

23 Sep 2020: PIB Summary & Analysis

1. Brucellosis Control Programme

Context:

Technology License Agreement on “Brucella abortus S19Δ per vaccine” between ICAR- Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) and Hester Biosciences Limited.

What is Brucellosis?

- Brucellosis is one of the most important [zoonotic diseases](#) worldwide which is also endemic in India causing huge economic losses to the dairy industry due to infertility, abortion, birth of weak offsprings and reduced productivity.
- It is responsible for abortions in cattle, buffalo, sheep and goats leading to infertility.
- Prevention of abortions will add new calves to the animal population leading to enhanced milk production.
- Brucellosis is an economically important zoonotic disease. Economic losses due to this disease is almost Rs.350 million per annum.
- It is a highly contagious disease.

Brucellosis Control Programme

- This programme was formerly known as the National Control Programme on Brucellosis.
- It was introduced during the 10th Plan and renamed during the 12th
- It includes the vaccination of female calves aged between 6 – 8 months in all Indian states.
- It also includes the vaccination of all un-vaccinated adult female bovines.
- The programme also covers biannual village screening of pooled milk samples, mass screening and castration of infected bulls.
- The programme is being implemented on a 60:40 sharing basis between Centre and States except in North Eastern and the Himalayan States where the funding is on 90:10 Centre: State sharing basis, whereas 100% central share is being provided for Union Territories.

The new vaccine strain developed at ICAR-IVRI, a modified strain of B. abortus S19, overcomes several drawbacks of the currently-used vaccine B. abortus S19, such as residual virulence to human and animals, not suitable for vaccination in adult animals, causing abortion when used in pregnant animals and also interfering with sero-diagnosis of clinical infection.

2. Agricultural Imports

Major agricultural imports into India

- Major agro-products imported in the country are edible vegetable oils, pulses, fresh fruits, raw cashew nuts, raw sugar, raw cotton and spices which, in value terms, constitute nearly 84% share in India's total agri imports.
- India has a surplus in Agri Trade.
- Enhanced production and productivity of crops is one of the most important measures to reduce dependency on agricultural imports.
- **Various agricultural schemes of the government:**

- [Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana \(RKVY\)](#)
- National Food Security Mission (NFSM)
- NFSM - Oilseeds and oil palm
- Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI)
- [Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture \(MIDH\)](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana \(PMKSY\)](#)
- Soil Health Card, etc.

Context:

Union Agriculture Minister gave the above information in the Rajya Sabha.

3. Kritagya Hackathon

Context:

‘Kritagya’ Hackathon by National Agricultural Higher Education Project of ICAR.

About the Hackathon:

- The Kritagya Ag-Tech Hackathon has been planned by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under the National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP).
- It aims to promote potential technology solutions for enhancing farm mechanization with special emphasis on women-friendly equipment.
- Students, faculties and innovators/entrepreneurs from any university/technical institution across the country can apply and participate in the event in the form of a group.
- They can propose solutions for farm mechanization.
- Participating students can collaborate with local start-ups, students from technology institutes, and can win Rs. 5 lakhs, Rs 3 lakhs and Rs. 1 lakh as first, second and third prize.
- KRITAGYA is an acronym for KRI for Krishi (Agriculture), TA for Taknik (Technology) and GYA for Gyan (Knowledge).
- The development and promotion of women-friendly equipment through innovative technology solutions and right collaborations with stakeholders would play an important role in enhancing farm productivity and profitability.

The ICAR commenced NAHEP, a Government of India and World Bank project, in November 2017 with the overall objective to support the National Agricultural Research and Education System in providing more relevant and better quality education to students.

4. Plastic Parks

Context:

The Government has come up with a scheme of setting up of Plastic Parks with state-of-the-art infrastructure through cluster development approach.

Details:

- The Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has approved the setting up of 10 Plastic Parks in the country.
- Six of these parks have already been given the final approval and they are in the states of Assam, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh (2 parks), Tamil Nadu and Odisha.
- The parks are being built to consolidate and synergize the capacities of the domestic downstream plastic processing industry.

5. Central Pollution Control Board

Context:

The Central Pollution Control Board celebrates its 46th foundation day.

Know more about the [Central Pollution Control Board \(CPCB\)](#) in the linked article.

6. GIS-enabled national land bank portal

Context:

The government has integrated the Industrial Information System (IIS) portal with the GIS System of six states to provide updates on land availability and plot-level information to investors anywhere in the world on a real-time basis and help them make informed decisions.

Details:

- The land bank portal is expected to help investors zero in on land located in various states for potential projects.
- Investors will also get access to details of logistics, land, rail & air connectivity, tax incentives, drainage system, power supply and raw material availability from the portal on various industrial belts.
- In the first phase, extensive information about industrial belts in six states is available on the portal.
- Government agencies are provided with unique User IDs and passwords to upload the land details.

7. Laser Guided Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM)

Context:

Laser Guided ATGM Successfully Test-fired.

Details:

- The DRDO successfully test-fired the indigenously-developed Laser-Guided Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) from the Main Battle Tank (MBT) Arjun at KK Ranges in Ahmednagar in Maharashtra.
- The missile uses a warhead that has the capability to neutralise armoured vehicles which have reactive armours, which are specially-designed protective armours used in military vehicles.
- Laser-guided ATGMs lock and track the targets with the help of laser designation to ensure precision-hit accuracy.
- The missile employs a tandem HEAT warhead to defeat Explosive Reactive Armour (ERA) protected armoured vehicles.
- It has been developed with multiple-platform launch capability.

8. World Blood Donors' Day

Context:

World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) was observed on 14th June 2020.

About the World Blood Donors' Day:

- The theme of World Blood Donor Day 2020 was "Safe Blood Saves Lives".
- The event serves to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products and to thank blood donors for their life-saving gifts of blood.
- The event was organised for the first time in 2005, by a joint initiative of the World Health Organisation and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

9. Ken Betwa River Linking

Context:

Union Minister for Jal Shakti holds virtual meeting with Ministers of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh to expedite the implementation of Ken - Betwa Link Project.

To know more about the [Ken Betwa River Linking Project](#), click on the linked article.

10. Tele-Law Programme

Context:

The Department of Justice releases the first e-edition of success stories on Tele-law programme titled "Reaching the unreachable - Voices of the Beneficiaries".

Details:

- The programme has enabled legal advice to more than 3 lakh beneficiaries in the various geographically difficult and far-flung areas.
- The Tele-Law programme was launched in 2017 to address cases at the pre-litigation stage.
- Under this programme, smart technology of video conferencing, telephone/instant calling facilities available at the vast network of Common Service Centres at the Panchayat level are used to connect the indigent, down-trodden, vulnerable, unreached groups and communities with the Panel Lawyers for seeking timely and valuable legal advice.

To learn more about the [Tele-Law Programme](#), click on the linked article.

11. Shinkun La Tunnel

Context:

NHIDCL expedites detailed project report (DPR) work on the world's longest high-altitude Shinkun La Tunnel.

About the Shinkun La Tunnel:

- On completion of this tunnel, the Manali - Kargil highway will remain open throughout the year.
- The 13.5 km long tunnel under the Shingo La pass will enable all-weather road connectivity between Manali and Nimu via Shingo La and Padum.
- The tunnel will provide all-weather road connectivity between Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir in Zaskar valley.
- With the construction of the tunnel, inhabitants of around 15-odd villages of Zaskar Valley in Jammu and Kashmir will be relieved since the valley remains cut off due to heavy snowfall during the winter.

Shingo La:

- Shingo-la (also known as Shinku La) is a mountain pass in India, on the border between Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh.
- This pass may be considered as an entry point to Lughak Valley in Zaskar.

12. International Sign Languages Day

Context:

International Sign Languages Day celebrated on 23rd September.

About International Sign Languages Day:

- The Day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly and observed for the first time in 2018 as part of the International Week of the Deaf.
- The International Week of the Deaf was first celebrated in 1958 and has since evolved into a global movement of deaf unity and concerted advocacy to raise awareness of the issues deaf people face in their everyday lives.

- The proposal for the Day came from the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD). September 23rd was chosen since it was the day on which the WFD was established in 1951.
- The theme of the 2020 International Week of the Deaf was “Reaffirming Deaf People's Human Rights”.

13. Ind-CEPI mission (India Centric Epidemic Preparedness) for Rapid Vaccine Development and Supporting Indian Vaccine Development

Context:

The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) launches Programme for "Strengthening Clinical Trial Research Capacity in Neighbouring Countries".

Details:

- The DBT, through the mission, aims to strengthen the development of vaccines and associated competencies/technologies for the diseases of epidemic potential in India.
- One of the key focus areas of the mission is to support capacity building and regional networking with LMICs (Low and Middle-Income Countries).
- The DBT has initiated the first phase of the “Training program to strengthen clinical trial research capacity for neighbouring countries” in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.
- The objective of these trainings would be to support researchers and investigator teams for enhancing and strengthening their clinical trial capabilities for conducting clinical trials in compliance with ICH-GCP (International Conference on Harmonisation - Good clinical practice).
- Through this training program and knowledge sharing efforts, GOI is fulfilling its commitment of building various technical capacities in its neighbouring countries.
- Efforts to network with South Asia, ASEAN and African regions for this purpose would be aided through Ind-CEPI.

CEPI

- The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) is a global partnership launched in 2017 to develop vaccines to stop future epidemics.
- CEPI finances and coordinates the development of vaccines against infectious diseases.
- It is headquartered in Oslo, Norway.

