

## Weekly Current Affairs 18th June to 23rd June 2018

### Indian scientists discover sub-Saturn like planet around a sun-like star

An Indian team of scientists led by Professor Abhijit Chakraborty of Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad, have discovered a sub-Saturn or super-Neptune size planet around a Sun-like star.

The planet has a mass of about 27 Earth Mass and size of 6 Earth Radii. It goes around the host star in about 19.5 days.

The discovery was made by measuring the mass of the planet using the indigenously designed 'PRL Advance Radial-velocity Abu-sky Search' (PARAS) spectrograph integrated with 1.2m Telescope at PRL's Gurushikhar Observatory in Mount Abu, India.

### India retaliates to US tariffs, hikes import duty on 29 US products

In a retaliatory move to the heavy tariffs imposed by the United States on imported steel and aluminium items, India has decided to raise customs duty on 29 US products including almond, walnut and pulses. The duty hike by India would have equivalent tariff implications for the US.

The duty hike decision by India is similar to that of the European Union and China which decided to levy higher import duties on a variety of US products in retaliation to its protectionist policies.

### ISRO clears GSAT-11 for launch

The 5,700-kg GSAT-11 satellite was slated for launch on May 26 from Kourou, a site in South America which India uses to launch its heavy-weight satellite.

In a setback to the ISRO, the space agency lost contact with GSAT-6A after it was launched in March this year. Although the ISRO has been trying to establish with GSAT-6A, a satellite meant for military communication, it has found little success.

This also led to the ISRO recalling GSAT-11 for conducting thorough checks.

## **US President Donald Trump orders to end separation of immigrant families**

US President Donald Trump has signed an executive order to keep together immigrant families who have been detained at the border with Mexico.

With the decision, Trump reversed his own policy amid heavy pressure from his fellow Republicans, Democrats and the international community, over the separation of undocumented parents and children.

## **International yoga day observed globally**

The 4th International yoga day was celebrated across the world on June 21, 2018. The day's celebrations in India were led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Dehradun.

The Prime Minister joined thousands of volunteers, performing Yoga asanas in the lawns of Forest Research Institute in Dehradun. Similar Yoga related events were held across the world to mark the occasion.

In fact, ahead of the yoga day, the PM Modi had taken to social media to share the intricacies of various Yoga Asanas. He also shared pictures of people performing Yoga, at various locations across the world.

## **President Ram Nath Kovind approves Governor's rule in J&K after BJP-PDP split**

President Ram Nath Kovind on June 20, 2018 approved the Governor's rule in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) following the resignation of Mehbooba Mufti as Jammu and Kashmir's Chief Minister.

The move came hours after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) pulled out of its alliance with Mehbooba Mufti's Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), citing the "critical security situation" in the Valley. After BJP-PDP split, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had submitted a detailed report to the President regarding the Governor's rule after receiving it from J&K Governor NN Vohra.

## **In Detail: United States withdraws from UN Human Rights Council**

Nikki Haley, the US Permanent Representative to the United Nations, on June 19, 2018 announced the withdrawal of the United States from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), accusing the council of bias against US ally Israel.

However, Haley asserted that United States will continue to promote human rights outside of the council and would consider rejoining it in the future, if reforms are made. The move came a day after the 47-member council began its latest session on June 18, 2018 with an attack against President Donald Trump's immigration policy.

## **RBI revises housing loan limits under Priority Sector Lending**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on June 19, 2018 revised the upwards housing loan limits under Priority Sector Lending (PSL).

The housing loan limits were revised to bring union of the PSL guidelines for housing loans with the Affordable Housing Scheme of the Union Government and to give a stimulus to low-cost housing for the economically weaker sections and low income groups.

PSL loans are relatively cheaper than market interest rate.

## **US President Donald Trump orders US Military to form 'Space Force'**

US President Donald Trump on June 18, 2018 ordered the US Defense Department and the Pentagon to create a "Space Force", an independent sixth branch of the armed forces.

The Space Force military branch would be "separate but equal" to the Air Force. Joseph F. Dunford Jr., Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, would oversee the creation of the force. The president also reasserted plans to land astronauts on the moon again and do another human lunar landing within 10 years; and eventually on Mars.

## **Union Cabinet approves proposal for enactment of Dam Safety Bill, 2018**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 13, 2018 approved the proposal for introduction of Dam Safety Bill, 2018 in the Parliament.

The draft bill has been finalised after wide consultation with leading Indian experts and international experts. It will enable all states and union territories of India to adopt uniform dam safety procedures that will not only ensure the safety of the dams but will also safeguard their benefits.

The uniformity will also help in protecting human life, livestock and property