

Challenges facing Khadi

Mains Paper 3: Indian Economy



Context

The Prime Minister has repeatedly stressed his support for khadi, cottage industries, crafts and handlooms.

Brief notes About Khadi

- Genuine khadi or khaddar is woven from short-stapled organically grown cotton.
- The beauty is in its uneven texture and colours, as cotton bolls are not all pure white in every region.
- Fabrics being made today in the name of khadi are modified spin-offs that look more like handloom fabric, with mill-produced yarn, screen printed and often mixed with mill-made polyester.

What are major Issues facing this sector

- **Restriction of scope:** According to the **Khadi Mark Regulations (KMR) of 2013**, no textile can be sold or

otherwise traded by any person or institution as khadi or a khadi product in any form if the khadi mark tag issued by KVIC is missing.

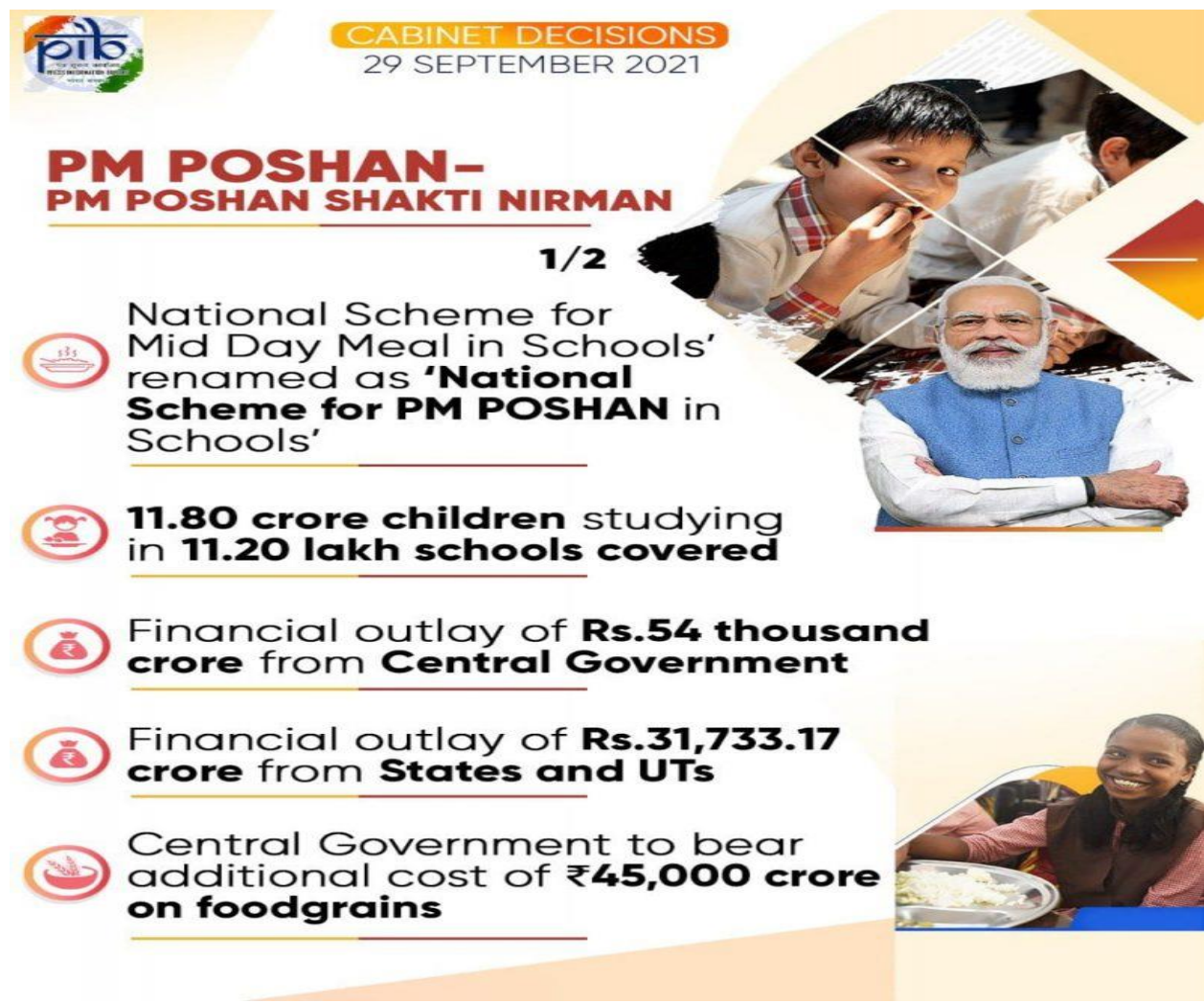
- **This restricts the scope of trade** to a few approved entities, thereby creating recognisable barriers to enter the market for khadi.
- **Restrictive certification process:** The certification process described in Chapter V (Clause 20 (a)) of the KMR requires accredited agencies to perform an on-site verification of hand-spinning and hand-weaving processes.”
- Yarn must be procured only from KVIC depots or the Cotton Corporation of India, **descriptions of mechanisation and electrification are ambiguous.**
- There are so many restrictions that most producers have no incentive and many small bodies are unable **to pay Rs 50,000 for certification.**
- **Multiple authorities:** Hand-spinning and weaving are also part of craft skills. Only the hand-spun part is additional in khadi.
- But today KVIC, on its website and in its catalogue, has visibly non-hand-spun silk-printed saris, polyester fabrics and others that seem clearly machine-printed.
- The KVIC online catalogue has products like industrially-made suitcases, bags and wallets which are under MSME, but with a “khadi” label.
- This points to the need for bringing khadi and all handicrafts together in one ministry.

Conclusion

Gandhi did not intend to create a police state for the khadi sector, full of acts and rules that put production in a straitjacket. Perhaps, some courageous producers can try circumventing all this by using the word “khaddar” on their labels instead.

Source: The Indian Express






PM POSHAN Scheme



The infographic features a yellow and white background with a large image of a child eating and a portrait of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It includes the PIB logo, the text 'CABINET DECISIONS 29 SEPTEMBER 2021', and a list of five key decisions regarding the PM POSHAN scheme, each accompanied by a small icon.

1/2

**PM POSHAN-
PM POSHAN SHAKTI NIRMAN**

-  National Scheme for Mid Day Meal in Schools' renamed as '**National Scheme for PM POSHAN** in Schools'
-  **11.80 crore children** studying in **11.20 lakh schools** covered
-  Financial outlay of **Rs.54 thousand crore** from **Central Government**
-  Financial outlay of **Rs.31,733.17 crore** from **States and UTs**
-  Central Government to bear additional cost of **₹45,000 crore** on **foodgrains**

Context

The existing Mid-Day Meal scheme which provides hot meals to students will be renamed as the **National Scheme for PM Poshan Shakti Nirman**.

What are the key features of the scheme?

- It is a Centrally-Sponsored Scheme that aims to enhance the nutrition levels of schoolchildren
- Eligibility - All school going students of classes I to VIII studying in government and government-aided schools are eligible to avail the benefits.
- Duration - For a period of five years (2021-22 to 2025-26)
- The total budget of the scheme will amount to Rs. 1, 30,794.90 crore.
- The scheme will be extended to pre-primary students or Bal Vatikas of Government and Government-aided primary schools.
- The concept of **TithiBhojan** (community participation programme in which people provide special food to children on special occasions) will be encouraged extensively.
- Government is also promoting the development of **Nutrition Gardens** in schools.
- Social Audit of the scheme is made mandatory in all the districts.
- Special provision is made for providing supplementary nutrition to children in aspirational districts and districts with high prevalence of Anemia.

- Cooking competitions will be encouraged at all levels right from village level to national level to promote ethnic cuisine.
- Involvement of Farmers Producer Organizations (FPO) and Women Self Help Groups in implementation of the scheme will be encouraged.
- While Centre bears the entire cost of food grains, their transportation, management, monitoring and evaluation, components such as cooking costs, payments to cooks and workers are split in a 60:40 ratio with states.

What is the need for this scheme?

- The findings in Phase I of the NFHS-5 for 22 States and Union Territories in December 2020 were shocking
 1. Childhood stunting rose in 13 States
 2. High prevalence of anaemia among children and women
 3. Wasting was a serious concern in 12 States
- The worsening case of malnutrition threatens to deprive millions of children of a fully productive adult life.
- The **National Education Policy (NEP)** has also recommended that pre-school education should be formalised and this scheme is a step towards that.

Can this scheme bring the desired outcome?

- The West Bengal government accused the Centre of just changing the name of the mid-day meal scheme.

- While the NEP proposes breakfast in schools, the government has not taken any decision on that yet.
- The renewed plan should introduce a greater diversity of diets that compensates for micronutrient and protein deficiency.
- The Government must fiscally strengthen the **Saksham Anganwadi-Mission POSHAN 2.0** which amalgamates POSHAN Abhiyan and schemes covering anganwadis, creches and adolescent girls.

Source: **The Hindu, The Indian Express**

Constitutionalisation of Political Parties

Context

Political parties are the breathing air of the political system and they need to be constitutionalized to ensure in-party democracy and to make them transparent.

What is so remarkable about political parties?

- A political party is an organised group of citizens who hold common views on governance and act as a political unit that seeks to obtain control of government with a view to further the agenda and policy they profess.

- They are indispensable links between the people and the representative machinery of government.
- Political parties maintain a continuous connection between the people and those who represent them either in government or in the opposition.
- Political parties are important institutes in almost every democratic country.

What are the legal provisions with respect to political parties?

- Political parties in India are extra-constitutional.
 - The right to form political parties is not mentioned in the Constitution of India.
 - **Section 29A (5) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951** – It is the only major statutory provision dealing with political parties in India.
 - It sets down certain conditions for a political party for the formation and registration by ECI.
1. It must consist only of Indian citizens
 2. It must call itself a political party set up for the purpose of contesting elections to the Parliament and State Legislatures and for no other purpose.
 3. It must have at least 100 registered electors as its members.
- It orders that a political party shall bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India as by law established, and to the principles of socialism, secularism, democracy, and would uphold the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India

- **Deregistration of parties** - The ECI is not empowered to de-register parties on the grounds of violating the Constitution or breaching the undertaking given to it at the time of registration.
- A party can only be de-registered
 1. if its registration was obtained by fraud;
 2. if it is declared illegal by the Central Government;
 3. if a party amends its internal Constitution and notifies the ECI that it can no longer abide by the Indian Constitution.

What is the case of political parties in other countries?

- **The German model** - Germany gives constitutional status to political parties and deals with their status, rights, duties and functions.
- **The U.K. model** - In U.K., the Conservative Party has National Conservative Convention, Central Council and an Executive Committee to maintain high levels of internal democracy.
- **The U.S. model** - In the U.S., both the Democratic and the Republican Party have National Committee that plays an important role in the presidential election and agenda setting.

What is the need for constitutionalisation of political parties?

- Most of the parties in India are openly caste- or religious-based.

- The finances of most of the parties are dubious and opaque.
- Almost all the parties are family fiefdoms. i.e. engaged in dynasty politics.
- There are no periodical in-party elections in Indian parties.
- Since, political parties are the agents of democracy and safety valves in the political system, they desperately need reform.
- Hence, it is high time to constitutionalise political parties to ensure in-party democracy, to impart transparency in their finances, and to de-communalise them.

Source: The Hindu

Plastic Waste Management (Second Amendment) Rules, 2021



Single use plastic ban in india

Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2021 is proposed to be implemented in three stages

What are three various stages?
What will be ban?

What is the issue?

The Union government notified the Plastic Waste Management (Second Amendment) Rules, 2021 allowing recycled plastic in food packaging.

What was the earlier case of recycled plastic?

- The 2016 rule mentions that carry bags or products made of recycled plastic shall not be used for storing, carrying, dispensing or packaging ready to eat or drink foodstuff.

- In 2018, the FSSAI banned the use of recycled plastic or newspaper for packaging of food items from July 1, 2019.

What is the new amendment about?

- The new rules provide a moratorium of 10 years to big companies to keep polluting since more single-use plastic products will be added to the phase-out list only after a decade.
- It has also allowed the use of recycled plastics for packing food products.

What are the concerns of using recycled plastic?

- India recycles 60 per cent of its plastic waste and most of this is done by the informal workforce in the country.
- Industrial packaging happens to be the highest user of plastic.
- The unscientific methods used by the informal workforce to produce plastic pellets raise concerns, especially around the contamination and purity of the recycled plastic.
- Plastic is used in a variety of sectors ranging from medicines, electronic equipment to chemical fertilizers and using such plastics in food contact applications is a concern.
- No standards were prescribed for recycling of plastic making it difficult to understand the chemical conformity of the recycled plastic.

- A growing body of research proves there is migration of chemicals (additives) from plastics to the food.

What are the global practices regarding the use of recycled plastics?

- In the U.S., manufacturers are responsible for ensuring that the recycled product is of suitable purity.
- The European Union has come up with a ‘plastic strategy’ in 2018 to transform the way plastic products are designed, produced, used and recycled in the EU.
- Korea’s Ministry of Food and Drug Safety revised its legislation allowing only chemically recycled resins in parts that do not come into direct contact with food.
- The Chinese agency is now conducting an industry survey and initiating a risk assessment method for recycled food contact materials.

What are the recommendations for India?

- Our plastic has to be recycled in authorised recycling facilities.
- The use of recycled plastic should have been mandated for non-food applications initially to understand the issues.
- An inventory of the types of processes for recycling is needed and the safe method has to be identified and used for food contact applications.
- Guidelines on the source of the post-consumer plastic waste, type of polymer that can be used, the average

time of plastic-food contact, temperature of the food, etc. are required.

- A working mechanism needs to be developed with all the stakeholders including MoEFCC, FSSAI, CPCB, SPCB, Urban Local Bodies, representatives of the plastic industry as well as consumers.

Source: Down to Earth

Lucy Mission - First Mission to Trojans



Context

NASA will launch its first spacecraft Lucy on an Atlas V rocket to study Jupiter's Trojan asteroids to collect insights into the solar system's formation.

- **Mission** - To investigate the group of rocky bodies circling the Sun in two swarms, one preceding Jupiter

in its orbital path and the other trailing behind Jupiter.

- After receiving boosts from Earth's gravity, Lucy will embark on a 12-year journey to 8 different asteroids.
 - Among the 8 asteroids, one asteroid is in the Main Belt between Mars and Jupiter and then 7 Trojan Asteroids.
- Lucy will offer new insights into the history of the solar system, including how all of the planets came to be and why they are aligned in their current configuration.
- **Working** - Lucy will fly by its targets within 400 kms of their surfaces.
- It will use its onboard instruments and large antenna to investigate their geology, including composition, mass, density and volume.
- It will be the first solar-powered to venture this far from the Sun, and will observe more asteroids than any other spacecraft before it.

Trojan Asteroids

- Trojan asteroids or Jupiter Trojans are group of asteroids (more than 7,000 in number) that share the planet Jupiter's orbit around the Sun.
- They are leftovers of the primordial material from which Jupiter and the other outer planets were formed.
- Despite the fact that they really are in a very small region of space, they're very physically different from one another.

- Trojans are a type of co-orbital object, where a star and a planet orbit around a common barycentre.

Source:TH