



Daily current affairs

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Nod for three changes to triple talaq Bill

- The Union Cabinet approved three crucial amendments to the triple talaq Bill, including a provision for bail to an accused before the start of trial.
- These three provisions to the Muslim Women Protection of Rights on Marriage Bill, which makes instant triple talaq illegal and imposes a jail term of up to three years, provide additional safeguards from the Act being misused.
- While the proposed law will remain “non-bailable” — the police cannot grant bail at the police station — the accused can approach a magistrate for bail even before trial.

Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2017

- The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2017 was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Law and Justice, Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad on December 28, 2017.
- The Bill makes all declaration of talaq, including in written or electronic form, to be void (i.e. not enforceable in law) and illegal.
- It defines talaq as talaq-e-biddat or any other similar form of talaq pronounced by a Muslim man resulting in instant and irrevocable divorce.
- Talaq-e-biddat refers to the practice under Muslim personal laws where pronouncement of the word ‘talaq’ thrice in one sitting by a Muslim man to his wife results in an instant and irrevocable divorce.
- **Offence and penalty:** The Bill makes declaration of talaq a cognizable and non-bailable offence. (A cognizable offence is one for which a police officer may arrest an accused person without warrant.) A husband declaring talaq can be imprisoned for up to three years along with a fine.
- **Allowance:** A Muslim woman against whom talaq has been declared, is entitled to seek subsistence allowance from her husband for herself and for her dependent children. The amount of the allowance will be decided by a First Class Magistrate.
- **Custody of minor children:** A Muslim woman against whom such talaq has been declared, is entitled to seek custody of her minor children. The determination of custody will be made by the Magistrate.

National Anti-Trafficking Bureau

- For the first time, the **National Anti-Trafficking Bureau** will coordinate with authorities in foreign countries and international organisations, and facilitate inter-State and trans-border transfer of evidence and materials.
- It will **strengthen the intelligence apparatus** to improve the collection, collation and dissemination of operational intelligence.
- The Bureau will also coordinate actions and enforcement by various bodies or authorities established under this Bill.
- There will be **State and District Anti-Trafficking Committees** which will arrange for appropriate training and sensitisation of functionaries of all personnel.
- The Bureau will also **develop and monitor a database** on every crime under this Act. Such systematic surveillance of offenders will, in about three years, not only help prevent trafficking but pre-empt it.

Rupee drawing arrangement (RDA)

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has emerged as the top source of inward remittances, while Kerala has received the maximum funds sent from abroad, according to the Reserve Bank of India's survey of inward remittances for 201617. UAE's share in total remittances was 26.9%, followed by the United States (22.9%), Saudi Arabia (11.6%), Qatar (6.5%) and Kuwait (5.5%)
- Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu together received 58.7% of total remittances.
- More than half of remittances received by Indian residents were used for family maintenance, i.e., consumption (59.2%), followed by deposits in banks (20%) and investments in landed property and shares (8.3%).
- 'RDA most popular' The rupee drawing arrangement (RDA) is the most popular channel of remittances which accounts for 75.2% of remittances, followed by SWIFT (19.5%), direct transfers (3.4%) and cheques and drafts (1.9%).

National Policy on Biofuels - 2018

Background:

In order to promote biofuels in the country, a National Policy on Biofuels was made by Ministry of New and Renewable Energy during the year 2009. Globally, biofuels have caught the attention in last decade and it is imperative to keep up with the pace of developments in the field of biofuels. Biofuels in India are of strategic importance as it augers well with the ongoing initiatives of the Government such as Make in India, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill Development and offers great opportunity to integrate with the ambitious targets of doubling of Farmers Income, Import Reduction, Employment Generation, Waste to Wealth Creation. Biofuels programme in India has been largely impacted due to the sustained and quantum non-availability of domestic feedstock for biofuel production which needs to be addressed.

Salient Features:

- The Policy categorises biofuels as "Basic Biofuels" viz. First Generation (1G) bioethanol & biodiesel and "Advanced Biofuels" - Second Generation (2G) ethanol, Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) to drop-in fuels, Third Generation (3G) biofuels, bio-CNG etc. to enable extension of appropriate financial and fiscal incentives under each category.
 - The Policy expands the scope of raw material for ethanol production by allowing use of Sugarcane Juice, Sugar containing materials like Sugar Beet, Sweet Sorghum, Starch containing materials like Corn, Cassava, Damaged food grains like wheat, broken rice, Rotten Potatoes, unfit for human consumption for ethanol production.
 - Farmers are at a risk of not getting appropriate price for their produce during the surplus production phase. Taking this into account, the Policy allows use of surplus food grains for production of ethanol for blending with petrol with the approval of National Biofuel Coordination Committee.
 - With a thrust on Advanced Biofuels, the Policy indicates a viability gap funding scheme for 2G ethanol Bio refineries of Rs.5000 crore in 6 years in addition to additional tax incentives, higher purchase price as compared to 1G biofuels.
 - The Policy encourages setting up of supply chain mechanisms for biodiesel production from non-edible oilseeds, Used Cooking Oil, short gestation crops.
 - Roles and responsibilities of all the concerned Ministries/Departments with respect to biofuels has been captured in the Policy document to synergise efforts.
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