

## Current Affairs: 17.12.2021

### MINIMUM AGE OF MARRIAGE FOR WOMEN



**The Union Cabinet on December 15 took the decision to raise the legal age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 years. The legal age of marriage for men is 21 years**

About:

With this decision, the government will be bringing the age of marriage for both men and women at par.

Why is there a minimum age of marriage? The law prescribes a minimum age of marriage to essentially outlaw child marriages and prevent the abuse of minors.

View of different religion-

Personal laws of various religions that deal with marriage have their own standards, often reflecting custom.

For Hindus, The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 sets 18 years as the minimum age for the bride and 21 years as the minimum age for the groom. In Islam, the marriage of a minor who has attained puberty is considered valid.

The Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 also prescribe 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men, respectively. For the new age of marriage to be implemented, these laws are expected to be amended.

### AYA JAITLEY COMMITTEE



**The Union Cabinet's decision to raise the legal age of marriage for women in India is based on the recommendation of a panel led by Jaya Jaitly.**

About:

In June 2020, the Ministry for Women and Child Development set up a task force to look into the correlation between the age of marriage with issues of women's nutrition, prevalence of anemia, IMR, MMR and other social indices.

The committee, headed by former Samata Party president Jaya Jaitly, also had on board NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V K Paul and secretaries of several ministries.

### Recommendations-

The committee has recommended the age of marriage be increased to 21 years.

The committee also asked the government to look into increasing access to schools and colleges for girls, including their transportation to these institutes from far-flung areas.

Skill and business training has also been recommended, as has sex education in schools.

The committee said these deliveries must come first, as, unless they are implemented and women are empowered, the law will not be as effective.

The committee has further recommended that an awareness campaign be undertaken on a massive scale on the increase in age of marriage, and to encourage social acceptance of the new legislation, which they have said would be far more effective than coercive measures.

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## NUCLEAR POWER



Union Minister of Atomic Energy said, the Government has accorded 'In-Principle' approval of the site at Jaitapur in Maharashtra for setting up six nuclear power reactors of 1650 MW each in technical cooperation with France which would make it the largest nuclear power generating site with a total capacity of 9900 MW.

About:

The project is proposed to be setup at Jaitapur site in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra. Presently techno-commercial discussions to arrive at the project proposal with M/s. EDF, France are in progress.

The present installed nuclear power capacity in the country is 6780 MW and the share of nuclear power in the total electricity generation in the country is about 3.1% in the year 2020-21.

The present nuclear power capacity of 6780 MW is planned to be increased to 22480 MW by 2031 on progressive completion of projects under construction and accorded sanction.

The Government has taken several measures to enhance the generation from nuclear power plants in the country. These include:-

Accord of administrative approval and financial sanction of - ten (10) indigenous 700 MW Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) to be set up in fleet mode with provision of equity support.

Resolution of issues related to Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (CLND) Act & Creation of Indian Nuclear Insurance Pool (INIP).

Amendment of the Atomic Energy Act to enable Joint Ventures of Public Sector Companies to set up nuclear power projects.

## WTO PANEL'S SUGAR REPORT AGAINST INDIA

**A panel set up by the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) has ruled against India's sugar subsidies.**



About:-

It has asked it to "withdraw its prohibited subsidies under the Production Assistance, the Buffer Stock, and the Marketing and Transportation Schemes within 120 days from the adoption of [the] report".

The panel circulated its report, 'India — Measures Concerning Sugar and Sugarcane', on December 14. The report is yet to be adopted (or rejected) by the WTO's full membership. What was the complaint against India?

Three countries, Australia, Brazil and Guatemala, had complained about "support allegedly provided by India in favour of producers of sugarcane and sugar (domestic support measures), as well as all export subsidies that India allegedly provides for sugar and sugarcane (export subsidy measures)".

India's domestic support and export subsidy measures appeared to be inconsistent with various articles of the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture and the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM), and Article XVI (which concerns subsidies) of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT).

India provides domestic support to sugarcane producers that exceeds the de minimis level of 10% of the total value of sugarcane production, which they said was inconsistent with the Agreement on Agriculture.

## FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI)

**India has registered the highest ever annual Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow of 81.97 billion dollar in 2020-21.**

About:-

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Commerce and Industry Ministry said, FDI inflows in the last seven financial years is over 440 billion dollar, which is nearly 58 percent of the total FDI inflow in last 21 financial years. Top five countries from where FDI Equity Inflows were received during 2014 to 2021 are Singapore, Mauritius, USA, Netherlands and Japan. Computer Software and Hardware sector attracted the largest share of FDI inflows, followed by Service, Trading and Telecommunications.

## ALGO TRADING

Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), on December 9, proposed that all orders emanating from application programming interface (API) of stockbrokers should be treated as algorithmic trading, or algo, raising concern that such restrictions will hamper the growth of algo trading in India.

What is algo trading?

Algorithmic trading refers to orders generated at superfast speed by the use of advanced mathematical models that involve automated execution of trade. Even a split-second faster access is considered capable of bringing huge gains to a trader. The algo runs on the broker's systems and not on the investor's system. Whenever the algo generates a signal, an order automatically gets fired on the investor's account with no human involvement from either the broker or the investor. The algo trading system automatically monitors the live stock prices and initiates an order when the given criteria are met. This frees the trader from having to monitor live stock prices and initiate manual order placement.

## STATE OF FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN INDIA

The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) released the report on the State of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in India

About:

The report prepared by the Institute for Competitiveness highlights the importance of early education years in the overall development of a child.

It further highlights the role of well-planned early interventions like the National Education Policy (2020) and the NIPUN Bharat guidelines, leading to long-term improved learning outcomes.

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) skills refers to basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills. The Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy establishes an understanding of the overall state of Foundational Learning across children aged below ten years in Indian States and Union territories.

The Index includes five pillars comprising of 41 indicators. The five pillars are : Educational Infrastructure, Access to Education, Basic Health, Learning Outcomes and Governance.

### Key Highlights:

- Some states may serve as role models for others in certain aspects, but they too need to learn from other states while addressing their challenges. For instance, while Kerala has the best performance in the small state, it can also learn from some lower-scoring regions, such as Andhra Pradesh (38.50), which outperforms Kerala (36.55) with respect to access to education.
- States have performed particularly worse in the Governance pillar because over half of the states have a score that is below the national average, i.e., 28.05, the lowest across all pillars.
- The issue of Access to Education is one that demands prompt action on the part of the States. The performance of Large States such as Rajasthan (25.67), Gujarat (22.28), and Bihar (18.23) is noticeably below average. Whereas the North-eastern states have the highest scores as a result of their superior performance.



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## SAMUDRAYAAN PROJECT

**Under the Deep Ocean Mission launched by the Government of India, a manned scientific submersible has been proposed to be developed for deep ocean exploration. The project is named as Samudrayaan.**

About:-

National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), an autonomous Institute under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, had developed and tested a 'personnel sphere' for a manned submersible system for 500 metre water depth rating.

Personnel Sphere of 2.1m diameter to be used as a crew module up to 500 m water depth has been developed using mild steel and tested up to 600 m water depth in the Bay of Bengal using the research Vessel Sagar Nidhi during October, 2021.

One Titanium alloy personnel sphere for manned submersible system for 6000 metre water depth rating, is under development in association with Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, ISRO, Thiruvananthapuram.

## INDIA-VIETNAM RELATIONS

**India and Vietnam sign Letter of Intent (LoI) to establish partnership in Digital Media.**

About:-

The LoI envisages sharing of information and experience in establishing policies and regulatory frameworks on digital media and social networks, and conducting capacity building and training programs for media professionals and officials in the two countries.

Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting Shri Anurag Thakur also informed the Vietnamese counterpart about the Digital Media Ethics Code being implemented by the Government since February 2021.

This year completes five years of “Comprehensive Strategic Partnership” between India and Vietnam, and the year 2022 will mark fifty years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.