

7. Shortnews

1. Copra MSP Hike

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved a higher Minimum Support Price (MSP) for copra for the 2026 season to enhance farmer incomes and production incentives.

Key Highlights

Increased MSP- MSP for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) milling copra fixed at ₹12,027 per quintal and ball copra at ₹12,500 per quintal for 2026. It is in line with the policy of MSP at 1.5 times the cost of production.

Procurement Mechanism- NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India) and NCCF (National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India) will continue as Central Nodal Agencies under the Price Support Scheme (PSS).

Copra

Copra is the dried kernel of coconut used primarily as a raw material in agro-processing industries.

Uses- It is used for producing coconut oil, desiccated coconut, cosmetics, soaps, and several food and industrial products.

Coconut (Cocos nucifera)

Coconut is known as Kalpavriksha in India which provides food, drink, oil, fibre, fuel, and timber.

Native- Indo-Pacific region.

Cultivation Conditions

1. **Climate-** Grows best in warm, humid tropical climates with temperatures of 20–32°C and 100–300 cm annual rainfall.
2. **Soil & Water-** Prefers well-drained sandy loam or laterite soils with adequate moisture but no waterlogging.

Top Producers

1. **Global-** Indonesia, Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, Brazil.
2. **India-** Karnataka (largest producer), followed by Kerala and Tamil Nadu as per Coconut Development Board (CDB) data for 2022–23. CDB has its headquarters in Kochi, Kerala

Significance- The enhanced MSP aims to stabilise farmer incomes, mitigate price risks, and support India's position as a leading global producer of coconut and copra.

2. CoalSETU

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the CoalSETU window to enable long-term coal linkages for any industrial use and limited exports, expanding the Non-Regulated Sector framework. NRS framework focuses on supplying coal via auction-based Fuel Supply Agreements (FSAs) to industries like Cement, Steel, Sponge Iron, Aluminum, and Captive Power Plants (CPPs), moving away from old FSAs to ensure transparency

CoalSETU- CoalSETU (Coal Linkage for Seamless, Efficient and Transparent Utilisation) is a new auction-based window added to the Non-Regulated Sector (NRS) Linkage Policy, 2016.

Objective- The policy aims to ensure efficient utilisation of domestic coal reserves, enhance ease of doing business, reduce import dependence, and align coal supply with evolving industrial demand.

Nodal Body- Ministry of Coal.

Key Features

1. **Open Eligibility-** Any domestic industrial consumer can participate in auctions, unlike earlier NRS linkages limited to specified end-use sectors.
2. **Auction-Based Long-Term Linkages-** Coal linkages will be allocated through transparent auctions for long-term supply.
3. **Usage Flexibility-** Coal can be used for own consumption, coal washing, or distribution among group companies, but resale within India is prohibited.

4. **Export Provision**– Export of coal is permitted up to 50% of the allocated linkage quantity; coking coal is excluded and traders are not allowed to bid.

Significance– CoalSETU strengthens coal sector reforms by promoting transparent allocation, supporting washeries, reducing imports, and enabling optimal domestic resource utilisation.

3. Census 2027

The Union Cabinet approved ₹11,718 crore for conducting Census 2027, India's first fully digital census, including nationwide caste enumeration.

Census– A census is the systematic process of collecting, compiling, analyzing, and disseminating demographic, economic, and social data pertaining to all persons in a country at a specific time. The first attempt at a national count was in 1872 (under Lord Mayo), followed by the first complete, synchronous census in 1881 (under Lord Ripon), establishing the decennial pattern. The first census after independence was conducted in 1951, marking the start of the modern, post-colonial series under the Census Act of 1948.

Census 2027– Census 2027 will be India's 16th census and 8th since Independence, and the world's largest digital administrative and statistical exercise.

Digital Nature– It will be the first paperless census, using mobile applications, web portals, geo-tagging, and provision for self-enumeration, with data protection safeguards built into the design.

1. **Census Management & Monitoring System (CMMS)** portal will track operations in real time.
2. **Census-as-a-Service (Caas)** will allow ministries to access clean, machine-readable datasets for policymaking.
3. **Census will also include a web**-based Houselisting Block (HLB) Creator application for charge officers and offer the public the option of self-enumeration.

Phases of the Census

1. **Phase I – House Listing & Housing Census (April–September 2026)**– Covers housing conditions, amenities, assets, and geo-spatial mapping; no personal data collected.
2. **Phase II – Population Enumeration (February 2027 onwards)**– Collects demographic, socio-economic, and cultural data including age, sex, education, occupation, religion, language, migration, fertility, and caste.

In Ladakh and snow-bound regions of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, PE will be carried out in September 2026.

Caste Enumeration– For the first time since 1931, detailed caste and sub-caste data, including OBCs, will be collected during Phase II, following approval by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs.

Conducted By– The census will be carried out by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, with around 30 lakh field functionaries.

Significance– Census 2027 will provide critical data for evidence-based governance, welfare targeting, reservation policies, and understanding India's socio-economic diversity.

4. National Film Heritage Mission (NFHM)

Under the National Film Heritage Mission, India has digitized films to preserve its cinematic legacy through modern archival techniques.

National Film Heritage Mission (NFHM)– The National Film Heritage Mission was launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to preserve, restore, and digitize India's rich film heritage.

Objective– The mission aims to safeguard endangered film material, restore landmark Indian films using advanced technology, and ensure long-term preservation and public access.

Nodal Agency– The National Film Archive of India (NFAI), Pune, is the implementing agency responsible for restoration, digitization, storage, and access to preserved films.

Key Achievements

1. **Large-scale Digitization**– 1,469 film titles, including feature films, documentaries, and short films, have been digitized, covering 4.3 lakh minutes of content.

2. **Advanced Restoration**– Films are restored using 2K/4K picture and sound technologies, with new inter-negatives created for archival safety.
3. **Access and Preservation**– Digitized films are securely stored by NFAI and made available through its official digital platforms.

Significance– NFHM protects India's cinematic heritage, promotes cultural continuity, and enables national and global access to historically significant Indian films.

National Film Archive of India (NFAI), Pune– NFAI was established in 1964 as a media unit under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Serves as the nodal repository for preserving India's film and non-film cinematic heritage. Headquartered in Pune, with regional centres in Bengaluru, Kolkata, and Thiruvananthapuram.

5. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar

Union Home Minister Amit Shah paid tributes to Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in Andaman and Nicobar on completion of 115 years of a collection of Savarkar's poems, 'Sagara Prana Talamalla'. A statue of Veer Savarkar was also unveiled at Cellular Jail symbolising his sacrifice, resolve, and unwavering dedication to India's freedom struggle.

Veer Savarkar– Vinayak Damodar "Veer" Savarkar (1883–1966) was a freedom fighter, political thinker, lawyer, and writer, and a key proponent of Hindu nationalism.

Early Life– Born on 28 May 1883 in Bhagur, Nashik (Maharashtra), Savarkar engaged in revolutionary politics during his school days and later at Fergusson College, Pune.

Revolutionary Activities Abroad– While studying law in the United Kingdom, he became active in organisations like India House and founded the Free India Society, inspired by nationalist movements.

Years in Jail– Arrested in 1910, Savarkar was sentenced to two life imprisonments for his revolutionary activities against British rule and incarcerated in the Cellular Jail (Kala Pani) in 1911, where he endured severe hardships.

Literary Contributions– He authored influential works including "The Indian War of Independence (1857)" and "Hindutva", written during his detention at Ratnagiri.

Associated Organisations– Savarkar was linked with Mitra Mela, Abhinav Bharat Society, India House, Free India Society, and served as President of the Hindu Mahasabha (1937–1943).

Later Life– Released in 1924, he led social and ideological movements until his death on 26 February 1966, after undertaking a fast unto death.

6. UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Status

Recently, Italian cuisine has been officially inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, making it the first entire national cuisine to receive this status.

Key Recognition– This is a historic UNESCO recognition of the entire national culinary tradition—not just a single dish—as an element of humanity's intangible cultural heritage.

Official Title– "Italian cooking– Between sustainability and biocultural diversity."

Awarded By– UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The inscription took place during the 20th session of the Committee, hosted by India in New Delhi.

Reason for Status Granted– UNESCO recognized the deep cultural and social blend inherent in Italian cooking, defined by several key characteristics–

1. **Conviviality**– The focus is on the social ritual of shared meals, expressing intimacy, and connecting with family and community.
2. **Intergenerational Knowledge**– Culinary skills, recipes, and memory are passed down informally, especially from grandparents to grandchildren, in the family setting.
3. **Sustainability**– The tradition is rooted in an anti-waste philosophy, promoting zero-waste recipes and the use of seasonal, local produce.
4. **Biocultural Diversity**– It celebrates the vast regional diversity of specialties and the deep link between food, local territory, and unique regional identities.

Significance and Impact

1. **Global First-** Italy becomes the first nation globally to receive this broad recognition for its entire cuisine.
2. **Cultural Identity-** It strongly reinforces Italy's cultural identity and national pride.
3. **Economic Protection-** The status supports Italy's efforts to fight "Italian-sounding" food fraud and imitation products globally, protecting the value of its agri-food exports.
4. **Preservation-** It supports the preservation of sustainable food practices, artisanal techniques, and regional biocultural diversity.

Its Uniqueness Earlier UNESCO inscriptions highlighted specific rituals or techniques (e.g., French gastronomic meals, Neapolitan pizza-making), whereas the Italian inscription uniquely recognises a daily, diverse, nationwide food practice, closely tied to sustainability and local identity.

