Prelim Bits 21-07-2018

BRICS

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- BRICS is an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
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- The BRICS members are all leading developing or newly industrialized countries, but they are distinguished by their large, sometimes fast-growing economies and significant influence on regional affairs.
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- All five are G-20 members.
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- BRICS developed New Development Bank (NDB) which will have capital of US$50 billion with each country contributing US$10 billion, while the monetary fund will have US$100 billion at its disposal.
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- Since 2012, the BRICS group of countries have been planning an optical fibre submarine communications cable system to carry telecommunications between the BRICS countries, known as the BRICS Cable.
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- Since 2009, the BRICS nations have met annually at formal summits.
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- China has hosted the 9th BRICS Summit (2017) at Xiamen province.
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- Xiamen Declaration of BRICS forum was recently adopted in its 9th summit.
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- It explicitly called out several Pakistan-based terror organisations and expressed concern on the security situation in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region.
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BRICS Media Forum

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- BRICS Media Forum,2018 is a high-level dialogue among media

organisations from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
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- It was held at Cape Town in South Africa recently under the theme 'Fostering an Inclusive, Just World Order'.
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- It was organised on the occasion of on former South African President Nelson Mandela's 100th birth anniversary on July 18.
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- The Forum was attended by 38 mainstream media organisations from BRICS nations, including five from India.
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- The forum unanimously agreed to adopt the Cape Town Declaration 2018.
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- It pledged to strive to create a media landscape that upholds the integrity of news that is created and shared through the BRICS nations.
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- A decision to establish BRICS Media Academy and a BRICS news portal was also taken.
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BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting

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- 8th BRICS Health Ministers' was organised recently at Durban, South Africa.

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- In this meeting, India affirms strong support for TB cooperation plan in every aspect.
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Regional Aviation Partnership Cooperation

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- The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding amongst BRICS Nations on the Regional Aviation Partnership Cooperation.
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- The objective is that BRICS countries will benefit from the establishing of an institutional framework to cooperate in the field of civil aviation.
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- The MoU has the potential to spur greater trade, investment, tourism and cultural exchanges amongst the BRICS Nations.
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Ekalavya Schools

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- Ministry of Tribal Affairs recently approves setting up of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) in States/ UTs.
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- Ekalavya Residential Schools aims to provide education to tribals in their local environment.
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- Target – Ekalavya schools in every block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons by 2022.
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- Ekalavya schools will be on a par with Navodaya Vidyalayas.
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- It will have special facilities for preserving local art and culture, besides providing training in sports and skill development.
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- The Ekalavya Residential School Scheme isnt new. It has been around for many years now. However, the government has signaled in Budget 2018 that it wants to expand the scope.
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Student Police Cadet (SPC) Programme

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- Home Ministry is planning to launch the Student Police Cadet (SPC) programme in Gurgaon.
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- The programme designed for students of Class VIII and IX to start a project on tolerance, moral values, patience and ethics among others.
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- The programme is aimed at making them better citizens and seeks to build a bridge between the police and the larger community through school students.
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- It will be implemented first in government schools.

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- It seeks to cover issues like community policing, fight against social evils, safety of women and children, fight against corruption and disaster management.
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Scientific Research Infrastructure Management and Networks (SRIMAN)

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- The government has proposed a new policy “SRIMAN” that plans to hire out to researchers all lab equipment that cost more than Rs. 10 lakh.
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- It is expected to transform scientific instruments in government labs into lucrative assets generating a steady rental income.
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- It would also reduce the amount of time such expensive instruments remain idle.
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- Currently, the practice of researchers bidding for time-slots to use lab instruments is typically seen more with very expensive equipment, such as radio telescopes and particle-accelerators, which cost crores of rupees.
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Source: The Hindu, PIB

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