

March 12th and 13th news:

National:

Rajasthan Passes Bill awarding death penalty to rape convicts

Rajasthan assembly passed an amendment bill awarding death penalty for convicts involved in the rape of girls below 12 years of age.

State Home Minister Gulab Chand Kataria introduced 'The Criminal Laws (Rajasthan Amendment) Bill, 2018' in the assembly, which was passed in the House by a voice vote following a debate.

The new amendment added sections 376-AA and 376-DD to the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

The amendment says that a person who is convicted of raping/gang-raping a girl up to twelve years of age will be given a death sentence or rigorous imprisonment, which shall not be less than fourteen years and 20 years, respectively

Bilateral:

India offers 100 million dollar credit to Mauritius for defence procurement

India has offered a 100 million dollar Line of Credit, LoC, to Mauritius for defence procurement to help its security capacity.

India also agreed to sell a Multi-Purpose Offshore Petrol Vessel to the island nation, which will be financed through the LoC announced on 12th March

It will also have a five-million-dollar grant component in addition to the LoC. Press Secretary to the President, Ashok Malik said the Line of Credit is a big step in India's defence cooperation with Mauritius.

Earlier, both the countries signed four MoUs to further strengthen bilateral cooperation.

These agreements are in the fields of education, health, culture and civil services. The MoUs were exchanged in the presence of President Ram Nath Kovind and Mauritian Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth in Port Louis.

Economy:

1.36 lakh jobs added in July-Sept., says survey

According to the quarterly employment survey by the Labour Bureau for July-September....

- There was positive changes in seven out of eight sectors, in creating employment.
- Employment in eight key sectors, including manufacturing, IT and transport, rose by 1.36 lakh on net basis in July-September this fiscal compared to the previous quarter
- Construction sector was the only segment that reported job losses of 22,000 in the second quarter of FY2017-18.

- Estimates from present quarterly employment survey reveal that there was an overall positive change of 1.36 lakh workers [in July-September] over the previous quarter [April-June], across eight sectors at all-India level
- Manufacturing sector added 89,000 jobs, education sector added 21,000 jobs while transport sector saw addition of 20,000 jobs.
- Trade (14,000), health (11,000), accommodation and restaurant (2,000) and IT/BPO sector (1,000) also reported job additions.
- Female workers accounted for 74,000 and male workers 62,000.

Environment:

1st International Solar Alliance Summit: PM shares 10 action points on solar energy

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron, along with several heads of States and governments, symbolically launch International Solar Alliance; PM shares 10 action points on solar energy; says easy accessibility of better and cheaper solar technology has to be ensured.

In the association of 121 countries, 61 countries signed and 32 ratified the ISA Framework Agreement which is a reflection of common desire to significantly augment harnessing of solar energy, make joint efforts towards development and mobilize investment in the solar sector.

The summit focus is on various projects being prepared by different countries in areas including rural electrification, off grid solar power, water supply and irrigation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi shared 10 action points on solar energy while addressing the first conference of the International Solar Alliance in New Delhi. He said easy accessibility of better and cheaper solar technology has to be ensured.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi stressed on the need to identify various ways in which solar energy can be best used for the welfare of children and society.

PM Modi, French President launch Solar Plant at Mirzapur

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and visiting French President Emmanuel Macron on 12th March inaugurated 101 megawatt solar power plant at Dadar Kala village in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh.

This is the largest solar projects in the country set up by French company ENGIE. The company was awarded the project in 2016 with the cost of Rs. 680 crore. More in this report:

The unveiling of the inaugural plaque of 101 megawatt solar power plant at Mirzapur breathing fresh energy into India-France ties.

The Solar Plant of 101 mega watt built at a cost of Rs. 650 crore at Mirzapur's Dadar Kalan village.

This plant is spread over 328 acres and is connected to the Jigna power plant's grid.

Currently, 75 mega watt electricity is being generated. India is generating 20 GW of energy from solar power with an aim to scale this up to 100 GW by 2022.

Sports:

ISSF World Cup: Akhil Sheoran bags fourth Gold for India

Indian shooter Akhil Sheoran continued the march of India's young brigade at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun stage in Guadalajara, Mexico, shooting down the Men's 50m Rifle 3 Positions (3P) Gold with lots to spare.

Sheoran is now the fourth young Indian shooter to have won a first ISSF World Cup medal in the competition after the likes of Shahzar Rizvi, Manu Bhaker, Mehuli Ghosh and Anjum Moudgil had put India on top of the medal standings with their performances over the last week.

Sheoran's Gold was India's fourth of the competition and makes it almost certain that India would finish on top of the medal tally for the first time in an ISSF World Cup.

Akhil shot 455.6 in the final to leave behind Austria's Bernhard Pickl in second place with 452. In a classy field which included 38-time ISSF medalist and Hungarian Rifle legend Peter Sidi, Rio Olympic Bronze medalist Alexis Reynauld of France and Air Rifle Gold medalist Istvan Peni, also of Hungary besides India's champion 3P exponent Sanjeev Rajput, Sheoran's performance in tough conditions belied his age and experience.

Persons in news:

Xi Jinping: China's Parliament on 11th March abolished the decades-old two-term limit for the President, allowing Xi Jinping to remain as the country's leader for life. The constitutional changes were passed in Beijing by the annual sitting of the National People's Congress - the country's legislature - with two-third majority.

Of the 2,964 delegates, only two voted against the change, while three abstained. Earlier, the seven-member Standing Committee - the top most body of the ruling Communist Party of China - had unanimously approved the amendment. 64-year old Xi Jinping is currently in his second five-year term and due to retire in 2023 under the current two term system.