

Centre Issues Scheme Guidelines For Funding Of Testing Facilities, Infrastructure, And Institutional Support Under The National Green Hydrogen Mission

- The **Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE)** has released guidelines for a scheme to fund testing facilities, infrastructure, and institutional support for developing standards and regulations under the **National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM)**.
- The goal is to ensure the safe and secure operation of equipment and instruments in the GH2 value chain.
- **Key Highlights:**
 - **Objective:**
 - Address gaps in existing testing infrastructure for various components of the GH2 value chain.
 - Establish new and upgrade existing testing facilities to achieve self-sufficiency in testing and certification of GH2.
 - **Timeline:**
 - New testing and certification facilities: 18 months from the date of sanction by MNRE.
 - Upgrading existing facilities: 12 months.
 - MNRE can cancel projects if there are delays or failure to meet the scheme's objectives, in consultation with the Steering Committee.
 - **Access:**
 - Testing facilities, whether new or upgraded, will be open to all potential users and not restricted to any specific organization or group.
 - **Implementing Agency:** National Institute of Solar Energy, under MNRE.
 - **Budget:** Rs. 200 Crores until 2025-26.
 - **Funding Pattern (by MNRE):**
 - Up to 100% for government entities.
 - Up to 70% for non-government entities.
- **National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM):**
 - **Launch Date:** January 4, 2023
 - **Budget:** Rs. 19,744 crores up to FY 2029-30
- **Goals:**
 - **Achieve a Green Hydrogen (GH2)** production capacity of 5 million metric tonnes (MMT) by 2030.
 - Establish India as a leading producer and supplier of GH2.
 - Reduce dependence on fossil fuel imports by over **Rs. 1 lakh crore by 2030.**

SEHER Programme

- The **SEHER programme**, launched by **NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)** in collaboration with TransUnion CIBIL, aims to boost financial literacy and business skills among women entrepreneurs.
- **This initiative is designed to help women** access financial tools necessary for growing their businesses and creating jobs. SEHER supports WEP's mission to improve financing access for women in India's 63 million MSMEs.
- **Key Facts about the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)**
 - **Established:** WEP was incubated by NITI Aayog in 2018 and transitioned to a public-private partnership in 2022.
 - **Purpose:** WEP serves as an aggregator platform to build a supportive ecosystem for women entrepreneurs across India.
- **Goals:** WEP aims to empower women by providing comprehensive support in areas such as:
 - Entrepreneurship Promotion
 - Access to Finance
 - Market Linkages
 - Training and Skilling
 - Mentoring and Networking
 - Business Development Services

RBI Concerns Over High Credit-Deposit (CD) Ratio

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has urged banks to balance the growth of credit and deposits to reduce the high **Credit-Deposit (CD) ratio**.
- **CD Ratio:**
 - A financial measure showing the percentage of loans issued by a bank compared to its total deposits.
 - **According to the RBI's Financial Stability Report:**
 - The CD ratio has been increasing since September 2021, reaching 78.8% in December 2023.
 - Over 75% of banks with CD ratios above 75% are private sector banks.
- **Key Reasons for High CD Ratio:**
 1. **Higher Credit Growth:**
 - Rising retail credit, including vehicle and personal loans.
 - From April 2022 to March 2024, bank lending to the retail sector grew at a CAGR of 25.2%.
 - Increased loans to businesses and MSMEs.
 2. **Slower Deposit Growth:**
 - Stiff competition among banks.
 - Customers shifting from saving to investing, diverting funds to capital markets.
- **Impact of High CD Ratio:**
 - **Pressure on Net Interest Margins (NIM)**
 - **Liquidity Risk**
 - **Credit Risk**

New SEBI Guidelines for Credit Rating Agencies (CRAs)

- The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has issued new guidelines for **Credit Rating Agencies (CRAs) under the SEBI Act (1992)** and Regulation 20 of the CRA Regulations. These guidelines aim to improve the ease of doing business for CRAs and protect investor interests.
- **Key Guidelines:**
 1. **Communicating Ratings:** CRAs must inform companies of their ratings within one working day of the rating committee meeting.
 2. **Appeal Against Ratings:** Companies have three working days from the rating committee meeting to request a review or appeal of the rating decision.
 3. **Public Disclosure:** CRAs must publish a press release on their website and inform the stock exchange or debenture trustee within seven working days of the rating committee meeting.
 4. **Record Maintenance:** CRAs must keep records of these disclosures for 10 years.
- **About Credit Ratings in India:**
 - **Credit Ratings:** Represent a CRA's opinion on the probability of timely repayment of debt and the likelihood of default on interest and principal payments.
 - **Credit Rating Agencies (CRAs):** Defined by SEBI (Credit Rating Agencies) Regulations, 1999.
 - A CRA is a corporate body involved in rating securities, either listed or to be listed on a SEBI-recognized stock exchange.
 - **Registered CRAs:** There are seven CRAs registered with SEBI: CRISIL, CARE, ICRA, Acuité, Brickwork Rating, India Ratings and Research Pvt. Ltd, and Infomerics Valuation and Rating Pvt. Ltd.

Integrated Tribal Development Programme By NABARD

- **NABARD** is set to launch an **Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP)** in the **Kulathupuzha Gram Panchayat of Kerala**.
- **About ITDP**
- The **Integrated Tribal Development Programme** is **NABARD's flagship project**, active since **2005-06**.
 - It revolves around the concept of '**wadi**,' a small orchard-based initiative that aligns with the tribal communities' natural connection to trees and forests. The '**wadi**' model adopts a holistic approach to development.
- The projects under ITDP are **financed by the Tribal Development Fund (TDF)**.
- **The main goal of TDF** is to develop sustainable and participatory models for the integrated development of tribal families, focusing on activities that generate a steady income.

Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) Results for 2021-22 and 2022-23

- **Conducted by:** National Sample Survey Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
- **Coverage:** unincorporated non-agricultural establishments, including proprietorships, partnerships (excluding Limited Liability Partnerships), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), cooperatives, societies, trusts, and more.
- **About Unincorporated Enterprises:** An unincorporated enterprise is a producer unit not legally separate from its owner. The assets used in these enterprises belong to the owners, not the enterprises themselves. These businesses cannot engage in transactions or contracts independently nor incur liabilities on their own behalf.
- **2022-23 Key Highlights:**
 - **Establishments Growth:** Increased by 5.88% to 6.50 crore, with 55% in rural areas.
 - **Top States:** Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra.
 - **GVA:** There was a 9.83% increase in GVA compared to 2021-22.
 - **Women Entrepreneurs:** Lead 54% of proprietary establishments in manufacturing.
 - **Digitization:** Internet use for business up by 7.2%.
 - **Credit Availability:** There was an improvement in credit availability, with the average outstanding loan per establishment rising to Rs. 50,138 in 2022-23

DPIIT Finalizing a Producer Price Index (PPI)

- The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** is finalizing a model to launch a **Producer Price Index (PPI) in India**. This new index may eventually replace the **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)** to align with international standards and most G20 economies.
- **About PPI**
 - PPI measures the average change in prices that producers receive for their goods and services sold in the domestic market or exported.
 - **Types:**
 - **Output PPI:** Prices of goods/services when they leave the place of production.
 - **Input PPI:** Prices of goods/services when they enter the production process.
- **Need to Replace WPI**
 - **Bias:** WPI has a built-in bias due to double or multiple counting of the same product.
 - **Exclusions:** WPI doesn't include exports, imports, or the service sector (about 55% of GDP).
- **Key Recommendations of the Working Group**
 - **Experimental PPI:** Develop an experimental PPI with the base year 2011-12, including export and import prices of major items during the experimental phase.
 - **Separate Indices:** Create two separate sets of indices—one with services and one without.
 - **Transition:** Switch from WPI to PPI after the PPI series stabilizes.
- **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)**
 - **Definition:** WPI measures changes in the prices of goods sold and traded in bulk by wholesale businesses to other businesses.
 - **Published by:** Office of Economic Adviser, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
 - **Base Year:** 2011-12

Stablecoins

- The recent instability in the stablecoin market, including the collapse of TerraUSD, has raised questions about the reliability of these digital assets.
- **About Stablecoins**
 - Stablecoins are cryptocurrencies with values tied to another asset, like a fiat currency or commodity (e.g., gold), to maintain a stable price.
 - **Purpose:** They offer an alternative to the high volatility of popular cryptocurrencies, making them potentially more suitable for everyday transactions.

Project PARI

- **Project PARI (Public Art of India)** launched by the **Ministry of Culture** for the 46th World Heritage Committee Meeting.
- **Objective:** To stimulate dialogue, reflection, and inspiration, enhancing the nation's dynamic cultural fabric.