

“Courage doesn’t always roar, sometimes it’s the quiet voice at the end of the day whispering ‘I will try again tomorrow’” Mary Anne Radmacher

UDYAM SAKHI PORTAL LAUNCHED FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

On the occasion of International Women’s Day, the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) launched a portal for women entrepreneurs of India.

India has around 8 million women who have started and are running their own businesses and the Ministry of MSME believes that the women in India can play a vital role in the growth of the Indian economy.

The portal is a network for nurturing entrepreneurship and creating business models for low cost products and services in order to empower women and make them self-reliant and self-sufficient.

The portal provides assistance through its platform for entrepreneurship learning tools, incubation facility, training programs for fund raising, providing mentors, one-on-one investor meet, provide market survey facility and technical assistance.

NITI AAYOG LAUNCHES WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PLATFORM ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

NITI Aayog launched the **Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)**, on the occasion of International Women’s Day.

The initiative is aimed at building an ecosystem for women across India to realize their entrepreneurial aspirations, scale-up innovative initiatives and chalk-out sustainable, long-term strategies for their businesses.

The WEP theme song “Naari Shakti” composed and sung by Shri Kailash Kher was released on this occasion.

It aims to power a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem through an enabling network of industry collaborations, partnerships, mentors and peer-to-peer connect.

The platform aspires to substantially increase the number of women entrepreneurs who will create and empower a dynamic New India.

These aspirations are manifest in the three pillars on which WEP is built: **Ichha Shakti** (motivating aspiring entrepreneurs to start their enterprise), **Gyaan Shakti** (providing knowledge and ecosystem support to women entrepreneurs to help them foster entrepreneurship) & **Karma Shakti** (providing hands-on support to entrepreneurs in setting-up and scaling up businesses).

With an informative, interactive website to act as a dedicated resource and knowledge base, WEP aims to address the bottlenecks faced by both aspiring and established women entrepreneurs by streamlining information across government and private sector schemes and initiatives.

WEP is to operate within a broader framework of industry collaborations and partnerships, which cut across sectors in the economy. From providing unique services such as credit evaluation of women-led startups by CRISIL and potential equity investments through an INR 10 crore fund established by DICE Districts, the WEP opens up avenues of growth and opportunity for women entrepreneurs.

Other partner commitments include ShopClues.com, which has offered to provide internship and dedicated mentorship and Mann Deshi Foundation to provide digital and financial literacy to aspiring women entrepreneurs. Several other leading corporates and industry bodies viz. **NASSCOM, CII, FICCI, SIDBI and Facebook have partnered** with WEP to provide business acceleration, mentorship and other start-up support for women entrepreneurs.

GOVT LAUNCHED SUKHAD YATRA APP AND SCHEME FOR DISTRICT DRIVING TRAINING CENTRES

Sukhad Yatra mobile application has been prepared by National Highways Authority of India, NHAI, to empower the Highway user.

The key feature of the app includes provision for the user to enter road quality-related information or to report any accident or pothole on the highway. It also provides users with real-time data related to waiting time

expected at Plazas and various facilities like points of interest, highway nest/nest mini, etc., available across the highway.

The app can also be used by the users to purchase the FASTag tag and further facilitate the highway user experience.

A toll-free number, 1033, will enable users to report an emergency condition, or highway-related feedback, across the highway. The service has also integrated with various ambulance/tow away services along the road to ensure rapid response time in emergency.

The service is supported by a multi-lingual support and user location tracking features to provide the user with accurate and responsive complaint resolution.

At least one model driving training centre will be set up in each district of the State or UT. Financial assistance of up to Rs. 1 Crore will be provided by the Ministry. The agency shall also invest equal amount of the grant under the scheme. The scheme is designed with an objective of creating employment and meeting the requirement of HMV and LMV drivers in the country.

It also aims at inculcating the habit of road safety, like behavioral and attitudinal changes among drivers. Training course will be conducted for drivers who carry dangerous/hazardous goods. The agencies willing to open the centre shall be required to provide infrastructure facilities like land, class rooms, simulator, etc.

Under the scheme for grant of financial assistance for administering Road Safety Advocacy and awards for the outstanding done in the field of Road Safety, assistance up to Rs. 5 lakh will be provided to NGO / Trust / Cooperative Societies and another agencies for administering road safety programme.

INDIA TO JOIN THE EUROPEAN BANK OF RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT (EBRD)

India has got the go-ahead to join the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Shareholders of EBRD have given their consent in this regard.

Now, India will become EBRD's 69th member, enabling Indian companies to undertake joint investments in regions in which the EBRD operates.

Membership of EBRD would enhance India's international profile and promote its economic interests. It will also give access to EBRD's Countries of Operation and sector knowledge.

India's investment opportunities would get a boost. It would increase the scope of cooperation between India and EBRD through co-financing opportunities in manufacturing, services, Information Technology, and Energy.

EBRD's core operations pertain to private sector development in their countries of operation.

The membership would help India leverage the technical assistance and sectoral knowledge of the bank for the benefit of development of private sector.

This would contribute to an improved investment climate in the country. The membership of EBRD would enhance the competitive strength of the Indian firms, and provide an enhanced access to international markets in terms of business opportunities, procurement activities, consultancy assignments etc.

This would open up new vistas for Indian professionals on the one hand, and give a fillip to Indian exports on the other. Increased economic activities would have the employment generating potential. It would also enable Indian nationals to get the employment opportunity in the Bank.

EBRD:

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is an international financial institution that supports projects in over 30 countries, from Eastern Europe to central Asia and the southern and eastern Mediterranean. Investing primarily in private sector clients whose needs cannot be fully met by the market, the EBRD promotes entrepreneurship and fosters transition towards open and democratic market economies.

The mandate of the EBRD stipulates that it must only work in countries that are committed to democratic principles. Respect for the environment is part of the strong corporate governance attached to all EBRD investments.

The EBRD provides project financing for banks, industries and businesses, both new ventures and investments in existing companies. It also works with publicly owned companies, to support privatization, restructuring state-owned firms and improving municipal services. It uses close relationship with governments in the region to promote policies that will bolster the business environment.

The EBRD is owned by 65 countries and two intergovernmental institutions: the European Union and the European Investment Bank (EIB).

RS 1000 CRORE FOR RESEARCH IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN NEXT TWO YEARS UNDER IMPRINT

In a major boost for research and innovation in the country, the Central Government has sanctioned a sum of Rs. 1000 crore for the phase two of the Impacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT) India programme.

Under the IMPRINT-II, a fund is being created by the Department of Science and Technology and Ministry of Human Resource Development together, in which participation will come from industry and other interested Ministries.

The project will be run as a separate vertical in coordination with the DST. Prof. Indranil Manna of IIT-Kharagpur will be the National Coordinator. The proposals for IMPRINT-II will be called from 16th March and will be sanctioned by May this year.

Under the IMPRINT-I Programme, 142 projects at a cost of Rs. 318.71 crore are already under implementation. These projects cover crucial domains like security and defence, information technology, energy, sustainable habitat, advance materials, health care, nano technology, climate change, etc. All these

projects are expected to result in publications and also patents.

ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY HAS ASKED THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF FOREIGN TRADE (DGFT) TO STOP IMPORTS OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED (GM) SOYBEAN

The Union environment ministry has asked the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) to stop imports of genetically modified (GM) soybean for food or feed without the approval of the regulator for transgenic products.

GEAC, which is the regulatory body for Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and products thereof, has not authorized or approved GM soybean or any other products derived from GM soybean seeds for import or cultivation in India.

The issue of GM foods has been controversial in India, with cotton being the only transgenic crop which is allowed to be cultivated. The environment ministry is yet to take a final call on allowing the commercial cultivation of GM mustard.

GM Soybean:

GM soybean is one of the most widely planted genetically modified plants in the world today. The GM soybean, otherwise called as the Roundup Ready (RR) soybean, was developed by the biotech giant Monsanto and made it commercially available to farmers in 1996. It was developed to make the plant survive being sprayed on with the non-selective herbicide, Roundup, which can kill conventional soybean plants.

GM Soybean was developed by introducing a copy of a gene from the *Agrobacterium* sp. strain CP4. Conventional soybean has a similar gene in its DNA but is sensitive to glyphosate, the active ingredient of the herbicide Roundup. With the insertion of the CP4 version of the gene, the GM soybean was able to develop resistance to the Roundup herbicide.

GEAC:

The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) is the apex body constituted in the Ministry of Environment and Forests under

'Rules for Manufacture, Use, Import, Export and Storage of Hazardous Microorganisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells 1989, under the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

The GEAC is responsible for approval of proposals relating to release of genetically engineered organisms and products into the environment are including experimental field trials (Biosafety Research Level trial-I and II known as BRL-I and BRL-II).

AIRPORTS COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL (ACI) – ASQ 2017 RANKINGS

Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport has been rated as the world number one among airports handling more than 40 million passengers per annum in a survey by the Airports Council International (ACI).

Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport has been ranked as the World's Best Airport for customer experience.

ACI:

ACI is a trade association of 1,953 member airports across 176 countries. As part of its survey on Airport Service Quality, views of passengers on 34 key performance indicators are measured. Nearly 74% of the world's top 100 busiest airports are part of the ASQ network.

DSB HAS AGREED TO SETTING UP A PANEL TO DETERMINE DOMESTIC CONTENT ISSUE

The World Trade Organization's Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) has agreed to India's request for setting up a panel to determine whether the country complied with a previous ruling striking down its domestic content requirements for solar cells and modules.

In 2016, New Delhi had lost a case against the US at the WTO after the global trade body stated that power purchase agreements signed by the Indian government with solar firms for its National Solar Mission did not meet international trade norms.

The US, which is of the opinion that New Delhi continues to apply the "WTO-inconsistent measures", had in December last year

approached the Geneva-based multi-lateral organization demanding action against India for non-compliance of the WTO ruling.

India, however, has been maintaining that it has complied with the WTO's ruling. India had requested the WTO to set up a panel to determine its compliance with the rulings of the dispute.

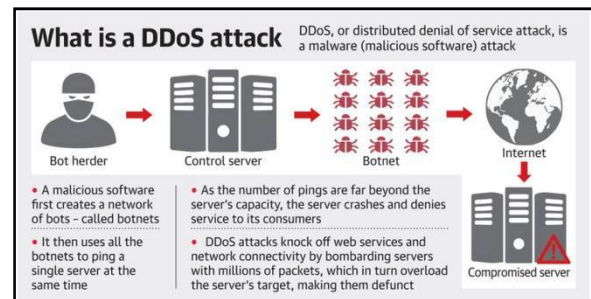
Dispute Settlement Body:

The General Council convenes as the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) to deal with disputes between WTO members. Such disputes may arise with respect to any agreement contained in the Final Act of the Uruguay Round that is subject to the Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes (DSU).

The DSB has authority to establish dispute settlement panels, refer matters to arbitration, adopt panel, Appellate Body and arbitration reports, maintain surveillance over the implementation of recommendations and rulings contained in such reports, and authorize suspension of concessions in the event of non-compliance with those recommendations and rulings.

SAPOSHI

It is a new malware detected by cyber security agencies.



It is capable of taking over electronic devices and turning them into 'bots', which can then be used for any purpose, including a Distributed Denial of Service attack which, with enough firepower, can cripple entire industries.
