

August – 17

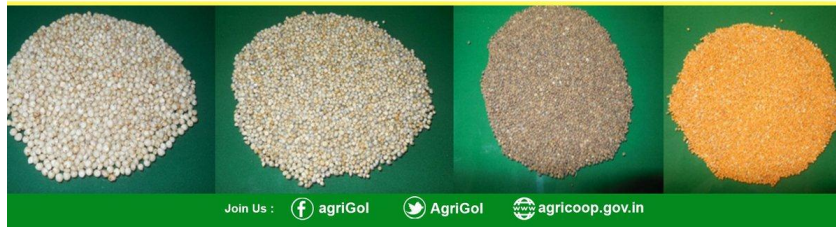
NATIONAL

“International Year of Millets”

- ❖ India has written to Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of United Nations (UN) proposing declaration of year 2019 as “International Year of Millets”.
- ❖ It has requested inclusion of this proposal in agenda of 26th session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) meeting, scheduled to be held in October 2018 in Rome, Italy.



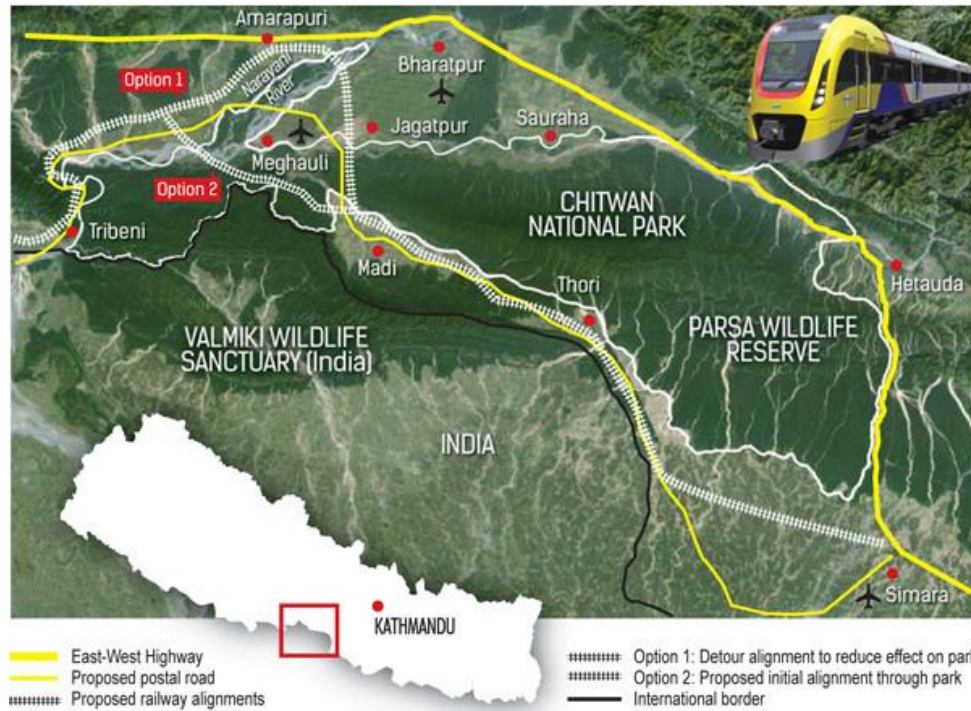
Millet is a common term to categorize small-seeded grasses that are often termed nutri-cereals or dryland-cereals, and includes sorghum, pearl millet, ragi, small millet, foxtail millet, proso millet, barnyard millet, kodo millet and other millets. An important staple cereal crop for millions of small holder dryland farmers across sub-saharan Africa and Asia, millets offer nutrition, resilience, income and livelihood for farmers even in difficult times. They have multiple untapped uses such as food, feed, fodder, biofuels and brewing. Therefore, millets are Smart Food as they are Good for You, Good for the Farmer and Good for the Planet.



- ❖ Adoption of this proposal by FAO with support of its member nations will enable it to be moved to UNGA for declaration of 2019 as International Year of Millets.”
- ❖ India is celebrating 2018 as National Year of Millets. Observation of Year of Millets will help to promote production and consumption of millets.

Postal Highway Project

- ❖ India has released additional Rs. 470 million (Nepali) for Phase I of Postal Highway Project being constructed in Southern Plains of Nepal.
- ❖ It is also called Hulaki Rajmarg which runs across Terai region of Nepal, from Bhadrapur in east to Dodhara in west, cutting across entire width of the country.



- ❖ It is oldest highway in Nepal to aid transportation and facilitate postal services throughout the Himalayan nation.
- ❖ The Package 1 of the Project comprising two road sections Dhangadhi-Bhajaniya-Satti road and Lamki-Tikapur-Khakraula have already been completed and were opened for service in January 2017.

Swadesh Darshan Scheme

- ❖ The first project under Swadesh Darshan Scheme 'North East Circuit: Imphal and Khongjom' was inaugurated in Manipur.
- ❖ The project covers two sites i.e. Kangla Fort and Khongjom in Manipur.
- ❖ Under this project, Union Tourism Ministry has carried out restoration works.

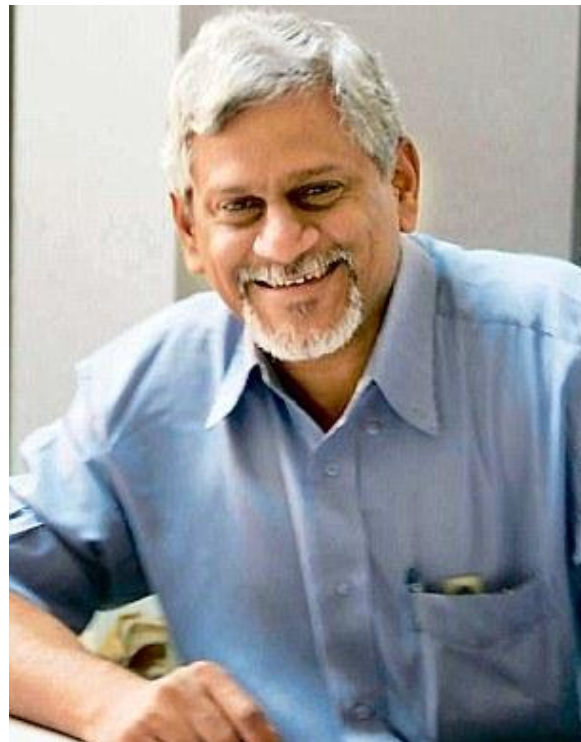


- ❖ The scheme was Union Tourism Ministry with an objective to develop theme-based tourist circuits in the country.
- ❖ It is 100% centrally funded scheme for the project components undertaken for public funding.
- ❖ It also has provision for leveraging voluntary funding under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
- ❖ Kangla fort had served as tradition seat of past Meetei rulers of Manipur till 1891.
- ❖ The old Govindajee Temple is the largest Hindu, Vaishnav temple in Imphal city in Manipur.

INTERNATIONAL

Chair of International Nitrogen Initiative

- ❖ Indian scientist-academician N Raghuram became first Indian and Asian to get elected as Chair of International Nitrogen Initiative (INI), a global policy making initiative.
- ❖ He will succeed Mark Sutton of the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Edinburgh.





- ❖ Besides, him David Kanter of the New York University was elected as Vice-Chair. The new chairs will formally take up their roles on January 1, 2019.
- ❖ Their responsibility will be to steer network of six regional centres each under INI Regional Director (East Asia, South Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, North America).

International Nitrogen Initiative (INI)

- ❖ INI is international program, set up in 2003 under sponsorship of the Scientific Committee on Problems of Environment (SCOPE) and from International Geosphere-Biosphere Program (IGBP).
- ❖ INI is coordinated by Steering Committee, led by chair and six regional centre directors.
- ❖ INI is also currently sustained partner of Future Earth - an international research organisation.

24th World Congress of Philosophy

- ❖ The 24th World Congress of Philosophy (WCP) was held in Beijing, China from August 13 to 17, 2018.
- ❖ It was organized by the International Federation of Philosophical Societies, and Peking University. Its theme was “Learning To Be Human”.
- ❖ This was first time that the quinquennial (once in five year) event was held in China.
- ❖ It was first organized in 1900 in Paris, France and since it has become one of the largest philosophical events in the world.
- ❖ Each World Congress is sponsored by one of member societies in different country, which assumes responsibility for organization of that Congress.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

NPCI launches UPI 2.0

- ❖ The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched Unified Payments Interface (UPI) 2.0, an upgraded and renewed version of Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- ❖ UPI 2.0 includes a feature wherein users can
 - Check an invoice sent by a merchant prior to making the payment.



- Link their overdraft account to UPI.
- Creation of one-time mandates and pre-authorisation of transactions for payment at later date.
- Make payments by scanning signed QR codes which avoids QR tampering.
- ❖ UPI is payments system that allows multiple bank accounts belonging to any participating bank to be controlled via single mobile app.
- ❖ It was launched by NPCI in April 2016.

ENVIRONMENT

Colour-coded stickers on vehicles

- ❖ The Supreme Court has accepted the suggestions of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) to have hologram-based coloured stickers on vehicles which would indicate the nature of fuel being used.
- ❖ The apex court has asked government to implement use of coloured stickers on vehicles plying in Delhi-NCR by September 30, 2018.
- ❖ It also clarified that this colour-coding will only be applicable in Delhi and NCR. This move aims to counter air pollution in national capital.
- ❖ With this approval, Delhi will be first city in India to have hologram-based coloured stickers on according to fuel they run on.
- ❖ Under this colour scheme proposed by MoRTH,
 - **Light-blue colour** will be used for vehicles running **petrol and CNG-run vehicles**
 - **Orange colour** sticker will be used for **diesel-driven vehicles**.
- ❖ These hologram-based stickers will also contain registration date of the vehicle.

RUCO initiative

- ❖ The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched RUCO (Repurpose Used Cooking Oil) initiative to enable collection and conversion of used cooking oil to biodiesel.



- ❖ The initiative was launched nearly month after FSSAI notified standards for used cooking oil.
 - ❖ According to FSSAI regulations,
 - Maximum permissible limits for total polar compounds (tpc) have **been set at 25%**,
beyond which the cooking oil is unsafe for consumption.
 - ❖ Beside this, FSSAI is also working in partnership with Biodiesel Association of India (BAI) and food industry to ensure effective compliance of used cooking oil regulations.
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