

“Dream your own dreams, achieve your own goals. Your journey is your own and unique.”

Roy T. Bennett

NATIONAL

THE BANNING OF UNREGULATED DEPOSIT SCHEMES BILL, 2018

The Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2018 was approved by the Union Cabinet.

Objectives:

- * To provide comprehensive legislation to deal with illicit deposit schemes in the country.
- * To protect the savings of the investors.

The bill is aimed at tackling the menace of illicit deposit taking activities in the country.

Key features of the Bill:

The Bill imposes complete prohibition of unregulated deposit taking activity.

It provides for deterrent punishment for promoting or operating an unregulated deposit taking scheme, stringent punishment for fraudulent default in repayment to depositors.

The Bill has adequate provisions for disgorgement or repayment of deposits in cases where such schemes nonetheless manage to raise deposits illegally.

The Bill provides for attachment of properties/assets by the competent authority and subsequent realization of assets for repayment to depositors.

Clear-cut time lines have been provided for attachment of property and restitution of depositors.

The Bill enables creation of a central online database, for collection and sharing of information on deposit taking activities in the country.

The Bill defines the “deposit taker” and “deposit”

The primary responsibility of implementing the provisions of the proposed legislation lies with the State governments.

The Bill contains a substantive banning clause which bans deposit takers from promoting,

operating, issuing advertisements or accepting deposits in any Unregulated Deposit Scheme.

Types of offences:

- * Running of Unregulated Deposit Schemes
- * Fraudulent default in Regulated Deposit Schemes
- * Wrongful inducement in relation to Unregulated Deposit Schemes.

The principle of the bill is that it would ban unregulated deposit taking activities altogether, by making them an offence ex-ante, rather than the existing legislative-cum-regulatory framework which only comes into effect ex-post with considerable delays.

It has adequate provisions for repayment of deposits in cases where such schemes nonetheless manage to raise deposits illegally.

The Bill provides for attachment of properties/assets by the competent authority and subsequent realization of assets for repayment to depositors in a stipulated time.

The Bill also enables creation of a central online database, for collection and sharing of information on deposit taking activities in the country.

DEFENCE ACQUISITION COUNCIL (DAC) APPROVED PROCUREMENT OF HIGH POWERED RADARS

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved procurement of high powered radars for the Indian Air Force and air cushion vehicles for the Army and the Coast Guard together worth over Rs. 5,500 crore.

The 12 high power radars will be procured indigenously under the ‘Buy (Indian) IDDM’ category.

The radars will provide long range medium and high altitude radar cover with the capability to detect and track high speed targets following parabolic trajectories.

Technologically superior, the radars will have the capability to scan 360 degrees without mechanical rotation of Antenna and will

operate on 24x7 basis with minimal maintenance requirement.

ACVs: the All-Terrain-Vehicles

In the other deal, air cushion vehicles (ACVs) to be procured from an Indian shipyard.

This will enable travel at very high speeds over shallow water, sand banks, mud flats and swamps which are non-navigable by boats and small crafts due to draught restrictions or uncharted depths

Defense Acquisition Council (DAC)

It was set up on August 29, 2001

This was done to counter corruption and speed up decision-making in military procurements

Head of the Council: Defence Minister

Functions of DAC:

Will give policy guidelines to acquisitions, based on long-term procurement plans.

Will also clear all acquisitions, including imported equipment and those produced indigenously or under a foreign license.

Defence Procurement Board will deal with purchases.

Defence Production Board which will supervise procurement from indigenous sources, such as ordnance factories and equipment manufactured under a foreign license.

GOVERNMENT IS NOT YET READY TO SIGN THE HAGUE TREATY

The government is not yet ready to sign the Hague treaty on the inter-country abduction of children by parents fleeing a bad marriage.

The government has long held the view that the decision could lead to harassment of women escaping marital discord or domestic violence.

There has been immense pressure from the U.S. on the government to sign the treaty.

Special committee says no to legislation.

A committee constituted by the Centre to examine legal issues involved in international parental abduction submitted its report in April, opposing a central provision of the Hague Convention.

It said that the criterion of habitual residence of the child, which is used to determine whether the child was wrongfully removed by a parent as well as to seek the return of the child to the country of habitual residence, was not in the best interest of the child.

It also recommended setting up of a Child Removal Disputes Resolution Authority to act as a nodal body to decide on the custody of the child as well as a model law to deal with such disputes.

The government is contemplating assigning the National Commission for Protection of Children the responsibility to adjudicate on such cases along with a judicial expert.

Hague treaty on the inter-country abduction of children:

The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction or Hague Abduction Convention is a multilateral treaty developed by the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH) that provides an expeditious method to return a child internationally abducted by a parent from one member country to another.

The Convention was drafted to ensure the prompt return of children who have been abducted from their country of habitual residence or wrongfully retained in a contracting state not their country of habitual residence.

The primary intention of the Convention is to preserve whatever status quo child custody arrangement existed immediately before an alleged wrongful removal or retention thereby deterring a parent from crossing international boundaries in search of a more sympathetic court.

The Convention applies only to children under the age of 16.

The Convention does not alter any substantive rights.

The Convention requires that a court in which a Hague Convention action is filed should not consider the merits of any underlying child custody dispute, but should determine only that country in which those issues should be heard.

**EXPENDITURE FINANCE COMMITTEE (EFC)
APPROVED REVISED COST ESTIMATE OF DRIP**

The Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) has approved revised cost estimate of Dam Rehabilitation & Improvement Project (DRIP) for Rs. 3466 crore and has extended time period for conclusion till June, 2020.

DRIP:

The Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), Government of India, with assistance from the World Bank, is implementing the DAM REHABILITATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (DRIP), which would be a six-year project. The Central Dam Safety Organisation of Central Water Commission, assisted by a Consulting firm, is coordinating and supervising the Project implementation.

Goals: The project originally envisaged the rehabilitation and improvement of about 223 dams within four states namely, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Tamil Nadu and later Karnataka, Uttarakhand (UNVNL) and Jharkhand (DVC) joined DRIP and total number of dams covered under DRIP increased to 250. The project will also promote new technologies and improve Institutional capacities for dam safety evaluation and implementation at the Central and State levels and in some identified premier academic and research institutes of the country.

The project development objectives of DRIP are: (i) to improve the safety and performance of selected existing dams and associated appurtenances in a sustainable manner, and (ii) to strengthen the dam safety institutional setup in participating states as well as at central level.

CWC: Central Water Commission is a premier Technical Organization of India in the field of Water Resources and is presently functioning as an attached office of the Ministry of Water

Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India.

The Commission is entrusted with the general responsibilities of initiating, coordinating and furthering in consultation of the State Governments concerned, schemes for control, conservation and utilization of water resources throughout the country, for purpose of Flood Control, Irrigation, Navigation, Drinking Water Supply and Water Power Development. It also undertakes the investigations, construction and execution of any such schemes as required.

DHARMA:

It is a software programme – Dam Health and Rehabilitation Monitoring Application (DHARMA). DHARMA is a web tool to digitize all dam related data effectively. It will help to document authentic asset and health information pertaining to the large dams in the country, enabling appropriate actions to ensure need based rehabilitation. It is a new stride in asset management aspect by India.

**RESERVE BANK OF INDIA HAS DECIDED TO SET UP A
PUBLIC CREDIT REGISTRY (PCR)**

To provide a single-point and real-time source for financial liabilities of a person or entity, the Reserve Bank of India has decided to set up a public credit registry (PCR) in a modular and phased manner.

An Implementation Task Force (ITF) is being constituted by the Reserve Bank of India to help design undertake logistics for the next steps in the setting up of the PCR.

YM Deosthalee Committee Report:

RBI's decision is based on the report of the task force which pointed out that credit information is spread over multiple systems in bits and pieces, making it difficult to get a comprehensive view of the financial liabilities of a person or entity.

With a view to removing information asymmetry to foster the level of access to credit, and to strengthen the credit culture in the economy, there is a need to establish a PCR.

The setting up of the PCR will consolidate all financial information about borrowers exists at present in silos and often impacts the time taken to get a loan, as well as the quantum of loan, sanctioned.

A comprehensive credit information repository covering all types of credit facilities (funded and non-funded) extended by all credit institutions – commercial banks, cooperative banks, NBFCs, MFIs.

Also covering borrowings from other sources, including external commercial borrowings and borrowing from market, is essential to ascertain the total indebtedness of a legal or natural person.

It had also suggested that the registry should facilitate linkage to related ancillary credit information available outside the banking system, such as corporate balance sheet information and GSTN, depending on the legal provisions.

However, it had recommended that the registry should NOT include elements of judgment such as credit scoring services and had also called for strict privacy guidelines.
