise farmer's income and create potential market for traders.
- It will motivate the farmers for natural resource mobilization for input production.

Public Sector Undertakings

Context

- As per information available with Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), 19 sick & loss making Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs)/ units of CPSEs have been approved for closure by the Government.

About CPSEs

- Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) function under the administrative control of their respective Ministries/Departments.
- Common problems faced by loss making CPSEs include obsolete plants and machinery, heavy interest burden, resource crunch, low capacity utilization, low productivity, surplus manpower, high input cost, non-remunerative prices etc.
- The concerned administrative Ministry/ Department takes action relating to improving the performance and efficiency of CPSEs functioning under them which may include infusion of capital in CPSEs to enable them to remain as market intervention organizations in public interest.
- Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) is the nodal Department for Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) but there is no CPSE under its direct administrative control.

Promotion of Electric Vehicles

Context

- In order to promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle (xEV) technology and to ensure sustainable growth of the same, the Government notified FAME-India Scheme.

About government initiatives

- Phase-I of the FAME-India Scheme implemented through four focus areas namely Demand Creation, Technology Platform, Pilot Project and Charging Infrastructure.
- Under new GST regime, the rates of GST on Electric Vehicles has been kept in the lower bracket of 12% (with no Cess) as against the 28% GST rate with Cess up to 22% for

conventional vehicles.

- Ministry of Power has allowed sale of electricity as 'service' for charging of electric vehicles. This would provide a huge incentive to attract investments into charging infrastructure.
- Ministry of Road Transport Highways issued notification regarding exemption of permit in case of battery-operated vehicles.
- The Phase-II of FAME Scheme envisages support for setting up of adequate public charging infrastructure to instill confidence among Electrical Vehicles (EV) users, through active participation and involvement of various stakeholders including Government agencies.

Credit Cards for Fishermen

Context

The Government of India has extended the facility of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) to fisheries and animal husbandry farmers to help them meet their working capital needs.

About the initiative

- The KCC facility will help fisheries and animal husbandry farmers to meet their short term credit requirements of rearing of animals, poultry birds, fish, shrimp, other aquatic organisms and capture of fish.

The criteria for eligible beneficiaries under Kisan Credit Card (KCC) for Animal Husbandry and Fisheries is as follows:.

Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture:

- Fishers, Fish Farmers (individual & groups/partners/share croppers/tenant farmers), Self Help Groups, Joint Liability Groups and Woman groups.
- The beneficiaries must own or lease any of the fisheries related activities such as pond, tank, open water bodies, raceway, hatchery, rearing unit, possess necessary license for fish farming and fishing related activities, and any other State specific fisheries and allied activities.

Marine Fisheries

- Beneficiaries as listed at 1.1 above who own or lease registered fishing vessel, boat, possess necessary fishing license/permission for fishing in estuary and sea, fish farming/ mariculture activities in estuaries and open sea and any other State specific fisheries and allied activities

Poultry and small ruminant

- Farmers, poultry farmers either individuals or joint borrower, Joint Liability Groups or Self Help Groups including tenant farmers of sheep/goats/pigs/poultry/birds/rabbit and having

owned/rented/leased sheds.

Dairy

- Farmers and Dairy farmers either individuals or joint borrower, Joint Liability Groups or Self Help Groups including tenant farmers having owned/rented/leased sheds.