

## **April 5<sup>th</sup> news:**

### **International:**

#### **UN terror list has 139 Pakistan entries**

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has identified 139 Pakistani terrorist individuals and entities who have lived in Pakistan, operated from there or have been associated with groups that used Pakistani territory for carrying out their operations.

In its consolidated list updated on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, UNSC named Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and its chief Hafiz Saeed, Osama bin Laden's heir apparent and Al Qaeda's Ayman al-Zawahiri, Harkatul Mujahideen, Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan and others. Hafiz Saeed is also listed as a person wanted by Interpol for his involvement in terrorist activities.

The list also includes Dawood Ibrahim, an Indian national who, according to the UN Security Council, has held several Pakistani passports issued in Rawalpindi and Karachi. The UN claims that he owns a palatial bungalow in the hilly area of Noorabad, Karachi.

### **National:**

#### **HRD Ministry Constitutes Committee to Prevent Exam Paper Leakages**

The Ministry of Human Resource Development constituted a High Powered Committee to examine the entire system of conducting Class X and Class XII examination conducted by the CBSE with a view to preventing leakages. Mr Vinay Sheel Oberoi, Retd. Secretary (Higher Education), MHRD will be the Chairperson of the 7 member High Power Committee.

#### **Union Cabinet approves amendments to Protection of Human Rights Bill**

The Union Cabinet on 4<sup>th</sup> April approved amendments to the human rights protection bill for "better protection and promotion of human rights in the country"

The Protection of Human Rights (Amendments) Bill, 2018, was cleared in a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Bill proposes to enlarge the scope of eligibility and scope of selection of chairperson of National Human Rights Commission as well as the State Human Rights Commissions". It also aims at to incorporate a mechanism to look after the cases of human rights violation in the union territories.

The bill "proposes to amend the terms of office of chairperson and members of National Human Rights Commission and State Human Rights Commissions to make (them) in consonance with the terms of chairperson and members of other commissions".

The statement claimed that the amendment would "strengthen" the human rights institutions "for effective discharge of their mandates, roles and responsibilities".

It would also bring India's human rights law "in perfect sync with the agreed global standards and benchmarks towards ensuring the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual in the country".

## **Bilateral:**

### **Trial run of first India-Bangladesh container train flagged off**

The trial run of the first container train between India and Bangladesh was flagged off from Kolkata city on 4<sup>th</sup> April

The train left for Bangladesh with 60 containers loaded with almost 1,200 tonnes of de-oiled cake, used as a raw material for animal feed. It will pass through Sealdah, Naihati, Ranaghat and Gede in India and Darsana and Ishurdi in Bangladesh before reaching Bangabandhu West station, 117 kilometres off capital city of Dhaka.

Currently, the trade between India and Bangladesh is largely road-based. Reportedly, it takes almost a month for an Indian truck to reach Bangladesh through the congested Petrapole-Benapole border, with customs clearance alone taking nearly 25 days. The train is also likely to resolve the capacity constraints of sea and land routes.

## **Economy:**

### **Cabinet approves reducing strength of CCI members to 3 for speedy approvals**

The Cabinet on 4<sup>th</sup> April approved reducing the size of the Competition Commission of India (CCI) in line with the government's policy of "minimum government and maximum governance" as well as global standards. It attributed the move to its earlier decision of not having additional benches.

At present, the CCI can have six members and one chairperson. This will now be reduced to three members and one chairperson.

The commission currently has four members. Two existing vacancies will not be filled, while none will be appointed in place of the one member, who is due to retire in September.

The government termed the move "right sizing" and said this would result in faster turnaround in hearings and speedier approvals, stimulating the business processes of corporates and resulting in greater employment opportunities in the country.

Of the six members, one has to be a judicial member and the remaining five are technical members. However, in the past, ex-bureaucrats filled the posts of technical members. Hence, reducing the strength would not adversely affect the CCI's functioning.

Section 8(1) of the Competition Act, 2002 provides that the commission will consist of a chairperson and between two to six members.

An initial limit of one chairperson and not more than 10 members was provided in the Act, keeping in view the requirement of creating a Principal Bench, Additional Bench or Mergers Bench, comprising at least two Members each, in places as notified by the government.

Section 22 of the Competition (Amendment) Act, 2007 was changed to remove the provision for creation of Benches.

### **Small saving schemes account for 20.9% of government borrowing in FY18**

There has been a sharp rise in government borrowing from small saving schemes in the past five years; also, the contribution of market borrowing was a 17-year low in 2017-18.

According to data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), small savings schemes such as post office deposits, National Savings Certificate (NSC), and Kisan Vikas Patras (KVP) accounted for a little over a fifth (20.9 per cent) of all central government borrowing in FY18, up from 17.2 per cent a year before and 2.4 per cent in FY14. This is the highest contribution from small savings in 19 years (see chart).

The share from here in total government borrowing has been largely growing at the expense of the bond market (market borrowing); the latter's share declined to 72.8 per cent in FY18, from 94.2 per cent in FY14. This, analysts say, has kept a lid on bond yields on the benchmark interest rate in the economy.

the government borrowed Rs 1,001.6 billion through small savings in the past financial year, up from Rs 903.8 billion in FY17 and Rs 123.6 billion during FY14. In the same period, annual borrowing from the (bond) market declined by 27 per cent, from Rs 4,756 billion in FY14 to Rs 3,482 billion.

Total government borrowing during the period was down 5.3 per cent, to Rs 4,782 billion from Rs 5,050 billion. The period also saw a jump in government borrowing from the provident fund, from Rs 97.5 billion in FY14 to Rs 140 billion in FY18.

The interest rate on small savings schemes such as post office deposits and KVP are fixed by the government every quarter. In contrast, the yields (or interest rate) on government bonds change daily, depending on demand-supply for these in the secondary market.

The yield (or interest rate) on the 10-year government bond has declined steadily in the past four years, from a high of 8.8 per cent in FY14 to record low of 6.2 per cent in early 2016. Yields are up by nearly 115 basis points over the past 12 months, in line with a global hardening of rates and a rise in the Centre's fiscal deficit

### **Sports:**

#### **Commonwealth Games 2018 Starts in Australia**

The 21st edition of the Commonwealth Games will begin in Gold Coast, Australia. Carrara Stadium has been chosen as the venue to host the opening ceremony. These Games will mark the 5th time that Australia has hosted the games.

- India sends a strong contingent of 225 member for the games
- The games will officially start from the 5th of April and will go on for the next ten days.
- India has won a total of 438 medals. At the 2010 edition in New Delhi -- the country's most successful campaign -- India finished second with a staggering 101 medals.

**Aussie boxer becomes first CWG 2018 medallist:** Australian boxer Taylah Robertson has become the first Medallist of the 21st Commonwealth Games without even stepping into the ring. She got a bye straight into the 51 kilogram category women's semifinals scheduled for April 13.

Robertson got what is called the lucky Bronze medal due to the small size of her draw. India has not fielded any boxer in the 51 kilogram category for women boxers.