

# NEWS TODAY

## ZERO-BUDGET NATURAL FARMING (ZBNF) BROUGHT BIG GAINS FOR ANDHRA FARMERS

Findings were part of a study that **compared ZBNF and non-ZBNF techniques in crops like paddy, groundnut etc. It compared 6 parameters:** Water, electricity, energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, yield and net revenue.

- > ZBNF provided **saving of 1,400 to 3,500 cubic metres of water per acre** per paddy cropping period. If all of India's paddy area is brought under ZBNF, 150-400 billion cubic metre of water can potentially be saved.
- > **Electricity consumption** of farms relying on groundwater **reduced by 1,500-3,900 units per acre and saved Rs 6,000-16,000.**
- > ZBNF hindered microbial activity and **cut methane emissions by 88%.**
- > Study **did not observe much impact on crop yield.**

ZBNF is a **method of chemical-free agriculture** drawing from traditional Indian practices. It was originally promoted by Maharashtrian agriculturist Subhash Palekar. **ZBNF was introduced in Union Budget 2019-20.**

ZBNF is **based on 4 pillars (refer infographic).**

**Benefits of ZBNF:** Requires very less amount of water and electricity than what is required under chemical farming, reduces farming costs by using in-situ resources, manage soil nutrition, fertility, pests and seeds.

### ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING

**involves four components...**

- One, 'beejamrutham', or microbial coating of seeds using cow dung and urine based formulations
- Two, 'jeevamrutham', or application of a concoction made with cow dung, cow urine, jaggery, pulse flour, water and soil, to multiply soil microbes
- Three, mulching, or applying a layer of organic material to the soil surface, to prevent water evaporation and contribute to soil humus formation
- Four, 'waaphasa' or soil aeration through favourable micro climate in the soil

## EASE OF DOING BUSINESS (EODB) RANKINGS FOR STATES RELEASE DEFENCE MINISTERS OF INDIA AND IRAN MEET AT TEHRAN

Released by Department of Industrial Promotion and Internal Trade (DPIIT) in collaboration with World Bank to improve overall business environment in States. This is 4th annual edition starting 2015.

Ranking of states **for year 2019** is based on implementation of **Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP).**

> BRAP 2018-19 released by DPIIT includes 180 reform points covering 12 business regulatory areas such as Access to Information, Single Window System, Labour, Environment, etc.

**Ranking categorises states as:** Top Achievers (Above 95% compliance); Achievers (90 - 95%); Fast Movers (80 - 90%); Aspirers (Below 80%)

**In 2019 ranking**

> Andhra Pradesh is at top, followed by Uttar Pradesh.

➤ Uttar Pradesh from North India, Andhra Pradesh from South India, West Bengal from East India, Madhya Pradesh from West India and Assam from North East India topped the ranking. Among Union Territories, Delhi bagged top spot.

> Tripura at 36th (ranked at bottom).

These rankings **represent the EoDB** in State with increased transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of government regulatory functions vis-a-vis business enterprises.

> State rankings will help **attract investments, foster healthy competition** and increase EODB in each State.

## IMAGES SENT BY CHANDRAYAAN-1 INDICATE POSSIBLE IMPACT OF EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE ON MOON

Images show that **Moon may be rusting at poles.** Also, Chandrayaan-1 data indicates that Moon's poles are home to water.

> Since surface of Moon is known to have iron-rich rocks, and not water and oxygen, **NASA believes that atmosphere might be partly responsible for the same.**

**About Chandrayaan-1**

> Launched in 2008. It **carried 11 scientific instruments** built in India, USA, UK, Germany, Sweden and Bulgaria.

➤ **Payloads from India:** Terrain Mapping Camera, Hyper Spectral Imager, Lunar Laser Ranging Instrument, High Energy X - ray Spectrometer, Moon Impact Probe.

➤ **Payloads from abroad:** Chandrayaan-I X-ray Spectrometer, Near Infrared Spectrometer, Sub keV Atom Reflecting Analyzer, Miniature Synthetic Aperture Radar, Moon Mineralogy Mapper, Radiation Dose Monitor.

> It aimed at conducting **chemical and mineralogical mapping of the entire lunar surface** for distribution of mineral and chemical elements.

> **Key findings:** Detected water in vapour form in trace amounts, confirmed Ocean Magma Hypothesis, detected x-ray signals during weak solar flares thus indicating presence of magnesium, aluminium, silicon and calcium on lunar surface.

Union Minister of State for Space informed that **launch of Chandrayaan-3 may take place in early 2021.**

**Key outcome**

> **On trade:** Called for diversification and expansion of trade and commerce and expediting conclusion of Preferential Trade Agreement.

> **On Afghanistan:** Explored revival of regional approach model involving India-Iran to stabilise Afghanistan as US plans to exit Afghanistan and give Taliban a stake in governance.

➤ Earlier, India and Iran along with Russia had collaborated to safeguard their interests by supporting the Northern Alliance when Taliban was in power between 1996-2001.

> **US sanctions on Iran:** Iran hoped for India to take impartial stand during its two-year term at UNSC.

**Importance of Iran for India**

> Gulf region is home to nine million Indian nationals and meets large parts of India's energy needs.

> Gateway to Afghanistan and central Asia bypassing Pakistan. Also, Iran is key to International North-South Transport Corridor.

> Important regional power in gulf region.

**Recent issues**

> Iran's insistence to give **Chahbah-Zahedan railway contract** to Khatam al-Anbiya constructions.

➤ Entity is under US secondary sanctions which means companies who deal with it could also face restrictions.

> Increasing **Chinese inroads into Iran**

> US sanctions against Iran affecting India Iran partnership, trade.

# CONSUMER AFFAIRS MINISTRY RELEASED DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR ADVERTISEMENTS

- Under Consumer Protection Act, 2019, **Central Consumer Protection Authority is empowered to issue necessary guidelines** to prevent unfair trade practices and protect consumers' interest.
  - > Guidelines cover all advertising and marketing communications regardless of form, format or medium.
- **Key guidelines:**
  - > **For disclaimers:** If not easily noticeable, legible, understandable to an ordinary consumer, then will be treated as misleading advertisements.
  - > **For Endorser:** All descriptions, claims and comparisons that they endorse or that are made in advertisements they appear in are capable of being objectively ascertained and are capable of substantiation.
  - > **On Surrogate advertising:** Goods or services whose advertising is otherwise prohibited shall not circumvent such restrictions by advertising other goods or services of which is not prohibited.
  - > **On Free claims:** An advertisement should not describe a good or service as free, without charge or other similar terms, if a consumer has to pay anything other than cost while buying the product.
  - > **On Bait advertisement:** Advertisement shall not seek to entice consumers to purchase a good or service without a reasonable prospect of selling advertised good or service at price offered.

## ALSO IN NEWS

<b>Kesavananda Bharati</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He was the <b>head seer of Edneer Mutt in Kasaragod district of Kerala.</b></li> <li>• In Kesavananda Bharati judgement, <b>Supreme court (SC) outlined basic structure of the constitution.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Case was primarily about the <b>extent of Parliament's power to amend the Constitution.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• SC ruled that <b>basic structure of the Constitution was inviolable</b> and could not be amended by Parliament.</li> </ul>
<b>K-shaped recovery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This means those at the <b>top are seeing things go up</b>, and those at the middle and <b>below are seeing things go down and get worse.</b></li> <li>• An example in India is the stock <b>market being healthy while millions have lost their jobs.</b></li> <li>• The same type of <b>inequality extends to the job market.</b> Lower-skilled workers lost their jobs disproportionately, while job losses aren't as significant for office workers in financial, service sectors.</li> </ul>
<b>Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Home Affairs has <b>suspended FCRA licences</b> of four Christian associations this year.</li> <li>• An FCRA licence is <b>mandatory for a non-profit organisation to receive foreign funds.</b></li> <li>• FCRA regulates the <b>acceptance and utilization of foreign contribution</b> by individuals or associations and prohibits its utilization for any activities detrimental to national interest etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a <b>sub-scheme under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission</b> of Ministry of Rural Development which aims <b>to help rural households including women to set-up enterprises.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; SVEP addresses three major pillars of rural start-ups namely - finances, incubation and skill ecosystems.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Long term vision is <b>to provide support for start-up to 1 crore village enterprises</b> and provide <b>direct employment to 2 crore people.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; As of August 2020, around 1 lakh enterprises are being supported out of which 75% are owned and managed by women.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Data from a report on education released by the National Statistics Office (NSO)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Key highlights</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <b>Top 5 states/UTs in literacy:</b> Kerala (highest- 96.2%), Delhi, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Assam.</li> <li>&gt; <b>Bottom 5:</b> UP, Telangana, Bihar, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh (lowest-66.4%).</li> <li>&gt; <b>Male- female literacy gap</b> at the all-India level is 14.4 percentage points with <b>male literacy at 84.7% and female literacy at 70.3%.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• NSO under <b>Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation</b>, is responsible for conduct of large-scale sample surveys in diverse fields on All India basis.</li> </ul>
<b>First ever International Day of Clean Air For Blue Skies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2019, United Nations adopted a resolution to observe International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies <b>on 07th September every year starting from 2020.</b></li> <li>• <b>It aims to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Raise <b>public awareness</b> at all levels.</li> <li>&gt; Demonstrate close <b>link of air quality to other environmental/developmental challenges</b> such as climate change and Sustainable Development Goals.</li> <li>&gt; Promote and facilitate <b>solutions that improve air quality.</b></li> <li>&gt; <b>Bring together diverse international actors</b> to form a strategic alliance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Warming Arabian Sea</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to scientists an <b>unusually warm Arabian Sea</b> is likely to have <b>contributed to intense bursts of monsoon rain</b> in parts of India in August this year.</li> <li>• Earlier reports also suggested that Arabian Sea is becoming <b>warmer as a result of climate change.</b></li> <li>• This has resulted in a <b>rise in widespread extreme rains over Western Ghats and central India</b>, since warming induces increased fluctuations in the monsoon winds, with ensuing episodes of <b>enhanced moisture transport from the Arabian Sea towards</b> the Indian subcontinent.</li> </ul>
<b>Malabar rebellion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was an armed revolt staged by the <b>Mappila Muslims of Kerala against British authorities</b> and unpopular jennies (<b>landlords</b>), <b>mostly Hindus</b> in 1921.</li> <li>• It was <b>part of the Khilafat Movement</b> and is also popularly known as <b>Moplah rebellion.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Moplas were <b>mostly poor peasants.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• It is often perceived to be one of the first cases of <b>nationalist uprisings in Southern India.</b></li> <li>• British government <b>responded to movement</b> with much aggression, bringing in Gurkha regiments to suppress it and imposing martial law.</li> </ul>

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