

22 Feb 2021: PIB Summary & Analysis

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1. National Awards by the Dept. of Chemicals and Petrochemicals

Context:

10th national awards for 'Technology Innovation in Petrochemicals & Downstream Plastics Processing Industries' to be presented.

About the Awards:

- **Given by:** The National Awards for 'Technology Innovation in Petrochemicals and Downstream Plastic Processing Industries' is an initiative of the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals.
- **Objective:** It is aimed to felicitate and recognize the innovative efforts of renowned scientists, researchers and industrialists in the broad areas of Polymer Science & Technologies.
- This award scheme is expected to help improve the performance of the existing products and quality leading to better acceptance and increase in demand of the products in the competitive market of polymer and plastic.
- These awards are given in 12 categories.

Additional info:

- The National Policy on Petrochemicals was announced in April 2007.
- The policy envisions the development of value-added, quality petrochemical products at globally competitive prices using eco-friendly processes and technologies as well as innovation of newer application and products with focus on sustainable development.

2. VL-SRSAM Missile System

Context:

Defence Research & Development Organisation ([DRDO](#)) conducted two successful launches of Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM).

Details:

- The launches were carried out from a static vertical launcher from Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha.
- Prior to the test, around 8,000 people residing within two km radius of the ITR were evacuated as part of safety measures.

About VL-SRSAM:

- VL-SRSAM is meant for neutralizing various aerial threats at close ranges including sea-skimming targets.
- It has been indigenously designed and developed by DRDO for the Indian Navy.
- The canister-based state-of-the-art weapon system can identify, track, engage and destroy the target with high kill probability. It has a strike range of about 40 km.

3. Skill Development Centre (SDC) for Fire Safety Training

Context:

Raksha Mantri inaugurates DRDO Skill Development Centre for Fire Safety Training.

About the SDC:

- The Skill Development Centre (SDC) for Fire Safety Training of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is situated at Pilkhuwa in Uttar Pradesh.
- The facility, created by the Delhi-based DRDO laboratory Centre for Fire, Explosive and Environment Safety (CFEES), is aimed at developing trained human resources, fire safety technology and products to save precious human lives and valued assets.
- The first of its kind in India, the SDC has been created by adopting state-of-the-art technology and setting up of simulation systems for validation of fire at realistic scale in order to meet the challenges and enhance the skills of Defence Fire Service Personnel and combatants from the Armed Forces.
- The DRDO facility would be utilised for imparting fire prevention and fire-fighting training to the Fire Service personnel of Indian Armed Forces, DRDO, Ordnance Factories, Coast Guard and defence undertakings.
- In addition, trainees from Bhutan, Sri Lanka and other neighbouring countries would also be imparted training at the Centre.
- The facility would be maintained by CFEES, which carries out safety audits, training activities and R&D activities in the area of fire, explosive & environment safety.

Significance:

- The facility is likely to strengthen their knowledge and fire-fighting skills and prepare them for handling fire threats in the emerging high-tech environment.
 - Training of fire personnel in such high standard facilities will result in high levels of fire safety awareness and implementation of safety provisions in defence establishments thus leading to minimisation of losses and property due to fire accidents.
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4. Council of IITs

Context:

Union Education Minister chairs the 54th Meeting of the Council of IITs.

Details:

- The IIT Council set up four committees to look at a range of issues – from funding to graded autonomy – of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and decided to go for “rationalisation of staff from current standard to a lower number”.
 - However, it did not elaborate on the rationalisation of staff and whether this includes reduction of both teaching and non-teaching staff.
 - IITs together are currently facing a shortage of staff by nearly 39%, as per official data.
 - On the basis of the recommendation of the Chairman of Standing Committee for IIT Council, four Working Groups were constituted on the following issues related to [NEP-2020](#):
 - Group-1: Graded Autonomy, Empowered and accountable BoG and Director
 - Group-2: Grooming distinguished academics for directorship of IITs
 - Group-3: Reform and restructuring of the Academic Senate
 - Group-4: Innovative funding mechanisms
 - **About IIT Council:**
 - IIT Council is the apex decision-making body of the IITs.
 - The Council is chaired by the Minister-in-charge of technical education in the Union Government.
 - It has as its members MPs, chairpersons and directors of all IITs, chairpersons and directors of other eminent institutes such as IISc, etc.
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5. Labour Bureau

Context:

Labour Bureau organises training of trainers for five All-India Surveys.

Details:

- Labour Bureau, Chandigarh organised the Training of Trainers for the five All India Surveys relating to Domestic Workers, Migrant Workers, Employment Generated by the Professionals, the Employment Generated in Transport Sector and the All India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey.
- The back-to-back training sessions were a part of the three-day comprehensive training sessions to be imparted to the officers/officials of the Labour Bureau, the officers from the seven regional offices of the Labour Bureau and the officials from various state governments.
- These trainings are a precursor to the trainings that will eventually be imparted to the field officers who will ultimately undertake the surveys across the country.

About the Five All India Surveys:

- The Labour Bureau is all set to launch its five major surveys, including on migrant and domestic workers, across the country by April 1.
- The surveys that would be conducted are:
 - All-India Survey on Domestic Workers (DW): to estimate the proportion of DW in the workforce by major states and across India and percentage distribution of these DWs/households that employ them by important socio-demographic key characteristics.
 - All-India Survey on Migrant Workers: to find the estimated number of migrant workers in India and also collect information on their living conditions, working conditions and other socio-economic conditions.
 - All-India Survey on Employment Generated by Professionals: firstly, to estimate the total number of active professionals in the country and secondly, to capture the employment generated by these professionals.
 - All-India Survey on Employment Generated in Transport Sector: to assess the number of jobs generated in the transport sector in the country.
 - All-India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey: to measure relative change in employment situation over successive quarters in a sizeable segment of the non-farm economy covering eight important sectors of the Indian economy.
- The results of these surveys will be declared within seven to eight months, including six months field work.

About the Labour Bureau:

- It is an attached office of the Ministry of Labour & Employment and has been at the forefront in fulfilling the data needs of various stakeholders in the field of labour and employment since 1920.
- The two main wings of the bureau are in Shimla and Chandigarh.
- It has four regional offices in Ahmedabad, Chennai, Kanpur and Kolkata and a subregional office in Mumbai.
- The organisation is headed by a Director General, a Higher Administrative Grade Officer from the Indian Economic Service (IES). He is assisted by a team of dedicated professionals from the Indian Economic Service and the Indian Statistical Service.

6. Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)

Context:

Union Minister for MSME & Road Transport & Highways inaugurated 50 artisan-based SFURTI clusters, spread over 18 States.

Details:

- In the 50 clusters inaugurated, over 42,000 artisans have been supported in the traditional segments of muslin, khadi, coir, handicraft, handlooms, wood craft, leather, pottery, carpet weaving, bamboo, agro processing, tea, etc.
- The Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India has funded an amount of around Rs.85 crore for the development of these 50 clusters.
- The Ministry of MSME is implementing a Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI) with a view to organize traditional industries and artisans into clusters to make them competitive and increase their income.

About SFURTI:

- This scheme has been under implementation since 2005-06 for making traditional industries more productive, market-driven and competitive by organizing the traditional industries and artisans into clusters.
- The scheme envisages providing need-based assistance for replacement of production equipment, setting up of Common Facility Centres (CFC), product development, quality improvement, improved marketing, training and capacity building, etc. with the financial assistance extended by the Government.
- The scheme was modified as revamped SFURTI scheme during 2016-17.
- As on date, there are 371 clusters which have are being funded by the Ministry, supporting 2.18 lakh artisans with a total government assistance of Rs. 888 cr.
- SFURTI clusters are of two types:
 - Regular Cluster (500 artisans) with Government assistance of up to Rs.2.5 crore
 - Major Cluster (more than 500 artisans) with Government assistance up to Rs.5 crore

7. Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC)

Context:

Shri Pravas Kumar Singh took oath as member of the CERC.

To know all about the CERC, check **PIB dated Dec 16, 2020**.

8. National Technology Awards 2020

Context:

A total of 12 companies have been selected for the National Technology Awards 2020 for the successful commercialization of innovative indigenous technologies.

Details:

- They have been selected under three categories: indigenous technologies, MSME, and start-ups.
- Every year, for furtherance of its mandate, the Technology Development Board (TDB) seeks applications for the prestigious National Awards for commercialization of technologies under these three categories.
- The winners were selected from a total of 128 applications after thorough examination by eminent technologists and a stringent two-tier evaluation process.

About the National Technology Awards by TDB:

- Indigenous technologies category:
 - The Award is given to an industrial concern which has successfully developed & commercialized an indigenous technology.
 - In case, the technology developer/provider and technology commercializer are two different organizations; each one would be eligible for an award of Rs. 25 lakh and a trophy.
- MSMEs category:
 - The Award is given to MSMEs which have successfully commercialized a product based on Indigenous technology.
 - SSI Unit Awards given earlier by TDB, has been renamed as 'MSME Awards'.
 - This carries a cash award of Rs. 15 lakh and a trophy.
- Start-up category:
 - This is a new category of Award introduced by TDB for technology start-ups.
 - It is given to the technology start-ups for development of promising new technology with potential for commercialization and carries a cash prize of Rs. 15 lakh and a trophy.

Read more about the Technology Development Board in **PIB dated 22 March, 2020**.