

PM SHREE SCHEME

The PM SHRI scheme

- According to the Ministry of Education, the scheme will be called PM SHRI Schools (PM Schools for Rising India).
- Under the scheme, 14,500 schools across India's states and Union Territories will be redeveloped to reflect the key features of the NEP, 2020.
- The NEP for schools envisages a curricular structure and teaching style categorised in four stages: foundational, preparatory, middle, and secondary.
- According to the NEP, the foundational years (pre-school and grades I and II) should involve play-based learning. At the preparatory level (grades III-V), light textbooks are to be introduced along with some formal classroom teaching.
- Subject teachers are to be introduced at the middle level (grades VI-VIII). The secondary stage (grades IX-XII) will be multidisciplinary, with no hard separation between arts and sciences or other disciplines.
- It also proposed that board exams be held twice a year, including one for helping students to improve their

scores, and that two types of papers on mathematics should be offered a standard paper, and a different one to test higher levels of competency.

Centrally sponsored scheme

- A centrally sponsored scheme is one in which the cost of implementation is mostly split in a 60:40 ratio between the Union government and the states/UTs. The mid-day meal scheme (now PM Poshan) or the PM Awas Yojana are examples of centrally sponsored schemes.
- In the case of the North-eastern states, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, and UTs without legislatures, the Centre's contribution can go up to 90 per cent.
- PM SHRI will be implemented at a cost of Rs 27,360 crore over the next five years, in which the Centre's share will be Rs 18,128 crore.
- PM SHRI schools will be an upgrade of existing schools run by the Centre, states, UTs, and local bodies. This essentially means that a PM SHRI school can be an upgraded KV, JNV, or even a school that is run by a state government or a municipal corporation.

Where and how

- The PM SHRI scheme will be application-based, which means states will have to identify schools for upgradation under the scheme.
- Subsequently, schools will be required to self-apply online.
- The portal will be opened four times a year, once every quarter, for the first two years of the scheme.
- They will be equipped with labs, smart classrooms, libraries, sports equipment, art room, etc., and shall also be developed as green schools with water conservation, waste recycling, energy-efficient infrastructure and integration of organic lifestyle in curriculum.
- These schools will also “offer mentorship” to other schools in their vicinity.

THE HINDU

Draft amendment to the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules 2011

- The Department of Consumer Affairs, Legal Metrology Division has notified a draft amendment to the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules 2011.
- What are the mandatory provisions under the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules,

2011? It is mandatory under the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 to ensure a number of declarations, such as the name and address of the manufacturer/packer/importer, the country of origin, the common or generic name of the commodity, the net quantity, the month and year of manufacture, the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) and consumer care information.

- As a consumer-oriented policy, all pre-packaged commodities should also be inspected.
- As stated in Rule 2(h), the “principal display panel”, in relation to a package, means the total surface area of a package containing the information required in accordance with these rules, namely that all the information should be grouped together and given in one place the pre-printed information could be grouped together and given in one place and the online information in another place.
- Additionally, Rule 9(1)(a) provides that the declaration on the package must be legible and prominent.
- The consumers’ ‘right to be informed’ is violated when important declarations are not prominently displayed on the package.

- If there is more than one major product, Rule 6(1) (b) states that “.....the name or number of each product shall be mentioned on the package.” This sub-rule is, however, not applicable to mechanical or electrical commodities.

What are the proposed amendments?

- As many blended food and cosmetic products are sold on the market, the key constituents need to be mentioned on the product packaging.
- It is common for consumers to assume that brands’ claims are accurate, but such claims are usually misleading.
- Additionally, the front side of the package must contain the percentage of the composition of the unique selling proposition (USP).
- Listing the USP of a product on the front of the package without disclosing its composition percentage violates consumer rights. Also, packages displaying key constituents must display a percentage of the content used to make the product.
- The Department of Consumer Affairs, Legal Metrology Division has suggested that at least two prime components should be declared on

the package’s front side along with the brand name.

- Currently, manufacturers list the ingredients and nutritional information only on the back of the packaging.
- The proposed Section 6(1)(ba) states that when a commodity contains more than one constituent, the front side of the package must include a declaration of two or more of the commodities’ prime constituents along with the brand name.
- This declaration must also include the percentage/quantity of the USPs of the product in the same font size as the declaration of the USPs
- When the new provision of Section 6(1) (ba) is added, consumers will not be misled by the fake claims of manufacturers relating to the content in blended foods and cosmetics.

THE HINDU

Content moderation in Wikipedia

- India has summoned officials of Wikipedia, in response to cricketer Arshdeep Singh Wikipedia page being edited with misleading information that stated he was a “khalistani”.

- To increase Wikipedia's reliability and also to prevent vandalism and disruptive edits, there are restrictions on edits to the content that Wikipedia hosts.
- One of these restrictions is to allow certain "protections" to be accorded to particular articles.
- An article may have varying degree of protection depending on the vulnerability of the article to vandalism, disruption, and abuse.
- In the case of social media platforms, platform owners such as Meta or Twitter are responsible for exercising due diligence in content moderation through individuals on their payroll.
- However, in Wikipedia, the situation is slightly different given that content moderation decisions are not taken by employees.
- What can the Indian government do if it is aggrieved by content on Wikipedia?
- In India, for intermediaries to claim the "safe harbour" of not being responsible for the content they host, under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000, they must abide by due diligence requirements under the Act and its Rules.
- As per the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, there are certain categories of information that an intermediary should not allow to be hosted or uploaded on its platform.
- One such category is information that is "patently false and untrue, and is written or published in any form, with the intent to mislead or harass a person, entity or agency for financial gain or to cause any injury to any person".
- Therefore, in the Indian context, even if the Wikimedia Foundation does not own the information hosted on Wikipedia, once Wikimedia Foundation has "actual knowledge" of such content being hosted on its platform, it would be held responsible for the same.
- In the context of the IT Rules, 2021 "actual knowledge" occurs when an intermediary has been notified by either a court order or through an order of the appropriate agency demanding removal of the offending content.
- In this case while neither has happened, Wikipedia administrators and editors have removed the distortion from Arshdeep Singh's page and granted it certain protection such that only "trusted editors" can edit the page.

Joint space exercise

- India and the U.S. will undertake joint military drills in October in Auli, Uttarakhand. Auli is at an altitude of 10,000 feet and some 95 km from the Line of Actual Control (LAC).
- The time is ripe for the inaugural India-U.S. Joint space military exercise.
- First, this single act will push India's defence partnership into a new orbit.
- Second, it will send a strong message to a common adversary.
- Third, it will have other ripple effects for the wider quad.
- Space has been singled out as a critical area of cooperation in the recent Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) meeting between India and the U.S. For the first time in history, both countries are jointly staring at a common adversary. Nothing binds friends together as sharing the same displacement anxiety.
- The launch of the tri-service Defence Space Agency (DSA) has permanently taken the military away from the shadows of civil space.
- The government has also set up the Defence Space Research Agency (DSRA) to help develop space-based weapons for the DSA.
- Space is as much recognized as a military domain as land, water, air, and cyber
- The lowest hanging fruit would be a joint anti-satellite (ASAT) missile test. It is essentially a missile launched from the Earth's surface to destroy a satellite passing overhead.
- Both countries have demonstrated capability in this.
- The test would be against a simulated orbital target as that does not create space debris and is not included in the wording of the U.S. moratorium.
- Eventually, this will lead to other space military collaborations such as directed energy weapons, rendezvous and proximity operations (RPOs), and co-orbital ASATs.

Space programmes

- France conducted its first space military exercise, ASTERX, in 2021. China is marching ahead to the Cis-Lunar space (region beyond the geosynchronous orbit) with an ambition to establish a permanent presence on the Moon by 2024.
- The doctrine in space is still evolving with the U.S. urging partner countries to lay down rules and norms.

- China and Russia have released a draft binding treaty of their own.
- Red lines and norms will eventually emerge but until then it provides an ideal new theatre to push Indo-U.S. military collaboration forward.
- Space has assets that form the bedrock of the modern economy GPS (PNT position navigation timing), telecom networks, early warning systems for missiles, and weather forecasts all are enabled by our satellites in GEO or LEO orbits.
- But NGOs have other expenses too. In order to achieve long-term and sustained impact, they need to pay for administrative and support expenses not specifically tied to programmes for instance, rent, electricity, technology, and human resource costs.
- CSR funders' focus on regulatory compliance amendments to the CSR law in 2021 include substantial financial penalties for noncompliance.

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CSR and NGO funding

- Giving, both private and public, flowed to NGOs working towards combating pandemic-induced challenges such as loss of livelihood for vulnerable communities, food banks, and health and medical support.
- In any such social effort, program expenses attract the big cheques especially when they come from corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives in India.
- For example, an NGO working on education outcomes might receive funding for books, other online resources, teacher training, curriculum design, etc.
- Roughly 90% of the CSR funders are relatively small, unlisted companies and companies that spend less than ₹50 lakh annually on CSR are not required by law to have a CSR committee.
- They generally leave decision-making and action plans to company boards, who may have little to no experience working with NGOs or on social impact.
- Hence, their priorities tend to sway towards risk avoidance, compliance, and cost minimisation.
- Several larger companies have added CSR to the responsibilities of their HR or administration or communications head, rather than hiring professional leads, experienced in the social sector.

- The pandemic also exposed how vulnerable NGOs are to financial stress.
- Our research revealed that 54% of NGOs had less than three months in reserve funds in September 2020.
- This number stood at 38% before the pandemic. Without adequate reserves, NGOs cannot pay salaries or bills when faced with an unexpected funding shortfall.
- The CSR programmes cannot currently contribute to NGO reserves/corpus by law.
- However, by covering indirect costs and organisational development, they still help to relieve financial pressure and make organisations more resilient.
- As our research has shown, more CSR decision-makers are shifting their focus from compliance with CSR laws to the social impact they are making.
- CSR funders are following several themes to make this transition, such as hiring professionals, coming together in collaborative, and defining and publishing their impact metrics to hold themselves accountable.
- The idea is to move beyond signing cheques to recognising that, ultimately, what's good for Indian society is also good for business.

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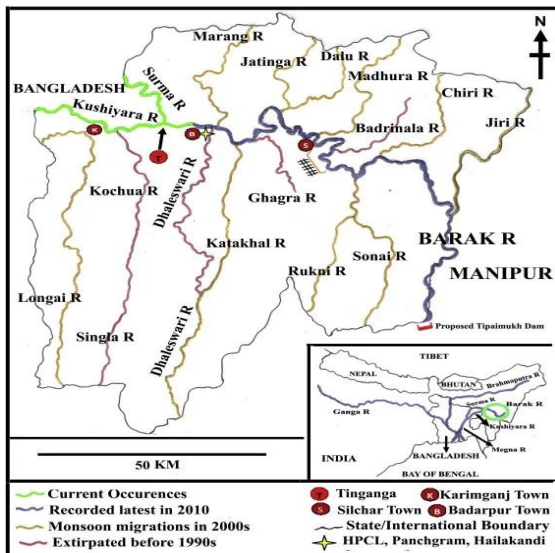
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Kushiyara

- India and Bangladesh on Tuesday signed a water-sharing agreement
- The two leaders agreed to share the waters of the Kushiyara, a common river, in the first such arrangement between the countries since 1996.
- The agreement will benefit southern parts of Assam state in India and the Sylhet region in Bangladesh.
- The Kushiyara River is a distributary river in Bangladesh and Assam, India. It forms on the India-Bangladesh border as a branch of the Barak River, when the Barak separates into the Kushiyara and Surma.

- The waters that eventually form the Kushiyara originate in the uplands of the state of Assam and pick up tributaries from Nagaland and Manipur



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