

09 – 02 – 2022

News: Parvatmala Scheme

- Recently, the Union Finance Minister in the Union Budget for 2022-23 announced National Ropeways Development Programme – “Parvatmala” to improve connectivity in hilly areas.

Parvatmala Scheme

- The Parvatmala Scheme will be taken up on PPP (Public Private Partnership) mode, which will be a preferred ecologically sustainable alternative in place of conventional roads in difficult hilly areas.
- The idea is to improve connectivity and convenience for commuters, besides promoting tourism.
- This may also cover congested urban areas, where conventional mass transit systems are not feasible.
- The scheme is being presently started in regions like Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir and the other North Eastern states.
- The Finance Minister announced that contracts for 8 ropeway projects for a length of 60 km would be awarded in 2022-23.

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) will have responsibility for development of ropeway and alternative mobility solutions technology, as well as construction, research, and policy in this area.
- In February 2021, the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961 was amended, which enabled the MORTH to also look after the development of Ropeways and Alternate Mobility Solutions.
- The move will give a boost to the sector by setting up a regulatory regime.
- The MORTH has so far been responsible for development of Highways and regulating the road transport sector across the country.

Significance

Economical mode of transportation

- Given that ropeway projects are built in a straight line over a hilly terrain, it also results in lower land acquisition costs.
- Hence, despite having a higher cost of construction per km than roadways, ropeway projects' construction cost may happen to be more economical than roadways.

Faster mode of transportation

- Owing to the aerial mode of transportation, ropeways have an advantage over roadway projects where ropeways can be built in a straight line, over a hilly terrain.

Environmentally friendly

- **Low dust emissions.** Material containers can be designed so as to rule out any soiling of the environment.

Last mile connectivity

- Ropeway projects adopting 3S (a kind of cable car system) or equivalent technologies can transport 6000-8000 passengers per hour.

Benefits of Ropeways

Ideal for difficult / challenging / sensitive terrain

- Long rope spans: **The system crosses obstacles like rivers, buildings, ravines, or roads without a problem.**
- Ropes guided over towers: **Low space requirements** on the ground and no barrier for humans or animals.

Economy

- Ropeway having multiple cars propelled by a single power-plant and drive mechanism.
- This reduces both construction and maintenance costs.
- The use of a single operator for an entire ropeway is a further saving, in labor cost.
- On level ground, the cost of ropeways is competitive with narrow-gauge railroads; in the mountains the ropeway is far superior.

Flexible

- Transport of different materials - A ropeway allows for the simultaneous transport of different types of material.
- Ability to handle large slopes
- Ropeways and cableways (cable cranes) can handle large slopes and large differences in elevation.
- Where a road or railroad needs switchbacks or tunnels, a ropeway travels straight up and down the fall line. The old cliff railways in England and ski resort ropeways in the mountains take advantage of this feature.

Low footprint

- The fact that only narrow-based vertical supports are needed at intervals, leaving the rest of the ground free, makes it possible for ropeways to be constructed in built-up areas and in places where there is intense competition for land use.

News: Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)

- Recently, the government informed the Parliament about the fund allocation to the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)

- In the year 2016, Ministry of Food Processing and Industries (MoFPI) had introduced an umbrella Scheme Called “Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters” or SAMPADA, which was proposed to be implemented with an allocation of Rs 6,000 crore for the period of 2016-20.
- In the year 2017, the government renamed the SAMPADA scheme as Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY).
- It is a Central Sector Umbrella Scheme.

- A dedicated **investor's portal called 'Nivesh Bandhu' was launched in 2017** to aid and assist potential investors in the food processing sector in taking informed decisions. This portal is a 'one stop information source' on central and state government policies, incentives offered, Agri Resources and infrastructure facilities across the country.
- An investor-friendly mobile App-'Nivesh Bandhu' was developed and launched to enable the investor to have access to relevant information very conveniently and from any destination from their mobile proving to be game changers for the investors in taking informed investment decisions.

Objectives

- To supplement agriculture.
- To create processing and preservation capacities.
- To modernise and expand existing food processing units with a view to increasing the level of processing.
- To add value leading to the reduction of wastage.

Components

- Mega Food Parks.
- Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure.

- Infrastructure for Agro-Processing Clusters.
- Creation of Backward and Forward Linkages.
- Creation/Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities.
- Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure, and
- Human Resources Institutions.
- **Operation Greens.**

News: Promotion of Organic Farming

- In view of increasing demand of organic agricultural product, Government has been promoting Organic farming as a chemical free farming through dedicated schemes namely Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER) since 2015-16.

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).**

Implementation

- Under PKVY **Organic farming is promoted through the adoption of the organic village** by cluster approach and PGS certification.
- **Fifty or more farmers will form a cluster having 50-acre land** to take up the organic farming under the scheme.
- The **produce will be pesticide residue free** and will contribute to improving the health of the consumer.
- It primarily aims to increase soil fertility and thereby helps in production of healthy food through organic practices **without the use of agro-chemicals**.

Organic farming and its significance

- Organic cultivation doesn't **involve the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers** and thus helps to maintain a harmonious balance among the various complex ecosystems. Also it **improves the quality of the soil** which further improves the standards of the crops produced there.
- In the long term, organic farming leads in subsistence of agriculture, bio-diversity conservation and environmental protection.
- It will also help in building the soil health resulting in sustainable increased crop production.

Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD-NER)

- Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD-NER) is a **Central Sector Scheme**, a sub-mission under **National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)**, launched by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- It is implemented in the states of **Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura**, during the 12th plan period.
- The scheme aims to **development of certified organic production in a value chain mode to link growers with consumers and to support the development of entire value chain starting from inputs, seeds, certification, to the creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing, marketing and brand building initiative**.
- The assistance is provided for **cluster development, on/off farm input production, supply of seeds/planting materials, setting up of functional infrastructure, establishment of integrated processing unit, refrigerated transportation, pre-cooling/ cold stores chamber, branding, labeling and**

packaging, hiring of space, hand holdings, organic certification through third party, mobilization of farmers/processors etc.

- Recently, the 'Wild' Arunachal Kiwi has received organic certification by the Mission Organic Value Chain Development for the North East Region.
- Certification helps producers and handlers; they receive premium prices for the products and have access to fast-growing, local, regional and international markets.
- Such certifications in India can be obtained after a strict scientific assessment done by the regulatory body, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).