

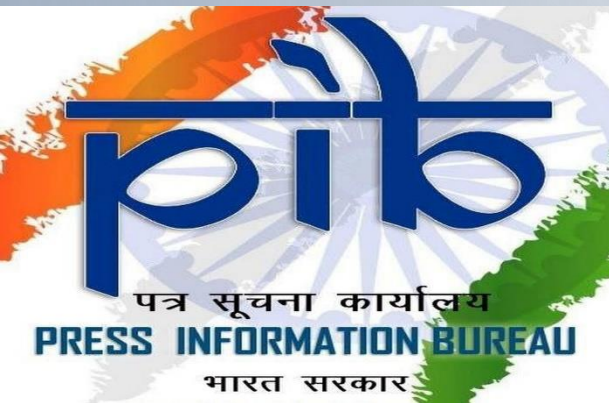


# CURRENT AFFAIRS



## WEEKLY ROUND-UP

- ✓ **PIB IN DETAIL**
- ✓ **AIR/RS/LSTV SUMMARIES**
- ✓ **NEWSPAPERS DAILY**



**23<sup>rd</sup> JULY TO 28<sup>th</sup> JULY, 2018**

# Public Affairs Index

- The index has been developed by Bengaluru-based think tank Public Affairs Centre.
- It ranks States in India based on 10 themes 30 focus subjects and 100 indicators.
- **The themes include,**
  - ✓ Essential infrastructure,
  - ✓ Support to human development,
  - ✓ Social protection,
  - ✓ Women and children,
  - ✓ Crime,
  - ✓ law and order,
  - ✓ Delivery of justice,
  - ✓ Environment, transparency and accountability,
  - ✓ Fiscal management and economic freedom.
- The current edition 2018 focus on the subject "The Children of India".
- The latest index released by PAC shows that Kerala has been ranked as the number one state in terms of governance for the past three years, followed by Tamil Nadu.
- Despite the political instability and the public protests seen in the recent past, Tamil Nadu continues to be ranked second in terms of governance.
- Telangana, Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka follow the top two states.
- Telangana, which had an overall ranking of 20 in 2017, has shot up to third place in the new index.
- Among smaller states, Jammu and Kashmir held its position as the best in terms of governance for the second consecutive year, followed by Himachal Pradesh.

## Rajiv Gauba panel to check cases of mob lynching

- i. High-level committee headed by Rajiv Gauba, had been constituted to check cases of “mob lynching”.
- ii. The government said a Group of Ministers (GoM), headed by Union Home Minister will consider the report of the committee and submit its recommendations to Prime Minister.

### Do you know?

- i. As per the Constitution, ‘Police’ and ‘Public Order’ are State subjects and State governments are responsible for controlling crime, maintaining law and order and protecting the life and property of the citizens.
- ii. Supreme Court condemned the recent spate of lynchings as “horrendous acts of mobocracy” and told Parliament to make lynching a separate offence.

## Girinka Programme

**Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted 200 cows to villagers from Rweru villages as part of Rwandan Government’s Girinka Programme.

### **About Girinka Programme:**

- a) The programme was initiated by President Paul Kagame in response to alarmingly high rate of childhood malnutrition and as way to accelerate poverty reduction and integrate livestock and crop farming.
- b) Under this programme, poorest residing in region get cows from Government and gift first female calf to neighbour to promote brotherhood.
- c) The programme is based on premise that providing dairy cow to poor, transforms livelihoods, reconciles communities improving agricultural productivity through use of manure as fertilizers.
- d) The program has contributed to increase in agricultural production in Rwanda – especially milk production and products and has reduced malnutrition and increased incomes.

# FDI inflows

## According to RBI –

- i. Karnataka registered the biggest increase in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) last year.
- ii. Karnataka sees 300% jump in FDI inflows and Tamil Nadu FDI inflows increased.
- iii. Gujarat, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh all saw a drop in FDI inflows.

## About Foreign direct investment:

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is a form of investment that involves the inoculation of foreign funds into an enterprise that operates in a different country of origin from the financier.

Foreign direct investment is vital part of an open and real international economic system and a major promoter to development.

## Determinates of FDI in Host Country:

### Host Country Determinants:

- a) Policy framework for FDI
  - b) Economic, political and social stability
  - c) Rules regarding entry and operations.
  - d) Standards of treatment of foreign affiliates.
  - e) Policies on functioning and structure of markets (esp. competition and merger and acquisition [M&A] Policies.
- a) International agreements on FDI
  - b) Privatization Policy
  - c) Trade policy (barriers-tariff and non-tariff) and coherence of FDI and trade policies

## Do you know?

- a) India had jumped one spot to 8th rank in the 2017 Global FDI Confidence Index.
- b) Governance and regulatory issues made up 7 of the top-10 factors that investors consider when deciding on an investment destination according to the report.
- c) However, India in 2018 has fallen out of the top 10 destinations for FDI in terms of its attractiveness, according to an AT Kearney (Global FDI Confidence Index) report.
- d) Reasons – Challenges with implementation of GST and impact of demonetization.
- e) Notable reforms done –
  - Elimination of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board, a government agency responsible for reviewing all potential foreign investment, and
  - The liberalisation of foreign investment thresholds for the retail, aviation, and biomedical industries,

### Miscellaneous

- a) Iran was the second-biggest oil supplier to Indian state refiners.
- b) According to the “World Investment Report for 2018”, issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Indian FDI in Africa in 2016-17 at \$14 billion was even lower than it was in 2011-12 at \$16 billion.



## Shekatkar Committee

- i. The committee was formed by Ministry of Defence in the year 2016.
- ii. It focussed on enhancing combat capability and rebalance defence expenditure.

Some of the recommendations taken by the ministry include

- i. Better utilization of Supply and Transportation echelons and Animal Transport Units.
- ii. Closure of Military Farms and Army Postal Establishments in peace locations.
- iii. Enhancement in standards for recruitment of clerical staff and drivers in the Army.
- iv. Improving the efficiency of the National Cadet Corps.

## Salicornia

- a) Salicornia is a plant that grows in salty marshes in the mangrove wetlands.
- b) The plant can be used as a substitute to salt with low sodium content.
- c) The patients suffering from hypertension, diabetes and gastric related ailments prefer the Salicornia salad and salt. The production of the salt substitute has come down drastically in Gujarat with the scarcity of the Salicornia. Thus India is forced to import it from Israel and Scandinavian countries.
- d) Recently, Andhra Pradesh government has intensified the efforts to tap commercial benefits from the plant through cultivation as well as extraction.
- e) The government has documented the presence of the Salicornia along the coastline of Krishna district, exploring the possibilities to extract the salt substitute through various methods.

# Second century BCE Buddhist site at Thotlakonda in Visakhapatnam

- a) Heritage conservationists and members of Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) has expressed concerns over proposed construction of amphitheatre, rest rooms and information centre at second century BCE Buddhist site, Thotlakonda in Visakhapatnam.
- b) Buildings might mar the original heritage site and are against the norms laid down by the courts.
- c) Court had ordered – no construction or development activity of any sort shall be permitted within the boundaries of the ancient site.
- d) Tourism should be developed but not at the cost of protected areas.

## Important Value Additions

- a) Thotlakonda site was first discovered in 1976
- b) The excavations conducted by ASI revealed the ruins of a well-established Theravada (Hinayana Buddhism) monastery
- c) Under Article 49 of the Constitution, the State is under obligation to protect every monument, place or object of artistic or historic interest declared to be of national importance from spoliation, disfigurement, destruction, removal, disposal or export, as the case may be. (DPSP)
- d) Under Article 51A(f) of the Constitution, there is fundamental duty to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture. (Fundamental Duties)

# Punjab seeks special category status

Punjab government asks Centre to grant it special category status under the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Swasthya Suraksha Mission.

As we know that Punjab is struggling to check the menace of drugs.

Punjab government allege that – Punjab State is a victim of proxy war waged by Pakistan

If Punjab gets special category status, that would make it eligible for higher grant from the Centre.

## Do you know?

Jammu and Kashmir, hilly and North-eastern States are under special category status. They get a higher share of central grants due to their disturbed status, difficult terrain or due to sharing border with Pakistan.

## About Special Category Status

The concept of a special category state was first introduced in 1969 when the 5th Finance Commission sought to provide certain disadvantaged states with preferential treatment in the form of central assistance and tax breaks.

Initially three states Assam, Nagaland and Jammu & Kashmir were granted special status but since then eight more have been included (Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Sikkim, Tripura and Uttarakhand ).



The rationale for special status is that certain states, because of inherent features, have a low resource base and cannot mobilize resources for development. Some of the features required for special status are:

- a) Hilly and difficult terrain;
- b) Low population density or sizeable share of tribal population;
- c) Strategic location along borders with neighbouring countries;
- d) Economic and infrastructural backwardness; and
- e) Non-viable nature of state finances.

### **About Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY)**

It aims at correcting the imbalances in the availability of affordable healthcare facilities in the different parts of the country in general, and augmenting facilities for quality medical education in the under-served States in particular.

PMSSY has two components:

- i. Setting up of AIIMS like Institutions
- ii. Upgradation of Government Medical College Institutions.

# SC on appointment of Lokpal

## **In news:**

- i. The Supreme Court of India has reprimanded the central government over the delay in appointment of Lokpal.
- ii. SC has expressed dissatisfaction over the government's stand on completing the appointment of the Lokpal.

## **About Lokpal-**

- a) Lokpal is the central governing body that has jurisdiction over all members of parliament and central government employees in case of corruption.
- b) Lokpal is an ombudsman to protect the common man from corruption in public service and power centres.

## **Do you know?**

- i. Lokayukta is similar to the Lokpal, but functions on a state level.
- ii. Government failed to appoint a Lokpal despite an April 2017 judgment by the Supreme Court.
- iii. The Supreme Court has sent across a timely message that efforts to cleanse the economy must be matched by equally strong measures to cleanse public life too.

## **The main function of Lokpal and Lokayukta is –**

- a) To address complaints of corruption,
- b) To make inquiries, investigations, and
- c) To conduct trials for the case on respective state and central government
- d) To help in curbing the corruption in the central and state government

## Issue of Lokpal appointment

- i. According to the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, a five-member panel to select the anti-corruption ombudsman, comprising the Prime Minister, the Lok Sabha Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, the Chief Justice of India and an eminent jurist.
- ii. The post leader of opposition is not recognised, as no party (other than ruling party) secured the 10% of total seats in Loksabha and it is the main reason behind delay in appointment.
- iii. The only reason for the delay in the appointment of the Lokpal is that a minor amendment to the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, to enable the leader of the largest party in the opposition in the Lok Sabha to join the five-member selection committee, is yet to be passed.
- iv. A parliamentary committee has endorsed the amendment, which is on the same lines as the mechanism for the selection panels for the Central Vigilance Commissioner and the Chief Information Commissioner.

## National Park in news: Bandipur National Park

### **About:**

- i. Bandipur National Park – located in state of Karnataka
- ii. It is one of the premier Tiger Reserves in the country along with the adjoining Nagarhole national park.

### **In news:**

- i. There is a significant reduction in the number of road kill in Bandipur ever since the ban on night traffic through the tiger reserve was introduced in 2009.
- ii. Two national highways cuts through the tiger reserve

### **Do you know?**

Bandipur, which was established in 1974 as a tiger reserve under Project Tiger, is a national park.

# Pangolin

- A special unit of the Odisha Police has launched a drive to bust an international syndicate that illegally trades pangolin.
- Pangolins are nocturnal mammals, often called “scaly anteaters,” are covered in tough, overlapping scales.
- These burrowing mammals eat ants and termites using an extraordinarily long tongue, and are able to quickly roll themselves up into a tight ball when threatened.
- There are eight different pangolin species can be found across Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.
- They are the most trafficked mammal in the world.
- They are listed as "Endangered" in IUCN red list of threatened species.
- The scales of the pangolin are sold raw or fried in Asia for as much as \$500 per kilogram for treating asthma and migraines.
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international intergovernmental agreement to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.
- TRAFFIC is the wildlife trade monitoring network, which is a non-governmental organization working globally on trade in wild animals and plants in the context of both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

