



**PHD Research Bureau**  
PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry



### **Decisions taken by the Union Cabinet (24<sup>th</sup> November 2021)**

- **Cabinet approves extension of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY) for another four months (December 2021-March 2022)**

In pursuance of the pro-people announcement made by Prime Minister in his address to nation on 07.06.2021 and as part of the Economic Response to COVID -19, the Union Cabinet has approved the extension for the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY-Phase V) for a period of another 4 months i.e. December 2021 till March 2022 @ 5 kg per person per month free of cost for all the beneficiaries covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) [Antodaya Anna Yojana & Priority Households] including those covered under Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

Phase-I and Phase-II of this scheme was operational from April to June, 2020 and July to November, 2020 respectively. Phase-III of the scheme was operational from May to June, 2021. Phase-IV of the scheme is currently operational for July-November, 2021 months.

The PMGKAY scheme for Phase V from December 2021 till March, 2022 would entail an estimated additional food subsidy of Rs. 53344.52 Crore

The total outgo in terms of food-grains for PMGKAY Phase V is likely to be about 163 LMT.

It may be recalled that in the wake of economic disruptions caused by the unprecedented outbreak of COVID-19 in the country last year, the Government in March 2020 had announced the distribution of additional free-of-cost foodgrains (Rice/Wheat) to about 80 Crore National Food Security Act (NFSA) beneficiaries at the scale of 5 Kg per person per month under the PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY), over and above the regular monthly NFSA foodgrains i.e., regular entitlements of their ration cards, so that the poor, needy and the vulnerable households/beneficiaries do not suffer on account of non-availability of adequate foodgrains during the times of economic crisis. So far, under the PM-GKAY(phase I to IV) the Department had allocated a total of almost 600 LMT foodgrains to the States/UTs equivalent to about Rs. 2.07 Lakh Crore in food subsidy.

The distribution under PMGKAY-IV is presently ongoing, and as per the reports available from States/UTs so far, 93.8% foodgrains have been lifted and nearly 37.32 LMT (93.9% of July'21), 37.20 LMT (93.6% of Aug'21), 36.87 LMT (92.8% of Sept'21), 35.4 LMT (89% of Oct'21) and 17.9 LMT ( 45% of Nov'21) foodgrains have been distributed to about 74.64 Crore, 74.4 Crore, 73.75 Crore, 70.8 Crore and 35.8 crore beneficiaries respectively.

Going by the experience of earlier phases, the performance of PMGKAY-V is also expected to be on the same high level as achieved before.

Overall, the government will be incurring an expenditure of nearly Rs.2.60 lakh Crore in PMGKAY Phase I- V.

- **Cabinet approves Privatization of Electricity Distribution and Retail Supply Business in the Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the formation of Company (Special Purpose Vehicle) to privatize the electricity distribution business in the Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (DNH&DD), sale of Equity Shares of the newly formed Company to highest bidder and formation of Trust(s) for serving employees' liabilities.

The said privatisation process will fulfill the desired outcomes of better services to over 1.45 lakh consumers of DNH&DD, operational improvements and functional efficiencies in distribution and provide a model for emulation by other utilities across the country. This will further lead to an increase in competition and strengthen the electricity industry and will also lead to recovery of unrealized dues.

In May 2020, Government of India had announced 'AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan', to make India self-reliant through structural reforms. One of the key measures planned was to reform the power distribution and retail supply in UTs through privatization of the power distribution utilities, for leveraging private sector efficiency in electricity distribution.

A single distribution company i.e. DNH-DD Power Distribution Corporation Limited would be incorporated as a wholly owned Government Company and Trust(s) shall be formed to manage the terminal benefits of the personnel transferred to the newly formed company. Transfer of assets, liabilities, personnel etc to the newly formed company will be done as per the Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu Electricity (Reorganization and Reforms) Transfer Scheme, 2020.

- **Cabinet approves Continuation of the umbrella scheme "Atmosphere' & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)" from the 14th Finance Commission to the next Finance Commission Cycle (2021-2026)**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today gave its approval for continuation of the umbrella scheme "Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)" along with its eight sub-schemes to the next finance cycle of five years i.e. 2021-2026 at an estimated cost of Rs.2,135 crore. The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) through its units namely India Meteorological Department (IMD), National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF); Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) and Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS).

**Details:**

ACROSS scheme pertains to the atmospheric science programs of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and addresses different aspects of weather and climate services. Each of these aspects is incorporated as eight sub-schemes under the umbrella scheme "ACROSS" and is

implemented in an integrated manner through the aforesaid four institutes.

#### **Implementation Strategy and target:**

The eight sub-schemes under the ACROSS scheme are multi disciplinary in nature and will be implemented in an integrated manner through IMD, IITM, NCMRWF and INCOIS to cover all the aspects of the weather and climate. Each institute has a designated role for accomplishing the above tasks through the following eight schemes:

- (i) Commissioning of Polarimetric Doppler Weather Radars (DWRs)-IMD
- (ii) Upgradation of Forecast System-IMD
- (iii) Weather & Climate Services-IMD
- (iv) Atmospheric Observations Network-1 MD
- (v) Numerical Modelling of Weather and Climate -NCMRWF
- (vi) Monsoon Mission III- IITM/NCMRWF/INCOIS/IMD
- (vii) Monsoon Convection, Clouds and Climate Change (MC4)-IITM/NCMRWF/IMD
- (viii) High Performance Computing System (HPCS)-IITM/NCMRWF

#### **Major impact including employment generation potential**

The scheme will provide improved weather, climate, ocean forecast and services, and other hazard related services thereby ensuring transfer of commensurate benefits to the end - user through various services like Public weather service, Agro-meteorological Services, Aviation services, Environmental monitoring services, Hydro-meteorological services, climate services, tourism, pilgrimage, power generation, water management, Sports & adventure etc. The whole process from generation of forecast to its delivery requires considerable manpower at every stage, thereby generating employment opportunities to many people.

#### **Background:**

One of the mandates of the Ministry of Earth Sciences is to observe weather, climate and ocean parameters and carry out R&D activities to develop and improve capability to forecast weather, climate and hazard related phenomena for societal, economic and environmental benefits including addressing science of climate change and developing climate services. The increased incidence of extreme weather events due to Global Climate change and the risk associated with severe weather has prompted MoES to formulate many target oriented programs, which are carried out in an integrated manner through IMD, IITM, NCMRWF and INCOIS. As a result, these activities are put together under the umbrella scheme "ACROSS".

- **Cabinet approves continuation of the umbrella scheme "Ocean Services, Modelling, Application, Resources and Technology (O-SMART)"**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today gave its approval for continuation of the umbrella scheme "Ocean

Services, Modelling, Application, Resources and Technology (O-SMART)" of Ministry of Earth Sciences, for implementation during the period from 2021-26 at an overall cost of Rs. 2177 crore.

The scheme encompasses seven sub-schemes namely Ocean Technology, Ocean Modelling and Advisory Services (OMAS), Ocean Observation Network (OON), Ocean Non-Living Resources, Marine Living Resources and Ecology (MLRE), Coastal Research and Operation and Maintenance of Research Vessels. These sub-schemes are being implemented by autonomous/attached institutes of the Ministry, viz. National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai; Indian National Center for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad; National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa, Center for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE), Kochi; and National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), Chennai as well as involving other national institutes. A fleet of oceanographic and coastal research vessels of the Ministry provide required research support for scheme.

The research and technology development pertaining to oceans in India was initiated by Department of Ocean Development (DoD), which was set up in 1981 which later merged to Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and continuing since then. MoES has achieved significant position in the Oceanographic research through technology developments, forecast services, field installations, explorations, survey, technology demonstrations towards national benefits. The O-SMART scheme encompassing oceanographic research activities is being implemented with the objectives for providing forecast and services based on the continuous observation of our oceans, development of technologies and exploratory surveys for sustainable harnessing of our oceanic resources (both living and non-living) and promotion of front-ranking research in ocean sciences.

Several major milestones have been achieved through the activities of the scheme, the most significant is India's recognition as Pioneer Investor with International Seabed Authority (ISA) for conducting extensive research on deep sea mining of Poly Metallic Nodules (PMN) and hydrothermal sulphides in the allotted area of the India Ocean. The technology development for desalination using low temperature thermal desalination installation of such facility in Lakshadweep islands is also a significant achievement. Moreover, India's ocean related activities are now extended from the Arctic to Antarctic region covering large ocean space which have been monitored by through in-situ and satellite-based observation. India has taken leadership role in implementing Indian Ocean component of Global Ocean Observing System in Intergovernmental.

Oceanographic Commission through wide range of observations networks including both moored and drifters' types have been deployed and maintained in the Indian Ocean. These observation network yields ocean forecast services for potential fishing ground and natural costal hazards warning for storm surge associated with cyclone and Tsunami to stake holders at nations levels as well as neighbouring countries. A state-of-the-art early warning system for oceanic disasters viz. tsunami, storm surges, has been established at INCOIS, Hyderabad to provide services for India and countries of the Indian Ocean, which have been recognized by UNESCO. Extensive survey along the Indian exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and continental shelf of India are conducted for national benefits towards identifying ocean resources, Ocean related advisory services, navigation, etc. Assessment of living resources in the EEZ and deep ocean of India including mapping of the living resources has been undertaken for marine ecosystem with goal for Conservation and protection of Marine

Biodiversity. The Ministry has been also monitoring the health of coastal waters of India including shoreline changes and marine ecosystems.

OSMART being a multidisciplinary continuing scheme, the ongoing extensive research and technology development activities would augment capacity building of the nation in the oceanographic field at the international level. The present decade has been declared as the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development by the United Nations (UN) and continuation of the scheme would strengthen our stand in the global oceanographic research and technology development. This continuation of the scheme would contribute significantly towards national policy on blue economy for effective and efficient use of the vast ocean resources in a Sustainable way. Efforts towards achieving United Nations sustainable Development Goal-14 to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources are being covered through the coastal research and marine biodiversity activities. Significant contribution to the national GDP is being made and to be continued through the ocean advisory services and technologies developed benefiting communities and several sectors working in the marine environment, particularly in the coastal states of India.

In the next five years (2021-26) this scheme would provide further comprehensive coverage through strengthening the ongoing activities towards delivering cutting edge technology applicable for marine domain, forecast and warning services to various coastal stake holders, understanding biodiversity towards conservation strategy for marine living organisms and understanding coastal processes.

- **Cabinet approves continuation of National Apprenticeship Training Scheme for next five years**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi today has accorded its approval for stipendiary support of Rs. 3,054 crore to apprentices who undergo apprenticeship training under National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS) of Ministry of Education for the period from 2021-22 to 2025-26 (upto 31-03-2026).

Approximately 9 lakhs apprentices will be trained by industry and commercial organisations. NATS is a well-established scheme of Government of India which has demonstrated to enhance the employability of students who have successfully completed the apprenticeship training.

The apprentices who have completed graduate and diploma programme in Engineering, Humanities, Science and Commerce will be given stipend of Rs.9,000/- and Rs.8,000/- per month respectively.

The Government has approved an expenditure of more than Rs. 3,000 crore during the next five years which is about 4.5 times the expenditure made during the previous 5 years. This increased expenditure on apprenticeship is in line with the thrust which National Education Policy 2020 has given to apprenticeship.

In keeping with the Government emphasis on "SabkaSaath, SabkaVikas, --SabkaVishwas, SabkaPrayaas", the scope of NATS has further been expanded to include students from Humanities, Science and Commerce besides students from engineering stream. This scheme

aims to raise the standards of skill level by strengthening the skill ecosystem and as a result, will provide employment to approximately 7 lakhs youths in the next five years.

The NATS will provide apprenticeship in the emerging areas under 'Production Linked Incentive' (PLI) such as Mobile manufacturing, Medical devices manufacturing, Pharma sector, Electronics/Technology products, Automobile sector etc. The scheme will also be preparing skilled manpower for connectivity/logistics industry sectors, identified under GatiShakti.

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Warm Regards,

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