

## 7. SHORT NEWS

### PM-POSHAN

A Parliamentary panel reviewed PM-POSHAN and recommended expanding its scope to address adolescent nutrition gaps and improve educational outcomes.

#### Key Recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee

1. **Breakfast**– Recommended providing at least a light breakfast along with the midday meal to improve students' nutrition and concentration.
2. **Expansion up to Class 10**– Suggested extending the scheme to cover students up to Class 10 to ensure continued nutritional support beyond Class 8.
3. **Further Extension to Class 12**– Proposed expanding the scheme to Class 12 within the next five years to support adolescents.
4. **Focus on Adolescent Nutrition**– Emphasised that adolescence is a critical growth phase, and better nutrition can reduce health issues and dropout rates (especially among girls).
5. **Improve Learning Outcomes**– Highlighted the need to link nutrition with better cognitive performance, concentration, and exam preparedness.
6. **Reduce Inequality in School Infrastructure**– Recommended extending benefits of PM-SHRI schools to more average government schools by relaxing norms.

#### About PM-POSHAN (Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman) Scheme

1. Launched in 1995 as Mid Day Meal or the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE).
2. Later expanded to upper primary classes and now renamed as PM POSHAN (2021).
3. It is a centrally sponsored scheme that provides nutritious cooked meals to school children to support health and education outcomes.
4. **Beneficiaries**– The scheme covers students from Class 1 to Class 8 in government and government-aided schools, including those in special training centres.
5. **Objectives**– It aims to improve nutritional status, increase enrolment and attendance, and reduce dropout rates, especially among economically weaker sections.
6. **Nutritional Provisions**– Meals are designed to meet prescribed calorie and protein norms, and in some cases include fortified foods and micronutrients to address malnutrition.

#### Achievements of PM-POSHAN

1. **Coverage**– Covers ~11–12 crore children in over 11 lakh schools, making it the world's largest school feeding programme.
2. **Improved Child Nutrition**– The scheme has significantly enhanced calorie and protein intake, helping reduce malnutrition among school children.
3. **Increased Enrolment & Attendance**– Availability of free meals has led to higher school enrolment, regular attendance, and retention, especially in rural areas.
4. **Reduction in Dropout Rates**– It has contributed to lower dropout rates, particularly among economically weaker sections and girls.
5. **Improved Learning Outcomes**– Better nutrition has led to enhanced concentration, cognitive development, and academic performance.

### City Gas Distribution

The Union Government has urged States and UTs to fast-track approvals for City Gas Distribution (CGD) pipeline projects.

#### About the City Gas Distribution

1. City Gas Distribution (CGD) network is a system of pipelines that supplies natural gas to households, industries, and transport within a city or region.
2. Types of Supply–
  1. Provides PNG (Piped Natural Gas) for domestic and industrial use.

## Building Bureaucrats Since 2006

2. Provides CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) for vehicles.
3. Objectives- To promote clean energy, reduce pollution, and improve energy access in urban areas.
  1. The initiative aims to increase adoption of piped natural gas (PNG) and helps reduce reliance on LPG cylinders.
4. Energy Security- India's heavy dependence on imported LPG (~60%), makes supply vulnerable to geopolitical tensions, necessitating a shift to PNG.
5. Infrastructure- Includes pipelines, compressors, metering stations, and CNG filling stations forming an integrated network.
6. Regulatory Authority- Regulated by the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) in India.

## Sejjil Missile

Iran officially deployed the Sejjil ballistic missile for the first time in active combat against US and Israeli positions.

### What is the Sejjil Missile?

1. The Sejjil (also spelled Sajjil or Ashura) is an indigenous, two-stage, medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) developed by Iran.
2. It represents a major technological leap from older liquid-fueled missiles to more reliable solid-fuel systems.
3. It was developed by Iran's aerospace industries.
4. It is nicknamed the "dancing missile" because it can maneuver at high altitudes, making interception difficult.

### Key Features

1. Solid-Fuel Propellant- Can be stored fully fueled for long periods, enabling near-instant launches.
2. Two-Stage Design- Uses two solid-propellant motors to achieve high altitude and speed.
3. Extended Range- Operational strike range of about 2,000 km, covering the Levant region.
4. High Payload Capacity- Can carry a warhead weighing around 700 kg.