

## **December 7<sup>th</sup> news:**

### **International:**

#### **Trump officially recognises Jerusalem as Israel's capital**

US President Donald Trump on 6<sup>th</sup> December recognised Jerusalem as Israel's capital. He also ordered to start the process of moving the US embassy from Tel Aviv to the holy city. The move reversed decades of US and international policy on the holy city

At the same time, Trump reiterated his commitment to the two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. He said, United States remains deeply committed to helping facilitate a peace agreement that is acceptable to both sides.

### **National:**

#### **Minorities Commission to study minority status to Hindus in eight states**

The National Commission for Minorities (NCM) on 6<sup>th</sup> December formed a three-member committee to study the matter of minority status to Hindus in eight states where their population is less than 50 per cent. The committee has to give a report within three months.

The committee was formed under the chairmanship of George Kourien. He is also the vice chairman of NCM. Other two NCM members are Sulekha Kambre and Manjeet Singh Rai. Ajay Kumar, Additional Secretary of NCM, will be the secretary of this committee. The states where Minority status for Hindus sought are- Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Lakshdweep, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh.

#### **Centre enhances monetary allowances for Gallantry Award winners**

The Government has enhanced the monetary allowances for the Gallantry Award winners vide notification dated 04 December 2017. This will come into effect from the 01 August 2017.

The enhancement is for the recipients of post-independence Gallantry Award, pre-independence Gallantry Award and the monetary allowance attached to 'Jangi Inam', a pre-independence Gallantry Award. The allowances have been doubled in most of the cases and in a few cases have been increased by more than 100%.

Award	Old Allowance	New Allowance
Param Vir Chakra (PVC)	10,000	20,000
Ashok Chakra	6000	12000
Mahavir Chakra	5000	10,000

Distinguished Service Order, Indian Order of Merit and Indian Distinguished Service Medal will now get eight thousand in place of four thousands rupees. Jangi Inam's monetary allowances has been revised from five hundred to one thousand rupees.

### **Yuvraj Singh Launches UNICEF-ICC's Adolescent Campaign**

Indian cricketer Yuvraj Singh will be promoting a UNICEF sports initiative for youngsters in South Asia, which will also have the ICC's backing. Yuvraj launched the "Power of Sports to Shape the Future of Adolescents" campaign in South Asia

### **Bilateral:**

#### **India, Cuba sign MoU for enhanced cooperation in health sector**

India and Cuba on 6<sup>th</sup> December signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for enhanced cooperation in the health sector. The MoU between the two sides is important for exchanges in the health sector and to develop institutional framework.

The objective of this MoU is to establish comprehensive inter-ministerial and inter-institutional cooperation between the two countries in the field of health by pooling technical, scientific and financial and human resources.

### **Economy:**

#### **RBI maintains status quo in Monetary Policy**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 6<sup>th</sup> December kept its key lending rate—the repo rate—unchanged at 6 percent, but warned about lurking inflation worries in the new year, amid signs that costlier fuel prices could pinch household budgets.

The RBI marginally raised its retail inflation forecast for the second half of the fiscal year (October-March) to range between 4.3 and 4.7 percent, from the earlier estimates of 4.2-4.6 percent.

India's retail inflation has been galloping towards the RBI's tolerable 4 percent threshold driven by costlier vegetables.

Retail or consumer price inflation, the main price gauge that the central bank tracks for interest rate related decisions, was 3.58 percent in October.

The RBI also kept one eye on global oil prices that has nudged higher, following last week's deal between Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and other crude producers to curb production by 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd) until the end of 2018. This will likely drive up prices.

This could knock up pump-gate diesel and petrol prices in India, which imports more than two-thirds of its crude oil requirements.

The status quo on repo rate—the rate at which banks borrow from the RBI—dashed hopes further lowering of borrowing costs for households and the companies. The RBI last cut the repo rate by 0.25 percentage points to 6 percent in August.

The RBI also retained its economy's growth forecasts for 2017-18, despite signs of revival in consumption spending and investment activity. The central bank expects the gross value added (GVA) to grow at 6.7 percent in 2017-18.

The Indian economy grew 6.3 percent in July-September, recovering from a three-year low growth slump of 5.7 percent in April-June, as companies scaled up production and restocked supplies after goods and services tax (GST) kicked in from July 1.

Data released last month showed that the GST-induced supply shock may have eased considerably, helping a rebound in the broader economy.

Gross value added (GVA), which is GDP minus taxes, grew 6.1 percent, mirroring greater production activity in factories, according to data released by Central Statistics Office (CSO). GVA growth had significantly fallen in the last few quarters, slipping to 5.6 percent in April-June.

Among the MPC members, Chetan Ghatge, Pami Dua, Michael Debabrata Patra, Viral V. Acharya and Urjit Patel favoured an unchanged repo rate, while Ravindra Dholakia voted for a 0.25 percentage point rate cut.

## **Science and Technology:**

### **Akash Missile Successfully Launched**

The Surface to Air Missile AKASH with indigenous radio frequency seeker against target Banshee has been successfully launched from the Launch Complex-III at ITR Chandipur, Odisha. The Radars, telemetry and electro-optical systems along the coast have tracked and monitored all the health parameters of the missile. This missile is being inducted into Army as Short Range Surface to Air Missile (SRSAM). With this success, India has achieved the capability of making any type of Surface to Air Missile.

## **Environment**

### **International Solar Alliance is Now a Legal Entity**

India and France-led International Solar Alliance (ISA) on 6<sup>th</sup> December became a legal entity after 19 countries ratified this treaty-based international Government organisation. Besides, 46 countries have signed the statute for the ISA which is an alliance of 121 countries.

In terms of its Framework Agreement, with ratification by Guinea as the 15th country on 6th November 2017, the ISA will become a treaty-based international inter-governmental organisation on 6th December 2017

Apart from India and France, Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, Cuba, Fiji, Guinea, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Nauru, Niger, Peru, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, and Tuvalu are the other countries that have ratified the ISA.

This will be the first international Government organisation whose headquarters will be based in India. The ISA is an Indian initiative, jointly launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the then President of France Francois Hollande on November 30, 2015, in Paris, on the sidelines of COP-21, the United Nations Climate Conference.

### **International conference on Climate Change held in Nepal**

The International conference on climate change was held in Nepal. It was inaugurated by Nepal President Bidya Devi Bhandari. It was titled 'Resilient. Its purpose was to draw attention towards adverse effects of global warming in Hindu Kush mountain range. It was organized by Nepal's Ministry for Environment in collaboration with International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

### **Sports:**

#### **Sushil Kumar resigned**

Double Olympic medallist Sushil Kumar has also quit his role as a National Sports Observer for wrestling. He was among 12 national observers appointed in March this year.