

December - 06

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Air Forces of India and the U.S began a 12-day military exercise in Kalaikunda and Panagarh air bases in West Bengal with an aim to enhance the operational coordination.
 - This 'Ex Cope India-18' is the fourth edition in the series of bilateral drills between the Indian Air Force and the U.S. Air Force and this is for the first time that the exercise is being held at two Air Force bases.
- ❖ Qatar announced that it will leave the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in order to focus on gas production. It has been a member of OPEC since 1961.
- ❖ Salman Khan, 52-year-old actor has topped Forbes India's 2018 list of richest Indian celebrities with earnings amounting to Rs 253.25 crore. He has taken the top spot for the third time in a row.
 - He is followed by the Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli and third position is taken by Akshay Kumar.
- ❖ Pakistan will soon impose a 'sin tax' on cigarettes and sugary beverages and that fund would be diverted to the health budget.
 - sin tax is an internationally recognised term and is specifically levied on certain goods deemed harmful to society, for example tobacco, candies, soft drinks, fast foods, coffee and sugar.
- ❖ India's oldest (107 age) Youtuber Karre Mastanamma, whose YouTube cooking channel Country Foods has over 12 lakh subscribers, passed away at her native village Gudiwada near Tenali in Guntur district.
- ❖ The Karnataka government decided to bear the education expenses of girl students pursuing pre-university, graduation and post-graduate courses in colleges run by it.
- ❖ Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) has assumed the Mexico's presidency, five months after winning a landslide election victory.

NATIONAL

Sahitya Academy awards

- ❖ Sahitya Akademi announced its annual Awards in 24 languages (22 Scheduled Languages+ English and Rajasthani).
- ❖ Seven books of poetry, six novels, six short stories, three of literary criticism and two of essays have won the Sahitya Akademi Awards, 2018.



- ❖ Tamil writer, traveller, essayist and scriptwriter S. Ramakrishnan has won the Sahitya Akademi Award for 2018 for his novel Sancharam.
- ❖ Sahitya Akademi is an autonomous body under the ministry of Culture.

INTERNATIONAL

G20 summit in 2022

- ❖ For the first time, India will host the annual G20 summit in 2022 (17th) confirmed at the closing ceremony of the 13th summit (30 November and 1 December 2018) held in Argentina's capital Buenos Aires.
- ❖ It is India's 75th Independence Day in 2022, and India had requested Italy to get 2022 instead of 2021 (for hosting G20 summit).
- ❖ India presented a nine-point agenda to G20 countries at the concluded summit, calling for "strong and active cooperation" among them to comprehensively deal with fugitive economic offenders.

- ❖ India suggested that the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to assign priority and focus on establishing international cooperation, timely and comprehensive exchange of information.

USA Elections

- ❖ The 2018 elections were held in the United States on November 6, 2018.
- ❖ These midterm elections took place in the middle of Republican President Donald Trump's term.
- ❖ 35 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate and all 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives were contested.
- ❖ The winners in the Senate were elected to six-year terms running from January 3, 2019, to January 3, 2025.
- ❖ In the 2018 midterm elections, the Democratic Party won the majority in the House of Representatives and will have a preponderance of voting influence in selecting the next Speaker.
- ❖ In the Senate, the Republican Party slightly increased its majority, giving the U.S. a split Congress.
- ❖ The One Hundred Sixteenth United States Congress is the next meeting of the legislative branch of the Federal government of the United States, composed of the United States Senate and the United States House of Representatives.
- ❖ It is scheduled to meet in Washington, D.C., from January 3, 2019, to January 3, 2021, during the third and fourth years of Donald Trump's current term as president.

Result of 2018 Elections

House of Representatives

- ❖ Democratic party – 235
- ❖ Republic Party – 200

Senate

- ❖ Democratic party – 45
- ❖ Republic party – 53
- ❖ Independent – 2

First Female Top Prosecutor - South Africa

- ❖ President Cyril Ramaphosa named Indian-origin lawyer Shamila Batohi to head South Africa's prosecuting authority.
- ❖ Batohi, the first female to occupy the role and she will start her new role as the National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP) in February 2019.



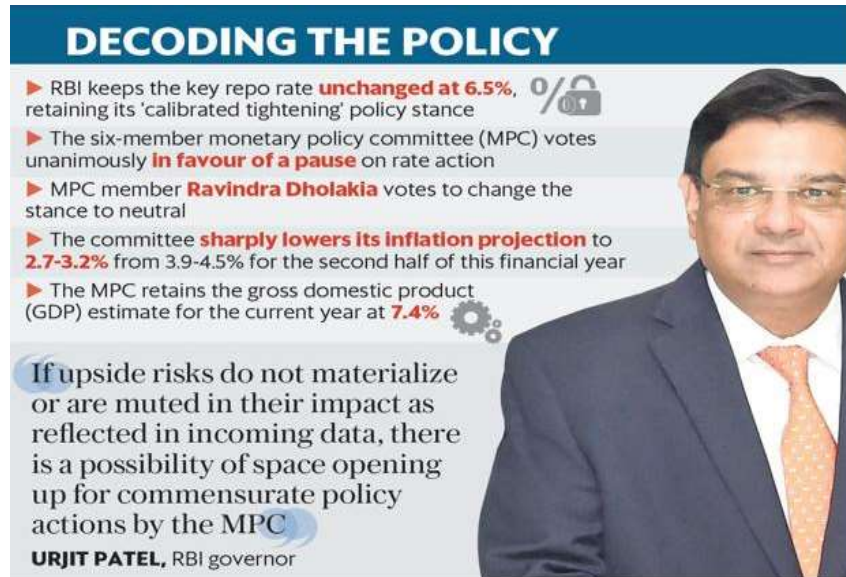
- ❖ She is a former prosecutions chief in KwaZulu-Natal province and has served as senior adviser to the prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC) since 2009.
- ❖ In 1995, she was part of a high-level team appointed by Nelson Mandela to investigate apartheid-era hit squads.

ECONOMY

Monetary policy review

- ❖ The Six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) headed by the RBI Governor Urjit Patel voted unanimously to maintain status quo on all key policy rates in the fifth bi-monthly monetary policy review meeting.
- ❖ The Repo rate at 6.5 percent and the reverse repo rate at 6.25 percent remain same.
- ❖ Also, the RBI informed the marginal standing facility rate and the Bank Rate too remain at 6.75 percent.

- ❖ The committee comprises six members - three officials of the RBI and three members nominated by the Government of India.



DECODING THE POLICY

- ▶ RBI keeps the key repo rate **unchanged at 6.5%**, retaining its 'calibrated tightening' policy stance
- ▶ The six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) votes unanimously **in favour of a pause** on rate action
- ▶ MPC member **Ravindra Dholakia** votes to change the stance to neutral
- ▶ The committee **sharply lowers its inflation projection to 2.7-3.2%** from 3.9-4.5% for the second half of this financial year
- ▶ The MPC retains the gross domestic product (GDP) estimate for the current year at **7.4%**

If upside risks do not materialize or are muted in their impact as reflected in incoming data, there is a possibility of space opening up for commensurate policy actions by the MPC

URJIT PATEL, RBI governor

- ❖ Decisions are taken by majority with the Governor having the casting vote in case of a tie.
- ❖ Current mandate of the committee is to maintain 4% annual inflation until March 31, 2021 with an upper tolerance of 6% and a lower tolerance of 2%.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ISRO's GSAT-11

- ❖ Indian Space Research Organisation or ISRO's GSAT-11 satellite also called the "Big Bird " was successfully launched into space from the French space port of Kourou in South America.
- ❖ It will help provide satellite-based internet to remote places where cable-based internet cannot reach.
- ❖ The satellite, weighing 5,854 kg, is the heaviest Indian-made equipment that the agency (ISRO) put into its orbit.

Big push for communication

GSAT-11 will play a vital role in providing broadband services across the country. It will also provide a platform to demonstrate new generation applications

- Launching from French Guiana between **2 a.m. & 3 a.m.** IST on Dec. 5
- Will be lifted to space on a **European Ariane 5 rocket**
- Mass 5,854 kg, cost **₹1,200 crore**, including the foreign launch
- Will rest in over the 74°E longitude, nearly **36,000 km** away



- Will carry **40 transponders** in the Ku /Ka bands
- Built to provide throughput data rate of **16 gbps**
- Expected to work for **15 years**

APPLICATIONS:

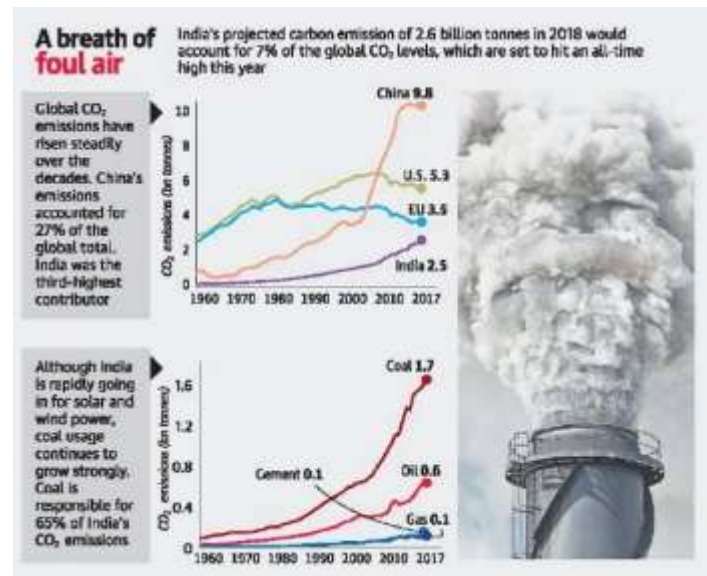
- To meet unprecedented data demands:** Greater capacity and high data rates over regions due to use of the spot beam technology
- Supporting Bharat Net connectivity:** Substantial bandwidth coverage to gram panchayats for supporting e-governance and other platforms
- VSAT terminals:** Capacity platform to support a huge subscriber base
- Unlock new applications:** Reaching out to different strata of society through Digital India platform

- ❖ GSAT-11 is equivalent to the combined power of almost all communications satellites sent into orbit by India.

ENVIRONMENT

India and carbon emission

- ❖ India, the third-highest contributor, is projected to see emissions rise by 6.3% from 2017.
- ❖ Global carbon emissions are set to hit an all-time high of 37.1 billion tonnes of CO₂ in 2018.
- ❖ The 2.7% projected global rise in 2018 has been driven by significant growth in coal use for the second year in a row, and sustained growth in oil and gas use.
- ❖ This study has been done by the researchers at the University of East Anglia (UEA) and the Global Carbon Project.



- ❖ 10 biggest emitters in 2018 are China, U.S., India, Russia, Japan, Germany, Iran, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and Canada.

STATES

Hornbill Festival

- ❖ The Hornbill Festival began in the Naga Heritage village of Kisama, Nagaland. It is also called the 'Festival of Festivals'.
- ❖ Hornbill Festival is celebrated in Nagaland every year 1st week of December. It is one of the biggest indigenous festivals of the country.



- ❖ The festival coincides with the Statehood Day of Nagaland which is observed on December 1.
 - ❖ The festival is a tribute to Hornbill, the most admired and revered bird for the Nagas for its qualities of alertness and grandeur.
 - ❖ It exposes both the culture and tradition of tribal peoples, and reinforces Nagaland's identity as a unique state in India's federal union.
 - ❖ It is organized by the State Tourism and Art & Culture Departments. It is also supported by the Union Government.
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