

**“Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change”**

**Wayne W. Dyer**

**INTERNATIONAL**

**SEYCHELLES REJECTS INDIA'S ISLAND PROJECT**

India's plans to get a foothold in the Indian Ocean islands of Seychelles has received a setback after its rejection.

Assumption island project was rejected by the Indian Ocean country earlier this week and it will not be ratified by its parliament.

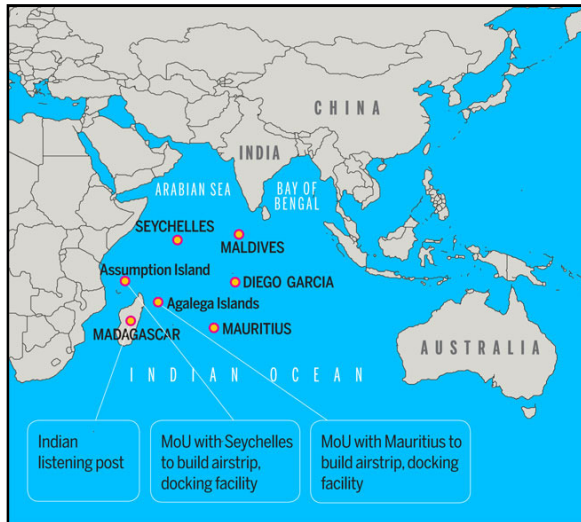
**PIO Parliamentary Conference**

India hosted the PIO Parliamentary Conference in January.

The aim of the conference was to firm up ties with individuals of Indian origin who are spread across the world and are playing important role in their host societies.

Mr. Ramkalawan, Leader of Opposition in Seychelles, who is an ethnic Indian, was earlier in the race to occupy the post of the president of the country.

Mr. Ramkalawan remained a staunch opponent of the maritime project of India in the Assumption Island.



**Importance of the project**

The island oversees the main energy route between the major Asian economies and the Gulf region. The project was expected to host a naval facility.

The agreement covers within its purview shared efforts in anti-piracy operations and enhanced EEZ surveillance to prevent intrusions by potential economic offenders including those indulging in illegal fishing, poaching, drug and human trafficking

**MADHYA PRADESH'S KADAKNATH RECEIVED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GI) TAG**

Madhya Pradesh has received the Geographical Indications (GI) tag for Kadaknath, a chicken breed whose black meat is in demand in some quarters.

The protein-rich meat of Kadaknath, chicks, and eggs are sold at a much higher rate than other varieties of chicken.

The breed is native to Jhabua, Alirajpur, and parts of Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh.

The Kadaknath is popular mainly for its adaptability, and the good-tasting black meat, which is believed to infuse vigor.

**Geographical Indications (GI) tag:**

A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on certain products which correspond to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g. a town, region, or country).

GIs have been defined under Article 22(1) of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement as: “Indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or a locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin.

India, as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 has come into force with effect from 15 September 2003.

The GI tag ensures that none other than those registered as authorized users (or at least those residing inside the geographic territory) are allowed to use the popular product name

Darjeeling tea became the first GI tagged product in India, in 2004-05.

**FIFTEENTH FINANCE COMMISSION TO USE 2011 CENSUS INSTEAD OF 1971**

A political storm is brewing in South India over the determination of how India distributes its pooled tax revenues among its many states.

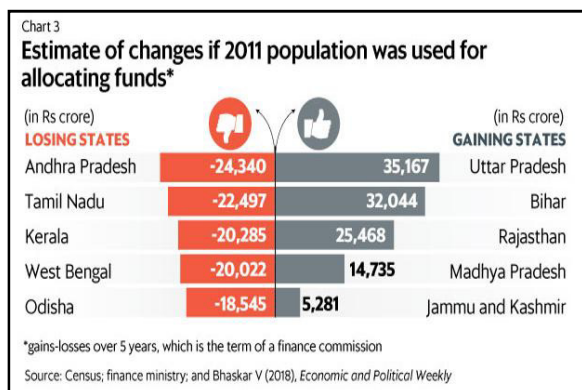
Several chief ministers and opposition leaders of southern states have expressed vehement opposition to one particular mandate of the present Fifteenth Finance Commission to use 2011 census population figures instead of 1971 for the purpose of tax devolution.

The Indian union made a compact with all its states in the mid-1970s to freeze federal allocations based on population size at 1971.

This was done to ensure states which had managed to tackle their population growth were not penalized by way of lower allocations.

The growth rate in population dropped uniformly across all states, but the fall in South India was rapid, creating a distinct divergence between the numbers of people in the North versus the South.

Since the present finance commission has the mandate to use newer population figures, which brings both economic and demographic divisions into the picture, the fear among southern states is that the degree of redistribution would increase.



**Fifteenth Finance Commission**

The Fifteenth Finance Commission of India is a finance commission constituted in November 2017.

The commission was set up to give recommendations for five fiscal years commencing on 1 April 2020.

The main tasks of the commission were to “strengthen cooperative federalism, improve the quality of public spending and help protect fiscal stability”.

Finance Commission is established by the President of India under Article 280 of the Indian Constitution.

The Finance Commission (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1951 additionally defines the terms of qualification, appointment, and disqualification, the term, eligibility and powers of the finance commission.

As per the Constitution, the Commission is appointed every five years and consists of a chairman and four other members.

**CHIPKO MOVEMENT**

March 26th commemorated the 45th year of the Chipko movement.

**Chipko movement:**

Chipko, signifying “embrace or hug”, was the strategy of hundreds of villagers –mostly women- in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand, to save the forest cover on the Garhwal Himalyas.

Reckless felling of trees on the hill slopes was having a devastating effect on the livelihood of the villagers.

Widespread protests followed in the early 70s, when villagers led by Chandi Prasad Bhatt, a Gandhian, literally embraced the trees to save them from the woodcutters’ axe.

The original Chipko andolan dates back to the 18th century and was started by Rajasthan’s Bishnoi community. The incident has been etched in the annals of history for the sacrifice of a group of villagers, who led by a lady named Amrita Devi, laid down their lives while protecting trees from being felled on the orders of then King of Jodhpur. After this incident, the king, in a royal decree, banned cutting of trees in all Bishnoi villages.

**SCIENCE AND TECH****INSIGHT (INTERIOR EXPLORATION USING SEISMIC INVESTIGATIONS, GEODESY AND HEAT TRANSPORT)**

It is the first-ever mission by NASA dedicated to exploring the deep interior of Mars. It will also be the first NASA mission since the Apollo moon landings to place a seismometer, a device that measures quakes, on the soil of another planet.

**InSight mission:**

InSight (Interior Exploration using Seismic Investigations, Geodesy and Heat Transport) is a NASA Discovery Program mission that will place a single geophysical lander on Mars to study its deep interior.

But InSight is more than a Mars mission – it is a terrestrial planet explorer that will address one of the most fundamental issues of planetary and solar system science – understanding the processes that shaped the rocky planets of the inner solar system (including Earth) more than four billion years ago.

By using sophisticated geophysical instruments, InSight will delve deep beneath the surface of Mars, detecting the fingerprints of the processes of terrestrial planet formation, as well as measuring the planet's "vital signs": Its "pulse" (seismology), "temperature" (heat flow probe), and "reflexes" (precision tracking).

**ISRO SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHED COMMUNICATION SATELLITE GSAT-6A**

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has successfully launched communication satellite GSAT-6A, on board its geosynchronous rocket GSLV-Fo8, at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. This is the 12th flight of the GSLV rocket and the sixth with an indigenous cryogenic upper stage.

**GSAT- 6A satellite:**

The GSAT-6A is a high power S-band communication satellite with a mission life of about 10 years.

A key feature of the satellite is to provide mobile communication to India through multi beam coverage facility.

The satellite will also provide a platform for developing technologies such as demonstration of 6 m S-Band Unfurlable Antenna, handheld ground terminals and network management techniques that could be useful in satellite based mobile communication applications.

The satellite is expected to be heavily used by security forces which are stationed in the remotest areas of the country.

The GSLV is a three stage/engine rocket. The core of first stage is fired with solid fuel while the four strap-on motors by liquid fuel. The second stage is the liquid fuel-propelled and the third is the cryogenic engine.

GSLV-Fo8, weighing 415.6 tonnes with a height of 49.1 meters comes with notable improvements like induction of High Thrust VIKAS Engine, electromechanical actuation system in place of electro-hydraulic actuation system.

**ISRO's 'unfurlable antenna'** is a six-meter-wide antenna which looks somewhat like an umbrella. This will be 'unfurled' once the GSAT-6A satellite has been put in orbit. This antenna, specially designed for the mission, is three times as broad as the antennas that are usually used by ISRO. This antenna will allow mobile communication from anywhere via hand-held ground terminals. Apart from communications, the GSAT-6A satellite is believed to be designated for military use as well.

**S-Band:**

S-band is an electromagnetic spectrum covering frequencies from 2 to 4 gigahertz (GHz). It crosses the conventional boundary between the Ultra High Frequency (UHF) and Super High Frequency (SHF) bands at 3.0 GHz. S-band is used by weather radars, surface ship radar, and some communications satellites. S-band is very useful because the 2.5 GHz band is used globally for 4G services, and is worth billions of dollars. The S-band spectrum is

extremely valuable for mobile broadband services.

**VIKASH ENGINE:**

The VIKAS (an acronym for VIKram Ambalal Sarabhai) is a family of liquid fuelled rocket engines conceptualized and designed by the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre in the 1970s

The design was based on the licensed version of the Viking engine with the chemical pressurization system

The early production VIKAS engines used some imported French components which were later replaced by domestically produced equivalents

It is used in the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) and the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) series of expendable launch vehicles for space launch use

VIKAS engine is used to power the second stage PSLV, boosters and second stage of GSLV Mark I and II and the first stage of GSLV Mark III. The propellant loading for VIKAS engine in PSLV, GSLV Mark I and II is 40 tons, while in GSLV Mark III it is 55 tons

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