



C.A Dated On 13-11-2018

General Studies-2

Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters

An Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters was signed by Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State for Home on behalf of the Government of Republic of India and Mr Mohamed Aujjar, Minister of Justice on behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, here today.

What is it?

- A **mutual legal assistance treaty (MLAT)** is an [agreement](#) between two or more [countries](#) for the purpose of gathering and exchanging [information](#) in an effort to enforce [public](#) or [criminal](#) laws.
- Modern states have developed mechanisms for requesting and obtaining evidence for criminal investigations and prosecutions.
- When evidence or other forms of legal assistance, such as witness statements or the service of documents, are needed from a foreign sovereign, states may attempt to cooperate informally through their respective police agencies or, alternatively, resort to what is typically referred to as requests for "mutual legal assistance.

Benefits:

- The Agreement will strengthen bilateral cooperation with Morocco.
- It will enhance effectiveness and provide a broad legal framework for prevention, investigation and prosecution of crimes; as well as in tracing, restraint and confiscation of funds meant to finance terrorist acts.
- It shows the resolve to jointly counter the threats posed by organized crime and terrorism.

National Disaster Management Authority:

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is conducting a basic training programme at the Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru.



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The six-day training programme, aimed at enhancing the preparedness of Airport Emergency Handlers (AEHs) to respond to CBRN emergencies at the airports, started today.

CBRN emergencies pertain to threats emanating due to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear material.

About NDMA:

- **National Disaster Management Authority**, abbreviated as **NDMA** is an agency of the [Ministry of Home Affairs](#) whose primary purpose is to coordinate response to [natural](#) or [man-made disasters](#) and for capacity-building in disaster resiliency and crisis response.
- NDMA was established through the [Disaster Management Act](#) enacted by the [Government of India](#) in may 30 2005.
- The [Prime Minister](#) is the ex-officio chairperson of the same .

Responsibilities:

The agency is responsible for framing policies, laying down guidelines and best-practices and coordinating with the State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) to ensure a holistic and distributed approach to disaster management.

By a 9-member board chaired by the Prime Minister of India.

NDMA is operationally organized into the following divisions:

- Policy & Planning
- Mitigation
- Operations & Communications
- Administration
- Capacity Building



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Indian Ocean Naval Symposium:

Why in News?

The Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) and Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Sunil Lanba, arrived at Kochi on 12 Nov 18 for the 10th anniversary commemorative activities of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) scheduled on the 13 and 14 Nov 18 at Kochi.

Theme:

In line with the vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi – “**SAGAR**”(Security and Growth for All in the Region) - the theme for the 10th anniversary seminar is “**IONS as a Catalyst for SAGAR**”.

SAGAR' is in consonance with India's 'Act East' policy and the nation's diplomatic, economic and military outreach in the region.

About IONS:

- The **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium**, commonly known as **IONS**, are a series of biennial meetings among the [littoral](#) states of the [Indian Ocean region](#).
- It provides a forum to increase maritime security cooperation, providing a forum for discussion of regional maritime issues and promote friendly relationships among the member nations
- The IONS initiative endeavours to generate a flow of information among naval professionals so as to enable a common understanding of regional maritime issues and in turn facilitate generation of mutually beneficial maritime security outcomes.
- It is a voluntary initiative among the navies and maritime security agencies of the member nations.
- In addition to the symposiums, numerous other activities like workshops, essay competitions and lectures are also held under the umbrella of the organization.

Samudra Shakti'



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Why in News?

INS Rana of the Eastern Fleet based at Visakhapatnam under the Eastern Naval Command is on deployment to the South East Asia and arrived at the port of Surabaya to participate in the inaugural edition of Indian Navy – Indonesian Navy Bilateral Exercise `Samudra Shakti' scheduled from 12 to 18 Nov 18.

Aims of Exercise:

- The aim of the exercise is to strengthen bilateral relations, expand maritime co-operation, enhance interoperability and exchange best practices.
- The exercise would start with a Harbour Phase scheduled from 12 to 15 Nov encompassing planning and briefing on various activities, professional interactions, cross deck visits, sports fixtures and social interactions.
- This would progress to a Sea Phase scheduled from 16 to 18 Nov and would include operations such as Joint Manoeuvres, Helicopter Operations, Surface Warfare exercise, ASW exercise and Anti Piracy exercises.

Background:

- The strategic partnership between the two nations was elevated to 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' during the visit of Honourable Prime Minister of India in May 18 and Defence co-operation has been a significant pillar in this partnership.
- The visit of the ship seeks to promote India's solidarity with Indonesia towards ensuring good order in the maritime domain and to strengthen existing bonds between the navies of the two nations.

General Studies-3

Central Board of the RBI

Why in the news?



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The RBI Board recently entered the news during the public spat between the central bank and the Finance Ministry. One of the reasons for the disagreement was the government's alleged threat of invoking *Section 7 of the RBI Act*.

Section 7 basically empowers the government to supersede the RBI Board and issue directions to the central bank if they are considered to be "necessary in public interest".

About RBI Board

- The RBI Board is a body comprising officials from the central bank and the Government of India, including officials nominated by the government.
- According to the RBI, the "general superintendence and direction of the affairs and business of the RBI is entrusted to the Central Board" and the Board exercises all powers and does all acts and things that are exercised by the RBI.
- The Board is also to recommend to the government the design, form and material of bank notes and also when and where they can serve as legal tender.

Members of the Board

The Board consists of official directors, who include the Governor and up to four Deputy Governors, non-official directors, who include up to ten directors from various fields and two government officials, and one director from each of four local boards of the RBI.

- The Governor and Deputy Governors hold office for not more than five years, the ten directors nominated by the government hold office for four years, and the government officials are to hold a term on the RBI Board as long as the government sees fit.
- According to the RBI Act, the director of the RBI Board cannot be a salaried government official (except for the ones specifically nominated by the government), be adjudicated as insolvent or have suspended payments to creditors, an officer or employee of any bank (again, this does not include the government nominee), or, interestingly, "is found lunatic or becomes of unsound mind".



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WB Ease of doing Business:

Why in News?

India's leap in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business rankings this year has slipped under the radar, in the cacophony over demonetisation and the RBI-Centre spat.

Observations :

- The country has, in fact, been one of the biggest 'improvers' in the 2019 study, with its rank shooting up from 100 to 77, among 190 countries.
- This is quite a big jump, given that its rank crept up from 142 to 100 in the four years from 2015 to 2018.
- The World Bank now deems India an easier place to do business in than BRICs peers such as Brazil (109) and South Africa (82) and West Asian economies such as Qatar (83) and Saudi Arabia (92).
- But it has a long way to go before it can catch up with China (46, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is at 4), the U.S. (8) or Singapore (a lofty 2). New Zealand is the top dog here.

What improved?

- India's climb in the 2019 rankings seems to have come mainly from sharply higher scores on two 'doing business' indicators — securing construction permits and trading across the borders. It also made smaller improvements in starting a business and getting credit.
- Upgrades in port infrastructure, a move to online documentation and facilities for exporters to seal their containers on their own, helped.
- On starting up a business, its rank improved from 156 to 137, as the time taken to start a new company was crunched from 30 days to 17 days, thanks to quicker GST registration and the abolition of site inspections in Mumbai.



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What didn't improve?

- While India managed dramatic changes in some indicators, there were others where its scores barely budged.
- Its score remains dismal on registering property, where it ranks 166.
- While it takes 69 days to register a piece of property and costs about 8% of its value in India, the norm for OECD countries is just 20 days at half that cost. New Zealand gets this done in a single day.
- The other vexatious aspect that most business folk will readily identify with, is paying taxes. Despite the advent of GST, India has remained a back-bencher on this at a rank of 121.
- India also fares poorly, at rank 163, on enforcing contracts. While enforcing a claim through the courts in Mumbai takes 1,445 days and costs 31% of claim value, OECD nations manage this feat in 582 days at a cost of 21%.

What is measured?

- But how exactly does World Bank manage to reduce a fuzzy thing such as 'ease of doing business' to a single number?
- The EODB study tries to capture the experience of small and mid-sized companies in a country with their regulators, by measuring the time, costs and red tape they deal with.
- To collect data, it empanels experts from the largest business cities in each country, with Mumbai and Delhi surveyed in India.
- It has many rounds of interactions with them — typically lawyers, business consultants, accountants, freight forwarders, government officials — who can capture the experience of multiple businesses.

Shortcoming of Study:

- In short, the World Bank's intent is to measure a country's progress on a few 'doing business' indicators in great depth, without trying to be comprehensive about the indicators, or striving for a statistically large sample.
- In India, it may not reflect the experience of partnership or proprietorship firms that dominate the small business space, or those located in tier 2 or tier 3 towns.



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- With the ten indicators measured by the study well-known, it is also easy for governments to specially target these areas for reforms.
- But the EODB rankings do serve as the most trusted ready-reckoner for foreign investors looking to set up shop in a country. For that reason, this is an achievement for India to celebrate.