Prelim Bits 03-12-2017

International Maritime Organisation

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- Click here to know more about International Maritime Organisation.
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- In its 30th session of IMO held in London, India has been re-elected to the council of IMO under “Category B”.
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- The IMO council consists of 40 members in which category A consists of 10 members, category B – 10 members and category C – 20 members.
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- The council plays a crucial role to play in deciding various important matters in relation to the global shipping industry.
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- India has had the privilege of being elected to and serving the council of the IMO, ever since it started functioning, except for two years during 1983-1984.
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- India is a party to 34 IMO Conventions and protocols.
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- It is currently in the advanced stage of ratifying Ballast Water Convention and Bunker Convention.
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Ballast Water Convention

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- Ballast water management convention was adopted in IMO in 2004.
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- It came into force in September, 2017.
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- The convention aims to prevent the spread of harmful aquatic organisms from one region to another.
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- It establishes standards and procedures for the management and control of

ships' ballast water and sediments.
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- All ships in international traffic are required to manage their ballast water and sediments to a certain standard according to the management plan.
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Bunker Convention

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- The convention was adopted in 2001 and came into force in 2008.
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- Its aim is to ensure that adequate, prompt, and effective compensation is available to persons who suffer damage caused by spills of oil, when carried as fuel in ships' bunkers.
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- It applies to damage caused on the territory, including the territorial sea, and in exclusive economic zones of States Parties.
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- It is modeled on the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969.
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- Upon ratification, it applies to an Indian vessel, wherever it is situated, and to a foreign flag vessel while it is within Indian jurisdiction.
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Kapu Reservation Bill

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- The Kapu community, with 27 per cent population in the state of Andhra Pradesh, has been demanding reservations for decades.
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- In 2016, Manjunath Commission was set up to recommend quota for Kapus and it has submitted its report.
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- The Kapu reservation bill was recently passed by the assembly, providing 5% quota in education and employment in the state.
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- The kapu, Telaga, Balija and ontari communities would get the quota under the new cateogory ‘F’.
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- There will be no political quota, meaning no reservation in political posts or positions.
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- With this reservation, it will take the total quota in the state to 55 per cent, which is more than 50 per cent limit restricted by the Supreme Court.
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- Thus it makes the central government nod necessary for inclusion in the Schedule IX of the constitution.
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- The existing quota for Backward Communities remains unaffected.
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Womb Transplant

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- The first birth as a result of a womb transplant in the United States has occurred recently.
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- A doctor in Sweden, Mats Brannstrom, is the first in the world to deliver a baby as a result of a uterus transplant.
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- The transplant helps women who had been born without uterus to bear children.
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- Firstly, in vitro fertilization to retrieve and fertilize their eggs will take place to produce embryos.
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- Then the embryos will be in frozen condition until they are ready to attempt pregnancy.
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- After the uterus transplant, the embryos can be thawed and implanted.
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Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

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- It is a viral respiratory disease of zoonotic origin caused by the SARS coronavirus.
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- It leads to shortness of breath and/or pneumonia.

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- The only symptom common to all patients appears to be a fever above 38 °C (100 °F).
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- There is no vaccine for SARS and no cases have been reported worldwide since 2004.
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- According to WHO, SARS affected regions include China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Canada.
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- Recently, Chinese virologists have found the origins of the SARS outbreak in 2003.
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- A single population of horseshoe bats in a cave in Yunnan province in China caused the outbreak.
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Source: The Hindu, PIB, Indian Express.

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