

“Whatever choice you make makes you. Choose wisely.” Roy T. Bennett

NATIONAL**PORTALS TO STRENGTHEN WOMEN SAFETY LAUNCHED**

The government has launched two portals to strengthen Women Safety:

Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC) portal to check objectionable online content

National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO) to aid in monitoring & investigation of sexual crimes.

Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC) portal:

The portal will receive complaints from citizens on objectionable online content related to child pornography, child sexual abuse material, sexually explicit material such as rape and gang rape.

The portal is convenient and user friendly that will enable complainants in reporting cases without disclosing their identity. This will not only aid the victims/complainants but also help the civil society organizations and responsible citizens to anonymously report complaints pertaining to child pornography, child sexual abuse material or sexually explicit material such as rape and gang rape.

Complainants can also upload the objectionable content and URL to assist in the investigation by the State Police. The complaints registered through this portal will be handled by police authorities of respective State/UTs. There are other features such as a victim or complainant can track his/her report by opting for “report and track” option using his/her mobile number.

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) will proactively identify such objectionable content and take up with intermediaries for its removal. For this NCRB has already been notified as the Government of India agency to issue notices under Section 79(3)b of IT Act.

National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO):

The National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO), which is accessible only to law enforcement agencies, will assist in effectively tracking and investigating cases of sexual offences.

It is a central database of “sexual offenders” in the country which will be maintained by the NCRB for regular monitoring and tracking by the State Police. The database is accessible only to the law enforcement agencies for investigation and monitoring purpose.

The database will include offenders convicted under charges of rape, gang rape, POCSO and eve teasing. At present the database contains 4.4 lakh entries.

The State Police have been requested to regularly update the database from 2005 onwards. The database includes name, address, photograph and fingerprint details for each entry. However, the database will not compromise any individual’s privacy.

Way ahead:

The two portals launched are part of efforts in the direction of strengthening security of women and children. However, the field level challenges have to be overcome by the Police at the ground level to ensure speedy justice to the victims. The security agencies should fully utilize potential of the two portals and update the database regularly for greater effectiveness.

There is also need for time bound completion of investigation in sexual crimes to instill deterrence among potential offenders.

‘SPUTUM SAMPLE TRANSPORTATION’ PROJECT

A pilot project for utilizing services of Department of Post for transport of sputum specimen for TB Diagnosis was launched by the Health Ministry.

Sputum is a thick fluid that is produced in the lungs and the airways leading to the lungs. A

sample of sputum is usually collected by the person coughing.

The sputum test is often the first TB test to be used in countries with a high rate of TB infection.

Sputum microscopy is inexpensive and simple, and people can be trained to do it relatively quickly and easily.

Most of the patients are not diagnosed because the specimen does not reach the laboratory due to non-availability of specimen transport mechanisms.

Transport of collected specimen also spares the patient's from travelling to the reference laboratory. Prompt transport of specimen followed by efficacious testing will enable appropriate management of the TB patients and reduced disease transmission.

'SPUTUM SAMPLE TRANSPORTATION' PROJECT

India has decided to place four more reactors under the IAEA safeguards. Accordingly, two Russian-designed Pressurized Light Water Reactors and two Pressurized Heavy Reactors being built with Indian technology will be covered.

With this, a total of 26 Indian nuclear facilities will be under the international nuclear energy watchdog.

Safeguards are a set of technical measures applied by the IAEA on nuclear material and activities, through which the Agency seeks to independently verify that nuclear facilities are not misused and nuclear material not diverted from peaceful uses. States accept these measures through the conclusion of safeguards agreements.

The objective of IAEA Safeguards is to deter the spread of nuclear weapons by the early detection of the misuse of nuclear material or technology. This provides credible assurances that States are honouring their legal obligations that nuclear material is being used only for peaceful purposes.

IAEA safeguards are an essential component of the international security system. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear

Weapons (NPT) is the centrepiece of global efforts to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons. Under the Treaty's Article 3, each Non-Nuclear Weapon State is required to conclude a safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

Within the world's nuclear non-proliferation regime, the IAEA's safeguards system functions as a confidence-building measure, an early warning mechanism, and the trigger that sets in motion other responses by the international community if and when the need arises. Over the past decade, IAEA safeguards have been strengthened in key areas.

IAEA:

The Agency works with its Member States and multiple partners worldwide to promote the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technologies.

It seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and to inhibit its use for any military purpose, including nuclear weapons.

IAEA reports to both the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council.

The IAEA serves as an intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear technology and nuclear power worldwide. The IAEA has its headquarters in Vienna, Austria.

MHA SIGNS MOU WITH ISRO TO SET UP AN INTEGRATED CONTROL ROOM FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The MHA and ISRO signed a MoU for setting up of a state-of-the-art Integrated Control Room for Emergency Response (ICR-ER) in Ministry of Home Affairs.

Integrated Control Room for Emergency Response (ICR-ER):

ISRO will render its technical expertise for setting up of proposed ICR-ER whereas the project will be executed under overall supervision of MHA.

The ICR-ER will cater to the requirement of Disaster Management as well as Internal Security.

ICR-ER will address the requirement of receipt of information on near real-time basis,

strategic level monitoring, situation awareness, command and control.

This will improve preparedness and response in the diverse internal security situation and disaster related emergencies.

Resultantly, it will increase the operational effectiveness and will be helpful in rendering timely response and assistance during various emergency situations.

ASPIRATIONAL DISTRICTS PROGRAM

In a bid to understand and address the challenges faced by the district administrations in implementing skill programs and help develop capacities, the government has approved a plan for visits of the senior officers of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurships to the 'Aspirational Districts' between October 2, 2018 and January 26, 2019.

The visit of officers of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurships will begin with a meeting with Districts Collector / CEO-Zila Parishad and other State level officers implementing the programs.

The team will also have interactions with Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras, training providers, ITIs, Polytechnics and JSS administrations.

The team would also have conversation with students and industry present in these districts. This will enable a stock taking of the available skill ecosystem vis-à-vis the available data and provide good understanding of challenges to be addressed at the district level to make youth employable.

Aspirational Districts Programme:

Launched in January this year, the 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts' programme aims to quickly and effectively transform some of the most underdeveloped districts of the country.

Focus of the programme was to enable optimum utilization of their potential; this program focuses closely on improving people's ability to participate fully in the burgeoning economy. Health & Nutrition,

Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development, and Basic Infrastructure are this programme's core areas of focus.

ATAL BIMIT VYAKTI KALYAN YOJNA

The Employee's State Insurance (ESI) has approved a scheme named 'Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna' for Insured Persons (IP) covered under the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948.

It aims to financially support those who lost their jobs or rendered jobless for whatsoever reasons due to changing employment pattern.

Its beneficiaries will be insured persons covered under Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 for period of two years continuously.

Cash assistance: Under the scheme, relief will be payable in cash directly to bank account of insured persons in case of unemployment. This financial assistance will be given to insured persons even while they search for new engagement. Beneficiary insured workers will be paid money, from their own contribution towards ESI scheme, in cash through bank account transfer.

Under this scheme, workers will be able to draw 47% of their total contributions towards ESIC after remaining unemployed for at least three months from date of leaving their previous jobs. They can choose to receive the cash at one go or in instalments. It will be applicable to all factories and establishments employing at least 10 workers.

BONDS TO RESCUE THE RUPEE

The sharp slide in the value of the rupee has led to speculation that the RBI might opt to issue NRI bonds worth \$30-35 billion in order to help attract dollar investment into the country.

NRI bonds were also issued in 1998 and 2000 to help curb the slide of the rupee.

NRI bonds:

These are bonds issued by the Reserve Bank of India to non-resident Indians who are interested in investing their money in India

Since these bonds offer higher returns than other similar investments, they can be used as a tool to attract capital during times when other domestic assets fail to attract the interest of foreign investors

Important factors behind the rupee's fall:

- Capital has been moving out of India's capital markets
- Foreign portfolio investors pulled out RS.47,836 crore in the first half of the year, a 10-year high
- Indian exports have been losing demand, while imports of commodities like crude oil have risen significantly
- India's current account deficit hit a five-year high in July

NRI bonds could theoretically help increase demand for the rupee and stabilize its value against the dollar

In 2013, when the rupee witnessed a fall of about 25% in just four months following the U.S. Federal Reserve's decision to taper down its bond-purchase programme, the RBI was able to collect more than \$30 billion worth of foreign capital

Way Forward:

While these bonds can provide temporary assistance to the rupee by encouraging capital inflows into the economy, they may not address the fundamental economic issues that are causing the fall of the rupee.

Until the RBI can rein in domestic inflation and the government can take steps to boost exports and curb imports, emergency measures like the issuance of NRI bonds can only offer temporary respite to the rupee.

SCIENCE AND TECH

BONDS TO RESCUE THE RUPEE

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested the indigenously developed surface-to-surface tactical missile 'Prahar', from Launch Complex-III, ITR, Balasore.

'Prahar', developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), is capable of filling the gap between the multi-barrel rocket system 'Pinaka' and medium-range ballistic missile 'Prithvi'. It can also engage multiple targets in different directions.

It has length of 7.3 meter, diameter of 420 mm and weighs 1,280 kg. It has operational range of 150 km and flight altitude of 35 km.

It is a solid-fuelled short-range missile fitted with inertial navigation system.

The missile is equipped with state-of-the-art navigation, guidance and electromechanical actuation systems with advanced on board computer.

It is a quick-reaction, all-weather, all-terrain, highly accurate battlefield support tactical weapon system.
