

Prelim Bits 02-08-2018

State Energy Efficiency Preparedness Index (SEEPI)

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- The 1st edition of the SEEPI was recently released jointly by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and NITI Aayog.

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- The index assessed state policies and programmes aimed at improving energy efficiency in five key sectors.

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- The sectors are buildings, industries, municipalities, transportation, agriculture and electricity distribution.

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- The criteria taken into account includes,\n

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- Sector-wise energy consumption,

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- Energy saving potential

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- States' influence in implementing energy efficiency

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- It has classified states in to four categories - front runner, achiever, contender and aspirant, based upon their efforts towards energy efficiency.

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- Kerala topped the list followed by Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh. These states are categorized as front runners.

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- Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Haryana have been categorised in the second best category of 'achiever' states.

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Commercial Courts Bill

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- The Lok Sabha has passed the Commercial Courts, Commercial Division and Commercial Appellate Division of High Courts (Amendment) Bill, 2018.
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- It will designate some courts as commercial courts for speedy disposal of commercial disputes.
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- It allows adjudication of commercial disputes with a value of at least Rs. 3 lakh. Previously the value was Rs. 1 crore.
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- It allows state governments to establish **commercial courts** at the district level in the following territories where high courts have ordinary original civil jurisdiction
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- In areas where High courts do not have original jurisdiction, it allows state governments to set up **Commercial appellate courts** to consider appeals from commercial courts below the level of a district judge.
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- The above amendments were aimed at improving the ease of doing business in India.
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- It is also argued that the transfer of all commercial disputes above Rs. 3 lakh may overburden the commercial courts and defeat the objective with which they were established.
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Tagline for Geographical Indicators

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- Ministry of Commerce and Industry has recently launched a logo and tagline for Geographical Indications (GI).
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- It is to increase awareness about intellectual property rights (IPRs) in the country.
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- A GI product is primarily an agricultural, natural or a manufactured product (handicraft and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory.
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- It is a community right rather than individual or company.
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- It is protected under Geographical indications of goods (registration and protection) act, 1999.

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- GI for a product is valid for 10 years and it can be renewed for any time.
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- It is managed by Cell for IPR promotion and Management (CIPAM) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
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- At the International level, GI is governed by WTO's Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
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- Tamil Nadu is the first among the states in India with regard to the number of GI tags for its products, while Uttar Pradesh comes second.
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- The first product in India to be accorded with GI tag was Darjeeling tea in the year 2004-05.
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- Some of the recently accorded GIs are,
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- i. Hand-crafted stone sculptures of Mamallapuram;
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- ii. Rasgulla of West Bengal;
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- iii. Pochampally Ikat of Telangana;
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- iv. Gobindobhog Rice of West Bengal;
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- v. Etikoppaka Toys of Andhra Pradesh; and
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- vi. Chakshesang Shawl of Nagaland.
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Polio

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- Recently, 28 children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) were paralyzed by the circulating vaccine-derived polio virus Type 2 (cVDPV).
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- WHO termed the health risk at national level to be very high and the risk of international spread to be high.
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- Immunisation using Oral Polio Vaccination (OPV) reduced the outbreak

caused by wild polio virus by 99.9% since 1988.

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- OPV contains weakened but live polio virus, which can cause paralytic polio.
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- The vaccine-virus is excreted by immunized children, it can move from one person to another.
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- On the one hand, a vaccinated person protects unvaccinated people she comes in contact with by spreading immunity through faeces.
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- But on the other, such circulation allows the virus to stick around and mutate to a more virulent form, raising the spectre of vaccine-derived poliovirus (VDPV).
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- VDPV, like imported wild polio, can cause outbreaks in under-immunised population.
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- It is for this reason that the eradication of polio worldwide requires OPV to be stopped and replaced with the Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV).
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- IPV is an injectable form of polio vaccine administered alone or in combination with other vaccines including the OPV (oral polio vaccine).
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- IPV does not cause VDPV but protects children equally well against polio.
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Agricultural Scientists' Recruitment Board (ASRB)

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- Union Cabinet has recently approved the proposal of restructuring of ASRB.
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- ASRB is an independent recruitment agency to various scientific positions in Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), the premier agency for agricultural research and education in the country.
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- After the recent restructuring, the budget head ASRB would be delinked from ICAR and be attached with Department of Agricultural Research & Education (DARE).
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- It will now be a 4-member body and have its own cadre of administrative staff.
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- It will be done to ensure the autonomy and efficient functioning of the institutions.

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Source: The Hindu, PIB, BusinessLine

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