

# Daily Current Affairs 6 and 7 July 2018

## India

### **Sambalpur Railway Division becomes first to eliminate all unmanned level crossings**

- The Sambalpur railway division of Indian Railways' East Coast Railway Zone on July 5, 2018 set a record by constructing six limited height subways (LHS) at one go, in a single block of four and half hours.
- The launch of the 6 Limited Height Subways in Sambalpur Division is the first of its kind not only in East Coast Railway, but also in the entire Indian Railways.
- The main objective behind the move was to eliminate all unmanned Level Crossing Gates over Sambalpur Division.
- In view of the launch of the 6 LHS, seven unmanned Level Crossing gates will be totally closed in Bhawanipatna-Lanjigarh Road Section of Kalahandi area of Odisha.

### **New five-judge constitution bench to hear challenge to Section 377 of IPC**

A newly re-constituted five-judge constitution bench will begin hearing of four crucial matters, including the much-contested case challenging the Constitutional validity of Section 377 of Indian Penal Code from July 10, 2018.

#### **Following are the four cases that have been listed for hearing before the bench:**

1. Constitutional validity of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code that criminalises homosexuality
2. Validity of the ban on entry of women between the age of 15 and 50 in the sanctum sanctorum of Sabrimala Temple
3. Validity of the Adultery Law under Section 497 of the Indian Penal Code, which seeks to punish only men for adultery and treats women involved in the crime as victims.
4. Whether a legislator can be disqualified on account of a charge sheet filed against him/her or should it be done only upon conviction?

The new five-judge bench will be headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra and would comprise Justices R F Nariman, A M Khanwilkar, D Y Chandrachud and Indu Malhotra.

The first case listed for hearing includes the challenge to Section 377 of Indian Penal Code or the issue of sexual relations between persons of same sex.

### **ISRO conducts successful flight testing of Crew Escape System**

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on July 5, 2018 conducted successful flight testing of 'Crew Escape System'.
- The major technology demonstration is the first in a series of 'pad abort' tests to qualify the system, which is a critical technology relevant for future human space mission.

- The Crew Escape System is an emergency escape measure designed to quickly pull the crew module along with the astronauts to a safe distance from the launch vehicle in the event of a launch abort.
- The first test (Pad Abort Test) demonstrated the safe recovery of the crew module in case of any exigency at the launch pad.

#### **British Council and Bengal Government sign MoU on educational and cultural collaboration**

- Alan Gemmell, Director British Council India and West Bengal's principal secretary for home and tourism and hill affairs Atri Bhattacharya on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding to further educational and cultural cooperation between Britain and Bengal in the presence of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at Nabanna.
- The overarching MoU celebrates the British Council's 70th anniversary in India - and Kolkata - with a focus on English language training across whole school system and higher education, linked to employability; research collaboration and capacity building in higher education and cultural collaboration between the UK and West Bengal with a focus on skills and tourism.
- As an immediate outcome of the MoU, Durga Puja, the world's largest community-based public arts and craft festival, will be in focus in the UK during the Totally Thames Festival, starting this August.

#### **Uttar Pradesh orders ban on plastic from July 15**

- Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath on July 6, 2018 issued an order to ban use of plastic in the state with effect from July 15, 2018.
- CM yogi urged everyone to stop use of plastic cup, glass and polythene after July 15. The order is in line with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plan to end the use of single-use plastic products by 2022.
- On November 18, 2015, the Allahabad High Court had directed the state government to issue a notification enforcing a complete ban on the sale of polythene across the state by the end of that year. Following this, the government implemented the order in January 2016. However, the Noida authority and Gautam Budh Nagar district failed to enforce the order.

#### **NMCG organises workshop on Collaboration for Ganga Rejuvenation**

- On the occasion of the World Environment Day 2018, the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) organised a workshop on 'Collaboration for Ganga Rejuvenation' on July 5, 2018 in New Delhi.
- The workshop witnessed participation from several foreign dignitaries who appreciated the efforts being made under the Namami Gange programme.
- The workshop paved way for discussions over issues including the urgent need for International Cooperation for integrated water management.

#### **Punjab orders mandatory dope test**

- Punjab CM Captain Amarinder Singh has ordered a mandatory dope test for all government employees, including police personnel, from the time of their recruitment through every stage of their service.
- Drug screening will be mandatory in cases of promotions, and also be a part of annual medical examinations.
- The state's Chief Secretary has been asked to issue an order.

## **Finance**

### **CBIC launches GST 'Verify App'**

- The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has developed a mobile app 'GST Verify' to protect interest of consumers. It is an android app to verify if the person collecting GST from the consumer is eligible to collect it or not, an official statement said today.
- It also provides the details of the person/ company collecting GST, it said.
- "Every time you shop/eat/buy check the bill if there is any GST amount mentioned, if yes verify through this app if she/he is genuinely registered person or not, thereby you save the amount shown as tax from the fraudster if he is cheating you," the statement said.
- It further said that a Composition Tax Payer should not collect the tax from his consumer.

### **Karnataka Government waives off Rs 34000 cr farm loan**

- Karnataka Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy on July 5, 2018 announced a Rs 34000 crore worth farm loan waiver in the maiden budget of the state's Congress-JDS run coalition government.
- Unveiling the budget proposals in the state assembly, Kumaraswamy who also holds the finance portfolio said that he had limited the loan amount to Rs 2 lakh, as it was not right to waiver higher value crop loan.
- To mobilise resources, the Chief Minister has proposed in the budget to increase tax on petrol from 19 to 21 per cent, additional excise duty on IML by 4 per cent, tax on electricity from 6 to 9 per cent and Motor Vehicles Tax by 50 per cent on private service vehicles.

### **CCI launches an Online Guidance System to determine notifiability of Merger & Acquisitions**

- Supplementing the Union Government's vision for e-Governance and Digital India Programme, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) on July 4, 2018 launched an Online Guidance System for determining notifiability of merger & acquisitions (combinations) in terms of the Competition Act, 2002.
- The Guidance System has been named as 'Do It Yourself (DIY): A notifiability check for mergers & acquisitions under the Competition Act, 2002'.
- The online guidance system has been launched as part of CCI's outreach initiatives and measures to simplify compliance requirements regarding combinations.

## Appointments

### Justice A K Goel appointed Chairperson of NGT

- Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel, who retired from the Supreme Court of India on July 6, 2018, has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the National Green Tribunal (NGT).
- He has been appointed to the position for a term of five years, as per an order issued by the personnel ministry. The post of NGT chairperson had been lying vacant for more than 6 months after the retirement of Justice Swatanter Kumar on December 20, 2017.
- Following Justice Kumar's retirement, Justice Umesh Dattatraya Salvi was appointed as the acting chairperson of the NGT. He retired on February 13. Following this, Justice Jawad Rahim was appointed as the acting chairperson.

## Sports

### Law Commission recommends legalising sports betting in India

- The Law Commission of India, in its 276th report, has recommended legalisation of regulated betting and gambling activities, while asserting that a complete ban has not been returning the desired results.
- The report titled, "Legal Framework: Gambling and Sports Betting including in Cricket in India" read that having discussed both pros and cons of legalising regulated gambling and betting activities, it would be apt to say that the arguments in favour of the same far outweigh the arguments alluding to the immorality of these activities.
- The report stated that since it is not possible to completely prevent these activities, effectively regulating them would be the only feasible option.

### Tendulkar launches Kit Up Challenge

- One of India's greatest cricketers of all times, Sachin Tendulkar has taken to social media to launch #KitupChallenge to encourage people to start playing sports.
- Posting a video of himself putting on his cricketing gear and getting ready to play, Tendulkar asked the viewers to take up a sport of their choice.
- As part of the challenge, Tendulkar called upon the viewers to post a short video of themselves on social media while getting ready to play a sport and use the hashtag to nominate others in the process.

### Sports Authority of India's name changed

- Union Ministers of Youth Affairs and Sports Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore announced that Sports Authority of India (SAI), will now be known as 'Sports India'.
- SAI is a successor organisation of the IXth Asian Games held in New Delhi in 1982.

- It aims at the joint preparation of long term sports-specific development plans by National Sports governing bodies and federations of India (NSFs).

## **Days**

### **International Day of Cooperatives 2018 observed**

- The International Day of Cooperatives was observed across the world on July 7, 2018 with an aim to promote the co-operative model, since it contains aspects of sustainable development at its core and is based on ethical values and principles.
- 2018 theme: Sustainable societies through cooperation.

## **World**

### **European Parliament rejects EU's controversial copyright law**

- European Parliament lawmakers on July 5, 2018 rejected a highly controversial European Union copyright law proposal that was proposed by Beatles legend Paul McCartney against the creators of Wikipedia.
- The draft law failed to get the required support with 318 parliamentary legislators voting against the measure, 278 in favour and 31 abstaining from the vote. The proposal was firmly resisted by major US tech giants as well as advocates of Internet freedom.
- The draft law proposed to put more responsibility on websites to check for copyright infringements and forced platforms to pay for linking to news.
- The move was intended to bring the EU's copyright laws in line with the digital age, but instead, it led to protests from the websites and much debate.