



• World Bank's Ease of Doing Business 2019 on - 31st October 2018

The World Bank released the Doing Business Report 2019 with title as 'Doing Business 2019: Training for Reform', assessing and ranking countries on the basis of ease of doing business in the year 2018 on 31st October 2018.

As per the 2019 Report, India has jumped 23 places on the Ease of Doing Business Index to 77th rank, up from 100th rank in 2017. This year, India's Distance to Frontier score is improved to 67.23 from 60.76 in the previous year.

The Doing Business assesses 190 economies and covers 10 indicators which span the lifecycle of a business too. It majorly ranks countries on the basis of DTF (Distance to Frontier), a score showing the gap of an economy to the global best practice.

Who has been selected by Harvard University for 2018 Gleitsman Award for promoting girls' education ? - Malala Yousafzai

Harvard University has nominated 20 years old Nobel Prize Winner Malala Yousafzai for its 2018 Gleitsman Award in gratitude of her work encouraging girls' education. She will be awarded with this award at December 6th, 2018 ceremony. The Gleitsman Award delivers US \$125,000 for activism that has improved quality of life around the world.

More about Malala Yousafzai

- Malala was born on 12th July 1997 in Mingora city in Swat jurisdiction of Pakistan.
- At the age of eleven she had caught International attention as a woman education activist post writing for the BBC about

life under the Taliban in Pakistan under pseudonym Gul Makai.

- Her campaign had resulted to Taliban assassination attempt near that leftward her harshly wounded after she was shot in head in 2012.

- Later she had originated non-profit Malala Fund to fund her work. Presently, she is a student at Oxford University, England.

- In 2014, at the age of seventeen, she was bestowed with Nobel peace prize, becoming youngest Nobel Laureate in the history of Nobel award. She had shared this award with Indian children's rights activist Kailash Satyarthi.

- She also has been bestowed with National Youth Peace Prize in 2011, Mother Teresa Awards for Social Justice in 2012, Simon de Beauvoir Prize in 2013, Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2013, Anna Politkovskaya Award in 2013.

- UN in her regard has acknowledged 12th July as 'Malala Day'.

Who has approved India-Morocco agreement on legal assistance in criminal matters ? - Union Cabinet

The Union Cabinet has sanctioned pact between India and Morocco on mutual legal assistance in criminal issues. The Union Cabinet was headed by PM Narendra Modi.

Important Facts

- The pact will deliver broad legal framework for bilateral assistance between India and Morocco in investigation and prosecution of crime, restraint, tracing, forfeiture/confiscation/proceeds and instruments of crime.

- It will also boost effectiveness in investigation and prosecution of crime and deliver essential peaceful ambience which is



pre-requisite for development of society as a whole.

o It will further be also contributory in acquisition of better inputs and insights in modus operandi of terrorists and planned criminals, which in turn can be utilised to fine-tune policy decisions in the field of internal security.

Air Marshal Pradeep Padmakar Bapat VSM takes over as the Air Officer-in-Charge Administration of IAF on - 31st October 2018

Air Marshal Pradeep Padmakar Bapat VSM overcharged Air Marshal HN Bhagwat AVSM VM who retired from post on 31st October 2018.

Air Marshal PP Bapat was made to order in the Indian Air Force in the Administrative Branch on 28th May 1983. He was commissioned as a Fighter Controller. Previously, he carried out the everyday tasks of Director General (Works & Ceremonials). He was bestowed 'Vishisht Seva Medal' by President of India in 2014. He epitomized MP twice in National Cycle Polo tournament.

Odisha government declared drought in 9 districts in the - State

The Odisha government announced drought in nine of the thirty districts in the State. The State has also sanctioned the Collectors of the districts to undertake relief actions in the affected areas. The State government informed that a sum of 2,33,173.8 hectares of crop field in Bargarh, Balangir, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Sambalpur and Sundargarh have encountered loss in crops by 33 percent and more than that.

Opening up of International Solar Alliance membership to all UN countries approved by - Union Cabinet

The Union Cabinet led by PM Narendra Modi has issued ex-post facto sanction for initiating International Solar Alliance membership to all nations that are members of the UN. In this concern, Cabinet has sanctioned to present Resolution in 1st Assembly of International Solar Alliance for modifying the Framework Agreement of International Solar Alliance.

Importance

- It will put solar energy in global schedule with universal request for developing and deploying solar energy.
- It will make International Solar Alliance inclusive, whereby all member nations of United Nations could become member.
- Thus, escalating membership will lead to International Solar Alliance initiative profiting the world at large.

International Solar Alliance

- International Solar Alliance is an alliance devoted to the promotion of solar energy among its member nations.
- The International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement had become effective in December 2017 and officially became de-jure treaty based International Intergovernmental Organization.
- It is HQ at Gurugram, India. The main aim of International Solar Alliance is to comprise global deployment of more than 1,000 gigawatt of solar production capacity and mobilisation of investment of more than US\$ 1000 billion into solar energy by 2030.
- International Solar Alliance also goals to work as an action-oriented organization by



carrying together nations with rich solar potential to combine global demand, thereby dropping prices through bulk purchase.

- It also pursues to simplify deployment of present solar technologies at scale, and encouraging collaborative solar R&D and capacity building.

Justices Hemant Gupta, R Subhash Reddy, MR Shah and Ajay Rastogi sworn-in as Supreme Court Judges on - 2nd November 2018

Justices Hemant Gupta, R Subhash Reddy, M R Shah and Ajay Rastogi took oath as the Judges of the Supreme Court on November 2nd, 2018. Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi directed oath of office to the 4 judges. Previously on November 1st, 2018, President Ram Nath Kovind allotted a notification assigning these 4 judges as the Supreme Court judges. Earlier to this promotion, Justice Gupta worked as the Chief Justice of the MP High Court; Justice Rastogi as the Chief Justice of the Tripura High Court; Justice Shah as the incumbent Chief Justice of the Patna High Court and Justice Reddy as the Chief Justice of the Gujarat High Court.

Strength of Supreme Court Judges

- With their promotion, the number of judges at the Supreme Court increased to 28.
- The approved strength of Supreme Court judges in 31. 2 judges, namely, Justice Kurian Joseph and Justice Madan B Lokur are going to retire in November and December 2018 correspondingly.

Justice Hemant Gupta

- Justice Hemant Gupta sworn-in as the Chief Justice of MP High Court on March 18th, 2017.

- He was promoted as the Judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, where he worked the longest tenure on July 2nd, 2002. He was one of most senior judges of the high court.

- Justice Gupta worked as Additional Advocate General of Punjab from 1997-1999.

Justice Ramayyagari Subhash Reddy

- Justice Ramayyagari Subhash Reddy worked as the Judge of the High Court of Judicature at Hyderabad for the State of Telangana and the State of AP.

- He was designated as the Chief Justice of the Gujarat High Court on February 3rd, 2016.

- He was designated as judge of High Court of AP on December 2nd, 2002.

Justice Mukeshkumar Rasikbhai Shah

- Justice Mukeshkumar Rasikbhai Shah was designated as the Chief Justice of Patna High Court on August 4th, 2018. On March 7th, 2004, he was designated as the Judge of Gujarat High Court.

Justice Ajay Rastogi

Justice Ajay Rastogi was suggested by the Collegium for being designated as Chief Justice of Tripura High Court on February 1st, 2018.

Lt General Rajeshwar takes over as 12th Chief of - Integrated Defence Staff

Lt Gen P.S.Rajeshwar sworn-in as 12th Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to Chairman, COSC. Earlier to this designation, he was working as Director General (Perspective Planning) at Integrated HQ, Ministry of Defence.

More about Lt Gen PS Rajeshwar

- He was commissioned into Regiment of Artillery in December 1980. He is alumnus of IMA, Dehradun, National Defence College, Delhi.



- He clutches Masters in National Security Administration from National Defence College, Philippines.

- He has rich operational and staff experience with difference of serving in operational environments including Counter Insurgency area in the North East and Counter Terrorist Operations in J&K, High Altitude Area, apart from UN Peacekeeping Operations.

- During 38 years of his memorable career, he has directed Artillery Regiment during Operation Parakram, Infantry Brigade at LoC, Counter Insurgency Force in Jammu and Kashmir and Corps in the desert sector.

Integrated Defence Staff

- Government had recognized Integrated Defence Staff, led by Chief of Integrated Staff as Chairman to make sure high degree of synergy between Armed forces.

- It performs as point group for integration of policy, doctrine, war fighting and obtaining by employing best management performs.

- It was formed on 1st October 2001 based on commendations of Group of Ministers which was formed in 2000 to review India's defence management.

- It has representation from all 3 services, including Ministry of External Affairs, DRDO and Department of Defence and Def (Finance).

First India-Japan military exercise Dharma Guardian-2018 begins in - Vairengte, Mizoram

The 1st joint military exercise titled 'Dharma Guardian' between India and Japan started at Indian Army's Counter-Insurgency Warfare School at Vairengte, Mizoram. The exercise is intended at emerging mutual understanding and respect among militaries of two nations, as also simplify in tracking around the

world phenomenon of terrorism.

More about Dharma Guardian

- In this exercise, Indian Army will be signified by 6/1 Gorkha Rifles, while Japanese Ground Self-Defence Force will field its 32 Infantry Regiment.

- The importance of this exercise will be on developing interoperability.

- Armies of two nations will mutually train, plan and execute series of well-established tactical drills for neutralization of probable threats that may be encountered in urban warfare scenario.

- Moreover, specialists from both nations will also organise detailed talks to share their expertise on varied operational aspects.

Cabinet approves MoU between India and South Korea for strengthening cooperation in - Tourism

The Union Cabinet Narendra Modi has sanctioned inking of MoU between India and South Korea for solidification of collaboration in the field of Tourism.

Objects of MoU

- To expand bilateral collaboration in tourism sector.

- To upsurge exchange of data and information associated with tourism.

- It will inspire assistance between tourism shareholders including hotels and tour operators.

- It will begin exchange programs for cooperation in Human Resources Development

- Exchange visits of tour Operators, decision or opinion makers, media for promotion of both-way tourism.

- To discuss experience in areas of promotion, marketing destination development



and management. Encourage participation in travel fairs/exhibitions in each other's nation.

- To promote safe, honourable and sustainable tourism.

Did you know?

India and South Korea have enjoyed robust diplomatic and long economic associations. Both nations are now desiring to reinforce and further develop recognized ties in field of tourism. South Korea is one of leading tourist producing markets for India from East-Asia region. Inking of this Memorandum of Understanding will be instrumental in growing arrival in India from this source market.

Railways Ministry launches 'UTS on Mobile' facility to enable seamless booking of unreserved tickets on - 1st November 2018

The Ministry of Railways launched the 'Unreserved Mobile Ticketing' facility (UTS on Mobile) to enable seamless booking of unreserved tickets all over Indian Railways, wiping out the need for passengers to wait in queues to purchase the tickets on 1st November 2018.

With this, the booking of unreserved tickets on all non-suburban sections across all Zonal Railways will now be available on mobile from 1st November 2018. This move comes with an aim to promote three C':

More about Process of ticket booking

- This booking facility for unreserved tickets, including season tickets and also platform tickets is available through the 'UTSONMOBILE' app, available for Android, IOS and Windows phone users.

- The process of ticket booking involves downloading the application and registration by furnishing the necessary details.

- After successful registration, the user is given user-ID and password through which the user can log-in and book ticket through this application within the ticketing area and outside the Geo-fenced area.

- The payment could be made through R-Wallet, debit card, credit card, net-banking, UPI and other e-wallets, thus, promoting government's directives to promote all digital modes of payments.

India inked loan Agreement for Turga Hydel Project with which country – Japan

India and Japan inked Loan Agreement worth Rupees 1817 crores for building Turga Pumped Storage (I)' Hydel Project. On accomplishment, this project will result to Industrial Development and Living Standard Improvement in the West Bengal.

Crucial Facts

This loan agreement was inked among Union Ministry of Finance, Government of India and Mr. Katsuo Matsumoto, Chief Representative Japan International Cooperation Agency. The aim of project is to reinforce competence to respond to fluctuation in supply & demand of power. It also pursues to advance stability of power supply by building pumped storage amenities, thereby resulting into industrial development and development of Living Standard of people in West Bengal.

Background

India and Japan have elongated and productive history of bilateral development assistance since 1958. In the past few years, the economic collaboration between India and Japan has progressively developed, which



has further combined and supported Strategic and Global Partnership between both nations.

Government Promulgates Ordinance to amend Companies Act, 2013

Union Cabinet has sanctioned proposal for promulgation ordinance to amend the Companies Act, 2013. The regulation had established assent from President Ram Nath Kovind under Article 123 and has been propagated. The modifications to the Act are intended to encourage ease of doing business and make sure better compliance levels.

Important Facts

The ordinance to modify Companies Act pursues to declog National Company Law Tribunals and decriminalise negligible offences by corporations. The ordinance will transfer 90 percent of the cases to regional directors under Ministry of Corporate Affairs from National Company Law Tribunals. Moreover, it will hold status of all non-compoundable offences since they are serious in nature.

Background

Union Government agreed Committee had recommended various changes to Act, including rearrangement of corporate offences under companies' law and in-house adjudication process to make sure courts get additional time to deal with solemn violations.

Apart from rearrangement of corporate offences to relieve special courts from adjudicating routine offences, the committee had suggested re-categorisation of 16 out of 81 compoundable crimes under the Act. This initiative was suggested to bring down National Company Law Tribunals' load as it looks at insolvency and bankruptcy cases as well.

Unreserved Mobile Ticketing facility launched by - Government

Union Ministry of Railways has initiated Unreserved Mobile Ticketing facility to enable seamless booking of unreserved tickets counting season tickets and also platform tickets all around Indian Railways. This will eradicate the necessity for passengers to wait in lines for buying the tickets.

UTS on Mobile phones goals to encourage 3 C': Cashless transactions, Contact-less ticketing and Customer convenience and experience. With this, booking of unreserved tickets on all non-suburban sections across all Zonal Railways will be now readily accessible on mobile phones.

Unreserved Mobile Ticketing facility

The ability for booking unreserved tickets is accessible via 'UTSONMOBILE' app, accessible for mobile phones with Android, iOS and Windows operating systems. The procedure of ticket booking includes downloading app on mobile phone and registration by furnishing the essential details.

After successful registration, subscriber is issued user-ID and password via which subscriber can login and book ticket through this app within the ticketing area. The payment can be done digitally using R-Wallet/debit/credit card/net-banking/UPI and other e-wallets.

Advantages

This environment friendly enterprise will permit seamless booking of unreserved tickets around Indian Railways. It will avoid necessity for passengers to wait in queues for purchasing tickets.

PM launches Support and Outreach Programme for - MSME Sector

PM Narendra Modi initiated Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- MSME Support and Outreach Program. As part of this program, Prime Minister revealed 12 crucial initiatives which



will benefit the growth, expansion and facilitation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises around the nation. There are 5 important features for simplifying the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises sector. These consist access to credit, access to market, technology upgradation, comfort of doing business, and sense of security for workers.

MSME Outreach Programme

- It goals to enhance Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises sector. It is one of key sector for major generations of employment.
- It will operate for 100 days covering 100 Districts across the nation.
- Various Central Ministers will visit these districts in order to impart businesspersons about various amenities being extended to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sector by Union Government and financial institutions.
- Under Access to Credit aspect of this program, Government will launch 59-minute loan portal to permit easy access to credit for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
- Loans up to Rupees One crore will be approved in-principle grant via this portal, in just 59 minutes. The connection to this portal will be available at GST portal.
- Government will issue 2 percent interest subvention for all GST registered Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, on fresh/incremental loans. For exporters who get loans in pre-shipment and post-shipment period will have upsurge in interest rebate ranging from 3 percent to 5 percent.
- All Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises with turnover above Rupees 500 crores will

now be forcibly brought on Trade Receivables e-Discounting System.

- This will permit businesspersons to access credit from banks, based on their future receivables.

Saura Jalnidhi scheme launched by - Odisha Government

Odisha Government has initiated Saura Jalnidhi scheme to inspire usage of solar energy in irrigation by farmers. Under this scheme, farmers will be issued 90 percent subsidy and 5,000 solar pumps. This will issue irrigation aids in 2,500 acres of the state. The recipient of this scheme will be farmers who have valid farmer i-cards and have least 0.5 acres of agricultural land.

More about Saura Jalnidhi scheme

- The scheme was released as part of state government's endeavour to upsurge the usage of solar photovoltaic pump sets in those areas so that irrigation amenities can be issued where power system is bad.
- For this scheme, state government has formed a provision of Rupee 27.18 crores in the financial year 2017-2018.
- In the 1st phase, this scheme will be accessible in those areas where electricity is not there for running the pumps. This scheme will produce 1.52 lakh human day jobs yearly and provided income to about 5,000 families and also lessen carbon footprints.
- Under this scheme, farmers will be issued a well-equipped solar pump irrigation system in junction mode. It will assist to lessen burden of input cost on farmers and also upsurge agricultural income. It will



encourage the usage of green energy and decrease pollution.

Maharashtra Government to convert decommissioned aircraft carrier INS Viraat into - Floating museum

Maharashtra state cabinet permitted plan for alteration of Indian Navy's longest-serving aircraft carrier INS Viraat, into India's 1st-ever moored maritime museum-cum-marine adventure centre. Presently, INS Viraat is at Mumbai's Naval dockyard after it was retired in 2017.

Important Facts

- According to state government's plan, INS Viraat's alteration will be on public-private-partnership basis.

- It will be grouted 7 nautical miles off Malvan coast at Nivati rocks in Sindhudurg district. This ship will crowd biodiversity centres and marine adventure centre delivering sailing and scuba-diving activities.

- There will be virtual galleries, cafeterias and even training centre for merchant navy squad. World over only 7 aircraft carriers so far have been rehabilitated into museums, theme parks and luxury hotel.

More about INS Viraat

- It was constructed in 1943 during 2nd World War and was 1st commissioned as HMS Hermes into the British Royal Navy in November 1959.

- During the Falklands War in 1982, the aircraft carrier had worked as flagship of the Royal Navy's task force. It has sailed approximately 11 lakh kilometres, enough to cover the globe 27 times.

- It was commissioned into the Indian Navy on May 12th, 1987.

- It had played a crucial role in Operation Jupiter in 1989 in the Sri Lankan peace keeping operation.

- It had taken part in the standoff Operation Parakram in 2001-2002 when India and Pakistan were engaged in a standoff position the Parliament terror attack.

- INS Viraat embraces Guinness Books of record of being the longest serving warship in the world. It was also the last British constructed ship serving with the Indian Navy.

3rd Ayurveda Day observed across India on - 5th November 2018

The 3rd Ayurveda Day was celebrated around the Nation on November 5th, 2018 on the eve of the Dhanawantari Jayanti/Dhanteras with an objective to further promote Ayurveda as the mainstream system of medicine.

The theme of the 3rd Ayurveda Day was 'Ayurveda for Public health'. All the State Governments, State **More about AYUSH**

- Directorates, entire Ayurveda colleges and teaching institutions, AYUSH Universities, Ayurveda Doctors, Ayurveda Drug Industries and shareholders of Ayurveda in India and overseas celebrated the 3rd Ayurveda Day centred on this theme.

Objectives of the Day

- Its main focus on strong point of Ayurveda and its unique treatment principles.

- It diminish the burden of disease and associated mortality by using the potential of Ayurveda.

Exploring Ayurveda to contribute for National health policy and National Health programs.

- It encourage Ayurvedic principles of healing in society.

- National Seminar on Entrepreneurship and Business Development in Ayurveda

- The Ministry of AYUSH organised a "National Seminar on Entrepreneurship and Business Development in Ayurveda" in collaboration with NITI Aayog to promote entrepreneurs and Ayurveda shareholders



towards businesses opportunities in the sector.

- The Seminar is a subsequent step to the initiatives accepted by the Ministry to increase Ayurveda Market percentage 3-fold by the year 2022.

- The seminar is supposed to develop awareness among shareholders about the business options, inspire young businesspersons to usage of modern technologies and modern innovations in business development.

Process to set up digital Public Credit Registry initiated by - RBI

The RBI has started the procedure to form a digital Public Credit Registry to get all the details of borrowers, including wilful defaulters and also the pending legal suits in order to cross check financial delinquencies. The public credit registry will also comprise information from units including SEBI, the corporate affairs ministry, GST Network and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India to permit the banks and financial institutions to attain a 360-degree profile of present and prospective borrowers on a real-time basis. The Public Credit Registry is a digital registry of genuine granular credit information. It will work as a financial data infrastructure allowing access to various shareholders and augment the present credit information ecosystem.

Key Highlights

- The RBI has requested expression of interest for developing the registry from organisations with a turnover of more than Rupees 100 crores in the past 3 years.

- Presently, there are numerous granular credit information storehouses in India, with each having different aims and coverage.

- Within the Reserve Bank of India, CRILC is a borrower level supervisory dataset with an edge in an aggregate exposure of Rupees Five crore.

- The Reserve Bank of India has mandated all its authorised units to submit credit information individually to all 4 CICs.

- According to the Expression of Interest, the projected solution should permit easy integration with ancillary information sources, including the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, SEBI, Goods and Services Tax Network, CERSAI, utility billers, Central Fraud Registry and Wilful Defaulter/Caution/Suit Filed Lists.

India's first microprocessor 'Shakti' developed by - IIT-Madras

The scientists at the IIT Madras have developed India's 1st indigenous microprocessor, which will decrease dependency on imported microchips and the risk of cyber-attacks. The microprocessor known as 'Shakti' was outlined, developed and stricken by Indian Institute of Technology Madras with a microchip invented in the Semi-Conductor Laboratory of Indian Space Research Organisation at Chandigarh. It has been developed at an estimate of about Rupees 11 crore. The 'Shakti' project is focused at emerging industrial-grade microprocessors and other components of the microprocessor ecosystem.

It is moderately funded by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, as part of 2-decade-old efforts to develop indigenous microprocessors.

Important Highlights



○ The design of the microprocessor initiates from an open source Instruction Set Architecture, a set of basic guidelines known as RISC V, which makes it customisable to any device.

○ The RISC-V is an open, free Instruction Set Architecture, enabling a fresh era of processor innovation via open standard collaboration.

○ It carries a new level of free, extensible software and hardware freedom on architecture, developing the way for the next 50 years of computing design and innovation.

○ The Instruction Set Architecture is fundamentally the programming language and provides commands to the processor training it on the tasks to be implemented.

○ The concept to develop the chip was evolved in 2011 with few initial works were then carried out. Bluespec, an open-source high-level synthesis language, went into developing the chips.

○ Primarily, the developers formed a normative design to demonstration the feasibility. Different devices may require a different type of hardware as well as new features/instructions.

○ The microprocessor will diminish dependency on imported microchips and the risk of cyber-attacks.

○ It could be well utilised in mobile computing, wireless and networking systems and it may also deliver power to mobile phones, surveillance cameras and smart meters.

• Night trial of Agni-I ballistic missile conducted by - India

India has effectively completed night user trial of Agni-I short ranged nuclear capable ballistic missile. The trial flight was accomplished by Indian Army's Strategic

Forces Command off Abdul Kalam Island in Bay of Bengal, off the coast of the Indian state of Odisha. The trial was 2nd known night-time test of Agni-I since its 1st such successful test in April 2014.

More about Agni-I missile

○ Agni-I is short-range nuclear proficient surface-to-surface ballistic missile. It is 1st missile of the Agni series released in 1983.

○ It was established by premier missile development laboratory of Defence Research Development Laboratory in association with Research Centre Imarat and united by Bharat Dynamics Limited, Hyderabad.

○ It weighs about 12 tonnes and is 15m long. It is fabricated to transfer payload of above 1 tonne (both conventional and nuclear warhead).

○ It is single stage missile powered by solid propellants. It can hit target 700 kilometres away. Its strike range is extendable by reducing its payload. It can be fired from either road or rail mobile launchers.

○ It is loaded with sophisticated navigation system which make sure it hit the target with accuracy and precision.

○ The missile already has been initiated into armed forces. It is also claimed to be a part of India's least trustworthy deterrence under No first to use policy.

Location tracking devices, emergency buttons mandatory for new public service vehicles by- Government

The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways alerted that all new public service vehicles, excluding auto rickshaws and e-Rickshaws, registered on and afterward January 1st, 2019 will have to be mandatorily fitted with Vehicle Location Tracking and Emergency Buttons.



In case of older public service vehicles, registered up to December 31st, 2018, the particular State Governments will notify the date by which these vehicles have to install VLT Device and Panic Buttons. The Vehicle Location Tracking device creators would support in providing the back-end services for monitoring the device with an aim to make sure safety of passengers especially females.

Operational procedure for implementation of VLT cum Emergency buttons

- The Ministry has passed an advisory to all the states for this.
- The States are needed to make sure execution of this order and check fitment and functional status of the Vehicle Location Tracking device in the public service vehicles at the time of checking of the vehicles for fitness certification. Command and Control Centres will be formed by the State/ Vehicle Location Tracking builders/any other agency authorised by the State Government.
- These centres will deliver information to the 'VAHAN' data base of the State with regard to the over speeding device "healthstatus".
- The details of each Vehicle Location Tracking device will be uploaded on the VAHAN database by the Vehicle Location Tracking device producers using its protected authenticated access.
- The Vehicle Location Tracking device producers will install the Vehicle Location Tracking devices in public service vehicles and register the devices along with details of vehicle on the equivalent backend systems in real-time.
- Vehicle Location Tracking device creators will get their devices tested for conformity of production every year following

the 1st certification from the testing agencies as per to the Rule126 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.

USITC rules against anti-dumping duty on PTFE resin from - India, China

The United States International Trade Commission governed against putting an anti-dumping duty on the import of an artificial fluoropolymer from India and China. The fluoropolymer is an important ingredient in the non-stick coating for pans and other cooking utensils.

It is non-reactive, due to the power of carbon-fluorine bonds and thus, it is often utilised in containers and pipework for corrosive chemicals. When used as a lubricant, polytetrafluoroethylene decreases friction, wear and energy consumption of machinery. It is also normally used as a graft material in surgical intercessions as well as used as a coating on catheters. The United States International Trade Commission noted in its governing that polytetrafluoroethylene resin from India and China were traded in the United States at less than fair value.

Key Highlights

- The United States International Trade Commission declared that no anti-dumping duty orders will be released on the imports of polytetrafluoroethylene resin from China and India, as a result of its negative purposes.
- The counsel for the foreign exporters in this proceeding, Dharmendra Choudhary, informed that an anti-dumping order would have been released without this remarkable success at United States International Trade Commission.
- The counsel said that the federal American body usually sides with the United States domestic industry. He said that given the tremendously paltry success rate of



foreign exporters in United States International Trade Commission proceedings, this exceptional victory of Indian polytetrafluoroethylene exporters is all the more notable.

- The decision is supposed to oblige as a springboard for the Indian polytetrafluoroethylene exporters to cement their position in the United States market.

- Without the orders, polytetrafluoroethylene imports from India would have been subject to an antidumping duty of 22.78%.

- In addition, the Indian polytetrafluoroethylene exporters would also have been imperilled by a costly and time-consuming yearly cycle of administrative review of the anti-dumping order.

Ministry of Food Processing Industries issues guidelines for Operation Greens on - 5th November 2018

The Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries on November 5th, 2018 permitted the operationalisation strategy for Operation Greens. The Operation Greens was declared in the Budget speech of 2018-19 with an outlay of Rupees 500 crores to stabilise the supply of Tomato, Onion and Potato crops. It will make sure availability of Tomato, Onion and Potato crops throughout the nation round the year without price instability.

Assistance and eligibility

- The pattern of assistance will include of grants-in-aid at the price of 50% of the entitled project cost in all areas, subject to maximum Rupees 50 crores per project.

- Qualified Organisation who will be qualified to take part in the program would comprise State Agriculture and other Marketing Federations, Farmer Producer Organizations, cooperatives, companies, Self-

help groups, food processors, logistic operators, retail and wholesale chains; and central and state governments.

- The claimant fulfilling the entitlement criteria under the plan is needed to submit the online application on “SAMPADA” portal of the ministry attaching therewith complete documents.

Major Objectives

- To enhance value realisation of Tomato, Onion and Potato farmers by targeted interventions to fortify Tomato, Onion and Potato production clusters and their Farmer Producer Organisations.

- Price stabilisation for producers and consumers by appropriate production planning in the Tomato, Onion and Potato clusters.

- Reduction in post-harvest losses by formation of farm gate infrastructure, development of suitable agro-logistics, and formation of suitable storage capacity involving consumption centres.

- Rise in food processing capacities and value addition in Tomato, Onion and Potato value chain. Setting-up of a market intelligence network to gather real time information on demand and supply and price of Tomato, Onion and Potato crops.

Indian Coast Guard launches new Offshore patrol vessel - ICGS Varaha

Indian Coast Guard initiates new Offshore patrol vessel 'ICGS Varaha' at L&T Kattupalli shipyard near Chennai. It is 4th in the series of 98 M Offshore patrol vessels outlined and assembled indigenously by Larsen & Toubro.

More about ICGS Varaha

- It is equipped with advanced technology navigation and communication instrument, sensor and machinery.



- Its weapon power consists of One 30mm and Two 12.7mm guns with fire control system.
- It has been intended to attain maximum speed of 26 knots and has durability of 5,000 nautical miles.
- It also fitted with an Integrated Bridge System, Automated Power Management System, Integrated Platform Management System, and High-Power External Fire Fighting system.
- It can transport 1 twin engine helicopter and 4 high speed boats, including 2 inflatable boats, for boarding operation, search and rescue, law enforcement and maritime patrol.

○ It will also be enabling of transporting pollution response equipment to contain oil spill at sea.

Did you know?

In March 2015, Union Defence Ministry had presented contract to Larsen & Toubro for building 7 Offshore patrol vessels awarded. The 1st and 2nd ships of this project already have been distributed to Indian Coast Guard and are currently based in Western Coast and Eastern Coast of India and 3rd Offshore patrol vessel will be delivered in primary 2019. The shipyard will deliver all 7 ships by March 2021.

India, South Korea signed MoUs for strengthening cooperation in field of - Tourism and sports

India and South Korea inked 2 MoU for solidifying assistance in field of Tourism and sports during the visit of the 1st Lady of the Republic of Korea, Kim Jung-sook, to India. 1st Lady Kim was the Chief Guest at the Deepotsav programme held by UP and at the ceremony of the new Memorial of Queen Suriratna (Heo Hwang-ok) in Ayodhya.

MoU on cooperation in the field of Tourism and sports

○ The Union Ministry of Tourism inked a MoU with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of South Korea for fortifying collaboration in the field of Tourism.

○ Union Tourism Minister KJ Alphons and Do Jong-hwan, South Korean Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sports signed the Memorandum of Understanding.

○ Another Memorandum of Understanding was inked by Minister of State of Youth Affairs and Sports Rajyavardhan Rathore and the Korean Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Do Jong-hwan.

○ To increase bilateral cooperation in tourism sector and exchange of data related to tourism.

○ To inspire cooperation between tourism shareholders including hotels and tour operators with exchange programs for assistance in human resources development.

○ To inspire investment in the tourism and hospitality sectors with exchange visits of tour operators and media for promotion of two-way tourism.

○ To encourage safe, honourable and sustainable tourism with exchange of coaches, athletes, experts Exchange of scientific and methodical materials and dual training for athletes and officials.

○ Involvement in sports event, seminars, symposia and conferences.

Union Home Ministry releases Rs 113 crore to 6 Border States for development on - 5th November 2018

purpose The Union Ministry of Home Affairs on November 5th, 2018 issued Rupees 113.36 crores to Six Border States under the Border Area Development Programme to



advance the condition of people living in these isolated sites. These Six Border States are Assam, Nagaland, Sikkim, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.

With this, so far, the Home Ministry has issued a sum of Rupees 637.98 crores during 2018-19 to states having International Border. These funds were in totalling to Rupees 1100 crore released in 2017-18 for the all-round development of villages situated along the International Border in 17 states.

Border Area Development Programme

- The BADP was initiated in the year 1986-87 for balanced development of border areas of States bordering Pakistan namely, J&K, Punjab, Gujarat and Rajasthan and then it was extended to all the land borders.

- Nowadays, the Border Area Development Programme covers 111 border districts in 17 states to complete special development requirements of border population with a emphasis on the people living within 50 kms of the International Border.

- The 17 states are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, HP, J&K, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, UP, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

- The Border Area Development Programme schemes consist building of primary health centres, schools, and supply of drinking water, community centres, and drainage to enable sustainable living in border areas.

- It includes advancement of sports activities in border areas, promotion of rural tourism and border tourism, and safety of heritage sites.

- As many as 61 model villages are being established under the Border Area Development Programme to recover the quality of life for the border population.

India's nuclear submarine INS Arihant completes first 'deterrence patrol' on - 5th November 2018

Indian PM Narendra Modi on November 5th, 2018 declared that India's 1st indigenous nuclear submarine 'INS Arihant' has successfully accomplished its "1st deterrence patrol"

The expansion indicates the underwater warship has finished its maiden long-range mission with live nuclear-tipped missiles. On the event, PM Narendra Modi congratulated all people complicated in the process, especially the crew of INS Arihant for the great achievement.

Key Highlights

- The 6,000 tonnes INS Arihant was under development for 3 decades under a highly classified program, comes under the direct control of the Nuclear Command Authority led by Prime Minister Modi.

- Succeeding the successful completion of its deterrence patrol INS Arihant can now be measured a fully functional underwater ballistic missile delivery platform.

- The ballistic missile submarine is a planned asset as it can fire city destroying missiles from anywhere in the sea and continue undetected for a long duration.

- It can also snitch closer to the coast of an enemy country and fire ballistic missiles far-deep into their territory, which otherwise cannot be touched by land-based short ranged ballistic missiles.

US exempts India, China from its sanctions for buying Iranian oil on - 5th November 2018



The USA on November 5th, 2018 provisionally exempted 8 nations, including India from the United States approvals for buying Iranian oil. Talking during a press conference in Washington, United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo declared the list of the nations that are temporarily exempted from the approvals. The nations include India, China, Japan, Italy, Greece, South Korea, Taiwan and Turkey. The main aim of the US is to furnish the Iranian regime of the revenue it utilises to fund violent and destabilising actions throughout the Middle-East and around the world.

Key Highlights

- 2 among the relieved 8 nations have already completely finished imports of Iranian crude oil and will not resume as long as the United States approves regime remains in place.
- The United States is seeking to continue negotiations to get all of the countries to bring down their crude imports from Iran to nil.
- More than 20 importing countries have already zeroed out their imports of crude oil, taking above One million barrels of crude every day off the market.
- The Iranian regime, since May to till date, has vanished more than USD 2.5 billion in oil revenue.
- Besides this, 100% of the revenue Iran receives from the sale of oil will be seized in foreign accounts.
- Iran would only be capable to utilise the money for humanitarian trade/bilateral non-sanctioned goods.

Lucknow stadium renamed after Atal Bihari Vajpayee ahead of India-West Indies T20I match on - 5th November 2018

The newly-built Ekana International Stadium of Lucknow was renamed after former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on 5th November 2018. The stadium will be known as 'Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee International Cricket Stadium'.

The stadium was renamed just ahead of the first-ever international cricket match - the T20 International between West Indies and India.

The city hosted its first international match at the stadium on 6th November 2018 where India was playing against West Indies in the second T20 International match.

Lucknow stadium renamed after Atal Bihari Vajpayee ahead of - India-West Indies T20I match

The freshly built Ekana International Stadium, Lucknow was renamed on November 5th, 2018 following former Indian PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The stadium will now be called as Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee International Cricket Stadium. The stadium was retitled just ahead of the 1st-ever international cricket T20 match between India and West Indies. The city organised its 1st International cricket match at the stadium on November 6th, 2018 when India played against West Indies in their 2nd T20 International match.

Similar Initiatives Undertaken

- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh declared to rename the forthcoming capital Naya Raipur as Atal Nagar.
- CM Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath also finalised to name the planned Bundelkhand Expressway as 'Atal Path'.
- AIIMS Rishikesh auditorium, which is a ghat on Sabarmati River in Gujarat and the



cyber tower in Mauritius will also be named after Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

- Even, North Delhi Municipal Corporation is fusing a list of institutions consisting parks, schools, and hospitals to be named in the honour of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

- AP wants to name AIIMS Mangalagiri after Vajpayee; and HP also wants to rename the Rohtang Tunnel after him.

- Several states including Andhra Pradesh, HP, Assam, and MP have requested the Central Government to rename landmarks after Vajpayee.

- Shivraj Singh Chouhan has pursued Central Government's approval to modify the name of Habibganj railway station in Madhya Pradesh after him.

- The state government of MP has also finalised to construct 2 memorials in Gwalior and Bhopal and include a biography on Vajpayee in the school curriculum from coming year to reserve the memory of the late leader.

- The HP cabinet also sanctioned the suggestion to install a statue of Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Shimla's historic Ridge.

United Nations Postal System issues special postal stamps to mark - Diwali celebration

UN Postal Administration has released special stamps with Diya lamps to honour India Hindu festival Diwali. These stamps are available at United Nations HQ post office in New York, United States and online also.

Important Facts

- The special event sheet (stamps) release by United Nations Postal

Administration are in denomination of US \$1.15.

- It includes 10 stamps and tabs featuring festive lights and symbolic diyas. The background of sheet represents UN Headquarters structure illuminated with message of "Happy Diwali" to observe the spirit of the festival.

- The description associated information about stamps mentioned that Diwali is joyous and popular festival of lights, which is observed in India and by followers of many faiths worldwide.

- It also said that during celebrations clay made diyas are lit to imply the victory of good over evil. The festival also signifies beginning of new year for many communities.

United Nations Postal Administration

United Nations Postal Administration is a postal agency of UNs. It releases postage stamps and postal stationery, denominated in US \$ for UNs offices in New York, in Swiss francs for offices in Geneva and in Euros for the offices in Vienna. Postage rates applied are identical to those of the host country.

UN World Food Programme, Alibaba Group form strategic partnership to - Eliminate hunger

UNs World Food Programme and Chinese e-commerce leader Alibaba Group have planned strategic partnership for backing efforts eradicate hunger worldwide by 2030. The contract was inked between World Food Programme Executive Director David Beasley and Alibaba Partner and Chairman Sun Lijun at Alibaba's HQs in Hangzhou, China.

Important Facts

- Under this contract, Alibaba will loan its cutting-edge technology and capitals to



support digital transformation of World Food Programme's operations.

- In actual, Alibaba Cloud, the cloud computing branch of Alibaba will effort with World Food Programme to progress digital "World Hunger Map".

- The map will assist to monitor universal hunger and operations to eradicate scourge by 2030 which is one of United Nation's important Sustainable Development aims.

- It also goals to improve efficiency of interventions and condense emergency response times.

More about World Food Programme

- The World Food Programme is the food-assistance arm of the UN. It is the world's principal humanitarian group talking hunger and promoting food security.

- It works to benefit people who cannot produce/obtain sufficient food for themselves as well as their families.

- It is a member of the UNDG and part of its Executive Committee.

- It was recognized in 1961 following 1960 Food and Agricultural Organization Conference.

- It delivers food support to an average of 80 million people in 75 nations every year.

India re-elected as member of ITU council till 2022 from - 2019

India has been designated as a member of the International Telecommunications Union Council- ITU for additional four years from 2019 to 2022. The declaration was done by the Union Government on November 6th, 2018. Talking on this, Telecom Minister Manoj Sinha informed that department is pleased to see India as a member of the International Telecommunications Union Council again. This is a recognition of the role

that India plays in the area of Telecom and ICT on the global stage."

Important Highlights

- The elections to the Council were organised during the continuous International Telecommunications Union Council Plenipotentiary Conference 2018 at Dubai.

- India won 165 votes and placed 3rd among the 13 nations designated to the council from the Asia-Australasia region and 8th among the 48 nations elected to the council globally.

- The International Telecommunications Union Council has 193-member states, which chose representatives to the council.

- India has been an active member of the International Telecommunications Union Council since 1869, sincerely supporting the development and proliferation of telecom in the global community of countries.

Did you know?

India has been a steady member of the International Telecommunications Union Council since 1952 and has played an imperative role in harmonising the contributions of member states from the region, always regarding the moralities of equality and consensus-building. India's strong association with the International Telecommunications Union is also verified in the recent International Telecommunications Union Council conclusion to form the International Telecommunications Union South Asia Area Office and Technology Innovation Centre in New Delhi. The centre is anticipated to be made operational by January 2019.

US exempts India from imposition of sanctions development of Chabahar Port in - Iran



USA has relieved India from imposition of few authorizations for development of strategically situated Chabahar port in Iran, along with building of railway line connecting it with landlocked Afghanistan. The decision comes into existence following United States imposed toughest permissions on Iran under Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act, 2012.

Important Points

- The exclusions to India are with respect to expansion of Chabahar port, building of associated railway lines and for shipment of non-authorized goods via port for Afghanistan's usage, and the nation's continued imports of Iranian petroleum products.
- This exclusion relates to reconstruction assistance and economic development for Afghanistan.
- These events are vigorous for continuing support of Afghanistan's growth and humanitarian relief.
- It is also part of United States President Donald Trump's South Asia strategy which emphasizes United States's constant support of Afghanistan's economic growth and development and close partnership with India.
- This strategy states that India has major role in maintaining peace and development in Afghanistan.

Did you know?

United States has forced toughest ever permissions on defiant Iran intended at altering the Iranian regime's behaviour. The permissions cover Iran's banking and energy sectors and reinstate penalties for nations and organisations in Europe, Asia and elsewhere that do not halt Iranian oil imports. However,

nations including India, China, Italy, Greece, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Turkey were momentarily permitted to endure buying Iranian oil as they showed noteworthy lessening in oil purchase from Iran.

India to resume exporting raw sugar to China from early 2019 by - The Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry

India devices to restart exporting raw sugar to China starting 2019, almost subsequently a decade. The initiative is a part of a greater goal of shifting emphasis to the foreign markets to shed excess stocks that have muted prices and resulted financial distress in the Indian sugar mills. The Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry informed same in a statement that Indian Sugar Mills Association and a public sector corporation of China, COFCO, have inked a agreement for exporting Fifteen thousand tonnes of raw sugar.

Key Highlights

- India devices to export 2 million tonnes of raw sugar to China starting coming year.
- Raw sugar is the 2nd product after non-basmati rice that China will import from India.
- The initiative is supposed to decrease the 60 billion trade shortfall that China has with India.
- India's export to China in 2017-18 amounted to 33 billion US dollars while imports remained at 76.2 billion dollars.

Did you know?

India formed a record 32.5 million tonnes of sugar in the 2017-18 financial year and the output is projected to be approximately the same level in the present marketing year. The yearly domestic demand is approximately 26 million tonnes. The nation also has an opening stock of Ten million tonnes at the



beginning of the present marketing year that initiated past month. The government is also conveying with many nations, including China and Indonesia, to enhance exports.

Funds worth Rs 25000 for graduate girls approved by - Bihar

The state cabinet of Bihar on November 8th, 2018 permitted a proposal to pay Rupees 25000 to every girl graduating in 2018 and onwards.

The decision was occupied at the cabinet meeting led by CM Nitish Kumar. According to the decision, the single-time payment will be done to every girl who graduated from the state colleges on or afterward April 25th, 2018, notwithstanding of the pass division, community or region.

Important Highlights

- The state cabinet has sanctioned Rupees 300 crore towards the disbursement of the payment.
- Approximately, One lakh Twenty thousand girls are anticipated to clear their graduation course in 2018.
- The scheme is a part of a larger government plan that goals to pay individual girl Rupees 54000 including the payments made to her, right from birth to graduation.

Other Approvals

- The cabinet allowed allotment of 50 acres of land without ant fee from the Bhagalpur Engineering College campus to the IIT Institute Society.
- The cabinet also approved a proposal to form 119 posts, including 109 of English instructors and 10 employability skills instructors, for the freshly created ITIs and extremist-affected districts for skill development.
- The cabinet also approved the formation of 132 new positions in the CID state police to man numerous branches for the weaker

sections in the districts, including the rail districts.

- The positions comprise 1 each of DSP (special crime), typist assistant sub-inspector and constable driver for every district.

Strategic Sale of Government Equity in Dredging Corporation of India approved by - CCEA

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has sanctioned strategic disinvestment of 100 percent Government of India's bonds in Dredging Corporation of India Limited- DCIL to association of 4 ports. Currently, Central Government embraces 73.44 percent shares in Dredging Corporation of India Limited. The association of 4 ports consists of Vishakhapatnam Port Trust at Andhra Pradesh, Paradeep Port Trust at Odisha, Jawahar Lal Nehru Port Trust at Maharashtra and Kandla Port Trust at Gujarat. The government's divestment goal for fiscal 2018-19 was Rupees 80,000 crore and till date it has garnered more than Rupees 15,000 crore from PSU share sales.

Importance

- Strategic sale of Dredging Corporation of India Limited will further simplify association of ransacking activities with ports, keeping in mind the role of Dredging Corporation of India Limited in expansion of dredging activity in the nation and potential scope for modification of ports into 3rd party dredging.
- The co-sharing of amenities between company and ports shall result into savings for ports.
- This will also further issue chances for larger investment in Dredging Corporation of India Limited as integration with ports shall benefit ineffective vertical connection in value chain.

Dredging Corporation of India Limited



- It is miniratna public sector unit involved in the business of dredging. It does dredge for Indian seaports completely.
- It is complicated in capital dredging, beach nourishment, and land renovation.
- It was recognized in March 1976 and is HQ in Visakhapatnam, AP.
- It presents report to the Ministry of Shipping. Nearly all maintenance dredging in Indian seaports is carried out by DCI.
- It also infrequently dredges at overseas seaports in nations such as Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Dubai.

Leasing out six airports through Public Private Partnership approved by - Cabinet

Union Cabinet led by the PM Narendra Modi has permitted leasing out 6 airports of Airports Authority of India for operation, management and expansion under Public Private Partnership in the 1st phase. This will be completed via Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee. Union Cabinet also permitted composition of Empowered Group of Secretaries headed by Chief Executive Officer, NITI Aayog with Secretaries of Ministry of Civil Aviation, Department of Economic Affairs and Department of Expenditure to decide on any matter falling beyond scope of Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee.

Benefits

- Public Private Partnership in infrastructure projects carries efficiency in service delivery, enterprise, proficiency and professionalism apart from binding desirable investments in public sector.
- The Public Private Partnership in airport infrastructure projects has fetched world class infrastructure at airports, delivery of timely services to airport passengers, enhancing revenue stream to Airport Authority of

India without accomplishing any investment, for expansion of Greenfield Airports.

- Currently, Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Cochin airports are being accomplished under Public Private Partnership model.
- Public Private Partnership airports in India have been hierarchical among top Five in their respective categories by Airports Council International in terms of Airport Service Quality.
- These Public Private Partnership experiments have facilitated to develop world class airports and also assisted Airport Authority of India in facilitating its incomes and concentrating on evolving airports and air navigation infrastructure in rest of the nation.

India, Singapore bilateral naval exercise 'SIMBEX 2018' started from - 10th November 2018

The 25th edition of SIMBEX, "Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise" is started from 10th November and will continue till 21st, 2018 in the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal. The 2018 edition has marked the silver jubilee of SIMBEX. To mark this historical occasion, the navies of both the countries are undertaking exercises over an extended geography.

Important Highlights

- The 2018 edition of the bilateral maritime exercise will going to be the largest edition since 1994 in terms of complexity and scale.
- The initial harbour phase will be holding at Port Blair which is the capital of Andaman and Nicobar Islands between 10th November to 12th November, which will be followed by sea phase from November 12th-16th in the Andaman Sea.



○ The second harbour phase will going to be held from November 16th to 19th at Visakhapatnam – ‘the City of Destiny’.

○ The harbour phase would also be including programs such as a silver jubilee commemoration ceremony, various professional and training interactions, 10 Km ‘Friendship Run’ during the Annual Vizag-Navy Marathon, social evening and joint cultural programs to observe the 25th anniversary.

○ The final sea phase would be held in the Bay of Bengal between 19th November to 21st November.

○ The SIMBEX 2018 will also be witnessing a diverse range of exercises at sea ranging from live weapon drills including multiple missile firings, HWT(Heavy Weight Torpedo) and medium range gun/ anti submarine rocket firings, advanced Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) exercises, submarine rescue demonstrations, integrated Surface and Anti-Air Warfare (AAW), UAV(Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) operations and cross deck helicopter flying among others.

Who has been appointed as Chairperson of Competition Commission of India ? - Ashok Kumar Gupta

Appointments Committee of the Cabinet led by PM Narendra Modi has selected previous IAS officer Ashok Kumar Gupta as Chairperson of Competition Commission of India- CCI. He replaces acting chairperson Sudhir Mital. He will be in the office till October 25th, 2022 or until further orders, whichever is the earliest. Gupta is earlier IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre.

More about Competition Commission of India

○ Competition Commission of India is quasi-judicial statutory organisation formed under The Competition Act, 2002.

○ It was recognized in October 2003 and became completely practical in May 2009.

○ Section 8(1) of the Act provides Competition Commission of India shall comprise of Chairperson and not less than 2 and not above 6 Members.

○ Currently, Chairperson and 4 Members are in post. It has been operational as collegium right from its inception.

○ Competition Commission of India goals to eradicate practices that unfavourably affect competition in diverse industries and defend interests of consumers and make sure freedom of trade.

○ It pursues to eradicate practices having contrary effect on competition, promote and sustain competition, defend interests of customers and make sure freedom of trade in Indian markets.

○ It also provides estimation on competition matters on reference received from statutory authority recognized under any law and undertakes competition advocacy, create public awareness and inform training on competition matters.

Who has been presented with France’s highest civilian honour ? - Jawahar Lal Sarin

Well-known French scholar Jawahar Lal Sarin was bestowed with France’s highest civilian award Chevalier de la Lgion d’Honneur. He was bestowed with this honour in recognition of his outstanding contribution to enhance Indo-French cultural cooperation and encouraging French language. Jawahar Lal Sarin is President of Alliance française de Delhi’s governing organisation. He had learned French for 5



years at the Punjab University, Chandigarh, and far along at the Sorbonne University, Paris.

More about Legion d'Honneur

- It is the highest civilian award offered by the French government to individual for his outstanding service to France, regardless of the citizenship.
- It was introduced in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte.
- The merit for both military and civil merits, is separated into 5 degrees of growing distinction: Chevalier as Knight, Officier as Officer, Commandeur as Commander, Grand officier as Grand Officer, and Grand-croix as Grand Cross. Actors Amitabh Bachchan and Shahrukh Khan were also bestowed in 2007 and 2014.
- Other Indians who were also bestowed are Amartya Sen, Ravi Shankar, Zubin Mehta, Lata Mangeshkar, JRD Tata and Ratan Tata among others.

World leaders mark 100 years since end of First World War on - 11th November 2018

World leaders assembled in Paris on November 11th, 2018 to head the global commemorations to mark 100 years since the finish of the 1st World War. The event witnessed about 70 leaders gathered consisting United States President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin to spot the centenary of the 1918 Armistice in the French capital.

The memorial service was planned by the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which lies at the foot of the Arc de Triomphe monument in Paris.

Key Highlights

- The Paris Peace Forum is a fresh yearly event grounded on an idea that International assistance is important to tackling global challenges and making sure durable peace.

- Projected by French President Emmanuel Macron, the Peace forum is focused at highlighting the reputation of international institutions in serving resolve fights, prevent wars and spread prosperity.

- The forum is a fragment of the 'fightback' against nationalism around the world.

- The main goal of the conference is to present that there are lots of forces in the international system including states, NGOs, foundations, intellectuals, firms, who believe that there is a necessity of a world of rules, an open world and a multilateral world.

- The 1st World War witnessed about 70 of the modern-day countries in battle with each other with 6 main colonial powers in the centre counting Austria-Hungary, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the Ottoman Empire.

- Approximately ten million soldiers are anticipated to have been killed during the war and above double the number wounded.

- Among the civilians, around 5-10 million are projected to have been killed.

PK Dash, Akhilesh Ranjan and Neena Kumar inducted as members of - CBDT

Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has selected 3 senior Indian Revenue Service officers K Dash, Akhilesh Ranjan and Neena Kumar as fresh members of Central Board of Direct Taxes. All 3 members belong to 1982 batch of the Indian Revenue Service. Earlier to this selection, Dash was working as Principal Chief commissioner of I-T in Bhopal, Ranjan and Kumar were serving as PCCsIT in Delhi. With these 3-fresh joining, Central Board of Direct Taxes now has full house working strength of 5 members and chairman. The 2 other members of Central Board of Direct Taxes are Indian Revenue Service officers Aditya Vikram and P C Mody while the



board's Chairman is Sushil Chandra.

More about Central Board of Direct Taxes

- Central Board of Direct Taxes is nodal policy forming body of Income Tax department under Finance Ministry. It is a statutory authority recognized under The Central Board of Revenue Act, 1963.
- It is superlative body in India for bordering policies linked to direct taxes and is also tasked to enforce direct tax laws in the nation.
- The configuration of Central Board of Direct Taxes includes Chairman and 6 members.

Agreement with US-based RIFM for improving the quality of fragrant oils signed by - CIMAP

Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants- CIMAP has inked Memorandum of Understanding with United States grounded Research Institute for Fragrant Materials- RIFM for enlightening the quality of fragrant oils. It was inked at conclusion of 2 days annual conference of International Fragrance Association, Paris. Team of Research Institute for Fragrant Materials had visited the Lucknow HQ of Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants earlier in 2018 to upsurge the acceptability and mandate of Indian fragrances on a global level. The debates during the visit resulted in inking of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Advantages

- It will go long way in normalizing fragrant material fashioned in India and bring it to an International level.
- It will assist boosting fragrance quality in India as Research Institute for Fragrant Materials internationally homogenizes the quality of fragrant materials. It will stretch

impetus to aroma mission of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research which goals at improving production of fragrant materials.

Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants

- CIMAP is a frontier plant research laboratory of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research.
- It was originally recognized as Central Indian Medicinal Plants Organisation in 1959. It is HQ in Lucknow, UP.
- It has 4 research centres located in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Pantnagar and Purara near Bageshwar, Uttarakhand.
- It is involved in the field of science and business of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants.
- It directs multi-disciplinary high-quality research in biological and chemical sciences and encompassing technologies and services to farmers and businesspersons of Medicinal and aromatic plants.

India, Singapore bilateral naval exercise SIMBEX 2018 began on - 10th November 2018

India and Singapore will organise 25 joint naval exercise- SIMBEX, abbreviation for Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise from November 10th-21st in India off Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal. SIMBEX 2018 will highlight silver jubilee of exercise and will be largest edition since 1994 in terms of scale and complexity.

More about SIMBEX 2018

- It will saw diverse range of exercises at sea including live weapon drills consisting multiple missile firings, heavy weight torpedo and medium-range gun and anti-submarine rocket firings; advanced anti-submarine warfare exercises and anti-air warfare;



unmanned aerial vehicle operations and cross deck helicopter flying among others.

- The original 1st harbour phase of the exercise will be organised at Port Blair tracked by Sea Phase in Andaman.

- 2nd harbour phase will be organised at Visakhapatnam. Final sea phase will be organised in Bay of Bengal. The number of missiles and torpedo firings in this exercise will be major ever undertaken by Indian Navy with any foreign Navy till date.

- Indian Navy for this exercise will be deploying Ranvir class destroyer INS Ranvijay, 2 Project 17 multirole stealth frigates INS Satpura and INS Sahyadri, Project 28 ASW corvette INS Kadmatt, Project 25A missile corvettes, INS Kirch and INS Sukanya, Fleet Support Ship, INS Shakti, Sindhughosh Class submarine, INS Sindhukirti, P8I Long Range Maritime Patrol and Dornier 228 Maritime Patrol aircraft from INAS 311, Mk 132 Hawk AJTs from INAS 551 and integral helicopters such as the UH3H, Seaking 42 B, Seaking 42C and Chetak utility helicopters.

- Singapore Navy will be deploying represented by 2 Formidable Class stealth frigates RSS Formidable and RSS Steadfast, 2 Missile Corvettes, RSS Vigour and RSS Valiant, 1 Littoral Mission Vessel RSS Unity, Archer class Submarine, RSS Swordsman, 'Swift Rescue' Deep Sea Rescue Vehicle, Fokker F50 maritime reconnaissance aircraft, embarked S70B helicopters and Scan Eagle unmanned aerial systems.

Ladakh restoration project wins 2018 UNESCO Asia-Pacific award for - Cultural Heritage conservation

The restoration of an aristocratic house project from partial ruin state in Ladakh

undertaken by LAMO Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation, Centre has secured 2018 UNESCO Asia-Pacific award for Cultural Heritage conservation in Award of Distinction category. Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation is public charitable trust recognized to articulate an alternative vision for the arts and media in Ladakh region.

Important Points

- The re-established structure is strategically situated at the foot of Leh palace, contributing to continuity of historic townscape of 17th century.

- Its recovery creates precedent for preserving non-monumental urban fabric of Leh Old Town.

- Under restoration project, Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation had utilised rescued and local building materials and Indian construction techniques and skilfully presented modern facilities to guarantee its ongoing usage.

Other Category awardees

- Award of Excellence was awarded to restoration project of early 20 th century Shijocho Ofune-hoko Float Machiya in Japan.

- It rejoices Kyoto culture by protecting city's threatened wooden townhouse typology and iconic annual Gion Festival.

- Award of Distinction was awarded to Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation Center, Ladakh, India Award of Merit was presented to 5 Martin Place, Sydney- Australia; Aijing Zhuang, Fujian China; Commercial Bank of Honjo Warehouse, Saitama- Japan.

- Honourable Mention awarded to Hengdaohezi Town, Heilongjiang- China, Rajabai Clock Tower University of Mumbai Library Building, Mumbai- India, Ruttonsee Muljee Jetha Fountain, Mumbai- India.



- New Design in Heritage Contexts was awarded to Kaomai Estate 1955, Chiang Mai, Thailand and Harts Mill, Port Adelaide, Australia.

UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for - Cultural Heritage Conservation

It was recognized in 2000 and it establishes efforts of private entities and establishments that have effectively preserved structures and buildings of heritage value in the region. It intends to inspire other property owners to undertake preservation projects within their communities, either independently or by looking for Public-Private Partnerships.

Indian Army inducts 3 artillery gun system

- Indian Army inducted 3 major Globally Combat proven artillery gun systems including M777 A2 ultra-light howitzers, K-9 Vajra tracked self-propelled guns and 'Composite Gun Towing Vehicle' at Deolali Field Firing Range, Maharashtra.

- These are 1st artillery gun systems to be received by Indian Army in 3 decades. Last received was Bofors artillery gun system acquired from Sweden in early 1980s.

Important Points

- M777 A2 Ultra-Light Howitzers is 155mm, 39 Calibre Ultra-Light Howitzers towed artillery gun, with extreme range of 24-30 kilometres obtained from United States.

- It being versatile and light-weighted can be heli-lifted, thus providing employment flexibility in different terrains.

- Under it, 25 guns will be imported and remaining will be accumulated in India by BAE Systems in partnership with Mahindra Défense.

- Deliveries will be accomplished by mid-2021.

- The gun systems introduction delivers a major motivation to Make in India initiative.

- K9 Vajra guns is a 155mm, 52 calibre self-propelled gun with extreme range of 40-kms.

- It will be imported from South Korea. It is modified version of original K9 Thunder artillery gun for desert conditions.

- Overall 100 units will be procured by Army, and 1st 10 will be imported in semi knocked down form from South Korea and assembled by L&T in India and remaining 90 will be factory-made in India.

- The 1st regiment of K9 will be fitted by July 2019 and all 100 guns will be delivered by November 2020.

- Common Gun Tower is a 6x6 field artillery tractor which is industrialized in India by Ashok Leyland. It has cross nation capability and will replace ageing fleet of artillery gun towing vehicles.

Long cohabitation is presumed marriage by - Supreme Court Directed

Supreme Court has sustained presumption that couple who live together as husband and wife are legally married and woman can entitle maintenance under Section 125 of Code of Criminal Procedure. The top court detained that law presumes in favour of marriage and against concubinage when man and woman have live-together uninterruptedly for a number of years.

Court Ruling

- A male who lived with female for long time and even though they may not have undergone legal provisions of valid marriage is accountable to pay the female maintenance if he deserts her.

- In this case, male should not be permitted to advantage from legal loopholes by enjoying benefits of de facto marriage without undertaking duties and responsibilities.



• Any other interpretation in this case will lead female to homelessness and destitution, which provision of maintenance in Section 125 of CrPC is meant to avert.

Did you know?

This judgment of Supreme Court was grounded on appeal filed by female against Karnataka High Court decision of June 2009. The High Court had set aside family court order, guiding man she lived with since 1998 and had 2 children by to pay maintenance. Their relationship in this case was solemnised in a temple and husband of female had later uninhibited the family. The family court had directed him to pay maintenance to female and their children every month. This court had held the couple is accepted as husband and wife by society. The man had however had forwarded appeal in High Court, which marked that there was no proof that she was his legally-wedded wife.

Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities held in - New Delhi

The Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities- GITC 2018 organised in New Delhi from November 9th-11th, 2018. It was co-hosted by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Korea and its organising associates Rehabilitation International Korea and LG Group.

Important Points

• Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities is being organised every year in Asia-Pacific area and such programmes were organised in past in nations like South Korea, China, Thailand, Vietnam and many more.

• The aim of Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities was to leverage IT skills among youngsters with disabilities and also to increase awareness about usage of Information and Computer Technology in improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities.

• The programme witnessed contribution approximately 300 contestants including 120 Youth with disabilities from 24 Asia Pacific nations.

Sri Lankan PM leaves Presidents Party to join - Sri Lanka People's Party

Newly selected Sri Lankan PM Mahinda Rajapaksa finished his 5 decades long connotation with Sri Lanka Freedom Party and linked with newly-formed Sri Lanka People's Party. Sri Lanka Freedom Party was initiated by his father Don Alwin Rajapaksa in 1951. Rajapaksa's linking with Sri Lanka People's Party points that he will contest snap polls, under his own party banner and not that of President Maithripala Sirisena's SLF Party. Sri Lanka People's Party was designed in 2017 by Rajapaksa's supporters for his re-entry into politics. In February 2018 local council elections Sri Lanka People's Party won 2/3 of total 340 seats.

Sri Lankan Political and Constitutional Crisis

• In January 2015 Presidential election, then President Mahinda Rajapaksa was surprisingly beaten by his then deputy Sirisena with backing from Ranil Wickremesinghe's United National Party.

• But, power-sharing planning between President Sirisena and Prime Minister Wickremesinghe in later times became progressively uncertain on numerous policy matters, mainly on economy and security.

• Further crack had established between them over policy towards China and India,



with Wickremesinghe favouring Indian investment as counter to Chinese inroads in Sri Lankan infrastructure projects and Sirisena's intention to challenge 2020 presidential election under Mr Wickremesinghe's party.

- In October 2018 Sirisena had rudely unconcerned Wickremesinghe and substituted with Rajapaksa, a pro-China strongman as new PM. This initiative had jumped Sri Lanka into political and legitimate crisis.

33rd ASEAN Summit begins in Singapore on - 11th November 2018

The 33rd edition of the ASEAN Summit started on November 11th, 2018 at Suntec Singapore Convention Centre, Singapore. The opening ceremony of the summit will occur on November 13th, 2018. Lee Hsien Loong, PM of Singapore, is the Chairman of this year's Summit.

The Summit will remain till November 15th, 2018 along with other associated summits including East Asia Summit, Regional Comprehensive Economic Summit and ASEAN plus summits.

The Summit will witness the presence of leaders of partner nations including Russian President Vladimir Putin, Canadian PM Justin Trudeau, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japan's PM Shinzo Abe. However, the United States President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping will not be in attendance.

The Vice President Mike Pence will signify the United States, while the Chinese side will be characterized by Premier Li Keqiang.

Prospective events

- More than 400 organisations from more than 100 nations are participating as exhibitors in the summit.

- Apart from leaders of all Ten ASEAN nations, heads of Eight key partner countries of ASEAN will also be taking part.

- The ASEAN leaders are anticipated to accept the ASEAN Smart Cities Framework and take stock of ASEAN's accomplishments in 2018 in firming ASEAN's resilience and innovation.

- The ASEAN leaders, along with their complements from nations taking part in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, will deliberate the process of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership negotiations at the second Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Summit.

- The leaders will also interchange views on regional and international matters with their counterparts at the 21st ASEAN Plus Three Summit and 13th East Asia Summit.

- On the final day of Summit November 15th, Singapore Prime Minister Lee will hand over the ASEAN Chairmanship to Thailand's PM Prayut Chan-o-cha.

Public Service Broadcasting Day observed across India on - 12th November 2018

The Public Service Broadcasting Day was celebrated across India on November 12th, 2018. The day is celebrated every year to celebrate the 1st and last visit of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi to the studio of All India Radio, Delhi in 1947. Mahatma Gandhi had on November 12th, 1947 visited the studio of All India Radio to address the evacuated people from Pakistan who were provisionally settled in Kurukshetra, Haryana after the partition of the Indian subcontinent.

More about the Day



- On November 12th, 2018, 70 years ago Mahatma Gandhi stayed the All India Radio office for his 1st and last live broadcast.

- Gandhiji had finalised to carry his message through radio, as he couldn't visit the refugees of Partition stationed at Kurukshetra in Haryana.

- The words, which were spoken by Gandhiji on that day, became a treasure and an extract of the speech is played on November 12th every year.

- Mahatma Gandhi was neither the PM nor the President, he didn't grasp any position. Like a common inhabitant he spoke from the All India Radio studio.

- The day was acknowledged as the Jan Prasaran Diwas or Public Service Broadcasting Day in 2000, afterward it was conceptualised by Suhas Borker, Convenor, Jan Prasar.

• Portable cold storage device developed by - IIT-Madras

Indian Institute of Technology Madras has established portable solar power-driven cold storage device with 500 kgs capacity for storing vegetables and fruits, among other items. The device will benefit farmers for storing their produce for adequate time for preventing it being spoild before being sold, to avoid wastage of agricultural produce. The 1st unit of device was positioned at farm in Madurantakam in Kancheepuram district in Tamil Nadu.

Solar-powered cold storage device

- It has been established under project subsidized by Department of Science and Technology under Ministry of Science and Technology and IIT-Madras.

- It provides storage capability with temperature ADB to provide US \$13 million

loan to EESL to promote efficient energy usage in India Asian Development Bank will issue US \$13 million loan to Energy Efficiency Services to encourage efficient energy use in India. It will be issued by Global Environment Facility as part of US \$200 million Asian Development Bank financed Demand-Side Energy Efficiency Sector Project.

Important Points

- Asian Development Bank capital is assisting Energy Efficiency Services Limited finance energy service services for mounting recognized energy-efficient skills such as Light Emitting Diode- LED street lights with municipalities, while exploring fresh technologies and their self-supporting business models.

- The added financing for project through Global Environment Facility grant will be utilised by Energy Efficiency Services Limited for accomplishing investments in fresh and emerging technologies, consisting trigeneration, efficient motors and air-conditioners, smart meters and related new business models to increase usage of such innovations.

Asian Development Bank

- Asian Development Bank is a regional development bank located out of Asia.

- It goals to encourage social and economic development in Asia by accomplishing a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while supporting its efforts to eliminate extreme poverty.

- It was recognized in December 1966 and its HQ is at Ortigas Centre in Manila, Philippines. It has over-all 67 members, of which 48 are from within Asia and the Pacific and 19 outside.

National Education Day celebrated on -
11th November 2018



National Education Day of India is observed every year on 11th November to celebrate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who was the 1st education minister of independent India. Present year, it was 130th birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. As 1st education minister of India, Azad had overseen formation of national education system with free Primary Education and modern foundations of higher education. He is also attributed with founding of IITs and laid foundation of UGCs, an imperative institution to supervise and advance higher education throughout the nation.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

- Maulana Abul Kalam was born on 11th November 1888 and passed away on 22nd February 1958.
- He was senior Muslim leader of Indian National Congress during Indian independence movement.
- He was 1st Minister of Education of Independent India.
- He had played vital role in foundation of Jamia Millia Islamia at Aligarh, UP. He supported in shifting campus of university from Aligarh to New Delhi in 1934.

Did you know?
National Education Day was introduced by Union Ministry of Human Resource Development in 2008 proclaimed to celebrate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad for recalling his contribution to cause of education in India. Its aim is to toughen educational institutions and to increase quality of education to greater heights.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates Inland Multi-Modal Terminal Port in Varanasi on - 12th November 2018

PM Narendra Modi on November 12th, 2018 initiated an Inland Multi-Modal Terminal Port on river Ganga at Ramnagar in Varanasi. This Multi-Modal Terminal Port was built at the cost of Rupees 207 crores on National Waterways-I on River Ganga as part of the World Bank-aided Jal Marg Vikas project of the Inland Waterways Authority of India. The other 3 terminals are under construction at Sahibganj, Haldia and Gazipur.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, led by PM Narendra Modi on January 3rd, 2017 sanctioned the implementation of the Jal Marg Vikas Project for capacity augmentation of navigation on National Waterway-1. The project was permitted at a cost of Rupees 5369.18 crore with the technical help and investment support of the World Bank.

More about Jal Marg Vikas Project

- The Jal Marg Vikas Project intends to enable commercial navigation of vessels with the size of 1500 - 2000 tons on NW-1.
- The development and operations of the NW-1 project will result to direct and indirect employment generation in the states of UP, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal.
- The project consists development of fairway, Multi-Modal Terminals at Varanasi, Haldia and Sahibganj, strong river navigation system, modern River Information System, Digital Global Positioning System, night navigation facilities, construction of a navigational lock at Farakka.
- The NW-1 along with planned Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor and NH-2 constitutes the Eastern Transport Corridor of India linking the National Capital Region with the eastern and North-Eastern states.
- This waterway will work as a connection to Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Nepal and other east and South-East Asian nations



via Kolkata Port and Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route.

- The Jal Marg Vikas Project will result in an environment-friendly, fuel-efficient and less costly alternative mode of transportation, especially for bulk goods and over-dimensional cargo.

Largest brain-mimicking supercomputer "SpiNNaker" switched on , constructed at - University of Manchester

The World's largest supercomputer "Spiking Neural Network Architecture-SpiNNaker" machine planned to work in similar way as human brain was switched-on for the 1st time.

More about SpiNNaker

- It was designed and constructed at University of Manchester in United Kingdom.

- It can model additional biological neurons in real time than any other machine on planet.

- Biological neurons are basic brain cells found in nervous system that communicate by releasing spikes of pure electro-chemical energy.

- It is neuromorphic computing that utilises large scale computer systems having electronic circuits to mimic these spikes in a machine.

- It is talented for completing above 200 million actions/second, with each of its chips containing 100 million transistors.

- It is unique as it mimics the immensely parallel communication architecture of brain, conveyance billions of small amounts of data instantaneously to thousands of different destinations.

- It also unique due to the reason that, unlike traditional computers, it does not interconnect by sending big sets of

information from point A to B via standard network.

Potential Applications

- It has huge potential for neurological innovations in science including pharmaceutical testing. It can be utilised to harness to control robot which can interpret real-time visual information and circumnavigate towards confident objects while ignoring others.

- It can also benefit to unlock few of secrets of how human brain performs by running unprecedentedly huge simulations.

- It will permit roboticists to design huge-scale neural networks into mobile robots so they can walk, talk and locomote with flexibility and low power.

ISPRL, ADNOC sign MoU to explore storage of crude oil on - 12th November 2018

The Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd- ISPRL on November 12th, 2018 inked a MoU with the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company- ADNOC in Abu Dhabi to explore the possibility of storing Abu Dhabi National Oil Company crude oil at Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd.'s underground oil storage capability at Padur in Karnataka, which has a 2.5 million tonne storage capacity.

The MoU was inked by Abdulla Salem Al Dhaheri, Director of Marketing, Sales and Trading at Abu Dhabi National Oil Company and Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd CEO, MD HPS Ahuja on the side-lines of the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference. Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan witnessed the occasion along with UAE Minister of State and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company Group CEO Dr.



Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber.

Important Points

- Under the agreement, Abu Dhabi National Oil Company is predictable to store crude in compartments at Padur.
- The Memorandum of Understanding follows the arrival of the final shipment of the early delivery on November 4th of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company crude to be stored in another Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd underground capability at Mangalore, also in Karnataka, which will store 5.86 million barrels of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company crude oil.
- Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd is an Indian government-owned company mandated to store crude oil for emergency requests.
- Abu Dhabi National Oil Company is the only foreign oil and gas company, so far, to invest by way of crude oil in India's strategic petroleum reserves programme.

Significance

- India is a vital oil market and the Memorandum of Understanding underlines the strategic energy corporation between the UAE and India that influences the UAE and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company's expertise and oil resources.
- The agreement will permit Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd to explore, with Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, opportunities linked to the possible storage of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company crude at Padur, which would benefit to knowingly support the nation's strategic petroleum reserves.

Indian Navy - Indonesian Navy bilateral exercise 'Samudra Shakti' began on - 12th November 2018

The introductory edition of Indian and Indonesian Navy Bilateral Exercise "Samudra Shakti" started on November 12th, 2018 at Surabaya, Indonesia. The exercise will accomplish on November 18th, 2018. The INS Rana of the Eastern Fleet located at Visakhapatnam under the Eastern Naval Command reached at the port of Surabaya to take part in the exercise. The exercise goals to fortify bilateral relations, expand maritime co-operation, enhance interoperability and exchange best practices. The strategic partnership between both the countries was raised to 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' during the visit of PM Narendra Modi to Indonesia in May 2018.

Highlights of the Bilateral Exercise 'Samudra Shakti'

- The exercise started with a Harbour Phase planned from November 12th-15th encompassing planning and briefing on numerous activities, professional interactions, cross deck visits, sports fixtures and social interactions.
- The harbour phase will be trailed by a Sea Phase programmed from November 16th-18th and would consist operations, for example, Joint Manoeuvres, Helicopter Operations, Surface Warfare exercise, ASW exercise and Anti-Piracy exercises.
- The participation of Indian Naval Ship Rana pursues to encourage India's solidarity with Indonesia towards ensuring good order in the maritime domain and to fortify present ties between the navies of the both countries.

Government approves constitution of new boards of Governors for IIMs on - 12th November 2018

The Union Government on November 12th, 2018 permitted the process of constitution of new boards of Governors for 20 Indian



Institute of Managements according to the IIM Act 2017.

Talking on the same, Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar informed that the procedure of constitution of boards for the Indian Institute of Managements, which have been given complete powers of operating the institutions, is a major expansion which indicates complete autonomy of quality institutions in higher education and will ensure a quality development of higher education.

Key Highlights

- The endorsement for the constitution of the new boards for Indian Institute of Managements has been issued in consultation with the Union Ministry of Law and Justice.

- The procedure is in harmony with the provisions of Section 10 of the IIM Act 2017. The IIM Act is a historical step of the Government that for the 1st time provided wide-ranging autonomy to the higher educational institutions.

- In harmony with the spirit of the Act, Government has finalised to instantly withdraw the Government nominees who are in surplus of the provisions of the Act. This will form way for ample control of the institutions by reputed academicians and alumni.

- The procedure of constitution of the 1st boards would start with 3 Ex-officio members, who will nominate the Chairperson, who shall normally be the present Chairperson and would be given the full term under the new Act.

- The Chairperson would then head the further procedure of makeup of the boards as laid down under the Act.

- Thereafter, the board comprising of Chairperson and ex-officio members will co-opt 5 alumni from each of the Indian Institute of Managements, who will usually be the

present serving members, except in cases of ineligibility.

Government sets up National Data Repository shared by - Union Petroleum Minister

The Union Government has formed a state-of-the-art National Data Repository. The news was shared by Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan while speaking at the DG Carbons Roadshow program in Abu Dhabi.

The Minister informed that the repository is a database of entire geo-scientific data of hydrocarbon resources in the nation.

Significance

- With this, India has joined the league of nations including United Kingdom and Norway which have a National Data Repository for the upstream sector.

Objective

- The main aim is to form National Data Repository of reliable exploration and production statistics for India with provisions for seamless admission and online data management.

- To simplify efficient statistics reporting, statistics exchange and statistics trading among existing players including all geoscientific organisations.

- To expand DGH's ability to monitor and regulate the exploration and production activities and reporting.

- To inspire new exploration and production activities by delivering high quality and reliable data.

- To support an open domain system for a better-quality global exploration and production business environment in India.

Other Details



- The repository principally will protect National Exploration and Production statistics asset and shall benefit and promote exploration and production activities in India.

- It will store and preserve hydrocarbon exploration and production data in a harmless and reusable manner, in perpetuity.

- The data shall be conserved in accordance with normally accepted NDR standards and made available to entitled subscribers.

Global Cooling Innovation Summit held in - New Delhi

The 1st Global Cooling Innovation Summit was organised in New Delhi. It was initiated by Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan. It was mutually organised by Department of Science and Technology along with Alliance for An Energy-Efficient Economy, Rocky Mountain Institute, Conservation X Labs and CEPT University.

Global Cooling Innovation Summit

- The 2 days summit was 1st-of-its-kind solutions-oriented event planned to explore concrete means and ways to address climate threat that raised due to the increasing demand from room Air Conditioners.

- It saw participation from distinguished speakers worldwide, including innovators, philanthropists, venture capitalists and other manufacturing leaders.

- The launch of Global Cooling Prize was also declared on the side-lines of this summit.

- It will be International competition to incentivise expansion of residential cooling technology that will have 5 times less climate influence in comparison to standard room Air Conditioners sold presently.

Twitter launches #PowerOf18 campaign to boost youth engagement for - 2019 polls

Twitter India has initiated #PowerOf18 campaign intended at inspiring youth to contribute in public discussions and participate in civic engagement for the 2019 general elections. The resourcefulness was released by Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey and Maya Hari, Vice-President and MD, Asia Pacific, Twitter during townhall chat with the students of IIT-Delhi.

#PowerOf18 campaign

The campaign will work as resource for Indian youths to get additional information about elections,

support social causes they are obsessive about and join public debates. It is backed by Twitter's mission

to assist the public discussion and work with more like-minded partners and dispositions to create

awareness of reputation of voting.

Important Points

- The pact will assist to support bilateral assistance between India and Morocco.

- It will augment effectiveness and provide broad legal framework for inhibition, investigation and prosecution of crimes and also in tracing, restraint and confiscation of funds for finance terrorist activities.

- It will assist in countering fears posed by planned crime and terrorism.

Did you know?

In a countrywide survey directed with 3,622 youth respondents from India, Twitter noticed growing

reputation of social media for data consumption. It noticed that devastating 94 percent of defendants

indicating that they would cast their vote in the forthcoming elections. Nearly 60 percent of youth

measured would turn to social media to locate what's happening in India and around world, a



percentage greater than all other mediums including newspapers.

India and Morocco mark Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in -Criminal Matters

India and Morocco inked a pact on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, chiefly intended at containing menace of terrorists funding. It was inked in New Delhi by Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Kiren Rijju from the Indian side while Minister of Justice Mohamed Aujjar inked on behalf of Morocco government.

Flipkart co-founder, CEO Binny Bansal steps down on - 13th November 2018

Flipkart co-founder Binny Bansal on November 13th, 2018 declared his resignation as the CEO of the group, with immediate effect.

The decision was under lime light following Flipkart and Walmart issued a statement informing the same. The statement explained, "Earlier today, Binny Bansal declared his resignation as CEO of Flipkart Group, with immediate effect. Binny has been an imperative part of Flipkart since co-founding the organisation, but past events risked becoming a distraction and Binny has made a conclusion to step down." Now, Kalyan Krishnamurthy will remain as the CEO of Flipkart that now also comprises Myntra and Jabong, which will continue to work as separate platforms within the Flipkart business.

Further, Ananth Narayanan will remain as the CEO of Myntra and Jabong and will report straight to Kalyan. Sameer Nigam will also be the CEO of PhonePe. Both Kalyan and Sameer will report

straightway to the board. Did you know?

Binny Bansal's conclusion to step down from Flipkart comes less than 6 months after the news of American retailer Walmart buying Flipkart broke in the country. At the point of sale, Binny had continued while Flipkart's other co-founder Sachin Bansal finalised to leave the firm. Both the Bansal owners had detained 5.5% of share each in Flipkart. As a part of Walmart's condition that it could entertain only single Flipkart founders in the board, Sachin Bansal had resigned, selling his 5.5% share for a little more than Rs 6,700 crore. Binny Bansal, on the other hand, had reserved his 5.5% share in the firm and remained as the CEO of the group.

Before Flipkart, both Sachin and Binny worked with Amazon India as software developers but they finalised to leave within a short span of time to initiate something of their own.

World Diabetes Day celebrated on 14 November Worldwide on - 14th November 2018

World Diabetes Day was celebrated every year worldwide on 14th November to spread awareness

about diabetes. Celebrations of the day goals to pursue multilateral efforts to encourage and improve

human health and provide access to healthcare treatment and edification. The theme for World Diabetes Day 2018-2019 is "The Family and Diabetes". The 2 years theme

timeframe has been selected to raise awareness of the impression that diabetes has on the family and support network of those suffered and



promote role of family in management, care, prevention and education of diabetes.

More about Diabetes

- Diabetes is a chronic, progressive and non-communicable disease categorized by increased blood sugar levels.
- It occurs when (1) the pancreas does not secrete enough insulin hormone, which regulates blood glucose or (2) the body cannot efficiently utilise the produced insulin.
- Type-1 diabetes occurs when the body doesn't make enough insulin, and similarly, Type-2 diabetes occurs when the body doesn't utilise insulin efficiently, causing blood sugar to remain in the blood, which leads to serious issues in human body.
- The main symptoms of diabetes are additional fatigue, frequent urination, dysentery, excessive thirst, etc. Diabetes can also be genetic, but its main causes are obesity, lack of adequate nutrition, etc.

• Insulin injections and tablets are given to the patients suffering from Type-1 diabetes. Prevention of Type-2 diabetes is quite possible.

Did you know?

The World Diabetes Day was introduced by UN General Assembly in 2007 by fleeting resolution A/RES/61/225. The resolution had stimulated Member States to develop National policies for prevention, treatment and diabetes care.

Government to release Rs 75 commemorative coin to mark anniversary of Tricolour hoisting by Bose on - 13th November 2018

The Union Ministry of Finance on November 13th, 2018 finalised to release Rupees 75 commemorative coin on the eve of 75th anniversary of the hoisting of Tricolour for the 1st time by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose at Port Blair. During his visit to Andaman in on December 30th, 1943, Subhash Chandra Bose hoisted the Tricolour for the 1st time on free India land at Cellular Jail, Port Blair, much before India achieved Independence announcing the island as the free territory from the British rule.

Important Highlights

- Presently, the place where the flag was hoisted stands as a great memorial, and one of the best places to visit in Andamans. It was constructed by the Andaman Club as a mute testimony of Netaji's visit to the islands.

- Earlier on October 21st, PM Narendra Modi lifted the National Flag at Red Fort and unveiled the plaque to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the formation of Azad Hind Government, formed by Bose.

Features of Rs 75 commemorative coin

- The coin will carry the portrait of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose saluting the flag on the background of cellular jail.

- A numeral 75th along with inscription 'anniversary' will be portrayed below the portrait.

- There will be engraving in both Devanagari script and English saying "First Flag Hoisting Day".

- The 35gms coin will be made of 50% silver, 40% copper and 5% each of nickel and zinc metals.

Support and Outreach Programme for MSME Sector launched by – PM Narendra Modi



PM Narendra Modi initiated Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- MSME Support and Outreach Program. As part of this program, Prime Minister revealed 12 crucial initiatives which will benefit the growth, expansion and facilitation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises around the nation. There are 5 important features for simplifying the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises sector. These consist access to credit, access to market, technology upgradation, comfort of doing business, and sense of security for workers.

MSME Outreach Programme

It goals to enhance Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises sector. It is one of key sector for major generations of employment. It will operate for 100 days covering 100 Districts across the nation. Various Central Ministers will visit these districts in order to impart businesspersons about various amenities being extended to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sector by Union Government and financial institutions.

Under Access to Credit aspect of this program, Government will launch 59-minute loan portal to permit easy access to credit for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. Loans up to Rupees One crore will be approved in-principle grant via this portal, in just 59 minutes. The connection to this portal will be available at GST portal.

Government will issue 2 percent interest subvention for all GST registered Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, on fresh/incremental loans. For exporters who get loans in pre-shipment and post-shipment period will have upsurge in interest rebate ranging from 3 percent to 5 percent.

All Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises with turnover above Rupees 500 crores will now be forcibly brought on Trade Receivables e-Discounting System. This will permit

businesspersons to access credit from banks, based on their future receivables.

Saura Jalnidhi scheme launched by - Odisha Government

Odisha Government has initiated Saura Jalnidhi scheme to inspire usage of solar energy in irrigation by farmers. Under this scheme, farmers will be issued 90 percent subsidy and 5,000 solar pumps. This will issue irrigation aids in 2,500 acres of the state. The recipient of this scheme will be farmers who have valid farmer i-cards and have least 0.5 acres of agricultural land.

Saura Jalnidhi scheme

The scheme was released as part of state government's endeavour to upsurge the usage of solar photovoltaic pump sets in those areas so that irrigation amenities can be issued where power system is bad. For this scheme, state government has formed a provision of Rupee 27.18 crores in the financial year 2017-2018.

In the 1st phase, this scheme will be accessible in those areas where electricity is not there for running the pumps. This scheme will produce 1.52 lakh human day jobs yearly and provided income to about 5,000 families and also lessen carbon footprints.

Under this scheme, farmers will be issued a well-equipped solar pump irrigation system in junction mode. It will assist to lessen burden of input cost on farmers and also upsurge agricultural income. It will encourage the usage of green energy and decrease pollution.

Which decommissioned aircraft carrier will be converted into floating museum - INS Viraat

Maharashtra state cabinet permitted plant for alteration of Indian Navy's longest-serving aircraft carrier INS Viraat, into India's 1st-ever



moored maritime museum-cum-marine adventure centre. Presently, INS Viraat is at Mumbai's Naval dockyard after it was retired in 2017.

Important Facts

According to state government's plan, INS Viraat's alteration will be on public-private-partnership basis. It will be grouted 7 nautical miles off Malvan coast at Nivati rocks in Sindhudurg district. This ship will crowd biodiversity centres and marine adventure centre delivering sailing and scuba-diving activities. There will be virtual galleries, cafeterias and even training centre for merchant navy squad. World over only 7 aircraft carriers so far have been rehabilitated into museums, theme parks and luxury hotel.

INS Viraat

It was constructed in 1943 during 2nd World War and was 1st commissioned as HMS Hermes into the British Royal Navy in November 1959. During the Falklands War in 1982, the aircraft carrier had worked as flagship of the Royal Navy's task force. It has sailed approximately 11 lakh kilometres, enough to cover the globe 27 times. It was commissioned into the Indian Navy on May 12th, 1987.

It had played a crucial role in Operation Jupiter in 1989 in the Sri Lankan peace keeping operation. It had taken part in the standoff Operation Parakram in 2001-2002 when India and Pakistan were engaged in a standoff position the Parliament terror attack. INS Viraat embraces Guinness Books of record of being the longest serving warship in the world. It was also the last British constructed ship serving with the Indian Navy.

India, Russia conduct joint military exercise 'INDRA 2018' on - 18th November 2018

The joint military exercise between India and Russia- 'INDRA 2018' is intended to

occur at fighting insurgency under the guidance of United Nations started on coming November 18th, 2018 in India. The joint exercise is being held at Babina Field Firing Ranges, Babina Military Station in UP. The training exercise that will extent across 11 days and it will witness the participation from company-sized contingents of the 5th Army of the Russian Federation and a Mechanised Infantry Battalion of India including induction and de-induction of the Russian contingent.

Important Points

- The main emphasis of the exercise will be on training and team building, special tactical level operations including cordon and search, house intervention, handling and neutralisation of improvised explosive devices and combined employment of force multipliers.
- The prime focus of the tactical field exercise will be to exchange best practices amongst the militaries and work on the current skills of the troops to prepare them to deal with exigencies at hand.
- The topics selected for the exercise are both live and modern-day affecting both the countries identically.
- The training will be administered by a joint directing panel comprising of senior officials of both the national contingents.
- The 10th counter-terrorism exercise in the series of Exercise INDRA is intended at sending a robust message to the world with a commitment of gratefulness of interoperability among Indian and Russian Armies for combined tactical level actions in the peacekeeping environment.



Draft of Indian Wind Turbine Certification Scheme prepared by - Ministry of Renewable Energy

The Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, in discussion with National Institute of Wind Energy Chennai, has planned a draft of a fresh plan known as Indian Wind Turbine Certification Scheme, which includes numerous rules of the Turbine Certification Scheme. The plan is a alliance of all relevant national and international standards, technical regulations and necessities published by Central Electricity Authority, rules published by Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and other international rules.

Important Highlights

- The draft scheme conscripts the rules for the advantage of all the shareholders from concept to lifetime of a wind turbine, including Indian Type Approved Model, Indian Type Certification Scheme, Wind Farm Project Certification Scheme and Wind Turbine Safety & Performance Certification Scheme.

- It integrates the best practices from other countries in order to make sure the quality of the wind energy projects.

The scheme goals to support and simplify the following shareholders:

1. Original Equipment Manufacturers
2. End Users including Utilities, SNAs, Developers, IPPs, Owners, Authorities, Investors and Insurers
3. Certification Bodies
4. Testing Laboratories

The Ministry has uploaded the draft scheme on their website: <https://mnre.gov.in> and has requested comments from all shareholders as well as

from the public latest by December 5th, 2018 for finalising the new scheme.

6 professors awarded Infosys Prize 2018 for -science and research

The Infosys Science Foundation occasion of its 10th anniversary declared 6 winners of the Infosys Prize 2018 in the 6 different categories of the award. They were nominated from 244 proposals by 6-member jury of famous scientists and professors.

2018

Recipients

1. Engineering and Computer Science: Navakanta Bhat, Professor at Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. He was bestowed for his work on design of novel biosensors grounded on his research

in biochemistry and gaseous sensors that thrust the performance limits of present metal-oxide sensors.

2. Humanities: Kavita Singh, Dean, School of Arts & Aesthetics, JNU. She was bestowed for her illuminating study of Mughal, Rajput and Deccan art.

3. Life Sciences: Roop Mallik, associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. He was bestowed for his work on molecular motor proteins, which are crucial for the working of living cells.

4. Mathematical Sciences: Nalini Anantharaman, Professor and Chairman of Mathematics, Institute for Advanced Study, University of Strasbourg, France. She was bestowed the prize in Mathematical Sciences for her work associated with "Quantum Chaos."

5. Physical Sciences: SK Satheesh,



Professor, Centre for Atmospheric & Oceanic Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. He was bestowed for his revolutionary scientific work in the field of climate change.

6. Social Sciences: Sendhil Mullainathan, professor of Computation and Behavioural Science, the University of Chicago, USA. He was bestowed for his ground-breaking work in behavioural economics.

More about Infosys Prize

- Infosys Prize is a yearly award conferred upon scholars, scientists, social scientists and engineers in India by the Infosys Science Foundation.

- The award aims to rejoice success in research and stand as a mark of excellence in same fields.

- Each category award recipient receives 22 carats gold Medallion, a Citation Certificate and prize money of US \$100,000.

- It is one of the maximum monetary awards in India that identifies the scientific research.

Regional meeting of World Customs Organisation being held in - Jaipur

4 days regional meeting of World Customs Organisation was organised in Jaipur, Rajasthan. It was attended by associates of 33-member nations of Asia. The meeting was mutually led by World Customs Organisation Deputy Secretary General Ricardo Travino and Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs Chairman S Ramesh.

Important Points

- The meeting pondered upon numerous matters including the steps essential for the capacity building and improvements in customs.

- It also discussed and considered upon revised Kyoto protocol, digital customs, e-commerce among other matters.

- Summary of several efforts made by National Trade Facilitation Committee for trade simplification was also scheduled in the meeting.

World Customs Organisation

- World Customs Organisation is an autonomous inter-governmental organisation whose mission is to improve effectiveness and efficiency of Customs supervisions.

- It was recognized in 1952 as Customs Co-operation Council.

- It is the only International firm with competence in Customs issues and is considered as voice of International Customs communal.

- It signifies 182 Customs managements across the globe that cooperatively process about 98 percent of world trade.

- It is HQ in Brussels, Belgium. It entertains leading role in discussion, expansion, promotion and implementation of modern customs systems and actions.

Objectives

- It aims to improve proficiency and effectiveness of member customs managements and support them to contribute magnificently to national expansion goals, particularly revenue collection, national security, employment facilitation, community defense, and collection of trade statistics.

Organisational Structure

World Customs Organisation's governing body trusts on competence and skills of World Customs

Organisation Secretariat and a range of technical and advisory committees to achieve its mission. The Secretariat includes more



than 100 International bureaucrats, technical specialists and support staff of some nationalities. World Customs Organisation has sectorised its membership into 6 regions whereby each region is represented by designated vice-chairperson to World Customs Organisation Council.

E-learning portal 'NIPUN' for training its personnel launched by - Delhi Police

Delhi Police has released an e-learning portal "Nipun" to communicate training and provide up to date data to police officers. The creativity is intended at conveying in-service online training and statistics to Police Personnel via specialised courses accessible online which have been intended by experts in various fields.

More about NIPUN

- The online courses on this online portal have been intended in association with UGC, FICCI, NHRC, NCPDR and Janaki Devi Memorial College, Delhi University under project CLAP- "The Collaborative Learning and Partnership". Delhi Legal Service Authority has also concurred to be partner in evolving specific courses for the Delhi Police.

- It will have online courses and resources on law, standing orders, investigation specifications, case files forms, latest High Court and Supreme Court verdicts. It is intended that Investigating Officers will be talented to take advantage of this data during course of their duty/case handling.

- Through this online portal Delhi Police officers can now access data by just logging-in the portal.

- They can entertain course from anywhere anytime. It will make easier for the police officer to enhance their skills and re-

enforce their knowledge while balancing training time along with their daily routine task.

Athlete Hima Das appointed first Youth Ambassador of - UNICEF India

India's ace sprinter and Asian Games Gold Medal winner sprinter Hima Das was selected as 1st ever youth ambassador of UN Children's Fund India. UNICEF India works with central government to make sure that each child born in nation gets best start-up in life, thrives and develops to his/her complete potential.

Recently, Hima secured a Gold medal in Women's 4x400m relay event at the 2018 Asian Games, organised from August 18th-September 2nd, 2018 at Jakarta, Indonesian. She also secured Silver in the Women's 400 metres Race event with a clock timing of 50.59 seconds.

More about Hima Das

- Addressing from Nagaon district of Assam, Hima Das took-up serious running in 2017.

- In July 2018, Hima scripted history by being the 1st Indian woman athlete to secure a Gold Medal in the women's 400 metres final race at the IAAF World Under-20 Athletics Championships in Tampere, Finland.

- With the victory at IAAF World Under-20 Athletics Championship, Das became the 1st Indian woman, be it junior/ senior, to secure a gold medal at any level in a World Championship.

- She is also the 1st Indian woman to secure a Gold medal at any athletics meet at the World level.

- Hima Das had previously clocked an Indian U-20 record of 51.32s to finish 6th in the Commonwealth Games 400 metres final in Gold Coast in April 2018.



- With a nickname of Dhing Express, Hima was among the 20 players to be endorsed for the Arjuna Award.

- In October 2018, Hima amalgamated Indian Oil Corporation as a Grade 'A' HR Officer.

Department of Biotechnology, Cancer Research UK sign MoU on - 14th November 2018

The Department of Biotechnology of India and Cancer Research United Kingdom on November 14th, 2018 inked a MoU for the India-UK Cancer Research Initiative. The India-UK Cancer Research Enterprise is a cooperative 5 years bilateral Research initiative by the Department of Biotechnology under Union Ministry of Science and Technology and Cancer Research United Kingdom. The Initiative was released at the Inaugural Researchers' Summit, which was organised in New Delhi from November 14th to November 16th, 2018.

India-UK Cancer Research Initiative

The India-United Kingdom Cancer Research Initiative will emphasis on inexpensive approaches to cancer. Both Cancer Research United Kingdom and Department of Biotechnology will spend five million pounds each in this pilot project and will pursue further investment from other potential funding associates. The initiative will classify a core set of research trials that address matters of affordability, prevention and care of cancer by bringing together leading Indian and United Kingdom specialists.

Importance

The India-United Kingdom Cancer Research Initiative delivers a chance to handle the

global epidemic of cancer by opening fresh paths for International data exchange and research base.

The research conclusions of this initiative will support cancer prevention, control and management in the long term.

Winter Session of Parliament to be held from - 11thDec 2018 to Jan 08, 2019

The Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs has suggested convening Parliament winter session from December 11th, 2018 to January 8th, 2019. The Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs was led by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh and meeting in New Delhi and talked on the dates of the session. The winter session of Parliament regularly initiates every year after Monsoon Session in November. However, from last 2 years in a row, it is commencement in December. The session has been overdue present year due to assembly elections in 5 states. Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs is one of the 6 cabinet committees in working (as of 2016). It takes care progress of government business in the Parliament. It is led by Union Home Minister. Others 5 cabinet committees are Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs, Cabinet Committee on Economic, Cabinet Committee on Security, Cabinet Committee on Accommodation and Appointments Committee of Cabinet. These 5 cabinet committees are led by PM.

UNSC lifts asset freeze, travel ban imposed on Eritrea after - 9 years



The United Nations Security Council in an undisputed vote settled to lift the permissions imposed against Eritrea, after 9 years. The Security Council had forced an arm ban, asset freeze and a travel embargo on Eritrea, amidst claims that the NorthEast African country, supported al-Shabab militants in Somalia. However, Eritrea has always denied the allegations.

Important Highlights

- The 15 membered United Nations Security Council accepted a United Kingdom drafted Resolution 2444, calling for an end to the 9-year-old restriction on the penurious nation as it rebuilds ties with its neighbouring country Ethiopia succeeding almost decades of animosity, fight and standoff.
- Eritrea and Ethiopia had both approved to ink a peace pact in July 2018, finishing a long stalemate resulting from the conflict between the two nations from 1998-2000 that resulted killing of a projected 100,000 people.
- The United Nations had 1st imposed bans on Eritrea in 2009 after the country was suspect of supporting armed terrorist groups, including Somalia's al-Shabab.
- Eritrea had also been criticised for human rights exploitations and mandatory National Service Conscription, which had resulted into tens of thousands of young Eritreans to escape the nation for Europe.
- The Eritrean government had opposed the designation as baseless. United Nations investigators also cleared that there is no evidence that Eritrea has supported terrorism in the past five years.
- Hence, United Nations Security Council lifted the ban, travel restrictions and asset freezes forced on the country with immediate effect. The Security Council also renewed its arms ban against Somalia.

Government to refund employers for seven weeks of maternity leave given to employees by - The Union Women and Child Development Ministry

The Union Women and Child Development Ministry finalised on November 15th, 2018 that the government will reimburse the employers the salaries for the 1st 7 of the 26 weeks of maternity leave for females earning above Rupees 15,000 in a month. The Ministry's decision came in the wake of criticisms that many organisations were unwilling to hire pregnant females after maternity leave was stretched from 12 to 26 weeks and few were even dismissing female workers.

Important Highlights

- The decision id for both the government and the private sector.
- The government has finalised to use the funds with the labour welfare cess to pay the workers.
- The usage of the cess lying with the state governments has been identical a smaller amount.
- Therefore, the government finalised following talks with the Labour Ministry that the 7 of the 26 weeks of maternity leave for all female employees in the private as well as government employees getting above Rupees 15,000 per month would be paid from that fund.
- The maternity leaves for pregnant females were stretched from twelve weeks to 26 weeks in 2017.

Did you know?
The Lok Sabha on March 10th, 2018 sanctioned the Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Bill, 2016, forming the way for replication of the maternity leave from 12 to 26



weeks. The Rajya Sabha, approved the bill in August 2017 during the monsoon session.

World Tolerance Summit held in Dubai on - 16th November 2018

The World Tolerance Summit- WTS 2018 was initiated on November 16th, 2018 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The subject of the summit was "Prospering from Pluralism: Embracing Diversity through Innovation and Collaboration".

The 2-summit is the mega gathering of government leaders, diplomats, change-makers and crucial figures from the public as well as private sectors. More than 2,000 ministers and government leaders worldwide are supposed to take part in the programme. It is being organised in the United Arab Emirates for the 1st time.

Important Highlights

- The summit is being organised to celebrate the United Nations nominated International Day of Tolerance.
- UNESCO had acknowledged November 16th as World Tolerance Day.
- The interactive summit will involve international thought leaders, decision makers, and influencers in thought-making debates in technology, social innovations and global networking can play an imperative role in forming a conducive environment to bring about positive modification in people's lives.
- Through a wide array of activities, it will investigate deep into the ways by which individuals, groups and countries can be open-minded, understanding and welcoming others' opinions and views for a peaceful co-existence and collaborate in creating new ideas to shape a prosperous and sustainable future.

Consequence

- Education and knowledge are the means to instruct deep values of peace and tolerance

for diversity and to augment the social fabric of the community.

- It will also assist discover how technology can empower societies to unite people from different religions, creeds and class and further progress innovative traditions to share positive messages to generate cohesive and vibrant societies.

9th Annual Defence and Security Dialogue between India and China held in - Beijing

The Ninth Annual Defence and Security Dialogue between India and China organised in Beijing. It organised between the 2 defence delegations led by defence secretary Sanjay Mitra and China's deputy chief of Joint Staff Department of the Central Military Commission. Mitra was escorted by senior officials of Ministry of Defence and Indian Army, Navy and Air Force. The defence discussion was also organised ahead of 21st round of border debates between the special councils of the 2 nations in Chinese city of Dujiangyan on November 23-24th, 2018. National security advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese state senate and foreign minister Wang Yi are elected special representatives for the border debates.

Outcomes of 9th Dialogue

- Both nations agreed to improve exchanges and communications via reciprocal high-level visits between both defence ministries as well as between military commands, joint training trainings, mutual visits by defence personnel including mid-level and cadet officials were also settled.
- They also repeated significance of maintaining peace and tranquillity in border areas, executing consensus reached between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi



Jinping and specific extra confidence-building measures at the operational level.

- They emphasized reputation of this dialogue as significant mechanism between both nations for discussions on defence and security issues.

- They stressed necessity to further fortify military-to-military relations in order to toughen political and strategic joint trust between the both nations.

NITI Aayog constitutes Himalayan State Regional Council for development of - Himalayan region

NITI Aayog has formed Himalayan State Regional Council to make sure sustainable development of Indian Himalayan area. It will be presided by Dr.V.K.Saraswat, Member NITI Aayog and will involve Chief Secretaries of Himalayan States and Secretaries of important Central Ministries, senior delegates of NITI Aayog as well as special invitees.

Important Facts

- The Council has been formed to review and execute identified action facts based on Reports of 5 Working Groups, which were recognized along thematic areas to formulate a roadmap for action.

- It will be nodal agency for Sustainable development in Himalayan Region which include 12 States specifically J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, 2 districts of Assam Dima Hasao and KarbiAnglong and Darjeeling and Kalimpong in WB.

Terms of reference of Council

- It will check execution of action facts for Central Ministries, Institutions and 12

Himalayan State Governments in Indian Himalayan Region.

- It will progress, implement and monitor tourism sector standards along with policy coherence, reinforcing skill and entrepreneurship with emphasis on identified priority sectors, among other action points.

Indian Navy completes refit of Maldivian Coast Guard Ship Huravee in - Visakhapatnam

Indian Navy has magnificently accomplished refitted Maldivian Coast Guard Ship- MCGS Huravee at Naval Dockyard Visakhapatnam and was officially handed over. The ship was renovated in 4-months as part of Indian Navy initiative undertaken in continuance of its diplomatic outreach to approachable foreign navies in Indian Ocean Region.

Important Points

- During the refit, major maintenances were undertaken on Maldivian Coast Guard Ship Huravee's hull, main propulsion and auxiliaries.

- In addition, number of apparatus and systems of ship were advanced for better performance and dependability.

- Moreover, all apparatuses were put through extensive harbour and sea tests to attain complete combat capability of ship and make sure its nonstop availability for operations to Maldives Coast Guard for next working cycle.

Maldivian Coast Guard Ship Huravee

- It was formerly commissioned as INS Tillanchang, a Trinkat class patrol vessel manufactured by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers, Kolkata in March 2001.

- It was later gifted to Maldives by Government of India in April 2006 to fortify strategic partnership between both nations



and work together to make sure maritime safety of Indian Ocean Region.

- The Indian Government via Indian Navy has undertaken such political considerations formerly when it undertook refit of ship in 2015.

2nd Mega Food Park in Maharashtra inaugurated in - Aurangabad

Union Minister for Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal initiated second Mega Food Park in Maharashtra, in Wahegaon and Dhangaon village in Paithan taluka, Aurangabad. It was released under Mega Food Park Scheme and is encouraged by Paithan Mega Food Park Pvt Ltd. The 1st park was initiated in Satara district in March 2018. 3rd jumbo food park has been approved by Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries in Wardha, Maharashtra.

Paithan Mega Food Park

- It has been initiated in 102-acre of land at cost of Rupees 124.52 crore.

- The amenities at Central Processing Centre of this mega food park consist dry warehouse of 10,000 MT, cold storage, pre-cooling facility of 10 MT, ripening chambers of 400 MT, individual quick-freezing provision of 1.5 MT/hour.

- It also has freezer room, steam sterilisation and generation unit of 4 MT/H, food testing laboratories refer vans of 30 MT and milk tankers of 50 MT, milk processing ability of 1,00,000 lts/day with bulk milk chilling of 20,000 litre and other food processing amenities.

Importance

- The contemporary infrastructure for food processing formed at mega food park will profit the farmers, growers, processors and consumers of Maharashtra and adjoining areas.

- This mega food park will advantage the people of Aurangabad district and adjoining districts of Nashik, Dhule, Jalgaon, Buldhana, Jalna, Bid and Ahmednagar.

- It will deliver direct and indirect employment to 5,000 persons and profit approximately 25,000 farmers in CPC catchment areas.

Union Government, ADB sign loan agreements worth USD 574 million on - 16th November 2018

The Union Government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed loans agreements on 16th November 2018 worth USD 574 million for various projects in India, including hydropower transmission in Himachal Pradesh, support to IIFCL in India, and for water and sanitation services in Tamil Nadu.

The ADB is committed to achieve a prosperous, resilient, inclusive and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, established in 1966. There are 67 members with 48 from the Asia and the Pacific region.

3 proposals under Nirbhaya Fund and 1023 Fast Track Courts to be set up approved by - Government

The Empowered Committee of Officers, under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Women and Child Development Ministry approved 3 proposals under the Nirbhaya Fund as well as forming 1023 Fast Track Special Courts.

Setting up of 1023 Fast Track Special Courts

- The Committee sanctioned the application of the Department of Justice under Ministry of Law and Justice to form 1023 Fast Track Special Courts to dispose-off



incomplete cases of rape and POCSO Act nationwide.

- The project was sanctioned with a total financial expenditure of Rupees 767.25 crores. In the 1st phase, 777 Fast Track Special Courts will be formed in Nine states and in the 2nd phase, 246 Fast Track Special Courts will be formed.

Procurement of forensic kits for sexual assault cases

- The Committee sanctioned the proposal of Union Ministry of Home Affairs for procurement of forensic kits for sexual stabbing cases to quick start use of such kits in States.

- These kits will be utilised via Training of Trainers, capacity training for forensics in sexual stabbing cases and establishment of State Forensic Science Laboratory.

- The application was sanctioned with a sum financial outlay of Rupees 107.19 crore.

Setting up video surveillance system at 50 Railway Stations

- The Committee sanctioned the proposal from Konkan Railway Corporation Limited for initiating video surveillance system at 50 Railway Stations with a sum Project cost of Rupees 17.64 crore.

- The funding will be used for surveillance hardware and accessories, local connectivity equipment and power supply equipment.

Maratha Reservation Bill passed by - Maharashtra Cabinet

The state cabinet of Maharashtra on November 18th, 2018 approved the Maratha Reservation Bill, sanctioning reservation for the Maratha community. The bill is expected to be tabled during the winter session of the state's legislative assembly.

The decision was based on the suggestions of

the Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission, whose report was given to the state's Chief Secretary DK Jain on November 15th. The initiative follows months of mega protests by members of the community asking for reservation in education and jobs.

Important Highlights :

- Maharashtra's CM Devendra Fadnavis publicized that independent reservation will be issued to the Maratha community under a new category known as Socially and Economically Backward Category.

- The Marathas will get the reservation from an independent quota and it is not anticipated to affect the reservations issued to the OBCs.

- The commission's report explained that Marathas are "socially and educationally backward class of residents" with minuscule symbol in government and semi-government services.

- The % of the reservation for the Maratha community will be finalised by a sub-committee, which will be founded by the state cabinet to take statutory actions for the execution of the sanctions of the backward commission.

KMP Expressway, Ballabhgarh-Mujesar Metro rail link inaugurated by – PM Narendra Modi

PM Narendra Modi on November 19th, 2018 initiated the Kundli-Manesar section of the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal-KMP western peripheral expressway. Along with this, he also inducted the 3.2 kilometres long Ballabhgarh-Mujesar Metro rail linkage, which would enable travel for people of Delhi and Faridabad, and laid the foundation stone of the Shri Vishwakarma Skill University, which will arise at Dudhola in Palwal district.



Ballabgarh becomes the 4th city in Haryana to have metro connectivity after Gurgaon, Faridabad and Bahadurgarh. Prior this year, Manesar to Palwal stretch of the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal, whose whole length is 135.65 kilometres, was unlocked for public.

Important facts about KMP Expressway

Kundli-Manesar-Palwal expressway will pass via 5 districts of Haryana including Gurugram, Sonapat, Mewat, Jhajjar and Palwal.

A total of Rupees 6,400 crores has been spent on the expressway project and 3,846 acres of land was acquired at a cost of Rupees 2,788 crores.

The length of the stretch from Kundli to Manesar is more than 83 kilometres. This stretch would have Fourteen major/minor bridges, 56 underpass/agricultural vehicular underpasses, 7 intersections and 7 toll plazas.

The expressway will decrease the road traffic from Delhi, especially reducing the number of trucks entering Delhi, thus helping in dipping pollution.

Besides, the project will also deliver a high-speed connection between northern Haryana and southern districts and provide a continuous high-speed link for traffic, from Haryana to neighbouring states.

Who won bronze medal in men's singles at World Junior Badminton Championship - Lakshya Sen

India's topmost junior shuttler Lakshya Sen aged 17-years secured bronze medal at Li Ning BWF World Junior Badminton Championships 2018 organised at Markham, Canada. In singles semi-final match, he lost to uppermost seed and world junior number 1 Kunlavut Vitidsarn from Thailand by 22-20,

16-21, 13-21 points. This was Sen's 1st medal from this prestigious tournament in 3 attempts.

India's Performance BWF World Junior Badminton Championships

This was general India's 5th boys singles bronze medal at BWF World Junior Championships and only medal India received in present year's Championships. Earlier, RMV Gurusaidutt in year 2008, B Sai Praneeth in year 2010, HS Prannoy in year 2010 and Sameer Verma in year 2011 have secured bronze medals. Siril Verma in year 2015 is India's only boy's singles silver-medallist at World Junior Championships. Saina Nehwal in year 2008 is only India's sole gold medallist at BWF World Junior Championships. She also has secured silver medal in 2006 in girl's singles event.

World Toilet Day observed worldwide on – 19th November 2018

The World Toilet Day was celebrated worldwide on November 19th, 2018. The day's key emphasis is to encourage action to tackle the global sanitation crisis and make sure that everyone has a safe toilet by 2030. This is part of the UN Sustainable Development Goal 6: sanitation and water, which goals to make sure availability and sustainable management of sanitation and water for all by 2030.

The 2018 theme of the International Day is "Toilets and Nature". Present year's campaign is grounded on the narrative: When nature calls, we have to listen and act. The theme concentrates on the necessity to construct toilets and sanitation systems that work in harmony with the environment.

Objective

The main aim of the celebration is to engage with communities and repeat the national resolve to withstand the Sanitation



achievement. Since the beginning of the Swachh Bharat Mission, the rural sanitation coverage has amplified from 39% in October 2014 to more than 96% presently.

Global Sanitation Coverage

Additional people in the world have phones than toilets. The world is better at communication than sanitation. More than billions of people do not have a safe toilet.

Approximately 80% of all the world's wastewater flows back untreated into the environment.

Approximately 1/5 of schools globally have no toilet amenities at all, which is a big problem for girls during menstruation.

About 900 million school going children have nowhere to wash their hands to bar the spread of lethal diseases.

During menstruation, females and girls often stay home, when there are no safe toilets and private hygiene amenities at work or school.

Currently, about 445 million ladies and girls have no other option but to go to the toilet in the open areas.

World Toilet Day Commemoration in India

In India, the day was commemorated with mass awareness and mobilisation activities across various states and districts.

The key objective of the campaign is on the use of toilets, which is closely connected to Indian PM Narendra Modi's call for a Swachh Bharat by October 2019.

The central part of the day's commemorates in India was the Swachh Bharat World Toilet Day Contest, which was declared on the eve by the Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

The crucial motive of the Contest is to inspire all districts in India to re-intensify the sanitation movement with a superior focus on Open Defecation Free-ODF Sustainability.

India asks WTO to set up panel against US for high import duty on – Steel and Aluminium

India's trade conflict with America has reached to a next level in the WTO, as India asked the World Trade Organization to formulate a panel against the United States for executing high import duties on aluminium and certain steel items. India finalised to urge World Trade Organization to form panel came after both nations failed to solve the problem in a bilateral talk procedure under the World Trade Organization's dispute settlement process.

Impacts on India

According to the specialists, America's decision to execute tariffs will influence India's export of these goods and hit global business. The whole basis of the United States action is grounded on its own insight of security threat issue.

However, few specialists are also in the favour that dragging the United States in the conflict over the matter is not a positive step, since India had a business excess with USA. Both nations are also complicated in numerous other disputes in the World Trade Organization, consisting in the areas of poultry, export incentives, solar and steel.

In connection to the execution of duties by the United States, India had finalised to upsurge customs duty on 29 American items including almond, walnut, pulses, iron and steel products. The duties would be effective from December 17th.



SC to direct states to implement draft - Witness protection scheme

The Supreme Court of India on November 19th, 2018 informed that it would guide all the states to executing the draft witness protection scheme developed by the Centre in consultation with the National Legal Services Authority.

The Supreme Court bench consisting Justices A.K.Sikri and S Abdul Nazeer took the conclusion in response to the appeal made by Attorney General KK Venugopal that the draft scheme, which has presently has been finalised, would be made into a law in due course, but till then the court should guide the states to begin executing it.

Important Highlights

- The matter of the witness protection scheme had cropped-up previously, when the supreme court was hearing a public interest litigation looking for fortification for witnesses in rape cases involving self-styled preacher Asaram Bapu.

- During the hearing on November 19th, advocate Gaurav Agrawal, supporting the court as an amicus curiae in the issue, informed the bench that the government has completed the draft witness protection scheme in discussion with National Legal Services Authority, grounded on the contributions got from a majority of the states.

- The advocate explained that the system has 3 groups of witnesses grounded on the threat acuity, and recommended that the states should initiate enforcing it.

- The requesters, who are witnesses in cases concerned to Asaram Bapu, had pursued a probe into the illustrations of suspected attacks and desertions of witnesses in these cases.

- The topmost court had in March 2017 interrogated Haryana and UP over the status of execution of witness protection schemes till then and had guided them to deliver security cover to witnesses in rape cases against Asaram Bapu, who is presently in jail.

Government to set up first National Institute of Inter-Faith Studies in Punjab

Union Government will form 1st-of-its-kind institute of Inter-Faith Studies in Punjab to encourage

brotherhood and diversity. It is being set-up as part of year-long actions to celebrate 550th birth

anniversary of 1st Sikh Guru and founder of Sikh religion Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The institute will be developed on lines of preaching of Guru Nanak Dev ji who taught qualities

of brotherhood, diversity and the idea of unity in diversity. Government will part specialists and form

committees to supervise and finalise concept of this institute.

Important Points

- Union Government has finalised to celebrate 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev ji at national as well as international level. The years long commemoration will consist of a number of honoring and constructive actions will be taken up during the celebration period.

- Number of religious activities including Nagar kirtan, Prabhat Pheris, Katha, langar and educational activities consisting seminars, workshops, lectures will be planned. Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee- SGPC, which is the top religious body of the Sikhs, will be the acquaintance partner for the event.

- Government will also develop Sultanpur Lodhi in Punjab where Guru Nanak is



supposed to have spent most of his life. The area will be advanced as heritage city including "Pind Babe Nanak Da".

- Moreover, high resolution telescope will be installed on Indian side to have a view of Kartarpur Sahib, in Pakistan, where the 1st Sikh guru spent his last days.

Sulabh International introduces India's first sewer cleaning machine to - End unsafe manual scavenging

Sulabh International has presented India's 1st sewer cleaning machine to decrease sewer deaths and finish unsafe practice of manual scavenging. The machine was revealed on event of World Toilet Day 2018, which was celebrated on 19th November, by mayors of all 3 Municipal Corporations of Delhi in the presence founder Sulabh International Bindeshwar Pathak. Sulabh International is social service firm that works to encourage human rights, environmental sanitation, non-conventional sources of energy, waste management and social reforms via education. It is major non-profit organization in India. It was originated by social activists Bindeshwar Pathak in 1970.

Sulabh sewer cleaning machine

- The machine will do away with 99 percent of manual scavenging.
- With help of it, manual cleaner does not have to enter sewer, however, if needed person has to go, then machine is completely loaded with gas checking machine, protective gears and clothing to safeguard workers from harmful gases.
- It is electro-hydraulically machine, with quick-view pipe inspection camera which outspreads up to 20 feet.

- The quick-view pipe view camera is fabricated to facilitate inspection of sewer, manholes, tunnels, tanks, mainline and other lateral pipeline facilities with outstanding zoom function, ascendable carbon fibre rods and sunlight presentable controller.

- The new machine costs around Rupees 43 lakh and is ideal for periodic mechanical desilting of manholes and to flush out sewer lines with the help powerful jetting pump capable of producing 150 BOP and flow of 150 litres/minute.

- It is also capable of de-choking sewer lines with the help of specially designed flexible steel rods.

India-USA joint military exercise Vajra Prahar commences - in Jaipur

India, United States Joint Special Forces Exercise 2018 called Vajra Prahar started at Mahajan Field Firing Range, Bikaner, Rajasthan. The exercise was organised between Special Forces of both nations to deal with operations for combat terrorism and is being done at unit and sub-unit levels.

Important Facts

- For this exercise, United States Army is represented by contingent of 1 officer and 10 Other Ranks from Special Forces Group of US Pacific Command.
- They will carry out 12 days rigorous mutual training in semi desert and rural terrain with objective to augment inter-operability of the two-armed forces and further military to military cooperation.
- The contingents of both nations in this exercise, will train on aspects including hostage rescue, building intervention, desert survival, medical aid and fight firing.
- At the conclusion of training, they will undertake a 3 days outdoor exercise to authenticate their best practices.



Indian Army selects Russian - Igla-S missile system

Indian Army has chosen Russia's Igla-S missile system as choice for its multibillion-dollar agreement for Man-Portable Air Defence Systems. Igla-S tender approximately \$1.47 billion from Russia's Rosoboronexport which had come as lowest bidder for Indian Army's Very Short-Range Air Defence

pact. The other bidders were MBDA of France and SAAB of Sweden. The deal is anticipated to be signed when Indian-Russian Intergovernmental Commission on Military-Technical co-operation meeting will take place in Moscow in December 2018.

Concerns for this deal

- There is tail of United States financial authorizations for arms purchases from Russia under Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) law that bans defence purchases from Russia, Iran and North Korea. United States is yet to fund India waiver for \$5.43 billion S-400 surface-to-air missiles defence system and naval warship deal with Russia inked in early October 2018 under CAATSA.

- United States had forced approvals on China for purchasing Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets and S-400 surface-to-air missiles defence system from Russia as it dishonoured United States permissions under CAATSA.

More about IGLA-S

- It is latest model of Russian Man-Portable Air Défense System technology. It proposes superior performance over previous supplied SA-18 missiles to India.

- It is planned for use against visible aerial targets at short-range including tactical aircraft, helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicle, cruise missile, head-on, in presence of natural clutter and counter-measures.

- According to the needs of Indian Army, it will have extreme range of 6 kilometres, altitude of 3 kilometres along with all-weather capability.

- Igla-S missile system will replace the present Igla in service which is in crucial necessity of replacement.

West Bengal Assembly passes Bill to give land rights to enclave dwellers in - North Bengal

West Bengal Assembly consistently passed West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Bill, 2018 to issue land rights to enclave dwellers in North Bengal. The bill will finish era of indeterminate future for the people residing in those enclaves because it will aid them to get full-fledged status as citizens of India, along with all civic facilities and rights. It will also aid in distribution of land rights documents people of enclaves in border district of Cooch Behar. The procedure will result in formation of 13 administrative district, while remaining area will be combined with existing 31 administrative districts. Plot-to-plot verification has been undertaken to ascertain the ownership status of the land to the dwellers.

Did you know?

Bangladesh and India had inter-changed overall 162 enclaves in August 2015 according to the historic 1974 Land Boundary Agreement, finishing one of the world's most-complex border disagreements that had lingered for 7 decades since Independence. In Cooch Behar, 111 Indian enclaves, spread over 17,160 acres, became part of Bangladesh territory and 51 Bangladesh enclaves, including 7,110 acres, joined India. The enclave residents were permitted to either reside at their current location or move to the other nation. Approximately, 37,334 people



residing in enclaves in Indian side refused to go to Bangladesh, whereas 922 enclave dwellers from Bangladesh side favoured to be in India.

AAI inks agreement with US Trade and Development Agency to prepare - Modernisation roadmap

State operated Airports Authority of India- AAI has signed pact with United States Trade and Development Agency to progress a roadmap for modernisation of its Air Traffic Services. Air Traffic Services comprises Air Traffic Management and Communication, Navigation and Surveillance. Airports Authority of India is statutory body under the guidance of Ministry of Civil Aviation. It is accountable for creating, upgrading, maintaining and managing civil aviation infrastructure in India.

Important Points

- The collaboration is aimed at developing Communication, Navigation and Surveillance/Air Traffic Management roadmap for the Airports Authority of India for modernisation of the National Airspace System.
- Under the pact, United States aircraft manufacturer Boeing will deliver technical assistance, thus form roadmap to augment communications, expand present systems and airspace capacity and invest in Communication, Navigation and Surveillance/Air Traffic Management amenities.
- It will assist in enlightening safety and dropping congestion for flights in India.
- At the same time, it will form market access for high quality United States exports that can advance India's aviation targets.

Did you know?

The double-digit growth in air passenger traffic over past 49 months in India has brought numerous challenges with it, consisting maintaining safe and efficient aircraft operations. In this backdrop, Airports Authority of India has finalised to draw healthy roadmap for sustained ANS infrastructure to match the growth challenges in a planned way. By using global and regional best practices as benchmark, technical assistance will mention roadmap and implementation plan to Airports Authority of India for enlightening airspace utilisation and implement Communication, Navigation and Surveillance/Air Traffic Management air and ground equipage in short, medium and long term.

Gujarat launches intensive project to conserve Gir lions on - 20th November 2018

Gujarat government on November 20th, 2018 released a Rupees 351 crore project for the conservation of the Gir lions. The project is released in the backdrop of the Canine Distemper Virus outbreak that killed 23 Asiatic lions in their only home Gir National park in Saurashtra.

This intensive project will also include an emergency ambulance van similar to the 108 emergency services. The Gujarat government also initiated hold to ten mines in the Gir region in view of the environmental issues due to the eco-sensitive zones ten kilometres around Gir.

Modern technology for conservation

- The Government informed that modern technology would also be utilised in lion conservation. The initiatives of nocturnal animals like the lions and others will be tracked via CCTV cameras and camera-mounted drones.



- Government is also planning to bring in a project on the lines of E-eye, which has been fruitful in the Corbett National Park.

More about E-eye

- E-Eye is a 24*7 all-season large-scale intelligent technology, capable of delivering live-feed wildlife supervision in susceptible areas and sanctuary perimeters, gathering and interpreting wildlife crime information to alert law enforcement before violations occur.

- The E-eye device protects areas by assisting in monitoring the hard-to-access regions, manage patrols, notice intruders, and keep rangers responsible. It also benefits reserve managers study wildlife.

UN environment Chief Erik Solheim resigns amid audit on - Travel expenses

UN Environment Chief Erik Solheim resigned from his position on November 20th, 2018 after an audit report questioning his enormous travel expenses. A United Nations audit had found that Solheim had spent nearly 5 lakh US dollar on travel. These unjustified travel expenses elevated allegations that the Environment chief showed little regard for the environment and efforts to decrease carbon emissions produced by air travel. They come at a time when the world body is struggling with lessening budgets.

Important Points

- As per to a draft of the report, the amount spent on travel by United Nations Environment double-folded between 2014-2017.

- The report was mainly critical of the travel undertaken by Solheim, United Nations Environment executive director since 2016.

- Solheim was recorded to travel for 529 out of the 668 days audited, expenditure of \$488,518 with no regard for the rules.

- On one occasion, it informed that Solheim made an 8-hour trip from Washington

DC for a weekend in Paris, earlier to taking another flight to New York City.

- The audit was carried out by the United Nation's Office of Internal Oversight Services. Solheim's resignation, was accepted by United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres and it would be effective from November 22nd.

- Solheim was described by United Nations spokesperson Stephane Dujarric as having been a leading voice in drawing the world's attention to dangerous environmental challenges, including plastics pollution, climate action, the rights of environmental defenders, biodiversity and environmental security.

Australia refuses to sign UN migration pact on - 21st November 2018

The Australian Government declared on November 21st, 2018 that it would not ink the United Nations Global Compact for Migration explaining that the pact would undermine its present immigration policies. Talking on the decision, Australian PM Scott Morrison informed that the government believes that the Compact is inconsistent with its well-organised policies and not in Australia's interest.

Important Highlights

- As per to the Australian government, the country's immigration policy already promotes safe, orderly and regular migration.

- Therefore, the government feels that adopting the pact would danger reassuring illegal entry to Australia and reverse the hard-won successes in combating the people-smuggling trade.

- Australia's harsh immigration policy detains asylum-pursuers who try to reach the nation by boat on remote Pacific islands. While the policy has led to a decline in people-smuggling, hundreds of people are now



being detained in Papua New Guinea and Nauru. Few have been there for many years.

- The UN and human rights groups at home and overseas have criticised the country's approach and the government has been under pressure over the worsening health of the people, many of them children, captive on the islands.

- The UN agreement on migration was settled upon in July 2018 subsequent almost a year of negotiations and it is anticipated to benefit open up legal migration and better management of the movement of people worldwide.

- The pact is due to be adopted in December.

- Earlier this week, the Australian PM declared he would also pursue to slash legal migration into Australia, from the present formal cap of 190,000 people every year to approximately 160,000.

- He informed the slash was required to counter worsening congestion in the country's main cities.

49th International Film Festival of India opens in - Panaji, Goa

49th International Film Festival of India started in Panaji, Goa. The theme of for current year's film festival is 'New India through a variety of genres of cinema, including history, action, romance and sports. Jharkhand is attention state for this year, with Jharkhand Day being observed on 24th November as part of festival. The attention nation is Israel.

Important Points

- This edition of the festival will present 212 movies from more than 68 nations which represents diversity of taste.

- International Competition section has fifteen movies out of which three are Indian.

- Competition section signifies movies directed and co-produced by 22 nations. 26 feature and 21 non-feature Indian movies will be screened in Indian Panorama section.

- The inaugural film of the festival was "The Aspern Papers", which tells story of obsession, grandeur vanished and dreams of Byronic adventures.

- Present year as extension of Khelo India Branding, Indian Sports Documentaries will also be presented including Mary Kom, Bhaag Milkha Bhaag and MSD-The untold story.

- The festival will also include honour to iron man Sardar Patel. The Homage section of this festival will pay tribute to Shashi Kapoor, Sridevi, Karunanidhi and Kalpana Lajmi.

More about International Film Festival of India

- It is biggest state sponsored film festival and directed jointly by Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Directorate of Film Festivals and Government of Goa.

- It was established in 1952 and since then organised yearly in Goa. It goals at delivering common platform for cinemas of world to project the excellence of the film art.

- It also pursues to contribute to create awareness for understanding and gratefulness of film cultures of various countries in context of their social and cultural philosophy and encourage friendship and cooperation among people worldwide.

Former JNU Professor S.P. Ganguly awarded Mexican Order of - Aztec Eagle

Mexican government has bestowed Indian academician Shyama Prasad Ganguly with 'Orden Mexicana del Águila Azteca'- Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle, the uppermost civilian award given to a foreigner by Mexico. He was bestowed for



disseminating Spanish language and Mexican culture to fortify Mexico- India cultural ties. He is 1st Indian Academician to get this honour.

Shyama Prasad Ganguly

He is previous professor of Spanish and Latin American Studies at JNU. He belonged to 1st generation of handful of Indian academics who truly made everybody else interested in Spanish. He has authored, edited and translated more than 25 books in academic career straddling 40 years.

Order of Aztec Eagle

- It is part of Mexican Honours System and is uppermost Mexican order awarded to foreigners in the nation.
- It was formed by decree in December 1933 by President Abelardo L. Rodríguez as prize to services given to Mexico by outsiders.
- It corresponds to alike distinctions given to Mexican inhabitants such as Condecoración Miguel Hidalgo or Belisario Domínguez Medal of Honor.
- It is given by office of the foreign minister on directions of Council recognized for this purpose led by the President, who inks each honour.
- Its earlier recipients of include Bill Gates, Nobel Economics Laureate Amartya Sen, writer and Nobel Literature Laureate Nadine Gordimer. Royal Eagle is Mexico's National animal and was taken sacred for Aztecs.

Antimicrobial Stewardship Guidelines to ensure judicious use of antibiotics in hospitals released by - ICMR

ICMR has unconfined Antimicrobial Stewardship Guidelines to guide hospitals in setting-up Antimicrobial Stewardship Programmes to make sure judicious usage of antibiotics in healthcare amenities. Antimicrobial Stewardship rules

goals to deliver directions in setting-up structure and processes of Antimicrobial Stewardship Programmes in healthcare institutions, discusses vital elements of antimicrobial stewardship and diagnostic stewardship and provide information on tools that can be utilised to measure progress.

More about AMSP

- Antimicrobial Stewardship Programmes is hospital-based programs devoted to improving antibiotic use.
- It is helpful in refining quality of patient care and safety via increased infection cure rates, reducing treatment failures and increasing the frequency of right prescription for therapy and prophylaxis

Need for AMSP

- Antimicrobial resistance is a mega public health challenge. Since unsuitable use of antibiotics is rampant in India, there is quick necessity to improve antibiotic use in hospitals.
- The growing consumption of antibiotics is one of crucial drivers of antimicrobial resistance seen in bugs.
- Few of the crucial factors driving antimicrobial resistance in our nation are irrational prescription of broad-spectrum antibiotics, poor rules for antibiotics sale, self-medication, lack of education and alertness regarding responsible use of antibiotics.
- National Health Policy, 2017, terms antimicrobial resistance as one of significant healthcare issues and prioritises development of rules regarding antibiotic use, limiting over-the-counter usage of antibiotics and limiting usage of antibiotics as growth promoters in livestock.
- It is significant to utilise the current drugs judiciously.



International Space Station completes 20 years on - 20th November 2018

The International Space Station- ISS grown 20 years old on November 20th, 2018. The project was initiated by Russian space agency Roscosmos when it released its Zarya module from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on November 20th, 1998. The release was trailed by NASA's Unity module. The couple was linked in low-earth orbit, which stimulated 13 years building effort of the most determined construction project in the history of humanity. The result of the exertion was a livable artificial satellite, which presently serves as a giant orbiting observatory and laboratory.

ISS Key Facts

- International Space Station is the largest manned object in space, 357ft long, just a yard short of a full-length football ground.
- It weighs 419,725 kilograms including the weight of spacecrafts. The space station can accommodate as many as 6 spacecrafts at one time.
- It is the single most expensive thing ever constructed at £93.4bn. It is the 3rd brightest object in the Earth's night sky after the moon and Venus.
- The space station travels at a velocity of 4.791 miles per second, fast enough to go to the moon and back in a same day.
- It orbits the earth about 16 times in a 24-hour period.
- It passes over 90% of the earth's population in the course of its orbital path. The living space in the station consists 6 sleeping quarters, a gym and a 360-degree bay window, but only two bathrooms.
- The zero gravity causes astronauts to float while doing their daily actions. The

orbiting station has been uninterruptedly occupied since November 2000.

- On September 2nd, 2017, Nasa's Peggy Whitson set the record of being the longest-serving human in space.

IIT-Hyderabad researchers develop smartphone-based system to detect adulteration in -Milk

Scholars from Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad are working to progress smartphone-based sensor to detect adulteration in milk. They have produced detector system which can measure level of acidity in milk with the help of indicator paper. They have also developed algorithms that can be combined in smartphone to accurately detect change in acidity. The sensor-chip based method calculates pH, which is indicator of the acidity and colour of paper indicates different pH levels.

Key Highlights

- In this adulteration detection system, scholars have used process called "electrospinning" to produce paper-like material made of nanosized fibres of nylon, combined with combination of 3 dyes.
- The paper is halochromic which changes colour in response to changes in acidity.
- Scholars developed prototype smart phone-based algorithm in which colours of sensor strips following dipping in milk are captured using camera of phone and information is transformed into pH ranges.
- They have utilised 3 machine-learning algorithms and compared their detection efficiencies in classifying colour of indicator strips.
- On testing this system with milk spiked with numerous combinations of contaminants, it found near-perfect classification with precision of 99.71 percent.



J&K Governor dissolved state assembly on - 21st November 2018

The J&K Governor Satya Pal Malik on November 21st, 2019 dissolved the State Assembly with instantaneous effect after rival alliances staked claim to formulate the government.

Important facts

- The governor ordered the communiqué of dissolution minutes after PDP leader and earlier CM Mehbooba Mufti publicized a letter on Twitter declaring that she would seek to form the government with her traditional rivals, the National Conference and Congress.

- The earlier CM and PDP President, Mehbooba Mufti staked claim to form the government in the state by explaining that her party, which is the largest party in the assembly with 29 MLAs, had the supporting of 15 lawmakers of National Conference and 12 of Congress.

- Earlier, both National Conference and Congress had demanded the dissolution of the assembly to dodge horse-trading and possible poaching of legislators amongst the emergence of the Lone-led front.

- Mufti's letter was trailed by People's Conference Chief Sajad Lone's letter to the governor, in which he betted claim to form the government with the backing of the BJP, which has 25 seats and above 18 other elected members.

- People's Conference has just 2 seats in the assembly

Imposed President's rule

- The Governor's rule was forced in the state on June 19th for a six months period following the collapse of the PDP-BJP coalition government after the Bhartiya Janta Party withdrew its support.

- The state assembly was kept suspended so that political parties could explore the likelihood of forming a new government.

- The 6-month tenure of the Governor's rule is scheduled to end on December 18th, after which the state will be put under the President's rule till it goes into polls.

- The state experienced polls at the end of 2014 and the Assembly's occupancy was till October 2020.

Joyce Msuya appointed as acting Executive Director of - UNEP

Tanzanian National Joyce Msuya was designated as acting Executive Director of UN Environment Programme after resignation of the Executive Director Erik Solheim. Solheim had resigned in wake of internal audit report accused of rule-breaking UN Environment Programme. The report has accused him of gulping up \$500,000 in unnecessary and budgeted travel expenses in only 22 months.

United Nations Environment Programme

- UN Environment Programme is voice for environment within the UN system. It was originated as result of United Nations Conference on Human Environment in June 1972. It is HQ in Nairobi, Kenya.

- UN Environment Programme also has 6 regional offices and various nation offices.

- It is the leading global environmental authority that sets global environmental programme, promotes coherent implementation of environmental dimension of sustainable development within UN system, and works as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.

- It acts as catalyst, advocate, educator and implementor to promote wise utilise and sustainable development of global environment.

- It operates with wide range of partners, including United Nations entities, international



groups, national governments, NGOs, private sector and civil society.

**Kim Jong-yang of South Korea elected as -
New President of Interpol**

Kim Jong Yang of South Korea was designated Interpol President for 2-year term by member nations at 87th General Assembly of Interpol, organised for first time in Dubai. He won at least two-thirds of votes cast at general assembly and beaten Russia's Alexander Prokopchuk. He will work until 2020, completing the 4-year mandate of his predecessor, Meng Hongwei, who was detained in China over corruption charges.

INTERPOL

- Interpol is global police cooperation agency and an NGO.
- It was recognized as the International Criminal Police Commission in year 1923. Its HQ is situated at Lyon, France.
- It is the world's largest international police organization, with 194-member nations including India. It is 2nd-largest international organization after UN in terms of international representation.
- Its efforts focus on public safety and combat terrorism, crimes against humanity, genocide, war crimes, environmental crime. It pursues to facilitate international police cooperation even where diplomatic relations do not exist between particular nations.
- It ensures that police worldwide have access to tools and services essential to do their jobs effectively. It also provides targeted training, expert investigative support, relevant information and secure communications networks.

**WTO to set up panels to rule on - US
tariff disputes**

The World Trade Organization- WTO decided to hear complaints from a number of

nations over new US steel and aluminium tariffs, and complaints from Washington over retaliatory duties.

The Dispute Settlement Body of World Trade Organization approved the constitution of panels to review US decision to hit a long line of nations with tariffs of 25 percent on steel and 10 percent on aluminium. Earlier, the EU, China, Canada, Norway, Mexico, and Russia all assured that they would escalate their disputes by starting adjudication proceedings, while the United States wants dispute panels against Canada, China and the EU.

The Dispute Settlement Body will develop separate panels for the complaints by the EU, China, Canada, Mexico, Norway and Russia, after the US said it would not approve to a single panel to hear all of them. A 7th request from Turkey for a panel will be discussed during a meeting later. The Dispute Settlement Body also decided for a panel which will review certain Chinese measures pertaining to the protection of intellectual property rights as needed by US.

Did you know?

Earlier, USA President Trump forced the tariffs levying 25% on steel and 10% on aluminium import. While imposing the tariffs, United States President justified it and informed that it's a matter of national security and hence it is the protection under World Trade Organization rule and out of purview the World Trade Organization's remit. United States departure from a decades-long strive for free trade, the exporter nations contacted World Trade Organization. They say the USA should compensate them for the damage, and have imposed their own tariffs in response.

**India, Australia sign five agreements on -
22nd November 2018**



India and Australia on November 22nd, 2018 inked 5 agreements to boost investments and enhance co-operation in areas including services to the disabled, bilateral investment, scientific collaboration and agricultural research and education.

The pacts were inked during the meetings organised between Indian President Ram Nath Kovind and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison in Sidney, Australia. The Indian President has become the 1st-ever Indian head of state to visit Australia. He arrived in the nation on November 21st, as a part of the 2nd leg of his 2-nation trip. The five pacts:

- i. Pact among the Government of India and the Government of Australia for co-operation in the area of disability and to distribute services to the differently-abled.
- ii. Pact among Invest India and Austrade to facilitate bilateral investment.
- iii. Pact among the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute, located in Ranchi and the Commonwealth Scientific and Research Organisation, based in Canberra, to foster scientific association and innovation.
- iv. Pact among the Acharya NG Ranga Agricultural University, Guntur and the University of Western Australia, Perth, for co-operation in agricultural research and education.
- v. Joint Ph.D. pact among the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi and the Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane.

Sangai tourism festival organised in - Manipur

The yearly Sangai Festival was observed in North-Eastern state of Manipur. It is magnificent festival of

state called after state animal, Sangai, the unsympathetically endangered brow-antlered deer found only in Manipur. The festival goals to promote Manipur as world class tourism destination. It was initiated by Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Sangai Tourism Festival

The festival was initiated in 2010 and has grown with the passage of years into big platform for Manipur to display its rich tradition and culture to the world. It displays tourism potential of Manipur in field of arts and culture, handloom, handicrafts, native sports, cuisine, music and adventure sports of state. The attention areas of festival reflect Manipur's rich cultural heritage and love for art of numerous tribes inhabiting state. It also displays "Ras Leela", which is state's classical dance style along with numerous other folk-dance performances like Bamboo dance, Maibi dance, Kabui Naga dance, Lai Haraoba dance, Khamba Thoibi dance. Indigenous sports including martial arts- Thang Ta, Mukna Kangjei-game that joins hockey and wrestling, Yubi-Lakpi- game played with greased coconut similar to rugby and Sagol Kangjei- Modern Polo will be also showcased festival.

Sangai Deer

Sangai Deer also known as the Dancing Deer. It is the state animal of Manipur. Once it was located across Manipur Valley in abundant now only its residual natural habitat is found in Keibul Lamjao National Park, only floating national park in the world. It is enlisted as unsympathetically endangered species by International Union for Conservation of Nature- IUCN. Keibul Lamjao National Park is floating park in Manipur's Loktak Lake with its unique composition of biomass vegetation that floats on surface of lake.



WCCB wins Asia Environment Enforcement Awards for - Combating trans-boundary environmental crime

UN Environment Programme has nominated Wildlife Crime Control Bureau- WCCB and its administration officer RS Sharath for 2018 Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards. They were nominated under organization and individual categories individually for their outstanding contributions in fighting the trans-boundary environmental crimes. The 2018 Awards will be presented by UN Environment Programme with UN Development Programme, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, INTERPOL, USAID, Freeland Foundation, and Government of Sweden. This is 2nd time in continuation that Wildlife Crime Control Bureau is bestowed by UN Environment award. Last year, it was bestowed for its efforts in conducting and co-ordinating species-specific wildlife enforcement operation identified "Operation Save Kurma".

Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards

- The awards widely recognize and observe excellence in enforcement by government delegates and institutions combating transboundary environmental crime in Asia.
- They are given to outstanding individuals or government organizations which validate excellence and leadership in enforcement of national laws to fight transboundary environmental crime.

- The thematic scope of these prizes covers any transboundary environmental crimes, including illegal trade in wildlife and illegitimate trade in chemicals/waste.

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau

- Wildlife Crime Control Bureau is statutory multi-disciplinary organisation under

Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change to fight systematized wildlife crime in the nation.

- It was recognized in June 2007 by amending Wildlife (Protection) Act (WLPA), 1972, a special Act to protect wildlife and fauna in the nation.
- Under Section 38 (Z) of WLPA, 1972, it is directed to collect and collate intelligence related to planned wildlife crime and disseminate it to state and other enforcement agencies for instant action.
- It supports foreign authorities and international group concerned to simplify coordination and universal action for wildlife crime control.

NASI SCOPUS Young Scientist Awards-2018

National Academy of Sciences India SCOPUS Young Scientist Awards 2018 were given to winners in New Delhi. This year 5 multi-disciplinary groups in awards were announced. The groups are agriculture, plant sciences and rural development, women in science, environmentally sound sustainable development, bio-medical research & healthcare and innovation in engineering & physical sciences. These groups associated with National missions of Make in India, Digital India, Healthy India and Clean India. The awards include citation, trophy and Rupees 75,000. The 5 winners were nominated from pool of about 800 candidates.

2018 Winners

Agriculture, Plant Sciences and Rural Development award was presented to Jitender Giri, National Institute of Plant Genome Research, New Delhi.

Biomedical Research and Healthcare award was presented to Maddika Subba



Reddy, Group Leader and Staff Scientist- V, CDFD, Hyderabad.

Environmentally Sound Sustainable Development award was presented to Vimal Chandra Srivastava, IIT-Roorkee, Roorkee.

Innovation in Engineering and Physical Sciences award was presented to Ajay S.Karakoti, Associate Professor, Ahmedabad University, Ahmedabad.

Women in Science award was presented to Zhumur Ghosh, Bose Institute, Kolkata.

More About Scopus Young Scientist Awards

It was 1st release by Amsterdam-based global publisher Elsevier in 2006. It is part of Elsevier's global resourcefulness for backing early career scientists in their quest to advance boundaries of science across broad range of disciplines. In 2009, India formally adopted programme within its scientific community via Elsevier's association with National Academy of Sciences, India. Indian version of this award bestows outstanding young scholars in the nation who are building their careers in academic research, helping them gain recognition for their work.

Institution's Innovation Council Programme launched by – Union Government

Institution's Innovation Council- IIC, Programme of Ministry of Human Resource Development's Innovation Cell was initiated in New Delhi by Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar. Human Resource Development Ministry has recognized Innovation cell at AICTE with resolution to systematically foster culture of Innovation in all Higher Education Institutions across the nation.

Institution's Innovation Council Programme

Institution's Innovation Council Programme is significant step in institutionalising

innovation and developing a scientific nature in the nation. The objective of formation of network of Institution's Innovation Councils is to encourage, inspire and nurture young students by exposing them to new ideas and processes ensuing in innovative activities in their formative years.

Above 1000 Higher Education Institutions have already formed Institution's Innovation Councils in their campuses and enrolled for Institution's Innovation Council network managed by Ministry of Human Resource Development's Innovation cell to encourage innovation through multitudinous modes leading to an innovation promotion eco-system in their campuses. With this initiative, India optimises to get good position in global innovation ranking in the next 2-3 years.

Innovation Cell has undertaken many initiatives for educational development in higher education for encouraging best practices in innovation and advance research. For this, it has executed programmes including Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievement, Smart India Hackathon- 2019, and many more.

Allied and Healthcare Council of India to be set up: Cabinet approval

The Union Cabinet led by PM Narendra Modi on November 22nd, 2018 sanctioned the Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2018 for regulation and standardisation of education and services by allied and healthcare experts.

The Bill provides for forming of an Allied and Healthcare Council of India and corresponding state associated and healthcare councils, which will work as a standard-setter and implementor for professions of allied and healthcare.

Important Highlights



- The bill provides for the formation of central and corresponding state allied & healthcare councils and fifteen major professional categories including 53 professions in allied and healthcare streams.

- It provides for structure, constitution, composition and purposes of the central council & state councils for instance framing of policies and standards, regulation of professional conduct, creation and maintenance of live registers, provisions for common entry and exit examinations.

- The professional advisory bodies under central & state councils will study issues independently and provide guidelines relating to specific recognised categories.

- The bill will also have a dominant effect on any other current law for any of the covered professions. The state council will undertake recognition of allied & healthcare institutions.

- The clause of offences and drawbacks has been encompassed in the bill to check malpractices. The bill also empowers the central and state governments to make guidelines.

- The bill calls for the constitution of an interim council within Six months of its passing, which will grasp the charge for a period of 2 years until the establishment of the Central Council.

- The council at the centre & the states are to be formed as body corporate with a provision to get funds from various sources.

Construction of Kartarpur Sahib corridor in Gurdaspur district to International Border has been approved by - Cabinet

PM Narendra Modi led Union Cabinet has permitted building and development of Kartarpur Sahib Corridor from Dera Baba Nanak, Gurdaspur district, Punjab to

international border with Pakistan. It was permitted as part of 550th birthday festivities of Guru Nanak Dev, which falls in 2019.

Kartarpur Sahib corridor :

It will simplify pilgrims from India who visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur, on the banks of the River Ravi in Pakistan every year. It was 1st proposed by then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1999. If connected on both sides, this could also deliver major improvement to religious tourism as additional pilgrims will be able to visit holy shrine throughout year.

It will be executed as integrated development project with Centre government's funding. Central Government will put in place suitable amenities for smooth passage of pilgrims. It will also request Pakistan Government to recognise the sentiments of the Sikh community, and develop a corridor with suitable facilities in their territory.

• Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems Services (ACROSS) scheme approved by - CCEA

PM Narendra Modi led Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs has sanctioned continuation of 9 sub schemes of umbrella scheme 'Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services-ACROSS' during 2017-2020. The scheme purposes at refining skill of weather and climate forecast through sustained observations, intensive Research and Development.

The scheme refers to the atmospheric science programmes of the Ministry of Earth Sciences. Its aim is to provide reliable weather and climate forecast for benefit of society. It also goals at improving skill of weather and climate forecast via sustained



observations, intensive Research & Development. It consists of 9 sub-programs which are multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional in nature and will be implemented in integrated method.

Benefits

- It will deliver improved weather, climate and ocean forecast, thereby making sure transfer of commensurate advantages to the various services.
- It will also deliver a sizable number of scientific and technical staff along with necessary administrative support, thereby producing employment.
- It will produce employment openings to many people as large number of agencies similar to the Krishi Vigyana Kendras of ICAR, Universities and local municipalities are roped to make sure last-mile connectivity of the weather-based services to the end-users.

PM Modi lays foundation stone of City Gas Distribution Projects on - 22nd November 2018

PM Narendra Modi on November 22nd, 2018 laid the foundation stone of City Gas Distribution- CGD Projects in 65 Geographical Areas in 129 districts under the 9th City Gas Distribution bidding round, remotely from Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The Prime Minister also released the 10th City Gas Distribution Bidding Round in 50 Geographical Areas distributed over 124 districts in 14 states. Further talking on the occasion, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan informed that the Government is working to move ahead creating a gas-based economy.

Significant Highlights

- Presently, the share of gas in the India's energy mix is just more than 6% and the

objective is to reach the 15% figure, while the world average is 24%.

- India goals to bring down its carbon emission and a number of initiatives have been taken in this direction such as LED bulbs, BS-VI fuel, bio-energy, International Solar Alliance, Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana, and providing clean piped gas supply to extra cities.
- India would also be ornamenting the LNG terminal capacity, renegotiating Indo-Qatar Gas deal and inspiring positive Indo-US engagement in this direction.
- India is not only focussing on growing the usage and supply of gas, but also on generating gas through agro-wastes and other produces and including the same into the City Gas Distribution network.
- India has also amplified its focus on promoting the use of eco-friendly clean fuel, natural gas as a fuel and feedstock across the nation to move towards a gas based economy.
- As per, the development of City Gas Distribution networks has been intended to upsurge the availability of cleaner cooking fuel such as PNG and transportation fuel as CNG to all the inhabitants of the nations.

Construction of Kartarpur corridor in Gurdaspur district to International Border by - Cabinet

PM Narendra Modi led Union Cabinet has permitted building and development of Kartarpur Corridor from Dera Baba Nanak, Gurdaspur district, Punjab to international border with Pakistan. It was permitted as part of 550th birthday festivities of Guru Nanak Dev, which falls in 2019.

More about Kartarpur corridor



○ It will simplify pilgrims from India who visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur, on the banks of the River Ravi in Pakistan every year. It was 1st proposed by then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1999.

○ If connected on both sides, this could also deliver major improvement to religious tourism as additional pilgrims will be able to visit holy shrine throughout year.

○ It will be executed as integrated development project with Centre government's funding. Central Government will put in place suitable amenities for smooth passage of pilgrims.

○ It will also request Pakistan Government to "recognise the sentiments of the Sikh community, and develop a corridor with suitable facilities in their territory.

Bhuseva and Bhudaar web portal launched by - Andhra Pradesh Government

AP Government has released Bhuseva and Bhudaar online web portal via which people can view land records online with the help of using Aadhaar card. Bhudaar security policy was also released to provide security to the land records of farmers.

More about Bhudaar

- It is 11-digit UID code to be designated to each agriculture land holding and rural and urban property.

- It will permit people to get land details on their mobile handsets. It will assist to transparency in land records. It delivers information related to all transactions of particular land/property in single source.

- It will also deliver history of transactions initially for the last 12 years. Revenue, Panchayat Raj, Municipal Administration, registration, survey & settlement, forest, endowments and waqf branches are engaged in making this service accessible to the

people. Unique ID for permanent Bhudaar will begin with 28 and if it is government land, 28 is followed by 00.

- Bhudaar card can be produced by the land owner/property owner from Bhuseva web portal. 2 types of Bhudaar cards are available including e-Bhudaar and M-Bhudaar. Under Mobile-Bhudaar, one has to download an application form on mobile. One can also receive Bhudaar card from Mee Seva centres.

UNICEF designates Singer Nahid Afrin as first Youth Advocate of NE region to fight for - Child rights

UN International Children's Emergency Fund- UNICEF has designated popular singer Nahid Afrin aged 17 years from Assam as the 1st "Youth Advocate" of the North-Eastern region to fight for child rights. United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund engages "Youth Advocates" to connect their voice as agents of change in society. Nahid had accomplished her playback debut in 2016 Bollywood

movie "Akira" starring Sonakshi Sinha in the lead. She got best female playback singer award at the Assam state Film Award 2018.

United Nations Children's Fund

- Earlier known as UN International Children's Emergency Fund is special programme of United Nations devoted to aiding national efforts to improve the health, nutrition, education, and general welfare of children.

- It was formed in 1946 to provide relief to children in nations devastated by World War II. It is HQ in New York City.

- After 1950, it focused its efforts toward general programmes for improvement of children's welfare, particularly in less-



developed nations and various emergency situations. Its broader mission was reflected in current name adopted in 1953. It was bestowed Nobel Prize for Peace in 1965.

- Since 1996 United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund programmes have been guided by Convention on Rights of the Child- 1989, which supports right of all children to enjoyment of highest attainable standard of health and to amenities for treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health.

- Much of United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund's efforts are focused in areas in which relatively small expenditures, but have noteworthy impact on lives of the most disadvantaged children, such as the prevention and treatment of disease. Its activities are funded by both government and private contributions.

7th International Tourism Mart 2018 being organised in - Agartala

The Seventh edition of the "International Tourism Mart" was organised in Agartala, the capital city of Tripura. It was held by Union Ministry of Tourism in association with Department of Tourism, Government of Tripura and North Eastern States. The theme for present year is 'Adventure Tourism'.

Important Highlights

- This edition of tourism mart is anticipated to witness wide participation of international buyers and media delegates from nations around the world and from different regions of the nation.

- Total 41 foreign delegates from 18 nations and 23 tour operators and travel agents along with 18 media persons, journalists, travel writers and bloggers are

going to take part in this edition of the tourism mart.

- Besides, foreign delegates, 26 domestic tour operators from other parts of nation and 78 sellers from North-Eastern states also had participated.

- The contestants had engaged in business-to-business meetings with sellers from North-Eastern region which enabled tourism product suppliers from region to reach out to international and domestic buyers.

- The mart also consisted presentations by state governments of region on their tourism potential, panel discussion, cultural evenings, sightseeing visits to local attractions in and around Agartala.

International Tourism Mart

- It is yearly event held in North-Eastern region with the aim of highlighting tourism potential of region in domestic and international markets.

- It provides platform to tourism business society and entrepreneurs from 8 North Eastern States. It held yearly in North-Eastern States on rotation basis.

- The earlier editions of this mart have been organised in Guwahati, Tawang, Shillong, Gangtok and Imphal.

- North-East Region of India including states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim.

- It is gifted with diverse tourist attractions and products.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women celebrated on - 25th November 2018

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was celebrated on November 25th, 2018. The 2018 theme of the day was Orange the World: #HearMeToo and



like earlier editions, the date marks the launch of sixteen days of activism that will accomplish on 10th December 2018, **International Human Rights Day**

- Despite the implementation of the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women-CEDAW by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979, violence against women and girls remains a unescapable problem worldwide.

- The UN General Assembly also released a resolution that laid the foundation for the road towards a world free of gender-based violence.

- Another courageous step in the right direction was personified by an initiative launched in 2008 - UNiTE to End Violence against Women.

Orange Day

- The 25th of every month has been elected as Orange Day by the United Nations Women campaign Say No, UNiTE, which was released in 2009 to mobilise civil society, activists, governments and the United Nations system in order intensify the influence of the United Nations Secretary-General's campaign, UNiTE to Finish Violence against Women.

- On the eve, contestants worldwide are stimulated to wear a touch of orange in solidarity with the cause, as the colour symbolises a brighter future and a world free from violence against women.

Scientists build and flow first-ever silent airplane with no moving propellers or - Jet turbines

Researchers from Massachusetts Institute of Technology- MIT, United States have built and flown 1st- ever silent airplane with no moving propellers/jet turbines. Currently, every aircraft has moving parts including

propellers, turbine blades and fans, which are motorized by the combustion of fossil fuels/battery packs that generate a persistent, whining buzz.

Important Points

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology scientists have designed this lightweight plane weighing about 5 pounds with 5-meter wingspan. It was flown at distance of 60m, a feat that was repeated ten times.

- It was simplest possible plane design that could demonstrate concept that ion plane could fly. It is 1st-ever plane having no moving parts in propulsion system.

- This new light aircraft does not have propellers/turbines with no dependency on fossil fuels to fly. It is motivated from movie and television series 'Star Trek'.

- It is power-driven by ionic wind/electro-dynamic thrust, a silent but mighty flow of ions that is generated aboard plane. It can produce enough thrust to propel plane over sustained, steady flight. Unlike propeller thrust planes, the new design is completely silent.

Importance

- It has theoretically opened new and unexplored possibilities for aircraft which are quieter, mechanically simpler and do not release harmful emissions.

- In the near-term, such ion wind propulsion systems could be utilised to fly less noisy drones. Moreover, ion propulsion combined with more conventional combustion systems can generate more fuel-efficient, hybrid passenger planes and other large aircrafts in future.

Andaman & Nicobar Islands home to tenth of India's fauna species as per - ZSI publication

Andaman & Nicobar Islands are home to 10th of India's fauna species and hosts 1,067



endemic faunal species found nowhere else. It was discovered by Zoological Survey of India publication titled Faunal Diversity of Biogeographic Zones: Islands of India. This journal for the 1st time has come up with record of all faunal species found on the island. It is India's peak organization on animal taxonomy. Its aim is to promote survey, exploration, study and documentation on various aspects of animal taxonomy in Indian subcontinent. It also pursues advancement of knowledge on animal taxonomy. It was found in 1916 and HQ in Kolkata. It has record of species found in particular category of animals and also highlights most susceptible among them.

Key Highlights

- Total area of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, which consists of 572 islands, islets and rocky outcrops, is approximately 8,249 sq.km has about total 11,009 species.
- It includes only 0.25 percent of India's geographical area but is home to above 10 percent of nation's fauna species.
- Thus, presence of such large number of species in such small area results Andaman & Nicobar Islands one of the richest ecosystems and biodiversity spots in India.
- Few of the species in Andaman & Nicobar Islands are banned to very small area and thus more vulnerable to any anthropogenic threat.
- 'Marine fauna' found on islands, dugong/sea cow and Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin are both categorised as Vulnerable under "IUCN Red List" of Threatened Species.
- 'Terrestrial mammalian' species consist 46 terrestrial mammalian species. Three species have been classified as Critically Endangered as Jenkin's shrew or *C. jenkinsi*, Andaman shrew or

Crocidura

andamanensis and Nicobar shrew or *C. nicobarica*. 5 species are listed as Endangered, nine species as Vulnerable, and One species as Near Threatened by IUCN.

- 'Birds' Endemism is pretty high in Andaman & Nicobar island, with 36 among 344 species of birds found only on these islands.

- 'Marine' diversity with 8 species of amphibians and 23 species of reptiles are prevalent to the islands.

- They are at high risk of being endangered.

- 'Marine faunal diversity' consists coral reefs and its associated fauna. In all, 555 species of Scleractinia corals that are located in the island atmosphere, all which are placed under Schedule-I of the Wildlife Protection Act.

70-feet tall statue of Lord Buddha unveiled at Rajgir in - Nalanda district

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar unveiled 70 feet tall statue of Lord Buddha at Rajgir, Nalanda district of Bihar state. It is 2nd tallest statue of Buddha in the nation.

Important Highlights

- The sculpture has been installed overhead 16-metre radius pedestal in centre of lake Ghora Katora.
- It has been constructed from 45,000 cubic foot pink sand stone. Ghora Katora is a natural lake bounded by 5 hills.
- The area around lake and sculpture has been established into beautiful park from eco-tourism point of view.
- In this area no petrol as well as diesel automobiles will be permitted to operate and only electronic automobiles will be permitted to operate in this area.



Mary Kom clinches gold in World Boxing Championship on - 24th November 2018

Mary Kom fashioned history on November 24th, 2018 by securing her 6th world championship gold at the 10th World Women's Boxing Championships, organised in New Delhi, India. Mary Kom distinctly remembered that she had earlier secured 5 straight Gold Medals at the World Boxing Championship, a feat that hasn't been completed by any women boxer before.

Key Highlights

- Mary Kom secured the sole Gold medal for India by beating Ukraine's Hanna Okhota in a unanimous 5-0 verdict in the 48 kilograms category summit bout.
- Another Indian boxer, Sonia Chahal clinched the silver medal in 57 kilograms bout, after she lost to Wahner Ornella Gabriele of Germany in the finals.
- Besides, 2 bronze medals were secured by Lovlina Borgohain and Simranjit Kaur, after they lost their semi-finals fights in 69kilogram and 64 kilogram weight categories individually.
- Overall, India finished the championships with One Gold, One Silver and 2 Bronze medals.

Recalling Mary Kom's participation in the New Delhi programme organised in 2006, she informed that at that time, boxers from fewer nations took part and the sport was not even included in the Olympics.

- She further added that though they secured 8 medals then, which included 4 Gold Medals, the competition is tougher these days and considering that fact, their present result, comprising 1 gold, 1 silver and 2 bronze medals, was great.

69th Constitution Day observed across India on - 26th November 2018

The 69th Constitution Day is celebrating across India on November 26th, 2018 to highlight the adoption of the Indian Constitution by the Constituent Assembly on November 26th, 1949 and it came into force on January 26th, 1950. On November 19th, 2015 during the year-long observation of the 125th birth anniversary of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, the Union Government announced November 26th as the Constitution Day in a gazette notification. After the independence of India, the Constituent Assembly delegated the job of drafting the Indian Constitution to the Drafting Committee chaired by Dr.B.R.Ambedkar. In the starting of 1948, Dr.Ambedkar finished the draft of the Constitution and forwarded it in the Constituent Assembly. In November 26th, 1949, this draft was accepted with very few modifications.

Indian Constitution

- The Constitution of India is a supreme law of India, which forms the framework that defines the political principles, begins the structure, processes, powers and duties of Government institution.
- The Constitution announces India a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic, assuring its residents justice, equality and liberty, and endeavours to promote society.
- The constitution's articles are assembled as "Preamble", Parts, Schedules, and Appendices. The preamble can be denoted to as the preface which lime lights the entire Constitution.
- The Constitution of India is the longest written constitution of any independent nation in the world.
- It implies the sovereignty of the people.



- Dr.B.R.Ambedkar is observed as the father of the Indian Constitution.

Sashastra Seema Bal to patrol - Dudhwa tiger reserve

Dudhwa Tiger Reserve- DTR and Sashastra Seema Bal have linked to deliver security to Dudhwa forests and its rich wildlife. It was part agreement reached among all security agencies consisting Sashastra Seema Bal, central and local intelligence officers, customs and excise officials, Special Tiger Protection Force and Dudhwa Tiger Reserve's field staff to deliberate matters involving safety of Dudhwa forests and its wildlife.

Important Points

- The combined long route patrolling including Sashastra Seema Bal, STPF and Dudhwa Tiger Reserve field staff will assist to reinforce patrolling in and around Dudhwa reserve to check forest and wildlife misconducts.

- Intelligence and data about activities of wildlife and forest criminals will also be shared among numerous security agencies.

- Besides, process to create Sashastra Seema Bal border outpost level communication and data was sanctioned for firming safety of Dudhwa.

Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

- It is protected area in UP that stretches mainly across the Lakhimpur Kheri and Bahraich districts.

- It consists Dudhwa National Park, Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary.

- It covers area of about 1,284.3 sq.km and consists 3 large forest fragments.

- It shares North-Eastern boundary with Nepal, which is defined to large extent by Mohana River.

- The area is huge Terai alluvial floodplain negotiated by various rivers and streams flowing in South-Easterly direction.

- Apart from tigers, it is also home to swamp deer, sambar deer, barking deer, spotted deer, hog deer, Indian rhinoceros, sloth bear, jackal, civets, wild cat, fishing cat, and many more.

- It is home to one of finest forests in India, some of these trees are above 150 years old and more than 70 feet tall.

Government appoints Akhilesh Ranjan as Convenor of Task Force drafting a - New Direct Tax Legislation

The Union Government on November 26th, 2017 designated Akhilesh Ranjan as Convenor of the Task Force that was established in November 2017 for drafting a New Direct Tax Legislation. Akhilesh Ranjan is currently working as the Member (Legislation) of the Central Board of Direct Taxes. The other associates of the Task Force remain unchanged. Other members are: Girish Ahuja, non-official Director of SBI, Rajiv Memani; Chairman & Regional Managing Partner of E&Y; Mukesh Patel, Practicing Tax Advocate, Ahmedabad; Mansi Kedia, Consultant, ICRIER, New Delhi; G.C. Srivastava, Retd IRS and Advocate. Besides, Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian will be a permanent Special Invitee in the Task Force. The task force has been planned to draft a suitable Direct Tax Legislation keeping in view the direct tax system widespread in different nations, International best practices and economic requirements of the nation. The Task Force has formed its own process for



regulating its work. Further, the Task Force will present its report to the Government by February 28th, 2019.

World-class township for autistic children, adults to be built in - Kolkata

The India Autism Centre- IAC, a world-level autism township is being planned to be construct near Kolkata, where children and adults suffering from the autism would receive training, treatment and boarding amenities. The one-of-its-kind initiative is a combined effort between a private organisation and the state government. It is supposed to come up more than 52 acres plot at Sirakol in South 24 Parganas in the next 5 years.

Crucial Highlights

- The township is believed to be construct at an estimated cost of Rupees 500 crore. It will be built under Section 8 of Companies Act, 2013.
- The construction work for the township will start in 2019 and it is expected to be accomplished by 2023. The soft launch of the project has been planned for January 2019.
- The centre will be the 1st of its kind in India as well as overseas, with housing facilities for 350 inhabitants and day-care centre for more than 200 children, adolescents and adults.
- It will have provisions for training teachers, who would be trained with those suffering from the autism disorder.
- It will also have an administrative branch and a guest house, to house parents of those receiving training at the institute.

Indian missions abroad to soon issue passports within - 48 hours

Indian missions worldwide to soon issue passports in less than 48 hours to residents overseas. The information was given by Minister of State for External Affairs V.K.Singh

while addressing a meeting after launching the “Passport Seva” project at the Indian Embassy in New Delhi. V.K.Singh informed that the passport offices at Indian missions have been digitally connected with the data centre in India, which would speed-up the process of issuing passport.

Important Points

- Earlier this week, the Indian mission at New York had delivered passports in less than 48 hours. The same will soon begin happening across the world.
- Currently, there has been a major simplification of rules & regulations for passport applicants.
- In fact, verification of much of information of the aspirants would now be done digitally.
- The “Passport Seva” project was 1st launched in the UK in October 2018. In the USA, the project was 1st rolled out in New York on November 21st, followed by Washington on November 24th.
- The project would be later launched in Indian Consulates at Atlanta, Houston, Chicago and San Francisco.

Importance

- The initiative is going to quantitatively and qualitatively upgrade India’s passport services immensely, both in the scope of the applications that can be tackled and also in the way they will be tackled and the way they will be united into the total much better consular services.

Other Details

- The Indian government will soon release a new set of passports, the sketch of which has already been sanctioned.
- The new passports will consist of advanced security features and better printing and paper quality.



However, there will be no changes in the colour of the Indian passport.

Syed Modi International Badminton title 2018 won by - Sameer Verma

India's Sameer Verma has secured Syed Modi India Grand Prix Gold badminton championship 2018 in men's singles group. In the final match organised in Lucknow, he conquered China's Lu Guangzu by 16-21, 21-19 and 21-14 points. Women's singles championship was secured by China's Han Yue after conquering India's Saina Nehwal by 21-18, 21-8 points.

Syed Modi International India Open Grand Prix championship

It was initiated by UP Badminton Association in 1991 as "Syed Modi Memorial Badminton Tournament" in the memory of Syed Modi. Primarily, it was National level programme and in 2004 it was held as International event for the 1st time. In 2011, it was advanced to BWF Grand Prix Gold tournament.

It is organised every year at Lucknow, UP.

Indian Space Research Organisation to launch hi-tech imaging satellite with 30 foreign satellites on - 29th November 2018

The ISRO on November 29th, 2018 will release a Hyperspectral Imaging Satellite-HySIS, an earth observation satellite along with 30 overseas commercial satellites from Sriharikota launch centre in Andhra Pradesh. The satellites will be released via Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle- PSLV-C43, from the 1st launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. The satellite, which can look in 55 spectral/colour bands from 630 kilometres

above the ground, will be utilised for a range of applications including agriculture, forestry and assessment of coastal zones, inland waters, soil, other geological environments and by the military for surveillance motives.

Important Highlights

- Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle is a 4-stage launch vehicle with alternating solid and liquid propellant stages.
- Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-C43 is the Core Alone version of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle which is the lightest version of it.
- Hyperspectral Imaging Satellite is an earth observation satellite advanced by Indian Space Research Organisation. It is the chief satellite of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-C43 mission.
- The weight of the spacecraft is about 380 kilograms.
- The satellite will be placed in 636 kilometres Polar Sun Synchronous Orbit with an inclination of 97.957 degrees.
- The mission life of the satellite is believed to be 5 years.
- The chief objective of the Hyperspectral Imaging Satellite would be to observe the earth's surface in visible, near infrared and shortwave infrared regions of the electromagnetic spectrum.
- The overseas satellites to be launched along with Hyperspectral Imaging Satellite include One Micro and 29 Nano satellites from 8 different nations.
- All these satellites will be positioned in a 504 kilometres orbit by Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-C43. Out of the 30 commercial satellites, 23 are from the USA.
- These satellites have been commercially agreement for launch via Antrix Corporation Limited, which is the commercial branch of Indian Space Research Organisation.



Venkaiah Naidu lays down foundation stone of Dera Baba Nanak - Kartarpur Sahib Corridor

The Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on November 26th, 2018 laid the foundation stone for the building of Dera Baba Nanak-Kartarpur Sahib Road Corridor at an event in Mann village, Gurdaspur district of Punjab. The foundation stone ceremony was witnessed by Union Minister for Road Transport Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Food Processing Harsimrat Kaur Badal, and CM Punjab Captain Amrinder Singh. On November 22nd, 2018, the Union Government finalised to construct the Kartarpur road Corridor up to the international border between India and Pakistan as an integrated development project to highlight 550th birthday of the Guru Nanak Dev Ji in 2019. Earlier on November 15th, 2018, India and Pakistan had declared to construct Corridors on their respective sides to allow Sikh pilgrims visit the holy shrine without visa.

Gurudwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur

- The Gurudwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur is situated on the bank of river Ravi in Pakistan and is approximately 3-4 kilometres from the Indo-Pak border in Pakistan.

- It was listened that Guru Nanak Dev ji gathered a Sikh community and lived for 18 years until his death in 1539.

- The shrine is visible from the Indian side with the help of binoculars installed at Gurdwara Dera Baba Nanak for darshans. Pakistan authorities generally trim the nearby obstructing elephant grass.

- The gurdwara was unlocked to pilgrims following repairs and restoration in 1999, and Sikh jathas have been visiting the shrine regularly ever since.

India inked protocol of Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement to prevent tax evasion with - China

India and China have inked protocol to modify Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement for avoiding double taxation and for inhibition of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income by permitting exchange of information. Under Section 90 of Income-tax Act, 1961, India can arrive into pact with foreign nation/specified territory for the avoiding double taxation of income, for exchange of information for the prevention of evasion.

Important Points

The Protocol to modify Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement with China apprises existing provisions for exchange of information to latest international norms. It incorporates variations needed to implement treaty related minimum norms under the Action reports of Base Erosion & Profit Shifting Project. Besides minimum norms, it also brings in variations according to Base Erosion & Profit Shifting Action reports as settled upon by the both sides. It will benefit prevent tax evasion by permitting the exchange of information.

India and ADB sign \$200 Million Loan to improve State Highways in - Bihar

Union Government has inked \$200 million loan pact with Asian Development Bank for Bihar State Highways III Project- BSHP-III. It will invest widening and advancement of around 230 kilometres state highways in Bihar to all-weather norms with road safety features. Since 2008, Asian Development Bank has delivered 4 loans to Bihar amounting value \$1.43 billion to upgrade about 1,453 kilometres of State Highways and to build new bridge over Ganga River near Patna.

Bihar State Highways III Project



It was sanctioned by Asian Development Bank Board in October 2018. It purposes at upgrading State Highways to standard double lane width with road safety features and paved path for reconstructing, widening and consolidating culverts and bridges. It also pursues to construct institutional capacity of State for road design and maintenance and incorporate suitable new technologies in the State's road sub-sector. The better-quality roads under the Project will contribute to savings in vehicle operating cost and travel time, diminish vehicle emissions and advance road safety. This loan will accompaniment efforts of Bihar Government to advance all state highways to meet least double lane norms with better surfaces and better-quality road safety leading to enhanced connectivity. It will also create State-level Road Research Institute to advance technical and management capacity of Road Agency Staff.

RBI eases hedging norms for overseas borrowings to 70% from - 100%

The RBI on November 26th, 2018 relieved the standards for External Commercial Borrowings by dropping the mandatory hedging provision to 70% from the existing 100%.

'Hedging' refers to an investment procedure needed to decrease the risk of adverse price/currency movements.

The Reserve Bank of India also clarified that the External Commercial Borrowings elevated prior to this circular will be needed to mandatorily roll over their current hedge only to the extent of 70% of outstanding External Commercial Borrowing exposure. The relaxed standards will be applicable to the External Commercial Borrowings with a maturity period between 3 and 5 years. External Commercial Borrowing is an instrument utilised to ease the access to

foreign money by Indian organisations, corporations and Public Sector Undertakings. The relaxation in hedging is for Indian organisations raising foreign currency-denominated External Commercial Borrowings under Track I of the External Commercial Borrowing framework. The Track I refer to medium-term foreign currency-denominated External Commercial Borrowing with a minimum average maturity of 3-5 years.

Significance

The initiative is likely to enhance the local credit market. It will upsurge the exposure of Indian organisations borrowing abroad to fluctuations in the foreign exchange market.

The initiative will also aid in improving dollar inflows into the economy at a time when few foreign currency deposits are likely to mature.

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- These satellites have been commercially agreement for launch via Antrix Corporation Limited, which is the commercial branch of Indian Space Research Organisation.

Venkaiah Naidu lays down foundation stone of Dera Baba Nanak - Kartarpur Sahib Corridor

The Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on November 26th, 2018 laid the foundation stone for the building of Dera Baba Nanak-Kartarpur Sahib Road Corridor at an event in Mann village, Gurdaspur district of Punjab. The foundation stone ceremony was witnessed by Union Minister for Road Transport Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Food Processing Harsimrat Kaur Badal, and CM Punjab Captain Amrinder Singh. On November 22nd, 2018, the Union Government finalised to construct the Kartarpur road Corridor up to the international border between India and Pakistan as an integrated development project to highlight 550th birthday of the Guru Nanak Dev Ji in 2019. Earlier on November 15th, 2018, India and Pakistan had declared to construct Corridors on their respective sides to allow Sikh pilgrims



visit the holy shrine without visa.

Gurudwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur

• The Gurudwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur is situated on the bank of river Ravi in Pakistan and is approximately 3-4 kilometres from the Indo-Pak border in Pakistan.

• It was listened that Guru Nanak Dev ji gathered a Sikh community and lived for 18 years until his death in 1539.

• The shrine is visible from the Indian side with the help of binoculars installed at Gurdwara Dera Baba Nanak for darshans. Pakistan authorities generally trim the nearby obstructing elephant grass.

• The gurdwara was unlocked to pilgrims following repairs and restoration in 1999, and Sikh jathas have been visiting the shrine regularly ever since.

First-ever India Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue held at - St. Petersburg

The 1st-ever India Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue was organised at St. Petersburg in Russia. India was headed by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar and Russian representative led by Economic Development Minister Maxim Oreshkin.

Important Points

• The 2-day forum provided members platform to debate development of bilateral relations in trade, investment, technology and industry.

• It was intended to bring together significant business figures from both nations.

• Transport, agriculture and agro-processing, Small and Medium Enterprises, digital revolution and frontier technologies and industrial co-operation were some of the important areas of focus of the forum.

Indo-Russian Strategic Economic Dialogue

• It was formed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Vladimir Putin in their casual summit organised at Sochi in May 2018, to have big push to economic partnership between both nations that has initiated to gain momentum since 2017.

• It goals to emphasis on macro picture of economic partnership and also explore partnership and combined ventures in services and IT sectors.

• It pursues to put in place process for partnership among resource-rich Russian regions and Indian states.

• In effort to enhance bilateral trade to \$30 billion by 2025, both nations have settled to give high importance to removal of obstacles to trade in order to improve upon 21.5 percent growth in 2-way trade recorded past year.

• India has already released Strategic Economic Dialogue with China.

Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System terms Titli cyclone - 'rarest of rare'

Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System- RIMES, for Africa and Asia has labelled "Titli", the severe cyclone storm that distressed Odisha in October 2018 as "rarest cyclone". Earlier, India Meteorological Department had named formation of Titli as "rarest of rare" occurrence after this unadorned cyclone had altered its path after making landfall.

• It is inter-governmental body registered under UN.

• It is retained and managed by 45 collaborating nations in Asia Pacific and Africa Region. India is chairman of the organisation and it was recognized in 2009 and was registered with United Nations in July 2009. It works from its regional early warning centre situated at campus of Asian Institute of



Technology in Pathumthani, Thailand.

Important Highlights

- As per to Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System, “Titli” cyclone is rarest of rare in above 200 years of cyclone track history in Odisha and also in another place.

- Its rare features were according to recurvature after landfall, recollecting its destructive potential after landfall and recurvature away from coastal areas for above 2 days.

- Due to its rare features, forecast data lacked actionable early warning data such as no indication of occurrence of secondary dangers, including landslides far away from the coasts in interior districts of Odisha.

- By learning from “Titli” cyclone, corrective measures can be progressed to minimise impacts in both coastal as well as non-coastal regions much effectively in future.

Sunil Arora appointed as new Chief Election Commissioner on - 26th November 2018

President Ram Nath Kovind on November 26th, 2018 selected Sunil Arora as the new Chief Election Commissioner. He would be subsequent to OP Rawat who retired from position on November 24. The 62 years old Arora was selected as the Election Commission on August 31st, 2017. He was brought in last year to complete the vacancy formed by former Chief Election Commissioner Nasim Zaidi’s retirement. He is now anticipated to take charge of his new position on December 2nd, 2018. A Chief Election Commissioner of the Election Commission can have a term of 6 years/hold office till the age of 65, whichever is earlier. The position of CEC is generally specified to

the senior-most election commissioner within the Election Commission.

More about Sunil Arora

- Sunil Arora is a 1980 batch Indian Administrative Services officer of the Rajasthan Cadre, who grabbed top positions in various government departments.

- Earlier to being selected as a top bureaucrat in the central government, he worked as the secretary to the CM from 1993-1998. He worked as the principal secretary of CM Vasundhara Raje from 2005-2008.

- He was further designated as the Secretary in the Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

- He has also worked as the joint secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation from 1999-2002 and also served in finance, textile and planning commission during his extensive career as a bureaucrat.

- He also served as CMD Indian Airlines for a term period of 5 years, with 2 years as additional charge and 3 years as full charge.

International Gita Festival, 2018 to be held in - Kurukshetra

The International Gita Festival 2018 will be held in Kurukshetra, Haryana from December 7th-23rd, 2018. This year it is 3rd year of this super cultural event, where Mauritius is partner nation and Gujarat is the partner state. Gita festival will also be held in Mauritius upcoming February. The aim behind this programme is to spread the message of Gita to world.

International Gita Festival 2018

- It is being held to celebrate birth of “Srimad Bhagwat Gita”, scripture having invaluable advice of Lord Krishna that he offered to Arjuna, in battlefield of Kurukshetra on 1st day of Mahabharata battle.



- It is organised mainly on eleventh day on Shukla Paksha of November to December months according to Shukla Paksha Ekadashi day of Margashirsha month.

- It is combinedly held by Kurukshetra Development Board, Haryana Tourism, District Administration & Information and Public Relations Department, Haryana.

- On side-lines of this programme, approximately 200 famous painters nationwide will draw paintings on walls of Kurukshetra on the theme of the Mahabharata under the 'Paint-the-wall' competition.

- Artists around India and from Mauritius, Indonesia, Iran, Turkmenistan and Russia will take active participation during the annual festival.

Government launches 'PAiSA' Portal under National Urban Livelihoods Mission on - 26th November 2018

The Union Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs on November 26th, 2018 released the "PAiSA"- Portal for Affordable Credit & Interest Subvention Access, a centralised electronic platform for faster processing of loans under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Urban Livelihoods Mission. "PAiSA" is yet another exertion by the government to join directly with the beneficiaries, ensuring that there is high-level transparency and efficiency in delivery of services. All 35 States, UTs and all Scheduled Commercial Banks, including Cooperative Banks are believed to be on board the PAiSA portal the ending of the year. The web platform was intended and developed by Allahabad Bank.

National Workshop on Municipal Finance and Urban Planning

- The "PAiSA" portal was released during the development of a daylong National Workshop on Municipal Finance and Urban Planning planned by the Union Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.

- The workshop delivered a platform to identify important areas of concern regarding municipal finance and urban planning and discovering the options available to resolve them by appealing senior experts to shed light on best practices.

- Above 300 delegates including officers from the states, urban bodies, town planning offices nationwide and banks took part in the workshop.

Defence Minister launched 'Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti' on - 27th November 2018

The Union Defence Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman on November 27th, 2018 officially released "Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti" in New Delhi. During the programme, salient discoveries and innovations achieved by DRDO, Defence Public Sector Undertakings and Ordnance Factories that have caused in successful filing of Intellectual Property Right requests were showcased. On the event, the Defence Minister also eased few of the researchers, who developed and innovated useful products for the country. A panel discussion was organised with participation of Chairman and MDs of all Defence Public Sector Undertakings to frame a strategy for the future in this concern. While talking on the eve, the Minister praised the efforts of Defence Research and Development Organisation and Directorate General of Quality Assurance for attentive efforts in



spreading awareness about Intellectual Property Right.

Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti: Key Highlights

- Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti has been introduced by the Department of Defence Production as a portion of the continuing initiatives to enhance self-reliance in defence.
- The mission goals to provide a boost to the Intellectual Property Right culture in indigenous defence industry.
- The DGAQ has been entrusted with the responsibility of co-ordinating and implementing the program.
- The end aim of the program is to instruct Intellectual Property culture in Indian defence manufacturing ecosystem.

BCCI announces two-year ban for - Age fraud

The Board of Control for Cricket in India broadcasted that a cricketer guilty of age fraud will be banned from all its recognised tournaments for a time period of 2 years. The Board of Control for Cricket in India said in a statement that they have a zero-tolerance policy for age fraud in sport and has taken stringent action against cricketers found guilty of tampering their DOB certificates while registering for BCCI cricket tournaments.

Important Highlights

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India declaration relayed that from the 2018-19 season, any cricketer who is found guilty of manipulating his/her DOB will be disqualified and banned from taking part in any of the BCCI tournament for a period of Two years.
- Under the new rules, the board will lock down on cricketers found guilty of manipulating with their DOB certificates.

- As per to the earlier guidelines, a cricketer guilty of age fraud had to face a restriction for a time period of Single year.

- In September 2018, the Board of Control for Cricket in India had restricted a Meghalaya-bound Delhi player, Jaskirat Singh Sachdeva, for presenting a fake DOB certificate to play in an Under-19 tournament.

Did you know?

The problem of age fraud has occurred for a long time and it is not only restricted to the Indian Team/the sport of cricket.

Defence Ministry revises security restrictions to boost development in border areas on - 27th November 2018

The Defence Ministry on November 27th, 2018 released fresh strategies, in which, it has permitted developmental work of small nature to be carried out by the Central/State governments' statutory bodies for quicker development in the border areas.

Important Points

- Under the new guidelines, limitations have been elevated for works like building, repair and maintenance of village ponds, government buildings like schools and hospitals.
- With this, the security deliberations for construction activities in border areas released earlier from time to time by the ministry shall not be appropriate for the development works in border areas.
- The fresh rules were released by the ministry by superseding the Security Restrictions Guidelines released by it in 1990.
- The necessity for new rules was felt, as the earlier limitations were restrictive in nature towards developmental activities near border areas and were not completely facilitating in



developmental works of small nature in the border areas.

Donald Trump to hold trilateral meeting with PM Narendra Modi, Japan's Shinzo Abe on - 28th November 2018

The White House informed in a statement on November 28th, 2018 that United States President Donald Trump will grasp a trilateral meeting with Indian PM Narendra Modi and Japanese Premier Shinzo Abe this week on the side-lines of the G-20 summit in Argentina. The trilateral meet, would be an expansion of the bilateral meeting between Trump and Abe, with the side-lines of the summit in Buenos Aires on November 30th and December 1st. Trump will 1st meet with Abe and then the both leaders mutually will meet with Indian PM Modi.

Significance

The trilateral meeting is noteworthy, as it comes at a time when China is busy in territorial disputes with various countries in the South China Sea and with Japan in the East China Sea.

India's Stand

- PM Modi, in his keynote address at the Shangri La Dialogue in Singapore in June 2018 illustrated India's stand on the strategic Indo-Pacific region.
- India deliberates the Indo-Pacific as a natural region, which is home to a huge array of global opportunities and challenges.
- India does not realize the Indo-Pacific Region as a strategy, nor as a grouping that pursues to dominate.
- It also does not reflect it as directed against any nation. It remains in favour of an open and stable international trade regime.
- India also cares a rule-based, open, balanced and stable trade environment in the

Indo-Pacific region, which will be valuable for all the countries in the region.

Wipro Chairman Azim Premji conferred highest French civilian honour on - 28th November 2018

Indian business magnate and philanthropist Azim Premji was conferred with the highest French civilian distinction Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur -Knight of the Legion of Honour in Bengaluru on November 28th, 2018. Premji, is the chairman of Wipro and bestowed with the honour from Alexandre Ziegler, the Ambassador of France to India. He got the award for his outstanding contribution to developing the IT industry in India.

Important Points

- The Legion d'Honneur award, which was introduced in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte, is the highest civilian award presented by the French Republic for outstanding service to France, regardless of the nationality of the recipients.
- The President of the French Republic is the Grand Master of the Order of the Legion of Honour award.
- The Indians who have got the prestigious award in the past include renowned researcher and Bharat Ratna awardee C.N.R Rao, late Tamil actor Sivaji Ganesan, artist Kamal Haasan, Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee and Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan.
- France is a crucial market for Wipro and the organisation is dedicated to continued investments in the country. Nearly, 65% of Wipro's employees in France are locals.

World's first GST calculator launched by - Casio

Japanese electronics company 'CASIO' has released world's 1st Goods and Services



Tax- GST calculator in India to simplify the Goods and Services Tax calculations for tax payers. The organisation has 2 variants of Goods and Services Tax calculators as MJ-120GST & MJ-12GST in the Indian market. These new Goods and Services Tax calculators will deliver solutions for Goods and Services Tax based invoicing.

Important Highlights

- These Goods and Services Tax calculators present built-in Goods and Services Tax tabs for all 5 tabs i.e. 0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%.
- It consists distinct buttons for Goods and Services Tax slabs to reduce time needed for processing invoice. The tax slab buttons on these calculators consist GST+0, GST+1, GST+2, GST+3, GST+4 and are variable according to the industry guidelines.
- These 5 buttons can store Gross value (net value+Tax), net value and tax paid under Goods and Services Tax slabs.
- These Goods and Services Tax calculators also feature tax-mode application that will assist taxpayers and traders to compute base value of products by subtracting tax from MRP.
- MJ-120GST calculator has GST+/tax-tab that can compute values in multiple formats- gross value from base value in GST+mode and base value from gross value in Tax-mode.
- Goods and Services Tax GT button in the calculator can further control gross value of Goods and Services Tax based calculation.

Arvind Saxena appointed as Chairman of -
Union Public Service Commission

President Ram Nath Kovind has selected Arvind Saxena as Chairman of Union Public Service Commission- UPSC, that conducts examination to select bureaucrats, ambassadors and police officers. He will have

occupancy till August 7th, 2020, when he will attain the age of 65 years. Earlier to this employment, he was serving as acting Chairman of Union Public Service Commission since June 2018. He had linked to Union Public Service Commission as member in May 2015. Earlier to joining the Union

Public Service Commission, he was serving as director of the Aviation Research Centre. Union Public Service Commission is constitutional body which conducts the significant civil services examination to choose IAS, IFS and IPS officers among others. It has been recognized under Article 315 of the Constitution and consists of Chairman and 10 Members selected and removed by President.

More about Arvind Saxena

- He was student of civil engineering from Delhi College of Engineering and have M.Tech in Systems Management from Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi.
- He was designated for civil services and united Indian Postal Service in 1978. In 1988, he begun working at Cabinet Secretariat, where he specialised in study of Strategic Developments in neighbouring nations.
- He has worked in different nations and in states of J&K, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. He is recipient of prize for meritorious services in 2005 and distinguished services in 2012.

Who has been appointed as Chairman of
National Skill Development Corporation ? -
AM Naik

Union Government has designated Anil Manibhai Naik as Chairman of National Skill Development Corporation. He is presently Group Chairman



of engineering conglomerate Larsen and Toubro- L&T. He was bestowed Padma Bhushan, India's third highest civilian award in 2009 for his unpaid contribution to economic growth of the nation.

More about National Skill Development Corporation

- National Skill Development Corporation is Public Private Partnership under Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship.
- It was originated in 2009 as not-for-profit corporation by Ministry of Finance to address necessity for providing skilled manpower across various industries.
- Government of India via Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship grabs 49 percent of share capital of National Skill Development Corporation, while private sector has remaining 51 percent of the share capital.
- National Skill Development Corporation goals to promote skill development by catalysing creation of large, quality and for-profit vocational institutions.
- Its aim is to form training capacity in the nation; fund vocational training initiatives and create market ecosystem for skill development.
- Its mandate is to train and develop 150 million people by 2022. It is also consisted in re-skilling and also in catering to skilled manpower need of foreign markets, most notably that of Japan and United Arab Emirates.

G20 Summit 2018 held in Argentina on - 28th November 2018

The 2018 G20 Summit initiated on November 28th, 2018 in the Buenos Aires city, Argentina. 19 leaders of the world's biggest economies and a representative of the EU will be organising a meeting on November 30th as part of the G20 summit.

PM Narendra Modi will represent India at the Summit and is planned to meet United States President

Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Argentina President Mauricio Macri, Chilean President Sebastian Pinera and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, on the side-lines of the summit.

More about G20 Summit 2018

- It will be the thirteenth meeting of G20 and the 1st G20 summit to be accommodated in South America.
- Argentina is believed to host more than 45 meetings at numerous government levels and areas in 11 various cities throughout the nation.
- President Mauricio Macri of Argentina expected the presidency of G20 on November 30th, 2017 for 1 year during a formal ceremony in Kirchner Cultural Centre in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- The Group was shaped with an objective of studying, reviewing, and promoting high-level policy issue conversation relating to the promotion of International Financial Stability.
- The forum goals to pre-empt balance of payments issues and turmoil on financial markets by better-quality coordination of monetary, fiscal, and financial policies.
- The forum pursues to address issues that go beyond the responsibilities of any organisation.

More about G20

- G20 was formed in 1999 and it is an international forum of the governments and Central Bank governors from 20 main economies.



- Jointly, the G20 economies account for about 85% of the Gross World Product, 80% of world trade.

- To handle the issues or the address issues that plague the world, the leaders of governments of the G20 countries sporadically participate in summits. In addition to it, the group also hosts distinct meetings of the finance ministers and foreign ministers.

- The 1st G20 Summit was organised in Berlin in December 1999 and was hosted by the finance ministers of Germany and Canada.

India, China sign protocol on hygiene requirements for export of fish meal, fish on - 28th November 2018

Oil India and China on November 28th, 2018 inked a protocol on hygiene and inspection necessities for the exports in New Delhi during the visit of Hu Wei, the Vice Minister of China's General Administration of Customs. Hu Wei, who headed a 6-member delegation to India, met India's Commerce Secretary Anup Wadhawan during his visit and deliberated various issues of market access for various products.

Important Highlights

- During the meeting, both sides esteemed each other's concerns and settled to resolve the market access issues expeditiously to attain the vision of the leaders of both the nations by promoting a more balanced trade.

- The Chinese delegation deliberated issues regarding market access for products including milk & milk products, agricultural products including soy meal, fruits & vegetables, tobacco & pharmaceuticals.

- The protocol on hygiene and inspection necessities was inked for the export of fish meal and fish oil from India to China.

- The pact would enable India to commence export of fish meal and fish oil to China. China had so far not permitted these exports from India. China imports fish oil to the value of USD 143.29 million every year and fish meal worth value USD 263.43 million.

EU aims to be first carbon neutral economy by - 2050

The EU on November 28th, 2018 counselled government, businesses, inhabitants and regions to join it in a determined plan to expurgated emissions and make the bloc carbon neutral by 2050. The European Union climate commissioner Miguel Arias Canete informed in a press conference in Brussels that the alliance is kicking-off a process to determine how Europe's energy and climate policy will change between now and 2050.

Important Highlights

- The EU includes 28 members, which together form one of the world's huge and hence, most polluting economies.

- Hence, it is intense to play its part and become the 1st major world player to be climate neutral.

The EU's strategic long-term vision trusts on its member states to take action.

- Under the climate neutral objective, the member states will present their draft National Climate and Energy campaigns to the EU by the end of 2018.

- As per to European Union's climate commissioner, while more homes will be protected and transport will be modernised, the important plank of any successful strategy will be to decrease fossil fuel use in energy production by 80% by 2050.

- This suggests increasing investments in clean energy from 2% of Europe's GDP to 2.8%, representing an added spend of between 175 and 290 billion euros/year.



• The declaration comes at a time when delegations from above 200 nations are due to convene in Poland for the upcoming COP24 Climate Summit, which goals to renew and shape on the Paris deal and limit global warming.

49th International Film Festival of India concludes in - Goa

The 49th International Film Festival of India- IFFI was organised in Panaji, Goa. The closing ceremony was organised at Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium in Bambolim, Panaji. Israeli Director Dan Wolman was bestowed with lifetime achievement award. Story-screenplay-dialogue writer Salim Khan bestowed with International Film Festival of India 2018 Special Award for his lifetime contribution to cinema. He was bestowed with cash award of Rupees 10 lakhs, certificate, shawl and scroll for his outstanding contribution to cinema.

Other Category Awards

- Best film- Golden Peacock award was presented to Ukrainian film “Donbass” directed by Sergei Loznitsa.
- Best director- Silver Peacock award was presented to Lijo Jose Pellissery for Malayalam film-India.
- Best Actor (Male) Award was presented to Chemban Vinod for his role in “Ee.Ma.Yau” Malayalam-India.
- Best Actor (Female) Award was presented to Ukrainian actress Anastasiia Pustovit for her role in “When the Trees Fall”.
- Centenary Award for Best Debut Feature Film of Director was presented to Alberto Monteras II for ‘Respeto’.
- ICFT –UNESCO Gandhi Medal was presented to “Walking with the Wind” directed by Praveen Morchhale.

IFFI 2019

• The IFFI theme of for current year’s film festival was ‘New India’ through a variety of genres of cinema, including history, action, romance and sports.

• Israel was attention nation and Jharkhand was the attention state for this year’s International Film Festival of India.

• This is for the 1st time that any state was made focus state at International Film Festival of India.

• “The Aspern Papers” was opening movie of the festival and closed with the world premiere of the German film “Sealed Lips”. Above 220 films from 67 nations were screened at this year’s

• International Film Festival of India. 26 feature movies and 21 non-feature movies were screened in the Indian Panorama section.

Miniratna Category–I status conferred by - NPCC

Union Government has conferred status of Miniratna: Category–I to National Projects Construction Corporation Limited. The empowerment of miniratna status to National Projects Construction Corporation Limited will benefit company to take fast decisions by enhancing delegation of powers to Board.

National Projects Construction Corporation Limited

• National Projects Construction Corporation Limited is schedule-B Central Public Sector Enterprise under administrative control of Ministry of Water Resources. It was united in 1957.

• It is premier construction firm having mandate with creation of infrastructure to deliver impetus for economic development of



the nation. It also has been bestowed ISO 9001:2015 Certification.

- National Projects Construction Corporation is making continuous profit since 2009-10 and is having positive net worth for last 6 years.

- It has determined business plan with enhanced order book situation of Rupees 11833 crores.

Did you know?

Department of Public Enterprises under Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises endowments status of Maharatna, Navratna, and Miniratna to Public Sector Undertakings and Central Public Sector Enterprises grounded upon revenue made by these enterprises. These statuses issue financial and administrative power to the firms to a certain extent. Currently, there are total Eight Maharatna, 16 Navratna, 60 Miniratna Category-I and 15 Miniratna Category-II Central Public Sector Enterprises.

First state to launch single emergency number 112 - Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh has become the 1st state in the nation to implement Emergency Response Support System as Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh initiated Emergency Response Support System number 112 for the state. Under this system, all emergency numbers including 100 for police, 101 for fire, 102 for ambulance and disaster response have been combined into one number "112". This emergency number has been announced on basis of United States emergency number 911. Progressively, this emergency number will be initiated in other states of the nation.

Emergency Response Support System

- It will deliver single emergency response number across the state, providing 24*7 efficient and effective response system which

can get inputs from various voice and data services including voice call, SMS, e-mail and panic buttons in public transport and to cater citizens in distress.

- It can also recognize the location of persons in distress, connecting via voice/data, and immediate assistance will be given to the affected.

- It will assist in optimum utilisation of manpower and quick action on emergency calls. In addition to this, issues related to co-ordination among police force will also be simplified.

- It has feature of Automated Response System for timely communication to police regarding the location of incidence using the system.

- It also has Global Positioning System-GPS enabled dispatch of vehicles to trace nearest vehicles.

- It will provide standardized as well as easy to handle mobile apps, IoT applications on Pan-India basis.

8 States achieve 100% household electrification under Saubhagya; total 15 States now have 100% household electrification on - 29th November 2018

R.K.Singh, Union Minister of State for Power and Renewable Energy, on November 29th, 2018 declared that Eight States have attained 100% saturation in household electrification under Saubhagya Scheme. With this, there are now whole 15 States in the nation that have 100% household electrification. These 8 states are MP, Tripura, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Mizoram, Sikkim, Telangana and West Bengal. As many as 2.1 crore connections have been issued under Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana till date.



States like Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, etc. are remaining with small number of un-electrified households and expected to attain saturation any time.

Award scheme under Saubhagya

Earlier on October 15th, 2018, the Government released an award scheme under the umbrella Saubhagya Scheme, which is also known as Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana. The Saubhagya award scheme will felicitate the power distribution companies and Power Department of the States and their workers for achieving 100% household electrification.

Three categories of Saubhagya award scheme

1. DISCOMs/Power Departments of Special Category States including 7 North Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand.
2. DISCOMs/Power Departments of Non-Special Category States having above Five Lakh un-electrified households in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Telengana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
3. DISCOMs/Power Departments of other than Special Category States having below Five Lakh un-electrified households.