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MK Yadav Sir

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INDIAN EXPRESS

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GREENWASHING

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)



GREENWASHING

Several airlines are under fire for false advertising, and have been accused of 'greenwashing'

EARLIER IN December, the UK ad regulator banned advertisements from Air France, Lufthansa, and Etihad for allegedly misleading consumers regarding the environmental impact of air travel.

This isn't the first time that airlines have come under fire for false advertising about their sustainability efforts and been accused of 'greenwashing'. On Tuesday, a case filed against Dutch airlines KLM for alleged greenwashing through one of their advertising campaigns went to trial in Amsterdam.

What is greenwashing?

Greenwashing is when firms or governments give a false impression that their products or activities are climate-friendly or help in reducing emissions. It may also occur when a company highlights sustainable aspects of a product to overshadow its environmentally damaging activities.

Greenwashing can involve environmental imagery, misleading labels, or hiding all the facts.

What were the ads?

In KLM's case, the company ran an advertising campaign telling its customers to "Fly Responsibly". Environmentalists sued KLM for false advertising, arguing there is no environmentally friendly way to fly.

In July, Britain's Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) identified three Google ads that suggested the flights operated by Air France, Lufthansa, and Etihad were sustainable. The Air France ad claimed the airline was "committed to protecting the environment" and urged holidaymakers to "travel better and sustainably". The Lufthansa ad suggested its customers would "fly more sustainably" and the Etihad one offered flyers "total peace of mind", mentioning their environmental advocacy. The ASA found that none of the ads corroborated their environmental claims.

How polluting are airlines?

Currently, the aviation industry is responsible for approximately 2.5% of all human-produced CO_2 emissions, according to the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 2022 estimates. This may seem like a modest contribution, but it is set to grow very fast.

ALIND CHAUHAN

Context: Recently, Dutch airline KLM found itself in a legal dispute with environmentalists in an Amsterdam court, as they question whether the airline's advertisements misled customers in a suspected case of "greenwashing."

Greenwashing

- **About**: Greenwashing is when firms or governments give a false impression that all of their products or activities are climate-friendly or help in reducing emissions.
- **Strategies and Tactics**: It may manifest when a company emphasizes the sustainable aspects of a product to divert attention from its environmentally harmful activities.
- **Concept of Greenwashing**: As defined by Investopedia, greenwashing involves the use of environmental imagery, misleading labels, and concealed tradeoffs to present a false picture of a company's commitment to sustainability.
- **Volkswagen Scandal**: The infamous 2015 Volkswagen scandal serves as a classic example of greenwashing, where the German car company was caught cheating in emissions testing for its supposedly eco-friendly diesel vehicles.

Scenario in India

- Greenwashing, the practice of promoting misleading or false environmental claims to portray a company or product as environmentally friendly deceptively, is also a prevalent issue in India.
- Unlike the USA, EU, etc., India lacks specific laws regulating environmental claims made by companies.
- **Laws in India**: The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) plays a regulatory role in monitoring advertising practices and holds some jurisdiction over allegations of greenwashing.

THE HINDU

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DISINFLATION

Syllabus GS Paper 3 – Economy)

Disinflation may pave way for interest rate cut: RBI officials

Central bank officials led by Deputy Governor Michael D. Patra say economic activity in India to be sustained by easing input costs, corporate profitability; CPI inflation will ease to 4.6% in the first three quarters of 2024-25, they add

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

A slowing in the rate of inflation could potentially lead to a reduction in global interest rates going forward, central bank officials wrote in an article in the RBI's December Bulletin released on Wednesday.

"The pace of global growth may slow further in 2024 while disinflation at varying pace in different geographies may pave the way for interest rate reductions," RBI officials led by Deputy Governor Michael D. Patra observed in their article on the 'State of the Economy'.

In India, the broad-based strengthening of economic activity that was underway would likely be sustained by easing input costs and corporate profitability, they wrote. Stating that CPI inflation rose to 5.6% in November as the recurrence of food price spikes punctured a brief respite in September and October, they said CPI inflation would ease to an average of 4.6% in the first three quarters of 2024-25 and that domestic financial markets had been lifted by the abiding strength of the real economy. The RBI said the views expressed in the Bulletin articles do not represent its views.

'Global headwinds'

"Despite significant global headwinds, the Indian economy remained the fastest growing major economy in 2023. The outlook is one of cautious optimism as consumer confidence remains positive and perceptions about current income turned up in the RBI's latest survey of households in November 2023," the officials wrote.

Emphasising that supply chain pressures in India remained below historical average levels, they said the Reserve Bank of India's economic activity index (EAI) forecasts GDP growth for Q3:2023-24 at 6.7%.

"Looking ahead, growth is likely to be sustained in H2:2023-24 and 2024-25 despite some moderation," they observed.

Rate cycle turning

RBI officials believe a slowdown in global growth and easing inflation will cause central banks to cut interest rates

- Officials say that despite global headwinds, India remained the fastest growing major economy in 2023
- India's domestic financial markets had been boosted by the abiding strength of the real economy, they add
- RBI's economic activity index (EAI) now forecasts GDP growth for the third quarter of 2023-24 at 6.7%



Basis	Disinflation	Deflation
Meaning	When the rate of inflation slows temporarily	When there is a fall in the general price level
Frequency	More frequent	Less frequent
Factors	Due to a pull down in the business cycle, use of tight monetary policy, etc.	Drop in consumer spending, investment, money supply, govt. expenditure, etc.
Example	Almost every economy go through this.	The Great Depression in the 1930s
Stock Markets	The stock market may or may not go down.	Stock market doesn't perform well and witnesses a drop.
Impact	It isn't believed to be negative for the economy	Deflation isn't good for the economy
Economy	Positive and stable.	Weaker and negative
Time period	Will continue until the inflation rate is zero	Will continue until inflation rate is positive or zero

Context: Recently, **central bank officials noted that a slowdown in the rate of inflation could potentially lead to a reduction** in global interest rates, foreseeing a possibility of further **global growth deceleration and disinflation in 2024**.

Disinflation

- **About**: Disinflation refers to a temporary deceleration in price inflation, indicating a slight decrease in the inflation rate over a brief timeframe.
- **Measuring Disinflation**: Unlike inflation and deflation, which signify the direction of prices, disinflation focuses on the rate of change in the inflation rate.
- **Economic Stability**: A controlled level of disinflation is essential to prevent the economy from overheating, ensuring a moderate and sustainable economic environment.
- **Causes of Disinflation:** Increases in the supply of money available for use in a nation's economy.
- Inflation can also occur when the economy 'overheats' because of excess aggregate demand (this is called demand-pull inflation).

Difference between Disinflation and Deflation

- Disinflation and deflation differ, with the former signifying a reduction in the inflation rate, while the latter indicates negative inflation.

PIB Dec 20

PM-MITRA MEGA TEXTILE PARKS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

Under PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks, 18 proposals from 13 states received

Context: The Government approved setting up of 7 (Seven) PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks in Greenfield/Brownfield sites with world class infrastructure including plug and play facility with an outlay of Rs. 4,445 cr.

PM-MITRA Mega Textile Parks

- **Accordingly, the Government of India** approved 7 PM MITRA Parks for the Textile industry.
  - Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra
- **Nodal Ministry**: Ministry of Textiles
- **Launched**: 2021
- **Developed by**: Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)
- **Capital Support:** Up to Rs. 500 crores per park to the Park SPV.
- **Inspired by:** 5F vision i.e. Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign.
- **Eligibility**: Minimum area of 1000 acres.
- **Objective:** PM MITRA Parks **will help in creating world-class industrial infrastructure** that would attract large-scale investment including foreign direct investment (FDI) and encourage **innovation and job creation** within the sector.
- **Aim**: To strengthen the Indian textile industry by way of enabling scale of operations, reduce logistics cost by housing entire value chain at one location, attract investment, generate employment and augment export potential.
- MITRA parks can be either Greenfield or Brownfield.
  - **Greenfield Sites**: New independent sites will be developed under this category.
  - **Brownfield Sites**: Sites with partly developed industrial trunk infrastructure and other intended facilities will be taken up for completing the development.

India's Textile Industry

- **Global Textile Production**: India holds the second position in textile production.
  - China is a global leader in textiles.
- **Exporting Textile Goods**: India is also the world's second-largest textile exporter.
- **Employment Generation**: **Second-largest job provider**, following agriculture.

DTE Dec 20

HOMICIDE REPORT 2023

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Reports and Indices)

Disputes over natural resources or property triggered 16.8% of all murders in India in 2019-21: UN report

Context: Recently, the 4th edition of Global Study on Homicide Report was released.

Global Study on Homicide Report 2023

- **About:** It emphasizes regional and sub-regional patterns, demographics, age, and gender characteristics of victims, taking into account the effects of major trends such as climate change and even the Covid-19 pandemic.
- **Published by**: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
- **Objective**: To reveal into the facts behind the violence, to try and identify notable trends and to inform policies and solutions.
- **3 Categories**: Criminal activities, interpersonal homicides, and socio-politically motivated homicides.

Key Findings of the Report

- **Escalation in Violence**: The rise in violence is attributed to conflicts arising from issues such as water access disputes, exacerbated by challenges associated with population growth, economic expansion, and the impacts of climate change.
- **Alarming Global Homicide Statistics**: The year 2021 witnessed an exceptionally deadly trend, with an estimated 458,000 intentional homicides worldwide, equating to an average of 52 killings every hour.
- **India's Homicide Trends**: In the period from 2019 to 2021, 16.8% of all murders in India were linked to disputes over natural resources or property, highlighting that approximately every sixth murder falls into this category.
- **Water-Related Conflicts in India**: Within the same timeframe, about 0.5% of these murders (300 incidents) in India were specifically attributed to conflicts related to water resources.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

- **About:** It stands as a prominent global figure in combatting illegal drugs and international crime, while also overseeing the execution of the primary United Nations initiative on counterterrorism.
- **Establishment**: In 1997.
- **Headquarters**: Vienna, Austria.

BUSINESS STANDARD Page 6

FAME INDIA SCHEME
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

Extend FAME by 3 yrs, make EVs a must for deliveries

NITIN KUMAR
New Delhi, 20 December

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry on Wednesday recommended a slew of measures to boost the adoption of electric vehicles in the country and recommended the extension of the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME-II) India Scheme by three years.



In its report on the Promotion of Electric Vehicles, the committee emphasised including private four-wheelers and quadricycles in the scheme, alongside mandating EVs in public transport, logistics, and delivery sectors.

"In order to facilitate the transition momentum to electric mobility, broaden the scope and extend the FAME-II Scheme for at least 3 more years. In order to decarbonise the transport sector, efforts should be made to set a deadline for making the transport sector in the country mandatorily electric," the 324th report pertaining to the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) said.

The committee raised concerns about the MHI's electric two-wheeler subsidy cuts in June, urging its restoration. Additionally, addressing high ownership costs as a significant hurdle, the committee suggested a reduction in goods and services tax to mitigate this expense.

"Government should explore the possibility of shrinking further the GST on Lithium-ion batteries," it said, adding "There is a need to address the issue of GST for manufacturers as well to reduce the high cost."

The committee also recommended the MHI conduct a study regarding the feasibility of battery standardisation and formulate a stable battery swapping policy. The move is aimed at increasing customer confidence and attracting foreign direct investment in the sector. To maximise the environmental decarbonsation benefits of EVs, the establishment of solar-powered EV charging stations is essential, the committee said.

Noting the challenges associated with financing the EVs, it suggested bringing it under the Priority Sector Lending (PSL) category until the 30 per cent penetration target fixed for 2030 is achieved, to accelerate India's commitment towards net-zero emissions.

KEY PROPOSALS

- Make EVs a must in mass transportation and logistics sector in polluted cities
- Enhance support for electric four wheelers and include private vehicles with cost/battery limits
- Explore further GST cuts on battery and EVs to increase affordability
- Extend income tax deduction for buying EVs until 2025

Context: The **Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry recommended** a slew of measures to boost the adoption of electric vehicles in the country and recommended the extension of the **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME-II) India Scheme by three years.**

FAME India Scheme

- **About**: FAME (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles) India is a part of the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan.
  - The main thrust of FAME is to encourage electric vehicles by providing subsidies.
- **Implementing agency**: The Department of Heavy Industry has been administering the FAME India scheme since 01st April 2015.
- **Objective**: Promotion of Electric and hybrid vehicles in the country by offering upfront Incentives on the purchase of Electric vehicles and by establishing charging Infrastructure for electric vehicles.

Salient Features of the FAME Scheme – 2

- This **scheme is the expanded version of the present scheme** titled 'FAME India-1 which was launched on 1st April 2015, with a total outlay of Rs. 895 crores.
- The target is to support 10 Lakhs e-2Wheeler, 5 Lakhs e-3 Wheelers, 55000 4 Wheelers, and 7000 Buses.
- **Under the scheme of FAME-II**, the demand incentive for e-2W has been increased to Rs. 15,000/KWh from Rs. 10,000/KWh with an increase in cap from 20% to almost 40% of the cost of the vehicle to increase the adoption of e-2W.
- **The phase II of the FAME-India Scheme** has been extended for a period of two years after 31st March 2022.
- **Benefits**: The scheme will help in addressing the issue of environmental pollution and fuel security.

ECONOMIC TIMES

Dec 20

USBRL PROJECT
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Infrastructure)

Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link most difficult project: Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw

Context: The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, described as the most challenging post-independence railway project in India, involves tunnelling through the young Himalayas. Of the total 272 km, 161 km has been commissioned. The Katra-Banihal section, with 87% in tunnels, includes the longest transportation railway tunnel.

Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) Project

- **About:** The USBRL Project aims to construct a railway line from Udhampur to Baramulla, linking the Kashmir valley to the Indian Railways network.
- **Aim**: To establish connectivity between Kashmir and the rest of the country, fostering development in the Valley.
- **Total Length:** 272 km.
  - Declared as a "National Project" in 2002.
- **Terrain Challenges**: The alignment of USBRL involves navigating highly rugged and mountainous terrain with complex Himalayan geology.
- **Tunnel Construction**: The project includes the construction of 38 tunnels with a combined length of 119 km.
- The longest tunnel (T-49) spans 12.75 km, making it the country's longest transportation tunnel.
- **Bridge Construction**: 927 bridges are part of the project, with a combined length of 13 km.
  - The iconic Chenab Bridge, with an overall length of 1315 m, an arch span of 467 m, and a height of 359 m above the Chenab river bed, will be the world's highest railway bridge.

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Dec 20

PROVISIONAL COLLECTION OF TAXES BILL

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Parliament Passes Provisional Collection of Taxes Bill, 2023 Rajya Sabha Returns After Discussion

Context: Parliament has passed the Provisional Collection of Taxes Bill, 2023 with Rajya Sabha returning it to Lok Sabha.

Provisional Collection of Taxes Bill, 2023

- **It repeals**: The Provisional Collection of Taxes Act, 1931.
- **Interim collection of taxes**: The Act allows for the immediate imposition or increase in customs or excise duty through a declaration. This **declaration may be included in the government bill** seeking to impose or increase such duties introduced in Parliament. The imposition or increase will come into effect from the day after the date of introduction of the Bill.
  - **It will cease to have effect once**: (i) the Bill is enacted, (ii) the central government directs so in pursuance of a motion passed by Parliament, or (iii) after the 75th day after the date of the introduction of the Bill.
  - It **also clarifies that these provisions will be applicable regardless** of whether the tariff classification has changed.
- **Refund:** The Act requires that refunds be issued in certain cases. Refunds must be issued if the declaration was enacted in an amended form, or it ceased to apply. Refunds will be made on the difference under the declaration and the enacted provision.
  - If the declared provision is not enacted, duties and taxes collected will be refunded in entirety.

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DRUG CONTROLLER GENERAL OF INDIA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Governance)



Drug cos asked to carry alert on anti-cold drug for infants

In June, govt banned 14 FDC drugs, saying that there was no therapeutic justification

Somrita Ghosh
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NEW DELHI

The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has asked the manufacturers of popular anti-flu and anti-cold combination drugs to carry a warning on these formulations against their use in infants and kids younger than four years of age.

In a notification issued on 18 December by the CDSCO (Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation), the DCGI head Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi has written to drug controllers of all states and Union Territories (UT) to ensure that manufacturers of Chlorpheniramine Maleate and Phenylephrine must put a warning on the products which are not to be prescribed for infants and children below the age of four.

The letter read that manufacturers should "mention warning 'Fixed Dose Combination (FDC) should not be used in children below four years age' on label and package insert/promotional literature of the drug".

The regulator, in the letter, mentioned that "The FDC of Chlorpheniramine Maleate IP 2mg-Phenylephrine HCl IP 5mg drop per ml was declared as rational by Prof. Kokate Committee and based on the recommendation of the committee, this office has issued No Objection Certificate (NOC) for continued manufacturing and marketing of subject FDC on 17.07.2015 under the 18 months policy decision."

A committee ruled that children under the age of four should not take the combination, after carefully examining the drug's usage

Earlier in June, the government had banned 14 such FDC drugs, citing that there is no therapeutic justification for these medicines. A fixed dose combination is the combination of two or more drugs in certain fixed dosage combinations. If it were combined for the first time, it would fall under the definition of a new drug.

"Subsequently, concerns have been raised regarding the promotion of unapproved anti-cold drug formulations for infants," the letter said.

The Subject Expert Committee (SEC) reviewed the combination of these two medications earlier in June in response to new concerns.

Finally, on 6 June, the Subject Expert Committee (Pulmonary) ruled, after carefully examining the drug's usage in light of the concerns raised, that children under the age of four should not take the combination.

Context: Recently, the **Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has instructed the manufacturers of well-known anti-flu** and anti-cold combination drugs to include a warning on these formulations, cautioning against their use in infants and children under four years of age.

Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI)

- **About**: DCGI is the head of department of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization of the Government of India. It is **responsible for approval of licences of specified categories of drugs** such as blood and blood products, IV fluids, vaccines, and sera in India.
- **Ministry**: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Functions

- **Preparation and maintenance** of national **reference standard**.
- **To bring about the uniformity in the enforcement** of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.
- Training of Drug Analysts deputed by State Drug Control Laboratories and other Institutions
- **Analysis of Cosmetics received as survey samples** from CDSCO.

Drugs Related Regulations in India

- **The Drugs and Cosmetics Act**: The primary purpose of these regulations is to oversee and regulate drugs and cosmetics within the country.
- **Scope**: These guidelines pertain to the issuance of licenses for the production of Ayurvedic, Siddha, and Unani medicines.
- **Mandatory Compliance**: Manufacturers are obligated to conform to specified criteria for both licensing manufacturing units and medicines. This includes providing evidence of safety and efficacy and adhering to Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).

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SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 – Art and Culture)

Sahitya Akademi announces awards; *Requiem in Raga Janki* best English work

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Tamil author Rajasekaran (Devibharathi), Telugu writer T. Patanjali Sastry and Malayalam writer E.V. Ramakrishnan are among those named for the Sahitya Akademi awards for 2023.

Nine books of poetry, six novels, five short story collections, three essays and one literary study have won the awards. In the English language category, Neelum Saran Gour has been selected for her novel *Requiem in Raga Janki*, and in Hindi, writer Sanjeev has been named for his novel *Mujhe Pahachaano*.

The awards recommended by the jury in 24 languages were approved by the Executive Board of the Akademi at its meeting on Wednesday. Madhav Kaushik, President of the Akademi, chaired the meeting. The awards are given to books first published during the five years immediately preceding the year of the award – that is between January 2017 and December 31, 2021.

Mr. Rajasekaran was chosen for his novel *Neervazhi Padooum*, Mr. Sastry for his short story collection *Rameshwaram Kaakulu Marikonni Kathalu*, and Mr. Ramakrishnan for his literary study *Malayala Novelinte Deshakalangal*.

Scholar Lakshmisha Tolpadi will get the award for his collection of essays *Mahabharatha Anusandhanada Bharathayatre* in Kannada. Bengali author Swapnamay Chakrabarti will receive the award for his novel *Jaler Upar Pani*.

Among the authors who will receive the honour for their poetry collections are Vijay Verma in Dogri, Vinod Joshi in Gujarati, Manshoor Banihali in Kashmiri, Ashutosh Parida in Odia, and Arun Ranjan Mishra in Sanskrit.

The award, including a copper plaque and ₹1 lakh prize money, will be presented on March 12, 2024.

The award, comprising an engraved copper plaque, a shawl, and ₹1 lakh in prize money, will be presented at a function on March 12, 2024.

The Akademi, founded on March 12, 1954, is an autonomous body under the Union Culture Ministry and is dedicated to the promotion of literature in Indian languages.

Context: **Tamil author Rajasekaran (Devibharathi),** Telugu writer T. Patanjali Sastry and Malayalam writer E.V. Ramakrishnan are among those named for the Sahitya Akademi awards for 2023.

- Nine books of poetry, six novels, five short story collections, three essays and one literary study have won the awards.

Sahitya Akademi

- **Establishment**: Instituted in 1954,
- **Purpose**: It is an annual literary honor presented by Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters.
- **Recognition and Awards**: Annually, Sahitya Akademi bestows 24 awards on literary works in acknowledged languages, including an equal number for literary translations to and from Indian languages.
- **Inclusive Language Recognition**: In addition to the 22 languages outlined in the Indian Constitution, Sahitya Akademi acknowledges English and Rajasthani for the implementation of its programs.
- **Significance and Ranking**: The Sahitya Akademi award holds the distinction of being the second-highest literary honor conferred by the Government of India, following the Jnanpith award.

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Dec 20

AMRIT BHARAT STATION SCHEME

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Govt Schemes)

Government says, over 1300 railway stations taken up for development under Amrit Bharat Station scheme

Context: Recently, Railways Minister announced that a total of 1309 railway stations have been selected for development under the Amrit Bharat Station scheme.

Amrit Bharat Station Scheme

- **Aim**: To enhance and modernize railway stations throughout the Indian Railways network.
- **Implemented by**: Ministry of Railways
- **Based on**: Master Planning for long term and implementation of the elements of Master Plan as per the needs and patronage of the station.
- **Status**: Presently, the scheme envisages to take-up 1275 stations for upgradation/modernisation over Indian Railway.
  - 18 stations of Sonpur Division and 20 stations of Samastipur Division have been identified.
- **Objective of Scheme**
  - The scheme **aims at preparation of Master Plans of the Railway stations** and implementation of the Master Plan in phases to enhance the facilities including and beyond the Minimum Essential Amenities (MEA) and aiming for creation of Roof Plazas and city centres at the station in long run.
  - The scheme **shall aim to meet the needs of the stakeholders**, station usage studies as far as possible based on availability of funds and inter-se priority.
  - The scheme shall cater for introduction of new amenities as well as upgradation and replacement of existing amenities.

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