Prime Minister WiFi Access Network Interface (PM- WANI)

December 10, 2020

`In news`

Recently, Union Cabinet approved setting up of public WiFi networks under PM-WANI

`Salient features of PM-WANI`

- Under PM-WANI, WiFi will be provided through public data offices (PDOs)
- There shall be no license fee for providing Broadband Internet through these public Wi-Fi networks.
- The PDO, to be set up along the lines of public calling office, can be a mom-and-pop store in the area or the common services centre present in various small towns, gram panchayats, and villages in the country.
- The PDOs can either provide the internet on other own or lease it from other telecom and internet service providers
- **Public Data Office (PDO):** It will establish, maintain, and operate only WANI compliant Wi-Fi Access Points and deliver broadband services to subscribers.
- **Public Data Office Aggregator (PDOA):** It will be an aggregator of PDOs and perform the functions relating to Authorization and Accounting.
- **App Provider:** It will develop an App to register users and discover WANI compliant Wi-Fi hotspots in the nearby area and display the same within the App for accessing the internet service.
- **Central Registry:** It will maintain the details of App Providers, PDOAs, and PDOs. To begin with, the Central Registry will be maintained by C-DoT.
- While no registration would be required for PDOs, PDOAs

and App Providers will get themselves registered with the Department of Telecommunications(DoT) through online registration portal (SARALSANCHAR; https://saralsanchar.gov.in) of DoT, without paying any registration fee. Registration shall be granted within 7 days of the application.

Background

The idea of a PDO was first floated by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India in 2017. Six months later, it set up the initial pilot project for PDO, in which companies such as Facebook, and the government's C-DOT had participated. Like a PCO, the PDO allows users to connect to a public WiFi system for a limited session depending on the internet pack chosen by the user.

Significance

The proposal will promote the growth of Public Wi-Fi Networks in the country and, in turn, will help in proliferation of Broadband Internet, enhancement of income and employment and empowerment of people.