

1. SAUBHAGYA SCHEME

- Nine States have achieved complete household electrification under the Saubhagya scheme. They are Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Mizoram, Sikkim, Telangana and West Bengal. With this, 16 States in the country now have 100 per cent household electrification.

About SAUBHAGYA Scheme:

- Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana - 'Saubhagya' was launched in September, 2017.
- Under Saubhagya free electricity connections to all households (both APL and poor families) in rural areas and poor families in urban areas will be provided.
- Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) has been designated as nodal agency for the Saubhagya scheme.
- The scheme aims to achieve universal household electrification in all parts of the country.
- All DISCOMs including Private Sector DISCOMs, State Power Departments and RE Cooperative Societies shall be eligible for financial assistance under the scheme in line with Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY).
- Eligibility: The prospective beneficiary households for free electricity connections under the scheme would be identified using SECC 2011 data. However, un-electrified households not covered under SECC data would also be provided electricity connections under the scheme on payment of Rs. 500 which shall be recovered by DISCOMs in 10 instalments through electricity bill.
- Providing last mile connectivity and electricity connections to all un-electrified households in rural areas.
- Providing Solar Photovoltaic (SPV) based standalone system for un-electrified households located in remote and inaccessible villages / habitations, where grid extension is not feasible or cost effective.

2. National Register of Citizens (NRC)

- The Supreme Court on December 12, 2018 extended the deadline for the submission of claims and objections by individuals excluded from the first draft of the Assam National Register of Citizens (NRC) to December 31, 2018.
- The Assam government released the final draft of NRC on July 30, 2018. The list incorporates names of 2.89 crore people out of 3.29 crore applicants. The names of 40.07 lakh people have been left out.

Assam NRC:

- The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is a list that contains names of Indian citizens of Assam. It was last prepared after Census in 1951. Assam, which had faced an influx of people from Bangladesh since the early 20th century, is the only state having an NRC.
- The Assam government on July 30, 2018 released the second and final draft of the state's National Register of Citizens (NRC). The draft includes the names of Indian citizens who have been residing in Assam before March 25, 1971.

3. What Are Britain's 'Golden Visas'?

- The UK government has put on hold plans to suspend "golden visa" category in reference to its use by super-rich foreign nationals, including Indians, to acquire fast-track settlement rights in Britain.

What are Golden Visas or Tier 1 Visas?

They provide a faster route for wealthy investors coming from outside the European Union and Switzerland to settle in Britain. The program was introduced in 2008 to attract wealthy foreign nationals willing to invest large amounts of capital in Britain.

Criteria:

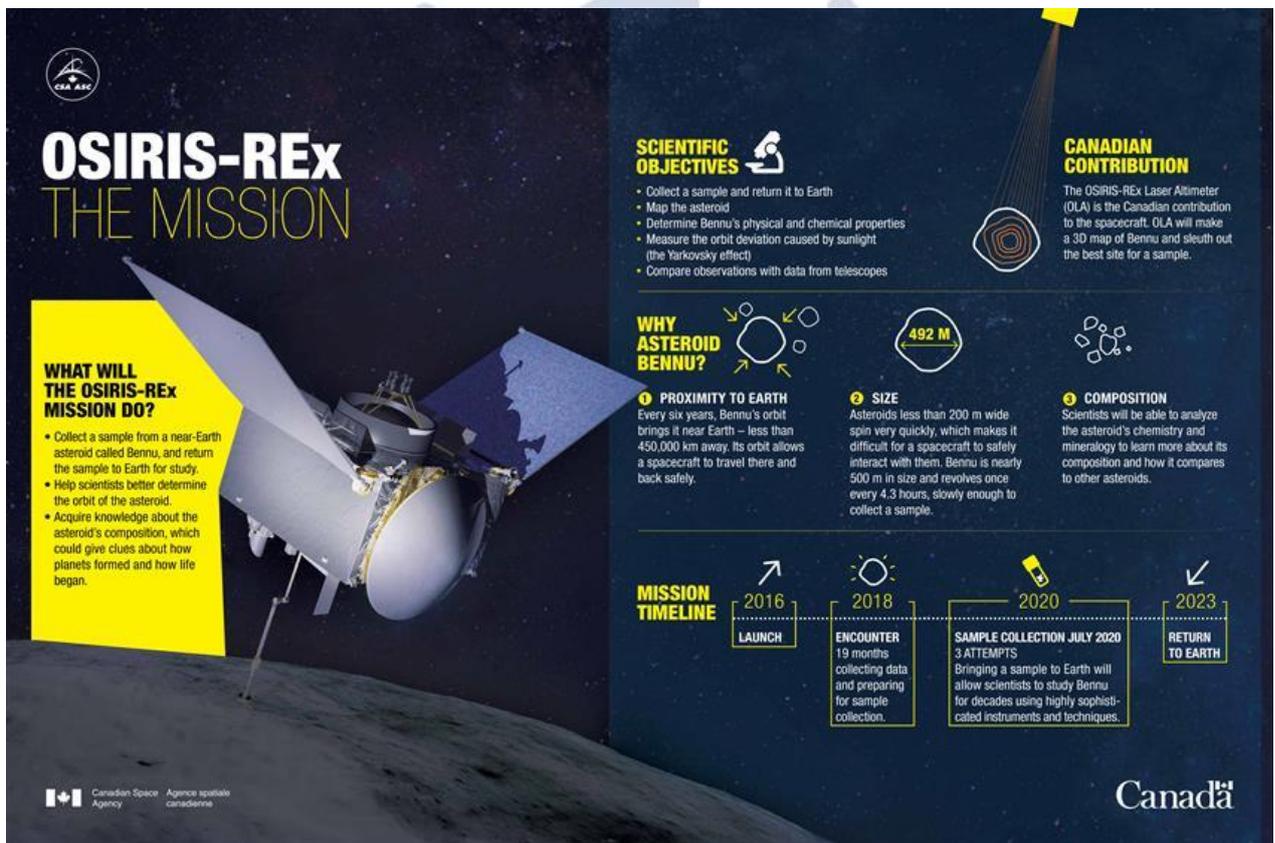
- To qualify, foreign nationals must put down a minimum of 2 million pounds (around \$2.5 million) as an investment in Britain. Such an investment in United Kingdom bonds, share capital or companies allows investors to apply for permanent residency within five years.

- For a £5 million investment, they can apply for permanent residency after three years.
- An investment of £10 million can open the door to permanent residency after two years. After that, the nationals theoretically could apply for citizenship.

4. OSIRIS-Rex mission and facts on asteroid bennu

- NASA's OSIRIS-REx spacecraft has discovered traces of hydrogen and oxygen molecules — part of the recipe for water and thus the potential for life — embedded in the asteroid Bennu's rocky surface.

About the mission:



OSIRIS-REx THE MISSION

WHAT WILL THE OSIRIS-REx MISSION DO?

- Collect a sample from a near-Earth asteroid called Bennu, and return the sample to Earth for study.
- Help scientists better determine the orbit of the asteroid.
- Acquire knowledge about the asteroid's composition, which could give clues about how planets formed and how life began.

SCIENTIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Collect a sample and return it to Earth
- Map the asteroid
- Determine Bennu's physical and chemical properties
- Measure the orbit deviation caused by sunlight (the Yarkovsky effect)
- Compare observations with data from telescopes

WHY ASTEROID BENNU?

- 1 PROXIMITY TO EARTH**
Every six years, Bennu's orbit brings it near Earth — less than 450,000 km away. Its orbit allows a spacecraft to travel there and back safely.
- 2 SIZE**
Asteroids less than 200 m wide spin very quickly, which makes it difficult for a spacecraft to safely interact with them. Bennu is nearly 500 m in size and revolves once every 4.3 hours, slowly enough to collect a sample.
- 3 COMPOSITION**
Scientists will be able to analyze the asteroid's chemistry and mineralogy to learn more about its composition and how it compares to other asteroids.

CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION

The OSIRIS-REx Laser Altimeter (OLA) is the Canadian contribution to the spacecraft. OLA will make a 3D map of Bennu and sleuth out the best site for a sample.

MISSION TIMELINE

- 2016 LAUNCH**
- 2018 ENCOUNTER**
19 months collecting data and preparing for sample collection.
- 2020 SAMPLE COLLECTION JULY 2020**
3 ATTEMPTS
Bringing a sample to Earth will allow scientists to study Bennu for decades using highly sophisticated instruments and techniques.
- 2023 RETURN TO EARTH**

Canadian Space Agency / Agence spatiale canadienne

Canada

- OSIRIS-Rex stands for Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security-Regolith Explorer.
- OSIRIS-REx is the third mission in NASA's New Frontiers program, which previously sent the New Horizons spacecraft zooming by Pluto and the Juno spacecraft into orbit around Jupiter.

- During its three year orbit of Bennu, OSIRIS-REx will be conducting a range of scientific experiments in order to better understand the asteroid.
- The aim of the mission is to collect a sample of regolith- the loose, soil-like material which covers the surface of the asteroid.

Bennu

- Bennu was selected for a the OSIRIS-REx mission from over 500,000 known asteroids, due to it fitting a number of key criteria.

These include:

- **Proximity to Earth:** In order for OSIRIS-REx to reach its destination in a reasonable timeframe, NASA needed to find an asteroid which had a similar orbit to Earth.
- **Size:** Small asteroids, those less than 200m in diameter, typically spin much faster than larger asteroids, meaning the regolith material can be ejected into space. Bennu is around 500m in diameter, so rotates slowly enough to ensure that the regolith stays on its surface.
- **Composition:** Bennu is a primitive asteroid, meaning it hasn't significantly changed since the beginning of the Solar System (over 4 billion years ago). It is also very carbon-rich, meaning it may contain organic molecules, which could have been precursors to life on Earth.
- Additionally, Bennu is of interest as it is a Potentially Hazardous Asteroid (PHA). Every 6 years, Bennu's orbit brings it within 200,000 miles of the Earth, which means it has a high probability of impacting Earth in the late 22nd Century.

5. FAME-India Scheme

- To promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology and to ensure sustainable growth of the same, Department of Heavy Industry is implementing FAME-India Scheme Phase - I [Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India] from 1st April 2015.
- The scheme was initially up to 31st April 2017, has been extended up to 31st March 2019 or till Notification of FAME-II, whichever is earlier.

FAME-India Scheme Phase – II:

- The scheme proposes to give a push to electric vehicles (EVs) in public transport and
- It seeks to encourage adoption of EVs by way of market creation and demand aggregation.

Automobile Sector:

- 100% FDI by automatic route is permitted in the automobile sector.
- Further, the sector is deregulated, both private sector and public sector are free to carry out investment in the automobile sector, including for manufacturing of Electric Vehicles and E-Buses.

ABOUT FAME

- FAME India is a part of the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan. Main thrust of FAME is to encourage electric vehicles by providing subsidies.
- Vehicles in most segments – two wheelers, three wheelers, electric and hybrid cars and electric buses obtained the subsidy benefit of the scheme.

FAME focuses on 4 areas i.e.

1. Technology development,
2. Demand Creation,
3. Pilot Projects and
4. Charging Infrastructure.

6. Indian Navy- Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle:

- The Indian Navy has inducted its first Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) System at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai. With this, the Indian Navy joins a select group of naval forces in the world that boasts of this niche capability.
- DSRV is used to rescue crew members stranded in submarines that get disabled. The DSRV can be operated at a depth of 650 meters and can hold around 15 people.

7. India's first Jean Monnet CoE opened at MAHE:

- India's first Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence, established by the European Union, was recently inaugurated at the Department of European Studies (DES) in Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE).

- It comes with grant of €1,00,000 to pursue India-EU interdisciplinary studies in culture, literature, education and society.

Who is Jean Monnet

- A French political economist and diplomat, Jean Monnet was influential supporter of European unity and is considered as one of founding fathers of European Union. He also has been called “The Father of Europe” by those who see his innovative and pioneering efforts in the 1950s as the key to establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, the predecessor of today’s European Union.

8. Universal Health Coverage Day- December 12:

- International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day) on 12 December aims to mobilize diverse stakeholders to call for stronger, more equitable health systems to achieve universal health coverage, leaving no one behind.
- The theme of World Health Day is: Universal health coverage: everyone, everywhere.

What is Universal Health Coverage?

- Universal health coverage (UHC) ensures all people, everywhere, can access the quality health services they need without suffering financial hardship. It is a fundamentally political goal rooted in the human right to health. It is also one of the smartest investments any country can make.

9. World’s first floating nuclear plant in Russia:

- Akademik Lomonosov is the world’s first “floating” nuclear power plant (FNPP). It is coming up in Russia.
- Key facts: An FNPP is basically a mobile, low-capacity reactor unit operable in remote areas isolated from the main power distribution system, or in places hard to access by land. They are designed to maintain both uninterrupted power and plentiful desalinated water supply in remote areas.

SOURCE:

1. [THE HINDU](#)
2. [PIB](#)