Prelim Bits 06-12-2017

Akash Missile

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- Akash is an indigenously developed medium-range, **surface-to-air missile** defence system.
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- It can target aircraft up to 30 km away, at altitudes up to 18,000 m.
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- It consists of Rohini radar that detects incoming aircraft with a range of 120 km.
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- It can intercept fighter jets, cruise missiles as well as ballistic missiles.
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- Recently, it was test fired with an indigenous radio frequency seeker.
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- This is the first surface-to-air missile with indigenous seeker that has been test fired.
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- With this success, India has achieved the capability of making any type of surface-to-air missile
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- This missile is being inducted into Army as Short Range Surface to Air Missile (SRSAM).
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Gulf Cooperation Council

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- The Gulf Cooperation Council is a regional political and economic alliance of six Gulf States.
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- Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates are the member countries.
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- It is headquartered in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

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- Its aim is to achieve ever closer union between the energy rich Gulf countries.
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- The UAE has recently announced that it has formed a new economic and partnership group with Saudi Arabia, separate from the GCC.
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- This move could undermine the popularity of GCC.
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Global Education Monitoring Report

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- The Global Education Monitoring Report 2017-18 of UNESCO has been released recently.
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- The report expresses concern over school textbooks in many countries glorifying war and military heroes rather than teaching peace, non-violence and reconciliation.
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- It says that that just 10% of the textbooks across the world include explicit statements on the need for conflict prevention and resolution.
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- Click here to know more about UNESCO.
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Soil Health Card Scheme

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- Soil Health Card scheme was launched in 2015 in Rajasthan.
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- The card informs farmers about nutrients status of the soils along with the recommendation on appropriate dosage of nutrients to improve soil health and fertility.
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- The card will be issued once in every 2 years to a farm so that nutrients deficiency can be regularly detected and improved.
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- The aim is to provide Soil Health Card to all 120 million farm holdings by Dec, 2017.

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- In the first phase of the scheme (2015-17), 100 million SHC have been distributed.
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- The second phase began on May 1, 2017, and will continue for the year 2017 to 2019.
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- This scheme is being implemented in collaboration with State Governments.
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- Every year World Soil Day is celebrated on 5th December
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International Solar Alliance

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- The ISA is an Indian initiative, jointly launched by India and France in Paris, on the sidelines of COP-21, the UN Climate Conference.
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- It has recently become a treaty-based international intergovernmental organization with the ratification by Guinea as the 15th country.
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- It aims to channel $300 billion in 10 years to promote renewable energy projects under a global mega fund for clean energy.
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- The framework agreement was opened for signatures in the 22nd session of the UN Climate Change Conference held at Marrakech, Morocco in 2016.
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- So far, 46 countries have signed and 19 countries have ratified the Framework Agreement of ISA.
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- The Headquarters is in India with its Interim Secretariat being set up in National Institute of Solar Energy, Gurgaon.
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- Further, ISA has also been developing a Common Risk Mitigating Mechanism (CRMM) for de-risking and reducing the financial cost of solar projects in the ISA member countries.
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Panchteerth

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- Union government has decided to develop five places “Panchteerth” in honor of Babasaheb Dr. B.R.Ambedkar.
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- It includes,
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1. His birthplace (Janma Bhoomi) in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh
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2. Dr.Ambedkar Memorial in London where he stayed while studying in U.K
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3. ‘Deeksha Bhoomi’ in Nagpur, where he took education
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4. ‘Mahaparinirvan Sthal’ in Delhi
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5. ‘Chaitya Bhoomi’ in Mumbai.
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Source: The Hindu, PIB, Economic Times

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