

**January 5<sup>th</sup> news:**

**International:**

**Beijing has never recognized existence of Arunachal Pradesh: China**

China on 3<sup>rd</sup> January maintained that its position on the China-India boundary issue was consistent and clear and that Beijing has never recognised the existence of Arunachal Pradesh.

The Chinese troops reportedly left the construction equipment behind after they were confronted by the Indian soldiers. The India-China border covering the 3,488 km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC) is disputed between the two sides and notably, Beijing claims Arunachal Pradesh to be the part of its south Tibet. Last year, the Indian and Chinese troops had engaged in a standoff on the Doklam plateau near Sikkim, at the trijunction of India, China and Bhutan, for over two months after the latter began constructing a road on the disputed territory. The standoff ended in August after the two sides decided to disengage their troops

**National:**

**Union ministries join hands to propel Technology Mission for Railways**

Three Union ministries have signed memorandum of understanding to facilitate the co-financing of 'Technology Mission for Indian Railways', says Ashwani Lohani, chairman, Railway Board, on 4<sup>th</sup> January.

The three ministries which joined hands to propel the Technology Mission for Indian Railways (TMIR) include Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Department of Science & Technology (Ministry of Science & Technology).

As per this MoU, Ministry of HRD and Ministry of Science & Technology have agreed to fund the TMIR projects to the tune of Rs 75 crore each while Railways and Industries will also contribute to their respective shares.

The mission will take up R&D projects in the areas of heavy haul, safety, energy, environment and urban railways.

**Bilateral:**

**Approval for Indo-Myanmar Agreement on land border crossing**

Cabinet has approved the Agreement between India and Myanmar on Land Border Crossing. The Agreement will facilitate regulation and harmonization of already existing free movement rights for people ordinarily residing in the border areas of both countries.

It will also facilitate movement of people on the basis of valid passports and visas which will enhance economic and social interaction between the two countries. The Agreement is an enabling arrangement for movement of people across India-Myanmar border. It is expected to provide connectivity and enhance interaction of the people of North Eastern States of India with the people of Myanmar.

It would give a boost to the economy of the North East and allow us to leverage our geographical connections with Myanmar to boost trade and people to people ties.

The Agreement will safeguard the traditional rights of the largely tribal communities residing along the border which are accustomed to free movement across the land border.

### **Economy:**

#### **Jute package made mandatory**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the mandatory packaging of foodgrains and sugar in the jute material for the Jute Year 2017-18. The decision would sustain the core demand for the jute sector and support the livelihood of the workers and farmers dependent on the sector.

The CCEA has extended the mandatory packaging norms under the Jute Packaging Material (JPM) Act, 1987. The approval mandates that 90 percent of the food grains and 20 percent of the sugar products shall be mandatorily packed in jute bags.

The decision also mandates, in the first instance, the entire requirement for packing of foodgrains would be placed in jute bags thus, making a provision for 100 percent packing of food grains in jute bags subject to the ability of the jute industry to meet the requirement.

The decision is expected to benefit farmers and workers located in the Eastern and North Eastern regions of the country particularly in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya, and Tripura.

Jute industry is predominantly dependent on Government sector which purchases jute products more than Rs. 5,500 crore every year.

Considering that nearly 3.7 lakh workers and approximately 40 lakh farmers are dependent for their livelihood on the jute sectors, the government has been making concerted efforts for the development of jute sector; increasing the quality and productivity of raw jute, diversification of jute sector and also boosting and sustaining demand for jute products.

### **Persons in news:**

**Vijay Mallya:** A Delhi court on 4<sup>th</sup> January declared liquor businessman Vijay Mallya a proclaimed offender for evading summons in a FERA violation case. Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Deepak Shehrawat passed the order after noting that Mallya failed to appear before it despite repeated summonses.