

Prelim Bits 25-09-2018

e-Vidhan

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- e-Vidhan is a Mission Mode Project to digitize and make the functioning of State Legislatures paperless.

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- It is part of Digital India Programme.

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- Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs is the Nodal Ministry for this project.

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- The Ministry desires to roll out e-Vidhan as National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA), covering all 40 Houses including two Houses of Parliament and State legislatures.

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- It is to be used by the Legislatures as well as all the Government Departments.

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- This project was first executed in Himachal Pradesh which made the Shimla Legislative Assembly the first Assembly in India to go paperless in 2014.

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- The **mNeVA (NeVA-mobile app)** is a user-friendly app that has made information on conduct of business in Legislatures accessible anytime, anywhere to everyone.

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- It is a work-flow based app deployed in Cloud (Meghraj).

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- It helps the Chair of the House to conduct the proceedings of the House smoothly and the members to carry out their duties in the House efficiently.

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Ease of Living Index - State Wise Ranking

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- It is an initiative launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

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- It aims to help the cities assess their liveability vis-à-vis national and global benchmarks.
- Ministry has recently released State wise ranking based on this index.
- Andhra Pradesh topped the charts followed by Odisha and Madhya Pradesh.
- Ministry has earlier revealed the ranking of cities based on four pillars namely Institutional, Social, Economic and Physical.
- Three cities in Maharashtra - Pune, Navi Mumbai and Greater Mumbai topped the first Ease of Living Index.
- The national capital, New Delhi, is ranked 65 among 111 cities, while Chennai is in 14th place. Kolkata did not participate in the survey.

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India International Science Festival

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- The fourth edition of India International Science Festival (IISF) is going to be organised in Lucknow.
- It will be organised with its focal theme “Science for Transformation”.
- Ministry of Science and Technology, Earth Sciences in association with Vijnana Bharati is organising this festival since 2015.
- The first and second edition of IISF were held in New Delhi and the third in Chennai.
- World Record Attempts have been a key part of India International Science Festival since 2015.
- This year, a World Record attempt will be made to “isolate DNA” by 500 students from class 8th to 10th standard.

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Mushairas

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- It is an event going to be organised by Ministry of Minority Affairs to commemorate the 150th Birth Anniversary of the Father of the Nation.

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- The event will be based on the themes of teachings and principles of Mahatma Gandhi.

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- The first such Mushaira will be held in New Delhi.

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- It aims to spread Mahatma Gandhi's legacy among the people at the national and international level.

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- A national committee under the Chairmanship of the President of India was formed to chalk out the plan, programmes and activities under the commemoration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

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Taiwan and India

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- India had imposed safeguard duty of up to 25 per cent on solar cells imports from China and Malaysia for two years to protect domestic players from a steep rise in inbound shipments.

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- Taiwan has sought consultations with India under the WTO's safeguard agreement against India's decision to impose import duty on solar cells.

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- Taiwan says it has a substantial interest as an exporter of the product.

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- The consultations, however, do not fall under WTO's dispute settlement system.

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- The objective of the consultation is to exchange views on the proposed measures and reaching an understanding to achieve the objectives" set out in an article of the WTO Agreement on Safeguards.

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- Seeking consultations under the safeguard agreement is a way to inform other countries that they are not fulfilling their commitments under the WTO rules.

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- Solar cells are mainly primarily imported from China, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan.

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- Imports of solar cells from Malaysia and China account for more than 90 per cent of the total inbound shipments in the country.

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Safeguard duty

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- Safeguard duties are applied when,

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1. There is a surge in imports of a particular product irrespective of a particular country and,
2. It causes serious injury to the domestic industry.

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- Safeguard measures are applied to all imports of the product in question irrespective of the countries in which it originates or from which it is exported.
- This aspect distinguishes Safeguards from antidumping measures which are always country specific.
- Safeguards are applied in the form of either safeguard duty or in the form of safeguard QRs (import licenses).
- These measures are administered in India by an authority called Director General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Earlier, it was administered by Director General of Safeguards (DGS) under Ministry of Finance. But its function was shifted to DGTR earlier this year.

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Source: PIB, The Hindu

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