Prelim Bits 24-07-2018

FDI Confidence Index

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- The index is compiled by AT Kearney, an American global management consulting firm.
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- It ranks top 10 destinations for FDI in terms of its attractiveness.
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- India ranks 11th in 2018 index, down from 8 in 2017 and 9 in 2016. Thus, Inida has fallen out of top 10 destination.
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- The report by AT kearney highlighted that the fall in rank is due to troubles in the implementation of the goods and services tax and the government's demonetisation decision in 2016.
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- It also highighted several of the reforms such as removing the Foreign Investment Promotion Board and liberalising FDI limits in key sector.
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Public Affairs Index

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- The index has been developed by Bengaluru-based think tank Public Affairs Centre.
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- It ranks States in India based on 10 themes 30 focus subjects and 100 indicators.
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- The themes include, \n
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    - Essential infrastructure,
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    - support to human development,
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    - social protection,

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    - women and children,
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    - crime,
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    - law and order,
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    - delivery of justice,
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    - environment, transparency and accountability,
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    - fiscal management and economic freedom.
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    - The current edition 2018 focus on the subject "The Children of India".
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- The latest index released by PAC shows that Kerala has been ranked as the number one state in terms of governance for the past three years, followed by Tamil Nadu.
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- Despite the political instability and the public protests seen in the recent past, Tamil Nadu continues to be ranked second in terms of governance.
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- Telangana, Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka follow the top two states.
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- Telangana, which had an overall ranking of 20 in 2017, has shot up to third place in the new index.
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- Among smaller states, Jammu and Kashmir held its position as the best in terms of governance for the second consecutive year, followed by Himachal Pradesh.
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Seva Bhoj Yojna

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- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** under the Ministry of Culture.
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- Under the Scheme, CGST and Central Government’s share of IGST paid by Charitable Religious Institutions on purchase of specific raw food items shall be reimbursed to them as financial assistance by the Government of India.
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- The charitable religious institutions include Temples, Gurudwara, Dharmik Ashram, Mosques, Dargah, Church, Matth, Monastries etc.
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- As per the scheme guidelines, the institutions applying for financial assistance are required to produce a certificate from District Magistrate indicating that the institution is involved in charitable religious activities.
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- These institutions must be distributing free food to public/devotees etc. since last 3 years on daily/monthly basis.
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- In case of mis-use of funds, it provide for penalties such as black listing the organisations, recovering the financial assistance with penal interest apart from taking criminal action as per law.
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Shekatkar Committee

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- The committee was formed by Ministry of Defence in the year 2016.
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- It focussed on enhancing combat capability and rebalance defence expenditure.
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- The Report was taken up by the ministry to frame key action points and roadmap for implementation.
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- Some of the recommendations taken by the ministry include\n
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    - Better utilization of Supply and Transportation echelons and Animal Transport Units.
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    - Closure of Military Farms and Army Postal Establishments in peace locations.
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    - Enhancement in standards for recruitment of clerical staff and drivers in the Army.
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    - Improving the efficiency of the National Cadet Corps.
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Border Haats

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- Haat means market. Border haats are, specially designed marketplaces along the border of two countries which aim at promoting the well-being of the people dwelling in remote areas across the borders.
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- The border haats are managed by Haat Management Committees (HMCs).
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- In 2010, India and Bangladesh agreed to open haats in remote border areas trade, of locally produced commodities, completely free from duties and taxes.
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- Last year, a MoU on Border Haats between India and Bangladesh was signed for establishment of a Joint Committee to review the border haats operation and propose new locations of Border Haats.
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- The first meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on Border Haats was recently held in Agartala, Tripura.
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Pangolin

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- A special unit of the Odisha Police has launched a drive to bust an international syndicate that illegally trades pangolin.
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- Pangolins are nocturnal mammals, often called “scaly anteaters,” are covered in tough, overlapping scales.
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- These burrowing mammals eat ants and termites using an extraordinarily long tongue, and are able to quickly roll themselves up into a tight ball when threatened.
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- There are eight different pangolin species can be found across Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.
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- They are the most trafficked mammal in the world.
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- They are listed as "Endangered" in IUCN red list of threatened species.
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- The scales of the pangolin are sold raw or fried in Asia for as much as $500 per kilogram for treating asthma and migraines.
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- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora **(CITES)** is an international intergovernmental agreement to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.
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- **TRAFFIC** is the wildlife trade monitoring network, which is a non-governmental organization working globally on trade in wild animals and plants in the context of both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.
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Source: The Hindu, PIB, Business Standard

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