

## **Prelim Bits 19-12-2018**

### **Global Gender Gap Report**

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- World Economic Forum (WEF) has recently released Global Gender Gap report 2018.

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- Gender gap is measured across 4 key pillars such as Economic opportunity, political empowerment, educational attainment and Health & Survival.

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- According to the report, India has been ranked 108<sup>th</sup> out of 149 countries. It retains the same rank as in 2017.

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- The global list was topped by Iceland for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, having closed more than 85.8 per cent of its overall gender gap.

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- Iceland is followed by Norway, Sweden and Finland in the top slots.

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- According to the report, the world has closed 68 per cent of its gender gap and at the current rate of change, it will take 108 years to close the overall gender gap and 202 years to bring about parity in the workplace.

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- South Asia was the second-lowest ranking region in the index, with only 65 per cent of its gender gap now closed.

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### **Position of India in Global Gender Gap**

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- India continues to rank third-lowest in the world on health and survival and remained world's least improved country in this sub index over the past decade.

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- Only two countries were below India on health & survival sub index ranking (Armenia at 148 and China at 149) and Sri Lanka stood at the top position in

the category.

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- However, India has slightly improved in the WEF's indicator of wage equality for similar work.

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- India has also closed its tertiary education enrolment gap for the first time this year.

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- It has also managed to keep its primary and secondary gaps closed for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year consecutively.

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## **National Supercomputing Mission**

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- India has recently granted contract to French technology firm to build 70 supercomputers under the National Supercomputing Mission.

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- The mission aims to connect national academic and R&D institutions with a supercomputing grid of over 70 high-performance computing facilities.

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- Supercomputers will be installed across the country and will be networked on the National Supercomputing grid over the National Knowledge Network (NKN).

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- It will be implemented by the Department of Science and Technology and Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) through Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) and IISc, Bangalore.

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- The Mission also includes development of highly professional High Performance Computing (HPC) aware human resource for meeting challenges of development of these applications.

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- The NKN is another programme of the government which connects academic institutions and R&D labs over a high speed network.

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## Israel Spacecraft

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- Israel is set to launch the country's first spacecraft to the moon.
- If it becomes successful, it will be the first private spacecraft to be launched by Israel and would be the 4<sup>th</sup> country to land on the moon.
- The spacecraft, called Beresheet, or Genesis in Hebrew, weighing 585 kg.
- It will be sent via a Falcon 9 rocket from SpaceX firm.
- It will take around a month to arrive in the moon.

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## Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

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- The Scheme was launched in 2016 to provide free cooking gas (LPG) connections to poor households.
- Under the scheme, the government provides a subsidy of Rs. 1,600 to state-owned fuel retailers for every free LPG gas connection that they install in poor households.
- This subsidy is intended to cover the security fee for the cylinder and the fitting charges.
- The scheme allows beneficiaries to pay for the stove and the first refill in monthly installments.
- However, the cost of all subsequent refills has to be borne by the beneficiary household.
- So far, the scheme targeted the poor and underprivileged listed in the Socio-Economic and Caste Census, 2011.
- Union Cabinet has recently approved the expansion of the scheme to all poor households (not covered under the existing beneficiary categories).

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## Farout

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- Astronomers have reported the discovery of the most distant body ever observed in the Solar System, at 120 astronomical units (AU) from the Sun.

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- This has led to the nickname “Farout” for the object, provisionally titled 2018 VG18.

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- Farout is also the first known Solar System object that has been detected at a distance that is more than 100 times farther than Earth is from the Sun.

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- For context, the second-most distant observed Solar System object is Eris, at about 96 AU. Pluto is currently at about 34 AU.

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- 1 AU is defined as the distance between the Earth and the Sun.

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**Source: The Hindu**

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