

With just 55 to 60 District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRC) made functional so far out of the targeted 269 in designated districts, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment has said that it feels the Union government is “somewhat casual” in its approach to complete this task. It said the government should lay down a proper road map with timelines for the execution of the work needed to establish the DDRCs in every district of the country as targeted. Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Pratima Bhoumik said that as of December 8, 269 DDRCs had been “set up” across the country. The reply defined DDRCs set up as ones that have been given “funds at least once”.

U.S.-China relations have witnessed an unprecedented downturn in 2022. Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan in August and the imposition of heavy restrictions on China's semiconductor industry by the U.S. in October have fanned the flames of rivalry between the two nations. Mr. Biden and Mr. Xi discussed outstanding matters related to U.S.-China relations for nearly three hours on the sidelines of the G-20 meeting in Bali. Easing tensions and reopening channels of communication were agreed upon by both the leaders.

While the meeting between the two heads of states certainly imply that there is a move toward bringing in more stability into bilateral relations, to what extent could this move be aimed at taking the relation to where it was before the trade war remains questionable.

The Chinese troops unilaterally tried to alter the status quo on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Arunachal Pradesh on December 9 and the move was contested by Indian soldiers in a firm and resolute manner, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Tuesday. Making a statement in both Houses of Parliament on the clash at Yangtse in Tawang sector, Mr. Singh said: “The ensuing face-off led to a physical scuffle in which the Indian Army bravely prevented the PLA [People's Liberation Army] from transgressing into our territory and compelled them to return to their posts.

Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport's security infrastructure “has frozen over time” and failed to keep pace with the increase in flights and passengers, a top Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) official said on a day a Parliamentary panel announced its decision to summon the airport's Chief Executive Officer, Videh Kumar Jaipuria.

₹ 10.09 lakh crore, the worth of the bad loans written off by banks during the last five financial years, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman informed Parliament. Non-performing assets, including those in respect of which full provisioning has

BENEFITS OF NATIONAL POLICY OF RARE DISEASES (NPRD) NOT REACHING PATIENTS

1. A Rajya Sabha MP highlighted lack of urgency on part of Centres of Excellence (CoE) to raise concerns over benefits of NPRD not reaching patients. Under NPRD, CoE are government notified tertiary hospitals with facilities for diagnosis, prevention and treatment of rare diseases. NPRD aims at lowering incidence and prevalence of rare diseases through a comprehensive preventive strategy.
2. **Key features of NPRD**-Classification of diseases Group 1: Disorders amenable to one-time curative treatment. Group 2: Diseases requiring long term / lifelong treatment having relatively lower cost of treatment. Group 3: Diseases for which definitive treatment is available but challenges are to make optimal patient selection for benefit, very high cost and lifelong therapy.
3. **Government's support in treatment**-Financial support under Umbrella Scheme of Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi by Central Government for treatment of Group 1 diseases. State Governments can consider supporting patients of such rare listed under Group.
4. **Prevention at different levels**-Primary prevention: preventing birth of an affected child. Secondary prevention: avoiding birth of affected foetus. Tertiary prevention: medical rehabilitation to rare disease patients.
5. **About Rare diseases**-WHO defines rare disease as often debilitating lifelong disease or disorder with a prevalence of 1 or less, per 1000 population. There are between 7000 - 8000 rare diseases and about 95% have no approved treatment. Challenges faced: lack of awareness among primary care physicians, lack of adequate screening and diagnostic facilities, unavailability of treatment, prohibitive cost of treatment etc.

HIGH USE OF SUBSIDISED FERTILISERS RAISES CROP YIELD FEARS

1. Data from Department of Fertilisers shows an increase in sale of both urea and di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) fertilisers during April-October 2022 over the corresponding seven months of previous year. Resulting nutrient imbalance owing to their use (disproportionate to other fertilisers) could have implications for soil health, ultimately affecting crop yields.
2. High government subsidies are behind low pricing, and high sales, of these two fertilisers. Government is making available fertilisers to farmers at subsidized prices through fertilizer manufacturers/importers. While urea is being provided at a statutorily notified maximum retail price (MRP), for phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertiliser there is a nutrient-based subsidy scheme. Fertiliser subsidy stood at around ₹1.6 lakh crore in 2021-22.
3. **Issues with excess use of Fertiliser**-High Subsidy burden. Multi-nutrient deficiencies and deterioration of soil health. Deviation from ideal nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P) and potassium (K) use ratio of 4:2:1 Possibility of nitrate contamination in groundwater.
4. **Measures taken by government for making subsidy regime more efficient**-One Nation, One Fertiliser (ONOF) Scheme Soil Health Card for wise Fertiliser use Production of Neem coated Urea.

PRIVATE MEMBER BILL SEEKS PM-LED PANEL FOR SELECTING CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER (CEC)

1. Tabling of the Bill comes at a time when Supreme Court (SC) is hearing petitions on need for reforms in appointment of CEC and Election Commissioners (EC). SC has questioned government on method to pick CEC and also asked centre for reasons of not come up with any law to regulate appointment of CEC and ECs yet.
2. Under Article 324(2), President is empowered to appoint CEC and ECs. President, who acts on aid and advise of Prime Minister and council of ministers, will make appointments “subject to provisions of any law made in that behalf by Parliament”.
3. **Issues related to appointment/removal of CEC and EC**-Appointment is done solely by executive thus giving unfettered discretion to ruling party to choose someone whose loyalty to it is ensured. Constitution has not prescribed qualifications (legal, educational, administrative or judicial) of CEC/EC. Safeguards to CEC from arbitrary removal (can be removed from office only by

been made on completion of four years, have been removed by way of write-off.

1,500 number of complaints of cybercrime reported daily across the country in the last three years of which only 2% have turned into FIRs, the Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai informed Parliament. More than 16 lakh cybercrime incidents have been reported and more than 32,000 FIRs have been registered.

1,811 number of NGOs whose FCRA registration was cancelled by the government between 2019-21 for alleged violation of law, the Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai informed Parliament. Any NGO which intends to receive foreign funding must register under the FCRA.

Evading a direct reply on the possible inclusion of Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, the Union Home Ministry has informed a Parliamentary panel that the main objective of the inclusion of tribal populations under the said Schedule is to ensure their overall socio-economic development, which the Union Territory's administration "has already been taking care of since its creation".

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and his British counterpart Kemi Badenoch held the sixth round of discussion on the India-U.K. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) which had been stalled over multiple issues, including reported Indian demand for greater number of student visas and political turmoil in the U.K.

Hailing Sri Aurobindo's life and work as reflecting the oneness and cultural pre-eminence of the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the poet-philosopher's modern thoughts, higher consciousness and uncompromising nationalism should inspire India's leadership role in the world in greater measure. In his address after virtually releasing a commemorative coin and postage stamp to mark the ongoing 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Sri Aurobindo at a function hosted at the Kamban Kalaiarangam, Mr. Modi likened the country to an immortal seed which may be suppressed a little under adverse circumstances, even wither a little, but cannot die.

order of President, just like a judge of Supreme Court). However similar protection is not provided to ECs.

4. **Amount Member Bill**-Any bill introduced by a member other than a minister. Mostly introduced and discussed on Fridays. Admissibility is decided by Chairman in case of Rajya Sabha and Speaker in case of Lok Sabha. No private member's bill has become an Act since 1970.

INDIA SEEKS VIEWS OF MEMBER NATIONS ON WTO'S ROLE IN PROTECTING E-COMMERCE CONSUMERS.

1. India also expressed interest to understand experiences of other countries and increasing cooperation among enforcement agencies regarding consumer protection in e-commerce space. In 1998, WTO established work programme on e-commerce to comprehensively examine all trade-related issues relating to this. It instructed WTO bodies (including Council on Trade in Goods, Council on Trade in Services etc) to explore relationship between existing WTO agreements and e-commerce.
2. It also agreed for a moratorium on e-commerce which entails that members should not impose customs duties on electronic transmissions (encompasses software, emails, digital music, movies, videogames etc). Work programme defines e-commerce as production, distribution, marketing, sale or delivery of goods and services by electronic means.
3. E-commerce had brought many benefits such as wider basket of goods and services at competitive prices, ease of transaction from home, and more secure payment options. However, it had also created several new challenges such as misleading advertising, online payment security, strong seller's position relative to customers, data protection etc.
4. **Initiatives taken in India**-Consumer Protection (e-Commerce) Rules, 2020. Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) published an Indian Standard for organizations publishing consumer reviews.

INDIA INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM (IGF) 2022 CONCLUDES

1. India IGF is an initiative associated with UN Internet Governance Forum, a multi-stakeholder platform to discuss public policy issues related to Internet. Internet Governance is development and application by Governments, private sector and civil society, in their respective roles, of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that shape evolution and use of Internet.
2. It includes Physical Infrastructure layer, Code or Logical layer, Content layer and Security. It involves IP Addressing, Domain Name System (DNS), Routing, Technical Innovations, Standardization, Security, Privacy etc.
3. Internet governance is significant because of Internet's potential to foster sustainable human development and building of inclusive knowledge societies, and enhancing free flow of information and ideas. Though, there is no single organisation in charge of Internet, major actors include Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), IGF, Internet companies, NGOs etc.
4. **India also supports a multi-stakeholder** approach in matters on Internet Governance. Principles of Internet governance. Challenges to Internet governance: Continuously evolving nature of internet, concentration of digital power in a few companies and countries, decision making skewed to supply side rather than to demand side etc.



"If you want to achieve; BE"

DR. KHAN
(KSG)