

April 3rd and 4th news:

International:

China increases tariffs on 128 US goods by up to 25%

China on 2nd April increased tariffs by up to 25 percent on 128 U S products, from frozen pork and wine to certain fruits and nuts in response to U S duties on imports of Aluminium and Steel.

China said, the tariffs affecting some 3 billion US Dollars of imports was to safeguard China's interests and balance losses caused by new US tariffs.

The Trump administration had said its duties were aimed at Steel and Aluminium imports that it deemed a threat to US national security, but China's Commerce Ministry called that reasoning an abuse of World Trade Organization guidelines

US adds Hafiz Saeed's political front Milli Muslim League to terrorist list

The US has designated the Milli Muslim League, the political front of Pakistan-based Mumbai attack mastermind-led Jamaat-ud Dawa, as a foreign terrorist organisation. The MML is an alias of Lashkar-e-Taiba also. It involved in 26/11 Mumbai terror attack.

The US also added Tehreek-e-Azadi-e-Kashmir (TAK) to the list of terrorist groups..Tehreek-e-Azadi-e-Kashmir is said to be a front of the LeT, which according to the Trump administration, continues to operate, without any restrictions in Pakistan.

The State Department said the move was aimed at denying the LeT resources it needs to plan and carry out further terrorist attacks.

The move comes a day after the Election Commission of Pakistan asked the MML to produce a clearance certificate by the interior ministry for its registration as a political party. General elections are scheduled to be held in Pakistan in July.

The JuD was designated by the Department of State as an alias of the LeT pursuant April 2016 and was added to the United Nations Sanctions list as an alias of the LeT in December 2008.

The JuD is believed to be the front organisation for the LeT which is responsible for carrying out the Mumbai attack that killed 166 people, including six Americans. It was declared as an FTO by the US in June 2014.

National:

NIRF rankings 2018: IISc Bengaluru best institution in India

Union Minister for HRD Prakash Javadekar on 3rd April released India's own top university rankings under 9 different categories. Like last year, Indian Institute of Sciences Bengaluru tops the list of Indian

Universities in the overall category followed by Indian Institute of Technology Madras in 2nd position, IIT Bombay in 3rd, IIT Delhi in 4th and IIT Kharagpur at number 5.

IISc Bengaluru has also topped in University rankings while Jawaharlal Nehru University and Benares Hindu University come in at 2nd and 3rd. Chennai's Anna University has been ranked 4th while University of Hyderabad has been ranked 5th.

In the Engineering colleges category, the Indian Institutes of Technology dominated as usual with IIT Madras topping the list, IIT Bombay at no 2, IIT Delhi at no 3 followed by IIT Kharagpur and IIT Kanpur at nos 4 and 5.

IIM Ahmedabad has been declared the top management college IIM Bengaluru 2nd, IIM Kolkata 3rd followed by IIM Lucknow with the 4th rank and IIM Mumbai ranked 5th.

In the top college rankings Delhi's Miranda House has scored again with the number one position, St Stephen's has stood second, Bishop Haber College of Tiruchirapalli ranked 3rd, Delhi's Hindu College is at number 4 and Chennai's Presidency college at number 5.

In other words, as far as top colleges are concerned, 3 Delhi colleges and 2 from Tamil Nadu have topped the rankings. The process of ranking higher educational institutions within the country began in 2016. 3 new categories - Medical, Law and Architecture were added this year.

Among medical colleges, Delhi's AIIMS has been ranked 1st followed by PGIMER Chandigarh at no 2 and Vellore's Christian Medical college at number 3.

Madhya Pradesh's Kadaknath Chicken Gets Geographical Indication Tag

Six years after it applied for the Geographical Indications (GI) tag for Kadaknath, a chicken breed whose black meat is in demand in some quarters, Madhya Pradesh has got the coveted label. The protein-rich meat of Kadaknath, chicks, and eggs are sold at a much higher rate than other varieties of chicken.

Chennai-based GI Registry accepted the application of Gramin Vikas Trust, Jhabua, which was filed in 2012.

Maharashtra govt provides 1% reservation for orphans in education and jobs

The Maharashtra government has provided one per cent reservation for orphans in education and jobs. A senior official said, the state cabinet had taken the decision in January, but the necessary government resolution was issued on 2nd April. According to the resolution, reservation is applicable to all state-level recruitments, across all levels from Class I to IV.

The persons who cannot trace their parents or any relative and do not know their caste will be eligible for the reservation. They should have the orphan certificate issued by the state government.

Economy:

Government launches digital platforms for ease of farm export

In line with the Digital India initiative, the government has developed three online portals to make it easier to export farm products from India and reduce transaction costs.

The digital platforms, developed by the Export Inspection Council, have integrated the entire export food chain by linking primary production, chain catch, aquaculture pond, dairy farms and apiaries.

The council is the official export certification body of the government and it has developed the portals for “credible inspection and certification and to strengthen the confidence on Indian produce”

Processing units, testing laboratories, official controls and exports will have complete traceability. One lab one assessment portal provides unified approach to all stakeholders like accreditation bodies, regulators and laboratories by bringing them together on a common platform to aid simplified procedures.

The Export Alert Monitoring portal monitors non compliances raised by importing countries. The portal will enable monitoring of alerts and action taken by multiple organizations involved in initial certification in the food safety & biosecurity and analysing the trend, understanding the trade barriers to reduce the alerts and enhance the export trade.

To enhance the country’s analytical capability, the council has provided accredited Proficiency Testing (PT) providers at Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai by reducing dependency on foreign PT providers and ease of access

Awards:

Sreekumaran Thampi: Lyricist and director Sreekumaran Thampi selected for the J.C. Daniel Award, the Kerala government’s highest honor for lifetime contribution to Malayalam cinema. The award comprises of Rs5 lakh and a citation.

The award was distributed at the Kerala State Film Award distribution function in Kollam. Thampi made his debut in 1966 with Kattumallika and has written over 1,000-odd melodies.

Persons in news:

Debjani Ghosh: Debjani Ghosh, former managing director of Intel South Asia, is the new president of Nasscom. She has replaced R.Chandrashekhar upon completion of his term. A big propagator of gender diversity and equal representation in corporate India, Ms Ghosh was the first woman to lead Intel India and MAIT (Manufacturers' Association for Information Technology).

Rosemary DiCarlo: Long-serving American diplomat Rosemary DiCarlo appointed to become the first woman to head UN political affairs, one of the most high-profile positions at the world body.

DiCarlo will replace Jeffrey Feltman, another American who held the post of under-secretary-general for political affairs since 2012.

DiCarlo also served as deputy assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs and director for United Nations affairs at the national security council in Washington.

Chandra Bushan Kumar: Senior bureaucrat Chandra Bhushan Kumar appointed as Deputy Election Commissioner as part of a major bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the government.