Prelim Bits 14-12-2017

India BPO Promotion Scheme (IBPS)

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- IBPS aims at setting up business process outsourcing (BPO) units in rural areas to secure balanced regional growth of the industry.
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- It is under the Digital India Programme to create employment opportunities and promotion of BPO operations.
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- The objective is to create opportunities for the youth living in these areas so that they do not need to migrate to urban clusters.
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- It provides capital support along with special incentives up to Rs 1 lakh in the form of viability gap funding (VGF) to companies to create BPO units.
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- Disbursement of financial support under the schemes is directly linked with employment generation.
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- It provides special incentives for employment to women and Divyang, setting up operations in towns other than capital towns, generating employment beyond target and promoting local entrepreneurship.
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- There are also special provisions for the Himalayan states of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand
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- Metro cities such as Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, National Capital Region (NCR), and Pune, along with their urban agglomeration were excluded.
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SANKALP Project

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- Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) aimed at providing market relevant training to youths across the country.
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- It is a centrally sponsored scheme under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and supported by World Bank loan assistance.
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- It also aims to enhance institutional mechanisms for skills development and increase access to quality training by setting up a national body for vocational education - Vocational Education and Training (VET).
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- VET shall regulate accreditation and certification in both long and short term thereby bringing about uniformity in vocational training.
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- India has recently signed the loan agreement with World Bank for this project, which ends in 2023.
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INS Kalvari

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- It is a Scorpene class submarine, named after deep sea tiger shark, inducted into Indian Navy recently.
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- The submarines of Scorpene class are propelled by diesel-electric engines and Torpedo is mounted as a primary weapon.
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- It weighs 1500 tonnes and can go up to depths of 300m.
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- It will have both anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare.
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- It also features an additional air-independent propulsion (AIP) system.
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- Conventional diesel-electric submarines have to surface every few days to get oxygen to recharge their batteries. With AIP systems, they can stay submerged for much longer periods.
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- It is first of the six submarines developed by the French DCNS under Project 75.
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- The project was signed in 2005 for building submarines by the Mazgaon

Dock Limited in Mumbai with transfer of technology from France.
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- INS Kalvari is followed by INS Khanderi which is currently undergoing sea trails and expected to be inducted by the end of 2020.
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- The Navy currently possesses 13 conventional submarines and one nuclear attack submarine INS Chakra on lease from Russia.
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- The Navy last inducted a conventional diesel-electric submarine, INS Sindushastra, procured from Russia in 2000.
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- Click here to know more about INS Chakra and Khanderi
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Ban on Petcoke

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- The Supreme Court relaxed its ban on the use of petroleum coke and allowed cement and limestone industries to use it.
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- The court has earlier urged States and Union Territories to move forward towards a nationwide ban on the use of petcoke and furnace oil to power up industries in an attempt to fight pollution.
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- The decision to modify its earlier stand is due to government's stand that petcoke is used as an ingredient and not as fuel in the cement industry.
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- The sulphur is mostly absorbed in the process of cement-making.
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- Click here to know more about Petcoke and Furnace oil.
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New Island

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- The world's newest island "Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai" was formed during a volcanic eruption in the remote Pacific three years ago.
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- The island rose from the seabed about 65 km northwest of the Tonga capital Nuku'alofa.

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- Scientists expected that the island will last anywhere from six to 30 years due to its resilience.
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- It is mainly because warm sea water combined with ash during the volcanic explosion to create a concrete-like substance known as “tuff” (a light porous rock).
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- Scientists believe that studying the life cycle of this new island will give insights in to Mars environment, since it is having many similar volcanic islands.
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Tonga Island

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Source: The Hindu, PIB

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