

NEWS TODAY

ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY REGULATION (ART) BILL 2020 INTRODUCED IN LOK SABHA

- ART Bill was approved by Cabinet in February, 2020 with an aim to **monitor medical procedures used to assist people to achieve pregnancy.**
 - > It is intended to **regulate ART clinics and banks, prevention of misuse, safe and ethical practice of ART services.**
 - > The bill can protect the affected women and children from exploitation as **India has one of the highest growths in ART centres.**

• Key provisions of the bill:

- > **A national Board to**
 - Lay down a code of conduct to be observed by those operating clinics.
 - Set the minimum standards of physical infrastructure, laboratory and diagnostic equipment and expert manpower.
- > **A national registry and registration authority** to maintain a database to assist the national Board.
- > States and UTs shall constitute **State Boards and State Authorities** to follow policies and plans laid by National Board.
- > To ensure **confidentiality of intending couples** and protect the rights of the child.

Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART)

- Around 10-15% of married couples in India face infertility.
- ART help couples unable to conceive naturally, with the aid of state-of-the-art technology, to achieve pregnancy.

WHO IS IT FOR?	TYPES
ART might be an option for women who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot conceive naturally • Cannot carry pregnancy to term • Have genetic disorders • Have partners with abnormal sperm 	There are two main types of ART <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artificial Insemination (AI) • In vitro fertilization (IVF)

INDIA WILL BE SELF-RELIANT IN THE PRODUCTION OF FERTILIZERS BY 2023: UNION MINISTER FOR CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS

- Currently, **fertiliser production of the country is 42-45 million tonnes**, and imports are at around 18 million tonnes.
- **Primary fertilizers used** to supply nutrients to soil are Nitrogenous (urea), Phosphatic (di-ammonium phosphate (DAP)) and Potassic (muriate of potash (MOP)) fertilizers.
 - > India ranks **second in the production of nitrogenous fertilizers** and third in **phosphatic fertilizers.**
 - > **Requirement of potash is met through imports** since there are limited reserves of potash in the country.
- **Issues faced by domestic industry:** Prices are fixed way below production costs, delays in releasing subsidies etc.
- **Steps taken to boost production and efficient use of fertilizers**
 - > Under Atma Nirbhar Bharat programme **new fertilizer manufacturing units are being setup with an investment of Rs 40,000 crore** to reduce dependency on import.
 - > **Soil health cards scheme** to rationalise use of fertilizers.
 - > DBT in fertilizer subsidy.
 - > **Production of organic and Nano fertilizers** as they are 25 to 30% cheaper and give 18 to 35% higher yield and keep the soil in good health.

BANKING REGULATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 2020 INTRODUCED IN LOK SABHA

- The bill seeks to replace **Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance 2020 that amended Banking Regulation Act, 1949 Act.**
 - > Ordinance brought 1,482 urban and 58 multi-state cooperative banks under RBI supervision to
 - Strengthen oversight of the lenders.
 - Boost depositors' confidence.
 - Prevent a Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank-like fraud.
 - Protect deposit holders for any fallout of the impact of the pandemic.

• Key features of the bill

- > It will bring **Urban Cooperative Banks and multi-state cooperative banks under direct supervision of RBI.**
 - Currently, Urban and multi-state cooperative banks come **under dual regulation of RBI and the Registrar of Co-operative Societies (RCS).**
- > Allows **RBI to resolve banking stress without putting Banks under a moratorium.**
 - Earlier, RBI had to first place a bank under a moratorium before preparing a revival scheme for stressed bank.
 - During moratorium, **bank cannot grant any loans or make investments** in any credit instruments.

THREE BILLS AIMED AT TRANSFORMATION OF AGRICULTURE AND RAISING FARMERS' INCOME INTRODUCED IN LOK SABHA

- These bills seek to replace the ordinances promulgated in June 2020 under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan to provide a **boost to those engaged in agriculture and allied activities.**

The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It aims to open up agricultural marketing outside APMC market yards for farmers, and also remove barriers to inter-State trade. • It proposes an electronic trading in transaction platform.
The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It aims at facilitating contract farming, where a private buyer contracts to purchase a crop at a certain price at the beginning of a season, transferring the risk of market unpredictability from the farmer to the corporate sponsor. • It will empower farmers for engaging with processors, aggregators, wholesalers, large retailers and exporters on a level playing field without any fear of exploitation. • It will reduce cost of marketing and improve income of farmers.
The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It aims to "deregulate" agricultural commodities like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, onions and potatoes. • It will help harnessing of economies of scale and attract private sector/foreign direct investment into agriculture sector helping modernization of food supply chain. • It will help both farmers and consumers while bringing in price stability.

- Co-operative banks are **financial entities established on a co-operative basis** and belonging to their members. This means that the customers of a co-operative bank are also its owners.

PARLIAMENT PASSES NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HOMOEOPATHY BILL AND NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR INDIAN SYSTEM OF MEDICINE BILL

- Bills propose a medical education system that **ensures availability of high quality medical professionals** both for homeopathic treatment as well as for the Indian System of Medicine.
 - > India has recognized six systems of medicine: **Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Yoga, Naturopathy and Homoeopathy.**

National Commission for Homoeopathy (NCH) Bill	National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) Bill
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Constitution of the NCH for development and regulation of all aspects relating to education, medical profession and medical institutions of Homoeopathy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Constitution of the NCISM for development and regulation of all aspects relating to education, medical profession and medical institutions of Indian System of Medicine.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Constitution of three Autonomous Boards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Homoeopathy Education Board ▷ Medical Assessment and Rating Board ▷ Board of Ethics and Registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Setting up of following Autonomous boards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Board of Ayurveda ▷ Board of Unani, Siddha, and Sowa-Rigpa ▷ Medical Assessment and Rating Board for Indian System of Medicine ▷ Ethics and Medical Registration Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Advisory Council for Homoeopathy as primary platform through which the states/UTs to put forth their views and concerns before NCH. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Advisory Council for Indian System of Medicine as primary platform for states/UTs to put forth their views and concerns before NCISM.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Uniform National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for admission to under-graduate homoeopathy education. Also, a common final year National Exit Test for the students graduating from medical institutions to obtain the license for practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Uniform National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for admission to under-graduate education. ⊙ Also, a National Teachers' Eligibility Test for postgraduates who wish to take up teaching as a profession.

ALSO IN NEWS

<p>Centre opposes plea seeking recognition of same-sex marriages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petition was filed before Delhi High Court to recognise same sex marriages under Section 5 of the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955. • Centre opposed it stating that legal system, society and values do not recognise marriage between same sex couples. • In 2018, a five-judge Constitution Bench unanimously held that criminalisation of private consensual sexual conduct between adults of the same sex under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code is clearly unconstitutional.
<p>10.4 million jobless migrant workers returned home post-lockdown</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to Union Minister for Labour and Employment, a total of 10.4 million migrant workers returned to their home states due to loss of jobs after COVID-19 lockdown. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Nearly 71% of these belonged to four states: Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Rajasthan. • It also stated that there is no data of migrant workers who lost their jobs and their lives during the COVID-19 lockdown.
<p>Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2018, erstwhile Multi-sectoral Development Programme has been restructured and renamed as PMJVK. • It seeks to provide better socio economic infrastructure facilities to the minority communities particularly in the field of education, health & skill development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > About 33 - 40 % resources are allocated for women-centric projects. • Under PMJVK, land of State Government/State Government bodies, land of other organisations such as Security Organizations, Waqf, Gram Panchayat can also be utilised for various educational, skill development projects.
<p>MANAK (Million Minds Augmenting National Aspirations and Knowledge)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was launched in 2017 by Department of Science and Technology in partnership with the National Innovation Foundation. • Objective of the scheme is to target one million original ideas/innovations rooted in science and societal applications to foster a culture of creativity and innovative thinking among school children. • Meritorious ideas are rewarded with the award money of Rs 10,000 with option of showcasing it to district, state, and national level exhibition along with mentoring support.
<p>National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a capacity building programme for Improving Quality of School Education through Integrated Teacher Training. • It aims to build competencies among all the teachers and school principals at the elementary stage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 16,99,931 School Heads and Teachers have been trained in 2019-20. • Functionaries (at the state, district, block, cluster level) shall be trained in learning outcomes, school based assessment, learner – centred pedagogy etc. • In 2020-21, it has been decided to launch NISHTHA – Phase II at the secondary level.
<p>Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOPS is a flagship program of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to provide assistance to India's top athletes. • It was started in 2014 to improve India's performance at Olympics and Paralympics. • It was revamped in 2018 to have a technical support team for managing the TOPS athletes and providing holistic support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > It supports probable athletes (Currently 94) identified for Tokyo-2021, Paris-2024 and Los Angles-2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

