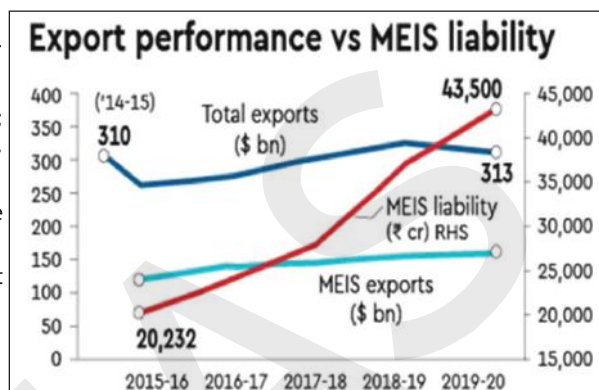


# NEWS TODAY

## MINISTRY OF COMMERCE BACKS MERCHANDISE EXPORT FROM INDIA SCHEME (MEIS) LIKE BENEFITS UNDER NEW SCHEME

- **Amid criticism from exporters and domestic industry**, it is suggested that some broad benefits of MEIS should be continued in its proposed successor- Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export Products (RoDTEP) scheme.
- **MEIS was introduced in 2015**, under Foreign Trade Policy of India 2015, **to offset infrastructural inefficiencies and the associated costs of exporting products** produced in India.
  - > It provided **incentive in the form of duty credit scrip to the exporter** to compensate for his loss on payment of duties. MEIS covers nearly 75% of all traded products.
  - > It focused on **goods/products having high export intensity** and employment potential.
- **MEIS is to be scrapped by December 31, 2020 because:**
  - > **WTO said it distorted trade** by providing direct subsidies
  - > **It failed in boosting exports.** Public tax liability under MEIS increased from Rs 20,232 crore in 2015-16 to Rs 43,500 crore in 2019-20.
- Government is **considering two new schemes to replace MEIS:**
  - > **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme** in select sectors with core competency and having potential for global exports.
  - > **RoDTEP** to support a few identified sectors where government deems India to have competitive strength.



## DAUGHTERS HAVE EQUAL INHERITANCE RIGHTS, SAYS SUPREME COURT (SC)

- SC judgment came on a batch of appeals that **raised a legal issue whether the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005:**
  - > Has a retrospective effect?
  - > If the claim of women depended on the living status of father as on amendment date (9.9.2005)?
- On this, SC ruled that a Hindu **woman's right to be a joint heir to the ancestral property is by birth** and does not depend on whether her father was alive or not when the law was enacted in 2005 i.e. it has retrospective effect.
- Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 **granted equal rights to women and men in ancestral property** and to intestate succession in personal property where succession happens as per law and not through a will.
  - > Before the 2005 amendment, **daughters were entitled only to a share of their father's inheritance** and weren't independent coparceners (a person who has a birthright to parental property) like sons.
  - > Amendment had **laid down a cutoff date of September 9, 2005 for claims**, to avoid legal complications. Certain SC rulings had subsequently said that **law would not apply to cases where the father had died** before the law came into effect.

## INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION (ISRO) IS EXPANDING ITS ROLE INTO DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

- ISRO, apart from its role of satellite launch, **has enlarged its role in developmental activities such as Agriculture, Railways, telemedicine, disaster management, etc.**
- **ISRO's role in various sectors:**
  - > **In agriculture:** ISRO technology is being used to carry out crop production forecasts for major crops and to improve crop condition and productivity by using remote sensing satellites data.
  - > **Rural Development:** ISRO has launched Village Resource Centres (VRCs) to provide space based services directly to rural areas like Telemedicine, Tele education, Panchayat planning, marketing information etc.
  - > **Urban development:** High resolution satellite data provides accurate information on current land use practices in a city or town.
  - > **Resource management:** ISRO through Earth Observatory satellites provides for effective management of natural resources.
  - > **In Railway sector:** applications of space technology are realised in guarding unmanned railway crossings, detecting obstructive objects on rail tracks to avoid train accidents etc.
  - > **Disaster Management Support Programme** using geoportals like Bhuvan to address various aspects of natural disasters, using space based inputs.
  - > **EDUSAT provided connectivity to schools, colleges and higher levels of education** and also supported non-formal education including development communication.

## GOVERNMENT TIGHTENS NORMS FOR IMPORT OF CERTAIN CHEMICALS WHICH CAN AFFECT ENVIRONMENT

- Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) inserted a **new policy condition for import of various chemicals & plastics** including carbon tetrachloride, chlorodifluoromethane and dichlorotetrafluoroethane.
  - > These chemicals are **used in cleaning agents, fire extinguishers and refrigerants** and China is the largest exporter of these goods to India.
- DGFT mandated their **importers to submit the bill of entry within 30 days to the ozone cell** in the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.
  - > Ozone Cell is **engaged in phase-out of production and consumption of chemicals, Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs)** with an accelerated phase-out schedule **as per the Montreal Protocol.**
  - > **HCFCs are the second generation of fluorine based gases**, the original replacements for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).
    - HCFCs contribute both to **ozone depletion and global warming.**
    - India had phased out HCFC-141b (used by foam manufacturing enterprises) in January, 2020.
- Montreal Protocol is **an international treaty to protect the ozone layer** by phasing out the production of numerous substances that are responsible for ozone depletion.

# HOUSE PANEL DISCUSSES WAYS TO MINIMISE INTERNET SHUTDOWNS

- Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology discussed ways to minimise internet shutdowns and **prioritise more logical ways to order an internet shutdown.**
- Internet shutdown is defined as **government imposed blanket disablement of access to internet** as a whole within a particular locality or localities for any duration of time.
  - > India has been responsible for **67% of the world's documented shutdowns** in 2018.
- **Reasons for internet shutdowns in India** include to check fake news circulation, for maintaining internal security and issues like preventing protest against movies, preventing cheating in examinations etc.
- **Impact of internet shutdowns:**
  - > **Economic loss** was more than 3 billion dollars between 2012-2017.
  - > Affects the **civil liberties and the constitutional rights** of the citizens. **UN had declared Internet as a basic human right** in 2016.
- **Legislative backing in India:**
  - > Home Departments in states mostly enforces shutdowns, drawing powers from **The Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017.**
  - > **Other laws** related to internet shutdown: Section 144 of Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and The Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.

## ALSO IN NEWS

<p><b>Krishi Megh(National Agricultural Research &amp; Education System -Cloud Infrastructure and Services)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is aimed at <b>protecting the precious data of the government's premier research body</b> Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).</li> <li>• Krishi Megh has been set up under the <b>National Agricultural Higher Education Project</b>, funded by both the government and World Bank.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; It has been <b>set up at National Academy of Agricultural Research Management</b> in Hyderabad.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises called upon AEPC to take <b>measures for increasing exports two times.</b></li> <li>• AEPC is the <b>official body of apparel exporters in India</b> that provides assistance to Indian exporters as well as importers/international buyers who choose India as their preferred sourcing destination for garments.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; It aims to <b>promote, support and facilitate Indian apparel industry</b> to enhance its competitive advantage and global positioning.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It is sponsored by <b>Ministry of Textiles.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>2nd edition of student entrepreneurship programme (SEP)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was <b>launched by NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission</b> in collaboration with Dell Technologies for young innovators of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs).                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; They will receive mentor support; prototyping and testing support; intellectual property registration and patenting of ideas etc, from Dell volunteers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• SEP is a 360-degree development program for <b>future technology leaders and entrepreneurs.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; It is <b>dedicated to encourage innovation spirit of students</b> and nurturing their leadership and entrepreneurial skills.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Swachh Bharat Mission Academy (SBMA) launched by Ministry of Jal Shakti</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is an Interactive Voice Response (IVR)-based <b>training course with modules on Open Defecation Free (ODF) Plus programme.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; ODF Plus is an extension of the ODF programme under the Swachh Bharat Mission.</li> <li>&gt; Its objective is to sustain the ODF programme and to take up <b>Solid and Liquid Waste Management.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• SBMA will <b>boost the capacity building efforts in training of Swachhagrahis</b>, community-based organizations, NGOs, SHGs and others who are associated with phase 2 of SBM(G).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collapse of Canada's Milne ice shelf</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Milne ice shelf in Canada</b> has lost more than 40% of its ice in last 2 days.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Ice shelves are <b>permanent floating sheets of ice</b> that connect to a landmass. However, they can also form wherever ice flows from land into cold ocean waters.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It has increased fears of the Arctic region being under severe stress due to global warming.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Arctic region is warming at twice the rate compared to the rest of the planet due to a feedback mechanism known as <b>the Arctic amplification.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Project Cheetah</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under this project, around <b>90 Heron drones of the three defence services would be upgraded</b> to be armed with laser-guided bombs, air to ground and air-launched anti-tank guided missiles.</li> <li>• Heron is a <b>medium-altitude long-endurance unmanned air vehicle (UAV)</b> system primarily designed to perform strategic reconnaissance and surveillance operations.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; It is designed and <b>manufactured by Israel Aerospace Industries.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Sunspots</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A massive Sunspot group, AR2770, was observed by images of <b>NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory.</b></li> <li>• A Sunspot is <b>an area on the Sun that appears dark</b> on the surface as they are <b>relatively cooler</b> than surrounding parts.</li> <li>• Sunspots <b>form due to strong magnetic field lines</b> coming up from within the Sun.</li> <li>• Most Sunspots appear in groups that have their own magnetic field, whose <b>polarity reverses during every solar cycle</b>, which takes around 11 years.</li> </ul>

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