

Industrial policy: Punjab Cabinet nod for guidelines on incentives

The Cabinet also agreed to revise the terms and conditions of the Dollar one million Paddy Straw Challenge Fund.

The Punjab Cabinet Monday gave its nod to the operational guidelines for availing of fiscal incentives under the industrial policy of the state.

Under the industrial policy introduced in 2017, incentives to anchor units include investment subsidy by way of reimbursement of net SGST (State Goods and Service Tax) for a period of 15 years subject to 200 per cent of FCI (Fixed Capital Investment), 100 per cent electricity duty exemption, 100 per cent exemption/reimbursement of stamp duty, 100 per cent exemption of CLU/EDC charges, employment generation subsidy, according to a government statement.

The industrialists had sought proper guidelines from the government and these were chalked out in consultation with the stakeholders. The policy has a special mechanism for the revival of stressed assets of sick units, the statement claimed. The government is an active partner with the industry to address the demand for skilled manpower. Job fairs are being organised in every district, it added.

Similarly, fiscal incentives and non-fiscal incentives have been provided for thrust sectors, Large, MSME and border zone Industries as well. For ease of doing business, Punjab Bureau of Investment promotion office provides a one-stop solution to all investors in obtaining regulatory and fiscal incentive approvals from the conceptualization stage to the grounding of project and after care also.

The statement said the operational guidelines were finalised after wide consultations with the Industry stakeholders. It said that the power tariff at Rs 5 per unit has been notified for all categories of Industry resulting in the rejuvenation of a large section of industry which is power intensive in nature. The State government has proactively abolished Truck Unions to ease logistics hurdles. The Cluster development programs for existing micro and small industries have been fast-tracked. The State will set up 4 new Industrial parks and 12 new Industrial Estates.

In another important decision, the Cabinet agreed to revise the terms and conditions of the Dollar one million Paddy Straw Challenge Fund, as per the suggestions from Punjab State Farmers' and Farm Workers' Commission and Punjab Agricultural University, to find a viable technological solution to combat the menace of paddy straw burning.

The Cabinet felt the terms and conditions of the Paddy Straw Challenge Fund should be easy and simple, allowing a larger number of institutions/individuals offering different technological solutions to participate in the contest.

The Cabinet discussed that the technology developed in this regard should emphasise on the criteria to ensure decomposition/degradation of in-situ, surface-retained paddy straw within 20 days of combine harvesting so as to enable unhindered sowing with the conventional drill.

Further, it should be safe for the crop and environment in the short and long term, with no negative impact on soil, crop productivity and human health. Technologies found achieving the target of less than 20 days, safety and efficiency (in this order of priority) would be employed for further ranking. The emerging technology should be applicable to the currently recommended varieties of paddy in this state and should have a favourable cost to benefit ratio.

About the challenge fund, the Cabinet decided that the application fee for participation in the challenge should be Rs 1.25 lakh/\$2000 per entry and it should be open to international entities active in the field.

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