

SMART ABHYAS

Current Affairs Monthly

NOVEMBER 2018

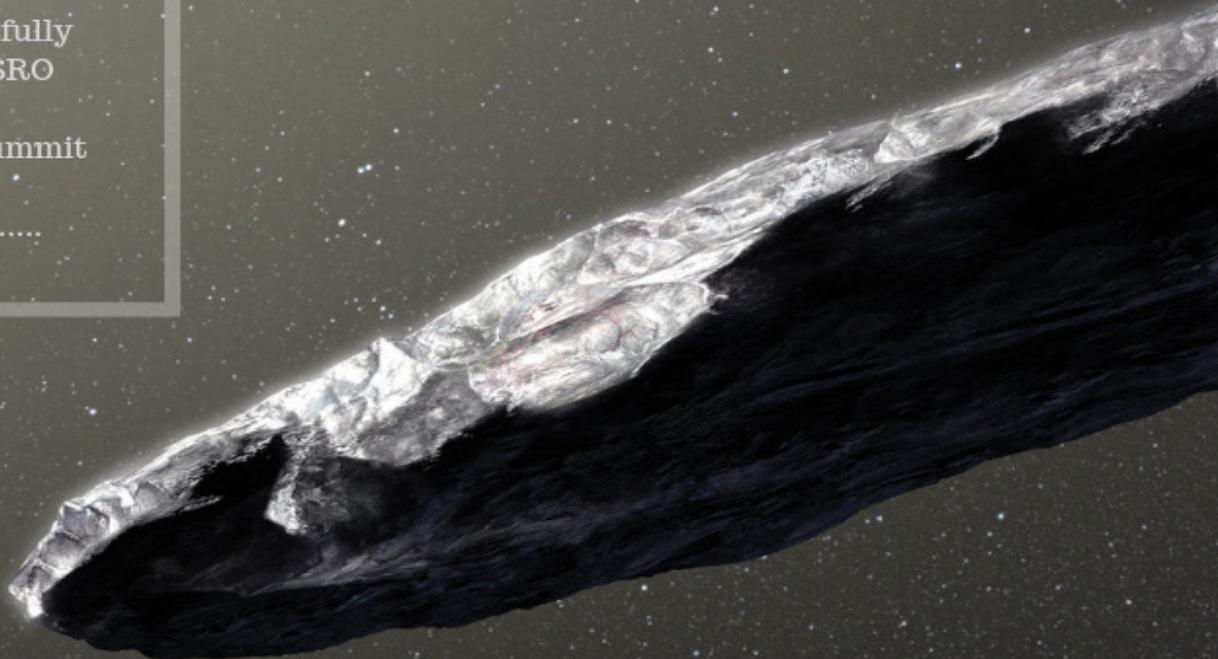
IN THIS MONTH'S MAGAZINE

Sea of Galilee shrinking

GSAT-29 successfully
launched by ISRO

13th East Asia Summit

and more.....



OUMUAMUA

Has Earth made its first ever encounter with an alien spaceship or is it just another hyped up space fantasy?

INCLUDES

Daily Quiz Compilation of
November 2018

Rajya Sabha TV and Lok Sabha
TV compilations

All India Radio Spotlight
Analysis

Dear aspirants

A note from Smart Abhyas



Smart Abhyas

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We at Smart Abhyas started this initiative with the intention of providing quality content to every single CSE aspirant out there. If you think we are on the right track please let us know by mailing us at smartabhyas@gmail.com, your feedback would mean a lot to us.

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING TO IMPROVE

Any suggestions that would help us enhance the quality of our content, the presentation of our content or anything important for that matter can be brought to us by mailing us at smartabhyas@gmail.com.

TELL A FRIEND

It would mean the world to us if you think that the content we are providing is worthwhile and spread the word to fellow aspirants out there.

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9. Sentinelese tribe : What you need to know
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11. Cabinet approves Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2018
12. Cabinet approves development of Kartarpur corridor project
13. Extension of Norms for Mandatory Packaging in Jute Materials
14. Global food security at risk says FAO
15. Extreme weather turning Arctic brown, may impact climate change: Study
16. Reggae music to be protected
1. Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary in trouble
2. National Green Tribunal not happy with stubble burners
3. 17 lakh Indian children to die due to pneumonia by 2030
4. Global Cooling Prize
5. Sea of Galilee in trouble
6. Extreme weather poses high risk to oil and gas infrastructure says TERI study
7. India's first dedicated elephant hospital
8. BASIC countries meet to discuss climate change
9. India gets UN Environment award for combating transboundary environmental crime
10. Ancient mammal extinctions in Africa not due to anthropogenic causes says new study
11. Andaman and Nicobar Island's faunal diversity
12. 'Vetiver' the wonder grass
13. Heatwaves a major setback for India

Economy

1. NBFC sector : What you need to know
2. Reserve Bank of India's reserves : What you need to know
3. RBI Surplus transfers : What you need to know
4. RBI's Central Board : What you need to know
5. India and oil : What you need to know
6. RBI Eases Hedging Norms for External Commercial Borrowings
7. Indian economy never hit a high growth phase

Geography. Ecology and Biodiversity

1. Earth's ozone layer healing: UN
2. Groundwater depletion : A major problem

Government Schemes and Initiatives

1. Safe City Project for Lucknow
2. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Support and Outreach Programme
3. India turns to small water enterprises as water crisis looms large
4. Proposed Ganga Bill
5. Cabinet apprised of India joining as Member of Advanced Motor Fuels Technology Collaboration Programme
6. Mutli modal terminal on river Ganga
7. HRD Ministry launches LEAP and ARPIT programmes for higher education faculty
8. NITI Aayog Constitutes Himalayan State Regional Council
9. Government approves 3 proposals under Nirbhaya Fund
10. Electoral bonds : All you need to know
11. City Gas Distribution (CGD) Projects

Science and Technology

1. Kepler telescope retires
2. Coconut oil is better than insect repellants
3. NASA's Dawn mission ends
4. Bhungroo : What you need to know
5. Superbugs to 'kill millions' by 2050
6. Oumuamua : What you need to know
7. NASA's Ralph set to visit Jupiter's Trojan asteroids in 2021
8. Missiles : Everything you wanted to know
9. NASA's Parker Solar Probe

10. ExoMars : What you need to know
11. Novel bionic mushrooms can produce electricity
12. ISRO launches communication satellite GSAT-29
13. Kilogram redefined
14. GROWTH-India telescope in action
15. Global fight on malaria has hit a plateau says WHO in its World Malaria Report 2018
16. India and Russia strike a deal for purchase of frigates
17. India to study herbal drugs
18. India's nuclear triad now operational
19. Human microbiome studies and India
20. InSight lands on Mars
21. HysIS satellite

International Relations, Summits and Meetings

1. India has been elected as a Member of the International Telecommunications Union
2. U.S. exempts Chabahar port work from sanctions
3. 13th East Asia Summit
4. RCEP Ministerial Meeting
5. India to step-up agro-diplomacy with China
6. Maldives cabinet approves to rejoin Commonwealth, 2 years after withdrawing from 53-nation grouping
7. Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) : What you need to know
8. Virtual Climate Summit

Point Blank (Facts for prelims)

1. China launches a new High-Orbit satellite to boost its global navigation system
2. Veer Surendra Sai Airport
3. India And Japan sign a loan agreement for Turga Hydel Project
4. 1st WHO Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health
5. Net Zero Energy Buildings
6. India's first indigenous microprocessor
7. Monkeypox
8. New offshore patrol vessel ICGS Varaha
9. The first country to ban sunscreen to save Coral Reefs
10. Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities, 2018
11. Central Tribal University in Andhra Pradesh
12. K9 Vajra and M777 Howitzer Guns inducted
13. CCEA approves Strategic Sale of government equity in Dredging Corporation of India
14. SIMBEX-2018
15. SpiNNaker: World's largest brain-like Supercomputer switched on for the first time
16. INSPIRE 2018
17. 38th India International Trade Fair begins in New Delhi
18. Veteran journalist N Ram conferred Raja Ram Mohan Roy Award
19. Nongkrem Dance Festival
20. Matua Community of Bengal
21. Global Talent Ranking
22. 12th ISMM World Congress on Mountain Medicine
23. CSE bags Indira Gandhi Peace Prize
24. Andhra Pradesh launches 'Bhudaar' Portal
25. IMD can forecast rise in the water level
26. PAiSA Portal
27. Logix India
28. Emergency Response Support System (ERSS)

Polity and Social Issues

1. Wildlife Protection Act – 1972
2. Earth Bio genome Project
3. Krishi kumbh 2018
4. Waste to Wealth

Geography, Ecology and Biodiversity

1. Biodiversity Report
2. Tiger Population in India
3. Moths as pollinators
4. India's Engine less Train
5. Clean Air Campaign

Economy

1. Reserve Bank of India

Science and Technology

01. Technology Summit 2018
02. Two time zones in India
03. Aloe Vera as oil repellent
04. EYEROV TUNA
05. Living Planet Report 2018

06. 4U 1630-472

07. Wellcome trust & DBT India Alliance

08. GSAT-29

09. Global Cooling Prize

10. World Prematurity Day

All India Radio (Spotlight Analysis)

1. A discussion on Outreach and support to MSME sector
2. A discussion on Ease of Doing Business in India
3. A discussion on India's Nuclear Triad
4. A discussion on trade relations between India and China
5. A discussion on 'Government's initiatives in the Education Sector'
6. A discussion on 'Significance of Prime Minister visit to Singapore'
7. A discussion on East Asia Summit
8. A discussion on Press and Democracy
9. A discussion on 'Clean energy and gas based economy'

POLITY AND SOCIAL ISSUES

World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index 2018

What is the issue ?

- India was ranked at 77 in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business 2018.
- New Zealand is placed first in this year's rankings.

About the Ease of Doing Business Index :

- Published by the World Bank
- Ranks 190 countries on 10 indicators across the life cycle of a business.

Key take aways from Ease of Doing Business 2018 :

- India was ranked at 77 among 190 countries in 2018's Index.
- India was aided largely by improvement in areas such as "dealing with construction permits", "trading across borders", "getting electricity", "getting credit" and "starting a business".
- However, compared to last year, India saw its ranking dip on various other parameters, such as "registering property", "protecting minority investors", "paying taxes" and "resolving insolvency".
- India is among the top ten economies improving the most across three or more areas measured by the study, alongside countries such as Afghanistan, Djibouti, China, Azerbaijan, Togo, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, Turkey and Rwanda.
- India is the only other country, alongside Djibouti, to be in top ten for second year in a row. Delhi and Mumbai are the only cities covered in India by the report.
- New Zealand tops the list of 190 countries, followed by Singapore, Denmark, and Hong Kong.

- The US is placed eighth and China has been ranked 46th while Pakistan is placed at 136.
- The most significant improvement has been seen in "dealing with construction permits", where the ranking has improved to 52 from 181. This is on account of the number of procedures coming down to 17.9 from 30.1, along with a reduction in the number of days to deal with construction permits — to 94.8 days from 143.9 days last year. The cost of permit, as a percentage of warehouse value, has also come down to 5.4 per cent, compared with 23.2 per cent a year ago.
- Similarly, India witnessed improvement in the ranking for "trading across borders", which rose to 80 from 146 last year. This is also due to a notable reduction in time and cost to import and export, in terms of documentary and border compliance

Observations made by the World Bank :

- The two economies with the largest populations, China and India demonstrated "impressive reform agendas", the World Bank said India also focused on streamlining business processes.
- It said that India made starting a business easier by integrating multiple application forms into a general incorporation form.
- India also replaced the value-added tax with the GST (Goods and Services Tax) for which the registration process is faster, the report said.
- Stating that a well-designed insolvency framework is a vital determinant of debt recovery, the report said the establishment of debt recovery tribunals in India "reduced non-performing loans by 28 per cent and lowered interest rates on larger loans, suggesting that faster processing of debt recovery cases cut the cost of credit".
- The World Bank observed that India has made paying taxes easier by replacing many indirect taxes with a single GST for the entire country backed by the fact that the number of payments per year has gone down to 11.9 from 13, and total tax and contribution rate — as a percentage of profit — has been reduced to 52.1 per cent from 55.3 per cent.

- However, the deterioration in ranking of the “paying taxes” parameter to 121 from 119 in 2018 could be attributed to 275.4 hours spend every year paying taxes, higher than 214 hours last year. “India made paying taxes easier by replacing many indirect taxes with a single indirect tax, the GST, for the entire country. India also made paying taxes less costly by reducing the corporate income tax rate and the employees’ provident funds scheme rate paid by the employer,” the report said.

Top 10 parameters world Bank took while rating India:

S.No	Parameters of World bank
01	Starting a Business
02	Construction permits
03	Getting credit
04	Protecting minority investors
05	Paying taxes
06	getting electricity
07	Registering property
08	Border trade
09	Enforcing contracts
10	Resolving insolvency

Reserve Bank of India and the Centre need to set aside differences for the greater good

What is the issue ?

- The autonomy of India’s Central Bank has come into question with recent events showcasing a crack in the otherwise low key relationship between the Reserve Bank of India and the Centre.

What is troubling India’s Central Bank ?

- The Reserve Bank of India wants more powers over regulating public sector banks (PSBs).
- The Central Bank feels that the government should not dictate the quantum of its surplus that can be paid as annual dividend.
- It is miffed that the Centre has suggested a separate payments regulator.

Reserve Bank of India : A look at what is happening

- Criticised for poor regulation following the fraud at Punjab National Bank, RBI Governor Urjit Patel told a parliamentary panel that it does not have enough powers over PSBs.
- However, the RBI does have nominee directors on bank boards. It leads physical inspection at banks and financial audits. It has also orchestrated mergers between banks whenever a bank has been on the verge of collapse
- So, the RBI does have adequate control over PSBs but may not be exercising it fully.
- The RBI earns income from lending to commercial banks and from purchase and sale of government securities.
- It also has a surplus seigniorage (the difference between the value of notes that it prints and the cost of printing and distributing them).
- After setting aside an amount for contingency and asset development, the RBI transfers the surplus to the government.
- In 2016, that amount was Rs.65,876 crore; this dropped to Rs.30,659 crore in 2017. This year, it paid 50,000 crore to the government.
- One view is that if the RBI dips further into its reserves to pay the Centre, this would weaken its balance sheet. On the other hand, the RBI is accountable to the government. Plus, globally, central banks do transfer surplus reserves to their governments.
- As payment systems fall under monetary policy, a separate payments regulator is unwarranted.

Why the government feels that Reserve Bank of India is on the wrong path :

- The RBI has said that if a borrower delayed payment for even one day, he should be dragged to an insolvency court and the asset classified as a nonperforming asset (NPA).
- On the current crisis, the government’s view is that the RBI’s rigid rules have constrained the lending capacity of many state-owned banks and the central bank is unwilling to support the markets, which are gasping for liquidity in the wake of recent

defaults in the debt markets.

- The Centre sees the prompt corrective action (PCA) framework by the RBI, which restricts weak banks from lending, as contributing to the liquidity crisis.
- It also wanted special dispensation by the RBI to help nonbanking finance companies (NBFCs) apart from relaxed norms for lending to micro, small and medium enterprises.
- The government wants the PCA diluted so that bank lending rises, thereby easing the liquidity crisis.

Section 7 of RBI Act : Will it tilt the balance ?

- It is a provision under which the government can give directions to the RBI to take certain actions “in the public interest”.
- This provision has been built into the law governing not just the RBI but also regulatory bodies in other sectors. Until now, however, the government has never exercised its powers under Section 7 of the RBI Act.
- Under Section 7, “The Central Government may from time to time give such directions to the Bank as it may, after consultation with the Governor of the Bank, consider necessary in the public interest.
- Subject to any such directions, the general superintendence and direction of the affairs and business of the Bank shall be entrusted to a Central Board of Directors which may exercise all powers and do all acts and things which may be exercised or done by the Bank.”
- Now, the government has started the process, or the first step towards invoking those powers under Section 7 — which is to start consultations with the RBI Governor on issues such as easing the PCA framework, providing more credit to small units.
- The next step would be to issue a directive to the RBI if the government so chooses — something which has never been done so far in the history of the RBI.

Private member’s Bill : What you need to know

Government Bills and Private member Bills :

- Any MP who is not a Minister is referred to as a private member. Parliament’s key role is to debate and make laws. Both Ministers and private members contribute to the lawmaking process.
- Bills introduced by Ministers are referred to as government bills. They are backed by the government, and reflect its legislative agenda.
- Private member’s bills are piloted by non-Minister MPs. Their purpose is to draw the government’s attention to what individual MPs see as issues and gaps in the existing legal framework, which require legislative intervention.

Introduction in the House

- The admissibility of a private member’s Bill is decided by the Rajya Sabha Chairman. (In the case of Lok Sabha, it is the Speaker; the procedure is roughly the same for both Houses.)
- The Member must give at least a month’s notice before the Bill can be listed for introduction; the House secretariat examines it for compliance with constitutional provisions and rules on legislation before listing.

When can they be introduced ?

- While government Bills can be introduced and discussed on any day, private member’s Bills can be introduced and discussed only on Fridays.
- Private member’s Bills have been introduced and discussed in Rajya Sabha on 20 days in the last three years.

Procedure for introduction of the Bill :

- On the scheduled Friday, the private member moves a motion for introduction of the Bill, which is usually not opposed.
- Only a fraction of private member’s bills that are introduced, are taken up for discussion.

- Rajya Sabha draws a ballot to decide the sequence of discussion of Bills. If a Bill is successful in the ballot, it has to wait for the discussion to conclude on a Bill currently being debated by the House.
- The discussion will resume when private member business is taken up in the upcoming Winter Session, and other private member's bills will have to wait for the debate to conclude.
- A private member's Bill that is introduced but not discussed in Rajya Sabha, lapses when Member retires.

What happens after discussion ?

- Upon conclusion of the discussion, the Member piloting the Bill can either withdraw it on the request of the Minister concerned, or he may choose to press ahead with its passage.
- In the latter case, the Bill is put to vote and, if the private member gets the support of the House, it is passed.

Private Member Bills passed since Independence

- The Muslim Wakfs Bill, 1952
- The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1953
- The Indian Registration (Amendment) Bill, 1955
- The Proceedings of Legislature (Protection of Publication) Bill, 1956
- The Women's and Children's Institutions (Licensing) Bill, 1954
- The Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archeological Sites and Remains (Declaration of National Importance) Bill, 1954
- The Hindu Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 1956
- The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1957
- The Orphanages and Other Charitable Homes (Supervision and Control) Bill, 1960

- The Marine Insurance Bill, 1959
- The Hindu Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 1962
- The Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 1964
- The Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, 1967
- The Supreme Court (Enlargement of Criminal Appellate Jurisdiction) Bill, 1968

Cabinet decision: Procedure to sell enemy shares worth Rs 3,000 crore gets cabinet nod

What is the issue ?

- The Union Cabinet has approved the procedure to sell enemy shares worth more than Rs 3,000 crore. The 'in principle' approval is according to the Enemy Property Act, 1968.
- The proceeds from the sale of these shares will be deposited as disinvestment proceeds in the Government Account maintained by Ministry of Finance.

More on the issue :

- A total of 6,50,75,877 shares of 996 companies belonging to 20,232 shareholders have been identified. Of the 996 companies, 588 are still active and 139 of them are listed. These shares have been lying unused since the Enemy Property Act came into force in 1968.
- The shares are in the custody of Ministry of Home Affairs and Custodian of Enemy Property of India (CEPI). The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management has been authorised to sell them. The sale will be guided by an inter ministerial group.

About enemy properties :

- According to Enemy Property Act, 1968, "Enemy property" refers to any property belonging to, held or managed on behalf of an enemy, an enemy subject or an enemy firm.