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Daily News Analysis

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Gender gap Report

The World Economic Forum released its report according to which India ranked 112th in terms of gender gap. The report said that the India was ranked in bottom-five in terms of survival and economic participation.

Key points

- India was in 108th position in 2018. Its performance weakened in the year 2019 according to the report.
- India's performance was lagging in three out of four metrics used for ranking the countries. India slipped to 150th rank in health and survival, 149th in economic participation, 112th in educational attainment. India improved to 18th place in terms of political empowerment.
- The report also said that opportunities for women in India is very low. India was ranked below countries like Bangladesh (50th), Indonesia (85th), Brazil (92nd), Nepal (101st), Sri Lanka (102nd), China (106th).
- The World Economic Forum published its first report in 2006. Since then performance of India has deteriorated. In 2006, India was ranked at 98th place. Opportunities for women in the country is 35.4%. Sex ratio of India was low as compared to other countries (91 girls for every 100 boys).
- Iceland was the topmost gender-neutral country. Next to Iceland, other Nordic Countries like Norway, Finland and Sweden were the top performers.

Steeling India 2019

Why in news?

The Confederation of Indian Industry organized "Steeling India 2019" conference, a drive to increase metal intensity in key sectors..

Key points

- The session focused on key industries namely automobile, infrastructure, railway, water, irrigation and housing. It discussed the strategies to promote steel intensive structures and to augment steel consumption. Steel producers, consumers and policy advisors attended the conference.
- The conference developed a road map to increase steel intensity in key sectors. It also brought in strategies to mitigate supply chain issues in the steel sector.
- CII organized the conference with the objective of augmenting steel production. The conference will help India pave ways to achieve its target of 300 MT of production by 2030 (according to National Steel Policy).



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- The World Steel Association predicts steel demand in India to reach 103 MT (Million Tonnes) in 2019.
- Experts believe that in coming days, rural market is to play a crucial role in steel sector. This is mainly because demand for fast-moving consumer goods like two-wheelers, mobile phones, etc. in rural markets are increasing at faster rate.

Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle

Why in News?

- Recently, the Supreme Court of India has directed the government to look into the feasibility of Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV) to deal with air pollution.
- Research is ongoing at the International Research Center for Hydrogen Energy at Kyushu University, Japan on FCEVs based on hydrogen cell technology, also known as 'fuel cells'.

Fuel Cell

- Fuel cells and batteries convert chemical energy into electrical energy and are very useful forms of galvanic cell.
- A galvanic or voltaic cell is an electrochemical cell that converts chemical energy into electrical energy through the redox reactions that occur within the cell.
- Galvanic cells that are designed to convert the energy of combustion of fuels like hydrogen, methane, methanol, etc. directly into electrical energy are called fuel cells. One of the most successful fuel cells uses the reaction of hydrogen with oxygen to form water.

Indian status

- In India, so far, the definition of Electric Vehicles only covers Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs).
- BEVs have no internal combustion engine or fuel tank and run on a fully electric drivetrain powered by rechargeable batteries.
- The Government of India has launched FAME India Scheme with the objective to support hybrid/electric vehicles market development and manufacturing ecosystem. It also covers Hybrid & Electric technologies like Mild Hybrid, Strong Hybrid, Plug in Hybrid & BEVs.
- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, under its Research, Development and Demonstration (RD&D) Programme, has been supporting various projects on hydrogen and fuel cells.
- The Ministry of Science and Technology has supported two networked centres on hydrogen storage led by IIT Bombay and Nonferrous Materials Technology Development Centre, Hyderabad.



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Government Instant Messaging System (GIMS)

- Government Instant Messaging System (GIMS) is a prototype of an Indian equivalent of popular messaging platforms, such as WhatsApp and Telegram for secure internal use.
- GIMS seeks to replace existing platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram and Signal which are being used by a majority of government departments and organisations.
- It will be used by employees of Central and state government departments and organisations for secure intra and inter organisation communications.
- It employs end-to-end encryption for one-to-one messaging.
- The server hosting GIMS is installed within the country and the information stored would be in the government-based cloud — NIC-operated data centres that are only meant for use by the government and its departments.
- GIMS Portal will administer and monitor the working of an app.
- Besides, one-to-one messaging and group messaging, it also provides for documents and media sharing in keeping with the hierarchies in the government system.
- GIMS is designed and developed by the Kerala unit of National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- The launch of the new app comes after the recent controversy over the WhatsApp breach of some Indian users' mobile devices due to Pegasus.

StrandHogg'

Why in news?

The Union Home Ministry has alerted States, warning them about the vulnerability of the Android operating system to a bug called 'StrandHogg'.

Key points:

- It is a vulnerability in android which allows real-time malware applications to pose as genuine applications and access user data of all kinds.
- It can listen to the conversations, access photo album, read/send messages, make calls, record conversations, get login credentials to various accounts, access private images, files, contact details, call logs and location information without being apparent to the affected users.

Araku valley

Why in news?

Efforts to pass on the benefits of the growing coffee industry in Araku valley to the locals.

Key points

- The Central government has recently accorded the prestigious 'Geographical Indication' (GI) tag to Araku Valley Coffee along with four other varieties of Indian coffee. Others are Coorg



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Arabica Coffee, Chikmagalur Coffee and Bababudangiris Arabica Coffee of Karnataka and Waynad Robusta Coffee.

- The GI tag is primarily the certification of products of agricultural, natural or manufactured (handicrafts and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory.
- The GI tag will help all the five coffee brands get maximum market and price for their premium products across the globe. Indian coffee is highly valued in the world market and sold as a premium product in Europe.
- Among the five, Araku Valley Arabica Coffee, produced through an organic method, is famous for its rich blend of good taste and invigorating aroma as well as purity. The coffee from the hilly areas of Visakhapatnam district and Odisha is produced by tribals through the 'integrated coffee development project'.
- The tribals use organic, green manures and adopt organic pest management practices.

Concerns:

- Araku's coffee is world-famous, but its farmers who are mainly tribals are still struggling.
- While coffee grown in Araku is sold at premium prices, farmers growing it don't even get Rs 100 a kilo for the same coffee fruit. The major profit is siphoned off by the middlemen.

PradhanMantriMatruVandanaYojana (PMMVY)

Why in news?

Several clauses and lengthy documentation introduced into PradhanMantriMatruVandanaYojana (PMMVY) have led to single women and young brides being left out of its purview.

Reasons for Inadequacy in the PradhanMantriMatruVandanaYojana

- Underage mothers- The applicant has to be at least 19 years old leaves out younger brides, who hesitate in getting their marriages registered as the legal age of marriage is 18 years.
- According to a study, 30-35% of first-time mothers are under the age of 18 years.
- Living Child- The scheme is solely for the first living child and leaves out newly married women, those who are most likely to give birth to one.
- Proof of address- A mother seeking benefits needs to provide proof of address of her marital home, which proves challenging for a newly married woman expecting a child and often residing in her natal home during pregnancy.
- Separate undertakings- The application form requires separate undertakings from the woman and her husband that the child for whom they are seeking the benefit will be the first living child for both of them.
- Bribe- women also have to pay a heavy bribe during the application process.
- Lengthy documentation- An application form to be filled for each of the three installments, an application for linking the Aadhaar card with a bank account, another one for linking the Aadhaar card with post office account and feedback form.



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Key points:

- The PradhanMantriMatruVandanaYojana (PMMVY) was announced in December 2016.
- The Union Cabinet approved the scheme and it was decided to give a benefit of Rs. 5,000 to pregnant and lactating mothers for the birth of the first child.
- This would be disbursed in three installments upon meeting several conditionalities — registration of pregnancy, at least one antenatal check-up, registration of childbirth and vaccinations.
- The remaining cash incentive of up to ₹1,000 is to be given under a separate scheme called JananiSurakshaYojana so that on an “average” women get a total sum of ₹6,000.
- The objective is to compensate women for wage loss due to childbirth.

Privilege motion

Why in news?

A Privilege Motion has been moved against the Union Textile Minister Smritilrani in the Lok Sabha.

Privilege Motion

- It is concerned with the breach of parliamentary privileges by a minister.
- Parliamentary Privileges are certain rights and immunities enjoyed by members of Parliament, individually and collectively, so that they can “effectively discharge their functions”.
- When any of these rights and immunities are disregarded, the offence is called a breach of privilege and is punishable under law of Parliament.
- A notice is moved in the form of a motion by any member of either House against those being held guilty of breach of privilege.

Parliamentary Privileges

- Parliamentary privileges are special rights, immunities and exemptions enjoyed by the two Houses of Parliament, their committees and their members.
- The Constitution also extends the parliamentary privileges to those persons who are entitled to speak and take part in the proceedings of a House of Parliament or any of its committees. These include the Attorney General of India and Union ministers.
- The parliamentary privileges do not extend to the President who is also an integral part of the Parliament. Article 361 of the Constitution provides for privileges for the President.
- Article 105 of the Constitution expressly mentions two privileges, that is, freedom of speech in Parliament and right of publication of its proceedings.
- Apart from the privileges as specified in the Constitution, the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, provides for freedom from arrest and detention of members under civil process during the continuance of the meeting of the House or of a committee thereof and forty



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days before its commencement and forty days after its conclusion.

- It needs to be noted that the Parliament, till now, has not made any special law to exhaustively codify all the privileges.

Privilege Committee

- It is a Standing Committee. It examines the cases of breach of the privileges of the House and its members and recommends appropriate action.
- The Lok Sabha committee has 15 members, while the Rajya Sabha committee has 10 members.

