

**If I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning.” Mahatma Gandhi**

**INTERNATIONAL**

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TO NOMINATE PROFESSOR J S RAJPUT TO UNESCO**

The Government of India has decided to nominate Professor J S Rajput, former Director NCERT, as India's representative to the Executive Board (EXB) of UNESCO.

The EXB is the main organ responsible for all policies and programmes of UNESCO.

**UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD:**

The EXB has a four-year term of office and 58 seats.

The executive board is one of the constitutional organs of UNESCO and is elected by the General Conference.

The executive board examines the work for the organization and the corresponding budget estimates.

In practice, the executive board is the main organ responsible for all policies and programmes of UNESCO.

Being a member of the board enables India in principle to play a role in shaping and reviewing UNESCO's policies and programmes corresponding to its five major programs on education, the natural science, the social and human Sciences, Culture and Communication and Information.

**NATIONAL**

**NITI AAYOG PLANS FOR PRIVATISATION OF PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SBI**

Former NITI Aayog vice chairman Arvind Panagariya has made a strong case for privatisation of public sector banks with the exception of SBI.

Mainly, predominance of scandals and NPAs in PSBs highlight the need for privatization of PSBs. Efficiency and productivity too demand that the government relinquish its control of the large number of banks whose market valuation has dwindled despite the fact that they hold the bulk of the deposits.

Also, there is a continuous pressure on the government finances on account of the weak performance of the banks. Privatization would

reduce the drain on the exchequer and the money saved could be used for developmental schemes and programmes of the government.

**POSITIVES:**

Private Banks will bring innovations in products, technology and customer servicing and a market-based discipline to lending. Private Banks, knowing that they cannot count on government's protection, is unlikely to engage in the sort of risky lending that characterized public bank lending. Also, they will not be subject to the same pressure from politicians and others in government that has destroyed the public sector banks.

The public-sector banks, which constitute almost 70% of the Indian banking system, are saddled with burgeoning stressed assets. The government has already injected over ₹2.6 lakh crore in the public-sector banks through recapitalization in the last eleven years, which has had limited impact in improving the health of public sector banks thus far.

Therefore, recapitalization of PSBs alone is not a permanent solution and will not be effective unless the inherent issues related to governance, productivity; risk management, talent, customer service, etc. are resolved.

The government should shrink unproductive public sector banks and move forward with increasing private sector participation in the banking sector.

**INDIA'S SERVICES INDUSTRIES SEEN PROPPING UP CAPITAL INVESTMENT**

India's dominant services sector is likely to lead growth in gross fixed capital formation GFCF is a measure of investment spending. The services sector accounts for about 55.2% of gross value added.

Healthcare, information technology, banking, telecom, retail, and ship-building had the highest growth rates of investments between the financial years 2012 and 2017.

But their share was dwarfed by the total amount of capital poured into telecom, power, oil, steel and banks, which together attracted 72% of the investments.

Reasons for low investments:

1. High inflation
2. A slowdown in incomes
3. Banks wary of lending because of rising soured loans
4. High real interest rates

**Gross fixed capital formation:**

As per RBI, Gross capital formation refers to the 'aggregate of gross additions to fixed assets (that is fixed capital formation) plus the change in stocks during the counting period.

Fixed asset refers to the construction, machinery, and equipment. Fixed assets are produced assets that are used repeatedly or continuously in production processes for more than one year.

GFCF is a component of the expenditure on the gross domestic product (GDP), and thus shows something about how much of the new value added in the economy is invested rather than consumed.

GFCF is not a measure of total investment, because only the value of net additions to fixed assets is measured, and all kinds of financial assets are excluded.

**MINISTRIES OF DEFENCE CAME UP WITH DRAFT POLICY ON DEFENCE PRODUCTION**

The defence ministry has come out with a draft policy on defence production. The aim is to make India one of the top five manufacturers of defence platforms with active participation of public and private sectors. At present, India is one of the world's largest importers of military platforms and weapons.

**Draft of the policy:**

It envisages achieving a turnover of Rs 1, 70,000 crore in military goods and services by 2025 by promoting the domestic defence industry.

The policy lists as a major aim achieving export of Rs 35,000 crore in military equipment and services by 2025 by promoting the domestic defence industry.

According to the policy, the government aims to make India self-reliant in defence production as well as fulfill demand of other friendly countries.

The policy says the licensing process for defence industries will be liberalized and the

list of items requiring licenses will be reviewed and pruned.

The policy says the tax regime will be rationalized to make domestic manufacturing attractive by ensuring that there is no tax inversion. Taxes on import of capital goods and services, inputs and components used in defence production will be rationalized.

The government identified 12 military platforms and weapons systems for production in India to achieve the aim of "self-reliance". They are fighter aircraft, medium lift and utility helicopters, warships, land combat vehicles, missile systems, gun systems, small arms, ammunition and explosives, surveillance systems, electronic warfare (EW) systems and night fighting enablers, among others.

**SCIENCE AND TECH**

**GSAT-6A TO GIVE ARMED FORCES A BOOST**

GSAT-6A, the second predominantly S-band communications satellite, is set to be launched from Sriharikota.

The 2,000kg-class 6A will complement GSAT-6. It is designated for the use of the Armed Forces and will not add any transponder capacity for general uses.

**Aiming high**


- GSAT-6A, similar to GSAT-6, is a high power S-band communication satellite
- Mission life: 10 years
- It is designated for the use of the Armed Forces

The satellite will help demonstrate and develop technologies like:

- Unfurling of a 6 metre S-Band antenna
- Handheld ground terminals
- Network management techniques useful in satellite based mobile communication applications

**Weight:**  
2,140 kg

**Cost:**  
₹270 crore



The GSAT-6A is scheduled to be launched from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh on March 29. • ISRO

**GSAT-6A**

A special feature of the GSAT-6A is its 6-meter-wide umbrella-like antenna, which will be unfurled in once it is in space.

The antenna is thrice as broad as the antennas generally used in ISRO satellites.

It will enable mobile communication from anywhere via hand-held ground terminals and won't require large ground stations.

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