

Decisions taken by the Union Cabinet

- **Cabinet approves the joint issue of postage stamp between India and Russia**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was apprised of the agreement signed in connection with release of Joint Stamps between Department of Posts, India and Russia Post (Joint-Stock Company "MARKA" of Russian Federation) to establish postal cooperation and strive towards mutually beneficial operational excellence in the field of issuance of stamps. Bilateral relations between India and Russia are marked by broad understanding on issues of mutual interest. India and Russia enjoy enhanced levels of cooperation in almost all areas of the bilateral relationship.

- **Cabinet approves the extension of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Netherlands on technical cooperation in the field of Spatial Planning, Water Management and Mobility Management**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was apprised of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and Netherlands on technical cooperation in the field of Spatial Planning, Water Management and Mobility Management in April, 2018.

Details

The objectives of this MoU are to promote and strengthen the collaboration between the signatories in the areas of Spatial Planning, Water Management and Mobility Management on the basis of equivalence, affordable housing, smart city development, geographical information system (GIS) for water supply & sewerage system, waste water reuse and recycle, conservation of fresh water by artificial recharge of aquifer, integrated solid waste management and heritage conservation and mutual benefit, taking into account the practical needs of both the countries.

Implementation strategy

Under this MoU, a Joint Working Group (JWG) will be set up to strategize and implement programmes on cooperation under the framework of the MoU. The Joint Working Group will meet once in a year, alternately in the Netherlands and in India.

Major Impact

The MoU will promote bilateral cooperation in the field of Spatial Planning, Water Management and Mobility Management between the two countries.

Beneficiaries

The MoU is expected to create employment in the areas of Spatial Planning, Water Management and Mobility Management, smart cities development, affordable housing, waste management, urban environment and heritage preservation.

- **Cabinet approves Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Denmark on technical cooperation in the field of Sustainable and Smart Urban Development**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was apprised of

the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and Denmark on technical cooperation in the field of Sustainable and Smart Urban Development in April, 2018.

Details

The objective of this MoU is to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of sustainable and smart urban development on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit through exchange of knowledge, institutional cooperation, research & development and commercial relations on related issues. Areas of cooperation include smart urban solutions, liveability, sustainable and integrated urban planning, re-development and land use, integrated solid waste management including waste to energy, sustainable transport systems, water and sanitation management, energy efficiency, resource mobilization and other related areas mutually agreed upon.

Implementation strategy

Under this MoU, a Joint Working Group (JWG) will be set up to strategize and implement programmes on cooperation under the framework of the MoU. The Joint Working Group will meet at intervals agreed upon by the Participants, alternately in Denmark and in India.

Major Impact

The MoU will promote bilateral cooperation in the field of Sustainable and Smart Urban Development between the two countries.

Beneficiaries

The MoU is expected to create employment in the areas of integrated solid waste management including waste to energy, sustainable transport systems, water and sanitation management, energy efficiency, resource mobilization.

• **Cabinet approves Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark-III Continuation Programme – Phase 6: Thirty Operational Flights of PSLV**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) Continuation Programme (Phase 6) and funding of thirty PSLV operational flights under the Programme. The Programme will also meet the launch requirement of satellites for Earth observation, Navigation and Space Sciences. This will also ensure the continuity of production in Indian industry. The total fund requirement is Rs. 6131.00 Crores and includes the cost of thirty PSLV vehicles, essential facility augmentation, Programme Management and Launch Campaign.

Major Impact:

The operationalisation of PSLV has made the country self-reliant in the launching capability of satellites for earth observation, disaster management, navigation and space sciences. The PSLV Continuation programme will sustain this capability and self-reliance in the launching of similar satellites for national requirements. The PSLV Continuation Programme – Phase 6 will meet the demand for the launch of satellites at a frequency up to eight launches per year, with maximal participation by the Indian industry. All the operational flights would be completed during the period 2019-2024.

The Programme will also meet the launch requirement of satellites for Earth observation, Navigation and Space Sciences. This will also ensure the continuity of production in Indian industry. PSLV Continuation Programme was initially sanctioned in 2008, and four phases

have been completed and the fifth phase is expected to be completed by Q2 of 2019-20. The Phase 6 approval will cater to the launch of satellite missions during the period Q3 of 2019-20 to Q1 of 2023-24.

- **Status-cum-Progress Report of “Special Committee for Inter-Linking of Rivers”**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has been apprised of the progress report of Special Committee for Inter-Linking of Rivers during 1.7.2016 to 31.3.2018. The progress report on interlinking of rivers has been submitted to the Cabinet in compliance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court judgement dated 27.02.2012 in the matter of Writ Petition (Civil) – 512 of 2002: “Networking of Rivers” along with Writ Petition No.668 of 2002 which directs the Union Government of India to constitute a Special Committee for Interlinking of Rivers. A periodical report is required to be submitted to the Cabinet on the progress made by the Special Committee for Interlinking of Rivers.

The Status Report of Special Committee on ILR consists of substantial progress made in three priority links namely Ken-Betwa Link, Damanganga-Pinjal Link and Para-Tapi-Narmada Link alongwith status of other Himalayan and Peninsular links identified as per National Perspective Plan of 1980.

- **Cabinet approves Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and United Kingdom on technical cooperation in the field of Sustainable Urban Development**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was apprised of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and United Kingdom on technical cooperation in the field of Sustainable Urban Development in April, 2018.

Details

The objective of this MoU is to facilitate and strengthen India-UK institutional cooperation in the field of sustainable urban development. The areas of cooperation include smart cities development, solid waste management, green affordable housing, waste water management, capacity building of urban institutions, skill development in urban areas, urban mobility, intelligent transport system and transit-oriented development, innovative access to finance and other related areas as mutually agreed upon by the Contracting Parties.

Implementation strategy

Under this MoU, an Indo-UK Joint Working Group (JWG) will be set up to strategize and implement programmes on cooperation under the framework of the MoU. The Joint Working Group on Urban Development is expected to meet once in a year, alternately in UK and in India.

Major Impact

The MoU will promote strong, deep and long term bilateral cooperation in the field of Sustainable Urban Development between the two countries.

Beneficiaries

The MoU is expected to create employment in the areas of smart cities development, solid waste management, green affordable housing, waste water management, skill development in urban areas, urban mobility, intelligent transport system and transit-

oriented development.

- **Cabinet approves Continuation Programme for Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark-III**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved funding for the for Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark-III (GSLV Mk-III) continuation programme (Phase-I) consisting of ten (10) GSLV (Mk-III) flights, at a total estimated cost of Rs. 4338.20 crores. This includes Rs. 4338.20 Crores and includes the cost of ten GSLV Mk-III vehicles, essential facility augmentation, Programme Management and Launch Campaign.

The GSLV Mk-III continuation Programme – Phase 1 is the first phase of operational flights that will enable the launch of 4 tonne class of communication satellites to meet the country's satellite communication requirements. The operationalisation of GSLV Mk-III will make the country self-reliant in the launching capability of 4 tonne class of communication satellites, and sustain & strengthen the space infrastructure and reduce the dependence on procured launches from foreign countries.

The operationalisation of GSLV Mk-III will make the country self-reliant in the launching capability of 4 tonne class of communication satellites and sustain & strengthen the space infrastructure and reduce the dependence on procured launches from foreign countries. The GSLV Mk-III Continuation Programme – Phase 1 will meet the launch requirement of communication satellites to meet the national demand for High Throughput Satellites for rural broadband connectivity, increase and sustain the availability of transponders for DTH, VSAT and Television broadcasters. GSLV Mk-III Continuation Programme – Phase 1 will be the first phase of operational flights of the GSLV Mk-III launch vehicle and the approval will cater to the launch of satellite missions during the period 2019-2024.

- **Cabinet approves Revision in the wage structure and allowances of Gramin Dak Sevaks (GDS) of the Department of Posts**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today has approved the revision in the wage structure and allowances of Gramin Dak Sevaks (GDS) of the Department of Posts. The revision in the wage structure would entail an estimated expenditure of Rs 1257.75 crore (Non-recurring expenditure - Rs 860.95 crore and Recurring expenditure of Rs.396.80 crore) during 2018-19. 3.07 lakh Gramin Dak Sevaks will be benefitted by this wage revision.

Details:

- i. Time Related Continuity allowance (TRCA) structure and slabs have been rationalised. The total GDSs have been brought under two categories viz. Branch Postmasters (BPMs) and other than Branch Postmasters namely Assistant Branch Postmaster (ABPMs).
- ii. The present 11 TRCA slabs will be merged into only three TRCA Slabs with two levels each for BPMs and other than BPMs.
- iii. Introduction of new Time Related Continuity Allowance (TRCA) will be as below:

Minimum TRCA of two types of proposed categories of GDSs as per working hours / levels			
S.No.	Category	Minimum TRCA for 4 Hours / Level 1	Minimum TRCA for 5 Hours / Level 2
1	BPM	Rs. 12000/-	Rs. 14500/-
2	ABPM/Dak Sevaks	Rs. 10000/-	Rs. 12000/-

- iv. Dearness Allowance will continue to be paid as a separate component, and also revised from time to time whenever it is revised for Central Government Servants.
- v. It is decided to continue the calculation of the ex-gratia bonus by applying the calculation ceiling of Rs. 7000 as basic TRCA + DA till such time a new scheme is devised.
- vi. Arrears for the period 1.1.2016 to the date of implementation will be paid by increasing the basic TRCA drawn during the period by a factor of 2.57. The arrears will be paid in one instalment.
- vii. Annual increase at the rate of 3% and the same may be given on 1st January or 1st July of every year as the case may be based on the one time written request of GDSs.
- viii. A new Risk and hardship Allowance has been introduced. Other allowances Viz. Office maintenance allowance, Combined duty allowance, Cash conveyance charges, Cycle maintenance allowance, Boat allowance and Fixed Stationery Charges have been revised.

Implementation strategy and targets:

The revision would result in improving the wages, allowances and discharge benefits of Gramin Dak Sevaks resulting in providing efficient & cost-effective basic postal facilities in the rural area. The proposed increased emoluments will enable him to improve his socio-economic standing.

Impact:

The Branch Post Offices are the fulcrum for provision of Communications and financial services in the village and are located in remote areas. The Post Master has to deal with large sums while making payments to customers; hence accountability is already built into his work. The enhanced remuneration will increase the sense of responsibility. Moreover, with the roll out of the India Post Payment Bank (IPPB), the CDS network is expected to play a key role in the process of financial inclusion of the rural population.

• Cabinet approves Revised guidelines on time bound closure of sick/ loss making Central Public Sector Enterprises and disposal of movable and immovable assets

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today has approved the revised guidelines of the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) on time bound closure of sick/ loss making Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and disposal of movable and immovable assets. The revised guidelines would reduce delays in implementation of closure plans of sick/loss making CPSEs. These guidelines will replace the guidelines issued by DPE in September, 2016.

These guidelines provide a broad framework for expeditious completion of various processes and procedures for closure of CPSEs by laying down important milestones in the closure process along with timelines, outlining the responsibilities of the concerned Ministries/ Departments/ CPSE, etc., in the process. The guidelines provide for advance preparatory action to be taken by administrative Ministry/ Department and CPSEs, preparation of closure proposal, settlement of statutory and other liabilities of the CPSE under closure and modalities for disposal of movable and immovable assets of such CPSEs in a time bound manner.

The guidelines give first priority for utilization of land of CPSEs under closure for Affordable Housing as per the relevant guidelines of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). Since there are employees working in these CPSEs, Government decided that closure

should not cause hardship to them and has now laid down a uniform policy to give workers VRS at 2007 notional pay scale irrespective of the pay scale in which they are working.

These guidelines shall apply to all sick/ loss making CPSEs, where –

- i. Approval/ in principle approval for closure has been obtained by administrative Ministry/ Department from the CCEA/ Cabinet; or
- ii. the process for obtaining the approval of the competent authority is underway after the administrative Ministry/ Department has decided for the closure of the CPSE.

By assigning priority to Affordable Housing it would make available land parcels of sick/loss making CPSEs under closure for the Government flagship programme of Affordable Housing being managed by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

- **Cabinet approves Continuation of Off-grid and Decentralised Solar PV Applications Programme - Phase III**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for implementation of Phase-III of Off-grid and Decentralised Solar PV (Photo Voltaic) Application Programme to achieve additional 118 MWp(Mega Watt peak) off-grid solar PV capacity by 2020. Phase-III of Off-grid and Decentralised Solar PV Application Programme covers following components:

i) Solar Street Lights: 3,00,000 numbers of solar street lights will be installed throughout the country with special emphasis on areas where there is no facility for street lighting systems through grid power, North Eastern States and Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected districts.

ii) Stand-alone Solar Power Plants: Solar power plants of individual size up to 25 kWp(kilo Watt peak) will be promoted in areas where grid power has not reached or is not reliable. This component is mainly aimed at providing electricity to schools, hostels, panchayats, police stations and other public service institutions. The aggregated capacity of solar power plants would be 100 MWp.

iii) Solar Study Lamps: 25,00,000 numbers of solar study lamps will be provided in North Eastern States and LWE affected districts.

For solar street lights and solar power plants, financial support up to 30% of the benchmark cost of the system will be provided except for NE States, Hill States and Island UTs where up to 90% of the benchmark cost will be provided. For solar study lamps only 15% of the lamp cost to be borne by beneficiary student and balance will be provided as financial support as such systems will be provided to school going children in backward and remote areas. The total project of the three components included under the phase-III is Rs. 1895 crore of which Rs. 637 crore will be provided as central financial assistance.

The off-grid solar systems will also open better livelihood opportunities for beneficiaries in rural and remote areas thereby increasing self-employment in such areas. It is estimated that, besides increasing self-employment, the implementation of Phase-III is likely to generate employment opportunity equivalent to 8.67 lakh man-days for skilled and unskilled workers.

Off-grid and Decentralized Solar PV Applications Programme has high impact in the rural and remote areas of the country where grid power has either not reached or is not reliable. During the Phase-III, the programme is likely to benefit 40 lakh rural households. In addition, the off-grid solar power plants proposed in the programme to provide electricity to schools, hostels, panchayats, police stations and other public service institutions will help communities at large and also help in increasing participation of women in education, social and livelihood activities.

- **Cabinet approves construction of a new 6 - Lane bridge with its approaches across River Ganga at Phaphamau, Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, approved the project for construction of 9.9 km long new 6 - lane bridge across river Ganga on NH - 96 at Phaphamau in Allahabad with total capital cost of Rs. 1948.25 crore. The construction period for the project is three years and likely to be completed by December, 2021. The new bridge will resolve the traffic congestion on existing old 2 - lane Phaphamau bridge on NH-96 at Allahabad.

The new bridge will also facilitate to the large congregation of people at Holy City Allahabad during Kumbh, Ardh-Kumbh and other yearly ritual baths at SANGAM in Prayag. This will give a boost to pilgrimage tourism and local economy of Holy city of Prayag. This new 6 - lane bridge will also be beneficial for the Lucknow / Faizabad bound traffic coming from Madhya Pradesh via National Highway - 27 and National Highway - 76 through Naini Bridge.

In addition, this project of new bridge will generate direct employment during construction for about 9.20 lakh mandays. At present all the Allahabad bound traffic coming from National Highway - 96, National Highway - 24 B, Asian Highway -1 and other local highways are using the existing old 2 - lane bridge at Phaphamau for crossing the River Ganga. There is no entry for goods vehicles on this bridge from 06 am to 11 pm. The present traffic on the old bridge is about 40,000 PCUs (Passenger Car Units) which is manifold greater than its designed capacity of 15,000 PCUs (Passenger Car Units), resulting in severe jam over bridge all around the day and night. This new 6 - lane bridge will decongest the old bridge and will also ensure fast and safe movement for traffic.

- **Cabinet approves interventions to deal with the current crisis in the sugar sector**

In order to improve the problem of liquidity of sugar mills resulting in accumulation of huge cane price arrears of farmers, the Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the following measures involving total amount of about Rs. 7000 crore :Creation of buffer stock of 30 LMT of sugar for one year and to incur estimated expenditure of Rs.1175 crore for this purpose. However, based on the market price and availability of sugar, this may be reviewed by Department of Food & Public Distribution(DFPD) any time. The reimbursement under the scheme would be made on quarterly basis which would be directly credited into farmers' account on behalf of mills against their cane price dues.

To notify Sugar Price (Control) Order, 2018 under Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to fix minimum selling price of white/refined sugar at the mill gate below which no white/refined sugar can be sold and delivered by a sugar mill in the domestic market. Fixation of minimum selling price of white sugar would be based on Fair Remunerative Price (FRP) of

cane and minimum conversion cost of white/refined sugar. The minimum selling price of white/refined sugar shall be initially fixed at Rs.29/kg which can be revised by DFPD subsequently based on revision of FRP etc. This will not affect availability of sugar to consumers at reasonable price and Government will put in place a mechanism to ensure that the retail prices of sugar are kept fully under control. At present, this would be done along with imposition of stock holding limits on sugar mills. The stock limit on mills will be initially imposed for the current sugar season (up to September 2018), which may be reviewed by DFPD at any time.

To augment capacity through up-gradation of existing distilleries attached to sugar mills by installing incineration boilers and setting up new distilleries in sugar mills; government will bear interest subvention of maximum Rs.1332 crore over a period of five years including moratorium period of one year on estimated bank loan amounting to Rs.4440 crore to be sanctioned to the sugar mills by the banks over a period of three years for which DFPD would formulate a detailed scheme in this regard. This would help diversion of sugar during surplus phase to reduce excess inventories.

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Warm regards,

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