Prelim Bits 05-10-2017

Grand Renaissance Dam

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- Grand Renaissance Dam is a gravity dam on the **Blue Nile River** in Ethiopia.
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- It is formerly known as the Millennium Dam and sometimes referred to as Hidase Dam.
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- It has been under construction since 2011 and likely to be finalized late 2017 or early 2018.
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- It is the first major dam on the Blue Nile and has the reservoir with the capacity of 74 billion cubic meters of water.
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- The capacity is equivalent to entire annual flow of Blue Nile at Sudan Border.
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- It will be the largest hydroelectric power plant in Africa as well as the 7th largest in the world.
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Paryatan Parv

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- The programme will be organised by the Ministry of Tourism from 5th to 25th October 2017.
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- The objectives of the programme are focussing on the benefits of tourism, showcasing the cultural diversity of the country and reinforcing the principle of “Tourism for All”.
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- It will be inaugurated at the Humayun’s Tomb, Delhi.
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- The “Adopt a Heritage” project launched by the Ministry of Tourism will be implemented at key sites during this period.
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India and Lithuania

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- Cabinet has approved signing of an extradition treaty between India and Lithuania.
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- The treaty provides a mutual legal framework for seeking deportation of terrorists, economic offenders and other criminals.
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- India has signed extradition treaties with 37 countries and extradition arrangements with eight other nations.
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Extradition Treaty Vs Arrangement

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- An extradition treaty is a mutually agreed text signed and ratified by two Governments.
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- The arrangement is made in the absence of an extradition treaty on the assurance of reciprocity including under an international convention.
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- In the arrangement, two countries consider any international convention as the legal basis for extradition in respect of any offence to which the convention applies.
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- It does not cover all offences.
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- For e.g India has signed extradition arrangement with Italy.
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- India and Italy are both States Parties to the 1988 UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.
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- This Convention has been notified under the Extradition Act by the Government of India.
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- Thus the legal basis for extradition will be based on this convention.
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German aid for Bullet train

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- India is tapping Germany to finance and execute the proposed Chennai-Bengaluru high-speed rail project.
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- In October last year, India and Germany signed a deal on bilateral cooperation in the rail sector.
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- According to the pact, Germany is expected to look at the possibility of a bullet train and increasing the speed of trains on existing routes to 200 kmph.
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- There are also five other planned high-speed routes Viz Delhi-Mumbai, Mumbai-Chennai, Delhi-Kolkata, Delhi-Nagpur, and Mumbai-Nagpur.
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Karnataka Forest Act

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- The Karnataka High Court recently declared Karnataka Forests (Amendment) Act, 2016 as unconstitutional.
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- The court directed the government to refund the amount collected as the Forest Development Fee (FDF) from private mining leaseholders.
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- Earlier, the state has imposed Forest Development Tax (FDT) on the sale of minerals by private mining companies.
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- The High Court in its 2015 judgement had held that private mining leaseholders in forest areas are not liable to pay the FDT and urged the state to refund the collected tax.
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- In order to circumvent the judgment, the government has enacted an amendment in 2016 and imposed the FDF of 12 percent.
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- Now, the High Court has quashed the amendment saying that imposition of levy by changing the name from ‘tax’ to ‘fee’ is impermissible.
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Choppiness Index

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- It is an index used by traders in financial markets to analyse the movement of prices.
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- It helps to determine whether prices are trending in a particular direction, either upward or downward, or are moving sideways in a choppy manner.
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Source: PIB, The Hindu and BusinessLine

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