

Weekly Current Affairs 25th June to 30th June 2018

President Ram Nath Kovind launches Solar Charkha Mission

President Ram Nath Kovind on June 27, 2018 launched the 'Solar Charkha Mission' on the occasion of the UN MSME Day to mark the important economic role played by Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

The Solar Charkha Mission was launched with an aim to employ artisans in 50 identified clusters. The mission will entail a subsidy of Rs 550 crore in the initial two years for 50 clusters and every cluster will employ 400 to 2000 artisans. The mission will generate employment in rural areas and will contribute to the green economy.

North Korea named worst human trafficking country for 16th year

The US State Department on June 28, 2018 categorised North Korea as the "worst human trafficking country" for the 16th straight year in its annual '2018 Trafficking in Persons Report'.

North Korea has been named in the lowest ranked Tier 3 category along with China, Russia and Iran. However, South Korea has been ranked at the highest category in the list of Tier 1 countries for the 16th consecutive year along with the US, UK, France and Canada.

Financial Action Task Force puts Pakistan on 'grey list'

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on June 27, 2018 added Pakistan to its 'grey list' of countries involved in providing monetary assistance to terrorism and related causes. The decision was taken during FATF meeting on Money Laundering in Paris.

At the FATF talks in Paris, a delegation led by Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Pakistani Interim Minister for Finance and Planning apprised the FATF of steps taken by Pakistan to curb terror financing and money laundering, pleading removal of Pakistan's name from FATF grey list. Pakistan had earlier been included in the 'grey list' from 2012 to 2015.

Rupee falls to all-time low of 69.09 against US dollar

The rupee hit the all-time low of 69.09 against the US dollar on June 28, 2018, falling past 69 mark for the first time ever. The previous record low of rupee was 68.86 on November 24, 2016.

The rupee opened at an all-time low of 68.89 against the US Dollar. On June 27, 2018, it ended at 68.63, the worst ever closing since August 28, 2013, when it hit a record closing low of 68.82. The fall can be attributed to the week-long rise in the crude prices amid concerns of higher inflation and current account deficit.

Emergency declared in Papua New Guinea over Polio outbreak

A public health emergency has been declared in three Papua New Guinea (PNG) provinces as the country responds to its first polio outbreak in 18 years when it was declared free of the disease.

As per the World Health Organisation (WHO), the virus was detected in a six-year-old boy in April this year. Later, it was found that the same virus stain has been identified in other healthy children in the same locality and community. That declared an official outbreak.

Government approves draft Act to replace UGC with Higher Education Commission

Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Prakash Javadekar on June 27, 2018 proposed a draft bill to repeal the University Grants Commission (UGC) and set up the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI), a move that aims to reform higher education in India.

The Act entitled 'Higher Education Commission of India Act, 2018 (Repeal of University Grants Commission Act)' revamps UGC Act, 1951 and its parent legislation completely. The HECI Act, 2018 is expected to be introduced in Parliament in the upcoming monsoon session.

NMCG approves setting up of community toilets, procurement of dustbins for Kumbh Mela 2019

The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) in its 13th Executive Committee Meeting on June 26, 2018 approved two projects – setting up of

community toilets and procurement of dustbins for the upcoming Kumbh Mela 2019 in Allahabad.

The setting up of community toilets and procurement of dustbins will be done at an estimated cost of Rs 113 crore and Rs. 3.6 crore, respectively. The move is aimed at ensuring that the pollutants are not dumped into river Ganga.

E Sreedharan Committee to lay down standards for metro rail systems

Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved a proposal to set up a committee which will lay down standards for India's metro rail systems in the country. The decision aims at cutting the costs in the construction and operation of metro rail systems in the country and brings them under the Make in India umbrella.

Besides recommending standardisation norms for various components, the Sreedharan Panel will also propose ways to indigenise metro components that are currently imported. This will bring down costs and also give a boost to the government's Make in India policy.

In a historic first, Saudi Arabia lifts ban on female drivers

In a first, women across Saudi Arabia were legally allowed to drive for the first time since 1957 on June 24, 2018, thus, putting an end to the world's last ban on female drivers which was seen as a symbol of women's repression in the deeply conservative Muslim kingdom.

Following the lifting of ban, women in Saudi Arabia fired up their engines and hit the roads, marking the moment they had waited for since the issuance of the royal decree by King Salman on September 26, 2017 to lift the driving ban on women.

Ministry of Women and Child Development launches report on 'Women in Prisons'

Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Maneka Sanjay Gandhi on June 25, 2018 launched the report titled 'Women in Prisons'.

The report throws light on the condition of women in prisons and their entitlements; issues faced by them and possible methods for resolution of the same. The report contains a comprehensive list of 134 recommendations for

improving the lives of women under incarceration, addresses a wide range of issues pertaining to pregnancy and childbirth in prison, their mental health, legal aid and reintegration in society.