

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Legal framework to protect interests of migrants

- Protocols of the Registrar General of India (RGI) should be amended to enable caste based enumeration of migrants so that they can avail the attendant benefits in the States to which migration takes place.
- Migrants should be enabled to avail Public Distribution System (PDS) benefits in the destination state by providing for inter-State operability of PDS.
- States should be encouraged to proactively eliminate the requirement of domicile status to prevent any discrimination in work and employment.
- Domicile status goes against constitutional fundamental right of Freedom of Movement and residence in any part of the territory of the country.
- States should include migrant children in the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan's (SSA) Annual Work Plans to uphold their Right to Education.
- Vast network of post offices should be made effective by reducing the cost of transfer of money to avoid informal remittances transfers by migrants.
- Migrants should be enabled to open bank accounts and banks should adhere to RBI guidelines regarding Know Your Customer (KYC) norms and not insist on documents that were not required
- Hugely underutilized Construction Workers Welfare Cess Fund (CWWF) should be used to promote rental housing, working Women Hostels etc. for the benefit of migrants.

Thiruvananthapuram tops city governance ranking: ASICS

- Thiruvananthapuram topped in 2016 Survey. Pune is ranked second, up two ranks from 2015. Kolkata retained its third rank.
- Bengaluru dropped by four places to 16th rank. Ludhiana, Jaipur and Chandigarh retain their previous last three positions of 19th, 20th and 21st respectively.
- Cities in India continue to score poorly across their city-systems framework with their average scores of between 2.1 and 4.4 on 10 scale. London and New York score 9.3 and 9.8 on the same parameters.
- ASICS is designed to help city leaders pin point issues in urban governance in their cities and help them chalk out a reform roadmap to make them more livable.
- It ranks cities in the scale of 0 to 10 scale. The better scores of city in the survey, indicates it will be able to deliver better quality of life to citizens over the medium and long-term.
- The major parameters of the survey included urban capacities and resources, urban planning and design, empowered and legitimate political representation, and transparency, accountability and participation.

Government notifies Specified Bank Notes (Cessation of Liabilities) Act, 2017

- This law makes possession of more than a certain number of the old Rs. 500 and Rs. 1,000 notes a criminal offence.

- It ends the liability of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the government on the demonetised Rs.500 and Rs. 1000 currency notes.
- It prohibits the holding, transferring or receiving of demonitised notes from 31 December, 2016 and confers power on the court of a first class magistrate to impose the penalty.
- Possessing more than 10 pieces of old notes by individuals and more than 25 pieces for study, research or numismatics purposes will attract a fine of Rs. 10,000 or five times the value of cash held, whichever is higher.
- Fine of a minimum of Rs, 50,000 will be imposed for a false declaration by persons for being abroad during the demonetisation period (9 November-30 December, 2016).

INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Georgia Granted Visa-Free Travel to EU by Member States

- **European Union** member states have approved the **visa-free travel** for Georgia to facilitate cooperation of **Georgia** with the European Union.
- Under the accord, Georgian citizens will be able to travel visa-free for 90 days in the EU during any 180-day period.
- The accord does not apply to the **United Kingdom or Ireland**.
- The accord now requires formal signature by the **28 member states** and the European Parliament.

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

IMD predicts above normal temperature in 2017 summer

- The maximum temperatures in March to May 2017 are likely to be warmer by more than 1°C in north, northwest and parts of central India. In other parts, maximum temperature will be between 0.5 to 1°C more than the normal.
- Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Telangana will see warmer temperatures along with hill states J&K and Himachal Pradesh.
- The forecast shows a 47% probability of summer temperatures being above normal. It also mentions that there will increase in the frequency and duration of heat waves across the country.
- Peninsular, northeastern and west central parts of the country will also experience minimum temperatures higher by 0.5°C to 1°C than normal.
- El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is expected to be in a neutral condition during summer months, thus unlikely to influence the temperatures in India.

PEOPLE IN NEWS

Author Neil Gaiman Named U.N. Goodwill Ambassador

- **Aim:** To raise awareness about the plight of forcibly displaced people and to generate much needed funds.
- Neil will play an important role in creating better public understanding and **support for refugees**.
- He had been working closely with UNHCR since 2013 and he has supported several fundraising initiatives and UNHCR campaigns and events, including #WithRefugees, the #IBelong campaign to end statelessness, World Refugee Day and the Nansen Refugee.

R Subramania Kumar to hold additional charge of MD & CEO of IOB

- Appointments Committee of Cabinet has approved the proposal for extending the additional charge of the post of **MD and CEO, IOB** for a period of another three months.
- **R Subramania Kumar** has given additional charge of the post of Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Indian Overseas Bank in **November 2017**.

Renowned Gujarati Writer Tarak Mehta Dies at 87

- Noted **Indian columnist**, humorist, writer and playwright, **Tarak Mehta**, died at the age of 87.
- He was mostly known for the popular column '**Duniya Ne Undha Chasma**' in Gujarati magazine.
- The popular Hindi TV show, **Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashma**, is based on this column.
- He had been well-known figure in the Gujarati theatre and his work had been translated and adapted in several Gujarati plays
- He was awarded Padma Shri, in 2015. Gujarat Sahitya Akademi awarded him Sahitya Gaurav Puraskar in 2011 and Ramanlal Nilkanth Hasya Paritoshik in 2017.

Senior Congress leader & RS MP Haji Abdul Salam passes away

- Rajya Sabha member from Manipur, Haji Abdul Salam passed away at 69.
- Salam is the **first Manipuri Muslim** to be a member of RS from Manipur. He has been representing the state in the upper house since 2014.
- He was elected to the 3rd, 6th and 8th Manipur Legislative Assembly from **Wabagai assembly constituency**.