

## 20 November 2019: PIB Summary & Analysis

### National Summit for Every Child in India

#### Context:

Vice President addressed the 'National Summit for Every Child in India' organized by UNICEF in Parliament.

#### Details:

- In his address, the VP called on parliamentarians to prioritize child welfare and evolve meaningful child-centred policies.
- The Summit was being held in Parliament on **November 20<sup>th</sup>** on the occasion of **World Children's Day**.
- The World Children's Day celebration was established in 1954 by the United Nations.
- UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, promotes and coordinates this day.
- Referring to Article 30 of the **Convention on the Rights of the Child**, the VP said that, it gives children the right to "learn and use the language and customs of their families, whether these are shared by the majority of people in the country or not."

#### Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted in 1989 and became the first legally binding international text to protect children's rights.
- It is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history.
- The Convention offers a vision of the child as an individual and as a member of a family and community, with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development.
- It recognizes the fundamental human dignity of all children and the urgency of ensuring their well-being and development.
- It defines Child Rights as the minimum entitlements and freedoms that every child, a citizen below the age of 18 should enjoy.
- These rights encompass freedom and civil rights, family environment, necessary healthcare and welfare, education, leisure and cultural activities and special protection measures.
- India ratified the UNCRC in 1992, agreeing in principles all articles except with certain reservations on issues relating to child labour.
- In India there is law that children under the age of 18 should not work, but there is no outright ban on child labour, and the practice is generally permitted in most industries except those deemed hazardous.
- The National Policy for Children, 2013 was adopted to affirm the Government's commitment to the rights based approach in addressing the continuing and emerging challenges in the situation of children.

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### Sowa-Rigpa

#### Context:

Cabinet approves establishment of the National Institute of Sowa-Rigpa (NISR) at Leh.

#### Details:

- The setting up of the National Institute of Sowa-Rigpa would provide an impetus for the revival of Sowa-Rigpa in the Indian subcontinent.
- The Institute will also provide opportunities for students of Sowa-Rigpa not only in India but also from other countries.

- The Institute will be an autonomous National Institute under the Ministry of AYUSH with the mandate to undertake interdisciplinary education and research programmes in Sowa-Rigpa in collaboration with premier national and international institutes and facilitate integration of different systems of medicine.
- This will facilitate quality education, scientific validation, quality control & standardization and safety evaluation of Sowa-Rigpa products; standardized Sowa-Rigpa based tertiary health delivery and the promotion of interdisciplinary research & education of Sowa-Rigpa at undergraduate, postgraduate and postdoctoral levels.
- NISR would identify the best Sowa-Rigpa treatment – including their standard procedures-within the framework of traditional Sowa-Rigpa principles and possible co-relation with bio-molecular western medicine in providing health care facilities to the general public.

#### About Sowa-Rigpa:

- Sowa-Rigpa is a traditional medical system of the Himalayan belt in India.
- It has been popularly practiced in Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Darjeeling (West Bengal), Himachal Pradesh and the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- Commonly known as the Tibetan system of medicine, it is one of the oldest, living and well documented medical traditions of the world.
- It originated in Tibet and has spread to India, Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia and Russia.
- The majority of the theory and practice of Sowa-Rigpa is similar to Ayurveda.
- **rGyud-bZhi** (four tantra) the fundamental text book of this medicine was composed by **Yuthog Yonten Gonpo**, who is believed to be the **father of Sowa-Rigpa**.
- rGyud-bZhi, which is based on the indigenous medicine of Tibet, is enriched with Ayurveda, Chinese and Greek medicine.

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## MoU between India and Comoros

#### Context:

Cabinet approves ex post facto the proposal for the MoU between India and Comoros on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine.

#### Details:

The MoU was signed between both countries in October 2019 during the Indian Vice President's visit to the island nation of Comoros.

For more on the MoU, check [PIB dated 11 Oct, 2019](#).

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## Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019

#### Context:

Cabinet approves Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

#### Details:

- The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for introducing the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019 in order to replace the Ordinance.
  - Economic developments after the enactment of the Finance (No. 2) Act, 2019 (Finance Act) along with reduction of rate of corporate income tax by many countries world over necessitated the provision of additional fiscal stimulus to attract investment, generate employment and boost the

economy.

- As these could have been achieved through amendment to the Income Tax Act, 1961 (IT Act) or to the Finance Act and the Parliament was not in session, it was done through the promulgation of the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Ordinance 2019 (the Ordinance) in September, 2019.

### Salient features of the amendments made by the Ordinance:

- In order to promote growth and investment, a new provision was inserted in the IT Act to provide that with effect from the current financial year 2019-20, an existing domestic company may opt to pay tax at 22% plus surcharge at 10% and cess at 4%, if it does not claim any incentive/deduction. The effective tax rate for these companies comes to 25.17%. They would also not be subjected to [Minimum Alternate Tax \(MAT\)](#).
- In order to attract fresh investment in manufacturing and provide a boost to '[Make in India](#)', another provision was inserted to the IT Act, to provide that a domestic manufacturing company set up on or after 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2019 and which commences manufacturing by 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2023, may opt to pay tax at 15% plus surcharge at 10% and cess at 4% if it does not claim any incentive/deduction. The effective rate of tax comes to 17.16% for these companies. They would also not be subjected to MAT.
- A company which does not opt for the concessional tax regime and avails the tax exemption/incentive shall continue to pay tax at the pre-amended rate. However, these companies can opt for the concessional tax regime after expiry of their tax holiday/exemption period. After the exercise of the option they shall be liable to pay tax at the rate of 22%. Further, in order to provide relief to companies which continue to avail exemptions/incentive, the rate of MAT was reduced from existing 18.5% to 15%.
- In order to provide relief to listed companies, the buy-back tax on shares of listed companies introduced through the Finance Act will not apply to buy-backs in respect of which public announcement were made before 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2019.
- In order to stabilise the flow of funds into the capital market, it was provided that the enhanced surcharge introduced through the Finance Act on capital gains arising on account of transfer of listed equity share or certain units which are liable to securities transaction tax will not apply. Further, it was also provided that the enhanced surcharge will not apply to capital gains income of FPIs (Foreign Portfolio Investment) arising out of transfer of any security including derivatives, having concessional tax regime.

## Industrial Relations Code Bill, 2019

### Context:

Cabinet approves the Industrial Relations Code Bill, 2019.

### Details:

- The draft code on Industrial Relations has been prepared after amalgamating, simplifying and rationalizing the relevant provisions of the following three Central Labour Acts:
  - The Trade Unions Act, 1926
  - The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946
  - The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947
- To help industries in hiring contract workers directly, the government has proposed to introduce the concept of **fixed-term employment** in the labour laws.
  - Fixed-term employment is a contract in which a company or an enterprise hires an employee for a specific period of time.
  - In a fixed-term employment, the employee is not on the payroll of the company.
- The Bill has proposed giving a legal framework for fixed-term employment through which contract workers serving a fixed-tenure will get equal statutory social security benefits as regular workers in the same unit.

- Under the present system, firms resort to hiring contract workers through contractors and they argue that it's a resourceful exercise. Through the fixed-term employment system, companies will be able to hire contract workers directly.
  - In 2015, the government had proposed allowing factories with up to 300 workers to retrench, lay off or shut shop without seeking the government's nod in the Industrial Relations Bill proposed in 2015. At present, factories with up to 100 workers can do so.
  - Amid severe opposition from trade unions on this proposal, the government decided to shelve it and retain the present threshold.
  - A few states have allowed factories with 300 workers to retrench without official sanction. Now, these state labour reforms would be nullified as the central laws take precedence. Labour falls under the concurrent list of the Constitution.
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## Disinvestment of CPSEs

### Context:

Cabinet approves strategic disinvestment of CPSEs.

### Details:

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister, has accorded 'In-principle' approval for strategic disinvestment in select central public sector enterprises (CPSEs).
  - **Benefits:**
    - The resources unlocked by the strategic disinvestment of these CPSEs would be used to finance the social sector/developmental programmes of the Government benefiting the public.
    - The unlocked resources would form part of the budget and the usage would come under the scrutiny of the public.
    - It is expected that the strategic buyer/acquirer may bring in new management/technology/investment for the growth of these companies and may use innovative methods for their development.
  - In 2015, the Government reinitiated the policy of strategic disinvestment in order to open up sectors for private enterprise to bring efficiency in management that would contribute to general economic development.
  - Strategic Disinvestment is guided by the basic economic principle that the Government should discontinue its engagement in manufacturing/producing goods and services in sectors where the competitive markets have come of age, and such entities would most likely perform better in the private hands due to various factors e.g. technology up-gradation and efficient management practices; and would thus add to the GDP of the country.
  - Currently, the cabinet approval for strategic disinvestment has been given for:
    - Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL)
    - Shipping Corporation of India Ltd. (SCI)
    - Container Corporation of India Ltd. (CONCOR)
    - Tehri Hydro Development Corporation India Limited (THDCIL)
    - North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited (NEEPCO)
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## Satellites to Assess Pollution Status

### Context:

ISRO satellites INSAT-3D & 3DR is assessing the pollution status over the country.

#### Details:

- The Imager payload on-board ISRO's INSAT-3D & 3DR satellites is used to monitor the **Aerosol Optical Depth (AOD)**.
  - The **AOD** is a measure of the extinction of the solar beam by dust and haze.
  - In other words, particles in the atmosphere (dust, smoke, pollution) can block sunlight by absorbing or by scattering light.
  - AOD tells us how much direct sunlight is prevented from reaching the ground by these aerosol particles.
  - It is a dimensionless number that is related to the amount of aerosol in the vertical column of atmosphere over the observation location.
  - A value of 0.01 corresponds to an extremely clean atmosphere, and a value of 0.4 would correspond to a very hazy condition.
- It is found that AOD, PM2.5 and PM10 concentrations are higher over the Indo-Gangetic Plains covering parts of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar during October and November.
- High concentration of these pollutants is seen originating from parts of Punjab and Haryana during **stubble burning**.
- Climatological study of satellite based fire occurrences and associated pollutant parameters reveal that fire occurrences increased by 4% over Punjab and Haryana region during October-November between 2003 and 2017.
- The model based analysis suggests that there is a high probability of transportation of smoke aerosols from Punjab & Haryana, towards down-wind regions of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.
- Using medium resolution Indian Remote Sensing (IRS) satellite data, stubble burned area maps are generated at the end of stubble burning activity in the Kharif season.
- ISRO has been carrying out monitoring of stubble burning since 2015.

Read more about stubble burning in [CNA dated Nov 17, 2019](#).

## Production of Bamboo in North Eastern States

#### Context:

The north eastern states have 34.53% of the country's bamboo bearing area.

#### Details:

- The [National Bamboo Mission](#) (NBM) focuses on the development of complete value chain of bamboo sector to link growers with consumers starting from planting material, plantation, creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing, marketing, micro, small & medium enterprises, skill development and brand building initiative in a cluster approach mode.
- NBM interventions includes support to industries for the establishment of bamboo treatment and seasoning plants, establishment of carbonisation plants and establishment of livelihood business incubators and establishment of processing units for value addition.
- The Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises is implementing a scheme called '**Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)**' in seven districts of Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura and Assam for need-based assistance, replacement of production equipment, setting up of Common Facility Centres (CFC), product development, quality improvement, improved marketing, training and



Read more about SFURTI in [PIB dated 5<sup>th</sup> July 2019](#).

## India – Europe 29 Business Forum

### Context:

The India – Europe 29 Business Forum has been organized by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in New Delhi.

### About the India – Europe 29 Business Forum:

- This is the fifth edition of the India-Europe 29 Business Forum (IE29BF).
- This is India's largest European industry platform.
- There would be sector-specific discussions and field visits, apart from B2B meetings, start-up connects and expositions.
- Participants are ministers from the central and state governments of India, diplomats, government representatives from E29 countries, leading industry representatives, entrepreneurs and the media.
- Focus sectors are artificial intelligence, smart cities, IT & ITES, renewable energy and pharmaceuticals.

### Europe 29:

- The Europe 29 (E29) region refers to the 29 countries in Central, Eastern and Northern Europe.
- The Europe 29 region comprises Albania, Liechtenstein, Austria, Lithuania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Malta, Croatia, Moldova, Cyprus, Montenegro, Czech Republic, Norway, Denmark, Poland, Estonia, Romania, Finland, Serbia, Greece, Slovak Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Iceland, Sweden, Latvia, Switzerland and Turkey.

## Industrial Corridors

### Context:

The government has approved the development of five industrial corridor projects to be implemented through the National Industrial Corridor Development and Implementation Trust (NICDIT).

### The five Industrial Corridors:

| Industrial Corridor  | States   |
|--|--|
| Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC)  | Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra    |
| Amritsar Kolkata Industrial Corridor (AKIC)  | Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal |
| Chennai Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC)   | Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala                              |
| East Coast Economic Corridor (ECEC) with Vizag Chennai Industrial Corridor (VCIC) as Phase-1 | West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu                            |
| Bengaluru Mumbai Industrial Corridor (BMIC)  | Karnataka, Maharashtra   |

## IEPF Authority Help Line

### Context:

The Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, inaugurated the Investor Education and Protection Fund

Authority (IEPFA) Help Line number and call centre.

**Details:**

In order to facilitate the investors with smooth information flow, the step taken by IEPFA to develop a Help Line (Call Centre Solution) with the help of CSC e-Gov SPV (Meity) will come a long way in speeding the process in addressing the queries of claimants.

For more on IEPFA, check [PIB dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019](#).

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## Singapore-India Defence Ministers' Dialogue

**Context:**

The Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh & his Singaporean counterpart Dr NG Eng Hen co-chair the Defence Ministers' Dialogue (DMD) in Singapore.

**Details:**

- The DMD between India & Singapore had commenced in 2015 after both countries signed the revised Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) to further strengthen the long-standing bilateral defence relationship.
- Since then, the relationship has broadened and deepened to encompass military cooperation across all three Services of the Armed Forces of India & Singapore, defence technology cooperation as well as cooperation through multilateral engagements.
- This is the fourth Indo-Singapore DMD.
- The inaugural edition of the Singapore-India-Thailand Maritime Exercise (SITMEX) in the Andaman Sea was conducted in September 2019.

For more on SITMEX, check [PIB dated Sep 19, 2019](#).

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## Country's Oil Demand to Rise 3.21% in 2019

**Context:**

As per the Monthly Oil Market Report published by [OPEC](#) in September, 2019, India's oil demand will rise by 3.21 per cent to 4.88 million barrels per day (mb/d) in 2019 from 4.73 mb/d during the previous year.

**The oil conservation measures to be taken at the end-users level includes:**

- Reducing energy consumption through introduction of standard and labelling program for equipment using petro-based fuels such as Domestic LPG Stoves, Diesel Irrigation Pump Sets & Diesel Generator Sets.
  - Training of drivers and organization of transport workshops.
  - Sensitizing farmers on petroleum conservation through Kisan Melas, agriculture workshops, etc.
  - Carrying out energy audits.
  - Educating housewives on efficient use of domestic LPG.
  - Mass awareness activities through Saksham Campaigns, Social Media campaigns, campaigns on TV, Radio & Newspapers, literature, Exhibitions, etc.
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## FASTag Project

**Context:**

The Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways has directed the [NHAI](#) to ensure that all major efforts

including deployment of best technology are adopted for ensuring success of the FASTag project.

**Details:**

The Government of India has mandated FASTag for all the vehicles operating on the Indian roads with effect from December 1, 2019.

About the FASTag Project, click [here](#).

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## Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin

**Context:**

Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin completes three years.

**About the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G):**

- The PMAY-G scheme was launched in 2016 with an aim to provide a pucca house, with basic amenities, to all houseless householders and those households living in kutchha and dilapidated houses, by 2022.
  - Amenities includes water, gas, toilet and electricity supply in all the households.
  - Under the PMAY-G, houses are being constructed using new technologies.
  - Time for construction of houses under the scheme has reduced to 114 days from 314 days in 2015-16 due to use of direct benefit transfer (DBT) platform.
  - Under PMAY, the minimum size of a house has also been increased to 25 square meters.
  - Identification of beneficiaries is as per the housing deprivation parameters and exclusion criteria prescribed under Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC) 2011 after due verification by Gram Sabha.
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## Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2019

**Context:**

The Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2019 was conferred on the occasion of World Toilet Day (19<sup>th</sup> November).

**Details:**

- The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) had commissioned “Swachh Survekshan Grameen-2019” (SSG 2019) through an independent survey agency to develop ranking of all districts of India on the basis of quantitative and qualitative sanitation parameters.
  - This ranking was done based on a comprehensive set of parameters including surveys of public places like schools, Anganwadis, PHCs, Haat/ Bazaars, Panchayat and citizen’s perception of Swachhata and their recommendations for improvement of the program and data from the Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin.
  - **Overall Ranking:**
    - Top 3 States – 1) Tamil Nadu, 2) Haryana, 3) Gujarat
    - Top 3 Districts – 1) Peddapalli, Telangana, 2) Faridabad, Haryana, 3) Rewari, Haryana
    - State with maximum citizen participation – 1) Uttar Pradesh
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