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## Daily News Pedia

### **EC revises poll affidavit format after SC order**

News affidavit format approved by Election Commission to be filled by political candidates in upcoming assembly polls.

- In new affidavit, Party candidate is required to fill up the form provided by the EC, which will contain.
- All his/her criminal particulars.
- Pending criminal cases will have to be declared in bold letters.
- The candidate will also be required to inform the political party from which he/she is contesting about his/her criminal background, if any.
- The party will then be obligated to put up on its website the information pertaining to candidates having criminal antecedents.

The purpose is to help voters make an informed decision.

Source: The Hindu.

### **Upgraded MiG-29 adds to air power**

India to get big boost in defence after upgraded Mig-29.

The country to celebrate the Air Force Day on October 8 and present a showcase of the upgraded MiG-29 with its combat capabilities at Adampur Air Force Station.

Features of Upgraded Mig-29 – A combat aircraft which is flexible and can manoeuvre every situation.

Mig 29 is a twin-engine jet fighter aircraft designed in the Soviet Union, compatible with latest missiles and can launch multi-dimensional attacks and Capability of taking off vertically. It has Multi-Functional Display (MFD) screen, Air-to-Air refuelling feature, Air-to-Air, Air-to-Ground and Anti-Shipping Operation and Glass cockpit having digital screens.

Source: The Hindu.

### **First case of 'Netflix addiction' at NIMHANS**

The Service for Healthy Use of Technology (SHUT) clinic at National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in Bengaluru received its first case of Netflix addiction: a 26-year-old unemployed man had turned to the streaming service to shut out reality for more than six months.

While entertainment has always had an element of escapism, streaming services that put up a show's entire season for viewing on multiple devices, have increased viewers' susceptibility to binge-watching. It's increasingly common for people to spend seven hours at a stretch watching the entire season of their favourite sitcom or thriller.

The addiction interferes with the child's academic performance and counsellors are advising students and parents to keep a close watch on the duration and the shows they watch.

Source: The Hindu.

### Eurasian Otter

Otter is a carnivorous mammal and there are 7 subspecies found in 3 continents - *Europe, Asia and Africa*.

The Eurasian otter found in all the 3 continents is considered to be "Near Threatened" in IUCN Red List.

It lives in a wide variety of aquatic habitats, including highland and lowland lakes, rivers, streams, marshes, swamp forests and coastal areas independent of their size, origin or latitude.

Eurasian otter is the one of the least-known of India's 3 otter species (Eurasian, smooth-coated & small-clawed otters) in Western Ghats. It has been recorded historically from the Western Ghats - Coorg in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu's Nilgiri and Palani hill ranges. Though its range is wide, it is not as frequently sighted as other two otters in India.

All 3 species of otters in India are protected under the Wildlife Protection Act and are listed in CITES Appendices.

- i. *Eurasian Otter - CITES Appendix I; WPA Schedule II*
- ii. *Smooth Coated Otter - CITES Appendix II; WPA Schedule II*
- iii. *Clawless Otter - CITES Appendix II; WPA Schedule I*

Source: The Hindu.

### JIMEX - 18

The 3rd edition of Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX) is going to be organized in Visakhapatnam. The last edition of JIMEX was conducted in Dec 2013 off Chennai.

The conduct of JIMEX-18 after 5 years is indicative of an upswing in the Indo-Japanese defence relations.

It is aimed to enhance interoperability, improve understanding and imbibe the best practices of each other.

Source: The Hindu.

### Van Vihar National Park

Van Vihar National Park is a located in the Bhopal district of the state of Madhya Pradesh. It is located adjacent to Upper Lake of Bhopal city at Madhya Pradesh in Central India.

It harbours herbivores like Chital, Sambar, and blue bull under free ranging condition and the animals like tiger, lion, leopard, hyena, crocodile and gharial under captive condition.

Van Vihar Safari Park is a paradise for bird enthusiasts, where one could found birds like Peacocks, Munias, barlets, wagtails, bulbuls, orioles, Kala Teetar, Blue Kingfisher, Phakta and migratory birds such as Tree Pie and Drongo.

## **ISRO & ROSCOSMOS to work together for first Indian manned mission**

India hopes to send its first manned mission Gaganyaan in 2022.

The ROSCOSMOS State Corporation for Space Activities and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will be working together on the Gaganyaan mission.

A MoU was inked between ISRO and the Federal Space Agency of Russia 'ROSCOSMOS' for joint activities in the field of Human Spaceflight Programme.

The Russian side has offered a ride to Indian astronaut a short visit to International Space Station (ISS) on board a Soyuz spacecraft for a short training mission in 2022. It had agreed to supply ISRO with the Rover for the second moon mission but this has not come through and now ISRO is building its own Rover.

It was also decided to set up measurement data collection ground stations of the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System NavIC and the Russian Navigation Satellite System GLONASS in both countries.

India-Russia space cooperation was very strong, with the Soviet Union being one of the three partners who helped India get off the ground with its space programme.

### **Editorial**

#### **To Read**

#### **India's worth as an investment destination**

The N-SIPI index provides a useful ground-level view of the business environment in various states.

The efforts towards improving the business climate started some years ago and deepened when the government's flagship initiatives, Make in India and Start-Up India, took centre stage. The department of industrial promotion and policy (DIPP) had rolled out the Business Reform Action Plan in 2015. India subsequently leapfrogged a commendable 30 places to get placed amongst the top 100 countries, according to the World Bank's *Doing Business 2018* report. But have we arrived where we should?

The National Council of Applied Economic Research designed an index in 2016 using six metrics—land, labour, infrastructure, economic climate, political stability and governance. This was intended to give a granular picture of the investment climate. This state investment potential index (N-SIPI) incorporated the perceptions of entrepreneurs, based on survey of industrial units. In the third edition, N-SIPI 2018, feedback on the goods and services tax (GST)—the most important initiative on unifying India into a massive common market—was added. The survey covered 1,049 units in 20 states and Delhi, ranking them on their investment potential based on the six major metrics. Interestingly, the rankings are broadly consistent with another study on the performance of states in terms of their service delivery performance. Such comparisons suggest that the N-SIPI rankings based on perceptions and secondary data are reasonably robust.

There is also merit in recognising the strength of the states on individual metrics. For example, land by itself is a critical issue and is perceived to be complex because of the maze of

regulations. However, strikingly, most states found no difficulty in acquiring land for industrial use except five: Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Odisha. In these states, the percentage of respondents facing difficulties ranged from a little less than 30% to a little over 70%.

Unlike land, perception on labour constraints had wide differences across the states. States like Jharkhand, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh and Assam were at one extreme, with more than 40% of the respondents expressing concern regarding the availability of skilled labour. Meanwhile, companies located in Gujarat, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal had more favourable views. Respondents have also shown major variation in perception of labour quality. Haryana and Gujarat continue to be viewed as the best states in this regard.

In another surprise, labour relations are not seen to be a problem for nearly 66% of the respondents across the states. Very diverse states such as Haryana, West Bengal and Gujarat were the best performers here, while Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh have noted moderate to severe constraints. Labour laws have been a constraining factor in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. And while Gujarat reported no problems, Chhattisgarh reported severe problems.

Power is a critical component of infrastructure that supports industrial advancement. The survey found that power availability was relatively good, with no significant difficulty faced by 78% of respondents on an average. States such as Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Punjab and Karnataka reported an excellent supply of power, while states that lagged behind included Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and West Bengal. With respect to water availability, the situation looked best in the case of Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Haryana. Surprisingly, despite being a coastal state, nearly one-fifth of the severely constrained firms belonged to Maharashtra, while Uttarakhand emerged as the most severely water-constrained state. The performance of states concerning road and rail connectivity was not an issue with over two-thirds of the surveyed firms while a little over one-fifth shared a moderate concern on the issue. Yet again, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Rajasthan did very well, while a developed state like Telangana was ranked lowest in the perception of good road and rail connectivity in the state.

The perception on industrial policy is critically important to promote efficiency and productivity. A well-designed industrial policy percolates through different levers, such as special support to a select group of industries, establishment of special economic zones to attract foreign participation or investment, privatization of public sector units, and promoting public-private ventures. Here, a high proportion of positive responses came from Uttarakhand, Haryana, Gujarat and West Bengal. On the other hand, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra appeared to be the poorest players in this regard.

GST was introduced in July 2017, and N-SIPI 2018 found that more than 40% of firms faced moderate to severe difficulty and 43% did not perceive any impact of the GST policy at all. This negatively impacted business operations severely, according to 17% of the firms. Unexpectedly, Bihar emerged as the most GST-friendly state followed by Gujarat, while firms from Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttarakhand and Tamil Nadu faced significantly negative impact. Of these, the worst hit was Andhra Pradesh, with 58% of respondents crying foul. On the related aspect of e-way bills, the majority of the respondents reported the impact being positive. The impact is remarkably good for Jharkhand (77%), followed by West Bengal and Bihar, while there is no perceived impact in Telangana, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

The findings demonstrate that states have to work hard to even remain where they are as the rankings are relative, competitive and in flux. They also show that learning lessons from other states is a good way forward.

**Mains Question**

**Q: Critically examine the Russia-India relations. Considering the global geopolitical instabilities, what are the challenges before India?**

YesUPSC