

Decisions taken by the Union Cabinet

- **Cabinet approves extension of the term of the Fifteenth Finance Commission up to 30th November, 2019**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the extension of the term of Fifteenth Finance Commission up to 30th November, 2019. It will enable the Commission to examine various comparable estimates for financial projections in view of reforms and the new realities to finalise its recommendations for the period 2020-2025.

Background: The Fifteenth Finance Commission has been constituted by the President on 27th November, 2017 in pursuance of clause (1) of article 280 of the Constitution and Finance Commission (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1951. The Commission was to submit its Report on the basis of its Terms of Reference (ToR) by 30th October, 2019 covering a period of five years commencing from 1st April, 2020.

- **Cabinet approves Amendment in the Terms of Reference for the Fifteenth Finance Commission**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the proposed amendment to enable Fifteenth Finance Commission to address serious concerns regarding the allocation of adequate, secure and non-lapsable funds for defence and internal security of India.

The Fifteenth Finance Commission has been constituted by the President on 27th November, 2017 in pursuance of clause (1) of article 280 of the Constitution and Finance Commission (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1951. In keeping with this requirement, the Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV-FC) has been constituted for giving recommendations for the five years period commencing 1st April, 2020.

Under the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Commission, it is proposed to ensure an assured allocation of

resources towards defence and internal security imperatives.

The amendment provides that Fifteenth Finance Commission shall also examine whether a separate mechanism for funding of defence and internal security ought to be set up and if so how such a mechanism could be operationalized.

- **Cabinet approves Inter-Institutional Agreement between India and USA for cooperation in the field of medicine**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given ex-post facto approval to the Inter-Institutional Agreement between India and the USA in the areas of regenerative medicine and 3D bio-printing, new technologies, exchange of scientific ideas/information and technologies, and joint use of scientific infrastructure.

Benefits:

- The joint research projects, training programmes, conferences, seminars etc. under this Agreement will be open to all qualified scientists and technologists, and will be supported on the basis of scientific merit and excellence. Scientific research and technology development in the areas of regenerative medicine and 3D bio-printing will have potential for generation of new Intellectual Property, processes, prototypes or products.
- Both institutes anticipate the general academic exchange contemplated under the Agreement will lead to the development of specific projects, each of which may have academic, clinical and commercial implications.

Salient features: The objective of the Agreement is to contribute towards the development of research and education of both the Institutions through academic collaboration. The general areas of common interest where collaboration and exchange of knowledge are intended for both include:

- Exchange of faculty members and students for training, study and research especially in the areas on 3D Bio-printing;
- Execution of joint research projects; and
- Exchange of information and academic publications.

- **Cabinet approves Implementation of the Cabinet's decision dated 28.12.2016 regarding**

pharmaceutical companies in the public sector – seeking modification therein

The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the following decisions:

- (1) Modifying the earlier decision dated 28.12.2016 of sale of land of PSUs to government agencies and instead permitting the sale of land as per revised DPE's guidelines dated 14.06.2018; and
- (2) Providing budgetary support as loan to the tune of Rs 330.35 cr. for meeting the employees' liabilities (Unpaid salary - Rs. 158.35 cr. + VRS Rs.172.00 cr.) as per following break-up:
 - a) IDPL (Indian Drugs & Pharmaceuticals Limited) - Rs. 6.50cr.
 - b) RDPL (Rajasthan Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd)- Rs. 43.70cr.
 - c) HAL (Hindustan Antibiotics Limited) - Rs. 280.15 cr.
- (3) Constitution of a Committee of Ministers for taking all decisions pertaining to closure/ strategic sale of the four Public Sector Undertakings, including the sale of assets and clearance of outstanding liabilities.

Major Impact:

- a) Budgetary support of Rs 330.35 cr. would help in disbursing the unpaid salaries and providing support for VRS of employees of IDPL, RDPL and HAL. The decision would mitigate sufferings of more than 1000 employees of these PSUs; and
- b) Setting up of a Committee of Ministers would expedite in process of implementation of the earlier Cabinet decision dated 28.12.2016 for closure of IDPL and RDPL and strategic sale of HAL and BCPL.

• Cabinet approves 2880 MW Dibang Multipurpose Project in Arunachal Pradesh

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the expenditure on pre-investment activities and various clearances for Dibang Multipurpose Project (MPP) in Arunachal Pradesh for an amount of Rs. 1600 crore.

The estimated total cost of Project is Rs. 28080.35 including IDC & FC of Rs 3974.95 crore at Jun'18 price level. The estimated completion period for the project shall be nine years from receipt of Government

sanction.

The project shall generate 2880MW (12x240MW) power to produce 11223MU of energy in a 90% dependable year. This is the largest ever Hydro Electric Projects to be constructed in India. The dam is 278 metres high and will be the highest dam in India once completed.

The Project is located on river Dibang, in Lower Dibang Valley District of Arunachal Pradesh. The project envisages construction of a 278 m high Concrete Gravity Dam (above deepest foundation level), 6 Nos. horseshoe-shaped Head Race Tunnels of length varying from 300 m to 600 m with 9 m dia., an underground Power House and 6 Nos. horseshoe-shaped Tail Race Tunnels of length varying from 320 m to 470 m with 9m dia.

- **Cabinet approves doubling of New Bongaigaon - Agthori via Rangiyarailway line (142.97 km)**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval to construct the New Bongaigaon and Agthori via Rangiya doubling (142.97 km) of Northeast Frontier Railway in Assam with an estimated cost of Rs. 2042.51 crore. The project will be completed by 2022-23 and will be executed by Construction Organization of Northeast Frontier Railway.

The line capacity utilization of the section between New Bongaigaon and Agthori via Rangiya is more than 100%. Traffic on this section will further increase as Rangiya-Murkongselek Broad Gauge line has already been commissioned in 2015-16 and Bogibeel Bridge new line has been commissioned recently. To remove the existing capacity constraints of existing network and to handle the increasing freight and passenger traffic, doubling of New Bongaigaon - Agthori via Rangiya is required. Overall operative performance of New Bongaigaon - Agthori via Rangiya will improve by the doubling and congestion of section will also reduce to the great extent.

The project will ease the growing through traffic into the North East region and saving due to faster mobility through the proposed double line section. This project will also generate direct employment during construction for about 34.31 lakh mandays.

The alignment for the approved doubling from New Bongaigaon to Agthori via Rangiya (142.97 km) will traverse through Bongaigaon, Baksa, Barpeta, Nalbari and Kamrup districts of Assam.

- **Cabinet approves the construction of 150 km long 3rd railway line between Allahabad - Mughalsarai (now Pt. DeenDayal Upadhyaya Jn.)**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval to construct a 3rd railway line between Allahabad - Mughalsarai (now Pt. DeenDayal Upadhyaya Jn.) (Length 150 km) with an estimated cost of Rs. 2649.44 crore. The project will be completed by 2023-24 and will be executed by Construction Organization of North Central.

The project will help cope up with the future traffic and remove capacity constraints. At present number of passenger and goods trains in this section are far more than its capacity, resulting in heavy detention to trains. This project will enhance capacity, reduce detention and cater for future growth of traffic. Construction of approved third Line between Allahabad and Mughalsarai will also ease traffic congestion at Chheoki, Naini and improve the punctuality of goods and passenger trains on vital route connecting National capital.

This project will also generate direct employment during construction for about 36 lakh mandays.

- **Cabinet approves construction of 81.17 Km New Railway Line between Sahjanwa and Dohrighat**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval to construct a new railway line between Sahjanwa and Dohrighat (81.17 Km) with an estimated cost of Rs. 1319.75crore. The project will be completed by 2023-24 and will be executed by Construction Organization of North Eastern Railway.

The project area is densely populated, economically backward and is deficient in road transport facilities. The proposed project will provide rail facility to the people of the area falling under the project line and will help in growth of small-scale industries in the area. This project will also generate direct employment during construction for about 19.48 lakh mandays.

Alignment from Sahjanwa to Dohrighat lies mostly in Gorakhpur district and very small area in Mau district in Uttar Pradesh. Indara-Dohrighat gauge conversion has already been sanctioned and this approval for new line for Dohrighat- Sahjanwa will complete the missing link and provide an alternate route avoiding Gorakhpur.

After completion of this connectivity, alternate route connecting Chhapra to Lucknow avoiding congestion at Gorakhpur will be available. Hence, this project is needed for better socio-economic development of the hinterland of this backward area with the help of rail transport.

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