

November 20th news:

International:

Mugabe Defies Ruling Zanu PF Orders to Step Down

Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe on 19th November defied his party's call for him to resign saying he will president over the ruling Zanu PF's Extra Ordinary Congress in December aimed at choosing the party's new leadership.

Speaking on the state-controlled Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation surrounded by security chiefs who toppled him, Mugabe acknowledged that there were serious issues in the party and government that should be tackled.

The president was expected to resign after meeting the military at State House but never mentioned it in his prepared speech but instead noted that the concerns of the securocrats, and war veterans needed to be addressed.

Mr. Mugabe said the dismissal of members of the party was not properly done. He said all omissions and contradictions in the party will be addressed at the forthcoming congress which he will chair.

He appealed for reconciliation in Zimbabwe noting that a similar move was made towards white colonial rulers who brutalized local people before the country attained independence from British rule in 1980.

The ruling party has given President Mugabe up to 20th November afternoon to resign or face impeachment after recalling him from the party and government.

Members of the so-called Generation 40, who were referred to as criminals by the military when it seized all state institutions, wanted First Lady Grace Mugabe to succeed her husband.

They targeted ruling party members linked to sacked Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa, who allegedly harbored presidential ambitions, and forced them to leave the party claiming that they wanted to remove the president from office unconstitutionally.

National:

Over 200 govt websites made Aadhaar details public: UIDAI

More than 200 central and state government websites publicly displayed details such as names and addresses of some Aadhaar beneficiaries, the Unique Identification Authority of India has said.

The Aadhaar issuing body added, in response to an RTI query, that it took note of the breach and got the data removed from those websites. It did not specify when the breach took place.

It said **Aadhaar details have never been made public+** from or by the UIDAI.

However, it was found that approximately 210 websites of central government, state government departments including educational institutes were displaying the list of beneficiaries along with their name, address, other details and Aadhaar numbers for information of general public

The UIDAI took note and got the Aadhaar data removed from the said websites, it said in reply to the RTI application.

UIDAI issues Aadhaar — a 12-digit unique identification number — which acts as a proof of identity and address anywhere in the country.

The central government is in the process of making Aadhaar mandatory for people to avail benefits of various social service schemes.

The architecture of the Aadhaar ecosystem has been designed to ensure data security and privacy which is an integral part of the system from the initial design to the final stage. It said security audits are conducted on a regular basis to further strengthen security and privacy of data. Besides this, all possible steps are taken to make the data safer and protected, the authority said.

Bilateral:

Swiss parliamentary panel approves automatic information exchange pact with India

Switzerland's key Parliament Panel has approved a pact for automatic exchange of information with India on financial accounts. The pact will help provide a continuous access to details about alleged black money hoarders in once-all-secret Swiss banks.

The Commission for Economic Affairs and Taxes of the Council of States -- a key panel of the Swiss Parliament's Upper House -- approved the proposed pact with India as also with 40 other countries. The proposal will now be submitted for approval from the upper chamber of Swiss Parliament.

A report says the exchange of information under this framework will work like this -- If an Indian has a bank account in Switzerland, the bank concerned will disclose the financial account data to authorities there; the Swiss authority will automatically forward the information to its peer in India who can then examine the person's details.

The pact proposes automatic information exchange with effect from next year and first exchange of information in 2019. It was approved by the Lower House of Swiss Parliament in September. The issue of black money has been a matter of big debate in India, and Switzerland has been long perceived as one of the safest havens for the illicit wealth allegedly stashed abroad by Indians.

Economy:

India moves up one notch to 126 in per capita GDP terms, says IMF data

India has moved up one position to 126th in terms of GDP per capita of countries, still ranked lower than all its BRICS peers, while Qatar remains the world's richest on this parameter, as per IMF data.

The data, which forms part of the latest World Economic Outlook report of the International Monetary Fund, ranks over 200 countries in terms of per capita GDP based on purchasing power parity (PPP).

PPP between two countries is the rate at which the currency of one country needs to be converted into that of a second country to ensure that a given amount of the first country's currency will purchase the same volume of goods and services in the second country as it does in the first.

India has seen its per capita GDP rise to \$7,170 in 2017, from \$6,690 last year, helping improve its rank by a position to 126th. Qatar remains top-ranked with per capita GDP of \$1,24,930, followed by Macao at the second position with \$1,14,430 and Luxembourg third with \$1,09,190.

Among BRICS countries, India has the lowest per capita GDP. Russia boasts of a GDP per capita of \$27,900, while for China, it stood at \$16,620, Brazil at \$15,500 and South Africa at \$13,400.

Interestingly, as per a recent Credit Suisse report, India is home to 2.45 lakh millionaires with a total household wealth of \$5 trillion.

As per the IMF data, the richest 10 countries in the world in per capita GDP terms also include Singapore (4th, \$90,530), Brunei (5th, \$76,740), Ireland (6th, \$72,630), Norway (7th, \$70,590), Kuwait (8th, \$69,670), United Arab Emirates (9th, \$68,250) and Switzerland (10th, \$61,360).

The US has failed to make it to the top 10 and is ranked 13th with a GDP per capita of \$59,500 while the UK is ranked even lower.

According to a Fortune magazine report based on the IMF data, several top-ranking countries such as Qatar and Brunei "have fuel and oil propelling their economies", while investment and strong banking systems have helped propel economic growth in other countries like Iceland and Ireland.