

## **July 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> news:**

### **International:**

#### **Israel adopts Jewish nation law**

Israel's Parliament on 19<sup>th</sup> July adopted a law defining the country as the nation state of the Jewish people, provoking fears that it could lead to blatant discrimination against Arab citizens. Arab lawmakers and Palestinians said it legalized "apartheid." Others said it neglected to specify equality and Israel's democratic character, implying the country's Jewish nature comes first.

#### **Turkey ends state of emergency after two years**

The Turkish government has ended the nationwide state of emergency which was imposed two years ago. Under the state of emergency, tens of thousands of people were arrested or dismissed from their jobs. However, the government has decided against extending it again after seven three-month renewals.

Turkey declared a state of emergency in 2016, following a coup attempt by Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FTO). The FTO launched several attacks which left 250 people dead and nearly 2, 200 injured. In April, the government had extended the ongoing emergency for three months until June.

Even the parliament passed a bill for early elections on June 24, which was touted to be a move for strengthening the democratic presidential system.

### **National:**

#### **SC Collegium reiterates Justice KM Joseph's elevation as apex court judge**

Supreme Court Collegium has brushed aside the reservations of the government over its decision to elevate Uttarakhand Chief Justice KM Joseph to the apex court as a judge and reiterated his name along with two other recommendations.

The Collegium said "nothing adverse" regarding "suitability" of Justice Joseph has been pointed out in two letters of Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad.

It also recommended the names of Chief Justice of Madras High Court Indira Banerjee and Orissa High Court Chief Justice Vineet Saran for appointment as Supreme Court judges.

The five-member Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra on January 10 had for the first time cleared the name of Justice Joseph for the judge of the apex court.

However, the government had on April 26 returned the Collegium's recommendation to elevate Justice Joseph seeking its reconsideration, saying the proposal was not in accordance with the top court's parameters.

The Collegium, also comprising justices Ranjan Gogoi, Madan B Lokur, Kurian Joseph and AK Sikri, met on July 16 and reiterated to recommend the Uttarakhand Chief Justice as the judge of the apex court.

While deliberating on the names for the apex court judges, the Collegium noted that against the sanctioned strength of 31 judges, the Supreme Court was currently functioning with 22 judges, leaving 9 clear vacancies.

If the Centre clears the name of Justice Indira Banerjee, the apex court would have three women judges. At present, Justices R Banumathi and Indu Malhotra are the two woman judges in the apex court.

### **NDA wins 325-126 with AIADMK backing and BJD, TRS abstentions**

A motion of no-confidence against the Narendra Modi government was expectedly defeated in the Lok Sabha on 20<sup>th</sup> July after a 12-hour marathon debate. The government obtained a two-third majority of the votes to demonstrate that it enjoys support cutting across political boundaries.

The no-confidence motion received 126 votes in favor and 325 votes against with 451 members of parliament present and voting. There were no abstentions but the decision of some parties to not take part in the vote had reduced the numbers in the government's favor.

### **Economy:**

#### **ONGC board approves exiting Pawan Hans, to sell 49% stake**

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation- ONGC- the premier Public Sector Natural gas company has approved exiting its helicopter service provider Pawan Hans by selling its entire 49 per cent stake.

The Board of Directors of ONGC took this decision. The move is expected to cut debt and consolidate resources in this core oil and gas business. ONGC wants its interest to be clubbed with the 51 per cent government stake that is already on offer for sale.

The offer for sale for government's 51 per cent stake in Pawan Hans which has been floated twice in the last 10 months, is likely to be reissued with an amended expression of interest

#### **India fastest growing economy in Asia; on track to meet FY18 target: ADB**

Led by India, South Asia will continue to be the fastest growing economic area despite new trade tensions in Asia and Pacific region, Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in a new report.

Growth in Asia and the Pacific's developing economies for 2018 and 2019 will remain solid as it continues apace across the region, despite rising tensions between the US and its trading partners, said a supplement to the Asian Development Outlook (ADO).

The ADO published in April had said that India's economic growth will rise to 7.3 per cent this fiscal and further to 7.6 per cent in the next financial year, retaining the fastest-growing Asian economy tag, on back of GST and banking reforms.

## **Andhra Pradesh**

### **AP CM launches e-Pragati core platform**

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on 19<sup>th</sup> July launched 'e-Pragati core platform' at Undavalli. e-Pragati, a forward-looking digital initiative, is aimed at connecting the citizen to 34 departments, 336 autonomous organizations and 745-plus services.

Through this project, the State government intends to realize the vision of 'Sunrise AP 2022'. The e-Pragati authority will achieve the goals of the project by supporting the seven development missions launched in the areas of e-Governance, Social Empowerment, Skill Development, Urban Development, Infrastructure, Industrial Development and the Services sector.

Mr. Naidu said e-Pragati would act as a platform to connect all departments and stand alone to resolve the issues. There should be coordination between citizens and the government to solve several issues.

Stating that Andhra Pradesh stood first with regard to Information Technology, Mr. Naidu said wonders could be done with IT and internet of things (IoT). The IT and IoT have been helping in a big way to improve performance of the government.

Explaining about government initiatives to move towards paperless government, IT Minister Nara Lokesh said certificate-less admissions were introduced in the State.

Issuance of the driving licenses was also made online. The portal had single access for all 34 departments integration to cover all services. "The democratization of data would help to know the ground level problems of people. The taxation system at grass root level is also digitalized," he said.