



PIB, THE HINDU Newspaper and Editorial Current Affairs

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PIB

Governor of the State

Why in news?

The President has accepted the resignation of Shri Kummanam Rajasekharan as Governor of Mizoram.

About Governor of the State:

- The Constitution of India envisages the same pattern of government in the states as that for the Centre, that is, a parliamentary system.
- The governor is the chief executive head of the state. But, like the president, he is a nominal executive head (titular or constitutional head). The governor also acts as an agent of the central government. Therefore, the office of governor has a dual role.
- Usually, there is a governor for each state, but the 7th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1956 facilitated the appointment of the same person as a governor for two or more states.

APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNOR

- The governor is neither directly elected by the people nor indirectly elected by a specially constituted electoral college as is the case with the president. He is appointed by the president by warrant under his hand and seal.

- In a way, he is a nominee of the Central government. But, as held by the Supreme Court in 1979, the office of governor of a state is not an employment under the Central government. It is an independent constitutional office and is not under the control of or subordinate to the Central government.

TERM OF GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

- A governor holds office for a term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office. However, this term of five years is subject to the pleasure of the President. Further, he can resign at any time by addressing a resignation letter to the President.
 - The President may transfer a Governor appointed to one state to another state for the rest of the term. Further, a Governor whose term has expired may be reappointed in the same state or any other state.
 - A governor can hold office beyond his term of five years until his successor assumes charge. The underlying idea is that there must be a governor in the state and there cannot be an interregnum.
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National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority

Why in news?

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), under Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, today put out list of 390 anti-cancer non-scheduled medicines with MRP reduction up to 87%.

Highlights:

- The Trade Margin rationalisation for 42 anti cancer drugs was rolled out as Proof of Concept, stressing on the new paradigm of self-regulation by the Industry. The manufacturers of these 42 drugs have been directed not to reduce production volumes of brands under

regulation.

- On 27th February, 2019, NPPA had put 42 anti-cancer drugs under 30% Trade Margin cap. Manufacturers and Hospitals were directed to convey revised MRP, to be effective from 8th March, 2019, based on the Trade Margin (TM) formula. 390 brands i.e. 91% of the 426 brands reported by manufacturers, showed downward price movement.
- The average out of pocket expenditure for cancer patients is 2.5 times that for other diseases. This move is expected to benefit 22 lakh cancer patients in the country and would result in annual savings of approx. Rs. 800 crores to the consumers.

About NPPA:

National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) was constituted vide Government of India Resolution dated 29th August, 1997 as an attached office of the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers as an independent Regulator for pricing of drugs and to ensure availability and accessibility of medicines at affordable prices.

FUNCTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

- To implement and enforce the provisions of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order in accordance with the powers delegated to it.
- To deal with all legal matters arising out of the decisions of the Authority.
- To monitor the availability of drugs, identify shortages, if any, and to take remedial steps.
- To collect/ maintain data on production, exports and imports, market share of individual companies, profitability of companies etc, for bulk drugs and formulations.
- To undertake and/ or sponsor relevant studies in respect of pricing of drugs/ pharmaceuticals.
- To recruit/ appoint the officers and other staff members of the Authority, as per rules and procedures laid down by the Government.
- To render advice to the Central Government on changes/ revisions in the drug policy.

- To render assistance to the Central Government in the parliamentary matters relating to the drug pricing.
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PM Ujjwala Yojana

- Empowerment of women is closely linked with the country's energy economy and this goal is driving investments in the entire value chain.
- As a measure towards empowerment of poor women in the country who are bereft of access to clean cooking gas, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas has launched Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) in the form of a social movement, enabling social change and irreversible empowerment of women.
- PMUY Scheme achieved another milestone by adding 7-croreth beneficiary in the Ujjwala family. Ujjwala yojana is empowering women to lead smoke-free lives, leading to a healthier lifestyle, saving them time by greatly reducing drudgery and enabling them to pursue other income enhancement and socially rewarding pursuits.
- To take this initiative forward, Pradhan Mantri LPG panchayats as peer learning platforms, are providing support, catalysing behaviour changes in Ujjawala beneficiaries and also encouraging safe and sustainable use of LPG. As many as 87,876 LPG panchayats have been conducted across the country.

Ujjwala Didi:

Ujjwala Didi, a CSR handholding initiative, aims at creating a force of 10,000 grassroot educators who can take the three messages till the last mile, viz.

- (i) Clean Cooking Fuel is to be universally available,
 - (ii) Clean Cooking fuel is affordable and
 - (iii) LPG is safe to use and insured.
- Ujjwala Didis will facilitate refill, address any fear around LPG safety,

help in resolving any grievances and facilitate new connections.

- Thus these empowered women will contribute to overall women empowerment in their panchayats. Ujjwala Didis are a living testimony of the highest possibilities of inclusive development.
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THE HINDU

SC appoints 3-member panel to mediate in Ayodhya dispute

Why in news?

A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court referred the Ayodhya dispute for mediation in a bid to heal minds and hearts.

About the Judgment:

- The five-judge Bench, appointed a panel of mediators, comprising former Supreme Court judge F.M.I. Kalifulla as chairman, Art of Living founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, and Sriram Panchu, a senior advocate with experience in alternative dispute resolution.
- The mediation would start in a week in Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh of which the disputed area is a part with the process conducted in-camera.
- While the mediation panel has been given eight weeks, the court urged the mediators to “conclude at the earliest.” The Bench also directed them to file a status report in four weeks.
- Eight weeks is the time given to the Muslim parties to review the accuracy and relevance of the Uttar Pradesh government’s official translation of thousands of pages of oral depositions and exhibits in the Ayodhya title suit appeals pending since 2010.
- In fact, the court had invoked Section 89 of the Civil Procedure Code (CPC) to propose mediation as an “effective utilisation of time” during the interregnum. Chief Justice Gogoi had expressed the hope that mediation might help spell a peaceful end to the volatile dispute.

For confidentiality:

- Stressing the need for “utmost confidentiality” in the conduct of the mediation to ensure its success, the court opined that it might be best if the media refrained from reporting the proceedings.
 - However, the court stopped short of passing any specific gag order on the media and left it to the mediators to pass “necessary orders in writing, if so required, to restrain publication of the details of the mediation proceedings.
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Jobs in MSME sector**Why in news?**

The number of net jobs created in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector in the last four years stood at just 3,32,394, which is 13.9% higher than the base four years ago, according to a CII survey of more than one lakh companies.

Findings of the Survey:

- The findings for the four-year period beginning 2015-16 pale in comparison with that from the government’s Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises for an earlier period, which shows 11,54,293 MSME jobs were created in the three years ended 2014-15.
- The survey shows just three States Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Telangana accounted for over 50% of the jobs created in this period (2015-16 to 2018-19).
- The top eight States accounted for over 80% of the jobs. The survey also found that 5,70,804 jobs are expected to be created over the next one year, which represents a 21% increase over the current employment base. The trend seen in the last four years in terms of sectoral break-up will remain largely the same.

Most in micro sector:

- It also shows that 73% of the jobs were created by micro enterprises. Small enterprises, on the other hand, accounted for 23% of the net jobs created, while medium enterprises accounted for just 4%.
- Net jobs created' is defined as recruitment, less exits.
- Out of the survey sample, 70,941 firms were responsible for this increase. On the whole, nearly two-thirds of the respondents witnessed an increase in hiring activity over the last four years, while 17% witnessed no change.

Sectoral division:

- Looking at the sectoral break-up, the hospitality & tourism sector accounted for 12% of the jobs, while the textiles & apparels and metal products sectors each contributed about 8% to job creation.
 - The other large job generators were machinery parts (7%) and transport & logistics (7%). The top five sectors accounted for over 40% of the jobs, indicating a degree of sectoral concentration.
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Supreme Court warns Haryana on damage to Aravalli range

Why in news?

The Supreme Court cautioned the Haryana government against doing “anything” to harm the ecologically fragile Aravalli range.

About the Judgment:

- A Bench, was responding to a submission by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that he would prove that the State has not introduced amendments in the Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA), 1900, in order to give a leeway to **illegal mining or builders**.
- We are concerned with Aravalli. If you are doing anything with Aravalli or Kant Enclave (where the top court had ordered demolition

of buildings due to illegal constructions in forest area) you will be in trouble. If you are doing anything with forest, you will be in trouble. We are telling you,” the bench told.

- On March 1, the court had threatened the Haryana government with contempt if it went ahead with the amendments virtually allowing **massive scale of construction in the Aravalli Hills**.
- The court had said the amendments pull the carpet from under a series of orders passed by the Supreme Court over the years to protect the Aravalli and Shivalik ranges from builders and indiscriminate mining.
- The court had pointed out how the once-lush Aravalli region was devastated after years of indiscriminate and illegal mining.
- The entire Aravalli area is devastated and entire flora and fauna there has gone, the court had said.
- In October last, the court had expressed shock over **31 “vanished” hills in the Aravallis** and had asked Rajasthan to stop illegal mining in 115.34-hectare area.

About Aravalli Hills:

- The Aravalli Range is one of the most popular mountain ranges in the western part of India.
- Stretching about 300 miles from the **northeast to the southwest**, the Aravallis intercept the state of Rajasthan on its stretch.
- The highest point in the Aravalli Range is called as **Guru Shikhar, which is located in Mount Abu**. At this point, the peak rises to about 5653 feet.
- The northern end of the Aravalli Range is a stretch of isolated and rocky hills and ridges that starts in **Haryana and ends in Delhi**.
- The southwestern range of the Aravalli passes through **Gujarat and Rajasthan**.
- Ajmer in Rajasthan is located on the southern slopes of the Aravallis. Situated near a narrow gorge, the city of Bundi in Rajasthan is surrounded by the Aravalli Range on its three sides.
- The Aravallis are some of the **oldest fold mountains in the world**. Beginning from the Rajasthan in western India, the mountain range extends to Delhi.
- The peaks of the Aravalli range are not pointed as young fold mountains. They have been **eroded by the forces of nature like**

rain, wind and sunshine.

Separate Forest Surveys

Why in news?

A high-power committee constituted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has recommended that forest surveys, the **biennial exercise** by the government to estimate forest cover, explicitly demarcate trees grown in forests from those grown outside, that is, in plantations and private lands.

About the Surveys:

- Currently, the government counts both towards estimating the portion of India's geographical area covered by forest.
 - Independent critics have for long pointed out that including both isn't an ecologically sound principle but this is a first instance of government-constituted committee recommending so.
 - India posted a **marginal 0.21% rise in the area under forest** between 2015 and 2017, according to the **India State of Forest Report (SFR) 2017**, which was made public in February 2018.
 - The document says that India has about 7,08,273 sq. km. of forest, which is **21.53% of the geographic area of the country** (32,87,569 sq. km.).
 - Getting India to have at **least 33% of its area** under forest has been a long-standing goal of the government since 1988.
 - Various editions of the SFR have over the years reported the area under forests as hovering around 21%. So, the government also includes substantial patches of trees outside areas designated as forests, such as plantations or greenlands, in its assessment.
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GST revenue-sharing proportion

Why in news?

The Centre should bring in a constitutional amendment to fix the proportion of devolution of Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection between the Central and the State Governments, said former chairman of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council C. Rangarajan.

Observations:

- The introduction of GST is an important step towards the reform of the indirect tax structure.
- Some States bemoan the loss of sovereignty. This is not true. The GST Council comprising all State Finance Ministers and the Union Finance Minister take the decisions on rates and several associated features. The Centre is also bound by it.

Appoint committee:

- He said that a committee could be appointed specifically to **fix the GST revenue-sharing proportion**, before bringing in a constitutional amendment to give effect to that.
 - The 14th Finance Commission had broken a new path in terms of allocation of resources.
 - One of the major recommendations had been to increase the share of tax devolution to 42% of the divisible pool. This was a substantial increase by almost 10%.
 - The balance in fiscal space thus remains broadly the same in quantitative terms, but tilts in favour of States in qualitative terms through compositional shift in favour of devolution and, hence, fiscal autonomy. Let there be one committee to decide what the rate will be for five years.
 - Indian Constitution had laid down the functions as well as taxation powers of the Centre and States.
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Supersonic shockwaves

Why in news?

NASA has captured unprecedented photos of the **interaction of shockwaves from two supersonic aircraft**, part of its research into developing planes that can fly faster than sound without thunderous “sonic booms”.

About the Supersonic shockwaves:

- When an aircraft crosses that threshold around **1,225 km per hour** at sea level it produces waves from the pressure it puts on the air around it, which merge to cause the ear-splitting sound.
 - In an intricate manoeuvre by pilots at NASA's **Armstrong Flight Research Center in California**, two supersonic T-38 jets flew just 30 feet apart below another plane waiting to photograph them with an advanced, high-speed camera.
 - The rendezvous at an altitude of around 30,000 feet yielded mesmerising images of the shockwaves emanating from both planes.
 - With one jet flying just behind the other, “the shocks are going to be shaped differently.
 - This data is really going to help us advance our understanding of how these shocks interact.
 - Sonic booms can be a major nuisance, capable of not just startling people on the ground but also causing damage like shattered windows and this has led to strong restrictions on supersonic flight over land in jurisdictions like the United States.
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