

## **April 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> news:**

### **International:**

#### **UN Security Council rejects Russian measures on Syria chemical weapons probe**

The United Nations Security Council rejected a Russian-drafted resolution 10<sup>th</sup> April on investigating chemical weapons use in Syria after Moscow vetoed a competing U.S.-proposed measure. Six countries including China and Russia backed the measure, while seven nations voted against. Two countries abstained. A draft resolution requires nine votes to be adopted in the 15-member council and no veto from the five permanent members -- Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

Russia vetoed a U.S.-drafted United Nations Security Council resolution that would have set up an investigation into chemical weapons use in Syria following the alleged toxic gas attack in Douma. It was the 12th time that Russia used its veto power at the council to block action targeting its Syrian ally.

The showdown between the United States and Russia at the United Nations came as the threat of Western military action in Syria loomed large.

### **National:**

#### **Prime Minister Narendra Modi Launches India's 1st All-Electric High-Speed Train**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off India's first all-electric high-speed locomotive in Bihar. The first big Make-in-India project completed by France's Alstom, the train has the country's most powerful engine with 12,000 horsepower and a maximum speed of 120 km per hour. The average cost of one high-speed locomotive is around Rs25 crore.

### **Bilateral:**

#### **India and Swaziland signed two agreements**

President Ram Nath Kovind, on a three-nation Africa visit, held delegation-level talks with Swaziland King Mswati III in Mbabane. Both sides agreed on expanding the India- Swaziland partnership to accelerate growth and development. India and Swaziland signed two agreements on health and visa waiver.

One of the agreement deals with granting of the visa waiver for the diplomats and officials holding relevant passports while the other is to ensure cooperation in the field of health and medicine.

**President Kovind was conferred with Order of the Lion, the highest award of Swaziland.**

### **Economy:**

**IGIA breaks into world's top 20 busiest**

New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport has jumped six notches to break into the league of the top 20 busiest airports in the world for 2017 in terms of traffic volumes.

The GMR-group-run New Delhi airport jumped from 22nd rank in 2016 to 16th rank, solidifying its status as one of the fastest growing airports in the world for passenger traffic, as per the Airports Council International (ACI).

The ranking is based on the preliminary passenger traffic results for the most-travelled airports in 2017, released by the ACI on 9<sup>th</sup> April

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL) was ranked the busiest airport in the world with 103 million passengers (both departing and arriving) despite a 0.3 per cent decline in traffic volumes over 2016.

Founded in 1991 with the objective of fostering cooperation among its member airports and other partners in world aviation, ACI is the trade association of the world's airports, currently serving 641 members operating from 1,953 airports across 176 countries.

ACI's World Airport Traffic Forecasts also predicts that the country will represent the third largest aviation market, in terms of passenger throughput, after the US and China by 2020.

Delhi, the country's busiest airport for passenger traffic, grew by 14.1 per cent year-over-year at 63.45 million, pushing it up from 22nd to the 16th busiest airport in the world

Even with this rapid growth in throughput, Delhi was also ranked first in Airport Service Quality for airports above 40 million passengers per annum along with the Mumbai airport

Besides, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai were also ranked among the fastest growing airports in the world with an year-over-year growth of 26.9 per cent, 19.6 per cent, 12.9 per cent and 10.5 per cent, respectively during 2017

Growing rapidly in relatively short period of time, India is poised to be one of the largest aviation markets in the world in the years to come

ACI's World Airport Traffic Forecasts predicts that the country will represent the third largest aviation market, in terms of passenger throughput, after the US and China by 2020

### **BJP is richest party with Rs. 1,034 crore**

Seven national parties declared a total income of Rs. 1,559.17 crore in 2016-17, with BJP having the highest — Rs. 1,034.27 crore, says a report.

This forms 66.34% of the total income of national parties added together during 2016-17, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) said in a report. The Congress followed with Rs. 225.36 crore, 14.45% of the total income, it said, adding that the CPI has declared the lowest income of Rs. 2.08 crore, a mere 0.13%.

## **New norms for global projects**

The Central Vigilance Commission has drawn up a new set of guidelines for projects funded by international agencies such as the World Bank, IMF and Asian Development Bank.

The new guidelines will put an end to existing practice of government departments and agencies adhering to the guidelines of foreign donors, while ignoring Indian government rules, in concluding contracts for projects funded by them.

The new guidelines also draw a distinction between grants-in-aid and loans.

The decision could open up a debate on whether Indian guidelines that insist on the lowest financial tender to be selected, even if quality questions remain, is better than standards followed by the international agencies.

A key difference in projects funded by foreign agencies was that most of them had a different way of awarding tender, different from CVC guidelines for selecting the lowest financial tender for negotiations.

The earliest record of a formal clarification that allowed government agencies to ignore Indian norms for such contracts is an order issued on October 1, 1999 by the then CVC. It amended the 1998 guidelines on post-tender negotiations by government departments.

More than a decade later, on October 28, 2011 the Commission clarified that the CVC guidelines “would not be applicable in projects funded by the World Bank, ADB etc. if found to be in conflict with the applicable procurement rules of the funding agencies.” The new guidelines, issued on April 6, overturn those norms.

## **NITI Aayog's northeast forum highlights 'HIRA' for development**

The first meeting of NITI Forum for North East has outlined five development missions for promoting sectors like horticulture, tourism and food processing in the region.

The focus of development projects in the region will be based on the concept of "HIRA" which stands for Highways, Internet ways, Railways and Airways.

Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog Dr Rajiv Kumar said, the emphasis will also be given on education, health and skill development in the region. He further said that there is also a planning for UDAN three through which the state capitals will be interconnected.

The NITI Forum was formed to explore and formulate the framework for sustainable growth of the Northeast. It was constituted in February this year.

## **Environment**

### **Conference on 'Water, Environment & Climate Change begins in Kathmandu**

The first international conference on 'Water, Environment and Climate Change: Knowledge Sharing and Partnership' has started in Kathmandu. Vice President of Nepal Nanda Bahadur Pun inaugurated the conference on 10<sup>th</sup> April

The basic objective of the conference is to bring together professionals, academicians, researchers, entrepreneurs, government and non government institutions to discuss and deliberate on challenges, opportunities and strategies related to water and environmental issues.

More than 100 international participants from 20 countries including India participating in the conference

### **Sports:**

#### **Heena Sidhu Wins Gold In 25m Pistol Event**

Indian shooter Heena Sidhu set **Commonwealth Games** record to win gold in women's **25m**pistol shooting event.

This is Sidhu's second medal at CWG 2018, after winning silver in women's 10m air pistol.

Another Indian shooter Annu Singh came sixth in the same event.

With this result, India has won three golds and overall eight medals in shooting.

#### **India Win Badminton Team Gold For first time In CWG History**

**India** clinched their first-ever badminton mixed team event gold in **Commonwealth Games** history after defeating defending champions Malaysia 3-1 in the final at Gold Coast.

India's previous best performance in the mixed team event at CWG was a silver-medal finish in the 2010 edition.

Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth represented India in singles' matches of the five-member team event.

#### **Shooter Mitharwal gets bronze**

On 10<sup>th</sup> April 2012 London Olympic Bronze medal winner in boxing Mary Kom entered the women's 48 kg final. She defeated Sri Lanka's Anusha Koddithuwakku in the first semi-final.

In the Men's 10-meter air pistol event, Om Prakash Mitharwal won bronze. Two days ago also, Mitharwal had won a bronze for India in men's 10-meter air pistol.

In women's singles table tennis group matches, Maitreyee Sarkar beat Papua New Guinea's Vero Nime 11-2, 11-9, 11-2.

**Awards:**

**Anushka Sharma:** Bollywood actor Anushka Sharma will be awarded the Dadasaheb Phalke Excellence Award for her successful movies as a producer.

The award will be given by an organization called Dadasaheb Phalke Foundation, a Mumbai-based organization, which is different from the Government of India instituted Dadasaheb Phalke Award, awarded during National Awards ceremony held annually in New Delhi.