

Decisions taken by the Union Cabinet

- **Cabinet approves Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Space Research Organisation and the Bolivian Space Agency on Cooperation in the Exploration and Uses of Outer Space for peaceful purposes**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its ex-post facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and Bolivia on Cooperation in the Exploration and Uses of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes". The MoU was signed between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Bolivian Space Agency on March 29, 2019 at Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia during the visit of President of India to Bolivia.

Details:

- a) This MoU shall enable the following potential interest areas of cooperation such as, space science, technology and applications including remote sensing of the earth; satellite communication and satellite based navigation; Space science and planetary exploration; use of spacecraft and space systems and ground system; and application of space technology.
- b) This MoU would lead to setup a Joint Working Group, drawing members from ISRO and the Bolivian Space Agency (ABE), which will further work out the plan of action including the time-frame and the means of implementing this MoU.

Implementation Strategy and Targets: The signed MoU would lead to concluding specific implementing Arrangement and setting up of Joint Working Group, to work out the plan of action including the time-frame and the means of implementing this MoU.

Major Impact: The signed MoU will provide impetus to explore newer research activities and

application possibilities in the field of remote sensing of the earth; satellite communication; satellite navigation; space science and planetary exploration.

Expenditure involved: The financial contribution with respect to each specific activity would depend on the nature of Joint activity and will be detailed in corresponding Implementing Agreements (Arrangements) / Contracts.

Benefits: This MoU would lead to develop a joint activity in the field of application of space technologies for the benefit of humanity. Thus all sections and regions of the country will get benefited.

- **Cabinet approves ISRO Technical Liaison Unit at Moscow**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the setting up of ISRO Technical Liaison Unit (ITLU) at Moscow, Russia.

Financial Implications: An average annual expenditure of about Rs. 1.50 crore per annum is anticipated to be incurred at ITLU in Moscow, Russia towards salary, office expenses, rent, taxes etc.

Details: The ISRO Technical Liaison Unit (ITLU) at Moscow will enable effective technical coordination for timely interventions on diversified matters with Russia and neighbouring countries for realization of the programmatic targets of ISRO. The Liaison Officer, deputed at ITLU from ISRO provides technical information about the developments in research and technology and inputs arising from their meetings with researchers, government agencies and industries in the respective countries. They also support the ongoing bilateral programmes of cooperation in space technology and act on behalf of ISRO on the matters referred.

Benefits:

- i) ISRO will be able to collaborate with Space agencies/industries in Russia and neighbouring countries for mutually synergetic outcomes.
- ii) ISRO's Gaganyaan programme requires development of some of the key technologies and establishment of specialized facilities, which are essential to support life in space.

iii) Keeping in view the 15th August, 2022 timeline for realization of the Gaganyaan human space programme, it is prudent to avail technical cooperation from International space agencies, who have already demonstrated their technical capabilities in specific areas. Russia, being one of the space faring nations, it is envisaged to collaborate with Russia extensively in various fields of relevance.

- **Cabinet approves signing of the UN Convention on International Settlement Agreements resulting from mediation by India**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the signing of the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements (UNISA) resulting from mediation by the Republic of India scheduled to be held at Singapore on 7th August, 2019, or at United Nations Headquarters.

Benefit: Signing of the Convention will boost the confidence of the investors and shall provide a positive signal to foreign investors about India's commitment to adhere to international practice on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

Initiatives to promote ADR Mechanisms: In order to encourage international commercial arbitration in India, to evolve a comprehensive ecosystem of arbitration the Government is establishing the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre (NDIAC) as a statutory body. The Commercial Courts Act, 2015, has been further amended and legislative exercise to further amend the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, is currently underway. These initiatives are being taken with a view to encourage the settlement of commercial disputes, domestic and international, in India through ADR Mechanism of Arbitration, Conciliation and Mediation. A new Chapter (IIIA) has been inserted in the Commercial Courts Act, 2015, for mandatory pre-institution mediation and settlement in certain category of cases. Therefore, the provisions of the 'Convention' are in line with the domestic laws and the efforts made to strengthen Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms.

- **Cabinet approves Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) rates for Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers for the year 2019-20**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has

approved the proposal of the Department of Fertilizers for fixation of Nutrient Based Subsidy Rates for P&K Fertilizers for the year 2019-20. The approved rates for NBS effective from the date of notification will be as under:

Per Kg Subsidy rates (in Rs.)			
N (Nitrogen)	P(Phosphorus)	K(Potash)	S(Sulphur)
18.901	15.216	11.124	3.562

The per kg. subsidy rates prior to notification will remain same as that of year 2018-19.

Expenditure: The expected expenditure for release of subsidy on P&K Fertilizers during 2019-20 will be Rs. 22875.50crore.

Benefits: This will enable the manufacturers and importers to formalize supply contracts for fertilizers and fertilizer inputs and make fertilizers available to the farmers in the year 2019-20.

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