

“Life itself is simple...it's just not easy.” Steve Maraboli

INTERNATIONAL & BILATERAL**ITU SOUTH ASIA AREA OFFICE AND TECH INNOVATION CENTRE TO BE SET UP IN DELHI**

The global telecom body International Telecommunication Union will set up its local area office for South Asia in the national capital.

The establishment of this ITU local area office will be an important milestone for India. It signifies global recognition of the progress India has made in the field of ICT.

It also places on the responsibility to work with our neighbouring countries to take the benefits of the rapid developments in this technology-driven industry to our people in the South Asia region.

The ITU South Asia Office will serve nine countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, in addition to the host country.

This local area office will play a key role ITU's development programs with focus on Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Land-Locked Developed Countries (LLDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and other similarly placed nations in the region.

International Telecommunication Union:

ITU is a United Nations specialized agency for Information and Communication Technologies, with membership of 193 countries and nearly 800 private sector entities and academic institutions.

ITU, based in Geneva, Switzerland, is a member of the United Nations Development Group and has 12 regional and area offices in the world.

The ITU coordinates the shared global use of the radio spectrum, promotes international cooperation in assigning satellite orbits, works to improve telecommunication infrastructure in the developing world.

NATIONAL**UNION CABINET CLEARED ORDINANCE ON TRIPLE TALAQ**

The Union Cabinet has cleared an ordinance as well as President's assent has been received that makes talaq-e-biddat, or instant triple talaq, a criminal offence that will attract a maximum jail term of three years.

While instant triple talaq will continue to be a “non-bailable” offence the police cannot grant bail at the police station the accused can approach a magistrate for bail even before trial.

The magistrate could exercise discretion to grant bail “after hearing the wife”.

The magistrate would also have power to decide the quantum of compensation and subsistence allowance for the victim and her minor children.

Another safeguard that had been added is that the police can lodge an FIR (first information report) only if the complaint is filed by the wife (victim), her blood relations or her relatives by virtue of her marriage.

The decision to take the ordinance route to enact a diluted version of its law making instant triple talaq a criminal offence is a sign of undue impatience

This is a matter that required deliberation, especially after serious objections were raised to some provisions of the Bill passed by the Lok Sabha

There is also an ongoing debate on the desirability of criminalizing instant triple talaq

Impact of these changes

These amendments will restrict the scope for misuse by preventing third parties from setting the criminal law in motion against a man pronouncing instant triple talaq against his wife.

They will also leave open the possibility of the marriage continuing by allowing bail and settlement.

Way Forward:

The core issue that arises from the proposed law remains: whether a marital wrong, essentially a civil matter, should lead to prosecutions and jail terms.

Also, when the law declares instant triple talaq to be invalid, it only means the marriage continues to subsist, and it is somewhat self-contradictory for a law to both allow a marriage to continue and propose a jail term for the offending husband

CABINET APPROVES REVISED COST ESTIMATE OF DAM REHABILITATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The CCEA has approved the Revised Cost Estimate of Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP) at the revised cost of Rs 3466 crore with the financial assistance of the World Bank.

The project will improve the safety and operational performance of selected existing dams and mitigate risks to ensure safety of downstream population and property.

The primary beneficiaries are both urban and rural communities dependent on reservoir and downstream communities, who are prone to risk associated with dam failure or operational failure.

Further effectiveness of Dam Safety Organisations will be increased to take the lead to make dams safe from structural and operational point of view through capacity building of staff and officials.

DRIP is a state sector scheme with central component to improve safety and operational performance of selected dams, along with institutional strengthening with system wide.

CABINET APPROVES ENHANCEMENT OF VARIOUS INITIATIVES UNDER ICDS SCHEME

The CCEA has approved enhancement of honorarium to Anganwadi Workers/Anganwadi Helpers (AWWs/AWHs) and performance linked incentive to AWHs [**Umbrella Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme**].

Nearly 27 lakh AWWs/AWHs will be benefitted by the approval.

The programme through targeted interventions will strive to reduce the level of malnutrition, anemia and low birth weight babies.

It will ensure empowerment of adolescent girls, provide protection to the children who are in conflict with law, provide safe place for day-care to children of working mothers, create synergy.

It will further ensure better monitoring, encourage States/UTs to perform, guide and supervise line Ministries and States/UTs to achieve the targeted goals and bring more transparency.

Launched in 1975, ICDS is an programme which provides food, preschool education, and primary healthcare to children under 6 years of age and their mothers.

These services are provided from Anganwadi centres established mainly in rural areas and staffed with frontline workers.

CABINET APPROVES SPECIAL PACKAGE UNDER DEENDAYAL ANTYODAYA YOJANA(NRLM)

The Union Cabinet has approved the extension of timeline for implementation of the Special Package under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) for Jammu & Kashmir for another period of one year during 2018-19.

This will help in covering all the vulnerable rural households in the State (estimated at two thirds of the total number of households) within a definite time frame.

It will ensure mobilization of households under the auto inclusion category and households with at least one deprivation category listed in the Socio Economic Caste Census – 2011.

It will also ensure coverage of all the blocks in Jammu & Kashmir under DAY-NRLM and ensures social inclusion, social development, and promotion of livelihoods leading to poverty alleviation in the State.
