

## **Prelim Bits 07-08-2017**

### **e-RaKAM**

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- Government has recently launched a portal named e-Rashtriya Kisan Agri Mandi (E-RaKAM).

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- The digital platform portal enables enable farmers to sell their agricultural products through auction.

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- Various E-Rakam centers are being developed to facilitate farmers for online sale their products across the country.

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- The farmers would get the payment for their products directly into their bank accounts without any intermediaries.

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- CWRC, a subsidiary of the Central Warehousing Corporation Ltd, will provide logistics support for sellers and buyers in case they need it.

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### **Hathkargha Samvardhan Sahayata**

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- It is the scheme launched by the Ministry of Textiles for handloom weavers.

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- The scheme aims to improve earnings of the handlooms weavers.

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- It helps to meet the needs of the handloom weavers for assistance for looms and accessories on larger scale with an objective to improve quality of fabric and productivity.

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- Under this scheme, GoI assists the weaver by bearing 90% of the cost of new looms so that they do not have to bear the heavy financial burden.

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## **National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI)**

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  - NABI is the first Agri-Food and Nutritional based Biotechnology Institute set up by the Dept. of Biotechnology in Mohali.
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    - The institute provides quality research in the field of agricultural biotechnology and innovative technologies in the field of food processing.
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      - Their products of nutritionally rich crops and processing of crop residues will be provided to the local farming communities to increase their income.
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        - They are acting as nodal agencies for local organization in the areas Agri food and nutritional biotechnolgy.
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          - Under reach to community program NABI is playing an important role in conducting motivational course to the students of local schools to increase their awareness in life sciences.
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## **Chemicals banned in firecrackers**

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  - Central Pollution Control Board recently labeled five chemicals as toxic in the manufacturing of firecrackers. Consequently, SC has banned the use of those chemicals in its recent order.
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    - The banned chemicals include antimony, lithium, mercury, arsenic and lead.
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      - The court entrusted the responsibility to ensure compliance to the Petroleum and Explosive Safety Organisation (PESO).
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        - Antimony - A chemical element with symbol “Sb” is used in the production of heads of safety ammunition, explosives and fireworks.
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          - Mercury - A Chemical element with symbol “Hg” is commonly known as

quick silver and only metallic element that is liquid in standard room temperature and pressure.

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- It is mainly used as a trigger for other explosives and sensitive to friction, heat and shock.

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- Arsenic - A Chemical element with symbol "As" is generally non-combustible. Arsine is used as an agent in chemical warfare, thus several countries have regulations on its use owing to its highly inflammable nature.

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- Lead - Lead is denoted by symbol "Pb", found in most heavy grade explosives. Due to its explosive nature it is used in most detonators to initiate big explosions.

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- Lithium - A highly volatile element, lithium is flammable, and it is potentially explosive when exposed to air and especially to water, though less so than other alkali metals.

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## **PESO**

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- Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation is under the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

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- It is a statutory authority, which is entrusted with the responsibilities under the Explosives Act, 1884; Petroleum Act, 1934; Inflammable Substances Act, 1952, Environment (Protection Act), 1986.

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- Its mission is to control and administer the usage of explosives, petrol stations in India.

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- It frames rules related to safety in manufacture, storage, transport and handling of explosives, petroleum, compressed gases and other hazardous substances.

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- The procurement of raw materials for fireworks does not come under the purview of the Explosives Act.

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- The PESO has been testing samples of crackers only for adherence to the sound limit of 125 decibels at a distance of four metres.

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## **US- India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF)**

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- USISPF is a new representative body set up to further enhances business relations between the two countries.
- The non-profit corporation aims to promote bilateral trade and will work closely together with businesses and government leaders to achieve economic growth, job creation, innovation, inclusion and entrepreneurship.

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## **Venus Satellite**

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- The Venus satellite (Vegetation and Environment Monitoring New Micro-Satellite) is an earth-observation micro-satellite.
- It is designed jointly by Israel's agency and France's National Centre for Space Studies (CNES).
- The scientific mission will monitor Earth's vegetation using a camera capable of recording 12 narrow spectral bands.
- The microsatellite will send high-resolution photos to track climate change and aid efforts to tackle desertification, erosion, and pollution.

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