



Panel Constituted in Rajasthan | Rajasthan | 16 Feb 2024

Why in News?

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma has promised a **probe into the alleged corruption** under the previous government.

Key Points

- A Cabinet sub-committee has been constituted to **review decisions and schemes** of the previous administration in Rajasthan and recommend whether they should be continued.
 - Free mobile phones for women, distribution of ration kits, and formation of new districts are among the matters to be reviewed.
- The government has also **ordered a probe into question paper leaks** during the previous government.

Legal and Regulatory Frameworks for Fighting Corruption in India

- **Legal Framework:**
 - **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988** provides for penalties in relation to corruption by public servants and also for those who are involved in the abetment of an act of corruption.
 - **Amendment of 2018** criminalised both bribe-taking by public servants as well as bribe-giving by any person.
 - **Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002** aims to prevent instances of money laundering and prohibits use of the 'proceeds of crime' in India.
 - **The Companies Act, 2013** provides for corporate governance and prevention of corruption and fraud in the corporate sector. The term 'fraud' has been given a broad definition and is a criminal offence under the Companies Act.
 - **The Indian Penal Code, 1860** sets out provisions which can be interpreted to cover bribery and fraud matters, including offences relating to criminal breach of trust and cheating.
 - **The Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988** the Act precludes the person who acquired the property in the name of another person from claiming it as his own.
 - **Regulatory Framework:**
 - **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013:** It provides for an establishment of a Lokpal (centre) and Lokayuktas (state).
 - They perform the function of an "ombudsman" and inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries and for related matters.
 - **Central Vigilance Commission:** Its mandate is to oversee the vigilance administration and to advise and assist the executive in matters relating to corruption.
 - **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1952:** The punishment specified under Section 165 of IPC was enhanced to three years instead of the existing two years.
 - **Amendments in 1964:** The definition of 'Public Servant' under the IPC was expanded. The definition of 'criminal misconduct' was expanded and possession of assets disproportionate to the known sources of income of a public servant was made an offence.
-

Chhattisgarh to Launch 'Niyad Nellanar' | Chhattisgarh | 16 Feb 2024

Why in News?

According to Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, the state government is soon going to launch the '**Niyad Nellanar**' scheme to ensure **basic amenities and benefits of welfare projects** reach **Naxal-affected villages**.

- These villages will receive amenities similar to those offered by the **Center's [PM-JANMAN program](#)**, which is designed to promote the socio-economic welfare of **[Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups \(PVTGs\)](#)**.

Key Points

- Niyad Nellanar, meaning "**aapka achcha gaon**" or "**your good village**" is the local Dandami dialect (spoken in south Bastar).
- Under this scheme, **amenities and benefits** will be **provided in villages located within 5 kilometers** of security camps in Bastar region.
 - 14 new security camps have been set up in Bastar. These camps will also help to facilitate the implementation of the new scheme. Around 25 basic amenities will be provided in such villages under Niyad Nellanar.
- **Families in these villages will receive** free gas cylinders under the **[Ujjwala scheme](#)**, four free rice, gram-salt, jaggery, and sugar, ration cards, irrigation pumps, free electricity, community halls, Anganwadi, and certificates of forest rights.
- In addition to all-weather roads, a sub health center, elementary school, sports field, bank, ATM, mobile tower, helipad, etc., will be constructed.

Ujjwala Scheme

- **About:**
 - It is the second phase of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) or Ujjwala 2.0 Scheme, launched in 2021.
- **Objectives:**
 - Empowering women and protecting their health.
 - Reducing the number of deaths in India due to unclean cooking fuel.
 - Preventing young children from a significant number of acute respiratory illnesses caused due to indoor air pollution by burning fossil fuel.

Chhattisgarh to Bring in Law to Stop 'Illegal Conversions' | Chhattisgarh | 16 Feb 2024

Why in News?

The Chhattisgarh government plans to bring in legislation to stop [“illegal religious conversion”](#) in the state.

Key Points

- In order to prevent these activities, an anti-conversion bill, titled [‘Freedom of Religion \(Amendment\) Bill’](#), will be introduced.
- According to CM Vishnu Deo Sai, **Christian missionaries** were carrying out conversion under the garb of healthcare and education.
- The government declared that it will put an end to conversion by force or allurements.

Freedom of Religion

- Every citizen is entitled with this right and liberty to preach, practice and propagate the religion of his choice.
 - An opportunity is also provided by this right to spread it among everyone without any fear of government intervention.
 - But also, it is expected by the state to practice it amicably within the jurisdiction of the country.
- **Constitutional Provisions Related to Freedom of Religion:**
 - **Article 25:** It imparts freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.
 - **Article 26:** It gives freedom to manage religious affairs.
 - **Article 27:** It sets freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion.
 - **Article 28:** It gives freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in certain educational institutions.

Major Judicial Pronouncements on Freedom of Religion

- **Bijoe Emmanuel and Ors. v. State of Kerala (1986):**
 - In this case, three children of Jehovah’s Witnesses sect were suspended from the school as they refused to sing the national anthem claiming that it is against the tenets of their faith. The court held that expulsion is violative of fundamental rights and the right to freedom of religion.
- **Acharya Jagdishwaranand v. Commissioner of Police, Calcutta (1983):**
 - The Court held that Ananda Marga is not a separate religion but a religious denomination. And the performance of Tandava on public streets is not an essential practice of Ananda Marga.
- **M. Ismail Faruqui v. Union of India (1994):**
 - The apex court held that the mosque is not an essential practice of Islam, and a Muslim can offer namaz (prayer) anywhere even in the open.
- **Raja Birakishore v. State of Orissa (1964):**
 - The validity of the Jagannath Temple Act, 1954 was challenged as it enacted provisions to manage the affairs of Puri temple on the grounds that it is violating Article 26. The court held that the Act only regulated the secular aspect of seva puja, therefore, it is not violative of Article 26.

Smart Gram Panchayat | Bihar | 16 Feb 2024

Why in News?

Recently, '**Smart Gram Panchayat: Revolution towards Digitization of Gram Panchayat**' Project was inaugurated at Paprou Gram Panchayat of Begusarai District, Bihar.

Key Points

- The project aims to extend the [PM-WANI \(Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface\)](#) Service to Gram Panchayats in Begusarai, marking a paradigm shift in rural connectivity.
- It is implemented by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, funded under the revamped [Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan \(RGSA\)](#).
- The project targets 455 Gram Panchayats across 37 Blocks in Begusarai and Rohtas Districts in Bihar.
- Emphasis is placed on **using technology to enhance access to online services** in critical sectors like health, education, and skilling, improving the quality of life in rural areas.
- The beneficiaries of this initiative are Students, farmers, artisans, and Women [Self-Help Groups \(SHGs\)](#).

PM-WANI

- The Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM WANI) scheme launched by the Department of Telecom (DoT) in December 2020.
- It is one key scheme launched to bolster the penetration of public WiFi hotspots to establish a robust digital communication infrastructure throughout the nation, especially in rural areas.

Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)

- The RGSA is a scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, launched in 2018.
- Later it was revamped and the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of RGSA was approved for implementation from 2022-23 to 2025-26 for capacity building of elected representatives (ERs) of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).
- The primary objective of Revamped RGSA is **to develop the governance capabilities of the Panchayats to deliver on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** which are covered within the purview of Panchayats.

Uttar Pradesh's Mega Investment Drive | Uttar Pradesh | 16 Feb 2024

Why in News?

The Uttar Pradesh government is about to host the fourth edition of the **Ground Breaking Ceremony (GBC@IV)** in Lucknow which is aimed at implementing investment proposals worth Rs 10 lakh crore.

Key Points

- **The Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA)** is poised to initiate 15% of the proposals at this ceremony, amounting to Rs 1.5 lakh crore.
- These mega projects include:
 - **Integrated Township in Chandauli:** A Rs 7,000 crore integrated township, covering 333 acres, will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during GBC@IV.
 - **World Trade Center Development in Chandauli:** The development of integrated

townships and malls by the World Trade Center Noida Development Company will generate an additional 12,000 jobs in Chandauli.

- **Manufacturing Ventures:** Projects by Bharat Heavy Electricals, Apex Welfare Trust, and Anita Distillery will collectively create employment opportunities for thousands in sectors such as industrial goods production, healthcare, and biofuel production.
- The implementation of these projects is expected to **catalyze economic growth** and development across several districts, including **Chandauli, Lalitpur, Basti, Etah, Bulandshahr, Amethi, Moradabad, and Jhansi**.
- The planned investments are poised to **create over 3,500 units across 45 districts**, significantly **contributing to job creation and economic empowerment**.
- This massive influx of investment is expected to bolster Uttar Pradesh's economic prowess and **contribute to India's overall [Gross Domestic Product \(GDP\)](#) growth**.

Previous Groundbreaking Ceremonies

- Three groundbreaking ceremonies have already taken place in the state, bringing investment of over ₹2.10 lakh crore.
- The first UP Investors' Summit was held in February 2018 in which 1045 MoUs worth ₹4.28 lakh crore were signed.
- The **first groundbreaking ceremony took place in July 2018**, followed by another in July 2019, resulting in the successful launch of 81 projects with investment of ₹61,792 crore and about 290 projects with investment of ₹67,202 crore, respectively.

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/statepcs/16-02-2024/print>

