



## World Day against Trafficking in Persons observed on - 30th July

On 30th July 2018, The World Day against Trafficking in Persons was observed across the globe. **Theme of this year was "Responding to the trafficking of children and young people"**.

Theme of this year also reflects about the problem that one third of trafficking victims are children. As per International Labour Organisation, around 21 million people are victims of forced labour globally which includes human trafficking victims for labour and sexual exploitation. **71 percent of trafficking victims are women and girls.**

## Any authority can't take any action on the basis of Assam-NRC Draft - Supreme Court

On 31st July 2018, The Supreme Court ruled that no authority can take any action against anyone on the basis of National Register of Citizens (NRC) prepared for State of Assam. As there are already many concerns about the exclusion of approximately forty lakh persons from the final draft list of NRC.

Concerned Ministry was also directed to adopt a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to deal with claims and objections regarding the draft NRC.

Meanwhile Election Commission has also made it clear that expulsion from NRC doesn't mean removal from electoral roll.

## Health Ministry inked MoU with Ministry of Electronics to facilitate access to - Ayushman Bharat

On 31st July 2018, National Health Agency (NHA) inked a MoU with Common

Service Centres (CSC) scheme under the Digital India Programm with an aim to facilitate access to Ayushman Bharat. Important to mention here that National Health Agency is apex body for the implementation of Ayushman Bharat-National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM).

CEO of National Health Agency (NHA) Dr Indu Bhushan and CEO of Common Service Centres-SPV Dr Dinesh Tyagi signed this MoU. This integration will give more accessibility and transparency in the beneficiary validation process and will also help in spreading more awareness.

## Proposal of delinking Aadhaar and social welfare benefits approved by - Delhi Government

On 31st July 2018, Delhi government approved a proposal of delinking Aadhar with social welfare schemes. This proposal was approved during meeting chaired by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. This will allow Social Welfare department to remit pensions which were stopped due to lack of Aadhaar linkage.

## . Amnesty programme to aid foreign visa violators launched by - UAE

On 1st August 2018, United Arab Emirates (UAE) launched three month visa amnesty programme with an aim to help hundreds of illegal foreign workers. It will allow these workers to leave country without any penalty and will also give them six months to find a job.

Under this programme, Till October 2018, visa violators will be given an amnesty period. Also workers from war torn countries



like Syria and Yemen can stay there on one year residence visa without any restrictions.

### **Name of high-resolution Earth observation satellite launched by China - Gaofen 11**

Optical remote sensing satellite named Gaofen-11 was successfully launched by China. This was the part of high-resolution Earth observation project of China. This was launched from Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in northern Shanxi Province using Long March carrier rocket.

This has been developed by China Academy of Space Technology (CAST). China High-resolution Earth Observation System (CHEOS) was initiated in 2010 and aimed to complete by 2020. In Chinese Meaning of Gaofen is high resolution.

### **Union Cabinet approves law provisioning death penalty for - Maritime piracy**

On 2nd August 2018, Union Cabinet approved bill provisioning death penalty or life imprisonment to those involved in piracy at sea. It was made harsh as current punishments were not that much harsh about it. This law was made as a part of commitment of India while signing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 1982.

### **Union Cabinet approves acquisition of IDBI Bank controlling stake by - LIC**

On 1st August 2018, Union Government approved acquisition of IDBI Bank's controlling stake by Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) as a promoter in the bank. Also Government shareholding below 50 percent in IDBI was also approved.

This will now help IDBI bank to tap 11 lakh LIC agents for doorstep banking services. While LIC will be able to sell its insurance products using 1916 branches of the Bank.

### **Advanced Air Defence Interceptor Missile successfully test fired from - Abdul Kalam Island**

On 2nd August 2018, Advanced Air Defence (AAD) Interceptor Missile which has been developed indigenously, was test fired from Abdul Kalam Island. This missile successfully hit target at a height of 20 kms. Though this missile has not got any formal name till now. This missile has its own mobile launcher, secure data link for interception, independent tracking and homing capabilities and sophisticated radars.

### **'Move Hack', global mobility hackathon launched by - NITI Aayog**

NITI Aayog has launched 'Move Hack' which is a global mobility hackathon to crowd source solutions aiming at the future of mobility in India. The hackathon envisaged to be one of the globally largest and will be focused on ten themes. It will also be structured over three legs - online, followed by a leg in Singapore and then finals in New Delhi.

The major objective of the Move Hack is to bring about dynamic, innovative and scalable solutions to problems pertaining to mobility.

The hackathon will be having two-pronged campaign approach:

1. Just Code It: The approach is aimed at solutions through innovations in software, product, technology and data analysis.



2. Just Solve It: The approach will be involving developing innovative business ideas or sustainable solutions to transform mobility infrastructure through technology.

### Important Details

- Move Hack will be open to individuals from all the nationalities and for the same Registrations are already open on the hackathon's main website- [movehack.gov.in](http://movehack.gov.in).

- The top 30 teams from the online submissions will be travelling to Singapore for two days, September 1st-2nd, 2018.

- A curated group of top experts will be mentoring the team.

- The top 20 teams from Singapore leg will also be participating in the final round, which will be held in New Delhi from September 5th-6th, 2018.

- The winners will be announced during the Move Summit 2018, which will be organised by NITI Aayog from September 7-8 in New Delhi.

- Top 10 winners will be recognised with total prize money over Rs. 2 crores.

### Telangana inked MoU with which IT gaint for first Blockchain District of India - Tech Mahindra

Electronics and Communication department of Telangana State inked a MoU with Tech Mahindra to launch first Blockchain district of India. This MoU was inked in Hyderabad during International Blockchain Congress 2018.

It will help in solving big scale world markets problems apart from giving a better workforce for future. Basically block chain technology enable us in storing data across peer to peer network which cant get corrupted as it decentralizes information without it being copied. Information can be accessed in real

time through shared servers and these servers are on cloud technology.

### National Sports University Bill, 2018 passed in - Lok Sabha

National Sports University Bill, 2018 was passed in Lok Sabha by voice note. This bill will enable country to set up first National Sports University in Imphal (west), Manipur. This will help country to promote sports education in areas of sports sciences, sports technology, sports management, and sports coaching. This will also allow government to set up campuses in other part of country too.

### Shaur Nahin mobile application launched by which state - Himachal Pradesh

"Shaur Nahin" campaign was launched by Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur with a **mobile application named as "Shaur Nahin"**. **This was launched with an aim to spread awareness of unnecessary blowing horn and controlling noise pollution.** This app will help general public to report cases of Noice pollution. Concerned Deputy commissioner, Superintendent of police, Sub-divisional magistrate and Sub-divisional police officer will get complaints generated through this app.

### • World's first single-chromosome yeast created by - Chinese researchers

Researchers from China have claimed to have created the world's first single-chromosome yeast while not affecting the majority of its core functions. The researchers involved in the creation are molecular biologists from the Centre for Excellence in Molecular Plant Sciences in China. This



research was published on the journal website – Nature on August 2nd, 2018.

### **Important Highlights**

- Brewer's yeast, 33 % of its genome is said to share ancestry with humans, has 16 chromosomes. But, Chinese scientists have managed to fit nearly all of its genetic material into just one chromosome while not affecting the majority of its functions.
- The researchers have used CRISPR-Cas9 genome-editing to create a single-chromosome yeast strain.
- Using the CRISPR-Cas9, their team have removed the DNA at the telomeres, the ends of chromosomes, protecting them from degrading.
- They also snipped out the centromeres, sequences in the middle which are important for the DNA replication.
- First, the fusion of two chromosomes was done, then joined the product to another chromosome, and hence repeated the process in successive rounds until there was only one chromosome left.

### **MoU signed between NHAI and SBI on - 3rd August 2018**

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the State Bank of India (SBI) for getting Long Term Unsecured Loan of Rs 25000 crore for 10 years with 3 years of moratorium on repayments on August 3rd, 2018.

This is the SBI's highest long term unsecured loan to any entity till date. Also, this is the largest amount of loan to have been sanctioned to NHAI in one stroke by any institution. SBI has offered the loan to the NHAI in response to the Expression of Interest invited by the latter from Scheduled Commercial Banks to fund Rs 25000 Crore as

an unsecured loan for 10 years with 3 years of moratorium on repayments.

### **Key Highlights of the MoU**

- The total sanctioned amount of Rs 25000 Crore will be disbursed by March 31st, 2019.
- The Rate of interest would be based on one month MCLR (Marginal Cost of Funds Based Lending Rate).
- Interest accrued on the amount actually outstanding will be paid every month.
- NHAI can draw the amount in any number of tranches by March 31st, 2019.
- The loan sanctioned is unsecured; there is no principal repayment liability for the first three years. The total loan period is 10 years.
- NHAI can repay or prepay the loan at any time without any prepayment penalty.
- The repayment would be made by NHAI in 14 equal half yearly installments once the three-year moratorium is over.

### **122 research projects under 'IMPRINT-2' scheme approved by- Government**

The Union Government has approved 122 new research project proposals on 4th August 2018 worth Rs 112 crore to fund under its Impacting Research Innovation and Technology 'IMPRINT-2' scheme.

This proposal was approved at the IMPRINT 2 Apex Committee meeting held in New Delhi. The initiative is aiming to advance research in healthcare, energy, security and defence domains in the high education institutions.



### Important Highlights

- Among 2145 proposals, 122 best proposals were selected to fund under IMPRINT-2 where 81 were sponsored by Industry out of the selected 122 new projects.

- The selected proposals will be including 35 (ICT), 17 (Healthcare Technology), 18 (Advanced Materials), 12 (Energy Security), 11 (Security & Defence), 9 (Sustainable Habitat), 5 (Environment & Climate), 7 Water Resource & River Systems, 4 (Manufacturing) and 4 (Nano Technology).

- The implementation of 142 projects under IMPRINT-1 has got underway. These projects have received support from several ministries, councils and departments in addition to the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

- The knowledge portal to monitor the progress of these research projects and to disseminate findings will going to be launched in October 2018.

### More about IMPRINT scheme

- IMPRINT is the first of its kind government-supported initiative to address the major science and engineering challenges that India must address and champion to enable, empower and embolden the nation towards its inclusive growth and self-reliance.

### The initiative is aiming at:

- To develop new engineering education policy
- To Create a road map to pursue engineering challenges

To provide the overarching vision that guides research into areas that are predominantly socially relevant.

**Mughalsarai Junction has been renamed as Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction on - 5th August 2018**

The iconic Mughalsarai Railway Junction of Uttar Pradesh has been renamed as Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction Railway station on August 5th, 2018. Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) National President Amit Shah did the inauguration of the renamed station.

### Important Highlights

- On the same occasion, a goods train with an all-woman crew was flagged off. It will be the first time in the country that an all-woman crew will be running a goods train.

- The state government also launched the smart yard project for the Mughalsarai station which is the century-old station on the busy Delhi-Howrah route.

- The bi-weekly Ekatmata Express, a train connecting Lucknow and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction, was also launched on the same occasion.

### More about Mughalsarai junction

- It is one of country's busiest railway station.

- It was set up in 1862 when the East India Company linked Howrah to Delhi by rail.

- The British built the station to transport goods from northern India to port cities in the east.

- It is also located on the main Howrah-Delhi Grand Chord line.

- With time, the station has become Asia's biggest goods train yard and one of the busiest stations of the India with the daily movement of around 250 trains.

### Did you know?

**Mughalsarai is also the birthplace of former prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri.**

**Lok Sabha passes National Sports University Bill, 2018 on - 3rd August 2018**

The Lok Sabha passed the National Sports University Bill, 2018 seeking to



establish a National Sports University in Manipur on August 3rd, 2018 as part of a vision to enhance country's standing in sports.

The Bill was introduced in Lok Sabha by Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports on 23rd July 2018. It has replaced the National Sports University Ordinance, 2018 that was promulgated on May 31st, 2018.

### **Bill Provision**

- The National Sports University will be headquartered in Manipur.

- It may be establishing outlying campuses within or outside India, colleges, or regional centres.

- The University will be undertaking research on physical education, collaborate internationally and strengthen sports training programs in the field of physical education, among others.

- The Bill Schedule contains statutes.

- These statutes specify the composition, establishment, and power of various authorities such as Vice Chancellor, the Chancellor, and Dean of Schools.

- Any such action will be requiring the approval of the central government.

- The central government will be reviewing and inspect the functioning of the University. The Executive Council may take action based on the inspection findings.

- If no action is taken within a reasonable time period, the central government may issue binding directions to the Council.

- In addition to that the central government may annul any proceeding of the University which don't conform with the Bill.

- The University will be maintaining a Fund which will be containing contributions by the central government, state governments, or the University Grants Commission; loans, gifts,

and donations; income from fees, and amounts received from any other source.

- In case any of the student's or candidate's name is removed from the University rolls and has been barred from appearing in the examinations, may appeal to the Executive Council to review the decision again.

## **World's first thermal battery plant inaugurated in - Andhra Pradesh**

The world's first-ever thermal battery plant will be unveiled in Andhra Pradesh by the state's Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on August 6th, 2018. Manufactured by the BEST (Bharat Energy Storage Technology Private Limited), the first-of-its-kind batteries will be aiming to boost renewable sources of energy production and reduce the dependence on non-renewable fossil fuel-based energy generation.

Main objective behind this technology is to help in mitigating carbon emissions towards best suited for grid balancing and stabilisations. It will also be used to store energy for commercial establishments, electric vehicles, telecommunication, and highway charging stations. It can also be effectively used in remote locations like islands and hilly terrains.

### **Important Highlights**

- In its first phase, batteries suited for telecommunications, mini or microgrids and electric buses would be manufactured.

- The batteries are expected to run for up to 800kms in a single charge.

- Under this project, electric buses, produced in collaboration with Bilva Motors, a global consortium, can deliver an 800-kilometre range with a single charge, with the help of BEST's thermal cells.



- The cell can be customised to be charged in either or eight hours, depending on the source.

- It can also provide output ranging between 5Kwh to 1 Mwh.

- The thermal plant is expected to start its commercial operations by next year May 2019.

## Academia Alliance Programme launched by - Startup India

Startup India has launched the Startup Academia Alliance program, which is a unique mentorship opportunity between startups and academic scholars working in similar domains, to fulfill the Indian Government's mission to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship in the nation.

### Key Objective

It is aiming to reduce the gap between scientific research and its industrial applications in order to increase the efficacy of these technologies and widen their impact.

The initiative is also aiming to create lasting connections between the stakeholders of the startup ecosystem by creating a bridge between the academia and industry and implement the third pillar on which the Startup India Action Plan is based - Incubation and Industry Academia Partnerships.

### Important Highlights

- The first phase of Startup Academia Alliance was kick-started in partnership with The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), Regional Centre for Biotechnology, Environment and Water, Council on Energy and TERI School of Advanced Studies.

- Renowned scholars from these institutes, from fields including renewable energy, healthcare, biotechnology and life sciences were taken on board in order to

provide mentorship and guidance to the startups working in relevant areas.

- Program applications were invited on the Startup India Hub, a one-stop destination for startups to apply for the opportunities.

- A total of 133 applications from relevant startups were received, out of which, 43 were shortlisted by the institutes on the basis of technological relevance and operational areas.

- Emphasis was placed on finding startups employing innovative solutions to press problems in diverse areas.

- The guidance and mentorship sessions under the alliance program have started.

- The startups are expected to benefit greatly from the expertise and insights brought forth by experienced research scholars working in the related fields.

## Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill approved by - President

Indian President Ram Nath Kovind has given his assent to the Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill, 2018, seeking to prevent economic offenders from fleeing the country and evading the legal process.

The bill was passed by the upper house of the Parliament, the Rajya Sabha through a voice vote on 25th July 2018. The Lok Sabha had cleared the bill on July 19th after almost a two-hour long debate.

The ruling government has been under attack from the opposition failing to bring back defaulters like Nirav Modi, Vijay Mallya and Mehul Choksi.

### More about the Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill

- This bill's main motto is to lay down measures to deter fugitive economic offenders from evading the process of Indian law by



remaining outside the jurisdiction of Indian courts.

- Its implementation is expected to restore law and order, as the fugitive economic offenders will going to be forced to return to India to face trial for their offences.

- The bill is also expected to help the banks and other financial institutions to achieve higher recovery from financial defaults committed by such fugitive economic offenders and thus improving the financial health of such institutions.

#### **Did you know?**

- Finance Minister Arun Jaitley announced the bill for the first time during his speech in 2017 Budget. India has witnessed several instances of economic offenders fleeing the country to avoid facing criminal proceedings such as Vijay Mallya and recently Nirav Modi.

- Most of the cases involve non-repayment of bank loans worsening the financial health of the banking sector in India. The existing criminal and civil provisions in the law are not entirely adequate to deal with the severity of the problem.

**.New organ donation plan to address Indian-origin shortages announced by -UK government**

The UK government has recently made announcement related new plans to change the law for organ and tissue donation on August 5th, 2018 to address the urgent need for organs within Indian-origin communities in the country. In 2020, It is expected to get new system into flow in the UK in 2020, as a part of a drive to assist the black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people awaiting life-saving transplant.

#### **Important Highlights**

- Under the new system of consent for organ and tissue donation, those who do not want to donate their organs will be able to record their decision on the state-funded NHS (National Health Service) ODR (Organ Donor Register).

- This announcement comes as a recent report called on the National Health Service (NHS) to take proactive action to address the high death rate among the Indian-origin people in Britain due to thier low levels of organ donation within the community.

- The report is named as - 'Organ Donation: Breaking Taboos Amongst British BAME Communities', commissioned by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, is aimed at studying the low levels of donation among the BAME communities in the country.

- The report revealed that the people from the BAME community are seen as generally less inclined towards opting for organ donation, largely due to deeply-entrenched cultural and religious beliefs which discourage organ donation.

- However, with respect to India, the report's findings revealed that India has seen a 10-fold increase in its organ donation consent rates over the last decade as a result of sustained public awareness programs, policy initiatives and multi-stakeholder collaborations.

**Uttarakhand HC banned commercial use of elephants in state on - 3rd August 2018**

Uttarakhand High Court (HC) banned the commercial use of elephants in the state and directed the state forest department on August 3rd, 2018 to rescue the elephants deployed for commercial purposes within a time span of 24 hours.





The division bench comprising Justices Rajiv Sharma and Lok Pal Singh also directed the forest department to issue notices to the owners of the animals and seek an explanation from them.

### **Ban on elephant joyrides**

- The court termed the captivity of the elephants as being in the violation of Sections 40 and 42 of Wildlife Protection Act, 1975.
- It banned joyrides which were being conducted by the resorts and directed the Chief Wildlife Warden through the Divisional Forest Officers (DFOs) to take over the elephants possession from the owners.
- The elephants will temporarily be kept at Rajaji National Park in Chilla. The injured elephants will be attended by veterinary doctors within 12 hours.

### **Parliament passes bill to give constitutional validity to NCBC on - 6th August 2018**

The Rajya Sabha passed the Constitution (123rd Amendment) Bill seeking to provide constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) on August 6th, 2018. The bill was passed in the upper house of the Parliament with an absolute majority and over two-third majority of the members present and voting. All 156 members present in the house voted in favour of the bill.

The Lok Sabha had passed the crucial bill on August 2nd with more than two-third majority, with all 406 members present voting in favour after an almost five-hour long debate. The House had passed the bill superseding the changes by the Rajya Sabha.

During the debate on the bill, several members demanded a census to ascertain the population of OBCs while some others pressed for making public the socio-economic survey

of 2014. Now, the bill will be sent to the President for his assent.

### **Important Highlights**

- The bill will be providing granting of constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) on par with the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.
- It states that the President may specify the socially and educationally backward classes in the various states and union territories in consultation with the Governor of the concerned particular state.
- Under the bill's provisions, all benefits given to the SCs and STs like scholarship are also expected to extend to the backward classes.
- The bill will be providing the NCBC with the powers of a civil court while probing any complaint.
- The duties of the NCBC will be including investigating and monitoring how safeguards provided to the backward classes under the Constitution and other laws are being implemented and probe specific complaints regarding violation of rights.

### **Parliament passes Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2018 on- 6th August 2018**

Indian Parliament passed the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2018 that proposes to enhance punishment for rape of a child on August 6th, 2018. The Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on July 30th, 2018 earlier.

The Bill is aiming to replace the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2018 promulgated on April 21st, 2018 following an outcry over the rape and murder of a woman in at Unnao in Uttar Pradesh and a minor girl in Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir.



The Bill stipulates stringent punishment for those who are guilty of rape, particularly of girls below the age of 12 and 16 years. The ordinance has also ordered death sentence to those guilty of raping girls below the age of 12 years.

### Bill Provisions

- The Bill is amending the IPC, 1860 to increase the minimum punishment for rape of women from 7 years to 10 years.
- Rape and gang rape of girls below the age of 12 years will strictly be carrying minimum imprisonment of twenty years which is extendable to life imprisonment or death.
- Rape of girls aging between 12 and 16 is punishable with imprisonment of 20 years or life imprisonment.
- If a girl aged between 12 and 16 is gangraped, the convict faces minimum punishment of life sentence.
- Repeat offenders will get punished with life imprisonment or death.
- The Bill will be providing for time-bound investigation in cases of rape of girl children. The investigation into rape of a child must be completed within the span of two months.
- Any appeal against a sentence by the trial court needs to be disposed off within 6 months.

**Life insurance scheme worth Rs 5 lakh for farmers launched by - Telangana**

The state government of Telangana launched the first-of-its-kind life insurance program worth Rs 5 lakh for the farmers in the state on August 6th, 2018. The scheme, which is called Rythu Bandhu Life Insurance Bonds,

is expected to benefit 2.8 million farmers and their families. The launch comes ahead of the 2019 state and parliamentary elections.

### Important Highlights

- Under the program, the families of the farmers will be getting the insurance amount irrespective of the fact whether the farmer's death is natural or accidental.
- The insurance amount will be given to the farmer's family within 10 days itself.
- The distribution of insurance papers to the farmers would be beginning from August 15th.
- Rough investment of Rs 650 crore made in order to launch the scheme.
- Telangana agriculture minister Pocharam Srinivas distributed the life insurance bonds to farmers in Kamareddy district during the launch.
- Officials from the agriculture department took up distribution in other parts of the state also.
- Most of the bonds are expected to be given to farmers by 15th of September.

**Name of former Tamil Nadu CM and DMK patriarch, who passed away - M Karunanidhi**

On 7th August 2018, DMK patriarch Muthuvel Karunanidhi passed away who was admitted to hospital on 28th July 2018. August 8 was declared as holiday by Tamil Nadu government to mourn the death of leader.

Muthuvel Karunanidhi was a strong name in Tamil Nadu politics. He also served as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for five terms. He was appointed as Chief Minister first time in 1969 after the death of CN Annadurai.

**Who replaced Indra Nooyi as CEO of Pepsico - Ramon Laguarta**



On 3rd October 2018, Pepsico CEO Indra Nooyi will step down from CEO position, as Ramon Laguarta will be succeeding her. Indra Nooyi was CEO of this company from last 12 years. She will continue to serve as Chairman of the company till early 2019.

Indra Nooyi who is an Indian, is first foreign born CEO of Pepsi. She was born in Chennai (Tamil Nadu) on 28th October 1955.

### Government appointed S Gurumurthy and Satish Marathe as part-time Directors of - RBI Board

On 7th August 2018, Central Government appointed Swaminathan Gurumurthy and Satish Kashinath Marathe as part-time non-official Directors on the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India (RBI). It was done after the approval of Appointments Committee of the Cabinet. They have been appointed for four years of term.

### Delhi High court decriminalised which act - Begging

On 8th August 2018, Delhi High Court decriminalised begging in Delhi. Bench of Acting Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice C Hari Shankar ruled that the provisions penalising the act were unconstitutional. Court also ruled that Delhi government is at liberty to bring in alternative legislation to curb any racket of forced begging after undertaking a thorough practical examination on the sociological and economic aspect of the matter.

### Niryat Mitra mobile app launched by - Suresh Prabhu

ON 8th August 2018, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Suresh Prabhu

launched "Niryat Mitra" App in New Delhi. Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) has developed this app. This app provides all information required for international trade from the policy provisions for export and import, applicable GST rate, available export incentives, tariff and market access requirements. By using this App user can get all information about HS code of other countries which is required for export or import. In total data of 87 countries has been added in this app.

### Khangchendzonga biosphere reserve of Sikkim added to - UNESCO list

One of the highest ecosystems in the world, Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve (Sikkim, India) has been added to UNESCO's list of World Network of Biosphere Reserve (WNBR). Thus Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve became 11th internationally designated WNBR. Important to mention here that Nandadevi, Simlipal, Sunderbans and Nilgiri biospheres of India are already in list.

Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve is named after Kangchenjunga mountain. Kangchenjunga mountain is 8,586 metres (28,169 ft) in height, which makes it third highest peak of the world.

### Who has been elected as Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha - Harivansh Narayan Singh

On 9th August 2018, Harivansh Narayan Singh from JDU was elected as new deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha. After the retirement of PJ Kurie (Congress MP from Kerala) in June 2018, this post was lying vacant.

Total strength of the Rajya Sabha is 244 and candidate required to get 123 members



support. Harivansh Narayan Singh got 125 votes.

Harivansh Narayan Singh is first time MP who is a veteran journalist representing Bihar. He was born in 30th June 1956 in Balia, Uttar Pradesh. He is a post graduate in Economics from Banaras Hindu University.

## 76th anniversary of Quit India movement observed across - India

On 8th August 2018, 76th anniversary of Quit India movement was observed across India. In 1942 on this day, Mahatma Gandhi started this movement with a famous call "Do or Die". This movement is also famous with the name of August Kranti Diwas. It was launched at the Bombay session of the All-India Congress Committee (AICC), at the height of the Second World War.

## Committee on natural conservation zones formed by - NGT

The National Green Tribunal has formed a committee to look into whether sub regional plans for NCZs (protection of Natural Conservation Zones) were consistent with the regional plan prepared by the National Capital Region Planning Board.

The bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel took this decision. The bench authorised the Ministry of Environment and Forests to be the nodal agency of the committee and asked the panel to hold its meeting within a month only.

### Important Highlights

- As per the tribunal's orders, all the concerned states will be needed to furnish a report on the same matter.

- The secretaries of Urban Development Departments of the states will going to be responsible to submit the sub-regional plans.

- After that, The matter will be finalized as far as possible within three months.

- The final report of the committee will have to be sent to the green tribunal on or before December 31st by e-mail.

- The bench posted the matter for consideration of the report on February 11th, 2019.

## Arbitration and Conciliation Bill (Amendment) 2018 passed by - Lok Sabha

The Lok Sabha passed the Arbitration and Conciliation Bill (Amendment) 2018 on August 10th, 2018, providing time-bound settlement of disputes and accountability of the arbitrator.

The bill was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister for Law and Justice, PP Chaudhary on July 18. The bill seeks to amend the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996. The Act also contained provisions to deal with domestic and international arbitration, and defines the law to conduct conciliation proceedings.

### Important Provisions of the Bill

- Setting up of Arbitration Council of India: The bill is also seeking to establish an independent body called the Arbitration Council of India (ACI) for the promotion of arbitration, mediation, conciliation and other alternative dispute redressal mechanisms.

**The council's functions would be including:**

- To frame policies for grading arbitral institutions and accrediting arbitrators.
- To make policies for the establishment, operation and maintenance of uniform professional standards for all alternate dispute



redressal matters.

- To maintain a depository of arbitral awards (judgments) made in India and abroad.

Composition of the ACI: The council will be consisting of a Chairperson who is either a Judge of the Supreme Court or Chief Justice or Judge of any High Court or any eminent person with an expert knowledge in conduct of arbitration.

The other members will be including an eminent arbitration practitioner, an academician with experience in arbitration and also government appointees.

### Amendment bill for speedy disposal of commercial disputes passed by - Parliament

The Rajya Sabha passed the Commercial Courts, Commercial Division and Commercial Appellate Division of High Courts (Amendment) Bill, 2018 on August 10th, 2018. The Lok Sabha had passed the same on July 31st 2018.

The bill is meant to make changes in the law for speedy disposal of commercial disputes and to minimize the pecuniary jurisdiction of commercial courts from Rs 1 crore to Rs 3 lakh. Followed by this, it will be sent to the President for his assent.

### Parliament passes Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2018 on - 10th August 2018

The Rajya Sabha passed the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2018 on August 10th, 2018. The bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on July 31st, 2018. The Bill is seeking to replace the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code

(Amendment) Ordinance 2018. It will be presented to President now for his assent.

### Key Provisions of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2018

- The Bill will be making changes in the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 to clarify that allottees under a real estate project should be treated as financial creditors.

- The voting threshold for routine decisions taken by the committee of creditors has also been reduced from 75 percent to 51 percent only.

- For certain key decisions, this threshold has been reduced to 66 percent now.

- The Bill allows the withdrawal of a resolution application submitted to the NCLT (National Company Law Tribunal) under the Code.

- This decision can be taken with the approval of 90 percent of the Creditors committee.

### .President gives assent to bill providing constitutional validity to NCBC on - 11th August 2018

President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the Constitution (123rd Amendment) Bill, 2018 on August 11th, 2018 that is seeking to provide constitutional status to the NCBC (National Commission for Backward Classes). The bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha on 6th August with an absolute majority and more than two-third majority of the members present and voting. All of the 156 members present in the house voted in favour of the bill.

The Lok Sabha had passed the crucial bill on 2nd August with more than two-third majority, with all 406 members present voting



in favour after an almost five-hour long debate. The House had passed the bill superseding the amendments by the Rajya Sabha.

### **Important Provisions of the Bill**

- The bill provides the granting of constitutional status to the NCBC on par with the National Commission for SCs and STs.

- It also stated that the President may specify the socially and educationally backward classes in the various states and union territories in consultation with the Governor of the concerned state.

- Under the bill's provisions, all benefits given to the SCs and STs like scholarship will be extended to backward classes too.

- The bill will be providing the NCBC with the powers of a civil court while probing any complaint.

- The duties of the NCBC will be including investigation and monitoring how safeguards provided to the backward classes under the Constitution and other laws are being implemented and probe specific complaints regarding rights violation.

## **Rajendra Menon sworn in as Chief Justice of Delhi HC on - 9th August 2018**

Justice Rajendra Menon sworn in as the new Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court by Lt Governor Anil Bajjal during a ceremony held at the Raj Niwas in New Delhi on August 9th, 2018. Justice Menon, ex Chief Justice of Patna High Court, has succeeded Justice Gita Mittal, who was elevated to head the Jammu and Kashmir High Court.

### **Important Highlights**

- The inclusion of Justice Menon won't be added to the depleted number of judges of the Delhi high court.

- The Delhi high court with sanctionable strength of 60 judges, would still be continuing to function with 35 judges even after Justice Menon takes charge.

- Given the low strength of judges, the newly appointed Chief Justice heard 11 matters listed before him on his very first day itself.

- The Justice also told his court staff to inform the lawyers that he would be taking up some of the matters in the regular list, which have been pending for long periods, from August 10th.

- One of the matters listed for hearing also includes a plea against unauthorised construction in South Delhi.

- While hearing an NGO's plea on the matter, Justice Menon asserted that he would not be entertaining any petitions or PILs, which were not in public interest but filed to take vengeance or settle personal scores by any of the party.

- The Chief Justice told the NGO that its petitions were not in public interest and that it should seek recourse to other legal means to agitate its grievance.

### **More about Justice Rajendra Menon**

- Born on June 7th, 1957, Justice Rajendra Menon hails from Jabalpur, in Madhya Pradesh and completed his school education from Christ Church Boys Senior Secondary School, Jabalpur.

- After completing his degree in science from the Government Science College, Jabalpur and in 1981, he completed his LLB from NSE Law College, Jabalpur.

- He was elevated to the Gwalior Bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court as an Additional Judge in April 2002.

- He got posted at the Principal Bench at Jabalpur in 2008 and served as the



Acting Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court from May 2016 to March 2017.

- He was elevated to the position of Chief Justice of the Patna High Court last year only in March 2017.

- The Supreme Court collegium recommended the transfer of Justice Menon to Delhi High Court on July 16th. He is due to retire on June 7th, 2019.

### **.Haryana Government to launch Ayushman Bharat scheme on - Aug 15th 2018**

The state government of Haryana has announced the launch of the Ayushman Bharat-Haryana Health Protection Mission on August 15th, 2018. The scheme is aiming to provide cashless healthcare facilities to beneficiaries at empanelled hospitals. The scheme would be initially implemented on a pilot basis in one government hospital in each of the 22 districts, one medical college and one ESI hospital.

The decision was taken during a meeting held under the chairmanship of the state's Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar in Chandigarh on August 9th, 2018.

#### **Important Highlights**

- Under this scheme, families identified by the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) would be granted with coverage of Rs 5 lakh each.

- Every family figuring in the defined SECC 2011 database would be entitled to claim the benefits under the scheme.

- Each beneficiary would be issued a card with a unique QR code, which they would have to produce at the hospital only.

- Other than this, all hospitals in Haryana have been directed to stock up on

medicines so that patients don't have to purchase them outside.

- A total of 15.50 lakh families, including 9, 25,014 in rural and 6, 26,761 in urban areas would be entitled to claim the benefits.

- Around 58 government and 32 private hospitals in the state will be impaneled for successful implementation of the scheme by August 15th for its pilot project.

### **'One District one Product' Summit inaugurated by - President Ram Nath Kovind**

President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the 'One District One Product' Summit in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh on August 10th, 2018. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, and UP Governor Ram Naik inaugurated the launch ceremony.

#### **Key Highlights**

- The summit aiming to give boost to micro, small and medium enterprises is a consequence of the UP Investors Summit held in UP in February 2018.

- With a tagline of 'Nayi Udaan, Nayi Pehchan', the President distributed loan sanction papers to some artisans during the summit.

- Loan papers amounting to Rs 1006.94 crore are to be distributed to 4085 artisans from 75 districts during the summit only.

### **Green fund worth over Rs 66000 crore to increase country's forest cover unlocked by - Government**

The Union Government has unlocked green funds worth more than Rs 66,000 crore to boost the country's forest cover. The fund is an accumulated amount of money, which user



agencies have been depositing as compensation to divert forest land for non-forest purposes, including infrastructure and industries, since the past 10 years.

The government has finally notified the rules for utilisation of the money by states and UTs and to set up authorities to monitor its use for afforestation and conservation.

### **Important Highlights**

- The rules were framed two years after a law to this effect was enacted. However, they were notified on August 10th, 2018 only.
- The rules also specify that 80 percent of the green fund will be utilised by the states for green activities listed under 13 permissible activities.
- The activities include plantation, forest fire prevention, assisted natural regeneration of forests, pest and disease control in forest, soil and moisture conservation works and improvement of wildlife habitat among others.
- The remaining 20 percent will be used for 11 listed works to strengthen forest and to protect wildlife related infrastructure.
- The list also includes third-party monitoring of works, development of certification standards, forest certification, and casual hiring of local people to help forest department staff.

### **Committee on natural conservation zones formed by - NGT**

The National Green Tribunal has formed a committee to look into whether sub regional plans for protection of NCZs (Natural Conservation Zones) were consistent with the regional plan prepared by the National Capital Region Planning Board.

The NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel and bench took this decision. The

bench authorised the Ministry of Environment and Forests to be the nodal agency of the committee and asked the panel to hold its meeting within a month.

The committee will be having the secretaries of Ministry of Environment, Forests and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Chairman of Central Pollution Control Board, National Remote Sensing Centre, Indian Space Research Organisation and the secretaries of Urban Development Departments of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi.

### **Important Highlights**

- All the concerned states will be required to furnish a report on the matter as per the tribunal orders.
- The secretaries of Urban Development Departments of the states will be responsible to submit the sub-regional plans.
- The matter will thereafter be finalized within three months only.
- The final report of the committee will have to be sent to the green tribunal on or before December 31st by e-mail.
- The bench posted the matter to considerate the report on February 11th, 2019.

### **Who has been appointed Chairperson of Appellate Tribunal for Electricity ? - Justice Manjula Chellur**

Former Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, Justice Manjula Chellur was appointed as the Chairperson of the APTEL (Appellate Tribunal for Electricity) on August 13th, 2018. She has been appointed for a period of 3 years or until further orders whichever comes earlier.

The Tribunal's judicial member Justice KN Patil and technical members IJ Kapoor, SD Dubey and BN Talukdar were present on the occasion. Tribunal Bar Association





President MG Ramachandran was also present in the occasion and he assured the bench full cooperation of the bar members in daily business.

The ACC (Appointments Committee of the Cabinet) had approved the proposal for appointment of Justice Chellur, in the pay scale, with allowances and benefits admissible to the post. The APTEL had been without a full-time Chairperson for 8 months, since the retirement of Justice Ranjana P Desai on November 30th, 2017.

#### **More about Justice Manjula Chellur**

- Justice Manjula Chellur was born on December 5th, 1955 in Karnataka.
- She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Allum Sunmangamma Women's College, Bellary and then law degree from Renukacharya Law College, Bangalore.
- The Supreme Court of India sponsored her on a Gender & Law fellowship to England's University of Warwick in 1977.
- Justice Chellur received an honorary doctorate from the Karnataka State Women's University in 2013.
- Manjula Chellur was the first woman Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court.
- She also served as the Chief Justice of Kerala High Court and was the first female judge of the Karnataka High Court as well.
- In 2016, She was also the second woman to be appointed as the Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, a post she held until her retirement on 4th December, 2017.

### **Proposal for setting up water aerodromes approved by - Civil Aviation Ministry**

Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu approved a proposal for setting up water

aerodromes on 11th August, 2018 in India. In June 2018, The approval comes after the DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) issued regulations, prescribing procedures and requirement for licensing of water aerodromes.

#### **Important guidelines for development of water aerodrome**

- Water aerodrome would be set up near locations of tourist and religious importance under the proposal.
- An entity seeking to set up a water aerodrome has to take approvals from various authorities which may include Environment and Forests, the Ministries of Defence, Home and Shipping.
- In the beginning, a provisional license shall be issued for a period of six months during which, the implementation of the water aerodrome operation will going to be monitored.
- The regular license would be accorded post implementation monitoring period and completing corrective action.
- A water aerodrome license will be valid for 2 years only.
- The formal application to set up a water aerodrome needs to be submitted at least 3 months before the date of intended operations.

### **Parker Solar Probe mission to study Sun's corona launched by - NASA**

US space agency NASA launched Parker Solar Probe, a historic mission to touch the sun on 12th August, 2018. The main aim of this mission is to send a satellite closer to the Sun than anyone else as on date.

The rocket carrying the solar probe was lifted off from Space Launch Complex 37 based at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in



Florida in US. This time launch happened after a failed attempt on the previous day, when a last-minute alarm caused the agency to miss its 65-minute weather window.

### **Important Highlights**

- This solar probe was launched aboard United Launch Alliance Delta IV Heavy rocket.

- Within an hour after the launch itself, NASA confirmed that the spacecraft had separated and the probe had been released into space successfully.

- The spacecraft is expected to fly past Venus in 6 weeks and make the first contact with the Sun six weeks after that.

- Parker Solar Probe will be making six more Venus flybys and 24 total passes by the Sun, journeying steadily closer to the Sun until it will be making its closest approach at 3.8 million miles during its mission of 7 years.

- The probe will be moving at roughly 430,000 miles per hour, setting the record of being the fastest human-made object ever at this point.

- The probe will be dipping inside the tenuous atmosphere, sampling conditions and getting to just 6.16 million kilometers from the broiling surface of the Sun.

- In december 2018, It is expected to transmit its first science observations.

**Justice VK Tahilramani sworn-in as Chief Justice of Madras High Court on - 12th August 2018**

Justice Vijaya Kamlesh Tahilramani was sworn in as the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court by Governor Banwarilal Purohit at a ceremony at the Raj Bhavan, Tamil Nadu on 12th August, 2018.

The swearing-in ceremony also saw the presence of Chief Minister Edappadi K

Palaniswami and Justice Indira Banerjee. Justice Tahilramani will be taking over from Acting Chief Justice Huluvadi G Ramesh, who was tasked to serve the High Court after the elevation of Chief Justice Indira Banerjee as the Supreme Court judge.

According to the roster of the Madras High Court, Justice Tahilramani along with Justice M. Duraiswamy, would be hearing public interest litigations relating to women's rights, all criminal appeals and criminal cases and other matters which are to be heard by a Division Bench.

### **More about Justice Tahilramani**

- Justice Tahilramani born in 1958.

- In 1982, She joined the Bar Council of Maharashtra and Goa.

- She served as a Public Prosecutor and Government Pleader for the State of Maharashtra.

- In June 2001, She was elevated as a Bombay High Court Judge.

- In December 2017, She was appointed as the Acting Chief Justice of Bombay High Court.

**Somnath Chatterjee, former Lok Sabha Speaker, passed away on - 13th August 2018**

Former Lok Sabha speaker Somnath Chatterjee passed away on 13th August, 2018 morning at the age 89. He died with a heart attack at a hospital in Kolkata, West Bengal.

The 10-time parliamentarian was suffering from a kidney-related ailment; and had been in and out of hospital for the last two months. Somnath Chatterjee had suffered a hemorrhagic stroke in July 2018.

**NITI Aayog launched 'Pitch to MOVE' for startups on - 14th August 2018**



NITI Aayog launched 'Pitch to MOVE', a mobility pitch competition on August 14th, 2018 which is aiming to provide budding entrepreneurs of India with a unique opportunity to pitch their business ideas to a distinguished jury.

The competition would be enabling startups working in the various fields of mobility to pitch their ideas to industry leaders and venture capitalists to raise investments. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be felicitating during the valedictory session of the Global Mobility Summit on September 8, 2018.

#### **More about 'Pitch to MOVE'**

- The mobility pitch competition is open primarily to startups from various parts of India who are interested to showcase their business ideas to jury members.

- The startups can be from the domain of public mobility, last mile connectivity, shared transport, electric vehicles, passenger transportation, battery technology, automotive IoT, experiential, travel, freight & logistics, powertrain/drivetrain, mobility infrastructure and automotive electronics.

- NITI Aayog has organised it in collaboration with Invest SIAM (India and Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers) as a part of a series to engage featured events in the run up to the main summit.

- The Global Mobility Summit 2018 is scheduled to be held between September 7th-8th, 2018 in New Delhi only at Vigyan Bhawan.

**Uttarakhand High Court declared itself legal guardian of cows in state on - 14th August 2018**

In a first of its kind ruling, Uttarakhand High Court invoked the 'parens patriae'

doctrine and declared itself as a legal guardian of members of the bovine family across the state on August 14th, 2018.

In Uttarakhand, the court is becoming a legal protector for the welfare of cows and other stray cattle in Uttarakhand. A division bench consists of Acting Chief Justice Rajiv Sharma and Justice Manoj Kumar Tiwari, issued various directions for the protection of cows in the same state.

The bench cited various references in its order to stress the importance of taking care for animals including Supreme Court rulings, excerpts from the Upanishads and Arthashastra and also teachings of Jainism and Buddhism; along with quotes of the Dalai Lama and Mahatma Gandhi.

The bulls slaughter, calves and cows is already banned in the state under the Uttarakhand Protection of Cow Progeny Act, providing a jail term of up to ten years or Rs 10,000 fine, or both.

**Chhattisgarh Governor Balramji Das Tandon passed away on - 14th August 2018**

Chhattisgarh Governor Balramji Das Tandon passed away following a cardiac arrest at Dr B R Ambedkar Memorial Hospital in Raipur on August 14, 2018. Tandon was ailing since past many days.

He was very active socially and was an excellent sportsperson in kabaddi, swimming, Volleyball and other sports.

**More about Political career of Balramji Das Tandon**

- Born on 1st, November 1927, Tandon was a graduate from Punjab University in Lahore.



- In 1953, he started his political career as a Corporator of Amritsar Municipal Corporation.

- Tandon was also one of the founder members of the Jan Sangh in 1951 and which later became the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

- He served as the Secretary of Punjab Jan Sangh between 1951 to 1957 and as a president of the Punjab BJP between 1995-97.

- Tandon was six-time MLA in his 65 years of political career.

### Ease of Living Index 2018 released on - 13th August 2018

The Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri announced the Top 10 cities rankings on Ease of Living Index 2018 on August 13th, 2018. Kolkata was the only city which refused to participate in the survey among the top 116 cities of India. Pune has also emerged as the top-ranked city in the Ease of Living Index.

#### Important Highlights

- Pune from Maharashtra, Navi Mumbai and Mumbai rounded the top three of Ease of Living Index 2018, while Thane was ranked at the 6th spot.

- New Delhi was placed at a 65th spot.

- Tamil Nadu's Chennai was ranked at the 14th place.

- The bottom 3 cities in the list are Kohima, Rampur and Patna.

#### More about Ease of Living Index

- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to assist cities assess their liveability in relation to national benchmarks, global and encourage cities to move towards an 'outcome-based' approach to urban planning and management.

- In June 2017, The survey was planned and was launched in January 2018 by Minister Hardeep Singh Puri with the help of Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar.

- Ease of Living framework consists of four pillars which are, Institutional, Social, Economic and Physical which are further broken down into 78 indicators and 15 categories.

- The Ease of Living assessment standards are closely linked to the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and aim to provide a strong impetus to India's effort for systematic tracking progress of SDGs in its urban areas.

### IRDAI constitutes working group to review norms for insurance surveyors on - 13th August 2018

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) on August 13, 2018 constituted a working group to update the norms for insurance surveyors. The working group, which will comprise 7 members, has been formed to address areas pertaining to licensing, renewal and IIISLA membership in the context of the existing regulatory framework for surveyors and loss assessors.

#### Key Highlights

- The group Yegna Priya Bharat group headed by Chief General Manager (Nonlife), IRDA led this group.

- It will be required to study the MoA (Memorandum of Association) and AoA (Articles of Association) of the IIISLA (Indian Institute of Insurance Surveyors and Loss Assessors) and make recommendations to bring about alignment with the surveyor regulations.

- It will also be having to make a holistic analysis of the existing regulatory framework in view of the needs of the industry.



- As IISLA is promoted by IRDAI, the working group will also be addressing issues related to the membership of IISLA.

- The term of reference of the working group also required it to make recommendations in order to bring in more clarity in the areas of ambiguity in the surveyor regulations.

- The group will be needed to submit its final report with recommendations within two months.

## Railways Ministry releases Report on Station Cleanliness on - 13th August 2018

Minister of Railways, Coal, Finance & Corporate Affairs, Piyush Goyal released the Third Party Survey Report on Station Cleanliness on 13th August, 2018. This survey was conducted by QCI (The Quality Council of India).

### Key Points of the Survey

- The Third Party Audit-cum-Survey on station cleanliness recently covered 407 stations including 75 stations in 'A1' and 332 stations in 'A' category stations.

- The rankings has shown that Under A-1 category stations, two important tourist stations - Jodhpur (1st place) and Jaipur (2nd place) of North Western Railway in Rajasthan have made their rank.

- Tirupati, which is another important religious station in South Central Railway, is bagged 3rd position in the rankings.

- Marwar was placed at 1st position, followed by Phulera station at 2nd position in A category stations.

- These two stations are from Rajasthan only. The 3rd place goes to Warangal station of South Central Railway in Telangana only.

## Shaheed Saman Diwas observed in Madhya Pradesh on - 14th August 2018

The Shaheed Saman Diwas observed in all districts of Madhya Pradesh on 14th August 2018.

The state government has observed this day to honour families of martyrs of Madhya Pradesh origin.

### Important Highlight

- On this day, the state government has organised various programs in the memory of the martyrs at schools.

- The heroic tale of the Martyrs was recited before the school students during the programs.

- The Minister-in-charge of districts along with the Member of Parliament, MLA and other public representatives also participated in the day's events.

- Overall, programmes to honour 602 martyrs held across the state.

- While the families of 13 martyrs honored in a program at Bhopal, the families of 4 Martyrs honoured at Sehore and Rajargarh, one in Vidisha and 3 at Raisen.

## Private companies need to disclose compliance under Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act stated on - 31st July 2018

The Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs in its 31st July, 2018 notification, amended the Companies (Accounts) Rules, 2014 and inserted a clause stating that companies need to include a statement disclosing their compliance under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.



The disclosure of constitution of Internal Complaints Committee under the Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act in the Directors Report of every company is now mandatory following this change.

**Government dismissed Allahabad Bank CEO Usha Ananthasubramanian from service on- 13th August 2018**

The Union Government dismissed Usha Ananthasubramanian, former CEO/ MD of Allahabad Bank and scam hit Punjab National Bank, from service on August 13th, 2018. Though the Allahabad Bank had divested Ananthasubramanian of all her powers as MD three months back, after she was named in the CBI charge-sheet in the Rs 14,000 crore PNB fraud case, she still continued to be bank's employee meanwhile.

She was dismissed from service on the day when she was supposed to retire from her services in order to secure public interest in public sector bank, which was leading from May 2017.

**Who has been appointed head coach of women's cricket team ? - Ramesh Powar**

Former India spinner Ramesh Powar was named head coach of the Indian women's national cricket team till the ICC World T20, on 14th August, 2018 which is to be held in November 2018.

Powar was interim coach of the team in July.

#### **Important Highlights**

- He has now been handed over full-time duties as head coach till November 30th, 2018 by the BCCI.
- His term will be including a tour to Sri Lanka, a bilateral series in the West Indies in

October followed by the ICC Women's World T20 in West Indies as well in November.

- In the past one and a half year, he is the third coach of women's team.

- Under his leadership, the Indian women's team underwent a fitness camp from July 25th to August 3rd in Bangalore at National Cricket Academy (NCA).

- Purnima Rau was removed just a few months before Arothe, before the women's World Cup in 2017.

#### **More about Ramesh Powar**

- Born on May 20th, 1978, Ramesh Powar is a former India off-spinner, who was selected in 2000 for the first intake of the National Cricket Academy in Bangalore.

- After his selection, Powar initially played for domestic cricket and remained a consistent performer in the format for many seasons.

- Infact, he played a crucial role in Mumbai cricket team's Ranji Trophy success in the 2002-03 season. Overall, he played first-class cricket in the span of 16 years.

- In 2004, he was first selected to play for the Indian national cricket team during their Pakistan tour.

#### **Did you know?**

Only a functional Cricket Advisory Committee can appoint a full-time coach on a long-term basis

, as given in the Supreme Court directive .

**India celebrates 72nd Independence Day on - 15th August 2018**

India celebrated its 72nd Independence Day by paying tribute to its previous leaders and freedom fighters on August 15th, 2018.

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi spread out the National flag. On the eve of 72nd Independence Day,



In addition to that President Ram Nath Kovind addressed the nation and called for creative thinking in governance to enable fast-track development and ensures social harmony.

### **Did you know?**

India got freedom from British Rule on August 15th, 1947.

**Former Indian cricket captain Ajit Wadekar passed away on - 15th August 2018**

Former Indian cricket captain Ajit Wadekar passed away after a prolonged illness on August 15th, 2018. He was brought dead to a hospital in South Mumbai. The official statement from the hospital read that he had been critically unwell for some time and was seeking treatment for this.

### **More about Ajit Wadekar**

- He was an Indian cricketer who played for the Indian national cricket team between 1966 and 1974.

- In 198, he made his first-class debut, before making his debut in international cricket in 1966.

- The aggressive batsman was a trailblazer in Indian cricket in spite of just 37 Test appearances.

- The feat that made him an icon was when he captained team India to their first overseas Test wins in England and the West Indies in 1971.

### **Did you know?**

In 1967, he was honoured with the Arjuna Award and in 1972, with Padmashri, India's fourth highest civilian honour.

**'Digital Screens' at 22 stations launched by - Railway Ministry**

The Union Ministry of Railways launched 'Digital Screens' to spread awareness about Indian Railways Heritage on 15th August, 2018.

The move is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to create digital museums at stations using QR code.

The project, initiated on a pilot basis, is aiming to showcase the legacy of Indian Railways through one to two-minute-long movie clips on digital LED screens at the railway station's entrance gate and also at different comfort areas.

### **Important Highlights**

- The 'digital screens' were made operational at 22 stations on August 15th at the occasion of India's Independence Day.

- The digital screens have been set up currently at Coimbatore, Lucknow, New Delhi, Sealdah, Jaipur, Agra Cantonment, Hazrat Nizamuddin, Howrah, Varanasi and other railway stations.

- These short films will be showcasing heritage buildings, locomotives and much more to make people aware of the rich heritage of Indian Railways.

- In addition to that, QR code based posters on Railway Heritage are also being displayed at these stations.

- The passengers can also do the scanning of the QR code on their mobile to view a streaming video on their mobile on various facades of the Railway heritage.

**Atal Bihari Vajpayee passed away on - 17th August 2018**

Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee passed away at 05:05 pm on 16th August, 2018 following a prolonged illness at



the AIIMS, New Delhi. He was 93 at the time of death. On 11th June 2018, he was admitted in AIIMS on 11th June, 2018.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the first non-Congress Prime Minister to serve a full five-year tenure. Vajpayee served three terms as the Prime Minister of India. He served the first term in 1996 for 13 days only. During his second term in 1998-1999, he served for complete 13 months. In his final and third term, he served the nations for complete five years between 1999 to 2004.

### EIU released Global Liveability Index 2018 on - 14th August 2018

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) released the Global Liveability Index 2018, the ranking of 140 global cities based on their living conditions on August 14th, 2018. The EIU is part of UK magazine 'The Economist' and it provides forecasting and advisory services through research and analysis.

#### Important Highlights of the Index

- Capital Vienna of Austria has been ranked as the world's most liveable city, displacing Australian city of Melbourne, which had held the record as the most liveable city for seven consecutive years. Rounding off the top 3 are Melbourne, Vienna, Osaka as the most liveable cities.

- Three Canadian cities made it into top 10 this year - Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary.

- Syrian capital of Damascus is still at the bottom of 140 cities despite the report noted that it has witnessed "a stabilisation in its dramatic decline in liveability".

- In Bangladesh, Dhaka is the second worst city and Pakistan's capital Karachi was ranked as the 4th worst city.

### Mario Abdo Benitez sworn in as new President of Paraguay on - 15th August 2018

Colorado Party's Mario Abdo Benitez was sworn in as the new President of Paraguay for a five-year term on August 15th, 2018. Benitez clinched the top place after defeating his closest rival, Efraim Alegre from the liberal opposition alliance, by four percentage points in the elections of nation, which were held in April 2018.

The oath of office at a ceremony in the capital Asuncion was taken by him and it was attended by hundreds of dignitaries including seven heads of state. He also replaced Horacio Cartes, who was also from the conservative Colorado Party.

After the results, the right-wing Colorado Party, which has dominated Paraguayan politics for decades, will going to be maintaining its hold on power again.

### SC directs Tamil Nadu to consider reducing water level at Mullaperiyar dam on - 16th August 2018

The Supreme Court directed the Tamil Nadu government to consider lowering the water level at Mullaperiyar dam to 139 feet from the current 142 feet on 16th August, 2018. The directive comes considering the "grave" flood situation in all the 14 districts of Kerala.

The Supreme Court also ordered the National Crisis Management Committee to meet on 16th August over Mullaperiyar Dam storage and management and file a report on the matter on the very same day.

The SC bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justice Indu Malhotra took a serious note of the grim flood situation in





Kerala and asked the sub-committee to hold an urgent meeting on 17th August 2018 morning with the presence of Centre's National Crisis Management Committee and the Chief Secretaries of Tamil Nadu and Kerala through a video-conference if physical presence of officials is not possible due to any reason.

### **Important Highlights**

- The bench stated that an effort has to be made to bring down the water level of the Mullaperiyar dam to 139 feet so that it would help people living downstream not to be in constant fear.

- The Tamil Nadu government had opposed the plea with regard to bringing down the water level in the dam, mentioning that the inflow of water presently is over 12,000 cusec in contrast to the outflow of 5,000 cusec.

- The bench said this was not the time to go into the past and efforts have to be made to deal with the situation risen at present.

- The bench also directed that the displaced and affected people to be given adequate relief with an immediate effect.

- It also directed the committee and the NCMS to come out with a disaster management plan and asked Tamil Nadu and Kerala governments to implement with the panel decisions.

**Nandula Raghuram elected as Chair of International Nitrogen Initiative on - 13th August 2018**

Indian scientist and academician Nandula Raghuram has been elected as the Chair of the International Nitrogen Initiative (INI), a global policy making initiative on 13th August, 2018.

After this appointment, Raghuram has become the first Indian and Asian to be elected to the Chair of INI. He will be succeeding Mark Sutton of the UK Centre for Ecology and

Hydrology, Edinburgh. The new chairs will take up their roles on 1st January, 2019.

### **More about Nandula Raghuram**

- He is a professor at the GGS Indraprastha University, New Delhi and specialises in the biological determinants of nitrogen use efficiency in crops.

- He has earlier served as the President of the Indian Nitrogen Group which was co-founded by him only.

- He also worked as the Director of the South Asian Nitrogen Centre while serving these diverse posts, he facilitated interdisciplinary international consultations on the research and policy aspects of reactive nitrogen and other nutrients in industry, agriculture and environment.

- He was the Editor-in-Chief of the Physiology, Springer journal, and Molecular Biology of Plants.

**Ministry of Agriculture Proposal to UNFAO to declare 2019 as 'International Year of Millets' on - 16th August 2018**

The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Radha Mohan Singh on 16th August, 2018 wrote to Jose Graziano da Silva, the Director General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation to declare the upcoming year as the 'International Year of Millets'.

Mr. Rahda Mohan Singh also stressed on the need to draw wider action and global attention to promote cultivation of millets.

### **Important Highlights**

- This cereal is highly nutritious and useful in various lifestyle diseases, enhancing resilience and risk management in face of climate change especially for small and marginal farmers.



- It is an important staple cereal crop for millions of dryland farmers across Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. It offers nutrition, income and livelihood to farmers even in difficult times.

- They can be used in multiple forms such as food, feed, fodder, biofuels and brewing.

- They are nutritionally superior to wheat and rice as they have higher levels of protein with more balanced amino acid profile, crude fiber & minerals such as Zinc, Iron, and Phosphorous.

- They can offer nutritional security and act as a shield against nutritional deficiency among children and women especially.

- Some major deficiencies such as anaemia (iron deficiency), B-complex vitamin deficiency, pellagra (niacin deficiency) can be dealt easily with these nutritionally rich millets.

- Millets can also help tackling health challenges such as diabetes, obesity, and lifestyle problems as they are gluten free and have a low glycemic index and are also high in dietary fibre and antioxidants.

- Moreover, during climate change, it is the last crop standing and will be a good risk management strategy for resource-poor marginal farmers.

### **Did you know?**

Millet is a common term that categorises small-seeded grasses also termed as 'Nutri-Cereals' or 'Dryland-Cereals'.

## **World Humanitarian Day 2018 observed globally on - 19th August 2018**

The World Humanitarian Day was observed on 19th August 2018 all across the globe in order to pay tribute to workers risking their lives in humanitarian services and to

gather support for people affected by crises around the world.

The terrorist attack had hit the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq on 19th August 2003

Where the bombing killed 22 people including UN Representative in Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello.

Fiver years after this incident , back in 2008, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution designating 19th August as World Humanitarian Day. Since then every year, the humanitarian community has organised global campaign to commemorate the Day to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers and for the well-being, survival and dignity of people who were affected by crisis.

## **Imran Khan sworn in as 22nd Prime Minister of Pakistan on - 18th August 2018**

Imran Khan, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former cricketer, was sworn in as the 22nd Prime Minister of Pakistan on 18th August, 2018. The President Mamnoon Hussain administered the oath taking ceremony at the President House in Islamabad.

Khan's PTI party had won the general elections conducted in the nation in July 2018. But his party fell short of getting full majority but it managed to scrape through a simple majority in the Pakistan parliament's confidence vote, which was conducted on 17th August.

Khan secured 176 votes, against 172 needed for majority, beating Shehbaz Sharif, president of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party, who got only 96.

### **Important Highlights**



- He will be taking the reign of power for the first time in his 22-year-old political career, till now he served a long-time opposition politician only.

- He has led campaign against corruption and government mismanagement after retiring as one of Pakistan's most popular cricketers back in 1992.

- Khan had famously captained Pakistan's national cricket team to World Cup glory in 1992.

- He also invited his former teammates and contemporaries including Navjot Singh Sidhu and Wasim Akram were in the swearing-in ceremony.

- Khan's next step after being sworn in would be to form a cabinet and assuming the control of the government.

## 18th edition of Asian Games to begin in Jakarta, Indonesia on - 2nd September 2018

The 18th edition of Asian Games is scheduled to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia from August 18th to September 2nd, 2018. The opening ceremony will be beginning at 5:30 pm Indian time, with most of the events scheduled to commence from August 19th onwards. The games will be taking place in Jakarta simultaneously, capital of Indonesia and Palembang, capital of the province of South Sumatra, so as to accommodate all branches of sports.

### Important Highlights

- The event will be witnessing participation from around 11,000 athletes from 45 countries in 40 sports and 67 disciplines consisting of 28 Olympic sports, 8 new non-Olympic sports and 4 new Olympic sports.

- Some of the events, including Handball and Football, already started last week.

- For the first time, eSports, a form of competition using video games, and canoe polo will also be contested as demonstration sports.

- The Indian contingent at the games will be led by Javelin Thrower Neeraj Chopra, will be India's flag-bearer at the glittering opening ceremony.

- Around 570 Indian athletes are expected to compete for top honours across 36 sports, which will be taking place in Jakarta and in Palembang.

- Renowned Indonesian singers like Raisa, Anggun and Tulus and a total of 4,000 dancers will also be performing at the ceremony.

## 11th World Hindi Conference held in Mauritius on - 18th August 2018

The 11th World Hindi Conference was inaugurated in Mauritius with the theme 'Hindi World and Indian Culture' on 18th August, 2018. The Prime Minister of Mauritius, Praveen Kumar Jagannath in Port Louis inaugurated the three-day conference. Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and other ministers were also there in the event.

### Important Highlights

- At first, On August 17th, there was a special flight arranged for around 290 official delegates arriving at Port Louis.

- This is the first time that representatives from all 29 states and UTs of Chandigarh, Delhi and Puducherry will be attending the conference.

- The delegates from India and across the world emphasised on the need to develop software for Hindi which can be made available to common people on a reasonable price.



- The eminent scholars stressed upon on refinement of the Hindi language after making it simple and interesting.

- The discussions participants also suggested that other than Devanagari, scripts of foreign languages can also be used to teach Hindi outside India.

- On the second day of the conference deliberations on relations of Culture and Language with films, media and literature were also held in four different sessions.

### **More about World Hindi Conference**

- It was started in 1975 to make the Hindi language a medium of service and knowledge and enabling it to move forward with the time.

- Hindi has made remarkable progress since then and it has become one of the prominent languages of the world.

- Mauritius would be hosting the conference for the third time. It was first hosted by the country in 1976 and then afterwards in 1993.

## **Wrestler Bajrang Punia wins Gold in - Asian Games 2018**

Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia snatched the spotlight on the first Day of the 18th Asian Games, on 19th August, 2018, by opening gold medal account for India. Punia won his maiden Asian Games gold in the 65kg category after defeating Japan's Takatani Daichi 10-8 in an exciting bout. However, India's first medal at the Games was won by the nation's mixed rifle team comprising Apurvi Chandela and Ravi Kumar, who had to settle for bronze after China defeated them.

On second Day, India's first medal was won by shooter Deepak Kumar, who won a much-deserved silver in the men's 10m air rifle finals event.

Apurvi Chandela also qualified for the finals of the 10m air rifle women's event after she

finished 2nd in the qualification round but she ended up at the 5th place at the end of the competition.

Other Indians to look out for on Day 2 include shooters Shreyasi Singh, Manavjit Singh Sandhu and wrestler Sakshi Malik.

### **Important Highlights**

- The 24-year-old Punia has become the only third Indian, after Yogeshwar Dutt and Rajinder Singh, to win two gold medals in a year with his performance.

- In hockey as well, India's hockey team defeated hosts Indonesia 8-0 in a great start with Gurjit Kaur being the star of the show with a hat-trick.

- Indian swimmers Sajan Prakash and Srihari Nataraj finished creditable fifth and seventh respectively in the men's 200m butterfly and 100m backstroke events.

- In kabaddi, both Indian men's and women's team triumphed over their opponents during their opening games itself.

- In handball, the Indian men's handball team won their Group 3 match against Malaysia that too with a wide margin of 45-19.

## **Anti-Tank Guided Missile 'HELINA' successfully test fired at Pokhran range on - 19th August 2018**

Indigenously developed Helicopter launched Anti-Tank Guided Missile 'HELINA' was flight tested from Army Helicopter in the ranges of Pokhran on 19th August, 2018. DRDO and the Indian Army conducted the test successfully.

The missile was tested for the full range of its weapon system. During the test, the 'HELINA' weapon system released smoothly from the launch platform and was also successful in tracking the target all through its course and hit the target with accurate



precision. All the parameters were monitored by the telemetry stations, tracking systems alongwith the Helicopters.

### **More about Anti-Tank Guided Missile 'HELINA'**

- It is the helicopter launched version of the NAG Missile.
- It has been designed and developed indigenously for Indian Army under IGMDP (Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme).
- It can be fired from HAL Rudra attack helicopter and Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH).
- HELINA works on "fire and forget" principle and operates in Lock on Before Launch mode.
- One of the most advanced Anti-Tank Weapons in the world, is guided by an Infrared Imaging Seeker (IIR) along with integrated avionics.

### **Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General passed away on - 18th August 2018**

Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General passed away on 18th August, 2018 after a short illness at the age of 88. He was described as a "global statesman and deeply committed internationalist who fought throughout his life for a fairer and more peaceful world", by the Kofi Annan Foundation during the statement announced at the time of his death. He is survived by his wife and three children also his home country, Ghana, has declared a week of national mourning.

#### **Important Highlights**

- He first joined the UN in 1962 as an administrative and budget officer with the WHO in Geneva.

- After his term ended in the UN, he set up his own foundation 'Kofi Annan Foundation' with an aim to promote global sustainable development, security and peace in 2007.

- He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001 to help revitalising the United Nations, during a period that coincided with the Iraq War and the HIV/Aids pandemic.

- He was appointed to lead a UN commission to investigate Myanmar's Rohingya crisis in September 2016.

### **.FSSAI constitutes B Sesikeran Committee to review food labelling standards on - 17th August 2018**

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) constituted a group of experts from health and nutrition sector to look into the issue of food labelling on 17th August, 2018. B Sesikeran, former director of NIN (National Institute of Nutrition) headed this panel and it also comprises Hemalatha and Dr Nikhil Tandon . The panel will be studying in detail the concerns of the industry and make recommendations.

The FSSAI CEO Pawan Kumar Agarwal made this announcement regarding the constitution of the Committee while addressing a national consultation on the draft regulation on food labelling organised by the CUTS International.

He also made it very clear that FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) will be going ahead with the labelling norms even if there is no full consensus on the matter after the panel's suggestions.



## War-torn Korean families to reunite briefly starting from - 20th August 2018

Around 180 families, who were torn apart by the 1950-53 Korean War, will be temporarily reunited in North Korea starting from 20th August, 2018. The move comes after the two Koreas renewed exchanges in 2018 following the decades-long standoff over North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

### Important Highlights

- The reunions, the first in three years, will be taking place in the North's tourist resort on Mount Kumgang, as agreed by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in during their first summit in April.

- On 19th August, the South Korean family members reached at the coastal border city of Sokcho to be briefed by officials on the reunion and for a brief health check-up, before crossing the border on 20th August.

- About 89 South Koreans crossed the military demarcation line to enter into North Korea on 20th August. The group is scheduled to return to the South on 22nd August.

- A group of 83 North Koreans will also be reunited with relatives who live in the South from 24th August to 26th August at the same resort.

### More about the Korean War

- War-torn Korean families to reunite for the brief time after 65 years

- The Korean War, which took place between 1950 and 53, was a war between North Korea and South Korea.

- It took place during the Cold War between the USA and the Soviet Union.

- As a product of the Cold War, Korea got splitted into two sovereign states

with their governments to claim to be the sole legitimate government of all of Korea and didn't even accept the border as permanent.

- The conflict escalated into a full-scale war when the North Korean forces, assisted by China and the Soviet Union, crossed the 38th parallel which is the boundary between the two Koreas and invaded the South on 25th June, 1950.

- The United Nations Security Council authorised the formation and dispatch of UN forces to South Korea repelling the North Korean invasion.

- Twenty-one member countries of the United Nations eventually contributed to the UN force, with the US to provide around 90 percent of the military personnel.

- The fighting ended with an armistice was signed on 27th July, 1953.

- However, no peace treaty was signed. In April 2018, the leaders of North and South Korea met at the demilitarized zone and agreed to sign a treaty by the end of the year to formally end the Korean War.

## World's first-ever 4D printing for ceramics developed by - Researchers

Researchers from the City University of Hong Kong (CityU) have developed the world's first-ever 4D printing for ceramics successfully that can be used to create complex, shape-changing objects.

### Key Highlights

- The researchers made use of the elastic energy stored in the stretched precursors to morph shape.

- Once the stretched ceramic precursors are released, they undergo self-reshaping.

- The precursors turn into ceramics after heat treatment



○ Ceramic has a high melting point, so it is difficult to use conventional laser printing to make ceramics.

○ They can have a high compressive strength-to-density ratio and can come in large sizes with high strength as compared to other printed ceramics.

○ Researchers developed a novel 'ceramic ink', which is a mixture of polymers and ceramic nanoparticles, to overcome these challenges.

#### **More about the Research Team**

It took the team over two and a half years to overcome the limitations of the existing materials and to develop the whole 4D ceramic printing system.

### **Saurabh Chaudhary wins gold, Sanjeev Rajput wins silver in - Asian Games 2018**

The Day 3 of Asian Games 2018 started with shooters Saurabh Chaudhary, Abhishek Verma and Sanjeev Rajput while adding three more medals to India's medal account, and henceforth taking the total medal tally to 8, including 3 gold, 3 silver and 2 bronze medals.

Saurabh Choudhary who is 16 years old Indian Shooter won gold in 10m Air Pistol event with Asiad record, while Abhishek Verma won bronze. on the other hand, India's Sanjeev Rajput claimed the silver by finishing second in the finals of the 50m rifle 3 positions men's event.

### **Engineering colleges to improve quality of engineering education to be mentored by - IITs**

IIT will be mentoring at least 5 engineering colleges located in its vicinity to improve the quality engineering education

standard in the country. The decision was taken during the 52nd Meeting of the Council of IITs, which was held under the Chairmanship of Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar in New Delhi on 20th August, 2018.

#### **Important decisions of the Council**

• The council decided that the IIT – PAL, which has been designed to assist the students to prepare for the JEE Advanced Exam, would be further extended and made available along with handholding support through the SWAYAM portal.

• It is decided that the IIT will going to monitor at least 5 engineering colleges located in its vicinity in order to improve the quality and standard of engineering education in the country.

• It has also decided that there will be no revision in the tuition fee being charged from the undergraduate students in IITs.

• The council is not considering any further changes in the JEE (Advanced) system.

• In addition to that, it was also decided that the IITs will be organising an annual 'Tech-Fest' demonstrating various innovations and technologies developed by them, at any suitable venue along with participation from CEOs from leading public/private sector organisations.

• Other, the boards of Governors of the individual IITs have been empowered to decide the fee for international students.

### **Northern states to set up joint secretariat to fight drug menace on - 20th August 2018**

The Chief Ministers of four Northern States on 20th August, 2018 unanimously decided to set up a joint secretariat at Panchkula, Haryana for data and information



sharing to effectively handle the drug menace issues in their respective states.

During the Regional Conference on Drugs – Challenges & Strategies, convened here to discuss and formulate a joint strategy to fight drugs.

The decision was taken during the regional conference on ‘Drugs – Challenges & Strategies’, convened in Chandigarh to discuss, evolve and formulate a joint strategy for the drugs fighting. The meeting observed Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat. Through video conferencing, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur also attended the meeting.

#### **Important Highlights**

- The Chief Ministers of the respective states decided to spend more resources to fight the drug problem, spread awareness and prevent people from falling prey to drugs.

- On the enforcement front, the Ministers agreed to be more proactive and facilitate a quick exchange of information on drug trends, cases registered, persons named, wanted or arrested.

- To facilitate an easy coordination for the same, the states have agreed to set up a common secretariat in Panchkula.

- They also decided that each of them will be appointing a nodal officer at the joint secretariat to coordinate and to facilitate the data sharing process.

- Further, the states decided that there will be a meeting of all Chief Ministers every six months and an officer level meeting every three months, which will be rotationally chaired by the Chief Secretary or the Director General Police of the states concerned.

- They also called upon the Chief Secretary / Director Generals of Police of the concerned States, Senior Superintendents of Police of the adjoining districts of the various states to coordinate with each other on a day to day level.

- They also extended an invitation to the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and senior officials or authorities from J&K to join in the next meeting to find a solution to the common problem.

- Senior civil and police officers from Rajasthan, Delhi, and Chandigarh also attended the meeting.

### **World's first-ever 4D printing for ceramics developed by - Researchers**

The City University of Hong Kong (CityU) researchers have developed the world's first-ever 4D printing for ceramics that can be used in creating complex, shape-changing objects successfully.

#### **Important Highlights**

- The researchers made use of the elastic energy stored in the stretched precursors to morph shape.

- When the stretched ceramic precursors are released, they undergo self-reshaping.

- The precursors turn into ceramics after heat treatment.

- It is difficult to use because of high melting point with conventional laser printing to make ceramics.

- They can have a high compressive strength-to-density ratio, and can come in large sizes with high strength compared to other printed ceramics.

#### **More about the Research Team**

- It took the team over two and a half years to surpass the the existing materials





limitations and to develop the whole 4D ceramic printing system.

- The research team has achieved one more breakthrough by developing two methods of 4D printing of ceramics with the development of the elastic ceramic precursors.

### Exercise Pitch Black 2018 concluded in Australia on - 18th August 2018

Exercise Pitch Black 2018 which is a biennial multi-national large force employment warfare exercise. It was hosted by Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) from 24th July, 2018 to 18th Aug, 2018 in Darwin, Australia.

It was the largest Pitch Black Exercise ever conducted by Australia, which witnessed the participation of 16 nations and over 140 aircrafts.

#### More about Indian Contingent

- IAF contingent consisted of 145 personnel, including four Sukhoi Su-30 MKIs, an Ilyushin tanker, an Ilyushin Il-78 tanker, a Lockheed Martin C-130J-30 Super Hercules, and a Boeing C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft.

- This contingent assembled at Air Force Station Kalaikunda and departed for the exercise on 19th July, 2018 from India to Australia via Indonesia.

- The Group Captain CUV Rao led this contingent.

#### More about Exercise Pitch Black

- It is a multinational exercise hosted by Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).

- It was started in 1981 and has expanded gradually to become the hemisphere's largest air force training exercise.

### 'In-body GPS' system to track tumours developed by - Researchers

Researchers from the MIT(Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and Massachusetts General Hospital in the US have developed a wireless 'in-body GPS' system that is capable of tracking tumours and pinpoint the location of ingestible implants inside the body.

During the tests conducted on animals, the system called 'ReMix' was found to be able to easily track the implants with centimetre-level accuracy. Similar implants can further be used to deliver drugs to specific regions in the body.

#### Key Highlights

- The researchers first implanted a small marker in animal tissues in order to test ReMix.

- Then the researchers used a wireless device reflecting radio signals off the patient to track its movement.

### NOTA option not applicable for Rajya Sabha Elections, ruled by - Supreme Court

The Supreme Court ruled that the 'None of The Above' (NOTA) option will not be applicable for voting in the Rajya Sabha elections on 21st August, 2018. A bench of Justices comprising CJI Dipak Misra and Justices AM Khanwilkar and DY Chandrachud made this decision.

The bench held that the NOTA option is meant only for universal adult suffrage and direct elections and not for the polls held by the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote as it is done in the Rajya Sabha.

#### Did you know?

The option of NOTA was introduced in India after the Supreme Court's judgment in PUC v Union of India on 27th September 2013.

### • Engineering colleges to improve quality of engineering



## education will be mentored by - IITs

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) will be mentoring at least five engineering colleges located in its vicinity, in order to improve the quality and standard of engineering education in the country.

During the 52nd Meeting of the IITs Council, the same decision was taken, it was held under the Chairmanship of Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar on 20th August, 2018 in New Delhi.

### Important decisions of the Council

- The council decided that the IIT – PAL, which has been designed to help the students to prepare for the JEE Advanced Exam, would be further extended and made available along with handholding support through the SWAYAM portal.

- It decided that the IIT will be mentoring at least 5 engineering colleges located in its vicinity in order to improve the quality and standard of engineering education in the country.

- It was also decided during the meeting that there will be no revision in the tuition fee being charged from the undergraduate students in IITs.

- The council also did not consider any further changes in the JEE (Advanced) system.

- Further, it was decided that the IITs will be organising an annual ‘Tech-Fest’ to demonstrate their various innovations and technologies developed by them, at any suitable venue with participation from CEOs from leading public or private sector organisations.

- Other than this, the boards of Governors of the individual IITs have been empowered in deciding the fee for international students.

## Madras HC ordered CBSE to publicise 'no homework, no bag' rule for Class I & II on - 20th August 2018

The Madras High Court on ordered the CBSE to publicise in media 20th August 2018 that stringent action would be taken against institutes not following the board's 'no homework' rule for class I and II students.

Justice N Kirubakaran passed these orders on a plea by advocate M Purushothaman seeking direction to the CBSE to follow only those books and syllabus, which have been prescribed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training.

### Important Details

- The CBSE produced a copy of the circular during the hearing, which read that it had issued similar circulars on 15th September, 2004, and on 12th September, 2016, stating that no homework should be assigned to students studying in classes I and II.

- The CBSE affiliation bylaws also mentioned that the schools affiliated to the board must satisfy its advisory of no school bag and homework for students up to second class.

- On the same matter, the board also stated that in compliance of the directions of the high court, it has once again reiterated that schools may ensure that no homework is given in class III.

- It also reiterated that since NCERT is an academic authority for classes I to VIII, all schools need to ensure that CBSE circular dated 17th April, 2007, to reduce the school bag load and homework for children, is religiously followed.



## 5 Thematic Reports on Sustainable Development in Indian Himalayan Region launched by - NITI Aayog

The NITI Aayog released the five Thematic Reports on Sustainable Development in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR), listing the challenges in all the defined 5 thematic areas on 23rd August, 2018.

Nearly 30 percent of springs, crucial to water security of people, are drying and 50 percent have reported reduction in discharge. In phased manner, spring Mapping and Revival by using 8 steps protocol taken up across Himalayan States.

## e-Filing, e-Pay, and NSTEP applications to facilitate litigants and lawyers launched by - CJI

Justice Dipak Misra, the Chief Justice of India launched three applications on August 23rd, 2018 for the benefit of the litigants and lawyers at the Supreme Court of India during an event.

These applications are - e-Pay, e-Filing and NSTEP (National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes). These applications have been created under the eCourts project Phase II and developed under the leadership of Justice MB Lokur, Judge-in-charge of eCommittee of Supreme Court.

The Union Minister of Law and Justice, Ravi Shankar Prasad released the brochures to increase awareness about eCourt initiatives and to enable litigants, lawyers and other stakeholders to avail the services of all these initiatives on the same occasion.

## Government permits Oxytocin sale through private chemists on - 21st August 2018

The Union Government permitted private retail chemists on 21st August, 2018 to sell Oxytocin with effect from 1st September 2018.

Earlier, through a notification dated 27th April, 2018, the government stated that the sale of Oxytocin through private retail chemists would be banned from 1st July, 2018. However, fearing shortage of Oxytocin in the market, the government deleted the provisions of its 27th April notification stating that the Oxytocin would be sold through government chemists only.

### More about Oxytocin

- Oxytocin which is a hormone produced in the human body naturally and is manufactured as a drug that is usually administered to a woman during pregnancy in the third stage of labour to prevent excessive bleeding.

- Oxytocin is administered to “prevent and treat” PPH (Postpartum Haemorrhage), which is the leading cause of maternal mortality globally according to World Health Organization (WHO).

- Overall, this PPH accounts for about 35 percent of all maternal deaths.

- The hormone stimulates the uterus muscles to contract, so that the labour starts. Synthetic oxytocin (pitocin) is sometimes used to induce a woman to begin labour, if she isn't able to start naturally.

- Once the baby is born, oxytocin promotes lactation, causing the milk to release so that the baby can feed.

**Did you know?  
Pfizer and Mylan are two leading producers of Oxytocin in India currently.**



## India declined UAE's Rs 700 crore offer for Kerala floods on - 21st August 2018

Kerala's Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan announced that the United Arab Emirates has promised assistance worth Rs 700 crore for the state's reconstruction on August 21st. The Union Government has decided to decline all offers of financial help from foreign countries.

The state has reportedly suffered damages worth more than Rs 20,000 crore including damaged highways to cover about 10,000 km, damaged buildings, crops lost and shutdown of one of the state's three international airports - Cochin International Airport after the heavy flooding.

The state government has demanded a minimum of Rs 2000 crore to help with reconstruction and rehabilitation work.

## Arun Jaitley resumes charge as Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs on - 23rd August 2018

President Ram Nath Kovind reassigned the Finance and Corporate Affairs portfolios to Union Minister Arun Jaitley on 23rd August, 2018.

After this, Jaitley will now be resuming the charge of Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Corporate Affairs. The temporary charge of both the ministries was given to Union Minister Piyush Goyal as Jaitley had undergone a kidney transplant at AIIMS on May 14, 2018 and was recovering from it.

However, Arun continued in the Cabinet as a Minister without a portfolio. He was active on social media, and wrote blogs on various issues like NRC (National Register for Citizens) in Assam, the no-confidence

motion in Parliament, and on the controversy over the Rafale fighter jet deal.

He first interacted with the public in two months on 1st July, 2018 through video conferencing when he addressed the first anniversary of the implementation of the GST regime. Recently, he made his first public appearance on 9th August 2018 when he attended the Parliament to vote in the elections for the Rajya Sabha's Deputy Chairman.

### More about Arun Jaitley

- At present, he is serving as a Rajya Sabha Member from Uttar Pradesh.

- Before joining politics, Jaitley was a practicing lawyer and had worked on the Bofors scandal.

- Jaitley joined the politics in 1991 officially when he became the National Executive Member of the BJP and later became the party's spokesperson in 1999.

- For 2000, he became the Rajya Sabha member for the first time in 2000 from Gujarat.

- Jaitley was the Vice President of the BCCI from north zone before prior taking on the finance ministerial post.

- He had briefly served as Union Minister of Defence between 2014 to 2017 and as the Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting between 2014 to 2016 in the current NDA Government.

## 15-year-old Shardul Vihan clinches silver in - Asian Games 2018

Young Indian shooter Shardul Vihan won India's 17th Asiad medal on 5th Day of Asian Games 2018. The 15-year-old won silver in the men's double trap finals event. Ankita Raina won bronze in tennis women's singles event earlier in the day, but after she



lost to 4-6, 7-6 against China's Zhang Shuai in the semifinals. The win takes India's medal tally to a total of 17 medals including 4 gold, 4 silver and 9 bronze.

### IMD to set up cyclone warning centre in Thiruvananthapuram by - October

A set up a Cyclone Warning Centre in Thiruvananthapuram has been proposed by The Union Ministry of Earth Sciences until October.

The decision has been taken after the several incidents of tropical cyclones and severe weather events striking in Kerala and Karnataka coasts in the recent times. The IMD has cyclone warning centers already at Chennai, Bhubaneswar, Kolkata, Vishakhapatnam, Ahmedabad and Mumbai at present.

The centre will be catering to the needs of Kerala and Karnataka. It will also be equipped with all state-of-the-art infrastructure including tools to forecast to issue weather warnings and coastal bulletins, which can be useful for fishermen. It will be further strengthening the present forecasting activity in Indian Meteorological Department's existing office in Kerala.

### .Punjab Government made sacrilege of religious text punishable with life imprisonment on - 21st August 2018

The Chief Minister of Punjab, Amarinder Singh announced that the state cabinet has approved amendments to the Indian Penal Code (IPC) to make sacrilege of all religious

text punishable with life imprisonment on 21st August, 2018.

The Cabinet approved the Code of Criminal Procedure (Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2018, and the Indian Penal Code (Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2018. The amended bills will going to be tabled in the upcoming Assembly session.

### Chandrayaan-I data confirmed presence of ice on Moon on - 21st August 2018

The NASA scientists, using data from the Chandrayaan-I spacecraft, on 21st August 2018 confirmed that there are frozen water deposits in the darkest and coolest parts of Moon's Polar Regions. They published these findings were published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the Chandrayaan-I spacecraft in 2008.

### Chhattisgarh to rename Naya Raipur as Atal Nagar by - Chhattisgarh state government

The state government of Chhattisgarh has decided to rename the state's new capital city Naya Raipur as Atal Nagar in the memory of former prime minister Late Shree Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The decision was taken during the state's cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Raman Singh on 21st August, 2018.

Vajpayee passed away at the age of 93 on 16th August in New Delhi following a prolonged illness. His last rites ceremony was held with full state honours at Smriti Sthal in the national capital on 17th August. The ceremony was attended by top dignitaries including Prime Minister, Chief Ministers, Indian President, Vice-President, and



Governors of several states and many foreign dignitaries including the King of Bhutan and former President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai.

### New Health Warnings on Tobacco Products Packs notified by - Ministry of Health

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare notified new sets of specified health warnings for all tobacco product packs on 20th August 2018. The new set of health warnings was notified through changes in the Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Packaging and Labeling) Rules, 2008. The Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Packaging and Labeling) Second Amendment Rules, 2018 are applicable from 1st September 2018.

All packs of tobacco products will now be having 'Tobacco Causes Cancer' and 'Tobacco Causes Painful Death' warnings written in white color in a red background. The words 'Quit Today Call 1800-11-2356' will also be inscribed in white on a black background along with the pictorial warning coming from September 2018 onwards. The quit line number 1800-11-2356 is online on-call assistance facility which is launched for those people who seek support to quit tobacco products.

### .NETA App to rate MPs, MLAs launched by - Former President Pranab Mukherjee

Former President Pranab Mukherjee on 24th August 2018 launched the NETA (National Electoral Transformation) mobile application to rate Members of Parliament(MPs) and MLAs.

'Neta - Leaders' Report Card' App which is the brainchild of 27-year-old entrepreneur Pratham Mittal and is a platform where voters

can also review and rate their elected representatives and hold them accountable as well.

#### Important Highlights

- In order to rate the representatives, the app needs a combination of mediums like the app itself, SMS,IVR calls and even via offline activation.

- One needs to put the pin number of the area that concerns a particular users and it shows a list of politicians from different parties who contested the last Lok Sabha elections, after downloading the app.

- The app also connects the user's profile with their constituency and present them the trending political discussions of the area.

- One can vote for a particular politician or skip this step to move on and use the other app features.

- New leaders are being provided by the app with an opportunity to showcase their popularity and catch the attention of political parties.

- The users of the app can also see which politician is ahead of others in terms of votes.

- The app is also being viewed as an instrument to determine voter sentiment across constituencies in India, this inspiration has been taken by the United States approval system.

- It is available on Andriod and iOS platforms and on web in 16 languages in order to cater towards a diverse user profile.

### UIDAI makes facial recognition mandatory for Aadhaar authentication on - 24th August 2018

UIDAI has recently made the announcement for new measure that seeks to



facial recognition mandatory for every authentication that requires Aadhaar. The information was shared by UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey on 24th August.

This new measure is being implemented following official circulars issued by UIDAI to Authenticate Service Agencies, User Agencies and certified biometric device providers.

### **Important Highlights**

- According to the new measure, the facial recognition will be coming as an additional feature along with the regular authentication process including identification of an individual based on fingerprints or eye scans.
- The services those majorly need Aadhaar authentication including mobile SIM issuance, banks, public distribution system and office attendance at government offices.
- There have been such cases where people have been excluded from Aadhaar authentication as their fingerprints were worn out or are not clear due to old age or because of being involved in manual labour or in agriculture.
- The facial recognition will be helping people in the Aadhaar authentication process.
- The process will be rolled out in a phased manner and it would also be initially mandated for the providers of SIM cards of telecom companies.
- The telecom operators have also been directed that at least 10 percent of their total monthly authentication transactions should be performed using facial recognition with effect from 15th September 2018.

**India, Singapore sign Second Protocol amending Comprehensive Economic**

## **Cooperation Agreement on - 24th August 2018**

India and Singapore signed the Second Protocol to make changes in the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement in order to boost bilateral trade between the two countries on 24th August 2018.

Rajneesh, Joint Secretary in the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry; and Francis Chong, Senior Director of the Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry signed the protocol in New Delhi.

### **Important Highlights**

- The protocol amending CECA will be giving effect to the provisions agreed between India and Singapore during the closure of the Second Review of India Singapore CECA.
- Both the sides agreed to expand the coverage of tariff concessions, rationalise Product Specific Rules, liberalise the Rules of Origin and include provisions on Certificate of Origin and Cooperation on its verification.
- These measures will further be facilitating trade between India and Singapore and also improve utilization of CECA.
- The provisions of the Second Protocol will be coming into effect starting from 14th September 2018.

## **JNU to rename its Management School after Late PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, announced on - 23rd August 2018**

The Jawaharlal Nehru University has made the announcement of renaming the School of Management and Entrepreneurship to 'Atal Bihari Vajpayee School of Management and Entrepreneurship', as a



tribute to the late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on 23rd August, 2018.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee passed away on 16th August 2018. He served as the Member of Parliament for Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. He was a member of the Parliament for more than four decades. He was elected to the Lok Sabha for ten times, and was elected twice to the Rajya Sabha, the upper house.

## Delhi-Mumbai Expressway work to begin from December 2018, announced by - Nitin Gadkari

Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport, Shipping and Highways announced on 24th August, 2018 that the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) will be starting the construction of the proposed Mumbai-Delhi Expressway by December 2018.

The announcement was made during Gadkari's address to media at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) in Navi Mumbai. By 2021, The highway will be ready for use.

### Key Highlights of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway project

- The first project tender of Rs 44,000 crore between Mumbai and Vadodara has already been floated. Recently, the second tender for the stretch between Delhi-Amritsar was also floated.

- The actual groundwork will be starting by 10th December, 2018.

- Commuters using the expressway would be able to reach Mumbai from Delhi or vice-versa within just 12 hours, (for now it takes 24 hours at present).

- The expressway which is to be built at a cost of approximately Rs 1 lakh crore, will be connecting India's two most backward

districts, Mewat in Haryana and Dahod in Gujarat.

- The expressway is expected to start from Gurugram on the Delhi outskirts and run parallel to the existing highway up to Jaipur, from where it will be turning eastwards to Rajasthan's Alwar and Ratlam in western Madhya Pradesh and then move westwards to Baroda.

- The expressway will be developing the locality in Rajasthan, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh and foster growth in these regions.

- The complete route will be: Delhi-Gurugram-Mewat-Kota-Ratlam-Godhra-Vadodara-Surat-Dahisar-Mumbai.

- As the expressway will be passing through regions which are unexplored regions, land acquisition cost will also be reduced.

## Defence Ministry clears procurement of 111 naval helicopters at cost of Rs 21000 crore on - 25th August 2018

The Union Defence Ministry has given its approval for the acquisition of 111 utility helicopters for Navy at an estimated cost of approximately Rs 21,000 crore on 25th August 2018. The Ministry also approved separate procurement proposals which are worth nearly Rs 25,000 crore.

The proposals were cleared during the meeting of the DAC which is the ministry's highest decision-making body on procurement.

### Important Highlights

- The procurement of the naval utility helicopters will be the first project under the ambitious strategic partnership (SP) model providing for roping in private firm to build select military platforms in India alongwith the partnership with foreign defence manufacturers.





- The utility helicopters will also be used in attack missions and also for search and rescue and surveillance operations.

- The DAC also granted approval to other procurement proposals costing Rs 24,879.16 crore, that include one on buying 150 indigenously designed and developed 155 mm advanced towed artillery gun systems for the Indian Army at an approximate cost of Rs 3364.78 crore.

- These gun systems have been indigenously designed and developed by DRDO and will be manufactured by production agencies nominated by DRDO.

- The DAC also approved a proposal to procure 24 naval multi-role helicopters which will be having the capability to engage in anti-submarine warfare.

- The helicopters are an integral part of frontline warships such as aircraft carriers, frigates, destroyers and corvettes.

- Other than this, the DAC also approved procurement of 14 vertically launched short-range missile systems, out of them 10 will be indigenously developed.

- The systems will be helping to boost the self-defence capability of ships against anti-ship missiles.

**Dutee Chand clinches India's first medal in 20 years in women's 100m in - Asian Games 2018**

The day ended on a high note for India with four Indian athletes - Hima Das, Muhammed Anas, Dutee Chand and Fouaad Mirza claiming the silver medal in their respective events at the 18th Asian Games on 26th August 2018.

India's Muhammed Anas and Hima Das bagged the silver medal in the men's and

women's 400 metres races respectively. While Anas completed the race in just 45.69 seconds and ranked second, Hima clocked record-breaking 50.79 seconds to take the second place in the women's race.

Another force of reckoning was Dutee Chand, who grabbed the spotlight by winning silver in the women's 100 m event. After this, she won the country's first medal in 20 years in a women's 100 m event. Before this, Rachita Mitsry bagged bronze medal in this event back in 1998.

In another first, Fouaad Mirza became the first Indian to win an Asian Games individual equestrian medal since 1982. He finished second with a score of 26.40 in the individual equestrian jumping event behind Japan's Oiwa Yoshiaki. Further, he along with his teammates Rakesh Kumar, Ashish Malik and Jitender Singh guided India to a second-place in the equestrian team event. Before that on Day 7 at the Asian Games, India's 23-year-old Tajinder Pal Singh also clinched the gold medal in men's shot put with an Asian Games record.

**. India's first flight powered by biofuel landed at IGI Airport on - 27th August 2018**

India's first flight powered by Biofuel landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi on 27th August, 2018 after taking off from Dehradun. Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu, Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan and Minister of State for Civil Aviation Minister Jayant Sinha were also present to receive the flight as it landed following its maiden run.



### Important Details

- Speaking at a function in New Delhi, Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu mentioned that an environment-friendly aviation sector is needed to create the positive impact on the environment.
- He also added that Spice Jet is the first Indian airline to fly on biofuel. also the action plan will be made keeping in mind the year 2035.
- Other than this, Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari said that the government is also planning to use methanol in the shipping sector.
- He said that the dependence on biofuel will be helping to boost farmer's income and is an ideal example to convert waste into wealth.

**FAME India phase II to be launched on - 7th September 2018**

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be launching the second phase of the FAME India scheme on 7th September, 2018. The scheme will be offering incentives for mass adoption of electric vehicles with an outlay of Rs 5,500 crore.

The Prime Minister will also be unveiling the scheme at the inaugural session of 'MOVE' – the global mobility summit, being organised in New Delhi from September 7th-8th. The summit will be seeing the attendance of several global CEOs from the automotive sector.

### Important Highlights

- The modalities of the scheme have been finalised by an inter-ministerial panel and will be soon placed before the union Cabinet for its approval.
- The second phase of the scheme spanning five years will also be offering a subsidy to all categories of electric vehicles,

including two-wheelers, three-wheelers and four-wheelers including taxis and electric buses that are used in public transportation.

- The scheme is being launched with a motto to promote green vehicles and check pollution. It will also be envisaging to set up a massive charging infrastructure to support electric vehicles.

○ However, strong hybrid vehicles, which were entitled for the incentives in the ongoing pilot phase of the scheme, would not be able to avail (SOPs) in its second phase.

**Online portal for common carrier capacity booking launched by - Petroleum Minister**

The Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Dharmendra Pradhan launched an online portal to enable easy, efficient and transparent booking of common carrier capacity for natural gas transmission services under GAIL's pipelines on 27th August 2018.

This portal will going to be the first step to facilitate gas trading on a hub or exchange-traded platform in India.

### Important Highlights

- This online portal is a transparent, market-friendly component in the gas trading system.
- It will be acting as a milestone in the expansion of gas marketing, without human interface, through digital means.
- It will be enabling the new entities to utilise GAIL's infrastructure in procuring the gas in a cost-effective manner.
- Thus, it will also be helping GAIL raise the standards of consumer experience for third-party access to natural gas pipelines to consumers in India.

**Government signed MoU with 6 states for construction of**



## Lakhwar Multi-Purpose Project in Uttarakhand on - 28th August 2018

Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari on 28th August 2018 signed MoU with the Chief Ministers of Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh for the construction of the Rs 3966.51 crore Lakhwar Multi-Purpose projects in the Upper Yamuna Basin near Dehradun in Uttarakhand.

Yogi Adityanath (CM of Uttar Pradesh), Vasundhara Raje from Rajasthan, Trivendra Singh Rawat from Uttarakhand, Manohar Lal Khattar (Haryana), Arvind Kejriwal from Delhi, and Jai Ram Thakur from Himachal Pradesh signed the MoU.

The Lakhwar project was approved in 1976 initially but project work was suspended in 1992.

## Government announced Drone Regulations 1.0 for safe commercial usage of Drones on - 27th August 2018

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation on 27th August, 2018 issued the CAR (Civil Aviation Requirements) or regulations for the public use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft System which are commonly known as drones.

The regulations were developed after extensive consultations among various stakeholders, and will come into effect starting from 1st December, 2018. Drones are a technology platform having wide applications ranging from photography to agriculture, from infrastructure asset maintenance to insurance. Drones range in size from very small to the ones that can carry multiple kgs of payload.

The regulation defines “No Drone Zones” around the airports; near the international border, Vijay Chowk in New Delhi; State Secretariat Complex in State Capitals, strategic locations and vital and military installations; etc.

## Sports policy for CPSEs launched by - Steel Ministry

The Union Minister of Steel, Chaudhary Birender Singh on 27th August, 2018 unveiled the corporate sports policy for Central Public Sector Enterprises under the Ministry of Steel in New Delhi.

The policy will be providing a framework for the promotion of sports by Steel Ministry CPSEs.

While speaking on the occasion, Chaudhary Birender Singh mentioned that sports are an indicator of a country’s economic development and strength and the CPSEs, under the Steel Ministry, will be striving to groom medal aspirants for the Olympic Games.

### Important Highlights

- The Steel CPSEs will discharge their responsibility via infrastructural and institutional support for talent spotting, scholarships, training and coaching.
  - The CPSEs will be first allocating a specific budget for sports activities according to their financial strength. The allocated amount will be separate from the company’s CSR funds.
  - The amount would be utilised by the companies to encourage rural sports, sports for differently-abled and activities for homemakers by sponsoring annual as well as periodic sporting events.
  - The public sector companies will also be sponsoring national and international sporting events.
- Other than this, all the CPSEs under the Steel



Ministry will be forming an apex sports body, which will be affiliated to National Level Sports Associations and Federations, Indian Olympic Association and Para Olympic Federation and Association.

- The Maharatna and Navaratna CPSEs may set up sports academy in at least one of the identified sports discipline and maintain infrastructure there for including facilities and general fitness equipment.

### **.PV Sindhu settled for silver after losing to top-ranked Tai Tzu Yi in - Asian Games 2018**

India's medal hunt on 10th Day at the 18th Asian Games started with two silvers from the men's and women's compound archery team. In the women's team gold medal match, India lost to Korea by 228-231 settling for silver. After the men's compound team finals, though the match was tied at 229-229, the gold medal was bagged by Korea and India settled for silver.

In the much-awaited women's singles gold medal match between PV Sindhu and Tai Tzu Yin, Sindhu settled for silver after she lost to Yin in straight sets. Other than the loss, Sindhu has become the first badminton player to win silver in Asian Games. India's medal tally now shows 45 medals including 8 gold, 16 silver and 21 bronze with the results.

### **JNPT, Maharashtra, MP and Ministry of Railways sign MoU for Indore-Manmad Railway Line Project on - 28th August 2018**

The Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust, under the Ministry of Shipping signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 28th August 2018 with the Ministry

of Railways, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh to implement the 362 km Indore- Manmad New Railway Line Project.

#### **Important Highlights of the Project**

- The implementation of the project will be through the IPRCL (Indian Port Rail Corporation Limited) on Joint Venture SPV model.

- A Joint Venture Company will be forming between the Ministry of Shipping or its nominated entity including JNPT with equity share of 55 percent; Maharashtra or its nominated entity; Madhya Pradesh or its nominated entity and others with equity share of 15 percent each.

- JNPT will be the main promoter of the project.

- The project is estimated to result in cumulative net economic benefits of Rs 15000 crore in the initial ten years of operations.

- It will be helping to generate employment, pollution reduction, fuel consumption and vehicle operating costs.

- The project is expected to be constructed within six years.

### **Manjit Singh wins gold in men's 800m, Jinson Johnson bags silver - Asian Games 2018**

India's gold account opened on 10th Day of the 18th Asian Games with Manjit Singh, who bagged first in the men's 800m final with a timing of 1.46.15. Jinson Johnson followed close behind with a timing of 1.46.35 in order to finish at the second place.

Pinky Balhara also won a silver in the women's 52 kg final after she lost to Uzbekistan's Gulnor Sulaymanova by 10-0. It was India's second medal in Kurash. India's first medal in the event came through



Malaprabha Yallapa Jadav, who picked up bronze after following her semifinal defeat.

Earlier, in the much-awaited women's singles gold medal match between Tai Tzu Yin and PV Sindhu, Sindhu had to settle for silver after But she lost to Yin in straight sets. Sindhu became the first badminton player to win silver in Asian Games, despite the loss from her.

India's medal hunt on 10th Day had also started with two silvers from the men's and women's compound archery team. In the women's team gold medal match, India lost to Korea by 228-231 to settle for silver. In the men's compound team finals, inspite of tie up of the match at 229-229, the gold medal was awarded to Korea and India had to settle for silver.

India's medal tally now shows 49 medals, including 9 gold, 18 silver and 22 bronze with the results.

## National Sports Day 2018 celebrated in India on - 29th August 2018

India observed the National Sports Day 2018 on 29th August 2018 to mark the birth anniversary of the legendary **hockey player Major Dhyan Chand** who was born on 29th August, 1905. Every year on this day, the President of India confers National sports and adventure awards including Arjuna and Khel Ratna to celebrate the achievements of exceptional athletes in the country. The date has been postponed to 25th September 2018 in the wake of ongoing Asian Games 2018 by this year.

Indian athletes are participating in the Asian Games 2018 currently, taking place at Jakarta, Indonesia. The Asian Games are also known as Asiad, is a continental multi-sport event held every 4 years between athletes from all over Asia.

## Gaganyaan Mission to put Indians in space before 2022 unveiled by - ISRO

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) unveiled the details of the Gaganyaan mission for manned space flight before 2022 on 28th August 2018.

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced this mission during 72nd Independence Day speech. He announced that this manned space mission will be taking Indian astronauts to space on board 'Gaganyaan' by 2022.

ISRO Chairman, Dr K. Sivan said that the program will be making India the fourth nation in the world to launch a Human Spaceflight Mission. Only the USA, Russia and China have launched human spaceflight missions so far.

## Projects worth Rs 150 crore for cleaning Ganga River and its banks approved by - NMCG

The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) approved projects worth nearly Rs 150 crores on 28th August 2018 to clean Ganga River and its banks in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal under the Namami Gange program. 5th Executive Committee of the NMCG took this decision in New Delhi.

### Important Details

- These projects will be including Interception and Diversion works where small rivers, rivulets and drains are intercepted before they empty into the main river and are diverted to Sewage Treatment Plants, so that the water that finally drains into the main river is clean and totally free from any pollutants.

- Sewage Treatment Plants (STP) and development of Ghats are also included in the projects.



Amendment bill to set up State Security Commission passed by - Punjab Assembly

The Punjab state assembly passed the Police (Amendment) Bill 2018 on 28th August 2018 that would pave a way to set up of a State Security Commission for selection of the director general of police (DGP).

The bill will be seeking to amend the Punjab Police Act 2007, which was enacted on 5th February 2008. The act didn't provide for selection of the DGP from the panel as prepared by the UPSC.

#### **Key Provisions of the Amendment Bill**

- Under the bill's provisions, the state government shall be selecting the DGP from amongst the Indian Police Service from a panel of at least three eligible officers borne from Punjab or any state cadre.

- The following are the criterion for the selection of the eligible officers:
  - They should already be in the rank of director general or be eligible to hold this rank for appointment as the DGP.
  - They should be selected on the basis of their service record and level experience.
  - The officers should have a reasonable period of service left, which shall in no case be less than an year as on the date of appointment

- As per the Bill, the appointed DGP expected to have a tenure of not less than two years irrespective of his date of superannuation.

**Union Government, World Bank and Rajasthan sign agreement to improve power distribution on - 28th August 2018**

The Union Government, Rajasthan and the World Bank signed a USD 250 million Development Policy Loan (DPL) to support Rajasthan in improving the performance of its

Electricity Distribution Sector under the State's '24x7 Power for All' program on 28th August 2018.

Sameer Kumar Khare, Joint Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs, Union Ministry of Finance; P. Ramesh, Special Secretary of Rajasthan; and Hisham Abdo, Acting Country Director of World Bank India signed for project agreement.

World Bank's loca for International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), has a 3 year grace period and a maturity of 21 years.

#### **Key Highlights**

- This 'Second Programmatic Electricity Distribution Reform Development Policy Loan' for Rajasthan is the second in the series of two operations planned for a comprehensive turnaround of Rajasthan's electricity distribution sector. The First Loan was closed in March 2017.

- It will also be deepening the Institutional and Operational Reforms that were launched in late 2015 centered on the Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana of the Union Government, which Rajasthan joined in 2016.

- It will also be intensifying reforms on the basis of the Rajasthan State Electricity Distribution Management Responsibility Act, with an aim to reform the Governance of DISCOMs and bring greater public accountability in their functioning.

- It also supports the Union Government's DELP(Domestic Efficient Lighting Program), under which more than 15 million LED lamps have been distributed in the State.

- It will be continuing to support the ongoing reforms that the distribution companies are making for a financial turnaround.



## New science and technology council to advise PM constituted - Government

The Union Government has constituted a 21-member science and technology council to advise Prime Minister Narendra Modi on matters related to technology, science and innovations.

The council, named as Prime Minister's Science Technology and Innovation Advisory Committee will be headed by K Vijay Raghavan, the principal scientific adviser to the Union Government.

### Key Details

- The panel will be advising the Prime Minister on all matters related to science, technology and innovation and monitor the implementation of PM's vision on the same.

- It will be facilitating the formulation and implementation of policies and decisions and provide action-oriented and future preparedness advise and assist in directing science and technology to solve the socio-economic problems in the country.

- It is also aiming to lay special emphasis on driving innovation in education and research.

## India, World Bank sign Loan agreement signed between World Bank and India on - 28th August 2018

A \$220 million Loan agreement of \$80 million guarantee amount is agreed in the Mou signed between The World Bank and The Union Government for the India Energy Efficiency Scale-Up program on August 28, 2018.

The Energy Efficiency Services Limited will going to implement the plan and will also help scale-up the deployment of energy saving

measures in residential and public sectors, strengthen institutional capacity of EESL and enhance its access to commercial financing.

Sameer Kumar Khare, Joint Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Hisham Abdo, Acting Country Director of World Bank India, signed the said agreement.

### Important Highlights

- The program would majorly be covering the financing, awareness, technical and capacity barriers faced by new energy efficiency programmes and support the Union Government's UJALA program.

- It will be helping to increase private sector participation in energy efficiency, including through private sector energy service companies.

- The EESL will be deploying 219 million LED bulbs and tube lights, 5.8 million ceiling fans, and 7.2 million street lights in this program which will be supplied by private sector manufacturers and suppliers.

- The investments to be done in the same program are expected to help to avoid lifetime greenhouse gas emissions of 170 million tons of Carbon dioxide and contribute to avoid an estimated 10 GW of additional generation capacity.

- Above 50 percent of the National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency target of 19.6 GW is indicated in India's Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Accord.

## Assam declares entire state 'disturbed' on - 29th August 2018

The Assam government issued a notification declaring the entire state as "a disturbed area" and extended the Armed Forces



(Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) for six more months in the state on 29th August, 2018.

The extension of the AFSPA comes as a precautionary measure in order to maintain order during the ongoing roll-out of the National Register of Citizens. The final draft NRC is likely to be published by 2018 end. Though the situation in the state is peaceful at the moment, but the state government took the decision to not to withdraw AFSPA until NRC exercise is over.

In September 2017, the Central Government delegated the power to Assam and Manipur to impose or withdraw AFSPA. Earlier on 1st April 2018, the AFSPA was completely removed from Meghalaya and some areas of Arunachal Pradesh.

### Third edition of 'Smart India Hackathon' launched by - HRD Ministry

The third edition of world's biggest open innovation model 'Smart India Hackathon 2019' was launched by the Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Prakash Javadekar on 29th August 2018 in New Delhi.

The 2019 edition is a nationwide initiative aiming to provide students with a platform to solve some of the pressing problems faced by people in their daily lives and hence to inculcate a culture of product innovation and problem-solving mindset.

#### Important Highlights

- The SIH-2019 is expected to witness participation for more than 1 lakh students from around 3000 institutions across the nation.

- The students will be getting the opportunity to work on challenges faced by the public sector organisations and the union ministries.

- For the first time, the event will also be including problem statements from the private sector and non-governmental organisations.

### India wins gold in women's 4x400 relay, Jinson Johnson bags gold in 1500m in - Asian Games 2018

India's gold medal account on 12th Day of the 18th Asian Games opened with Jinson Johnson, who finished it first with a time of 3:44:72 in the men's 1500m final. Johnson, who had won the silver in 800m, bagged the gold this time, while Manjit Singh, who won the gold in 800m and finished being fourth.

India's second gold of the day came through the Indian women's relay team who clinched the top position in the women's 4x400 relay finals. Hima Das gave India the lead at first and the other three racers - MR Poovamma, SL Gayakwad and V Koroth-maintained it right till the end. India took the first place with a timing of 3:28:72.

In the women's 1500m final, P Chitra awarded the bronze medal after she finished the race with a time of 4:12:56. Team India's first bronze medal in athletics came through Seema Punia, who with a throw of 62.26 finished at the 3rd sport in women's discus throw finals. The other Indian in the competition, Sandeep Kumari, finished at fifth.

India's hopes for a medal in men's hockey fell with the Indian men's hockey team losing to Malaysia 6-7 in the penalty-shootouts after the match ended 2-2 in regular time. India's medal tally now stands at 58 medals including 13 gold, 20 silver and 25 bronze with the results.

### PM Modi arrived in Nepal in - 4th BIMSTEC Summit kicks off





The 4th BIMSTEC Summit started on 30th August 2018 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The two-day Summit will be held on 30th August and 31st, 2018 with the main focus on countering terrorism, to boost trade and enhance regional connectivity.

### **Did you know?**

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation is an international regional organisation of seven nations of South Asia and South East Asia was founded in 1997.

**Union Cabinet approves Earth Sciences Ministry's umbrella scheme 'O-SMART' on - 29th August 2018**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs gave its approval for implementation of an umbrella scheme 'Ocean Services, Technology, Observations, Resources Modelling and Science (O-SMART)' on 29th August 2018.

The CCEA, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the scheme to implement during the period between 2017-18 and 2019-20 with an overall cost of Rs 1623 crore. The scheme covers a total of 16 sub-projects, which address ocean development activities such as technology, observations, services, resources and science.

### **Important Details**

- The Ministry of Earth Sciences has proposed to continue the existing schemes towards the ocean sector in a focused way as a part of the umbrella scheme -O-SMART.

- India is aiming towards creating a blue economy for effective and efficient use of the vast ocean resources in a sustainable way, which would be requiring a great deal of information on ocean science, technology development and providing services.

- The Ministry envisages the continuation of coastal research and marine biodiversity activities, which are important in the context of achieving United Nations Sustainable Development Goal-14 to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development under the (O-SMART) scheme.

- The ocean advisory services and technologies being rendered and developed under the scheme will be playing a significant role in the development activities more than dozen sectors, working in the marine environment including Indian coastal states, contributing significantly to the GDP.

**India, ADB sign USD 346 million loan to improve state highways in Karnataka on - 30th August 2018**

India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a USD 346 million loan agreement to finance improvement of more than 400 kilometres of state highways under the KSHIP-III Project on 30th August 2018.

The loan agreement was signed by Sameer Kumar Khare, Joint Secretary (Fund Bank and ADB) in the Department of Economic Affairs, Union Ministry of Finance, and Kenichi Yokoyama, Country Director of ADB's India Resident Mission signed this agreement.

Naveen Raj Singh, Chief Project Officer of KSHIP also signed a separate project agreement on behalf of Karnataka Government.

**Kathmandu Declaration adopted by Member States in - 4th BIMSTEC Summit**

The 4th BIMSTEC Summit concluded in Kathmandu with the signing and adoption of



the Kathmandu Declaration by all the seven members on 31st August 2018. The Summit started on 30th August 2018 in Kathmandu in Nepal. It started with the aim 'Towards a Peaceful Prosperous, and Sustainable Bay of Bengal Region'.

The 18-point Kathmandu Declaration is expected to boost the effectiveness of BIMSTEC Secretariat by engaging it in many technical and economic activities in the region. Foreign ministers of BIMSTEC member countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection during the summit.

Current chair of BIMSTEC, Nepal PM KP Sharma Oli gave a closing speech after handing over the Chairmanship of the next BIMSTEC Summit to President of Sri Lanka Maithripala Sirisena . Thus Sri Lanka will going to conduct the fifth summit of the BIMSTEC.

## Atal rankings for Higher Education Institutions launched by - HRD Ministry

The Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar launched the Innovation Cell and Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) in New Delhi on 30th August 2018.

The development is aiming to promote a culture of innovation and research in higher education. While speaking on the occasion, the Minister mentioned that India lacks innovation, it is a challenge for India to innovate and innovation will be making it prosper. He further mentioned that new thinking must be encouraged and every college must have an innovation cell.