

## **December 10<sup>th</sup> news:**

### **International:**

#### **Arabs, Europe, U.N. reject Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israeli capital**

Members of the UN Security Council (UNSC) have criticised Washington's decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and warned that it would raise tensions in the area even as Washington stood alone steadfastly defending its decision.

The international community would only recognise modifications of the 1967 borders accepted by both sides, France said in a statement that reflected the broad convergence of views of both US allies and others in the Council.

One of the Council resolutions adopted in 1980 specifically asks member countries not to put their diplomatic missions in the "Holy City" considered sacred by Jews, Christians and Muslims.

Arabs and Muslims across the Middle East condemned the U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital as an incendiary move in a volatile region and Palestinians said Washington was abandoning its leading role as a peace mediator.

The European Union also voiced alarm at U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem and its repercussions for any chances of reviving Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking.

### **Bilateral:**

#### **Agreement with GIZ in Technical cooperation**

Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry has signed an agreement with German firm GIZ for technical cooperation in the implementation of transport projects in Coimbatore, Bhubaneswar and Kochi. An amount of around 29 crore rupees through GIZ is envisaged for this purpose over a period of three years. The main objective of the agreement is to improve planning and implementation of sustainable urban transport.

### **Economy:**

#### **WTO: India battles services barriers**

Ahead of the December 10-13 meeting of the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) highest decision-making body, India has highlighted the difficulties faced by services suppliers from developing economies in complying with rich countries' complex domestic regulations.

India also rejected attempts by some WTO Members such as European Union and Canada to include 'gender equality' in the services trade negotiations agenda.

According to a November 27 WTO report, “the state of play in the services negotiations covers four areas: services trade facilitation, services related to e-commerce, market access, and domestic regulation.”

The WTO’s Ministerial Conference will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In a submission to the WTO on December 5, India said, “Service suppliers, particularly those of developing country Members, face numerous difficulties in complying with complex domestic regulations brought out by developed country Members.” It particularly emphasised hurdles faced by ‘natural persons supplying services in foreign jurisdictions.’

Incidentally, India is pushing for a Trade Facilitation in Services Agreement, which also aims to ensure easing rules regarding movement of professionals and skilled workers across borders for temporary work/projects.

On gender-related issues (or women’s economic empowerment) including the proposed disciplines on gender equality, India said, “...while we strongly support gender equality in all areas, we cannot agree with proponents that gender is a trade-related issue which can be meaningfully addressed through Domestic Regulation (DR) disciplines.”

The DR disciplines relate to formulation of ‘necessary disciplines to ensure that measures relating to qualification requirements and procedures, technical standards and licensing requirements and procedures do not constitute unnecessary barriers to trade in services.’

### **GE’s FirstBuild India hub in Hyderabad**

GE Appliances-backed co-creation community FirstBuild has decided to set up its India hub at T-Works, the makerspace coming up in Hyderabad. An agreement to this effect was signed on 9<sup>th</sup> December. FirstBuild India (1B India) intends to focus on IoT and business processes in appliances and manufacturing. It seeks to engage with T-Works and the maker community in knowledge sharing, skills development and community driven open-platform innovation