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1. Central Consumer Protection Authority Issues Guidelines for "Prevention of Misleading Advertisement in Coaching Sector"**Introduction**

In a significant move to protect the rights of consumers and maintain transparency in the coaching sector, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued comprehensive guidelines to address the issue of misleading advertisements in the coaching sector.

About Guidelines

'Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisement in Coaching Sector, 2024,' aim to safeguard students and the public from

deceptive marketing practices commonly employed by coaching centers.

Some of the important definition in the Guidelines are as follows:-

- i. "Coaching" includes academic support, imparting education, guidance, instructions, study programme or tuition or any other activity of similar nature but does not include counselling, sports, dance, theatre and other creative activities;
- ii. "Coaching Center" includes a center, established, run, or administered by any person(s) for providing coaching to more than fifty students;
- iii. "Endorser" shall have the same meaning as provided under clause 2(f) of the Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisements and Endorsements for Misleading Advertisements, 2022;

These guidelines are drafted in the wake of growing concerns about false/misleading claims, exaggerated success rates, and unfair contracts that coaching institutes often impose on students. Such practices have been found to mislead students, influencing their decisions by concealing important information, giving false guarantee etc.

The guidelines will apply to every person engaged in coaching, meaning not just the coaching centers, but also any endorsers or public figures promoting their services through advertisements. Endorsers, who lend their name or reputation to coaching centers, will now

be responsible for ensuring that the claims they endorse are accurate and truthful. Endorsers who endorse coaching institutes must verify the claims they are promoting. If they support false success rates or misleading guarantees, they will be held accountable alongside the coaching centres.

Key Highlights

Some of the Key Highlights of the Guidelines:

i. Regulation of Advertisements: The guidelines explicitly prohibit coaching institutes from making false claims related to:

- a. The courses offered, their duration, faculty qualifications, fees, and refund policies.
- b. Selection rates, success stories, exam rankings, and job security promises.
- c. Assured admissions, high exam scores, guaranteed selections or promotions.

ii. Truthful Representation: Misleading representations about the quality or standard of their services are strictly prohibited. Coaching institutes must accurately represent their infrastructure, resources, and facilities.

iii. Students' Success Stories: In a notable move, the guidelines reportedly will prevent coaching centers from using students' names, photos, or testimonials in advertisements without their written consent—and importantly, this consent must be obtained only after the student's success. This provision is intended to reduce the pressure student's face when enrolling, as they are often pushed into signing such agreements upfront.

iv. Transparency and Disclosure: Coaching centers will need to disclose important information, such as the name, rank, and course details alongside the student's photo in an advertisements.

Whether the course was paid for by the student that too must be clearly stated. Additionally, any disclaimers will need to be prominently displayed, with the same font size as other important details, ensuring that consumers are not misled by fine print.

v. No Creation of False Urgency: The guidelines will reportedly target the common tactic used by any person engaged in coaching i.e. creating a false sense of urgency or scarcity, such as implying limited seats or exaggerated demand, to pressure students into making immediate decision.

vi. Convergence with National Consumer Helpline: Every coaching center will be required to partner with the National Consumer Helpline, making it easier for students to raise concerns or complaints regarding misleading advertisements and unfair trade practices.

vii. Fair Contracts: The guidelines are also said to address the issue of unfair contracts that students are often enter into with coaching centers. Coaching institutes will no longer be allowed to use successful candidate's photographs, names, or testimonials without post-selection consent. This provision is intended to eliminate the pressure that many students face when enrolling in coaching centers.

viii. Enforcement and Penalties: Any violation of these guidelines will be treated as a contravention of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. The Central Authority has the power to take stringent actions against offenders, including imposing penalties, ensuring accountability, and preventing further occurrences of such deceptive practices.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: PIB

2. India Secures Top 10 Spot in Patents, Trademarks, and Industrial Designs: WIPO 2024 Report

Introduction



The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has released its World Intellectual Property Indicators (WIPI) 2024 report, highlighting significant trends in intellectual property (IP) filings across the globe. India has made notable strides, securing a place in the top 10 countries for patents, trademarks, and industrial designs, showcasing its growing influence in the global IP landscape.

Surge in Patent Filings

India recorded the fastest growth in patent filings among the top 20 countries, with a 15.7% increase in 2023. This marks the fifth consecutive year of double-digit growth. The country ranks

sixth globally, with 64,480 patent applications. Notably, more than half (55.2%) of these were filed by residents—a milestone for India. The patent office also saw a remarkable 149.4% rise in granted patents compared to the previous year, reflecting the country's rapidly evolving IP ecosystem.

Growth in Industrial Design Applications

India witnessed a significant 36.4% increase in industrial design applications, driven by the growing focus on product design, manufacturing, and creative industries. The leading sectors contributing to this growth were Textiles and Accessories, Tools and Machines, and Health and Cosmetics, which together accounted for nearly half of all design filings.

Expansion in Trademark Filings

India ranked fourth globally in trademark filings, with a 6.1% increase in 2023. Nearly 90% of these filings came from residents, with the Health (21.9%), Agriculture (15.3%), and Clothing (12.8%) sectors leading the way. The trademark office in India now holds the second-largest number of active registrations globally, with over 3.2 million trademarks, demonstrating India's strong commitment to brand protection.

Long-Term Trends in IP Growth

Between 2018 and 2023, India's patent and industrial design applications more than doubled, while trademark filings rose by 60%. This surge highlights the country's emphasis on innovation and intellectual property. The patent-to-GDP ratio also saw significant growth, increasing from 144 to 381 over the past decade, indicating that IP activity is scaling alongside India's economic expansion.

Global IP Trends and India's Role

Globally, 2023 saw a record 3.55 million patent applications, up 2.7% from the previous year. This growth was largely driven by resident filings in key Asian economies like China, the United States, Japan, South Korea, and India. The shift towards local innovation underscores efforts to strengthen domestic IP landscapes.

Government Initiatives Fueling Innovation

The findings from WIPO's 2024 report highlight India's progress in innovation and intellectual property, underpinned by various government initiatives aimed at making the country a global leader in innovation. The steady increase in resident filings reflects the success of these efforts in fostering a robust IP ecosystem.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Economics

Source: PIB

3. All about MATES, a new scheme for young Indians to work in Australia

Introduction



Australia has come up with a new scheme that allows talented young people from India to work in the country for some time.

What is MATES?

According to the department of home affairs of Australia, MATES gives Indian university graduates and early career professionals a chance to work in

Australia for two years.

On May 23, 2023, Australia and India entered into a Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA). The MMPA is a bilateral framework that supports and promotes two-way migration and mobility between the two countries, while addressing issues pertaining to illegal and irregular migration. MATES has been established under the MMPA.

This scheme will open for professionals from December this year, said Gaurav Chaudhary, immigration consultant of Ludhiana-based education consultancy EDU Planet.

Who can apply for a visa under MATES?

MATES is open to Indian nationals who are aged 30 or younger at the time of application; have not previously participated in MATES; have proficient English language skills (overall IELTS or equivalent score of at least 6, with a minimum score of 5 for each of the four modules); have graduated within 2 years from an eligible educational institution at the time of application; and hold a qualification (Bachelor's degree or higher) in one of the following: renewable energy, mining, engineering, Information Communications Technology (ICT), artificial intelligence (AI), financial technology (FinTech) and agricultural technology (AgriTech).

Graduates from the top 100 universities of India as per the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranking 2024 will be eligible for this scheme. From Punjab, the eligible universities are: Panjab University, Chandigarh University, Thapar Institute of Engineering and Technology, and Lovely Professional University.

Is there an Australian employer sponsorship requirement?

No, there is no requirement for sponsorship by an Australian employer.

What are the advantages of this scheme?

MATES participants will be able to live and work in Australia for up to 2 years. Whilst there is no strict requirement for visa holders to work in their nominated field of study, it is designed to support young professionals expand their skills and networks, particularly in the sectors listed above.

MATES will commence as a pilot programme with 3,000 places for primary applicants per programme per year. Participants will be able to apply to bring dependents (spouses and dependent children). Dependents will have work rights in Australia, and will not count towards the annual cap.

What is the duration of stay?

Visa holders will have 12 months to make their first entry into Australia, and may stay in Australia for 24 months from the date of first entry. The visa will allow multiple entries to Australia.

Participants may extend their period of stay by applying for another visa permitting temporary or permanent residence, provided they meet all eligibility requirements for the visa.

How will the visa be granted?

Visa will be granted through ballot. The ballot randomly selects people to apply for visa. Ballot application fee is Australian dollar (AUD) 25, and afterwards the shortlisted candidates will proceed for further formalities, said Gaurav Chaudhary.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Relations

Source: Indian Express