

CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES

11-08-2023

BIOETHANOL PROJECTS UNDER PM JI-VAN YOJANA

To facilitate production of ethanol, Government in March

2019 had notified the “Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN (JaiV Indhan- Vatavaran Anukool fasal awashesh Nivaran) Yojana” for providing financial support for setting up Second Generation (2G) ethanol projects in the country using lignocellulosic biomass and other renewable feedstock.

PM JI-VAN SCHEME



Address concerns of environmental pollution caused by burning of biomass/ agriculture residues.

Help in meeting the targets envisaged in Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme promoted by Government of India and the vision of 10% reduction in import dependence by way of reducing the use of fossil fuels.

To create rural and urban employment opportunities.

To contribute to Swaccha Bharat Mission by supporting the aggregation of non-food biofuel feedstocks such as waste biomass and urban waste.

Centre for High Technology (CHT), a technical body under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoP&NG), will be the implementation Agency for the scheme.

Bharat (BH) Series

To facilitate seamless transfer of vehicles on station relocation in the country, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, published G.S.R. 594(E) dated 26th August, 2021 wherein a new registration mark namely "Bharat (BH) series" has

been incorporated in the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989. This came into force with effect from 15th September, 2021. In an endeavor to further improve as well as to widen the scope of BH Series, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways published notification G.S.R. 879(E) on 14th December, 2022 and amended the rules governing Bharat (BH) series registration mark, wherein vehicles currently having regular registration mark of eligible persons can also be converted to BH Series registration mark.



Bharat (BH) Series has been implemented as a part of VAHAN application developed by NIC. The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways issued an advisory dated 02nd December, 2021 for BH Series registration and it is implemented in a total of 26 States/UTs till date. The implementation of Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 comes under the purview of the State Governments/UTs administration.

MANF Scheme

The Government has implemented various schemes for the welfare and upliftment of every strata, including minorities, especially the economically weaker and lesser privileged sections of the society.

Through various schemes of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Textiles, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Rural Development.

The Ministry of Minority Affairs has specifically implemented various schemes, including Pre-Matric, Post Matric and Merit-cum-Means Scholarship schemes,

across the country for socio-economic and educational empowerment of the six notified minority communities.

The Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India has been implementing the Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF) Scheme on the lines of the JRF Scheme of UGC and CSIR.

The UGC and CSIR Fellowship Schemes are open for candidates of all social categories and communities including minorities. In addition to this, students from minority communities are also covered under the Fellowship Schemes being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and Ministry of Tribal Affairs for SC and OBC students and for ST students respectively. In view of the overlap among the aforesaid Schemes - it has been decided to discontinue the MANF Scheme from 2022-23 onward.

The existing MANF Fellows will continue to receive Fellowships till the end of their respective tenure, subject to compliance with the extant guidelines. As of now, there is no proposal to restore the Scheme.

Schemes to Support MSMEs

As per the information received from Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS), the share of export of MSME specified products in all India exports during the year 2022-23 was 43.6%.



The Udyam Registration Portal has 2,18,69,557 MSMEs registered since its inception (01.07.2020) to 08.08.2023 with an employment of 12,84,04,488 (as on 08.08.2023). This includes 30,96,140 informal micro enterprises on the Udyam Assist Platform with an employment of 38,57,385.

The Ministry of MSME is implementing the MSME Champions Scheme, a Central Sector Scheme. MSME Champions Schemes comprising three components i.e.,



MSME-Sustainable (ZED), MSME-Competitive (Lean) & MSME-Innovative (for Incubation, IPR, Design and Digital MSME) for promoting competitiveness amongst Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) by the way of wastage reduction through Lean Manufacturing, support for Design improvement, building awareness on Intellectual Property Rights, Zero Defect Zero Effect (ZED) Scheme to encourage and enable MSMEs for manufacturing of quality products, tools & to constantly upgrade their processes for achievement of high quality and high productivity with the least effect on the environment, and to promote & support ideas of MSMEs through Incubation across India.

The objective is to modernize MSMEs' manufacturing processes, reduce wastages, encourage innovativeness, sharpen business competitiveness and facilitate their National and Global reach and excellence.

The Schemes are applicable for the benefit of registered manufacturing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) across India. The scheme assistance and subsidies are applicable as per the scheme guidelines. The guidelines and all other relevant information related to the scheme of MSME Innovative, MSME Sustainable (ZED) & MSME-Competitive (Lean) under MSME champions are available at <http://www.innovative.msme.gov.in>, <http://www.zed.msme.gov.in> & <https://www.lean.msme.gov.in/> respectively and financial assistance provided all over the country are available at official website of DC (MSME).

Conservation of The Great Indian Bustard

As per information available with the Ministry, there are about 150 Great Indian Bustards in the country.

The Ministry provides financial assistance to the States, including Gujarat, under the Recovery Programme for saving critically endangered species and its habitats and conservation and management of protected areas components of Centrally Sponsored Scheme – Development of Wildlife Habitats for conservation and protection of Great Indian Bustard.



Further, the Ministry sanctioned an outlay of Rs. 33.85 crores for the duration of seven years for the programme titled 'Habitat Improvement and Conservation Breeding of Great Indian Bustard-an integrated approach' under the CAMPA in the year 2016.

An MoU has been signed between Wildlife Institute of India and the International Fund for Houbara Conservation (IFHC), UAE to undertake collaborative work aimed at the conservation of the Great Indian Bustard.

Mangrove Plantations

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has been implementing a project titled 'Wetlands management for biodiversity and climate protection', at four Ramsar Sites in India.

Under this project, Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) studies have been conducted at four sites namely, Pong Dam Lake and Renuka Lake in Himachal Pradesh, Bhitarkanika Mangroves in Odisha and Point Calimere Wetland Complex in Tamil Nadu.

MoEFCC provides financial assistance to coastal States to undertake activities related to conservation and management of coastal ecosystems such as mangrove plantation, shelterbelt plantation, coral transplantation, enhancement of livelihood security of coastal communities including capacity building. Management Action Plans (MAP) for conservation and management of mangroves are formulated and implemented in 9 coastal States covering 38 identified mangrove sites. The list is at Annexure I.



As per the India State of Forest Report, 2021, the mangrove cover in the country has been estimated at 4992 sq km with net increment of 17 sq.km in the year 2021 as compared to 2019.

To augment India's efforts in afforestation, the Union budget 2023-24 announced 'Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI)' programme.

The aim of the MISHTI Scheme is to protect and revive mangrove ecosystems on the Indian coast while enhancing the socio-economic status of coastal communities. The programme is based on convergence of resources from various ongoing and proposed schemes at Central and State level, with an objective to develop and restore the potential sites of mangroves with the help of State Governments.

MALABAR-2023 AT SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Indian Navy's indigenous frontline warships INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata will participate in Exercise MALABAR 2023 scheduled at/ off Sydney from 11 - 21 August 23 along with ships and aircraft from the US Navy (USN), Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) and the Royal Australian Navy (RAN).

MALABAR series of maritime exercises commenced in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between Indian Navy and US Navy and has grown in stature over the years to include four prominent navies in the Indo-Pacific Region. The 2020 edition witnessed the maiden participation of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). This year marks the 27th edition of MALABAR which is being hosted by Royal Australian Navy (RAN).

The Assam Rifles

The Assam Rifles were raised as Cachar Levy in 1835 to protect British tea estates and their settlements against tribal raids. It is the oldest Central ParaMilitary Force in India. During times of peace and 'proxy war', it has to ensure the security of the India-China and India-Myanmar borders.

In internal security matters, it acts under the purview of the Army, as the penultimate interventionist force of the Central government Similar to the Rashtriya Rifles in J & K, the Assam Rifles is the specialized force that carries out anti- insurgency operations in difficult terrain of Northeastern States.

The headquarters of the Director-General of Assam Rifles (DGAR) is in Shillong. It is designated by the Constitution of Group of Ministers (GoM) committee as the Border Guarding Force for the Indo – Myanmar border. It is also its lead intelligence agency Constitution of Group of Ministers (GoM).



Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2023

The Amendment Bill provides that the registration granted under Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act shall prevail and be treated as valid permission under CRZ Notification.

It will enable lakhs of small marginal aquaculture farmers to avoid the possible need for obtaining CRZ clearances from multiple agencies.

Exemptions:

Specific exemption has been granted under the CAA Act for the establishment of aquaculture units within the No Development Zone (NDZ) of Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ).

Rationalisation of punishments:

The principal Act has a provision of imprisonment for a period up to 3 years for carrying out coastal aquaculture without registration.

The amendment bill replaces the same with suitable civil instruments such as penalty in line with the principle of decriminalizing civil transgressions.

Broad basing aquaculture:

The Amendment Bill provides for broad basing coastal aquaculture to comprehensively cover all activities of coastal aquaculture under the purview of this Act.

In 2005, coastal aquaculture activity was essentially shrimp farming.

Now newer forms of environment friendly coastal aquaculture have come up which can be done in coastal areas and mostly within CRZ such as:

- cage culture,
- seaweed culture,
- bi-value culture,
- marine ornamental fish culture,
- pearl oyster culture etc.

Resolving administrative issues:

Many of the administrative matters such as the powers of Member Secretary of the CAA and normal functioning of the Authority in the absence of Chairperson which were ambiguous have been suitably resolved under the Amended Act for administrative efficiency and accountability.

The Amendments expressly empower the Authority to appoint Committees which can contain experts, stakeholders and public representatives for the efficient discharge of its duties.

Scientific technologies:

The Government intends to create facilities that produce genetically improved and disease-free stocks for use in coastal aquaculture.

Government also intends to prevent use of antibiotics and pharmacologically active substances in coastal aquaculture.



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Emissions standards:

The amendment bill provides for fixing or adopting the standards for emission or discharge of effluents from coastal aquaculture units, making the owner liable to pay the cost of demolition and cost of damage to the environment as assessed by the Authority in the true spirit of Polluter Pays Principle.

It also prohibits coastal aquaculture in the ecologically sensitive areas or the geomorphological features.

Significance of the amendments:

These activities also have the potential for generating huge revenue and creating large scale employment opportunities for coastal fisher communities.

The Government intends to promote ease of doing business in coastal aquaculture.