

## **Editor's Desk**

### **Policy Times A monthly newsletter of GPA Policy Cell**

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2020 has been, what one can describe, at the least, as an extraordinary one. Months of lockdown led to normalisation of WFH and wide acceptance of Virtual Engagements by even the traditional sceptics within the Government. As we embrace 2021, it is time to look ahead with optimism, as our Government approves two vaccines for emergency use. Well begun is half done!

In this issue, as we start 2021, we cover the key policies the Government of India is formulating or planning to launch in the coming year. The National and State Policies of December have been mentioned in detail in our first issue of the new year.

#### **The Key Policies of 2021 include:**

- **National Cyber Security Policy**
- **New Data Centre Policy**
- **Discussions on Coastal Shipping Bill has begun**
- **The launch of "Brand India" mission**

#### **National Policies include:**


- **Introducing adoption of E20 fuel**
- **Indian Port Bills is up for consultation**
- **Central Investment Clearance Cell to be launched on April 1, 2021**
- **Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020**
- **RBI introduces "Positive Pay System"**

#### **State Policies Include:**

- **Karnataka Parliament passes the Land Reforms (Amendment) Bill**
- **Gujarat announced a new policy on Solar Energy**
- **Jharkhand Government approves loan waivers for 9 lakh farmers.**

December 2020 saw the Government push the Atmanirbharta initiative, putting our Country on the trajectory of potential increased participation in Global Value Chains and manufacturing. While ensuring that India adheres to its Paris Climate Accords targets, the government is actively looking to introduce the E-20 bio-fuel while encouraging research and development in new lithium-ion technology. Introducing drafts of the Indian Ports Bill (2020) and powering ease of doing business through the Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020 are important steps which will help bolster the Make in India initiative.

To keep the momentum going, the Ministry of Commerce plans to launch the "Brand India" mission, to give a fillip to the cause of "ease of doing business". A Central Investment



Clearance System (under the Single Window System) is also in the works and is scheduled for launch in April 2021. The Ministry of Petroleum has also started to formulate plans to end India's "energy poverty" by increasing the share of natural gas in India's energy mix.

On the international front, India is eagerly looking forward to President-elect Joe Biden take charge at the White House. In Europe, the UK and European Union have finally agreed on the UK's exit from the European supranational organisation. What an ordeal that was. UK and India are preparing early harvest trade deals to set the stage for a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement.

On the domestic front, headlining the news is the Farmers protest. In response to the protest, the Government is negotiating empathetically with the farmers' unions' representatives to resolve issues. The Prime Minister, has released Rs.18,000 crores to over 9 Crore farmers through the PM-Kisan scheme. State governments like Jharkhand have launched new schemes for loan waivers, while the Karnataka Government passed new bills in line with the centre's farm bills.

2021 will be the year for the State and the Centre in India to formulate the mechanism for safe vaccine distribution to the masses. On the policy front, the Government has set its sights on making India a stable investment destination and is expected to continue to come up with important policies that will take the economy forward. 2021 will set an Indian standard for the "new normal".

Wish you all a Fantastic Year Ahead and we look forward to meeting many of you, face to face !