Prelim Bits 23-11-2017

European Bank for Reconstruction & Development

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- The Union Cabinet has approved India's membership for European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).
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- EBRD is an international financial institution founded in 1991 and headquartered in London.
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- It is owned by 65 countries and two EU institutions, and US is the biggest shareholder.
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- Besides Europe, member countries of the EBRD are also from other continents - North America (Canada and US), Africa (Morocco), Asia (Japan, China, South Korea) and Australia.
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- EBRD's core operations pertain to **private sector development** in their countries of operation.
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- The minimum initial investment towards the membership of EBRD will be approximately one million Euros.
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- The EBRD is not to be confused with the European Investment Bank (EIB) which is owned by EU member states and used to support EU policy.
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15th Finance Commission

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- The Union Cabinet has approved the setting up of the 15thFinance Commission.
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- It will decide on the distribution of tax proceeds among centre, states and local bodies in the post-goods and services tax (GST) era.

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- The setting up of the finance commission for every 5 years is a Constitutional obligation under **Article 280 (1)** of the Constitution.
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- The recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission are valid from 2015 to 2020.
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- The recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission will be implemented in the period 2020 to 2025.
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- The 14th Finance Commission had raised the untied share of states in net central taxes to 42% from 32% after ending discretionary resource transfers from the centre to the states.
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Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra

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- The objective of this new scheme is to empower rural women through community participation.
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- Improving the child sex ratio, survival of new born girl child, girl education and empower them through several initiatives are the main motives.
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- It aims to create an environment in which women realize their full potential.
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- The scheme is envisaged to work at national, state and block level.
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- Under the scheme, community engagement through student volunteers is envisioned in the backward districts at block level.
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- Student volunteers will help in awareness generation regarding various important government programmes as well as social issues.
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- It will be implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development under umbrella mission for “Protection and Empowerment for Women” for the duration of 2017-18 to 2019-20.
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Brahmos Missile

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- It is the supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from land, sea, sub-sea and air based platforms.
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- IAF has successfully test fired the air-launched version of the brahmos for the first time from Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jet.
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- With this launch, India has completed the cruise missile triad for land, sea and air variants.
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- The air launched BrahMos missile is a 2.5 ton supersonic air to surface cruise missile with ranges of more than 400 kms.
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- It marks a history as IAF is the first air force in the world to have successfully fired an air launched 2.8 Mach surface attack missile.
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- The original range was 290 km which was further extended to 450 km after joining MTCR and expected to be extended even up to 600 km.
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- Click here to know more about Brahmos missile
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Beti Bachao Beti Padhao

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- The Union Cabinet has recently given its approval for expansion of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao for a Pan India reach covering all the 640 districts of the country as per census 2011.
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- The scheme was launched in 2015 to address the issue of decline in Child Sex Ratio (CSR) in gender critical districts.
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- The objectives of the Scheme are
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1. Prevent gender biased sex selective elimination
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2. Ensure survival & protection of the girl child
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3. Ensure education of the girl child
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- The initiative has two major components such as mass communication campaign and multi-sectoral action covering all States and UTs.
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- It is currently implemented in 161 districts which has adverse CSR.
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- It is being implemented in a coordinated effort by Ministry of WCD, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of HRD.
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- **CSR** - Number of girls per 1000 boys in the age group of 0-6 years. It declined sharply from 976 in 1961 to 918 in Census 2011.
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Implementation period of Environmental Protocols

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- Paris Agreement, 2015 under UNFCCC is intended for **2020-2030** period.
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- First phase of the Kyoto Protocol - **2005-2012**
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- Doha amendment, 2012 – concerning the second phase of the Kyoto Protocol
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- As only 75 countries have so far ratified the Doha amendments it could not be enforced which requires ratification of 144 countries.
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- Second phase of the Kyoto Protocol - **2013-2020**
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- India ratified the second phase of the Kyoto Protocol.
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Source: The Hindu, PIB.

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