

"Do what you love, love what you do, and with all your heart give yourself to it."

Roy T. Bennett

INTERNATIONAL & BILATERAL

WB TO PROVIDE LOAN FOR CLIMATE RESILIENT AGRICULTURE PROJECT IN MAHARASHTRA

The World Bank has approved a Rs. 2,700-crore loan to improve water harvesting structures and adopt climate resilient agricultural practices in the water-starved Vidarbha and Marathwada regions of Maharashtra.

The multilateral funding agency signed an agreement with the Centre and the Maharashtra government for a 30-year long loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which will be used to improve water availability in rain-fed areas in these regions, an official release said.

Called Maharashtra Project for Climate Resilient Agriculture, the project is said to benefit seven million people, mainly small and marginal farmers, in over 5,100 villages in 15 climate vulnerable districts in these two regions.

The project is expected to take a series of measures at the farm and watershed level. It will scale up climate-resilient technologies such as micro irrigation systems, expand surface water storage and facilitate aquifer recharge, which is expected to directly contribute to a more efficient use of scarce water resources.

Besides, it will encourage farmers to adopt seeds of short-duration, and drought and heat-resistant crops so that farmers face lesser risk of climate-related crop failure.

32 INDIANS ARE AMONG THE EXPERTS FOR ASSESSMENT REPORT OF IPCC

Thirty-two Indians, including seven affiliated with foreign institutions, are among the more than 700 experts selected to contribute to the next assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Five similar reports of IPCC in the past have formed the basis for the global strategy to fight climate change.

The Sixth Assessment Report, or AR6, will be completed in 2021 and is likely to be published in 2022.

The IPCC does not produce its own scientific work.

The experts selected by it survey all the climate change-related scientific research published in peer-reviewed scientific journals across the world and predict the possible future scenarios from them.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

IPCC is a scientific and intergovernmental body under the auspices of the United Nations set up at the request of member governments.

It is dedicated to the task of providing the world with an objective, scientific view of climate change and its political and economic impacts.

It was first established in 1988 by two United Nations organizations, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and later endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly.

Membership of the IPCC is open to all members of the WMO and UNEP.

The IPCC produces reports that support the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is the main international treaty on climate change.

IPCC reports cover the scientific, technical and socio-economic information relevant to understanding the scientific basis of risk of human-induced climate change, its potential impacts and options for adaptation and mitigation.

NATIONAL

UNION GOVERNMENT BANNED IMPORTS OF OXYTOCIN TO STOP ITS MISUSE

The Union government has banned imports of the hormone oxytocin to stop its misuse in the livestock industry, where activists say it causes

hormonal imbalances and shortens the lives of milch animals.

The government has also asked customs officials to step up vigilance against those likely to try and smuggle oxytocin into India.

The government has decided to rely on domestic production to satisfy requirements of the hormone.

A panel of top drug experts had recommended an import ban in February. It also recommended that sale be limited to registered government hospitals and clinics, a bar code system used on all forms of the drug to ensure tracking and prevent abuse.

Oxytocin:

Oxytocin has also been dubbed the hug hormone, cuddle chemical, moral molecule, and the bliss hormone due to its effects on behavior, including its role in love and in female reproductive biological functions in reproduction.

Oxytocin is a hormone that is made in the brain, in the hypothalamus. It is transported to, and secreted by, the pituitary gland, which is located at the base of the brain.

It acts both as a hormone and as a brain neurotransmitter.

The release of oxytocin by the pituitary gland acts to regulate two female reproductive functions: Childbirth and Breast-feeding.

The drug is used by dairy owners and farmers to boost milk production and make vegetables look bigger and fresher. But, it was found that indiscriminate use of Oxytocin in milch animals and by farmers was causing irreversible hormone damage.

The drug's abuse in animals shortens their lives and makes them barren sooner.

Implications to human health are humongous, from reproductive complications to hormonal imbalances.

PRADHAN MANTRI MATRU VANDANA YOJANA (PMMVY)

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has made total payment of Rs.

271.66 crores to beneficiaries under Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY). The payment has been made to 11,47,386 beneficiaries across the country.

PMMVY:

Pradhan Mantri Matritva Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) is a maternity benefit rechristened from erstwhile Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY). The IGMSY was launched in 2010.

The scheme is a conditional cash transfer scheme for pregnant and lactating women of 19 years of age or above for first two live births.

The maternity benefits under Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) are available to all Pregnant Women & Lactating Mothers (PW&LM) except those in regular employment with the Central Government or State Government or Public Sector Undertaking or those who are in receipt of similar benefits under any law for the time being in force.

The scheme is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under which cost sharing ratio between the Centre and the States & UTs with Legislature is 60:40 while for North-Eastern States & three Himalayan States; it is 90:10. It is 100% Central assistance for Union Territories without Legislature.

RESERVE BANK DEFERRED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDIAN ACCOUNTING STANDARDS IND AS

The Reserve Bank has deferred the implementation of the Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS) by one year as many banks are not prepared to migrate to the new accounting system. The earlier deadline for banks to switch to the Ind AS was from April 1 2018.

Ind AS or Indian Accounting Standards govern the accounting and recording of financial transactions as well as the presentation of statements such as profit and loss account and balance sheet of a company. Ind AS has been evolved as a compromise formula that tries to harmonise Indian accounting rules with the IFRS.

The implementation of IndAS for public sector banks requires an amendment to the Banking Regulation Act. The schedule in BR Act relating to financial statement disclosures needs to be changed to the IndAS format.

Section 29 of the Banking Regulation Act deals with the accounts and balance sheet of public sector banks. Private sector banks are covered by the Companies Act, which is based on the new accounting standards.

INDIAN AIR FORCE SET IN MOTION FOR ACQUIRING OF 110 FIGHTER JETS WORTH \$15 BILLION

The Indian Air Force set in motion the process of acquiring a fleet of 110 fighter jets worth an estimated \$15 billion, one of its largest orders in recent years, in a bid to shore up its fast-depleting squadron strength.

The issue of the request for information (RFI) is the first step to acquiring the aircraft.

This will be followed by a request for proposal (RFP) or a formal tender, to be followed by evaluations, technical trials and commercial negotiations.

‘Make in India’:

According to a statement on the defence ministry’s website, at least 85% of the jets have to be made in India, giving a big push to India’s “Make in India” programme.

In other words, the aircraft have to be jointly produced by a foreign aircraft maker along with an Indian company under the recently-launched strategic partnership model which aims to bring in high-end defence technology to India.

Leading military aircraft producers, including US firms Lockheed Martin and Boeing, Sweden’s Saab and France’s Dassault Aviation, are among those likely to vie for the mega deal.

According to estimates, some 400 aircraft will be going out of service in the next decade.

Many of these are the Russian-made MiG aircraft which have been the backbone of the Indian Air Force for decades.

The Indian Air Force and navy require as many as 400 single- and double-engine combat aircraft, according to government figures.

559 SWADHAR GREH PRESENTLY FUNCTIONAL IN THE COUNTRY

Recently released government data shows that there are 559 Swadhar Greh presently functional in the country with 17231 beneficiaries. Swadhar Greh is a DBT compliant scheme.

Swadhar Greh Scheme:

The Swadhar scheme was launched by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2002 for rehabilitation of women in difficult circumstances.

The scheme provides shelter, food, clothing and care to the marginalized women/girls who are in need.

The beneficiaries include widows deserted by their families and relatives, women prisoners released from jail and without family support, women survivors of natural disasters, women victims of terrorist/extremist violence etc.

The State Governments/UT Administration invite applications from eligible organizations and the proposals which fulfil the norms are placed before a Project Sanctioning Committee (PSC) chaired by Secretary(WCD) of the State/UT concerned.

As per guidelines of the Swadhar Greh Scheme, to seek financial assistance the agency should meet following requirements:

- The agency should be either recognized by State/UT under existing law or should be well known with the experience or working in the field for at least 3 years and its work should be reported satisfactory by the State Govt./UT Administration concerned.
- It should ordinarily have been engaged in the field of women’s welfare/social welfare for a minimum period of two years.
- Its financial position should be sound.

- It should have facilities, resources, experience and personnel to undertake the management of such project.
- It should run Swadhar Greh on a no-profit basis.
- It should have facilities like computers, internet connection etc at Swadhar Greh.

CHAKRAVAT

Kochi along with Indian Navy is hosting multi-agency rescue exercise- Chakravat. It is for the first time that the yearly exercise is being conducted in Kochi.

It is a multi-agency humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) exercise to review the response mechanism in the event of a cyclonic storm.

Chakravat' meaning 'cyclone' will see participation by the three Services, the Coast Guard, State administration, State Disaster Management Authority, National Disaster Response Force, Fisheries Department, Coastal Police, and members of the fishing community.

SAHYOG – HYEOLYEOG 2018

It is a bilateral joint search and rescue exercise between Indian Coast Guard and Korea Coast Guard. The joint exercise is part of a proposed establishment of a MoU between the two Coast Guards to improve maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.

The recently held exercise included scenarios of the hijacking of a merchant vessel and its subsequent rescue, interdiction of a pirate vessel, cross boarding, external fire fighting and the SAR (search and rescue) demonstration.
