

AGRICULTURE · C4S COURSES

PRAGATI Initiative

9 July 2026

Source: *Business Line*

Context

Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** launched the **PRAGATI** initiative on **9 July 2026**. The initiative aims to create a **nationwide ecosystem of 20,000 agri entrepreneurs** to promote regenerative agriculture and rural transformation.

The initiative at a glance

- **Programme:** PRAGATI.
- **Launched by:** Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
- **Date:** 8 July 2026 (event coverage 9 July 2026).
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoAFW)
- **Nature:** Multi-stakeholder + privately-led nationwide initiative.
- **Focus:** Regenerative + climate-resilient agriculture through inclusive agri-entrepreneurship.

What is PRAGATI?

8 States Covered

- **Madhya Pradesh + Bihar + Uttar Pradesh + Assam + West Bengal + Jharkhand + Maharashtra + Rajasthan.**

What Will Agri-Entrepreneurs Do?

Core Services at Village-Level Kiosks:

- **Agronomy advisory** — crop guidance + best practices.
- **Soil health services** — soil testing + nutrient recommendations.
- **Mechanisation solutions** — access to farm equipment + tools.
- **Credit linkages** — connecting farmers to bank + microfinance credit.
- **Market access** — helping farmers sell at better prices.
- **Livelihood opportunities** — beyond primary farming.

Financial + Digital Inclusion Push:

- **Credit** access.
- **Insurance** (linked to PMFBY etc.).
- **Savings** products.
- **Government entitlements** (PM-KISAN, DBTs).

What is Regenerative Agriculture?

- **Definition:** Farming approach that **regenerates soil health**, biodiversity, water cycles, and ecosystem functions.
- **Key practices:**
 - **No-till / minimum-till farming.**
 - **Cover crops.**
 - **Crop rotation.**

- **Agroforestry.**
- **Livestock integration.**
- **Benefits:** Improved soil carbon, reduced chemical dependency, better climate resilience.
- **Contrasts with:** Conventional industrial farming (soil-depleting).

What is Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA)?

- **Coined by:** FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization).
- **3 Pillars of CSA:**
 1. **Sustainably increase productivity + incomes.**
 2. **Adapt + build resilience** to climate change.
 3. **Reduce/remove greenhouse gases** where possible.

What is an Agri-Entrepreneur?

- Local rural individual trained to provide **agronomy advisory + input services + market linkages** to smallholder farmers.
- Runs a **village-level kiosk** (Agri Business Centre).
- Serves as the **last-mile delivery mechanism** for climate-smart + technology-driven farming.

Practice MCQs

Q1. With reference to the PRAGATI initiative launched on 8 July 2026, consider the following statements:

1. It was launched by Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
2. It aims to create a nationwide ecosystem of 20,000 agri-entrepreneurs.
3. It targets impact on 20 lakh (2 million) smallholder farmers.
4. It is fully funded by the Government of India with no private participation.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one (b) Only two (c) **Only three** (d) All four (e) None

(Statement 4 is wrong; **PRAGATI is a PRIVATELY-LED multi-stakeholder initiative** — NOT fully government-funded. It is backed by corporate CSR arms (PepsiCo, SBI Foundation), global philanthropies (Gates Foundation), and NGOs — set to be **India's largest privately-led agri-entrepreneurship programme.**)

Answer Key

1. **(c)** — Statement 4 wrong: PRAGATI is privately led, not fully government-funded.

Exam Relevance

- **UPSC Prelims & Mains: CRITICAL** — GS-II (Government Policies, Public-Private-Philanthropic Partnership); GS-III (Agriculture, Rural Economy, Climate Change); Prelims (PRAGATI, coalition partners, key persons); Mains-Essay on agri-entrepreneurship + climate-resilient farming.
- **NABARD Grade A: CRITICAL** — Direct subject: rural economy, agri-entrepreneurship, farmer livelihoods, FPOs; ARD paper must-know.

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