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4th, March, 2023

Today's Topics Covered

- 1) Himachal Pradesh initiative towards bio-energy sector.....Read in detail
- 2) Himachal Pradesh Sadhbhawana Legacy Cases Resolution Scheme, 2023....Read in detail
- 3) PRADHAV' campaign 'The Hackathon to wipe out the drugs' by Himachal Pradesh GovernmentRead in detail



Topic: Himachal Pradesh initiative towards bio-energy sector.

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

Importance for Prelims: Current Events in Himachal Pradesh.

Importance for Mains Exam:

- *PAPER-VI: GENERAL STUDIES-III : UNIT II: Modern and emerging technologies and initiatives in the State of Himachal Pradesh Including biotechnology policy, research, vision, scope and applications for developing horticulture, medicinal and aromatic plants resources of the State.*

What is the news?

- The State Government is all set to partner with the Indian School of Business (ISB) to provide policy inputs and research support for the emerging bio-energy sector. This was stated by Chief Minister, Thakur Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu while presiding over a meeting with the representatives of ISB .
- The State Government would initiate a pilot project for Bio-energy production from pine needles and bamboo as the State is blessed with an enormous wealth of conifer forests and has a high potential for bamboo production, said the Chief Minister. The project would involve the local community and increase their income.



Chief Minister shared:

- Many sectors like thermal power, cement and steel were exploring fossil fuel substitutes to reduce emissions. Thus, the scope can be expanded to include fuel briquettes made from pine needles as potential substitutes, which has the advantage of much higher calorific value and this would also pave the way for strengthening the rural economy”, said Sh. Sukhu.

How this collaboration will help?

- ISB would provide the business model and technology to make this project a success, with the assistance and cooperation of the State Government, said the Chief Minister, adding that ISB would also ensure adequate market linkage.

Government already initiated steps:

- As the Government mandate for ethanol blending in petrol has increased from 10 percent to 20 percent with an ambition to achieve the target of 'Green Energy State' by 2025, the ISB would also undertake the task of making ethanol, compressed bio-gas and bio-fertilizer from bamboo, he said. The residue of ethanol production from bamboo serves as feedstock for the production of compressed bio-gas and bio-fertilizer in large quantities, he added.
- Emphasizing the importance of community ownership of forests, the Chief Minister said that it provides incentives for communities to protect, and manage them sustainably. He further said that community ownership of forest land is associated with greater social responsibility and increased incentives for forest protection. This would attract industrial partners and private investments, as it improves environmental, social, and governance issues.

(Source: HP Government)

Topic: Himachal Pradesh Sadhbhawana Legacy Cases Resolution Scheme, 2023

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

Importance for Prelims: Economic and social development – sustainable development poverty, inclusion, demographics, social sector initiatives, etc.

Importance for Mains Exam:

- *PAPER-VI: GENERAL STUDIES-III : UNIT II: Sectoral Composition with respect to contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Employment.*

What is the news?

- In a move to provide a major relief to the small and marginal traders and settle approximately 50,000 cases of pre-GST era under litigation or tax assessment, the State Government has announced to roll out a new scheme named 'Himachal Pradesh Sadhbhawana Legacy Cases Resolution Scheme, 2023'.



How this scheme will benefit?

- The new scheme is expected to benefit both traders and the department of State Taxes and Excise, as it will help to dispose-off all pending legacy cases and recover arrears currently stuck in litigation. This would allow the stakeholders as well as the department to focus on

GST compliances.

- This ambitious Scheme will help in disposing-off the pending legacy cases and settlement of arrears which are under litigation or are yet to be assessed. The dealer is required to pay due tax along-with applicable settlement fee, but this does not offer any waiver of tax component.

Commissioner, State Taxes and Excise Yunus shared:

- The stakeholders may apply under the scheme by visiting the concerned department's circle office. The dealers will have to deposit applicable settlement fee online in relevant head of account of subsumed enactment and the State Government aims to generate a revenue collection about Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 crore by settling almost 50,000 pending cases.

Chief Minister, Thakur Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said:

- The Scheme shall be valid initially for a period of 3 months and will be available for the pre-GST taxpayers to resolve the tax liability and disputes. Under the said Scheme, taxpayers will be able to pay the outstanding tax amounts due and be free from any other consequences under the Law, while receiving full waivers of interests and penalties.

(Source: HP Government)



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Topic: 'PRADHAV' campaign 'The Hackathon to wipe out the drugs' by Himachal Pradesh Government

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

Importance for Prelims: Current Events in Himachal Pradesh.

Importance for Mains Exam:

- *PAPER-V: GENERAL STUDIES-II : UNIT II: Cybercrime and drug menace – mechanism to detect and control it in Himachal Pradesh.*

What is the news?

- State Government is making earnest efforts to protect and aware the school students from falling prey to the drugs and drug peddlers. The Government has started the 'PRADHAV' campaign 'The Hackathon to wipe out the drugs', spearheaded by the office of Additional Director General of Police.



What is the aim of this?

- Aims to aware students in this direction, besides expecting from them, to give information to police, if they see or feel suspicious of any such activity around their school or elsewhere.

Education Minister, Rohit Thakur shared:

- "It has become imperative and needs to be ingrained in the mind of every child in Himachal that we together can fight this evil and can contribute towards building a healthy society.
- Ignorance of consequences of the drugs, sheer curiosity, mental, emotional and psychological reasons often draw students into drug addiction. The department must make necessary changes in the education system policies besides functioning jointly with Police, Social Justice and Empowerment, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj departments for eradication of drugs from the State,

said the Minister.

- He asked the National Council for Education, Research and Training (NCERT) and Himachal Pradesh Board of School Education (HPBOSE) to prepare an age appropriate curriculum to educate children about ill effects of drug abuse and integrate the same into the curriculum of schools and colleges. He also stressed on the need to have a state-wide mental health helpline through which virtual counselling of children could be carried out even in the remotest parts of the state.
- He said that besides making yoga, sports, and physical activities a mandatory part in the curriculum the school authorities must conduct capacity building sessions jointly with the Social Justice and Empowerment Department. He also stressed on the periodic visits of psychologists, counsellors for conducting drug awareness campaigns in schools and colleges. It will robust the mental and physical health of children that would help in weaning them away from drugs, said the Minister.

(Source: HP Government)

Topic: SOPs to prevent tax fraudsters to enter GST system

Importance: Himachal HPAS Prelims and Mains

Importance for Prelims: Economic and social development – sustainable development poverty, inclusion, demographics, social sector initiatives, etc.

Importance for Mains Exam:

- ***PAPER-VI: GENERAL STUDIES-III : UNIT II: Sectoral Composition with respect to contribution to Gross***

Domestic Product (GDP) and Employment.

What is the news?

- The Commissioner, State Taxes and Excise, Yunus, in a release issued here today, stated that the department has framed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to prevent tax fraudsters from entering into the GST system at the registration stage itself.
- It has been observed that registration applications from persons declaring fake details in registration applications are being regularly received by the Tax authorities.

How it will help?

- The department has come out with SOP's to be adhered to by the tax officers while granting registrations to prevent tax fraudsters from entering into the GST system which mandates physical verification within 30 days of the date of registration, proper evaluation of attached reference documents viz: electricity bills, rent agreements, purchase deeds etc.
- Apart from this careful evaluation is to be done by the tax officers of the basic details filled in by the applicant with AADHAR card or any other reference identity in case of the application where a person is not a resident of the State. There will be no deemed approval as the processing of registration application will be dealt within a prescribed timeline.

(Source: HP Government)

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