

Weekly Current Affairs: 16 July to 21 July 2018

LS passes bill to end no detention policy in schools

- A bill to amend the Right to Education (RTE) Act to abolish the 'no detention policy' in schools was passed in the Lok Sabha on July 18, 2018.
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (second amendment) Bill, 2017 will be at the discretion of the states whether to continue with no detention or not.
- The states will decide at what level and who will conduct the examination.
- Under the current provisions of the RTE Act, no student can be detained till class 8 and all students are promoted to the next grade.

WhatsApp limits message forwarding to 5 chats in India to check rumours, fake news

- Under pressure to stop rumours and fake news triggering horrific lynching incidents, WhatsApp on July 20, 2018 announced to limit forwarding messages to five chats at once.
- It will remove the quick forward button next to media messages.
- WhatsApp had earlier this month launched a 'forward label' to identify messages which are not original and have been forwarded.
- More than 20 people have been killed by mobs in the past two months across the country after being accused of child kidnapping and other crimes in viral messages circulated on WhatsApp.
- The decision came after the Ministry of Electronics & IT had written to WhatsApp to take immediate steps to tackle the menace of misuse of their platform wherein inflammatory messages were circulated that led to unfortunate incidents.

Cabinet nod to introduce Bill providing for death penalty for rape of girl below 12 years

- The Union Cabinet has cleared a bill providing for stringent punishment, including death penalty, for those convicted of raping girls below the age of 12 years.
- Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad announced that the bill will be introduced in the ongoing Monsoon Session of Parliament.
- The Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2018, once approved by Parliament, will replace the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance promulgated on 21st April, following the rape and murder of a minor girl in Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir and the rape of a woman in Unnao in Uttar Pradesh.

India's first 'Two-Wheeler Mode' in Google Maps expands to Asia

- The two-wheeler mode in Google Maps that first arrived in India in 2017 has now been extended to Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.
- To be first available for Android users, the motorcycle-specific navigation will help bikers find the most suitable routes in these countries.
- In December 2017, Google incorporated navigation routes for two-wheelers with Voice Assistant capabilities in its Maps feature in India.
- The new travel mode in Google Maps is seen alongside Drive, Train or Bus and Walk alternatives.
- The two-wheeler mode in Maps shows trip routes that use "shortcuts" not accessible to cars and trucks. It also provides customised traffic and arrival time estimations.

India, Bangladesh sign revised travel agreement

- India on July 15, 2018 signed a revised travel agreement with Bangladesh to ease visa restrictions for citizens from the neighbouring country.
- The agreement was signed between the two countries in Dhaka in the presence of visiting Home Minister Rajnath Singh and his counterpart Asaduzzaman Khan.
- Under the Revised Travel Arrangement (RTA)-2018, freedom fighters and elderly Bangladeshi nationals will get five-year multiple visa from India.
- Besides this, both the leaders also held the 6th Home Minister Level Talks between India and Bangladesh.

[SC reserves verdict on constitutional validity of section 377 of IPC](#)

- The Supreme Court on July 17, 2018 reserved its verdict on a clutch of pleas challenging the constitutional validity of section 377 of Indian Penal Code which criminalises consensual gay sex.
- A five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra concluded hearing the arguments on the contentious issue after detailed hearing of four days, which had commenced on July 10.
- The bench, also comprising Justices R F Nariman, A M Khanwilkar, D Y Chandrachud and Indu Malhotra, asked the parties to file written submissions in support of their claims by July 20.
- The verdict is likely to be pronounced before October 2, 2018 as Justice Misra would be retiring as CJI on that day.

[BBC World Service launches its first Gujarati language television news bulletin](#)

- The BBC World Service has launched its first Gujarati language television news bulletin.
- 'BBC Samachar' will be broadcast live five days a week from Delhi and will air on the broadcaster's partner station GSTV at 8 pm.
- The launch is part of a wider BBC World Service expansion, which has seen 12 new language services launched around the world over the last 12 months.
- Four new language services have been launched online in India - Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi and Telugu.

[ISRO scientists successfully test Vikas Engine](#)

- ISRO said on July 15, 2018 that it has successfully conducted a ground test of its high thrust version of the Vikas Engine that would improve the payload capability of the space agency's launch vehicles.
- The Vikas Engine is the workhorse liquid rocket engine used to power the second stage of the ISRO's trusted Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).
- It is also used in the second stage and also at the four strap on stages of Geosynchronous Launch Vehicle (GSLV) and in the twin engine core liquid stage (L110) of GSLV Mk-III.
- During the test, the propulsion parameters were found to be "satisfactory" and "closely" matched the predictions.
- The ground test has validated the performance adequacy of the Vikas Engine for its use in the upcoming second developmental flight of GSLV Mk-III.
- ISRO is planning to launch GSLV-MkIII-D2 during the second half of 2018 carrying GSAT-29.

[Ramesh Powar named Indian women's cricket team interim coach](#)

- Former Indian off-spinner Ramesh Powar has been named as the interim coach of the Indian women's cricket team.
- Powar has been asked to coach the team by BCCI until they find a replacement for Tushar Arothe, who resigned as the coach of the women's team five months after being appointed.
- The Indian women's team will have a fitness camp from July 25 to August 3 in Bangalore and Powar has been asked to oversee the camp.
- Powar will be involved in planning the camp along with Biju George, the assistant coach.
- The BCCI has invited applications for the post of the coach of the women's cricket team, with the last date to submit an application being July 30.

[IIT-Madras unveils world's first remotely operable LEAP microscope](#)

- The IIT-Madras has commissioned remotely operable Local Electrode Atom Probe (LEAP) microscope.
- It is claimed to be world's first remotely operable LEAP microscope, as it can be remotely operated through special terminal by researchers divided geographically.
- LEAP is high-performance microscope that can provide a precise atom-by-atom view of materials.
- The remotely operable LEAP microscope has been developed in a collaborative exercise involving eight top research institutions in country, spearheaded by IIT-M.
- Other partner institutions are IITs of Bombay, Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur and Ropar, International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI) and Board of Research in Nuclear Sciences (BRNS).

