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Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana

- It would boost employment in formal sector and incentivize creation of new employment opportunities during Covid recovery phase under Atmanirbhar Bharat Package 3.0.
- Government of India will provide subsidy for two years in respect of new employees engaged on or after 1st October, 2020 and up to 30th June, 2021.
- It will pay 12% employees' contribution and 12% employers' contribution of wages towards EPF in respect of new employees in establishments employing upto 1000 employees for 2 years.
- It will pay only employees' share of EPF contribution i.e. 12% of wages in respect of new employees in establishments employing more than 1000 employee for two years.
- An employee with less than Rs. 15000/- monthly wage who was not working in an Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) registered establishment before 1st October, 2020 will be eligible.
- EPFO will credit the contribution in Aadhaar seeded account of members in electronic manner.
- EPFO shall develop a software for the scheme and also develop a procedure which is transparent and accountable at their end.

Height of Mt. Everest

- Nepal and China jointly certified the elevation of Mount Everest at 8,848.86 metres above sea level.
- This height is 86 cm higher than what was recognised since 1954.
- The elevation of 8,848 m was determined by the Survey of India in 1954.
- The devastating earthquake of 2015 in Nepal triggered a debate among scientists on whether it had affected the height of Mt Everest.
- Nepal's Survey Department decided to measure the mountain on its own, instead of continuing to follow the Survey of India findings of 1954.
- New Zealand, which shares a bond with Nepal over the mountain, provided technical assistance.
- Sir Edmund Hillary, the first climber on the peak in May 1953, worked as the mountain's undeclared brand ambassador to the world.

VISVAS Scheme

- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment will introduce Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargon ki Aarthik Sahayta (VISVAS) scheme.
- It is an interest subvention scheme for the self help groups (SHGs) or SCs and OBCs households with an annual income of up to ₹3 lakh.
- SC and OBC beneficiaries could avail an interest subvention of 5% p.a. on bank loans of up to ₹4 lakh per SHG and ₹2 lakh per individual.
- With subvention of interest, banks too would be encouraged to lend to the disadvantaged sections.
- The scheme would help in immediate liquidity as it would entail direct beneficiary transfer mode of crediting the accounts of beneficiaries.

PM WANI Scheme

- PM Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM WANI) is a framework for the proliferation of public Wi-Fi networks.
- According to the framework, Public Data Office (PDO) or public data centres will establish, maintain, and operate only WANI compliant Wi-Fi Access Points and deliver broadband services to subscribers.
- Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOA), which will curate information regarding PDO, will be set up to perform the functions relating to authorization and accounting.
- There will be no requirement for the proposed categories of PDOs.
- However, the aggregators, who will work closely with the PDOs and app providers, will have to register in registration portal SARALSANCHAR.
- The users can register and discover WANI compliant Wi-Fi hotspots in the nearby area through an app to access the internet service.
- The app providers can deliver public Wi-Fi services without a licence.

Malana Cream

- It is the charas or hash or hashish or bhang which comes from the Malana Valley in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh.
- Charas is the resin obtained from a species or strain of the cannabis plant, which grows naturally in the valley and is also cultivated illegally.
- It was banned in India in 1986 under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985.
- But the plant was considered an important crop in Kullu, used for a variety of other purposes such as making footwear.
- Malana valley has a single village, Malana, and the hash produced there is more ‘creamy’, as compared to that produced in other parts of state.
- With greater road connectivity, Malana and its neighbouring Parvati Valley became notorious for ‘drug tourism’.

Religious Freedom

- The State Department of the US has designated 10 countries including Pakistan and China as Countries of Particular Concern (CPCs) for violation of religious freedom.
- Nigeria is the first secular democracy that has been named a CPC.
- The US placed the Comoros, Cuba, Nicaragua and Russia on a Special Watch List (SWL) for governments that have engaged in or tolerated severe violations of religious freedom.
- It also designated certain terrorist organisations as 'Entities of Particular Concern'.
- It didn't renew this designation for al-Qaida in Arabian Peninsula and ISIS-Khorasan due to the total loss of territory formerly controlled by these organisations.
- Sudan and Uzbekistan have been removed from the SWL based on progress undertaken by their respective governments over the past year.
- These designations were done pursuant to the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA).

Source: PIB, AIR, The Indian Express, Economic Times,

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
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