

MANTHAN

Current Affairs Supplement

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Preface

Dear Readers,

The 'Current Affairs' section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the month for the upcoming exams like Banking, Insurance, CLAT, MBA etc. This comprehensive bulletin will help you prepare the section in a vivid manner. We hope that our sincere efforts will serve you in a better way to fulfil aspirations.

Happy Reading!

Best Wishes

Team CL

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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

National



Dahod tops NITI Aayog's aspirational districts list

- **Dahod district in Gujarat has been ranked first among 108 'aspirational districts' by the NITI Aayog on the basis of incremental development over two months from March 31 this year.**
- **Other districts that follow after Gujarat are West Sikkim (Sikkim), Ramanathapuram (Tamil Nadu), Vizianagaram (Andhra Pradesh), YSR Kadapa district (Andhra Pradesh). West Sikkim district in Sikkim stood second with 18.9 points.**
- **The NITI Aayog has ranked 108 districts on the basis of the improvements in five developmental areas that they have made from March 31 to May 31 this year. Transformation of Aspirational District's programme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi this year and it is aimed at quickly and effectively transforming some of the most underdeveloped districts of the country.**

NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant while releasing the first Delta ranking for the aspirational districts, stated that Kupwara in Jammu and Kashmir, Begusarai in Bihar, Ranchi in Jharkhand, Simdega in Jharkhand and Khagadia in Bihar are the worst performing districts. Telangana's Asifabad district, which was ranked 100 in baseline ranking released in March this year, made significant improvements in past two months and stood at 15 in Delta ranking.

Rupani announces agriculture JWG between Gujarat, Israel

- **Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani met Israel's Agriculture and Rural Development Minister Uri Ariel and announced a joint working group between Gujarat and Israel in the fields of agriculture, horticulture and allied sectors.**
- **During his interaction with Ariel, Rupani emphasised that agriculture is at the core of his priorities and Gujarat is committed to fulfill the dream of Prime Minister Narendra Modi of doubling the farmers' income by year 2022.**

Gujarat is a state in Western India. Its capital city is Gandhi nagar, while its largest city is Ahmedabad. Om Prakash Kohli is current Governor of Gujarat. Gir Forest National Park in Gujarat is home of the only wild population of the Asiatic lion. Anandiben Patel is the state's first woman chief minister. The current Prime Minister of India shri Narendra Damodardas Modi is also from the state of Gujarat, representing in the Lok Sabha from the Varanasi Constituency.

BJP government in Arunachal Pradesh plans to repeal anti-conversion law

- **Arunachal Pradesh is likely to repeal four-decade-old that seeks to curb religious conversions as it could "undermine secularism".**

- The state passed the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act in 1978, becoming the third state in the country after Odisha (1967) and Madhya Pradesh (1968) to do so.

Aadhaar Virtual ID is now operational

- The Aadhaar issuing authority Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), its Virtual ID system is now operational as most of the authentication user agencies, including financial institutions have migrated to the new system.
- The Aadhaar Virtual ID is slated to be rolled out from 1 July. The Virtual ID is a 16-digit random number mapped with Aadhaar number. It can only be generated, replaced or revoked by the Aadhaar number holder.
- It has been introduced so that the actual 12-digit Aadhaar number need not be shared for authenticating identity.

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) is a statutory authority established under the provisions of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 (“Aadhaar Act 2016”) on 12 July 2016 by the Government of India, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). Aadhaar is the world's largest biometric ID system. J. Satyanarayana is the current chairman of UIDAI.

Lok Sabha members can now ask only up to five questions per day

- Members of the Lok Sabha can ask only up to five questions per day from the upcoming session of the House. The release pointed out that the members, according to Direction 10B of the Lok Sabha Speaker, could give notices for posing more than 10 questions a day till now. The Direction 10B has been amended due to the count of notices for the questions exceeding 230 per day.
- In case a member gives notices for asking more than five questions on a day, the remaining questions would be allowed to be raised the following day.
- Lok Sabha is composed of representatives of the people chosen by direct election on the basis of the adult suffrage. The maximum strength of the House envisaged by the Constitution is 552, which is made up by election of upto 530 members to represent the States, upto 20 members to represent the Union Territories and not more than two members of the Anglo-Indian Community to be nominated by the Hon'ble President.
- Currently the Lok Sabha has 545 seats which are made up by election of up to 543 elected members and at a maximum, 2 nominated members of the Anglo-Indian Community by the President of India.

Sumitra Mahajan is the Speaker of the 16th Lok Sabha. She is currently the longest-serving woman member in the Lok Sabha. She is the second woman after Meira Kumar to be elected as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. In February, 2015, Sumitra Mahajan was included in the LIMCA book of records for being first Indian woman to represent the same Lok Sabha constituency on the same party ticket for eight times in a row.

Shri Kiren Rijiju led a High Level delegation to participate in AMCDRR, 2018 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

- A high level Ministerial delegation from India headed by Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State for Home Affairs was participated in the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction 2018 (AMCDRR 2018) held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 03-06 July, 2018.
- The theme of the AMCDRR 2018: ‘Preventing Disaster Risk: Protecting Sustainable Development’ reflects the essence of the Sendai Framework. Development that does not take risk into account cannot be sustainable.

- The theme of the AMCDRR 2018 is aligned with the theme of the 2018 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development that focuses on 'Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies'. In the 2014 general election, Kiren Rijiju was elected as a Member of Parliament in the 16th Lok Sabha, representing the Arunachal West constituency.

Jharkhand to set up country's first Khadi mall

- The first 'Khadi Mall' of the country will be opened in Ranchi soon, Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das announced.
- "Within 15 days, land in the Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC) campus will be made available to the Khadi Board to develop the country's first Khadi mall".

Jharkhand is a state in eastern India, carved out of the southern part of Bihar on 15 November 2000. The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub capital. Draupadi Murmu is the current and first woman Governor of Jharkhand.

Dalai Lama, Arvind Kejriwal launched 'Happiness Program' for Delhi Schools

- The Delhi government launched 'Happiness Curriculum' for school students, with the Dalai Lama gracing the occasion and saying that India can help the world overcome "negative emotions" of the mankind.
- The curriculum is for students up to class 8.

Delhi bordered by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. According to the 2011 census, Delhi city proper's population was over 11 million, the second-highest in India after Mumbai. Anil Baijal is the current & 21st Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. Arvind Kejriwal is the current and 7th Chief Minister of Delhi.

Government forms panel to upgrade norms for state, district level economic data collection

- Union government has set up a 13-member committee to upgrade the norms for computation of economic data at states and districts level in the backdrop of plans to revise the base year for National Accounts or GDP calculation.
- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) will change the base year to 2017-18 for the calculation of GDP and IIP numbers from the current 2011-12 with an aim to capture changes in the economy.
- The Committee for Sub-National Accounts will be headed by Ravindra H Dholakia, a retired professor of IIM Ahmedabad.

Bengaluru to get India's first e-waste plant

- India's first e-waste recycling unit will come up in Bengaluru, Union minister of chemicals and fertilisers Ananth Kumar said.
- The country's e-waste generation is on the rise, and estimated to reach 52 lakh tonnes in 2020.

A 2016 study by ASSOCHAM and KPMG ranked India among the top five countries in e-waste generation, with an estimated 1.85 million tonnes generated annually. According to the study, computers comprised 70% of the total e-waste and telecommunication equipment accounted for 12%. Bengaluru ranked third after Mumbai and Delhi, and generated nearly 92,000 tonnes of ewaste annually.

Chhattisgarh government to set up tribal museum in Naya Raipur

- The Chhattisgarh government will set up a tribal museum in the state's upcoming new capital Naya Raipur with a view to exhibit culture and tradition of scheduled tribes. The tribal museum will be built at the cost of Rs 27 crore in an area of around 22 acres in Naya Raipur and will be named after Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh.

Chhattisgarh was formed on 1 November 2000 by partitioning 10 Chhattisgarhi and 6 Gondi speaking southeastern districts of Madhya Pradesh. The capital city is Raipur. Balram Das Tandon is present Governor of Chhattisgarh. Raman Singh is the current Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh state since 7 December 2003.

NITI Aayog to organise India's First Global Mobility Summit

- NITI Aayog, in collaboration with various ministries and industry partners, is organising 'MOVE: Global Mobility Summit' in New Delhi on 7th and 8th September, 2018.
- This Summit will help drive Government's goals for vehicle electrification, renewable energy integration and job growth and also speed up India's transition to a clean energy economy.

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015. NITI Aayog is the premier policy 'Think Tank' of the Government of India, providing both directional and policy inputs. The current chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi and current vice chairman is Dr. Rajiv Kumar and the current chief executive officer is Shri Amitabh Kant.

EC launches app to report electoral malpractice

- The Election Commission launched an Android-based mobile application named "cVigil" for citizens to share proof of malpractices by political parties, their candidates and activists when the Model Code of Conduct is in force.
- The mobile application also facilitates sharing of geo-tagged photographic and video evidence without disclosing the identity of the sender.
- At the event, Chief Election Commissioner O.P. Rawat also launched a voter education and electoral participation portal, which has an entire section dedicated to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

Election Commission of India operates under the authority of Constitution per Article 324. The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, state Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country.

Uttar Pradesh Government announces much awaited defence manufacturing policy

- In an attempt to give a fillip to the Defence Corridor proposal, the State Government announced the much-awaited Defence Manufacturing policy giving sops to entrepreneurs, willing to invest while projecting an investment of Rs 50,000 crore in the next five years and generate 2.5 lakh jobs.
- The State cabinet approved a new policy called 'UP Defence Aerospace Unit and Employment Generating Policy, 2018'.
- Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in the Republic of India. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950. Lucknow is the capital of Uttar Pradesh. Ram Naik is currently the 24th Governor of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath is the current Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

Modi government approves hike in MSP for Kharif crops

- Union Cabinet has approved a steep rise in the minimum support price of crops, giving farmers the promised 50% return on input costs.

- The **biggest increase in MSP, about 40-50%**, is for coarse grains that are planted by the poorest farmers, mostly in unirrigated areas.

Minimum Support Price is the price at which government purchases crops for the farmers, to safeguard the interests of the farmers. In our country, **MSP for 24 agricultural commodities of Kharif and Rabi season are announced by the Government based on the recommendations of the Commission for Agriculture Cost and Prices (CACP).**

Tripura, Mizoram sign agreement for repatriation of Bru refugees

- In a major development, the **Centre and the state governments of Tripura and Mizoram finally managed to sign an agreement for repatriation of thousands of people belonging to the Bru community from Tripura to Mizoram.**
- After **more than two decades of living in the refugee camps in the Jampui Hills of Tripura**, as many as 32,876 people belonging to 5,407 families will finally return to their home state following a tripartite agreement signed by the two state governments and the Centre.

In 1997, a bout of ethnic violence forced thousands of people from the Bru tribe to leave their homes in Mizoram.

Agartala Airport to be named after Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishor Manikya Bahadur

- **Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb has said that Agartala Airport will be named after Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishor Manikya Bahadur.**
- He said, **Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishor Manikya Bahadur sowed the seeds for development of a modern Tripura**

Bir Bikram Kishore Debbarman Manikya Bahadur was a king or maharaja of Tripura State. He was the king before the merger of Tripura with India. He succeeded his father, Birendra Kishore Manikya Debbarman, on 13 August 1923.

Two techies create India's first SmartGaon

- A remote village in Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh, which can be termed as the country's first SmartGaon.
- The brainchild of two IT professionals -- Yogesh Sahu and Rajnish Bajpai, 'SmartGaon' is essentially a mobile app that not only connects the village internally and with the urban world, but also serves as a one-stop information centre and a marketplace for farmers.
- All initiatives undertaken in the village are updated, recorded, tracked and monitored on the app.
- Moreover, the app has key features like the villagers' directory, news and events calendar, health centre and information centre. According to the developers, the app is aimed at reconstructing villages for people to lead a vital life, as in the cities.

Uttarakhand HC declares animal kingdom a legal entity with rights of a 'living person'

- The Uttarakhand high court declared the entire animal kingdom, including birds and aquatic animals, as a legal entity having rights of a "living person", a year after according similar right to Ganga and Yamuna that was subsequently stayed by the Supreme Court.
- Explaining what a legal entity means, the HC said, "The entity acts like a natural person but only through a designated person, whose acts are processed within the ambit of law". This means the animal kingdom could be represented by a custodian.

NSG to be first central force to opt for e-ticketing instead of railway warrant

- The National Security Guard will be the first central paramilitary force to opt for e-ticketing instead of the railway warrant under an agreement signed with the IRCTC.
- A memorandum of understanding was signed between the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation and the NSG.

National Security Guard (NSG) is an Indian Special Forces unit under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). It was raised in 1984, following Operation Blue Star and the assassination of Indira Gandhi, "for combating terrorist activities with a view to protect states against internal disturbances".

UNESCO to set up Gaming University in Andhra Pradesh

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) will be setting up a 'Design University for Gaming' in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- UNESCO delegation entered into an agreement with Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB) for the establishment of 'International Gaming Digital Learning Hub'.

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to be formed under the State reorganisation act in 1956 and first state to be created based on the language in India. On 2 June 2014, the north-western portion of Andhra Pradesh was separated to form the new state of Telangana. The longtime capital of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, was transferred to Telangana as part of the division. Amaravati is the de facto capital city of the Andhra Pradesh. Nara Chandrababu Naidu is the current and first chief minister of the state since it was divided from Telangana.

Higher education to get Rs 1 lakh crore boost by 2022

- To increase investment in higher educational institutions, the Union Cabinet approved a proposal for expanding the scope of Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) by expanding its capital base to Rs 10,000 crore and tasking it to mobilise Rs 1 trillion by 2022.
- Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) has been set up by the Government to mobilize funds from the market as per requirements of the centrally funded higher educational institutions set up in all the States of the country including Rajasthan.

Shri Piyush Goyal launches the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS) and 'Khan Prahari' App

- Union Minister of Coal, Railways, Finance & Corporate Affairs, Shri Piyush Goyal launched the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS) and Mobile Application 'Khan Prahari' developed by CMPDI, Ranchi a Subsidiary of CIL and Bhaskarcharya Institute of Space Application and Geo-informatics (BISAG) at a ceremony in New Delhi.
- He is currently a Member of Rajya Sabha from Maharashtra.

First Cyber Forensic van of Delhi Police launched

- The Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri Hansraj Gangaram Ahir launched the first Cyber Forensic van of Delhi Police for on-the-spot police investigations at crime scene.
- The Van has been developed keeping in mind the need for a portable/mobile system in view of increasing number of digital crimes. It will be available on call in all districts/units on 24x7 basis.

Uttar Pradesh government bans plastic bags

- The Uttar Pradesh government banned the use of polythene bags and items of common use made of plastic from July 15.

- Plastic had been banned earlier in the State, but the prohibition on its use had not been implemented effectively so far.

Justice Goel named NGT chairperson for five years

- Supreme Court judge Adarsh Kumar Goel was named as the National Green Tribunal (NGT) chairperson for five years. Justice Lokeshwar Singh Panta is the first Chairman of NGT.

National Green Tribunal has been established on 18.10.2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010 for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources including enforcement of any legal right relating to environment and giving relief and compensation for damages to persons and property and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

West Bengal CM announces 'one person, one car' policy for ministers

- In an attempt to cut the costs incurred by the state over travel expenses of ministers and bureaucrats, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced the 'one person, one car' policy.

Keshari Nath Tripathi is the present Governor of West Bengal and Mamata Banerjee is the current and 8th Chief Minister of West Bengal. She is the first woman to hold the office. The British East India Company cemented their hold on the region following the Battle of Plassey in 1757, and Calcutta served for many years as the capital of British India.

CJI alone is master of the roster, rules SC

- The term 'Chief Justice of India' denotes an individual judge and not a collective of the first three or five senior-most judges of the Supreme Court called the 'Collegium,' the Supreme Court declared.
- It is the exclusive authority of this individual judge to allocate cases to fellow judges in his role as the master of the roster, a Bench of Justices A.K. Sikri and Ashok Bhushan clarified in their separate but concurring opinions.

India reconsidering Rs 2 lakh crore 5th generation fighter jet programme with Russia

- India has conveyed to Russia its unwillingness to go ahead with the joint development of a fifth-generation fighter aircraft (FGFA) primarily due to high cost involved in the project.
- India and Russia had signed an inter-governmental agreement for the mega project in 2007. The sources said the cost of the project has been estimated at around USD 30 billion or Rs 2 lakh crore.

International Round Table Conference on "Data for New India" on 9 -10th July 2018

- The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is organising a two-day International Round Table Conference on "Data for New India" in New Delhi during 9-10th July, 2018.
- The objective of the Round Table Conference is to identify innovative ideas for improving the statistical system in India, taking cue from the best practices followed in advanced countries like Canada, UK and Australia. Such a Conference is being organized in India for the first time.
- The Conference is being inaugurated by Shri D.V. Sadananda Gowda, Hon'ble Union Minister of Statistics & Programme Implementation.

D. V. Sadananda Gowda is currently the Minister of Statistics and Programme Implementation in the Government of India. He previously served as Minister of Law and Justice shifted from the Ministry of Railways in the cabinet reshuffle of 5 July 2016. He is a member of the 16th Lok Sabha representing the Bangalore North constituency.

Supreme Court rejects Centre's plea to defer hearing on Section 377

- The **Supreme Court refused** to defer the hearing on a clutch of **petitions against Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code that criminalises homosexuality**. The Centre, which has **challenged the criminalisation of gay sex by the top court in 2013**, had sought an adjournment, saying it needed time to file its response in the matter.
- After the **apex court had set aside the Delhi High Court's 2009 judgment decriminalising sex between consenting adults of same sex** by holding as "illegal" **Section 377 of IPC**, review petitions were filed, and on their dismissal curative petitions were filed by the affected parties for the re-examination of the original verdict.

Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code introduced during the **British rule of India in 1861**, which **criminalized sexual activities "against the order of nature", including homosexual activities**. **Section 377** says **whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to 10 years, and shall also be liable to pay a fine.**

IIT-Delhi, IIT-Bombay and IISc Bangalore get Institution of Eminence status

- The **Union Human Resource Development Ministry** has granted the **Institution of Eminence (IoE) status** to **IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay and IISc Bangalore**. Along with them, in the private sector, the **Manipal Academy of Higher Education, BITS Pilani and Jio Institute** granted **institution of eminence tag**. The UGC had received 103 applications including JNU and Delhi University for IoE status.
- There are **three categories under which the 'IoE' status can be granted**, the **first** of which is the **Public institutions category**, which includes **Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Mumbai and Delhi** were considered.
- The **second category** was **Private institutions**, under which **Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS) Pilani and Manipal University** have been granted the status.
- The **third category**, under which the **Jio Institute** was **granted the status**, was the **only Greenfield Private institutions**.
- The **Union HRD Minister, Prakash Javadekar**, tweeted the **names of IIT Bombay and IIT Delhi** who will receive government funding as the private sector institutes which are **granted the status of Institutes of Eminence** will get the government grants of **Rs 1000 crore in next five years**.

Prakash Javadekar is the **incumbent Union Minister of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD)**, Government of India. He was elected to the upper house **Rajya Sabha** as a **Member of Parliament from Maharashtra** in 2008, and re-elected from **Madhya Pradesh** in 2014.

First India Tourism Mart to be organized in New Delhi

- The **Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism, Shri. K. J. Alphons** announced that the **Tourism Ministry in partnership with the Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH)** and with the **support of State /UT Governments** will organize the **'first ever' India Tourism Mart (ITM)** from **16th to 18th September, 2018** at **Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi**.
- The **objective of the event is to create an annual Global Tourism Mart for India** in line with major international travel marts being held in countries across the world.

Alphons Joseph Kannanthanam is an **Indian civil servant**. He is **currently serving as the Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Culture, and Tourism**, in office since **3 September 2017**. He was elected unopposed as **Rajya Sabha member from Rajasthan** in 2017.

Indian Railways introduces first Double Stack Dwarf Container Service from Rajkot Division, Western Railway

- **Indian Railways** has introduced **Double Stack Dwarf Container Services**. This freight train was **flagged off on 7th July, 2018** from **Western Railway's Rajkot railway station** on its maiden commercial run.

- The **Double Stacked Container** is **6 ft 4 inches in height** and can run on electrified tracks. Despite being smaller in size, the **dwarf containers** can hold a capacity of **30,500 kgs**.

Indian Railways (IR) is the **fourth-largest railway network in the world by size**. **Piyush Vedprakash Goyal** is **currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Coal** in the Government of India. He was **elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016**.

Himachal bans thermocol cutlery, makes provision for hefty fine

- A month after it launched **“Plastic Hatao Himachal Bachao”** campaign, the **Himachal Pradesh government** has now **banned use and sale of thermocol cutlery**.
- The notification also has provision for **imposing penalty on that selling and littering thermocol cutlery**. **Himachal Pradesh was the first state in country to ban use of plastic bags in 2009**.

Himachal Pradesh state's name was coined from the Sanskrit—Him means 'snow' and achal means 'land' or 'abode'—by acharya Diwakar Datt Sharma. Shimla is the capital and the largest city of the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. In 1864, Shimla was declared as the summer capital of British India. Dharamshala is the second winter capital of the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. Jai Ram Thakur is the 13th and the current Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh. Acharya Dev Vrat is the current Governor of Himachal Pradesh.

Tenth edition of Delhi Dialogue set

- **India is set to hold the tenth edition of Delhi Dialogue**, the premier annual event to discuss politico-security, economic and socio-cultural engagement **between India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**, on 19-20 July.
- The **meet is aimed at finding a common ground and expanding the scope of cooperation between India and ASEAN nations**.
- **ASEAN member countries** are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Laos and Vietnam.
- **External affairs minister Sushma Swaraj will chair the ministerial session on 19 July**,

The **Delhi Dialogue** has been **held annually since 2009** and political leaders, policy makers, senior officials, diplomats, think tanks and academicians from both sides participate in the discussions pertaining to ASEAN-India relations. The **ninth edition of the Delhi Dialogue theme was "ASEAN-India Relations: Charting the Course for the Next 25 Years"** and Swaraj hosted the ministerial session.

NITI Aayog Proposes ‘National Health Stack’

- The **central government think tank NITI Aayog** has **unveiled the blue print of National Health Stack (NHS)**, a shared **digital healthcare infrastructure**.
- The blue print is in line with the implementation of the **Centre’s flagship scheme Ayushman Bharat** and other **public healthcare programmes** in the country.

The Union Cabinet has approved the launch of a **new Centrally Sponsored Ayushman Bharat -National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM)** having **central sector component under Ayushman Bharat Mission** anchored in the MoHFW. The scheme has the **benefit cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year**. The **target beneficiaries of the proposed scheme will be more than 10 crore families belonging to poor and vulnerable population based on SECC database**. **AB-NHPM will subsume the on-going centrally sponsored schemes –Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) and the Senior Citizen Health Insurance Scheme (SCHIS).**

Union Government sets noise standards for airports across India

- The Union environment ministry has issued a notification setting noise standards for all airports across the country.
- The limits, however, exclude defence aircrafts, and those that are landing and taking-off.
- The noise limits specified shall replace and supersede the ambient air quality in respect of noise limits of existing zones: silence, residential, and commercial areas.

The rules state that **busy airports** — a civil airport with more than 50,000 aircraft movements per year (take-off or a landing) — should not exceed noise levels beyond 75 dB (A) Leq (decibels) during the day time (6am to 10pm) and 65 dBA during the night (10pm to 6am). All other airports — an airport having more than 15,000 but less than 50,000 movements annually — should not exceed levels beyond 65 dBA during the day and 60 dBA during the night.

SC open to live-streaming of court proceedings

- The Supreme Court said that it is ready to go live on camera while the government mooted a separate TV channel for live-streaming court proceedings."
- A three-judge Bench of Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra and Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and D.Y. Chandrachud said a livestream is only an extension of the 'open court' system.
- Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal proposed a dedicated channel like the Rajya Sabha TV and the Lok Sabha TV for the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court of India came into being on 28 January 1950. It replaced both the Federal Court of India and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council which were then at the apex of the Indian court system. The first Chief Justice of India was Sir H J Kania. Originally, the Constitution of India envisaged a supreme court with a chief justice and seven judges; leaving it to parliament to increase this number. At present, SC is consisting of the Chief Justice of India and 30 sanctioned other judges. The motto of the Supreme Court is 'Yato Dharmastato Jayah', means "whence law (dharma), thence victory". It is also referred to – as the wheel of righteousness, encompassing truth, goodness and equity.

Union Minister Ananth Kumar inaugurates CIPET's Centre for Skilling & Technical Support in Dehradun

- Union Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers and Parliamentary Affairs, Ananth Kumar inaugurates the CIPET's Centre for Skilling & Technical Support (CSTS) at ITI Building and also lays the foundation stone of new Central Institute of Plastics Engineering & Technology (CIPET) Building at Doiwala, Dehradun.

Ananth Kumar has represented Bengaluru South constituency in the Lok Sabha. AnanthKumar is also serving as Minister of Parliamentary Affairs since July 2016.

Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu becomes first Chairman of Rajya Sabha to sign an MOU

- Rajya Sabha has, for the first time in 76 years since it came into being, entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a foreign counterpart for promoting inter-parliamentary dialogue.
- Shri Venkaiah Naidu, has, in the process, become the first Chairman of Rajya Sabha to sign such an agreement when he inked an MOU with the visiting President of the Senate of the Republic of Rwanda, Mr. Bernard Makuza. The three Senator delegation from Rwanda led by Shri Makuza is the first such a delegation exclusively from the Upper House of any country to visit India.

Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu is the current Vice-President of India, in office since 11 August 2017. Previously, he served as the Minister of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Urban Development and Information and Broadcasting in the Modi Cabinet. He also served as national president of Bharatiya Janata Party from 2002 to 2004. Earlier, he was the Union Cabinet Minister for Rural Development in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government. On 11 August 2017, he was sworn in as the 15th Vice-President of India, thus becoming the 13th person to hold the office.

Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Haryana Top Rankers in Ease of Doing Business

- Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, released the final rankings of States in Ease of Doing Business in New Delhi. The top rankers are Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Haryana. Jharkhand and Gujarat stood fourth and fifth respectively.
- DIPP, Ministry of Commerce and Industry in collaboration with the World Bank conducted an annual reform exercise for all States and UTs under the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP). The aim of this exercise is to improve delivery of various Central Government regulatory functions and services in an efficient, effective and transparent manner.
- In 2016, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh jointly emerged as number one states to do business, ahead of Gujarat - Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state - that was number one in 2015.

The national capital Delhi's score deteriorated to 33.99 percent, from 47 percent in 2016 and it stood at the 23rd spot in this year's rankings. North-eastern states except Assam continue to remain at the bottom of the rankings. Assam has improved its ranking in "ease of doing business" from 24th to 17th. Among the other states of the Northeast, Tripura is 25th, Nagaland 28th, Mizoram 30th and Manipur 32nd in rankings in the ease of doing business. Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya share the 34th position.

PM Modi is the third most followed world leader on Twitter

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the third most followed world leader on Twitter with 42 million followers on his personal account @NarendraModi, according to a study on 'world leaders on social media' conducted by communications firm Burson Cohn & Wolfe (BCW).
- As of May 18, 2018, Modi is just behind US President Donald Trump and Pope Francis. The official account of the Prime Minister @PMOIndia boasts of the fourth largest following with 26 million followers. Narendra Modi stands to be the second most influential leader in the world after US President Donald Trump.

Sushma Swaraj is the most popular among women leaders on Twitter

- Sushma Swaraj, India's External Affairs Minister also made it to the top 10 list of the most followed world leaders, with more than 10 million followers on Twitter. She is the most followed female world leader, as well as foreign minister on Twitter with 11 million followers.

Twitter is an online news and social networking service on which users post and interacts with messages known as "tweets". Twitter was created in March 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams and launched in July, 2006. Twitter, Inc. is based in San Francisco, California, USA.

Rajya Sabha members can use all 22 scheduled languages

- From the forthcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament, Rajya Sabha MPs will be able to speak in the House in any of the 22 Indian languages listed in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution, Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu said.
- The Rajya Sabha Secretariat has arranged for simultaneous interpretation facility for five more languages - Dogri, Kashmiri, Konkani, Santhali and Sindhi. Mr Naidu formally inducted the interpreters for these languages.

- Of the 22 scheduled languages, Rajya Sabha has earlier established Simultaneous Interpretation Service for 12 languages -- Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu. For five languages - Bodo, Maithili, Manipuri, Marathi and Nepali, interpreters of Lok Sabha are being deployed.

According to the Articles 344(1) and 351 of the Indian Constitution, the eighth schedule includes the recognition of the following 22 languages. under article 345 of the Constitution, Official language or languages of a State Subject to the provisions of Article 346 and 347, the Legislature of a State may by law adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language or languages to be used for all or any of the official purposes of that State.

Gujarat's Jewish community gets religious minority status

- Gujarat Government has granted religious minority status to Jews living in the state. Now, Jews living in Gujarat will get religious minority rights envisaged in Constitution of India and various acts and rules of the state government.
- Gujarat is third state in India to grant religious minority status to Jews after West Bengal and Maharashtra.

India's first private UAV factory to come up in Kota

- India's first private sector unit for manufacturing unmanned air vehicles (UAV) and light bullet proof vehicles (LBPV) will be set up by DCM Shriram Industries Group on the campus of Shriram Rayons in Kota, Rajasthan.
- The UAV and LBPV have been indigenously designed and developed by the DCM Shriram Industries Group.

DCM Industries Group, a 124-year-old company, decided to venture into defence equipment manufacturing after the union government introduced 'Defence Procurement Procedure 2016'. The new defence unit of Shriram Rayons in Kota is being set up under 'Make in India' initiative of the union government.

BSNL launches India's first internet telephony service, to enable making calls without SIM

- State-run telecom firm BSNL unveiled the country's first internet telephony service that will allow users to dial any telephone number in India through its mobile app.
- Now BSNL customers will be able to make calls using the company's mobile app "Wings" to any phone number in the country.
- Before this, phone calls on mobile apps were possible within users of a particular app and not on telephone numbers.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is an Indian state-owned telecommunications company headquartered in New Delhi. It was incorporated on 15 September 2000 and assumed the business of providing telecom services and network management from the 1 October 2000. BSNL is India's oldest communication service provider. It has footprints throughout India, except for Mumbai and New Delhi, where telecommunications are managed by Mahanagar Telephone Nigam (MTNL).

NITI Aayog proposes 15-point action plan to deal with air pollution

- Niti Aayog has proposed 15-point action plan for combating air pollution in ten most polluted cities in the country, including Delhi, Kanpur and Varanasi.
- The draft action plan titled 'Breathe India' includes encouraging electric vehicles, phasing out private diesel vehicle and development of crop residue utilisation policy.

- According to a recent WHO database (2018), Kanpur, Faridabad, Gaya, Varanasi, Agra, Gurgaon, Muzaffarpur, Lucknow and Patna are the top ten most polluted cities in India.

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015. NITI Aayog is the premier policy 'Think Tank' of the Government of India, providing both directional and policy inputs. The current chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi and the current vice chairman is Dr. Rajiv Kumar and the current chief executive officer is Shri Amitabh Kant.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu opens Anna Canteen

- Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu inaugurated the Anna Canteens offering subsidised food at Bhavanipuram, Vijayawada.
- The long-awaited Anna Canteens offering subsidised food for the poor were launched in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across Andhra Pradesh. About 100 canteens were opened in 35 ULBs in the first phase. They would serve breakfast, lunch and dinner for just Rs. 5 a plate on week days.

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to be formed under the State reorganisation act in 1956 and first state to be created based on the language in India. On 2 June 2014, the north-western portion of Andhra Pradesh was separated to form the new state of Telangana. The longtime capital of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, was transferred to Telangana as part of the division. Amaravati is the de facto capital city of the Andhra Pradesh. Nara Chandrababu Naidu is the current and first chief minister of the state since it was divided from Telangana.

Railways launched its first consolidated Bridge Management System

- The Railways has launched its first consolidated Bridge Management System, a web-enabled IT application to store data on its one lakh 50 thousand bridges.
- Balharshah and Chandrapur railway stations in Maharashtra from the Central Railway were awarded the first prize while Madhubani station of the East Central Railway and Madurai station of Southern Railway were the co-winners of the second prize.

Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao: MP government to appoint girls as district Brand Ambassador

- In Madhya Pradesh, in a first of its kind initiative, the state government will appoint girls as a district Brand Ambassador who has recorded significant achievements in any field under the Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao scheme.

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) was launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, on 22nd January, 2015 in Panipat, Haryana as one of the flagship programmes of the Government, to address the declining Child Sex Ratio and related issues of empowerment of women on a life-cycle continuum. It is a tri-ministerial, convergent effort of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development.

India's first '2+2' dialogue with US to take place in September

- India's first 2+2 dialogue with the US, which was postponed this month, will take place in the first week of September in New Delhi.
- The "2+2" dialogue is meant to replace the Strategic and Commercial Dialogue between the foreign and commerce ministers of the two countries that was held during the previous Obama administration.

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defense James Mattis will host External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Washington, D.C., for the dialogue. The "2+2" dialogue format was agreed to between the two sides during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Washington D.C. in June, 2017.

Odisha government constitutes Heritage Cabinet

- Odisha State Government constituted Heritage Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to preserve the history and culture of Odisha. Its aim is to spread and preserve history and culture of Odisha and enrich Odia language further.
- The Cabinet comprises eight members, including the Chief Minister. While the Chief Secretary will be Secretary of Heritage Cabinet, Secretary in the Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture will be the convenor.

Haryana tops states in per capita revenue collection under GST

- Haryana has topped other states in per capita revenue collection under GST, and is also the fourth highest generator of e-way bills in the country, according to state Finance Minister Abhimanyu.
- Haryana has widened the tax base by 82.22 per cent and logged 19 per cent hike in revenue collections. Haryana's per capita revenue collection under GST is the highest in the country at Rs.1876.

Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation Launches the Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018

- The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation launches the Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 (SSG 2018) in New Delhi.
- An independent survey agency will conduct the survey in all districts from 1st to 31st August 2018, and the results will be announced in the form of a ranking of all districts and states on the basis of quantitative and qualitative sanitation (Swachhata) parameters. The top performing states and districts are expected to be awarded on 2nd October 2018.

Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) opened India's first dormitory facility at MG Road Metro Station

- Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) has opened India's first dormitory facility at MG Road Metro Station.
- This is first of its kind initiative taken by a metro body offering world class accommodation at pocket friendly rate. This will be a bed space dormitory with air-conditioned facility. The dormitory will be operated and managed by Peters Inn.

President of India nominated four persons to the Rajya Sabha

- The President of India nominated four persons to the Rajya Sabha. Classical dancer Sonal Mansingh, columnist Rakesh Sinha, sculptor Raghunath Mohapatra and farmer leader Ram Shakal will have a six-year term in the upper House of the Parliament.

Article 80 of the Constitution lays down the maximum strength of Rajya Sabha as 250, out of which 12 members are nominated by the President and 238 are representatives of the States and of the two Union Territories. The present strength of Rajya Sabha, however, is 245, out of which 233 are representatives of the States and Union territories of Delhi and Puducherry and 12 are nominated by the President. The members nominated by the President are persons having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of such matters as literature, science, art and social service.

Bihar to get world's cheapest clean drinking water

- With the launch of cost-effective innovative water project, Bihar will soon provide the cheapest drinking water in the world.
- The first of such a water project was launched in Bihar's Darbhanga district, by Sulabh International, an organisation that introduced the concept of 'Sulabh Sauchalya' in the country.

- With the help of this project, the people will easily be able to get pure and clean water only in 50paise/litre. The 'Sulabh Jal' project converts contaminated pond and river water into safe drinking water.

Bihar is the **third-largest state of India by population**, according to the census 2011. It is a **land-locked state**, although the outlet to the sea through the port of Kolkata is not far away. **Nalanda University** is located in the town of **Rajgir**, in the northern Indian state of Bihar. It was a **Buddhist center of learning from 427 to 1197 CE**. It has been called “one of the first great universities in recorded history. **Satya Pal Malik** is the current Governor of Bihar and **Nitish Kumar** has been the Chief Minister of Bihar.

India becomes vice-chair of Asia Pacific region at global customs body

- **India** has become the **vice-chair (regional head)** of the **Asia Pacific region** of the **World Customs Organisation (WCO)** for a period of two years to June, 2020.
- The organisation has divided its membership into six regions. Each of the regions is represented by an **elected vice-chairperson** to the **WCO council**.
- **WCO** represents **182 customs administrations** across the globe that **collectively process approximately 98 per cent** of world trade.

The **World Customs Organization (WCO)** is an **intergovernmental organization** headquartered in **Brussels, Belgium**. **WCO** was established in **1952**. **Kunio Mikuriya** is the current **Secretary General** of the **World Customs Organization (WCO)**.

Manohar Lal Khattar launches 'Paudhagiri' campaign in Haryana

- **Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar** launched the '**Paudhagiri**' campaign, aimed at **increasing the green cover** in the state.
- Under this campaign, **22 lakh students** from **class 6 to 12** of all government and private schools in **Haryana** will plant a sapling each during three months of monsoon -- July, August and September.

Haryana was carved out of the former state of **East Punjab** on **1 November 1966** on **linguistic basis**. Among the world's oldest and largest ancient civilizations, the **Indus Valley Civilization** sites located at **Rakhigarhi village** in **Hisar district** of **Haryana**. **Haryana** is a **landlocked state** in **northern India**. As per the **2011 Census**, **Haryana** has the **lowest child sex ratio** in the age group of **0-6 years** in the country. According to the census, **against 1,000 boys born**, there were only **834 girls**. The state capital of **Haryana** is **Chandigarh**, a **Union Territory** and also the capital of the neighboring state of **Punjab**. **Kaptan Singh Solanki** is the current **Governor of Haryana**.

AIIA to organise two-day conference of heads of AYUSH National Institutes

- With an aim to upgrade the quality of education, healthcare facilities in the **AYUSH National Institutes**, the **All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA)** will organise a two-day conference of **heads of these centres** in **New Delhi**.
- **Vice chancellors of various health universities**, directors of reputed research organisations and around **100 accomplished senior professionals** from various national institutes, including **IIT, DST, DBT, UGC**, among others are expected to take part in the event.

Shripad Yesso Naik is the current minister of **Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH)** and former **Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare**. He is the **Member of Parliament from North Goa constituency**, representing the **Bharatiya Janata Party**.

Mauritius PM to attend Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

- **Pravind Jugnauth**, Prime Minister of **Mauritius**, **Tulsi Gabbard**, the first **Hindu member** of the **American Congress** and two **Indian-origin politicians** from **Norway (Himansu Gulati)** and **New Zealand (Kanwaljit**

Singh Bakshi) will be guests of honour at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in January 2019 being organised in PM Narendra Modi's constituency Varanasi.

- Modi will inaugurate the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) on January 22, with Pravind Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius, being the chief guest in the inaugural ceremony.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is a celebratory day observed on 9 January by the Republic of India to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community towards the development of India. The day commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai on 9 January 1915.

Railways to get first dedicated corridor for freight trains on August 15

- After 165 years of its birth, Indian Railways is set to get its first publicly-owned dedicated corridor for freight trains on August 15, when the country will be celebrating its 72nd Independence Day.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to dedicate to the nation a 190-km railway line between Dadri in Uttar Pradesh and Phulera in Rajasthan, which fall under the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC).

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. Piyush Vedprakash Goyal is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Coal in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016.

Odisha to get India's first skill training centre

- The Centre is planning to set up one National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) in every State to meet the rising demand for skilled manpower in the country.
- Laying the foundation stone of India's first such skill training institute at Barang near Bhubaneswar, Pradhan said the Centre's endeavour is yet another step to empower the youth of the State and make them job ready for industries. This will also help in addressing the issue of migration.

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE. Dr. Senayangba Chubatoshi Jamir is current Governor of Odisha. Naveen Patnaik is the current and 14th Chief Minister of Odisha.

10th edition of Delhi Dialogue concluded in New Delhi

- The 10th edition of the Delhi Dialogue concluded in New Delhi.
- The theme of the two-day DD -10 is "Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation".

The Delhi Dialogue is a premier annual track 1.5 event to discuss politico-security, economic and socio-cultural engagement between India and ASEAN. This is the first major event to be organized after the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit that was held in New Delhi in January 2018.

IAF participation in Ex Pitch Black 2018

- The Indian Air Force for the first time is participating with fighter aircraft in Exercise Pitch Black 2018 (PB-18), which is scheduled from 24 Jul 18 to 18 Aug 18 in Australia.
- Ex Pitch Black is a biennial multi-national large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).

The aim of the exercise is to practice Offensive Counter Air (OCA) and Defensive Counter Air (DCA) combat, in a simulated war environment. The first Pitch Black exercises took place on 15-16 June 1981 between different RAAF units Darwin and Tindal.

Government to use Microdots technology to check vehicle thefts

- In a bid to put an end to vehicle thefts, the government will soon launch a new standard for automobile industry, which involves use of a technology.
- In this technique, thousands of small dots laser etched will be sprayed with a vehicle identification number on all over the vehicle's body.
- This will also include their engines. This technology is termed as Microdots and it is almost impossible to remove these dots.

It is reported that 2.14 lakh vehicles are stolen across India annually. Delhi tops the list with 38,644 in 2016. This significant figure translates to over 100 vehicles on a daily basis. The state of Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra follows the list with 34,480 and 22,435 number of vehicles, respectively.

Cabinet approves scheme for freeing prisoners

- The Union Cabinet has approved a remission scheme for certain categories of prisoners, including women, transgenders and physically disabled, under which they will be set free on satisfying the given criteria.
- The remission is part of commemoration of 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The scheme will cover those women and transgenders who have crossed the age of 55 years, and men over 60 years of age, given they have served 50 per cent of their total sentence.
- Prisoners with over 70 per cent disability and who have served 50 per cent of their sentence will also be covered under the scheme -- irrespective of their age.
- Terminally ill prisoners will also be considered under the scheme. The scheme is, however, conditional and those convicted of murder, acts of terrorism, kidnapping for ransom, rape, dowry death and human trafficking will not be covered.

Ravi Shankar Prasad is the current Union Minister holding Law and Justice and Electronics and Information Technology and he represents the state of Bihar as a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha.

NMCG Organises “Ganga Vriksharopan Abhiyan” in Five Ganga Basin States

- National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) is running “Ganga Vriksharopan Abhiyan” in five main stem Ganga basin states – Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.
- The drive was launched on the 9th of this month, and the week upto 15th July was observed as ‘Shubharambh Saptah’.
- State Forest Departments of these states have been made the nodal agencies for the smooth and effective execution of the campaign.
- Divisional Forest Officers (DFOs) have been designated as the district level Nodal Officers and Chief Conservator of Forest (CCF) at the State level for organizing the events.

The campaign, which has been initiated as part of the Forest Interventions in Ganga (FIG) component of NamamiGange programme, is significant as it aims to bring greater awareness among people and other stakeholders regarding the importance of afforestation for the task of Ganga Rejuvenation.

CM Raman Singh launches “Abhar aapki sewa ka” app for pensioners

- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh announced a Chhattisgarh Online Pension Management System.

- This app is big development in the digital age. **E-payment to e-procurement to providing internet to every village has been done.** It is under e-governance, fulfilling the dream of Digital India plan of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Digital Chhattisgarh.”

Chhattisgarh was formed on 1 November 2000 by partitioning 10 Chhattisgarhi and 6 Gondi speaking southeastern districts of Madhya Pradesh. The capital city is Raipur. Balram Das Tandon is present Governor of Chhattisgarh.

Modi government defeats no-confidence motion gets more than two-third votes

- A motion of no-confidence against the Narendra Modi government was defeated in the Lok Sabha.
- The government obtained a two-third majority of the votes to demonstrate that it enjoys support cutting across political boundaries.
- The no-confidence motion received 126 votes in favour and 325 votes against with 451 members of parliament present and voting.

The Government must always enjoy majority support in the popular House to remain in power. If need be, it has to demonstrate its strength on the floor of the House by moving a Motion of Confidence and winning the confidence of the House. Rule 198 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha lays down the procedure for moving a Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers. A Motion of No-confidence need not set out any grounds on which it is based.

India to host U.S. for 2+2 talks

- India will host the inaugural round of the two-plus-two dialogue with the United States on September 6.
- The ministerial-level meeting will cover bilateral, regional and global issues.
- This will also be the first round of high-level interaction between the two sides following the elections in Pakistan that will conclude in the last week of July.

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defense James Mattis will host External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Washington, D.C., for the dialogue. The “2+2” dialogue format was agreed to between the two sides during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Washington D.C. in June, 2017.

West Bengal to launch Ayushman Bharat under joint banner

- The West Bengal government signed an agreement to implement the Centre's health insurance scheme under the joint banner "Ayushman Bharat - Swasthya Sathi", ending months of uncertainty over whether the Trinamool Congress-ruled state would back the initiative.
- Under the agreement, the state government is expected to expand the number of beneficiaries under its existing health scheme to provide more than 11 million families with health cover of Rs 5 lakh each.

The Union Cabinet has approved the launch of a new Centrally Sponsored Ayushman Bharat -National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM) having central sector component under Ayushman Bharat Mission anchored in the MoHFW. The scheme has the benefit cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year. The target beneficiaries of the proposed scheme will be more than 10 crore families belonging to poor and vulnerable population based on SECC database. AB-NHPM will subsume the on-going centrally sponsored schemes –Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) and the Senior Citizen Health Insurance Scheme (SCHIS).

Union Home Minister, Rajnath Singh launched SPC programme

- The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh launched the Student Police Cadet (SPC) programme for nationwide implementation at a ceremony in Gurugram, Haryana.

- The programme, designed for students of Class VIII and IX, will not add to the workload of students and is aimed at making them “better citizens”.
- “The programme seeks to build a bridge between the police and the larger community through school students by inculcating values and ethics in them through classes in school and outside.

Rajnath Ram Badan Singh previously served as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and as a Cabinet Minister in the Vajpayee Government. He has also served as the President of the BJP twice, 2005 to 2009 and 2013 to 2014. He has been representing the 16th Lok Sabha from Lucknow constituency.

Andhra Pradesh CM launches e-Pragati portal

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu launched ‘e-Pragati core platform’ at Undavalli near Amaravati.
- e-Pragati, a forward-looking digital initiative, is aimed at connecting the citizen to 34 departments, 336 autonomous organisations and 745-plus services. Through this project, the State government intends to realise the vision of ‘Sunrise AP 2022’.

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to be formed under the State reorganisation act in 1956 and first state to be created based on the language in India. On 2 June 2014, the north-western portion of Andhra Pradesh was separated to form the new state of Telangana. The longtime capital of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, was transferred to Telangana as part of the division. Amaravati is the de facto capital city of the Andhra Pradesh. Nara Chandrababu Naidu is the current and first chief minister of the state since it was divided from Telangana. E. S. L. Narasimhan is the Governor of Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Advanced weather forecasting system unveiled at Chandni Chowk

- Minister for Science and Technology Harsh Vardhan has unveiled the first of a kind Air Quality and Weather Forecast System, SAFAR at Chandni Chowk in New Delhi.
- The giant true colour LED display will give real-time air quality index on 24x7 basis with colour coding along with 72-hour advance forecast. The new system can track UV-Index, PM1, Mercury and Black carbon in real time and will provide health advisory and related precaution.
- The mission model project SAFAR is implemented in four cities of India which includes Delhi, Pune, Mumbai and Ahmedabad as an operational service.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan is the incumbent minister at Ministry of Science & Technology (India), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Ministry of Earth Sciences in the BJP-led NDA government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He represents Chandni Chowk in Delhi as a Member of Parliament in the 16th Lok Sabha.

India's first ceramics triennale to boost Jaipur's identity as artistic hub

- For the first time ever, ceramics and sculpture aficionados in India can see their work as well as that of several Indian artists under a single roof and in their own backyard. Jaipur is all set to host India's first ceramics triennale.

Jaipur is the capital and the largest city of the Indian state of Rajasthan in Northern India. It was founded on 18 November 1727 by Jai Singh II, the ruler of Amer after whom the city is named. Jaipur is also known as the Pink City, due to the dominant color scheme of its buildings. Jaipur is home to two UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the Jantar Mantar and the Amer Fort.

PM Modi becomes first Indian prime minister to set foot in Rwanda

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Rwanda on the first leg of his three-nation Africa tour, becoming the first Indian premier to visit the East African country.
- Prime Minister Modi holds bilateral meetings with President Paul Kagame, delegation-level talks and meetings with the business and the Indian communities. He also visited the Genocide Memorial and participates in an event on “Girinka” (one cow per family), a national social protection scheme of Rwanda initiated by Kagame.

Narendra Damodardas Modi is serving as the 14th and current Prime Minister of India since 2014. He was the Chief Minister of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014, and is the Member of Parliament for Varanasi. He became the first Prime Minister born after India's independence from the British Empire.

First meeting of India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on Border Haats concluded

- The first meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on Border Haats concluded in Agartala, Tripura.
- During the two day meeting both sides noted the positive impact of Border Haats on the livelihoods of the people living in areas adjoining the Haats.
- It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in Bangladesh on mutually agreed dates. A MoU on Border Haats between India and Bangladesh was signed in April 2017 for establishment of a joint committee to review operations of these haats.

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia. Dhaka is its capital and largest city. Mohammad Abdul Hamid is the 16th and current President of Bangladesh. Sheikh Hasina Wazed is the current and 10th Prime Minister of Bangladesh, in office since January 2009. Bangladeshi taka is the currency of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Government set up high level committee chaired by Union Home Secretary to check mob lynching

- Union Government is concerned at the incidents of violence by mobs in some parts of the country. Government has already condemned such incidents and made its stand clear in the Parliament that it is committed to upholding the rule of law and adopting effective measures to curb such incidents.
- As per the Constitutional scheme, 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects. State Governments are responsible for controlling crime, maintaining law and order, and protecting the life and property of the citizens.

Rajnath inaugurated National Traders Conclave

- Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the three-day National Traders Conclave on July 23, where trade leaders will discuss wide-ranging issues, including implications of the Walmart-Flipkart deal on the country's retail trade.

Rajnath Ram Badan Singh previously served as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and as a Cabinet Minister in the Vajpayee Government. He has also served as the President of the BJP twice, 2005 to 2009 and 2013 to 2014. He has been representing the 16th Lok Sabha from Lucknow constituency.

Naveen Patnaik releases first-ever tribal atlas of Odisha

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released the first tribal atlas of Odisha a set of maps and statistics highlighting the tribal demography of the state.
- The atlas has been prepared by the SC & ST Research and Training Institute in collaboration with Academy of Tribal Language and Culture.

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE. Dr. Senayangba Chubatoshi Jamir is current Governor of Odisha. Naveen Patnaik is the current and 14th Chief Minister of Odisha.

Acid attack victims included under disability in Madhya Pradesh

- In Madhya Pradesh, acid attack victims have been included under disability and they will be eligible to get all benefits of various schemes of the government as per Disabilities Act 2016.

Madhya Pradesh (meaning Central Province) is a state in central India. Its capital is Bhopal. Nicknamed the "Heart of India" due to its geographical location in India. Madhya Pradesh is the second-largest state in the country by area after Rajasthan. This state was the largest in India by area until 2000, when its southeastern Chhattisgarh region was made as a separate state. MP has the largest reserves of diamond and copper in India.

Swachh Survekshan Grameen launched in UP, Jharkhand and Maharashtra

- The Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 (SSG 2018) announced by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation was launched by three States.
- Under the SSG 2018, an independent survey agency will conduct the survey in all districts from 1st to 31st August 2018, and the results will be announced in the form of a ranking of all districts and States on the basis of quantitative and qualitative sanitation (Swachhata) parameters.
- Shri Babanrao Lonikar, Cabinet Minister, Water Supply and Sanitation Department, Government of Maharashtra, launched SSG 2018 in Maharashtra at an event in Pandharpur. Chief Minister of Jharkhand, Shri Raghubar Das, launched the Survekshan in Ranchi. Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath, launched the SSG in Lucknow.

As part of Swachh Survekshan Grameen 6980 villages in 698 districts across India will be covered. 34,000 public places namely schools, anganwadis, public health centres, haat/bazaars/religious places in these 6980 villages will be visited for survey. Citizens' feedback will be collected from over 50 lakh citizens on SBM related issues through direct interaction as well as online feedback.

Bihar's Sitamarhi becomes the First ODF District in the State

- Bihar finally made its presence felt in the sanitation mission, as the district of Sitamarhi became the first open defecation free (ODF) district of the state.
- Sitamarhi's ODF status comes at an important juncture for Bihar, which aims to go ODF by October 2, 2019. Presently, the state needs to construct another 6 lakh toilets across its 37 remaining districts.

Bihar is the third-largest state of India by population, according to the census 2011. It is a land-locked state, although the outlet to the sea through the port of Kolkata is not far away. Nalanda University is located in the town of Rajgir, in the northern Indian state of Bihar. It was a Buddhist center of learning from 427 to 1197 CE. It has been called "one of the first great universities in recorded history. Satya Pal Malik is the current Governor of Bihar and Nitish Kumar has been the Chief Minister of Bihar.

Odisha CM launches Green Mahanadi Mission

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the 'Green Mahanadi Mission', a plantation drive under which five crore saplings will be planted in the Mahanadi river basin.

- **Launching the programme by planting saplings at two locations in Subarnapur and Boudh districts**, Mr. Patnaik said that the plantation drive was being carried out in as many as 1,303 villages spread over 15 districts situated on both sides of the Mahanadi.

The objective of the mission is to stop soil erosion on river banks and recharge the groundwater reserve. The plantation drive will be implemented jointly by the departments of Forest, Horticulture and Watershed Development.

President Kovind launched Sanchar Kranti Yojna in Chhattisgarh

- **President Ram Nath Kovind** launched the Chhattisgarh government's 'Sanchar Kranti Yojna' in Jagdalpur, under which free smartphones will be distributed to 50 lakh people in the state.
- He also dedicated to the nation a new hospital building of the Late Baliram Kashyap Memorial Medical College in Dimrapal village, located near Jagdalpur, around 300 km from the state capital of Raipur.

Ram Nath Kovind is the 14th and current President of India. He had served previously as the Governor of Bihar from 2015 to 2017. He became only the second Dalit representative to become President after K. R. Narayanan, and also is the first BJP candidate to be elected to the post.

PM Modi addressed the 10th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** addressed the 10th BRICS Summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- The theme of this year's summit is, 'BRICS in Africa - collaboration for inclusive growth and shared prosperity in the 4th industrial revolution'.
- Besides Mr Modi, heads of the four other BRICS nations - Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa - took part in the meeting.

BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Originally the first four were grouped as "BRIC" (China, Brazil, Russia and India), before the induction of South Africa in 2010. In 2009, the first BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

Union Home Minister inaugurated second Young Superintendent of Police Conference

- **Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh** inaugurated the second Conference of Young Superintendent of Police being organized by Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D) in New Delhi.
- The theme of the Conference is "Predictive Policing and Contemporary Challenges for Indian Police Forces" and aims to create awareness among young Superintendents of Police and Commandants regarding latest technologies in areas of Artificial Intelligence; Predictive Policing/ Crime Analytics/ Big data Analytics; Geospatial Technology; Cyber Crime; Surveillance Tracking & UAVs; CCTV Equipment, for effective delivery of Police Services to citizens.

Kejriwal announces solar energy scheme aimed at raising farmers income by 3-5 times

- **Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal** announced the 'Mukhyamantri Kisan Aaye Badhotri Solar Yojna' which aims to increase the income of farmers by three to five times in the national capital.
- As per the scheme approved by the Delhi Cabinet, maximum of one-third surface area of the agriculture land can be used for installation of solar panels in such a way that agriculture activity is not affected. Kejriwal said the present estimated annual income of farmers is Rs 20,000 to 30,000 per acre per year.

Anil Baijal is the current Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

Mahila Shakti Kendra Scheme to empower rural women

- **Government of India** has approved a new scheme namely Mahila Shakti Kendra for implementation during 2017-18 upto 2019-20 to empower rural women through community participation.
- The Scheme is implemented with cost sharing ratio of 60:40 between centre and states except for North East and Special Category States where the ratio is 90:10.

Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog & MyGov launches “Innovate India Platform”

- **Shri. R Ramanan**, Mission Director, Atal Innovation Mission and **Shri.Arvind Gupta** CEO, MyGov launched the “#InnovateIndia Platform”, collaboration between the Atal Innovation Mission and MyGov, a citizen centric platform of the Government of India.
- The #InnovateIndia portal will serve as the common point for all the innovation happening across the nation.

The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) is a flagship initiative set up by the NITI Aayog to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across the length and breadth of the country, based on a detailed study and deliberations on innovation and entrepreneurial needs of India in the years ahead. **Finance Minister in his Budget Speech 2015-16** announced the Government's intention to establish the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and a mechanism to be known as SETU in NITI with an initial sum of Rs. 500 crore and Rs. 1000 crore respectively.

Eight-lane Bridge coming across Pamban Strait

- The **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** has started preparing a detailed project report (DPR) for construction of a world-class eight-lane road bridge across Pamban Strait at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,250 crore to connect Rameswaram Island with the mainland.
- The bridge is coming up adjacent to the existing 2.345-km-long Annai Indira Gandhi Bridge. Bengaluru-based Feedback Infra Limited is preparing the DPR for the project.

Pamban Bridge is a railway bridge which connects the town of Rameswaram on Pamban Island to mainland India. Opened on 24 February 1914, it was India's first sea bridge, and was the longest sea bridge in India until the opening of the Bandra-Worli Sea Link in 2010.

West Bengal renames itself ‘Bangla’

- The West Bengal Assembly passed a resolution to change the name of the State as ‘Bangla’ in three languages — Bengali, English and Hindi.
- The proposal to change the name of the State has been pending since August 2016, when the Assembly passed a resolution to change the name to ‘Bengal’ in English, ‘Bangla’ in Bengali and ‘Bangal’ in Hindi.
- The Centre, however, turned it down in 2017, objecting to having three names in three languages. The West Bengal Assembly again passed a resolution to change the name of the State as ‘Bangla’ in three languages — Bengali, English and Hindi.

Keshari Nath Tripathi is the present Governor of West Bengal and **Mamata Banerjee** is the current and 8th Chief Minister of West Bengal. She is the first woman to hold the office. The British East India Company cemented their hold on the region following the Battle of Plassey in 1757, and Calcutta served for many years as the capital of British India.

NGT constitutes monitoring panel for Yamuna rejuvenation

- The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** constituted a monitoring committee to oversee the Yamuna rejuvenation project.

- A Bench headed by NGT chairperson Adarsh Kumar Goel directed the committee, comprising former Delhi Chief Secretary Shailaja Chandra and retired NGT expert member Bikram Singh Sajwan, to submit a report by December.

National Green Tribunal has been established on 18.10.2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010 for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources including enforcement of any legal right relating to environment and giving relief and compensation for damages to persons and property and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. Justice Lokeshwar Singh Panta is the first Chairman of NGT.

Andhra CM lays foundation stone of mega sports complex

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu laid the foundation stone of a Rs 60 crore mega sports complex in Vijayawada.
- The Amaravati International Sports Complex will be built on 8.9 acres of land. The Andhra Pradesh government had decided to develop Amaravati, Vizag and Tirupati as sports cities.
- Similarly, the state government is implementing Panchajanya sports scheme to develop sports in the state.

Chandrababu Naidu has also launched 'Project Gandiva'. This project aims to achieve medals in Olympic Games in a span of ten years. The government wants to make Andhra Pradesh No.1 in the country in athletics. Chandrababu Naidu also announced financial aid of Rs 10 lakhs to Ch Satyanarayana of Lenin Volga Archery Academy whose daughter set a world record of shooting 100 arrows in the least time.

Solar-powered Cochin Airport gets UN's highest environmental accolade

- The Cochin International Airport in Kerala, the first fully solar-powered airport in the world, has been chosen for the prestigious Champion of Earth Prize – 2018 instituted by the United Nations (UN).
- The Champion of Earth Prize is considered the UN's highest environmental accolade.
- The airport, the first to be built in India under the public-private-partnership model, had logged 10 million passengers in the last financial year.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) established Champions of the Earth in 2005 as an annual awards programme to recognize outstanding environmental leaders from the public and private sectors, and from civil society. This awards programme is a successor to UNEP's Global 500 Roll of Honour.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched various projects worth 60,000 crore rupees

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched various projects worth 60,000 crore rupees at the ground-breaking ceremony in Uttar Pradesh capital Lucknow.
- He had attended the concluding session of the two-day 'Transforming Urban Landscape' convention. The event marked the third anniversary of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban); the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation of Urban Transformation (AMRUT); and the Smart Cities Mission.

Centre allows sugar mills to manufacture ethanol directly from sugarcane juice

- Union government has decided to allow sugar mills to manufacture ethanol directly from sugarcane juice or intermediate product called B-molasses.
- The sugarcane control order of 1966 has been amended in this regard as notified by the Union Food Ministry.
- The move would help mills divert cane juice for ethanol manufacturing during surplus years.
- So far, mills were allowed to manufacture ethanol from by-product called C-molasses, after sugar was taken out while processing raw cane juice.

The Indian Coast Guard conducted a bilateral top exercise with Bangladesh Coast Guard

- The Indian Coast Guard conducted a bilateral table-top exercise on maritime pollution response with Bangladesh Coast Guard at the regional headquarters (North East) of the ICG Kolkata.

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) protects India's maritime interests and enforces maritime law; it was formally established on 18 August 1978.

Indian Villages adopted by Ministers to get Free Wi-Fi Services

- Under 'Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojna', villages adopted by the members of parliament will be provided free Wi-Fi services across India by the government.
- The government has proposed to set up 25,000 Wi-Fi hotspots at existing rural exchanges of BSNL through comprehensive telecom development plan and in future, all other agencies/private telecom operators will be engaged to provide Wi-Fi services to every panchayat across India.
- The government has targeted to link each of the 2.5 lakh gram panchayats of India through optical-fibre network under Bharat Net Project.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is an Indian state-owned telecommunications company headquartered in New Delhi. It was incorporated on 15 September 2000 and assumed the business of providing telecom services and network management from the 1 October 2000. BSNL is India's oldest communication service provider. It has footprints throughout India, except for Mumbai and New Delhi, where telecommunications are managed by Mahanagar Telephone Nigam (MTNL).

Gujarat government announces urban sanitation policy

- The Gujarat government came out with an 'Urban Sanitation and Cleanliness Policy' for better management of solid and liquid waste in cities. Among other things, the policy aims at complete abolition of manual scavenging. A system to convert solid waste into fuel to generate "green energy" will be set up.

GIFT City is India's first operational smart city in the Ahmedabad (Amdavad) metropolitan region.

Srikrishna committee wants changes in Aadhaar Act, autonomy for UIDAI

- The Justice BN Srikrishna committee has stated that regulations suggested in the draft data protection bill will require the government to make changes to the Aadhaar Act.
- The UIDAI or Unique Identification Authority of India is the nodal agency that manages the Aadhaar biometric identification system.

India's first National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) for Women launched in Punjab

- The Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, laid the foundation stone for permanent campus of National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) for Women at Mohali, Punjab.
- This is the first NSTI Institute for Punjab and only one of its kind in India which is exclusively for women.
- The Minister also launched a unique Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra (PMKK) which would admit differently abled persons as well, also a first of its kind in India at Mohali. The Institute is presently operating out of temporary campus at Rajpura.

Kerala Startup Mission to host Global Hackathon series on July 28-29

- AngelHack, the world's largest hackathon organisers conducted the Global Hackathon series in the Kerala Startup Mission at Kinfra Hi-Tech Park in Kalamassery on July 28 and 29.

- The challenge for this round of the hackathon is to address problems that prevent female entrepreneurship, with its focus on health, safety, economic empowerment and culture.

Kerala has the highest literacy rate 93.91% in the 2011 census; the highest life expectancy, 77 years; and the highest sex ratio, 1,084 women per 1,000 men. Pinarayi Vijayan is the current Chief Minister of Kerala and Palanisamy Sathasivam is the current Governor of Kerala. Kerala is known as "God's own country" and is one of the popular tourist destinations in India.

Odisha to implement its own food security act from October 2

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced that the state government would implement its own food security act from Gandhi Jayanti on October 2.
- Odisha's own food security act would cover nearly 34.44 lakh people who have been left out from the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

As passed by the Parliament, Government has notified the National Food Security Act, 2013 on 10th September, 2013 with the objective to provide for food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity. The Act provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population for receiving subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), thus covering about two-thirds of the population. The eligible persons are entitled to receive 5 Kgs of foodgrains per person per month at subsidised prices of Rs. 3/2/1 per Kg for rice/wheat/coarse grains. The existing Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households, which constitute the poorest of the poor, will continue to receive 35 Kgs of foodgrains per household per month. Haryana became the first state to begin implementation of this act.

NITI Aayog proposes nodal energy ministry to streamline governance

- The NITI Aayog has proposed a common nodal energy ministry on the lines of the model followed in various other countries to streamline governance among different ministries and departments pertaining to the crucial sector and speed up decision-making.
- The Aayog, the government's premier think tank, has included the proposal in its second draft of the National Energy Policy following suggestions from its vice chairman Rajiv Kumar. If implemented, the proposal would help sort out governance issues among the ministries of petroleum and natural gas, power, coal, new and renewable energy, and the Department of Atomic Energy.

Odisha to set up riverine port on Mahanadi River

- The Odisha government approved a proposal for setting up a riverine port on river Mahanadi at Akhadasali village in Kendrapara district under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. The port will come up under the public-private-partnership mode on build, own, operate, share and transfer (BOOST) basis.

The Mahanadi is one of the largest Indian peninsular rivers that drain into the Bay of Bengal. The 857 km long river originates in Raipur district of the central Indian state of Chhattisgarh and flows through the eastern state of Odisha before meeting the sea. The Mahanadi drains most of the state of Chhattisgarh and much of Odisha. Tributaries of the Mahanadi include the Tel, Mand, and Hasdo rivers. Hirakud Dam is built across the Mahanadi River in the state of Odisha in India.

Nirmala Sitharaman hands over 'Made in India' engines to Army

- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman formally handed over two types of indigenously built high-power multi-fuel engines to the Army.
- The engines manufactured by the Engine Factory, Avadi -- a unit of Ordnance Factory Board, Department of Defence Production -- were fully indigenised for the first time under the Centre's Make in India programme.

- The first engine of 1000 HP engine 'V92S2' engine powers T-90 Bhisma Tank, the second engine 'V-46-6' engine powers the T-72 Ajeya Tank and its variants. The Engine Factory has manufactured more than 12,000 engines since its inception in 1987.

Nirmala Sitharaman is currently a member of the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka. **Nirmala Sitharaman** became the first full-time Defence Minister to fly in a Sukhoi 30 MKI of the Indian Air Force. She is the first full-fledged woman defence minister of India. The first defence minister of independent India was Baldev Singh. She is the second woman since Indira Gandhi to hold this major post.

Centre for removal of 'NOTA' from RS poll

- The Supreme Court reserved for judgment a PIL petition, which won the full support of the Centre, seeking to scrap the 'NOTA' option in Rajya Sabha election. A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra indicated that the court may indeed rule against the two circulars issued by the Election Commission of India on January 24, 2014 and November 12, the subsequent year, giving Rajya Sabha members the option to press the NOTA ('none of the above') button in the Upper House polls.
- Chief Justice Misra orally observed that **NOTA is meant only for universal adult suffrage and direct elections and not polls held by the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote as done in the Rajya Sabha.**

"None of the above", or NOTA for short, also known as "against all" or a "scratch" vote, is a ballot option in some jurisdictions or organizations, designed to allow the voter to indicate disapproval of all of the candidates in a voting system. The 'None of the above' (NOTA) option was introduced for the first time, in 1978, in a ballot by the State of Nevada, USA. In India, NOTA button first time introduced in the 2013 Assembly elections held in four States — Chhattisgarh, Mizoram, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and the Union Territory, Delhi.

PM Modi launches 81 projects worth Rs 60k crore in Lucknow

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 81 projects worth close to Rs 60,000 crore during a 'Ground Breaking Ceremony' in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
- "These projects will prove to be a big step in giving a new direction to Digital India and Make in India. Be it setting up of fibre or establishment of IT centre for internet service in Uttar Pradesh, digital infrastructure will give a new direction, new pace to the state," PM Modi said.

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in the Republic of India. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950. Lucknow is the capital of Uttar Pradesh. Ram Naik is currently the 24th Governor of Uttar Pradesh. Yogi Adityanath is the current Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

International



EU Leaders Agree To Extend Sanctions on Russia

- **European Union** leaders have agreed to extend the bloc's economic sanctions penalizing Russia for its aggression in Ukraine.
- Both **French President Emmanuel Macron** and **German Chancellor Angela Merkel** urged the leaders to agree to roll over the sanctions after giving an update on the state of implementation of the Minsk peace accords.

European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 28 member states that are located primarily in Europe. The Maastricht Treaty established the European Union in 1993 and introduced European citizenship. A monetary union was established in 1999 and came into full force in 2002 and is composed of 19 EU member states which use the euro currency. Brussels is the de facto capital of the European Union. Jean-Claude Juncker is serving as President of the European Commission since 2014. Donald Franciszek Tusk has been the President of the European Council since 2014.

UNESCO adds 8 pre-Islamic Iranian sites to heritage list

- **UNESCO** added eight pre-Islamic Iranian archeological sites to its World Heritage List, the UN agency announced at a meeting in the Bahraini capital. The sites collectively appear on the worldwide list as the "Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars region (Islamic Republic of Iran)".
- A province in modern-day Iran's south, Fars was the cradle of the Sassanid dynasty, which appeared at the start of the third century. With the latest addition, **Iran now has 24 sites on the heritage list of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.**

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris. **Audrey Azoulay** appointed as the **Director-general of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**, becoming the **second female leader of the organization.** India is sixth on the list of countries with 37 sites in the list. Italy leads with 54 sites followed by China with 53 sites.

Asia's first patent arbitration centre to open in Tokyo

- **Asia's first arbitration centre** specialised in intellectual property is slated to open in Tokyo, Japan in September to resolve the growing number of disputes in the region.
- The **International Arbitration Centre in Tokyo (IACT)** is set to have around a dozen arbitrators from around the world, who would try to resolve disputes within a period of one year.

India 73rd country with most funds in Swiss Banks, Pak at 72, UK on top

- **India has moved up to 73rd place** in terms of money parked by its citizens and companies with Swiss banks, while the **UK remains on the top.**

- **India had slipped to 88th place with a 44 per cent plunge** in such funds during 2016, but the **latest data from the Swiss National Bank (SNB) shows an increase of over 50 per cent** during 2017 to CHF 1.01 billion.
- **Pakistan is now placed one place higher than India at 72nd position**, down one slot, after 21 per cent dips in funds from that country in Swiss banks during 2017.

Lopez Obrador wins Mexico Presidency in landslide

- The leftist **Andrés Manuel López Obrador was elected president of Mexico in a landslide victory** that upended the nation's political establishment and handed him a sweeping mandate to reshape the country.

Mexico is a federal republic in the southern portion of North America. **Mexico City** or **City of Mexico** is the capital of Mexico. **Mexican peso** is the currency of Mexico. **Enrique Peña Niet** is serving as the current & **57th President of Mexico**, since 2012. **Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador** is the **President-elect of Mexico** until his inauguration as President on 1 December 2018.

UN declares Colombia's Chiribiquete park world heritage site

- The UN Educational, Scientific, and Educational Organization (UNESCO) has **placed Colombia's Chiribiquete national park on its list of world heritage sites**.
- The **park, which straddles the southern provinces of Caquetá and Guaviare**, is the country's largest and has **one of the highest rates of plant diversity** in the northern Amazon.
- It is also famous for its **table-top rock formations known as tepuis**, which rise out of the forest.
- It is the **ninth site in Colombia to be given world heritage status**.

Chiribiquete is home to the world's largest number of cave paintings, with **50 panels averaging 7 meters (23 feet)** in height and more than **75,000 individual paintings** dating back upwards of 20,000 years. **Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos** hailed the decision by the UN Educational, Scientific, and Educational Organization (UNESCO).

Indian-American named to key federal advisory committee on aviation

- **Indian-American Vivek Lall** has been **named to a key federal aviation advisory committee** which provides guidance to the **Trump administration** on the future of the airspace system.
- **Lall, currently vice-president at Lockheed Martin**, would be representing the viewpoints of defence technology organisations in the **NextGen Advisory Committee of the Department of Transportation**.

China approves \$1 billion aid to Pak despite FATT ban

- **China's one billion dollar loan to Pakistan** has come at a time when the **South Asian country has been officially placed on a terrorism financing watchdog's grey list**.
- The **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**, while taking the decision, **argued that Pakistan failed to act against terror financing on its soil**.
- The **idea behind putting Pakistan in the FATF grey list is to deplete its economy and eventually pull the plug on terror groups**.

The **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 by the Ministers of its Member jurisdictions. The objectives of the FATF are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

Israel enacts law to freeze Palestinian funds equal to prisoners' stipends

- **Israel enacted a law to financially penalize the Palestinian Authority** for paying stipends to **Palestinians jailed by Israel**, their families, and the families of those killed by Israeli forces.

- The **120-seat parliament** voted **87-15** in favor of the legislation that orders holding back part of the roughly **\$130 million in tax revenues** that Israel collects on behalf of the Palestinians each month under interim peace agreements.

Israel is a country in the Middle East, Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities in the world, and is considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority claim Jerusalem as their capital, however, neither claim is widely recognized internationally. Knesset is the unicameral national legislature of Israel. Israeli new shekel is the currency of Israel. Benjamin Netanyahu is serving as the 9th and current Prime Minister of Israel since 2009. Reuven Rivlin is serving as the 10th and current President of Israel since 2014.

Bolivia to build museum under ‘sacred lake’

- Bolivia is to build an underwater museum in its sacred Lake Titicaca. “It will be both a tourist complex and a centre for archeological, geological and biological research, which will make it the only one in the world”.
- Titicaca spans an area of 8,500 sq. km and straddles the border between Bolivia and Peru.

Bolivia is a landlocked country located in western-central South America. The capital is Sucre while the seat of government is located in La Paz. Juan Evo Morales Ayma has been serving as President of Bolivia since 2006. Boliviano is the currency of Bolivia.

Hawaii bans Coral-harming Sunscreens

- Hawaii became the first U.S. State to enact a ban on oxybenzone and octinoxate. The prohibition takes effect in 2021.
- Scientists have found the two substances can be toxic to coral, which are a vital part of the ocean ecosystem and a popular draw for tourists.

European Parliament rejects EU copyright law proposal

- The European Parliament rejected a highly controversial EU copyright law proposal that has pitted Beatles legend Paul McCartney against internet giants and the creators of Wikipedia.

European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 28 member states that are located primarily in Europe. The Maastricht Treaty established the European Union in 1993 and introduced European citizenship. A monetary union was established in 1999 and came into full force in 2002 and is composed of 19 EU member states which use the euro currency. Brussels is the de facto capital of the European Union. Jean-Claude Juncker is serving as President of the European Commission since 2014. Donald Franciszek Tusk has been the President of the European Council since 2014.

Tokyo unveils world’s first all-digital psychedelic art museum

- The world's first all-digital psychedelic art museum called the "MORI Building Digital Art Museum" has been unveiled in Tokyo.
- The museum uses projection-mapping technology that enables artworks to react to touch and movement. It houses about 50 kaleidoscopic installations, without which the place will just be a couple of huge, empty halls.

India to operate “world’s emptiest airport” in Sri Lanka

- India would operate Sri Lanka’s loss-making Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport in Hambantota.
- The \$210 million facility, 241km south-east of Colombo, is dubbed the “world’s emptiest airport” due to a lack of flights.
- India would operate the airport as a Sri Lanka-India joint venture. The joint venture would see India gain a major stake of the airport.

Sri Lanka is an island country in South Asia, located in the Indian Ocean to the southwest of the Bay of Bengal. Sri Lanka is separated from the India by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte is the official, administrative capital of Sri Lanka. Colombo is the commercial capital and largest city of Sri Lanka. Maithripala Sirisena is the current and 7th and current President of Sri Lanka, in office since January 2015. Ranil Wickremesinghe is the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka since 9 January 2015. Sri Lankan rupee is the currency of Sri Lanka.

Pakistan court sentences ousted PM Nawaz Sharif to 10 years imprisonment in corruption case

- An accountability court in Pakistan sentenced ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to 10 years in prison in one of the three corruption cases against him in the high-profile Panama Papers scandal.
- His daughter Maryam was sentenced to seven years and son-in-law Captain (retired) Safdar to one year.

Nawaz Sharif has served as the Prime Minister of Pakistan for three non-consecutive terms until he was disqualified for life from office by the Supreme Court of Pakistan in 2017 and Chief Minister of Punjab for two consecutive terms. He is noted as being Pakistan's longest-serving elected prime minister since its independence in 1947. Parliament of Pakistan is the federal and supreme legislative body of Pakistan. Nasirul Mulk is the 7th Caretaker Prime Minister of Pakistan who previously served as the 22nd Chief Justice of Pakistan.

Nepal, India to jointly promote tourism

- The 2nd meeting of the joint working group on tourism cooperation between India and Nepal concluded in Kathmandu.
- Both sides agreed to jointly promote Buddhist and Ramayana circuits and Adventure tourism.
- The meeting also decided to set up an industry-led India Nepal Tourism Forum.

UK launches new visas route for Indian scientists, academics

- The UK has launched new visas that will be open to overseas scientists and researchers, including Indians, to encourage the growth of the country's research sector.
- The new UKRI Science, Research and Academia scheme, which is being added to the already existing Tier 5 (Temporary Worker - Government Authorised Exchange) visa route, opened for researchers, scientists and academics from outside the European Union (EU) to come to the UK for up to two years.

London is the capital and most populous city of England and the United Kingdom. Pound sterling is the official currency of the United Kingdom. Theresa Mary May is serving as the current Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Elizabeth II is Queen of the United Kingdom and the other Commonwealth realms. She is the longest-lived and longest-reigning British monarch as well as the world's longest-reigning queen regnant and female head of state, the oldest and longest-reigning current monarch and the oldest and longest-serving current head of state.

Tayyip Erdogan inaugurates Turkey's powerful executive presidency

- Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was sworn in under a new governing system that grants him sweeping executive powers, which critics say give him far too much control.
- A former Istanbul mayor, Erdogan has been at the helm of Turkey since 2003 as prime minister and then the first directly elected president since 2014.
- Speaking at his sprawling presidential compound in Ankara, Erdogan unveiled the rebranded presidency “on this most important day of our country.”

- He won last month's election with 52.6 percent of the vote, ushered in the executive presidency that ends parliamentary governance and boosts the powers of the formerly ceremonial presidency.

Ankara is the capital of the Republic of Turkey. The Turkish lira is the currency of Turkey. Recep Tayyip Erdogan is the both the head of state and head of government of the Turkey.

UK government into crisis as Brexit Secretary David Davis resigns

- Brexit Secretary David Davis has resigned because he was not willing to be “a reluctant conscript” to Prime Minister Theresa May's European Union exit plan, delivering a blow to a British leader struggling to end divisions in her cabinet.

In July 2016, following a Brexit referendum in which a majority of those voting supported leaving the European Union, Davis was appointed by new Prime Minister Theresa May as Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, with responsibility for negotiating the UK's prospective exit from the EU. Brexit is the impending withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU). In a referendum on 23 June 2016, 51.9% of the participating UK electorate voted to leave the EU.

China pledges \$20 billion in loans to Middle East nations as part of ‘oil and gas plus’ model

- Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged a package of \$20 billion in loans and \$1.6 billion in financial aid to countries in the Middle East, as part of what he called an “oil and gas plus” model to revive economic growth in the region.
- China would offer aid worth 1 billion yuan (\$150 million) to Palestine to support economic development, besides providing a further 600 million to Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen.

The region comprising the Middle East is located in the western portion of the Asian continent, known as Western Asia. It has a territorial extension of more than 6.8 million square kilometers, with an estimated population of 260 million inhabitants. It is composed of 15 countries: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Syria, and Turkey.

New Czech government wins confidence vote in Parliament

- The new Czech government won a mandatory confidence vote in the lower house of Parliament, ending months of political instability following October's general elections and giving the far-left Communists a role in governing for the first time since the country's 1989 anti-communist Velvet Revolution.
- The government is led by populist billionaire Andrej Babis as prime minister. His centrist ANO (YES) movement won the election, but his first minority government lost a confidence vote in January and had to resign.

Czech Republic is a landlocked country in Central Europe, its capital and largest city is Prague. Milos Zeman is serving as the third and current President of the Czech Republic. Koruna is the currency of the Czech Republic.

India and China hold maritime security dialogue in Beijing

- India and China held their second maritime security dialogue in Beijing during which the Indian side elaborated on its vision for the Indo-Pacific region as articulated in Prime Minister Modi's keynote address at this year's Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. The two countries had held the inaugural maritime security dialogue in 2016 in New Delhi amid tensions over the South China Sea. It was not held last year.

Portugal parliament approves new gender change law

- The Portuguese parliament approved a law that will allow citizens to change their gender and name from the age of 16 without a medical report showing “identity disruption”.

- **Portugal joins Denmark, Malta, Sweden, Ireland and Norway to become “the sixth European country to grant the right to self-determination of transgender identity... without the guardianship of a third party and without a diagnosis of identity disruption”.**

Portugal is a country located in southwestern Europe. The capital and largest city is Lisbon, Euro is the official currency of the Portugal. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa is serving as the 20th and current President of Portugal. Antonio Costa is serving as the 119th and current Prime Minister of Portugal.

UN chief establishes panel on digital cooperation

- **UN chief Antonio Guterres has established a first-of-its-kind panel on digital cooperation aimed at addressing concerns of cybersecurity threats and rise in hate speech and named senior Indian diplomat Amandeep Singh Gill as the executive director of the panel's secretariat.**
- **The high-level panel on digital cooperation will be co-chaired by US philanthropist Melinda Gates and China-based Alibaba founder Jack Ma.**

UN agrees first-ever global compact on migration

- **For the first time ever, United Nations member states, except the US, have agreed on a deal to better manage international migration, address its challenges, strengthen migrant rights and contribute to sustainable development.**
- **Known as the Global Compact for Migration, the agreement will be formally adopted by world leaders in Morocco in December.**

Permanent members of the United Nations Security Council also known as the Permanent Five, Big Five, or P5 are the five states which the UN Charter of 1945 grants a permanent seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC), China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Antonio Guterres is a Portuguese politician and diplomat who is serving as the ninth Secretary-General of the United Nations. Previously, he was the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees between 2005 and 2015.

Iceland to take vacated US seat on Human Rights Council

- **Iceland has for the first time been elected to the Human Rights Council, filling the seat vacated by the United States, which withdrew from the body last month, citing bias.**
- **The United Nations General Assembly elected Iceland to serve on the Geneva-based global rights body effective immediately, through to the end of next year.**

United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world. The Council is made up of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly. The headquarters of UNHRC is in Geneva, Switzerland. The Council was created by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 March 2006 by resolution to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights. Vojislav Suc is currently serving as the President of the Human Rights Council.

BRICS news portal soon

- **A decision to establish a BRICS Media Academy and a BRICS news portal were among those taken at the 2018 BRICS Media Forum at Cape Town in South Africa.**
- **The Forum, a high-level dialogue among media organisations from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, was held over two days under the theme — ‘Fostering an Inclusive, Just World Order’.**

BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Originally the first four were grouped as "BRIC" (China, Brazil, Russia and India), before the induction of South Africa in 2010. In 2009, the first BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

8th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting at Durban

- "India affirms strong support for TB cooperation plan in every aspect as agreed upon in the 6th BRICS Health Ministers' meeting held in Delhi in 2016. This was stated by Shri J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare at the '8th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting at Durban, South Africa.

Haiti PM resigns after violent unrest

- Embattled Haiti Prime Minister Jack Guy Lafontant resigned following deadly violence and looting sparked by a now-abandoned plan to raise fuel prices, triggering a fraught process to form a new government. Mr. Lafontant was facing a potential vote of no confidence.

Haiti is a sovereign state located on the island of Hispaniola in the Greater Antilles archipelago of the Caribbean Sea. Port-au-Prince is the capital and most populous city of Haiti. Jovenel Moise is serving as the 42nd and current President of Haiti. The gourde is the currency of Haiti.

India, Pakistan to be part of anti-terror SCO drill in Russia next month

- Militaries of India and Pakistan will be part of a mega anti-terror drill in Russia next month which is being organised by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) with an aim to expand cooperation among the member countries to deal with terrorism and extremism.
- The exercise will be joined by all SCO member countries including Russia, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a Eurasian political, economic, and security organisation, the creation of which was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai, China by the leaders of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan; the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Charter was signed in June 2002 and entered into force on 19 September 2003. India and Pakistan have become latest full members in SCO in 2017.

UN finalizes first ever global compact for migration

- The UN member states finalized text of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration marking the first time they came together to negotiate an agreement covering all dimensions of international migration.
- The agreement is a "significant achievement" that reflects shared understanding that "cross-border migration is, by its very nature, an international phenomenon and that effective management of this global reality requires international cooperation to enhance its positive impact for all."

Nepal to host fourth BIMSTEC Summit in August

- Nepal will host the fourth BIMSTEC Summit on August 30 and 31 in Kathmandu.
- India hosted the leaders of BIMSTEC during the BRICS Outreach Summit in Goa in 2016.

BIMSTEC was set up in 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration and includes India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The theme includes counter-terrorism in semi-urban terrain and cordon and search, and each side will bring in some 30 soldiers. BIMSTEC countries held a disaster management exercise in 2017, but this is the first military exercise of the grouping which brings together important neighbours of India in South and Southeast Asia. BIMSTEC permanent secretariat is in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

UK tops Global Ranking of Nations' Soft Power, India not on list

- The UK has topped an annual global ranking of nations' soft power, with France placed second on the list of 30 countries which does not feature India.
- The 2018 'Soft Power 30' index, published last week by UK-based strategic communications consultancy firm Portland and the University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy, ranked Germany as third followed by the US.
- India does not figure on the list, but this year's report also features a chapter dedicated solely to Asia, listing 10 countries in the region, ranking India's soft power as eighth.

Peru declares 60-day state of emergency

- Peru declared a 60-day state of emergency on its Colombian border to ensure security from the menace of drug trafficking in a region.
- Peru President Martin Vizcarra said the decision was taken due to the "security problems" created by Colombian citizens crossing the border and it is was important to "reestablish the state's presence."

Peru is a country in western South America. Lima is the capital and the largest city of Peru and sol is the currency of Peru. César Villanueva has been the Prime Minister of Peru since April 2018.

EU & Japan sign biggest free trade deal

- The European Union and Japan have signed one of the world's biggest free trade deals, covering nearly a third of the world's GDP and 600 million people.
- Under the agreement, Japan will scrap almost all its tariffs on EU goods, particularly dairy items like cheese.
- The EU will also eliminate about 99 percent of its tariffs on Japanese goods, including removing levies on Japanese cars and scrapping tariffs on car parts.
- Firms in the EU, the world's biggest free-trade zone, currently export more than \$100bn (£75bn) in goods and services to Japan, the world's third-biggest economy, every year.

European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 28 member states that are located primarily in Europe. The Maastricht Treaty established the European Union in 1993 and introduced European citizenship. A monetary union was established in 1999 and came into full force in 2002 and is composed of 19 EU member states which use the euro currency. Brussels is the de facto capital of the European Union. Jean-Claude Juncker is serving as President of the European Commission since 2014. Donald Franciszek Tusk has been the President of the European Council since 2014.

Theresa May narrowly wins key Brexit vote

- British Prime Minister Theresa May narrowly survived another crunch Brexit vote in Parliament as she struggles to unify her divided party around her strategy for leaving the European Union.
- The Conservative government defeated an amendment introduced by its own backbench MPs to a future trade policy Bill which would have kept Britain in a customs union with the EU if it fails to agree to a free trade deal.

In July 2016, following a Brexit referendum in which a majority of those voting supported leaving the European Union, Davis was appointed by new Prime Minister Theresa May as Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, with responsibility for negotiating the UK's prospective exit from the EU. Brexit is the impending withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU). In a referendum on 23 June 2016, 51.9% of the participating UK electorate voted to leave the EU.

Two Indian-origin candidates joins race for London Mayor

- Two Indian-origin individuals are among 10 shortlisted by Britain's ruling Conservative party as prospective candidates to run for London mayor in 2020 against Labour's Pakistan-origin Sadiq Khan.
- Lucknow-born businesswoman Ruby McGregor-Smith joins the race alongside British Sikh politician Kulveer Ranger, both of whom will go head to head with the others at hustings next month before a vote on the final candidate by October.

Scotland chosen as site for UK's first spaceport to open by early 2020s

- A peninsula on Scotland's north coast has been chosen for the site of the UK's first spaceport.
- Vertical rocket and satellite launches are planned from the A'Mhoine peninsula in Sutherland which the UK Space Agency said would pave the way for space flights. Sutherland is the first vertical launch site to be awarded grant money, ahead of other vertical sites at Unst, Shetland, and North Uist in the Western Isles.
- The agency said the site, between Tongue and Durness, was chosen as the best place in the UK to reach highly sought-after satellite orbits with vertically launched rockets.

Scotland is a country that is part of the United Kingdom. Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland. Nicola Sturgeon is the current First Minister of Scotland.

South Korea's Former President has been sentenced to an additional eight years

- A South Korean court sentenced former South Korean President Park Geun-hye to an additional eight years for abusing state funds and violating election laws.
- She now faces the prospect of more than three decades behind bars. She's already serving a 24-year prison term over a massive corruption scandal that led to her removal from office last year.

Park Geun-hye was the first woman to be President of South Korea and also the first female president popularly elected as head of state in East Asia. She served as the 18th President of South Korea from 2013 to 2017. Moon Jae-in is serving as the 19th and current President of South Korea since 2017. Seoul is the capital and largest metropolis of South Korea. South Korean won is the currency of South Korea.

London launches action plan to become world's most walkable city

- The British capital has launched an action plan to become the world's most walkable city.
- The 'Walking Action Plan', released by the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan's team earlier this week, aims to encourage a million additional walking trips each day by 2024. Under the new plan, streets will be designed, built and managed to encourage walking, with better signposting and maps, as well as new, wider pedestrian crossings.

Israeli law declares the country the 'Nation-State of the Jewish People'

- Israel's legislature passed a controversial law that declares the country a principally 'Jewish state', further inflaming tensions between Israelis and Palestinians.
- Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel has long demanded that the Palestinians acknowledge his country's existence as the "nation-state of the Jewish people."
- The law is a largely symbolic measure, but it is bound to further fracture the relationship between Israel's Jewish majority and its non-Jewish Arab minority, which constitutes 21 percent of the country's population. Israel's 1948 Declaration of Independence explicitly enshrined equal social and political rights to all residents, but many non-Jewish Israeli citizens—especially Arab people—insist that they are treated as second-class citizens.

Israel is a country in the Middle East, Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities in the world, and is considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority claim Jerusalem as their capital, however, neither claim is widely recognized internationally. Knesset is the unicameral national legislature of Israel. Israeli new shekel is the currency of Israel. Benjamin Netanyahu is serving as the 9th and current Prime Minister of Israel since 2009. Reuven Rivlin is serving as the 10th and current President of Israel since 2014.

Pakistan gets its first woman chief justice of high court

- Pakistan has got its first-ever woman Chief Justice of a high court. Justice Tahira Safdar was named as the Chief Justice of the Balochistan High Court by Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar.
- Justice Tahira will replace Justice Meskanzai. She will work as the chief justice of the BHC till October 5 next year.

Justice Tahira was the first woman to be appointed as a civil judge in Balochistan, besides having the distinction of being the first lady to be appointed in all posts she served. She was also the first woman high court judge.

Abu Dhabi likely to get its first Hindu temple by 2020

- Abu Dhabi is likely to get its first Hindu temple by 2020 with a legal entity been registered with the local government for its construction.
- The plan to build the temple in the UAE's capital was approved by the Abu Dhabi Government during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first visit to the country in 2015.

Abu Dhabi is the capital and the second most populous city of the United Arab Emirates (the most populous being Dubai), and also capital of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, the largest of the UAE's seven emirates. United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federal sovereign absolute monarchy in Western Asia. Khalifa Al Nahyan is the current President of the United Arab Emirates. Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai. United Arab Emirates dirham is the currency of the United Arab Emirates.

UK hosted first Global Disability Summit in London

- UK hosted the first Global Disability Summit in London, to highlight the discrimination and stigma faced by people living with disabilities.
- The summit was hosted in conjunction with the Government of Kenya and the International Disability Alliance, to discuss ways of tackling the discrimination and prejudice faced by people with disabilities, especially in the developing world and other places where disabled people are particularly vulnerable.

PM gifts cows to villagers at Rweru Model Village in Rwanda

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted 200 cows to villagers who do not yet own a cow, under the Rwandan Government's Girinka Programme.
- The function to mark the handing over of cows was held at Rweru Model Village, in the presence of Rwandan President Paul Kagame.

Rwanda is a sovereign state in Central and East Africa and one of the smallest countries on the African mainland. Kigali is the capital and largest city of Rwanda. Rwandan franc is the currency of Rwanda. Edouard Ndirere serves as the Prime Minister of Rwanda.

Ireland to hold international conference of female parliamentarians

- Ireland will hold an international conference of female parliamentarians in September. Organised by the Irish Women's Parliamentary Caucus (IWPC), a cross-party forum for female parliamentarians within the Irish parliament, the conference will be held at Dublin Castle on September 9-10.
- Named "The International Congress of Parliamentary Women's Caucuses", the event will be attended by an estimated 300 delegates from over 27 countries and regions.

Ireland is an island in the North Atlantic. It covers five-sixths of the island, and Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom. Ireland is the third-largest island in Europe. Dublin is the capital and largest city in Ireland. In the Republic of Ireland, the official currency is the euro. Leo Eric Varadkar is the currently serving as the Taoiseach or prime minister, chief executive and head of government of Ireland.

Myanmar to host ASEAN education meet in Oct

- Myanmar which will host the next Asean Education Ministers Meeting (ASEM) in October seeks to boost its education sector by cooperating with India, China and the US among others.
- The 10th meeting of ASEM and Dialogue Partners would promote cooperation with Southeast Asian nations and partner countries. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) partner countries include India, China, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Russia, the US and Australia.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand to promote political and economic cooperation and regional stability. Brunei joined in 1984, shortly after its independence from the United Kingdom, and Vietnam joined ASEAN as its seventh member in 1995. Laos and Burma were admitted into full membership in July 1997 as ASEAN celebrated its 30th anniversary. Cambodia became ASEAN's tenth member in 1999. ASEAN secretariat is located in Jakarta, Indonesia.

10th BRICS Summit adopted Johannesburg Declaration

- Five BRICS member states, holding a three-day summit in Johannesburg which ends on 27 July 2018, have expressed satisfaction with the achievements of the bloc since its formation 10 years ago.
- "We, the heads of state and government, express satisfaction regarding the achievements of BRICS over the last 10 years as a strong demonstration of BRICS cooperation toward the attainment of peace, harmony and shared development and prosperity, and deliberated on ways to consolidate them further," the leaders said in their Johannesburg Declaration. The declaration was made on the second day of the 10th BRICS Summit underway in Johannesburg.
- The 10th BRICS Summit, as a milestone in the history of BRICS, was held under the theme "BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution".

Imran Khan declares victory in Pak. Election

- Pakistan's cricket star-turned politician Imran Khan declared victory for his party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party (PTI), in the country's general election.
- Mr. Khan's PTI party got 116 of the 270 National Assembly seats that were contested. The remainder in the 342-seat Lower House includes reserved seats for women and minorities.
- The election, in which Pakistanis voted for the National Assembly, and the four provincial assemblies, marked only the second time in Pakistan's 71-year history that a civilian government has handed power to another.

Imran Khan is a former cricketer who is the Prime Minister-elect and current chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. He, notably, led Pakistan to victory at the 1992 Cricket World Cup, Pakistan's first and only victory in that competition. In April 1996, Khan founded the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (Pakistan Movement for Justice), a centrist political party.

First ‘Nepal-India think tank summit’ held in Kathmandu

- Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Affairs (AIDA) and Nehru Memorial Museum Library (NMML) jointly hosted Nepal–India Think Tank Summit 2018 for the first time in Kathmandu on July 31.
- Former Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal inaugurated the summit where India’s ruling BJP Secretary General of India Ram Madhav has delivered a key note speech in the function.

Nepal is a landlocked country in South Asia located in the Himalaya. Mount Everest, the highest point on Earth is located in Nepal. Nepalese rupee is the official currency of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. Kathmandu is the nation's capital and largest city. Bidya Devi Bhandari became Nepal’s first woman President in 2015. Ms. Bhandari was elected twice in parliamentary elections in 1994 and 1999. Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli is currently serving as the Prime Minister of Nepal. He was the first elected prime minister under the newly adopted Constitution of Nepal.

India to give flash flood warning to Asian nations

- India has been designated as a nodal centre for preparing flash-flood forecasts by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- That means India will have to develop a customised model that can issue advance warning of floods in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand, according to Dr. Madhavan Rajeevan, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is an intergovernmental organization founded in 1873. WMO became the specialised agency of the United Nations for meteorology (weather and climate), operational hydrology and related geophysical sciences a year later. Its current Secretary-General is Petteri Taalas. The Organization is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

India becomes first South Asian country to get strategic trade authorisation status STA-1

- India is the only South Asian country to be on the list. Other Asian countries designated as Strategic Trade Authorisation-1 (STA-1) are Japan and South Korea.
- At the start of the first-ever Indo-Pacific Business Forum, Ross announced that the Trump administration has granted to India strategic trade authorisation status STA-1. Currently, 36 countries, mostly all NATO nations, have this status.
- The US administration’s decision to place India in the Strategic Trade Authorisation-1 list of countries, that eases export of high-tech items, acknowledges the security as well as economic relationship between the two largest democracies of the world, and boosts the defence partnership in a big way.

United States of America (USA) is a federal republic composed of 50 states and capital is Washington, D.C., Donald John Trump is the 45th and current President of the United States. He became the oldest and wealthiest person ever to assume the presidency, the first without prior military or government service, and the fifth to have won the election while losing the popular vote.

Imran Khan will take oath as Pakistani PM on August 14

- Imran Khan said that he will take oath as Prime Minister on August 14, as his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) announced that it has acquired enough seats in the lower house through coalition talks to form a majority government.
- Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) had emerged as the single largest party in the July 25 elections and had won 116 National Assembly seats out of the contested 270 parliamentary constituencies.

Mamnoon Hussain is the 12th and current President of Pakistan. Pakistan is a country in South Asia. It is the fifth-most populous country. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. Pakistani rupee is the currency of Pakistan.

ECONOMY AND FINANCE



Economy News

Niti Aayog, GNFC to use blockchain technology for subsidy payments

- **NITI Aayog and Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers & Chemicals Limited (GNFC) signed a statement of intent (SOI) to work together towards using the blockchain technology for fertiliser subsidy management.**
- **According to an official statement, the GNFC and the Aayog will work on implementing a proof-of-concept (PoC) application for using the technology in subsidy disbursements.**

The **National Institution for Transforming India**, also called **NITI Aayog**, was formed via a resolution of the **Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015**. **NITI Aayog** is the **premier policy ‘Think Tank’ of the Government of India**, providing both directional and policy inputs. The **current chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi** and the **current vice chairman is Dr. Rajiv Kumar** and the **current chief executive officer is Shri Amitabh Kant**.

22,000 rural markets to be linked to e-NAM portal

- **The Centre announced that 22,000 rural markets would be linked to the Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) by 2020 as part of its drive to double the income of farmers.**

The **e-NAM** is a **pan-India electronic trading portal**, a network of the **existing Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) mandis** to create a **unified national market for agricultural commodities**. The portal provides a **single window service for all APMC related information and services**.

Government of India celebrates July 1, as GST Day

- **Union government celebrates July 1, 2018, as 'GST Day' to mark the first anniversary of the new indirect tax regime at the Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. Goods and Services Tax (GST) was rolled out in the intervening night of June 30 and July 1, last year, in a ceremony held in the Central Hall of Parliament.**

The **GST tax** came into effect from **July 1, 2017** through the **implementation of One Hundred and First Amendment of the Constitution of India** by the Indian government. The **tax replaced existing multiple cascading taxes levied by the central and state governments**. The **GST has a four-tier structure for taxation of services, 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent**, in line with what has been done for goods. As per **Article 279A (1) of the amended Constitution**, the **GST Council has to be constituted by the President within 60 days of the commencement of Article 279A**. **GST Council is headed by Union Finance Minister**.

NSE, Nasdaq enter into technology pact

- The **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** and **Nasdaq** have signed an agreement wherein the global bourse will deliver a customised real-time clearing, risk management and settlement technology to the NSE.
- The exchanges also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to **explore business opportunities across listings, corporate and market services** and data and innovations in products, processes and technology.

The **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** is the leading stock exchange in India located in Mumbai and the fourth largest in the world by equity trading volume in 2015, according to World Federation of Exchanges (WFE). It began operations in 1994 and is ranked as the largest stock exchange in India in terms of total and average daily turnover for equity shares every year since 1995, based on annual reports of SEBI. NSE launched electronic screen-based trading in 1994, derivatives trading (in the form of index futures) and internet trading in 2000, which were each the first of its kind in India. Mr. Ashok Chawla is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of NSE and Mr. Vikram Limaye is the Managing Director and CEO of NSE.

World's biggest trading bloc a step closer after Tokyo meeting

- **Asian trade ministers** took another step toward creating what could be the **world's biggest trading bloc**, expressing hope that a deal could be signed by the end of this year.
- Ministers from the **16-nation Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership**, which includes **China, Japan and India but not the US**, met in Tokyo to try and thrash out remaining differences.

Rupee, Asia's worst performing currency this year

- **RBI's efforts to tighten the availability of rupees in the market** and halt a slide in the currency may squeeze profitability at the nation's lenders as it raises their funding costs, according to the local unit of Moody's Investors Service
- The rupee, Asia's worst-performing currency this year, touched a record low with rising oil prices threatening to stoke inflation and worsen government finances.

Sunil Mehta Panel on NPAs submits its report with recommendations to FM

- The **Sunil Mehta committee** which was formed with a view to tackle **Non-Performing Assets (NPAs)** and creating credit capacity submitted its report with recommendations to Finance Minister Piyush Goyal.
- The **Sunil Mehta panel** presented project 'Sashakt' and has recommended a five-pronged strategy to deal with stressed assets.

MCX plans currency derivatives

- The **Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX)**, the country's largest commodity bourse in terms of market share, plans to enter the currency derivatives segment.
- The exchange has been mulling an entry in the currency arena for a while now and the idea has even been discussed among the board of directors who are not averse to the idea.

Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX) is an independent commodity exchange based in India. It was established in 2003 and is based in Mumbai. MCX offers options trading in gold and futures trading in non-ferrous metals, bullion, energy, and a number of agricultural commodities (mentha oil, cardamom, crude palm oil, cotton and others).

CCI launches online guidance system for merger and acquisitions

- The **Competition Commission** launched an online guidance system on merger and acquisitions rules in order to simplify compliance requirements.

- The **Guidance System** has been named as “**Do It Yourself (DIY)**”: A notifiability check for mergers & acquisitions under the Competition Act, 2002”.
- This application envisages a staged process to guide the stakeholders in determining whether a merger or acquisition is notifiable to CCI.

The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** was established under the Competition Act, 2002 for the administration, implementation and enforcement of the Act, and was duly constituted in March 2009. **Shri Devender Kumar Sikri** is the current Chairperson of Competition Commission of India.

Tata Power Renewable commissions 100 MW solar capacity in Anthapuramu Solar Park

- **Tata Power** has its arm **Tata Power Renewable Energy Ltd (TPREL)** commissioned **100 MW (50 MW x 2)** solar capacity at Anthapuramu Solar Park, Andhra Pradesh.
- With this, the overall operating renewable capacity of the TPREL now stands at **2,215 MW** in India, a company statement said.

TS, NITI Aayog tie-up to boost AI

- The **Telangana government** and **NITI Aayog** have signed a statement of intent (SoI) on strengthening collaboration in the areas of **Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, IoT (Internet of Things)** and other emerging technologies.
- The SoI is to collaborate on devising implementation framework for solutions based on the emerging technologies; work to identify best practices and propagate solutions across the country; identify suitable financial support channels for funding pilots based on emerging technologies in Telangana; as well as establish centres of excellence.

KVIC launches In-house E-marketing system

- **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)** launched its first in-house single umbrella e-marketing system that can be accessed from anywhere in India for sale and purchase of its products.
- The earlier software was third-party software, with its headquarters in Bengaluru, on which the KVIC had no control in stock and accounts, despite paying hefty sum for it.

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a statutory body formed by the Government of India, under the Act of Parliament, 'Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956'. It is an apex organisation under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. Its head office is based in Mumbai.

IFC invests \$100 mn in M&M arm

- **World Bank Group member IFC** has invested **\$100 million** in **Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Ltd.** (Mahindra Finance).
- The investment in **India's largest tractor financier** will be through secured non-convertible debentures. Mechanised farming can cut costs by 25% and raise productivity by 20%, helping meet the Centre's target of doubling farmers' incomes by 2022.

First meeting of e-Commerce Task Force held

- **Commerce Secretary, Rita Teotia**, chaired the first meeting of the Task Force on e-commerce in New Delhi.

Bengaluru, Delhi top in startup funding

- **New Delhi** and **Bengaluru** had among the highest number of startup investment rounds greater than **\$100 million** since 2014. Bengaluru had 21 and New Delhi 18, according to a report by US venture capital and startup database CB Insights.

- The report shows that each of the Indian cities had about the same number as London (19), and significantly higher numbers than Boston (13) and Tel Aviv (2).
- Across the world, Silicon Valley (158), Beijing (128), Shanghai (58) and New York (40) dominated these mega-rounds.

India Climbs To 57th Position in Global Innovation Index Rankings

- India was ranked 57th in the latest Global Innovation Index (GII) rankings released in New York.
- India was ranked 60th in the year 2017 which shows that it has been constantly climbing up its GI rankings since 2015.
- According to reports, India has maintained its top place in the central and South Asia region and has consistently moved up the global ranking from 81st in 2015 to 57th in the year 2018.

On the global front, Switzerland maintained its number one position in the Global Innovation Index rankings. Other countries that fell in the top 10 list were Netherlands, Sweden, the UK, the US, Finland, Denmark, and Germany. GI is a leading benchmarking tool for business executives, policymakers and others seeking insight into the state of innovation around the world.

India becomes world's sixth largest economy in World Bank ranking

- India has become the world's sixth-biggest economy, pushing France into seventh place, according to updated World Bank figures for 2017.
- India's gross domestic product (GDP) amounted to \$2.597 trillion at the end of last year, against \$2.582 trillion for France.

The US is the world's top economy, followed by China, Japan and Germany. At the end of 2017, Britain was still the world's fifth-biggest economy with a GDP of \$2.622 trillion.

India becomes 69th shareholder of European Bank for Reconstruction & Development

- India has become the 69th shareholder of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, paving the way for more joint investment with Indian companies across the bank's regions of operation.
- London-headquartered EBRD is a multilateral development bank set up in 1991 after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The EBRD is owned by 69 countries and two EU institutions, 69th being India recently in July 2018. Sir Suma Chakrabarti is the current President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

Connaught Place is world's 9th most expensive office location: CBRE

- New Delhi's Connaught Place has moved one position higher to become ninth most expensive office location in the world with an annual rent of \$153 per sq ft, according to property consultant CBRE.
- Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) slipped to 26th position with an annual prime rent of \$96.51 per sq ft from 16th rank.
- The central business district (CBD) of Nariman Point also moved down to 37th position commanding an annual prime rent of \$72.80 per sq ft from 30th rank last year. BKC and Nariman Point were at 16th and 30th positions, respectively, last year.

According to the report, Hong Kong (Central) is at the first position with an annual rent of \$ 306.57 per sq ft, followed by London (West End), Beijing (Finance Street) in China, Hong Kong (Kowloon) and Beijing (CBD) in China. New York (Midtown- Manhattan) ranked sixth with an annual rent of \$ 183.78 per sq ft, while New York (Midtown-South Manhattan) is at 7th position commanding rent of \$ 171.56 per sq ft. In the top 10 list, Tokyo (Marunouchi/Otemachi), Japan is at the eighth position and London (City), UK, is at the 10th rank.

Two Indian-origin women on Forbes' list of America's 60 richest self-made women

- Indian-origin technology executives Jayshree Ullal and Neerja Sethi have made it to the Forbes' list of America's 60 richest self-made women, with 21-year-old reality-TV star and entrepreneur Kylie Jenner the youngest to be featured in the power list.
- Ullal is ranked 18th in the list of 60 self-made women, having a net worth of 1.3 billion dollars while Sethi is ranked 21st with a net worth of a billion dollars.

Born in London and raised in India, Ullal has been president and CEO of Arista Networks, a computer networking firm, since 2008. Sethi is the vice president of IT consulting and outsourcing company Syntel, a company she cofounded with her husband Bharat Desai in 1980 in their apartment in Troy, Michigan. The youngest is Jenner, who turns 21 in August, who is also on the list for the first time, Jenner has leveraged her massive social media following (110 million followers on Instagram) to build a USD 900 million cosmetics fortune in less than three years.

Mukesh Ambani topples Alibaba Group founder Jack Ma as Asia's richest person

- Mukesh Ambani overtook Alibaba Group founder Jack Ma to become Asia's richest person as he positions Reliance Industries Ltd. to disrupt the e-commerce space in India.
- The chairman of India's refining-to-telecoms conglomerate, Ambani was estimated to be worth \$44.3 billion with Reliance Industries Ltd. rising 1.6 per cent to a record 1,099.8 rupees, according to Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
- Ambani, best known for executing large-scale projects, spearheaded construction of the world's largest refining complex in Jamnagar, owns the most-widespread mobile data network globally and claims to have India's biggest as well as most-profitable retail firm.

India to grow over 7%, China to moderate

- India's economic growth is poised to rise to 7.4% in 2018 and 7.5% in 2019 as the economy has been able to navigate through growth obstacles due to demonetisation and impact of GST rollout, a report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) showed.
- China's GDP growth is projected to moderate to 6.7% in 2018 and to 6.4% in 2019, according to the report

Ministry of Corporate Affairs constitutes 10 Member Committee to review Companies Act 2013

- Ministry of Corporate Affairs has constituted a 10 Member Committee to review the Companies Act 2013. According to an official release, certain offences of the act may require to be decriminalised. The release said that this will also allow the trial courts to pay more attention on offences of serious nature. The committee headed by the Corporate Affairs Secretary is also expected to take necessary steps in formulation of draft changes in the law.
- The Committee is headed by the Secretary of Ministry of Corporate Affairs, for review of the penal provisions in the Companies Act, 2013 may be setup to examine 'de-criminalisation' of certain offences.

Companies Act 2013 is an Act of the Parliament of India on Indian company law which regulates incorporation of a company, responsibilities of a company, directors, dissolution of a company. The Act came into force on 12 September 2013 with few changes like earlier private companies maximum number of member was 50 and now it will be 200.

MCA has constituted a 10-Member Committee to review the offences under the Companies Act, 2013

- The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has constituted a 10 Member Committee, headed by the Secretary of Ministry of Corporate Affairs, for review of the penal provisions in the Companies Act, 2013 may be setup to examine 'de-criminalisation' of certain offences.
- The MCA seeks to review offences under the Companies Act, 2013 as some of the offences may be required to be decriminalised and handled in an in-house mechanism, where a penalty could be levied in instances of default.

The Companies Act 2013 is an Act of the Parliament of India on Indian company law which regulates incorporation of a company, responsibilities of a company, directors, dissolution of a company. The Act has replaced The Companies Act, 1956. The Act came into force on 12 September 2013 with few changes like earlier private companies maximum number of member was 50 and now it will be 200.

A K Capital Services leads race to manage India's first debt ETF

- Debt advisory services firm A. K. Capital Services is likely to manage India's first debt exchange traded fund (ETF) proposed to be set up for PSUs and public sector banks to raise long terms funds from the market.
- A K Capital Services is a comprehensive financial conglomerate aimed at providing the most competent solutions to its clients.
- Proficient at the Fixed Income Market Segment of the Indian Capital Market, the group offers a wide spectrum of services in Debt Capital Market, Broking & Distribution, Advisory, Retirement Trust Solutions, Project Financing, Venture Capital, Wealth Management and more.

A K Capital Services is the flagship company of the A K Group. Incorporated in 1993, A K Capital Services is one of the country's leading Sebi registered category-I merchant bankers.

India to remain fastest growing major economy in 2019: IMF

- The International Monetary Fund said that India remains a key driver of global growth. However, the World Economic Outlook forecast cut India's GDP outlook one-tenth for this year to 7.3 per cent and three-tenths for next year to 7.5 per cent.
- The IMF said, India will still retain its top spot in the global growth league.
- It said India's growth rate is expected to rise from 6.7 per cent in 2017 to 7.3 per cent in 2018 and 7.5 per cent in 2019, as drags from the currency exchange initiative and the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax fade.

The IMF, also known as the Fund, was conceived at a UN conference in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, United States, in July 1944. The IMF's primary purpose is to ensure the stability of the international monetary system—the system of exchange rates and international payments that enables countries (and their citizens) to transact with each other. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., of ". At present, 189 countries are the member countries in IMF. The current Managing Director (MD) and Chairman of the International Monetary Fund is noted French lawyer and former politician, Christine Lagarde, who has held the post since 5 July 2011.

IFFCO rolls out portal for farmers

- Fertiliser major IFFCO has partnered with Singapore-based technology firm iMandi to start an e-commerce platform for farmers, with an investment of about Rs.80 crore.
- An e-commerce app, 'IFFCO iMandi', has been introduced and would cater to 5.5 crore farmers already associated with the cooperative. A web portal has also been developed.

Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited, also known as **IFFCO** is a **Multi-state cooperative society** engaged in the **business of manufacturing and marketing of fertilisers** started in **1967** with **57 member cooperatives** in **New Delhi, India**.

T-Hub to host India's first Defence incubator

- One of the **country's first Defence incubators** will come up in **Hyderabad**, which is **India's missile development centre** and fast emerging the hub for aerospace industries.
- The incubator will be housed at **T-Hub**, which has already got recognition as one of the **country's major centres for nurturing start-ups and creative ideas**.
- The **Telangana State government** proposes to accommodate the **Defence incubator** in the upcoming **Phase-2** of the T-Hub.

Telangana is the newly formed **29th state of India** with **Hyderabad** as its permanent capital in **2014**. **Kalvakuntla Chandrashekhara Rao** is the first and the current **Chief Minister of Telangana**. **E. S. L. Narasimhan** is the **Governor of Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana**.

From April next year, national database for gun licence holders

- **India** will have a **national database for all licenced gun holders** from **April next year**.
- The Home Ministry said in a notification that the **names of all licenced gun holders across the country** will be **included in the national database** and they are also to be **given a unique identification number (UIN)** from the next financial year.
- "Every licensing and renewing authority will have to enter the data in the **National Database of Arms Licenses system**, which will generate a unique identification number (UIN), and w.e.t. April 1, 2019, any arms licence without UIN shall be considered invalid,".

CIC launches bilingual mobile app for complaints, appeals

- The **Central Information Commission (CIC)** has **launched an updated version of its mobile application in Hindi**, according to a statement issued by the **Personnel Ministry**.
- **RTI applicants** can submit their **second appeal or complaint** and link papers in both the languages i.e. in **Hindi and English**, through this app

The **Central Information Commission** has been constituted with effect from **12-10-2005** under the **Right to Information Act, 2005**. The jurisdiction of the Commission extends over all **Central Public Authorities**. The Commission includes **1 Chief Information Commissioner (CIC)** and not more than **10 Information Commissioners (IC)** who are appointed by the **President of India**. The first **Chief Information Commissioner of India** was **Wajahat Habibullah**. The present **Chief Information Commissioner of India** is **Radha Krishna Mathur**.

Shram Suvidha Portal

- **Shram Suvidha Portal**, launched by the **Government** caters to **four major Organisations** under the **Ministry of Labour & Employment**, namely **Office of Chief Labour Commissioner (Central), Directorate General of Mines Safety, Employees' Provident Fund Organization and Employees' State Insurance Corporation**.

Shram Suvidha is a **Web Portal** to provide a **single platform for all labour compliances**. **India** has more than **40 labour laws** regulated by the **Ministry of Labour and Employment**, the **Government of India** and **State Government**.

BSE Dalal Street building gets trademark

- Stock exchange major BSE has secured a "trademark" for its iconic building -- Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers -- located on Dalal Street.
- According to BSE, the Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers joins the elite club of distinguished structures around the world that have secured trademark rights.

Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) is an Indian stock exchange located at Dalal Street, Mumbai. It was established in 1875. BSE is Asia's first stock exchange. BSE claims to be the world's fastest stock exchange, with a median trade speed of 6 microseconds.

Vehicle tracking systems, FASTags to be made mandatory for CVs obtaining national permit

- Vehicle tracking systems and FASTags for electronic toll collection will be made mandatory for all commercial vehicles obtaining national permit.
- The proposed amendment also provides that driving licence and pollution control certificates can be carried in physical or digital form besides doing away with the fitness certification requirement at the time of registration for new transport vehicles.

India fastest growing economy in Asia; on track to meet 2018 target

- Led by India, South Asia will continue to be the fastest growing economic area despite new trade tensions in Asia and Pacific region, Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in a new report.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank established on 19 December 1966, which is headquartered in the Ortigas Center located in the city of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines. Takehiko Nakao is the current and ninth president of the Asian Development Bank.

CPPIB to step up India play, explore consumer space

- Canada's biggest public pension scheme sees India as its main focus for investment in Asia as the country pours money into infrastructure development.
- Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB), which manages Canada's national pension fund, has invested nearly C\$7 billion (\$5.30 billion) in India since entering the market a decade ago and is looking for opportunities to invest in Indian infrastructure, power and real estate projects.

Railways to have 100 pc bio-toilets by 2019

- Indian Railways will have 100 per cent bio toilets by next year that will make tracks safe and eliminate defecation on the rail lines, Railway Minister Piyush Goyal.
- He said that bio toilets was one of the most successful stories of the Railways as 60 per cent of the coaches have already been fitted with it so far.

A BioToilet is a next generation eco-friendly waste management solution, which reduces solid human waste to biogas and pure water, with the help of a bacterial inoculum.

GST council approves Simplified GST Return

- The GST Council in its 28th meeting held in New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Shri Piyush Goyal, Union Minister for Railways, Coal, Finance & Corporate Affairs has approved the new return formats and associated changes in law.

- The GST Council **approved quarterly filing of return for the small taxpayers having turnover below Rs. 5 Cr as an optional facility**. Quarterly return shall be similar to main return with monthly payment facility but for two kinds of registered persons – **small traders making only B2C supply or making B2B + B2C supply**.
- **93% of the taxpayers have a turnover of less than Rs 5 Cr** and these taxpayers would benefit substantially from the simplification measures proposed improving their ease of doing business.

The GST tax came into effect from July 1, 2017 through the **implementation of One Hundred and First Amendment of the Constitution of India** by the Indian government. The tax replaced existing multiple cascading taxes levied by the central and state governments. The GST has a four-tier structure for taxation of services, 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent, in line with what has been done for goods. As per Article 279A (1) of the amended Constitution, the GST Council has to be constituted by the President within 60 days of the commencement of Article 279A. GST Council is headed by Union Finance Minister.

Government slashes minimum annual deposit requirement under SSY

- Union Government has **reduced the minimum annual deposit requirement for accounts under Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana to Rs. 250 from Rs. 1,000 earlier**. The move will enable more people to take advantage of the girl child savings scheme.
- The account can be opened by the natural or legal guardian in the name of the girl from her birth till she turns 10. A depositor may open and operate **only one account in the name of the girl child** under these rules.
- It is **currently 8.1 per cent** and provides income-tax benefit under section 80 C of the Income Tax Act, 1961. Even the **returns are tax free in the scheme**.

Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY) is a small deposit scheme for the girl child launched in January 2015 as a part of the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' campaign. The **minimum deposit that needs to be made every year is now Rs 250, while the maximum is Rs 1.50 lakh**. There is **no limit on the number of deposits either in a month or a financial year**. The account will remain operative for 21 years from the date of its opening or till the marriage of the girl after she turns 18. To meet the requirement of her higher education expenses, partial withdrawal of 50 per cent of the balance is allowed after she turns 18.

India, 9 other Asian economies to pull ahead of US in terms of GDP by 2030

- The **10 major economies of Asia, including India**, are expected to see **robust growth and amount to over \$28 trillion in real GDP terms on aggregate, more than the U.S. by 2030**, says a DBS report.
- The Asia-10 includes **China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand**. Real GDP (2010 constant dollars) terms for the U.S. will amount to \$22.33 trillion by 2030.
- By 2030, Asia-10 economies will grow so robustly that they will, on aggregate, **amount to over USD 28.35 trillion in real GDP (2010 constant dollars) terms**, while for the **United States will amount to USD 22.33 trillion**.

Kerala tops in governance, Tamil Nadu second, says report

- **Kerala stands as the best-governed state in the country followed by Tamil Nadu**, according to the **Public Affairs Index 2018** released by Bengaluru-based think-tank Public Affairs Centre (PAC).
- While **Telangana, Karnataka and Gujarat are ranked third, fourth and fifth, respectively, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar ranked the lowest on the index**, indicating higher social and economic inequalities in the states.
- **“Kerala has topped the Public Affairs Index (PAI) for 2018 as the best-governed state for the third consecutive year since 2016 among large states”**.

- Among smaller states (with population less than two crore), Himachal Pradesh topped the list, followed by Goa, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura which figured among the top five states with good governance. Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya were ranked at the bottom of the index among small states.

Public Affairs Index released annually since 2016, the index examines governance performance in the states through a data-based framework, ranking them on social and economic development they are able to provide. Founded in 1994 by renowned economist and scholar, late Samuel Paul, the think-tank works to mobilise a demand for better governance in the country.

Iran becomes India's second biggest oil supplier, ahead of Saudi Arabia

- Iran was the second-biggest oil supplier to Indian state refiners between April and June, replacing Saudi Arabia as companies took advantage of steeper discounts offered by Tehran.
- India, Iran's top oil client after China, shipped in 5.67 million tonnes or about 457,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil from the country in the first three months of this fiscal year.

India slips 3 ranks in AT Kearney's FDI Confidence Index, out of top 10

- India in 2018 has fallen out of the top 10 destinations for FDI in terms of its attractiveness, according to an AT Kearney report, which says this could be due to teething troubles in the implementation of the goods and services tax and the government's demonetisation decision in 2016.
- India ranks 11 in the 2018 AT Kearney FDI Confidence Index, down from 8 in 2017 and 9 in 2016.

The United States (US) topped the index, followed by Canada at 2nd and Germany at the 3rd place. China (5), India (11), and Singapore (12) all rank lower this year, while Australia rises to 8th and New Zealand jumps to the 16th spot in only its second year on the Index. Japan and South Korea hold steady at 6th and 18th, respectively. It said that India fell out of the top 10 for the first time since 2015.

Panel to review third party motor cover costs

- Insurance regulator IRDAI has constituted a 16-member committee to examine motor third party insurance pricing aspects and make recommendations on the premium rates for 2019-20. This is for the first time the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India has formed such a committee, an official familiar with the development.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is an autonomous, statutory body tasked with regulating and promoting the insurance and re-insurance industries in India. It was constituted by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999 an Act of Parliament passed by the Government of India. The agency's headquarters are in Hyderabad, Telangana, where it moved from Delhi in 2001. IRDAI is a 10-member body including the chairman, five full-time and four part-time members appointed by the government of India.

Karnataka the top State in renewable energy

- With 27% of its power generation coming from renewable energy, Karnataka has emerged the leading State for renewable energy in India this year, pipping Tamil Nadu. The State reached 12.3 gigawatts (GW) of installed capacity as of March 2018, according to a new report by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA).
- Currently, state has 5 GW of solar capacity and 4.7 GW of wind capacity. The remainder of its renewable portfolio (2.6 GW) includes small hydro, biomass, plus heat and power cogeneration

Government panel suggests common database for economic indicators

- A panel of experts has suggested one single database for inflation, industrial output and employment to give credibility to India's growth numbers and improve the consistency of key statistics.
- A committee on analytics under IIT, Mumbai professor NL Sarda has told the government to set up a National Integrated Data System (NIDS), citing lack of metadata or additional contextual information as a major deficiency for all indicators.
- The proposed NIDS will create an integrated database system linking separate datasets with a common standard so that data can be easily correlated and a standard protocol for data exchange and data access be created.

Venezuela's Inflation to Reach 1 Million Percent, IMF Forecasts

- Venezuela's inflation will skyrocket to 1 million percent by the end of the year as the government continues to print money to cover a growing budget hole, the International Monetary Fund predicted.
- The crisis is comparable to that of Germany in 1923 or Zimbabwe in the late 2000s, said Alejandro Werner, head of the IMF's Western Hemisphere department. He forecast the economy to shrink 18 percent in 2018 -- the third consecutive year of double-digit contractions -- as oil production falls significantly.
- Venezuela has been suffering a dramatic economic collapse since crude prices nosedived nearly four years ago and authorities have refused to enact economic adjustments.

Nicolas Maduro has been the President of Venezuela since assuming office in 2013. Venezuela Capital is Caracas and Currency is Venezuelan bolivar.

Banks in News

Infibeam gets nod to set up payments bank

- E-commerce firm Infibeam has received shareholders' approval to expand business in IT segment, set up a payments bank and raise Rs. 2,000 crore.
- Shareholders of the company have also approved change in its name from Infibeam Incorporation Limited to "Infibeam Avenues Limited," according to a regulatory filing.

Payments banks are a new model of banks conceptualised by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). These banks can accept a restricted deposit, which is currently limited to Rs.1 lakh per customer and may be increased further. These banks cannot issue loans and credit cards. Both current account and savings accounts can be operated by such banks. Payments banks can issue services like ATM cards, debit cards, net-banking and mobile-banking. Bharti Airtel set up India's first live payments bank.

NABARD sanctions over Rs 735 cr for Bengal for rural infrastructure projects

- NABARD has sanctioned Rs 735.53 crore in the first quarter of the current fiscal under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) for West Bengal for facilitating the execution of 86 projects.
- According to the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), the entire loan amount was provided to the state at a concessional rate.

NABARD came into existence on 12 July 1982 by transferring the agricultural credit functions of RBI and refinance functions of the then Agricultural Refinance and Development Corporation (ARDC). NABARD is headquartered at Mumbai. The Bank has been entrusted with "matters concerning policy, planning and operations in the field of credit for agriculture and other economic activities in rural areas in India".

Initial RBI nod for Bank of China

- **Bank of China** — one of the four biggest state-run Chinese lenders — has received in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to open branches in India.
- According to the sources, the approval marks only the first step for a foreign bank seeking to start business in India.

Bank of China is one of the four biggest state-owned commercial banks in China. It was founded in 1912 by the Republican government to replace the Daqing Bank. It is the oldest bank in mainland China still in existence. Its headquarters are in Xicheng District, Beijing.

Project Sashakt: Banks give shape to inter-creditor pact for bad assets

- Banks have finalised an inter-creditor agreement and are working on details of an asset management company as part of a five-pronged mechanism they have identified to resolve the issue of mounting non-performing assets (NPAs) under Project Sashakt.
- Under Project Sashakt, financial institutions will enter into an inter-creditor agreement to authorise the lead bank to implement a resolution plan in 180 days.

Cabinet nod for extension of RRB recapitalisation scheme

- To ensure financial stability of Regional Rural Banks, the Cabinet approved extension of recapitalisation scheme for RRBs for next three years up to 2019-20 to help them maintain their minimum capital adequacy ratio.
- The scheme started in 2010-11 and was extended twice in 2012-13 and 2015-16. The last extension was up to March, 2017.

25 countries in global banks' 'high risk' list

- China, UAE, Cyprus and significantly, Mauritius, along with 21 other countries have been tagged as “high-risk jurisdictions” by global banks acting as custodians for foreign funds.
- Sebi-registered foreign portfolio funds invest in India through 56 countries. Of these, 25 are now considered ‘high risk’.

HDFC Bank most valuable bank in the emerging market outside China

- HDFC Bank has gone past Russia's Sberbank to become the most valuable bank in the emerging market outside China. HDFC Bank's current market capitalisation is \$78.4 billion against Sberbank's \$74.4 billion.
- There are four lenders from India that now rank among the world's 500 most valuable companies. HDFC Bank is followed by its housing finance cousin Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC), Kotak Mahindra Bank and State Bank of India.

HDFC Bank Limited is an Indian banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. HDFC Bank is India's largest private sector lender by assets. In 1994 HDFC Bank was incorporated, with its registered office in Mumbai, India. Aditya Puri is the Managing Director of HDFC Bank.

SBI Card launches artificial intelligence powered virtual electronic live assistant

- SBI Card, the country's second largest credit card issuer announced the launch of 'ELA' (Electronic Live Assistant), a virtual assistant for customer support and services.
- Driven by Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, ELA is designed to enhance customer experience by providing relevant and instant responses to customer queries.

On April 1, 2017, the State Bank of India, which was India's largest bank, merged with five of its associate banks (State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur, State Bank of Hyderabad, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Patiala and State Bank of Travancore), and with the Bharatiya Mahila Bank. Rajnish Kumar is the current chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI). Imperial Bank of India was the oldest and the largest commercial bank of the Indian subcontinent, and was subsequently transformed into State Bank of India in 1955.

Asian Development Bank approves 503-million US Dollar project of lining of Son canal in Bihar

- Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved 503-million US Dollar lining project of the Son canal in Shahabad-Bhojpur region of Bihar which would benefit the agriculture sector immensely in the region.
- The ministry statement said the estimated cost of the project is 503 million dollars out of which 352 million dollars is being provided by ADB.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank established on 19 December 1966, which is headquartered in the Ortigas Center located in the city of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines. Takehiko Nakao is the current and ninth president of the Asian Development Bank.

RBI cancels licence of Alwar Urban Co-operative Bank

- RBI has cancelled the licence of Alwar Urban Co-operative Bank in Alwar, Rajasthan as it is not in a position to pay its depositors in full as and when their claims accrue, among other reasons.
- The present financial position of the bank leaves no scope for its revival, the RBI said, adding that the cancellation of the licence is effective from the close of business on July 5. As the licence stands cancelled, the bank has been prohibited from conducting the business of banking, which includes acceptance of deposits and repayment of deposits with immediate effect.

The term Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs), though not formally defined, refers to primary cooperative banks located in urban and semi-urban areas. These banks, till 1996, were allowed to lend money only for non-agricultural purposes. The first urban cooperative credit society was registered in Canjeevaram (Kanjivaram) in the erstwhile Madras province in October, 1904.

HDFC Group's market cap crosses Rs10 trillion, Tata Group at Rs 11 trillion

- Deepak Parekh-led financial services conglomerate HDFC Group saw the market capitalisation of its listed firms cross the Rs 10 trillion mark, making it only the second Indian business house after the Tata group to achieve this feat.
- HDFC Group has four listed companies—Housing Finance Development Corp. Ltd, HDFC Bank Ltd, life insurance firm HDFC Standard Life Ltd and Gruh Finance Ltd. The Tata Group has about 30 firms listed on the stock exchange.

HDFC Bank Limited is an Indian banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. HDFC Bank is India's largest private sector lender by assets. In 1994 HDFC Bank was incorporated, with its registered office in Mumbai, India. Aditya Puri is the Managing Director of HDFC Bank.

YES Bank to unveil 7th edition of 'Transformation Series challenge'

- YES Bank, through partnerships with tech giants such as Microsoft, Cisco, IBM and Adobe, is looking to address India's urban development concerns through that route.
- The bank has joined hands with 12 global leaders as it prepares to announce the launch of the seventh edition of 'Transformation Series'.

Yes Bank is India's fourth largest private sector bank, founded by Rana Kapoor and Ashok Kapur in 2004. Yes Bank is the only Greenfield Bank licence awarded by the RBI in the last one decade.

Reserve Bank makes it compulsory to incorporate purchaser's name on the face of payment instrumentalities to prevent money laundering

- In order to address the concerns arising out of the anonymity and **to prevent money laundering**, the **Reserve Bank has now made it compulsory to incorporate the purchaser's name on the face of demand draft, pay order, banker's cheques and other instruments.**

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is India's central banking institution, which controls the monetary policy of the Indian rupee. It commenced its operations on 1 April 1935 in accordance with the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. RBI was nationalised on 1 January 1949.

An All-Women Branch Inaugurated At Jammu And Kashmir Bank

- As a **step towards women empowerment**, the state's first all-women branch of Jammu and Kashmir Bank was inaugurated.
- **First Lady Usha Vohra e-inaugurated the first 'All-Women Branch of Jammu and Kashmir Bank'** at a function organised at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), where the chairman, JK Bank, Parvez Ahmad, was also present.

The 13 women staffers of the newly inaugurated branch were presented badges of distinction and responsibility by the First Lady. Ms Vohra also launched special services and products designed exclusively for women clients of the bank, which included Pink Gold Saving Scheme, Pink Platinum Saving Scheme, Special Loan Facility for Women Entrepreneurs, Pink Gold Debit Card and Pink Platinum Credit Card.

Nabard award for Repco Micro Finance

- **Repco Micro Finance Ltd, a non-banking finance company promoted by Repco Bank, received Nabard 2018 award for its service to self-help group (SHG) linkage in Tamil Nadu for the fiscal year 2017-18.**
- Since its inception, the NBFC has disbursed loans amounting to Rs 2,500 crore to over 10 lakh beneficiaries through 50,000 SHGs.

NABARD came into existence on 12 July 1982 by transferring the agricultural credit functions of RBI and refinance functions of the then Agricultural Refinance and Development Corporation (ARDC). NABARD is headquartered at Mumbai. The Bank has been entrusted with "matters concerning policy, planning and operations in the field of credit for agriculture and other economic activities in rural areas in India".

RBI to issue new lavender colour smaller Rs. 100 note

- The **Reserve Bank of India will issue new Rs. 100 notes**, which would be **smaller in size than the present ones.**
- "The new denomination has motif of Rani ki Vav on the reverse, depicting the country's cultural heritage". **Rani ki Vav is a UNESCO's World Heritage Site located in Gujarat.**

The Government of India has the sole right to mint coins. Coins are minted at the four India Government Mints at Mumbai, Alipore (Kolkata), Saifabad (Hyderabad), Cherlapally (Hyderabad) and Noida (UP). All the coins are issued by RBI except one rupee and one rupee note.

Allahabad Bank to close lone foreign branch in Hong Kong

- **State-owned Allahabad Bank said it proposes to close its only foreign branch in Hong Kong as part of rationalisation of its overseas operations.**

Allahabad Bank is a nationalised bank with its headquarters in Kolkata, India. It is the oldest joint stock bank in India. On 24 April 2014, the bank entered into its 150th year of establishment. It was founded in Allahabad in 1865.

NABARD launches South East Asia's first ever Centre for Climate Change in Lucknow

- NABARD launched the Centre for Climate Change the first of its kind in South East Asia for accelerating concerted climate action by various stakeholders in government, private, financial and non-government actors in Lucknow.

The Centre would help NABARD in enhancing its capacity building efforts manifold. Besides, the new institution would also extend professional support to stakeholders for designing climate related projects and take up collaborative studies and action research projects in area of climate change. It would also support capacity building and project preparation effort in developing countries in the region as also in Africa.

Federal Bank received RBI nod to open offices in Bahrain, Kuwait and Singapore

- South-based private sector lender Federal Bank has received the Reserve Bank nod to open offices in Bahrain, Kuwait and Singapore, but is awaiting local clearances before it starts operations.
- The Kochi-headquartered bank, which leads diaspora remittances, already has representative offices in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. In January 2008, Federal Bank opened its first overseas representative office in Abu Dhabi.

The Federal Bank Limited is a major private sector commercial bank headquartered at Aluva, Kochi, and Kerala. Chief executive officer and managing director of Federal Bank is Shyam Srinivasan. The Bank was among the first banks in India to computerize all its branches. The history of Federal Bank dates back to the pre-independence era. The Bank was incorporated on April 23, 1931 as the Travancore Federal Bank Limited, Nedumpuram under the Travancore Companies Regulation, 1916 by late K.P. Hormis.

Banks to cease cryptocurrency transactions from July 10 after RBI directive

- Commercial banks in the country will no longer be able to transact in cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin in view of a Reserve Bank of India (RBI) directive in April.
- In a bid to protect consumers and curb money laundering and other financial irregularities, the RBI had, on April 5, barred all its regulated entities, including banks, from dealing in virtual currencies like bitcoins, following its earlier multiple warnings on their risks.

SBI issues 980 electoral bonds worth Rs 438 crore; political parties redeem Rs 427 crore

- State Bank of India issued a total of 980 electoral bonds worth Rs 438.30 crore in the first three phases of the sale of such bonds, out of which Rs 427.30 crore worth of bonds have been redeemed by the political parties in the country.
- SBI is the only authorised bank to issue and encash these bonds under the Electoral Bond Scheme, 2018 which kicked in from January 2, 2018. These bonds have a life of 15 days from the date of issue and no payment is made to any payee political party depositing them after expiry of the validity period.

An electoral bond is designed to be a bearer instrument like a Promissory Note — in effect, it will be similar to a bank note that is payable to the bearer on demand and free of interest. It can be purchased by any citizen of India or a body incorporated in India. Electoral Bond will be valid for 15 days from the date of issue and bonds will be issued in multiples of Rs.1, 000, Rs.10, 000, Rs.1 lakh, Rs.10 lakh and Rs.1 crore and are available at specified branches of State Bank of India.

SoftBank partners Paytm to launch mobile payments service 'PayPay' in Japan

- **SoftBank Group Corp** will launch a digital payments service in Japan, and has partnered Paytm for the service.
- The service PayPay will be launched by SoftBank's joint venture PayPay Corporation (with Yahoo Japan) in fall this year.
- "PayPay Corporation will team up with **India's largest digital payments company Paytm**, a SoftBank Vision Fund portfolio company, to utilise Paytm's technology and expertise in mobile payments".

Paytm is an **Indian e-payments and e-commerce brand** based in **Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India**. It was launched in **August 2010**. **Vijay Shekhar Sharma** is the founder of mobile payments company, **Paytm**. **Sharma** is **India's youngest billionaire**.

Renu Satti quits as Paytm Payments Bank CEO

- **Paytm Payments Bank CEO Renu Satti** has **resigned from the role** and will now head Paytm's new retail initiative. Paytm will look for a replacement for Satti, who had taken over the CEO role last year.
- "**Renu Satti will be leading the charge as COO of this new (retail) initiative...**She has already resigned from Paytm Payments Bank CEO position and the Bank will soon be recruiting a new CEO.

Surendra Rosha named HSBC India CEO

- The **Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC)** announced the **appointment of Surendra Rosha** as **Chief Executive Officer for HSBC India**, subject to regulatory approvals.
- "**Rosha succeeds Jayant Rikhye**, who is taking a leave of absence for medical reasons.
- **Rosha, who is currently HSBC's Head of Financial Institutions Group (FIG) for Asia-Pacific** has 27 years of experience in financial services sector. He began his career in **financial services** when he joined **HSBC's India operations in 1991**.

HSBC's origins in India date back to **1853** when the **Mercantile Bank of India** was established in **Mumbai**. The **Mercantile Bank of India, London and China** was founded in **Bombay (now Mumbai)**. The **Mercantile Bank** was bought in **1959** by **The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited**. Founded in **1865** to serve the needs of the **merchants of the China coast** and finance the growing trade between **China, Europe and the US**. **HSBC in India** has been active in the development of the Indian banking industry - **even giving India its first ATM in 1987**.

Firms in News

RIL becomes India's largest tax payer in the private sector

- Reliance Industries is the India's largest payer of Goods and Services Tax (GST), Excise and Customs Duty, and Income Tax in the private sector.
- Reliance has become the first Indian company to record PBDIT (Profit Before Depreciation Interest and Taxes) of over \$10 billion.

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) is an Indian conglomerate holding company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. On 18 October 2007, Reliance Industries became the first Indian company to breach \$100 billion market capitalization. It is also the highest income tax payer in the private sector in India. The company is ranked 203th on the Fortune Global 500 list of the world's biggest corporations as of 2017. Dhirubhai Ambani founded Reliance Industries in Bombay with his cousin.

Nasscom opens centre for data science, AI in Bengaluru

- Indian IT industry apex body Nasscom opened a Centre of Excellence for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Bengaluru.
- The centre was set up in collaboration with the Karnataka government with an aim to nurture innovation in emerging disruptive technologies such as AI and to leverage the power of data science.

NASSCOM, a not-for-profit industry association, is the apex body for the 154 billion dollar IT BPM industry in India, an industry that has made a phenomenal contribution to India's GDP, exports, employment, infrastructure and global visibility. It was established in 1988. Debjani Ghosh was the first woman to head tech body in 30 years.

Mark Zuckerberg, worth \$81.6 bn, third richest in world after Bezos, Gates

- Facebook Inc. co-founder Mark Zuckerberg has overtaken Warren Buffett as the world's third-richest person, further solidifying technology as the most robust creator of wealth.
- Zuckerberg, who trails only Amazon.com Inc. founder Jeff Bezos and Microsoft Corp. co-founder Bill Gates, eclipsed Buffett as Facebook shares climbed 2.4 per cent, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
- It's the first time that the three wealthiest people on the ranking made their fortunes from technology. Zuckerberg, 34, is now worth \$81.6 billion, about \$373 million more than Buffett, chairman and chief executive officer of Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

Facebook is an American online social media and social networking service company based in Menlo Park, California. Its website was launched on February 4, 2004, by Mark Zuckerberg along with Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes.

Ericsson unveils India's first 5G innovation lab at IIT-Delhi

- In a bid to stimulate the 5G ecosystem in India, Swedish telecommunications company Ericsson formally launched the country's first "Centre of Excellence (CoE) and Innovation Lab" for 5G at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi.
- The 5G innovation lab is an open platform and aims to help the industry and the academia to leverage the 5G technology to develop new 5G-based apps and business models.

RS Sharma is the current Chairman of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and V Ramgopal Rao, Director, IIT Delhi.

NRL becomes 1st oil PSU to introduce online legal compliance

- Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL) in Assam has become the first oil public sector undertaking (PSU) to adopt an online legal compliance system by introducing 'Legatrix'.
- 'Legatrix' is a onestop solution for effectively managing the organisations legal and regulatory compliances through monitoring control at different levels.

Samsung puts Noida on top with world's biggest mobile factory

- Samsung has set up what is the world's largest mobile factory at Sector 81 in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. The tag of housing the world's largest mobile factory has straight away put Noida on top of the world manufacturing map when it comes to consumer electronics.
- The new 35-acre Samsung Electronics facility at Sector 81 in Noida, Uttar Pradesh inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South Korean President Moon Jae-in on 9th July.

Samsung is a South Korean multinational conglomerate headquartered in Samsung Town, Seoul. Samsung was founded by Lee Byung-chul in 1938 as a trading company. Samsung phones founded back in 1969 as Samsung Electric Industries. Samsung Electronics today makes everything from televisions to semiconductors. It released its first Android smartphone in 2009, and can be credited with the launch of the first Android tablet back in 2010.

Government gives conditional approval for Vodafone-Idea merger

- Union government has given conditional approval to the Vodafone-Idea merger, the UK-based telecom firm said. The department of telecommunication has approved the merger between Vodafone India Ltd and Idea Cellular, provided arrears amounting to as much as Rs. 7,250 crore (\$1.1 billion) are paid to the government.
- The Vodafone-Idea merger will create India's largest telecom company and help the firms compete with billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd., which upended the world's second-largest mobile phone market by offering free calls and cheap data.

Vodafone Group is a British multinational telecommunications conglomerate, with headquarters in London. Idea Cellular is an Indian mobile network operator based at Mumbai, Maharashtra. On 20 March 2017, Idea and Vodafone India announced that their respective boards had approved a merger of the two companies. The merger is expected to be completed by March 2019, and the newly merged entity will be named Vodafone Idea Ltd.

Google to mentor local AI start-ups

- Google announced 'Launchpad Accelerator India,' a mentorship program that would aim to support Indian start-ups that deploy artificial intelligence and machine learning to build solutions for local needs.
- The company said the program builds on the success of the global Launchpad Accelerator program.
- It has been designed to grow the AI and ML ecosystem in India by helping Indian start-ups build scalable solutions for India's unique problems.

Google Inc. is an American multinational technology company that specializes in Internet-related services and products, which include online advertising technologies, search engine, cloud computing, software, and hardware. Google was founded in 1998 by Larry Page and Sergey Brin while they were Ph.D. students at Stanford University, California. It is now headquartered in California, USA. Pichai Sundararajan is the current chief executive officer (CEO) of Google Inc.

PepsiCo India to help State in recycling plastic

- **PepsiCo India** announced its intent to support the government's implementation of extended producer responsibility for PET (Polyethylene terephthalate) plastic waste bottles in Maharashtra.
- **PepsiCo India** has partnered with Gem Enviro Management to set up reverse vending machines for the collection and recycling of plastic bottles in the State. The programme will also ensure effective recycling of the PET waste collected.

PepsiCo, Inc. is an American multinational food, snack, and beverage corporation headquartered in Purchase, New York. The recipe for the soft drink Pepsi was first developed in the 1880s by Caleb Bradham, a pharmacist and industrialist from New Bern, North Carolina. He coined the name "Pepsi-Cola" in 1898. Indra Nooyi has been the chief executive of PepsiCo since 2006. Indra Nooyi has been appointed to the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board as its first independent female director.

\$4.7 billion verdict against Johnson & Johnson over cancer from talc

- **Johnson & Johnson** has been ordered to pay nearly \$4.7bn (£3.58bn) in damages to 22 women who claim the company's talcum powder contributed to them developing ovarian cancer, marking the sixth-largest product-defect verdict in US history.
- **Johnson & Johnson** is an American multinational medical devices, pharmaceutical and consumer packaged goods manufacturing company founded in 1886.

Johnson & Johnson is headquartered in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Robert Wood Johnson along with his brothers James Wood Johnson and Edward Mead Johnson founded Johnson & Johnson in January 1886. Alex Gorsky is the current Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Johnson & Johnson.

Walt Disney's \$71-billion deal with 21st Century Fox backed by proxy firms

- **Walt Disney's \$71 billion deal with 21st Century Fox** won the endorsement of influential proxy advisers Institutional Shareholder Services Inc. and Glass Lewis & Co., giving the entertainment giant another edge over rival suitor Comcast. **Walter Elias Disney** was an American entrepreneur, animator, voice actor and film producer.

Twenty-First Century Fox, Inc. is an American multinational mass media corporation that is based in Midtown Manhattan, New York City. It was founded by Rupert Murdoch in 1979. On December 14, 2017, The Walt Disney Company announced plans to acquire 21st Century Fox for \$52.4 billion after the spin-off of certain businesses. Following a competing bid by Comcast, Disney raised its bid to \$71.3 billion.

L&T to build 'tallest' govt. office building

- **Engineering and construction major Larsen & Toubro (L&T)** has bagged an engineering, procurement and construction project to build Head of Department (HoD) office buildings at Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh.
- "The project has to its credit of being the first Steel Diagrid project in India, the first project in combination with Automatic Climbing Formwork System (ACFS) and Diagrid, and will be the tallest government office building in India."

Larsen & Toubro Limited, commonly known as L&T, is the largest Indian multi-national firm headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. L&T originated from a company founded in 1938 in Mumbai by two Danish engineers, Henning Holck-Larsen and Soren Kristian Toubro.

LIC board approves acquisition of up to 51% stake in IDBI Bank

- The Life Insurance Corporation, LIC, board gave approval to the acquisition of up to 51 per cent stake in debt-ridden IDBI Bank.

- **Insurance regulator IRDAI** has already given its **approval to the LIC for the stake purchase**. The LIC stake buy will help the IDBI get a **capital support of 10,000 to 13,000 crore rupees**.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) is an Indian state-owned insurance group and investment company headquartered in Mumbai. It is the **largest insurance company in India**. The Life Insurance Corporation of India was founded in 1956. **IDBI Bank (Industrial Development Bank of India)** was established in 1964 in Mumbai by an Act of Parliament to provide credit and other financial facilities for the development of the fledgling Indian industry. It is owned by the Government of India.

Five oil PSUs sign JV pact for North-East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid

- **Five central oil PSUs - IOCL, ONGC, GAIL, OIL and NRL** - signed a **joint venture agreement for executing the North-East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid** as a step towards the **Urja Ganga Gas Pipeline Project**.
- The **Gas Grid Project** will connect all NE States to the **National Gas Grid** through **Barauni-Guwahati Gas Pipeline** being laid by GAIL.
- The **Rs 6000 crore Grid's** estimated length would be around **1500 km**, the statement said adding that the tentative time schedule for commissioning it would be four years, including one year for pre-project activities.

Urja Ganga gas pipeline project was inaugurated in 2016 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his constituency Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. A pipeline of length **2540km** is planned to be laid across the states from **Uttar Pradesh to Odisha**. The project is committed to provide the household members health safety by providing clean fuel with the piped gas to the locals of Varanasi and later to Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha.

Bharti Infratel, Indus Tower merger deal gets SEBI nod

- **Mobile tower arm of telecom major Bharti Airtel Infratel** has received clearance from stock exchanges for its merger with **Indus Towers**.
- In April this year, **Bharti Airtel, Idea Cellular and Vodafone Group** had announced an agreement for the merger of **Indus Towers and Bharti Infratel** to create the **largest mobile tower operator in the world outside China**.

Facebook market value plunges 119 billion in biggest loss in stock market history

- The shares of **Facebook plunged in the biggest one-day drop in stock-market history**. The 19 per-cent drop vaporized **119 billion US dollars** of the company's stock-market value, resulting into **CEO Mark Zuckerberg's worth fall by roughly 16 billion dollars**. It was Facebook's worst trading day since going public in 2012, eclipsing Intel's decline of 91 billion US Dollars in September 2000.

Facebook is an American online social media and social networking service company based in Menlo Park, California. Its website was launched on February 4, 2004, by **Mark Zuckerberg** along with **Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes**.

HCL Tech topples Wipro to become India's third biggest IT services firm

- **HCL Technologies** has toppled **Wipro** to become the **third-largest software services company in India** in terms of dollar revenue, clocking a top line of **\$2.05 billion** during the June quarter. The IT services revenue of Wipro during the same quarter was \$2.02 billion.
- **Tata Consultancy Services and Infosys** are the two larger Indian IT services firms with revenues of **\$5.05 billion and \$2.83 billion**, respectively in the June 2018 quarter.

HCL Technologies is a **next-generation global technology company** that **helps enterprises reimagine their businesses for the digital age**. It was established in 1976 and headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. **Shiv Nadar** is the founder and chairman of HCL and the Shiv Nadar Foundation.

ITC becomes India's 4th most valued firm in m-cap

- **ITC went past Hindustan Unilever to become the country's fourth most valued firm** in terms of market valuation helped by a smart surge in its share price. ITC also became the most valued FMCG Company.
- **TCS is the country's most valued firm with a market cap of Rs 7,43,930.44 crore followed by RIL (Rs 7,15,772.03 crore), HDFC Bank (Rs 5,82,044.68 crore), ITC and HUL in the top five order on BSE.**

ITC Limited or ITC is an **Indian company based in Kolkata, West Bengal**. Its diversified business includes five segments: Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), Hotels, Paperboards & Packaging, Agri Business & Information Technology. It was **established in 1910** as the **Imperial Tobacco Company of India Limited**, the company was renamed as the **India Tobacco Company Limited** in 1970 and later to **I.T.C. Limited** in 1974.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



University of Hyderabad increases bioavailability of harpin biopesticide

- Researchers at the University of Hyderabad have found that harpin biopesticide brought about 80-90% reduction in severity of fungal infection in tomato plants when it is encapsulated in chitosan nanoparticles.
- The fungal infection was caused by *Rhizoctonia solani*. The reduction in disease severity is only about 50-55% when the biopesticide is used without loading it in nanoparticles. The results were published in the journal Carbohydrate Polymers.

Indigenous fighter aircraft Tejas commences operations

- Indigenous fighter aircraft Tejas of No 45 Squadron ‘The Flying Daggers’ formally commenced operations from the Air Force Station at Sulur near Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.
- The Southern Air Command base at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala has been entrusted with the responsibility of integrating the fighter in Air Force’s Concept of Operations.
- Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (Southern Air Command) RKS Bhadauria formally took part in the inaugural ceremony.
- The ‘No 45 Squadron’ has been involved in training aircrew and would now undertake operations and maintenance of the aircraft under Group Captain S Dhankhar.

Tejas is the first advanced Fly-by-wire fighter aircraft designed, developed and manufactured in India by Bengaluru headquartered HAL. It is equipped with a satellite-aided Inertial Navigation System. The aircraft has a digital computer-based attack system and autopilot mode. It can fire Air to Air Missiles, carry bombs and Precision Guided ammunition.

PSLV bags first Australian order

- The Indian PSLV launcher has broken into a rising Australian space market and bagged its first small but promising order from Down Under.
- Fleet Space Technologies, an IoT (Internet of Things) startup disclosed that its first 10-kg nanosatellite Centauri I would fly to space on a PSLV later this year.

The PSLV's three versions can lift satellites of 1,000-1,750 kg to distances of around 600 km in pole-to-pole orbits. Since its first commercial launch in 1999, the PSLV has put in orbit 237 small satellites of 28 countries. About half of them are from the US. The commercial arm of ISRO is Antrix.

India's longest total lunar eclipse to be seen in Dubai on July 27

- Dubai is all set to witness a total lunar eclipse on the night of July 27, an observatory in Dubai announced. During the eclipse, the moon will enter the shadow of the earth for about four hours, and the event will be seen clearly across at least three continents.
- According to the Dubai Astronomy Group, the eclipse will last for about one hour and 43 minutes, the longest in the century, and will also feature a “blood moon”.

Astronomers report first image of baby planet being formed

- Astronomers from Germany have captured the first confirmed image of a planet forming in the dust swirling around a young star.
- Scientists said the planet appears as a bright spot in the snapshot taken using the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope in Chile.
- Miriam Kepler of the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy in Germany said hints of baby planets have been detected before, but astronomers weren't sure whether those observations might simply be features in the swirling dust.

NASA set to test 'quiet' supersonic flights

- NASA is set to publicly demonstrate and test a flight manoeuvre that allows jets to travel faster than sound without generating the characteristic sonic boom.
- Supersonic flight over land was banned in the US because they generated characteristic loud sonic booms that could sometimes damage buildings.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. President Dwight D. Eisenhower established NASA in 1958. Robert M. Lightfoot Jr. is the current the Acting Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) since January 20, 2017, making him the longest-serving Acting Administrator in NASA history.

ISRO successfully conducts test of first crew escape system

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted its first 'pad abort' test — crucial for proposed human spaceflight programme — at Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- "The crew escape system is an emergency escape measure designed to quickly pull the crew module along with the astronauts to a safe distance, without exceeding the safe G-levels, from the launch vehicle in the event of a launch abort,"

NASA Spacecraft to Make History by “Touching” the Sun

- The U.S. space agency has invited the public and media to view the NASA spacecraft that will soon help scientists better understand the Sun.
- The Parker Solar Probe is scheduled to be launched on August 4th in a first-time mission to touch the Sun and explore its outer atmosphere. The probe was initially called Solar Probe Plus. However, it was changed last May to Parker Solar Probe in honor of the astrophysicist Eugene Parker.

NASA's famous planet-hunting telescope Kepler running out of fuel

- NASA's famous 'planet-hunting' telescope 'Kepler' is being put into hibernation as it has almost run out of fuel. The Space agency announced that the Kepler team received an indication of the spacecraft fuel tank running low which prompted the agency to put the spacecraft in a 'hibernation-like' state.

Kepler was launched in 2009 with an objective to learn more about the number and frequency of planets in our galaxy, the telescope which is some 94 million miles away from Earth has continuously monitored over 150,000 stars in the Cygnus-Lyra region and has discovered over 4,600 planet candidates as per the data provided by NASA.

Internet to remain free and fair in India as government approves Net Neutrality

- The Telecom Commission (TC) has approved net neutrality rules that bar service providers from discriminating against Internet content and services by blocking, throttling or granting them higher speed access.
- The decision that intends to ensure open and free Internet in the country was taken at a meeting of the Commission, the highest decision-making body in the Department of Telecommunication in New Delhi.

Indian Naval aircraft deployed for RIMPAC naval exercise

- For the first time, Indian Navy's P8I long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft from Indian Naval Ship (INS) Rajali has inducted at Hawaii for participating in the Rim of Pacific Multinational Naval exercise (RIMPAC-18).
- This is the first time ever that an Indian Naval aircraft has traversed so far east into the Pacific.

Indian warship visits Indonesia's Sabang port

- The Indian Navy patrol vessel, INS Sumitra, became the first-ever warship to sail into the Indonesian port of Sabang, strategically poised at the mouth of the Malacca Strait.

INS Sumitra is the fourth and last Saryu class patrol vessel of the Indian Navy, designed and constructed by Goa Shipyard Limited. It was launched in 2010.

Five Indian educational institutions features in Top 100 of The Golden Age University Rankings

- Five Indian educational institutions found their place in the top 100 of the Times Higher Education "Golden Age" ranking 2018. Universities established between 1945 and 1967 considered for this category. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, IIT Kharagpur, IIT Delhi, IIT Kanpur and IIT Madras have been featured in top 100. The ranking takes its name from what was a Golden Age in global higher education, characterised by rapid university expansion and increasing investment in research, said a statement from Times Higher Education.
- The Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, features among the top 100 in the Times Higher Education Golden Age University Rankings and top 50 in the Emerging University Rankings.
- Thus the universities in the Times Higher Education "Golden Age" ranking were established between 1945 and 1967. University of California, San Diego, tops the list. IIT Kharagpur has been placed in the 76th position.

Among the top 5 Indian institutes, IIT Bombay was established in 1958, IIT Kharagpur was established in 1951, IIT Delhi was established in 1961, IIT Kanpur was established in 1959 and IIT Madras was established in 1959. Among these institutes, IIT Bombay and IIT Delhi were granted 'Institutes of eminence' tag by Government of India recently.

South Africa unveils new telescope aimed at galaxies

- South Africa has unveiled a powerful radio telescope 'MeerKAT', part of an international project that scientists say will provide new details on the Milky Way and other galaxies.
- They also are releasing an image described as the "clearest view yet" of the center of our galaxy.

- The **global consortium building the Square Kilometre Array, or SKA**, has support from countries including **Canada, China, India, Italy, Britain, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands and New Zealand**. It includes a radio telescope site in Australia as well as in South Africa.

Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andhra top states with maximum capacity approved for solar parks

- **Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan have topped the list of states with maximum solar power generation capacity approved under solar parks in India**, according to fresh data of total 26,449 Megawatt capacity projects released by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).
- Experts say commissioning this mammoth renewable energy capacity under the **approved 45 solar parks spread across 22 states would broadly require investments in a range between Rs 1 lakh crore and over Rs 132,000 crore**.
- The list features solar parks of varying size ranging from the smallest parks in Meghalaya and Mizoram with 20 Mw capacity each to the **biggest solar park, Dholera in Gujarat, with 5,000 Mw capacity**.

ISRO qualifies high thrust Vikas Engine

- After conducting a ground test of 195 seconds, a **high thrust version of the Vikas Engine was successfully qualified at ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) in Tirunelveli district's Mahendragiri, of Tamil Nadu**.
- This engine would **improve the payload capability of PSLV, GSLV and GSLV Mk-III launch vehicles**.

Vikas Engine, a workhorse liquid rocket engine designed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), powers the second stage of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) of India. It also powers the second stage and the fourth strap of Geosynchronous Launch Vehicle (GSLV) and the twin-engine core liquid stage (L110) of GSLV Mk-III.

China to launch 300 satellites to provide worldwide low-orbit communications

- **China plans to launch 300 low-orbit satellites to provide worldwide communication services, with the first in the series to be launched later this year.**
- The **first in the 300-satellite array -- known as the Hongyan constellation -- is set to be launched by the end of this year**. The **Hongyan constellation is composed of more than 300 satellites**, along with data processing centres, and will be built in three stages.
- The **new constellation will be the first group of low-orbit communication satellites designed and launched by China**, enabling the country to better guide disaster rescue efforts,

China is already developing BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) to rival America's Global Positioning System, (GPS). Besides rivalling GPS, China uses BDS for its military applications to avoid dependence on GPS.

World's oldest bread, baked 14,500 years ago, found at prehistoric site in Jordan

- **Charred remains of a flatbread baked about 14,500 years ago in a stone fireplace at a site in northeastern Jordan have given researchers a delectable surprise: people began making bread, a vital staple food, and millennia before they developed agriculture.**
- The discovery showed that hunter-gatherers in the Eastern Mediterranean achieved the **cultural milestone of bread-making far earlier than previously known, more than 4,000 years before plant cultivation took root**.
- It was **made by a culture called the Natufians, who had begun to embrace a sedentary rather than nomadic lifestyle, and was found, at a Black Desert archeological site.**

Indian experts get Oxford awards for arsenic poisoning research in Ganga-Brahmaputra delta

- A team comprising experts from the **Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur** and the **University of Oxford** has been selected for an award for exceptional research-led innovation to mitigate arsenic poisoning in the **Ganga-Brahmaputra delta** in north and northeast India.
- The innovation awards instituted by the university's vice-chancellor include one for prominent Oxford-based linguist **Aditi Lahiri**, who was selected for the “inspiring leadership” award for developing a flexible approach to speech recognition.

12 new moons discovered around Jupiter

- A dozen new moons have been discovered around **Jupiter**, bringing its total number of moons to **79**, the most for any planet in solar system. One of the moons has been called a “real oddball” due to its tiny size.

Jupiter is the fifth planet from the Sun and the largest in the Solar System. It is a giant planet with a mass one-thousandth that of the Sun. **Jupiter** and **Saturn** are gas giants.

DRDO Successfully Tests BrahMos Supersonic Cruise Missile

- Supersonic cruise missile **BrahMos** was successfully test fired from the **Integrated Test Range (ITR)** at **Chandipur** in **Odisha**.
- The trial was conducted to validate its "life extension" technologies developed for the first time in India by **DRDO** and team **BrahMos**. The missile was launched from the launch complex three of the **Integrated Test Range** and successfully flew in its pre-set trajectory meeting its mission objectives.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Republic of India, charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in **New Delhi, India**. It was formed in **1958** by the merger of the **Technical Development Establishment** and the **Directorate of Technical Development and Production** with the **Defence Science Organisation**.

ISRO ropes in 3 partners

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has roped in three partners to help it assemble **27 satellites** at a quick pace over the next three years.
- It signed separate three-year contracts with **Alpha Design Technologies P Ltd** and its six consortium members; with defence public enterprise **Bharat Electronics Ltd**; and with **Tata Advanced Systems Ltd**, **Hyderabad**.

Indian Space Research Organisation is the space agency of the Government of India headquartered in the city of **Bangalore**. **ISRO** was formed in **1969**. **ISRO** built India's first satellite, **Aryabhata**, which was launched by the **Soviet Union** on **19 April 1975**. **Dr Kailasavadivoo Sivan Nadar** is current the chairperson of the **ISRO**.

A target of installing 175 GW of renewable energy capacity by the year 2022 has been set

- The Government has set a target of installing **40 GW** of grid connected rooftop solar capacity in the country including **Delhi** and **National Capital Region (NCR)** by year **2022**.
- As per the **Delhi Solar Policy, 2016** notified by Government of **National Capital Territory of Delhi**, target has been set for installation of **1 GW** of solar power by year **2020** and **2 GW** of solar power by year **2025** in **Delhi**.
- The Government has set a target of installing **100 GW** of solar capacity by **2022** in the country.
- A target of installing **175 GW** of renewable energy capacity by the year **2022** has been set, which includes **100 GW** from solar, **60 GW** from wind, **10 GW** from bio-power and **5 GW** from small hydro-power.

India to expand polar research to Arctic as well

- Three decades after its **first mission to Antarctica**, the government is **refocusing priorities to the other pole — the Arctic**—because of opportunities and challenges posed by climate change.
- This month, it **has renamed the National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR) — since 1998**, charged with conducting expeditions to India's base stations to the continent — as the **National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research**. Now, **India only has one Arctic observation station near Norway**.

India is already an **observer at the Arctic Council** — a forum of countries that decides on managing the region's resources and popular livelihood and, in 2015, **set up an underground observatory, called IndARC**, at the **Kongsfjorden fjord, half way between Norway and the North Pole**. **India** has already established a **high-altitude research station in the Himalayas, called HIMANSH**, at **Spiti, Himachal Pradesh**. **Himadri Station** is **India's first Arctic research station located at Spitsbergen, Svalbard, Norway**.

NASA launches tools to increase commercial use of satellite data

- **NASA has launched an online toolkit to make it easier for users to find, analyse and utilise** the most relevant satellite data for their research, business projects or conservation efforts.
- The **"Remote Sensing Toolkit"** provides a simple system that **quickly identifies relevant sources based on user input**.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an **independent agency of the executive branch** of the **United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program**, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. **President Dwight D. Eisenhower** established **NASA in 1958**. **James Frederick Bridenstine** is an **American politician and the current administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration**. He became the **first member of Congress to lead NASA**.

Facebook to launch its own internet satellite in 2019

- **Facebook** is working on **launching Athena, its own Internet satellite, early in 2019**.
- According to an application **Facebook** appears to have filed with the **US Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** under the **name Point View Tech LLC**, the project is **designed to "efficiently provide broadband access to unserved and underserved areas throughout the world"**.
- **Facebook**, however, is **not alone in aiming to increase Internet accessibility** through satellites **in low Earth orbit**. **Elon Musk's Space X** and **Softbank-backed One Web** are two other prominent names who have similar ambitions.

Facebook began **Aquila project in 2014**. In **2017**, the **solar-powered drone successfully completed the second full-scale test flight**. The social network also **discontinued in 2017** a small helicopter drone project that could temporarily replace cellular services in emergency situations.

NASA to launch car-size spacecraft to study Sun

- **US space agency NASA** is **preparing to launch a probe in August to study the Sun closer than any human-made object ever has**, revealing multiple mysteries behind the star.
- The **car-sized spacecraft called Parker Solar Probe** is slated to lift off no earlier than **August 6** on a **United Launch Alliance Delta IV Heavy**,

President Dwight D. Eisenhower established **NASA in 1958**. **James Frederick Bridenstine** is an **American politician and the current administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration**. He became the **first member of Congress to lead NASA**.

NASA set to launch world's first mission to touch the Sun

- NASA is on schedule to launch mankind's first mission to the Sun - a car sized probe that will swoop to within 4 million miles of the solar surface, facing heat and radiation like no spacecraft before.
- The Parker Solar Probe, which is expected to take off no earlier than August 6 aboard United Launch Alliance Delta IV Heavy, will study the Sun closer than any human-made object ever has.

Parker Solar Probe is a planned NASA robotic spacecraft to probe the outer corona of the Sun. NASA renamed the spacecraft from the Solar Probe Plus to the Parker Solar Probe in honour of astrophysicist Eugene Parker. This was the first time a NASA spacecraft was named after a living person, honoring physicist Eugene Parker.

World witnessed longest lunar eclipse of the century

- The longest total lunar eclipse of this century coincided with Mars' closest approach in 15 years to offer skygazers a thrilling experience.
- The partial eclipse of the moon started at 11:54 p.m. IST on July 27 and the total eclipse started at 1 a.m. on July 28. It was last for 103 minutes, making it the longest eclipse of the 21st century.
- The eclipse lasted for one hour 43 minutes, and was visible in Europe, West Asia, Africa, Australia, most of Asia and South America. In India, it was visible in different parts amid cloudy night.
- A total lunar eclipse takes place when the Earth comes between the Sun and the Moon, and covers the Moon with its shadow. When this happens, the Moon turns red or ruddy brown, which is why the phenomenon has earned the nickname, 'blood moon'.

First lake of liquid water is discovered on Mars

- A massive underground lake has been detected for the first time on Mars, raising the possibility that more water - and maybe even life - exists there.
- According to a report led by Italian researchers in the US journal Science, the lake is about 20 kilometres wide, located under a layer of Martian ice. It is the largest body of liquid water ever found on the Red Planet.
- Mars is now cold, barren and dry but used to be warm and wet. It is believed that the planet was home to plenty of liquid water and lakes at least 3.6 billion years ago.

Mars making closest approach to Earth in 15 years

- The red planet, Mars will make the closest approach to Earth in the last fifteen years, next week. One can catch Mars in the night sky when the two planets will be just 57.6 million kilometres apart on 31st July.
- Before that, the red planet will be in opposition when there will be a total lunar eclipse. That means Mars and the sun will be on exact opposite sides of Earth.

Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun and the second-smallest planet in the Solar System after Mercury. It is often referred to as the "Red Planet" because the reddish iron oxide prevalent on its surface gives it a reddish appearance that is distinctive among the astronomical bodies visible to the naked eye. Mars has two relatively small natural moons, Phobos and Deimos.

NASA's new planet hunting probe, TESS, begins operations

- NASA's latest planet hunting probe – the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) – has started its search for new worlds around nearby stars, the US Space agency said.
- TESS is expected to transmit its first series of science data back to Earth in August, and thereafter periodically every 13.5 days, once per orbit, as the spacecraft makes its closest approach to Earth.
- TESS is NASA's latest satellite to search for planets outside our solar system, known as exoplanets.

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Indian priest discovers proof of long-lost galaxy

- The Indian Catholic priest, Fr Richard D'Souza and astrophysics researcher who found conclusive evidence of a long lost galaxy, the third biggest after Andromeda and the Milky Way, said that like many others before him he nearly gave up on the search.
- He along with fellow researcher Eric Bell hit upon conclusive evidence of galaxy named M32p that was "shredded and cannibalised" by the Milky Way's galactic neighbour Andromeda about two billion years ago.
- This disrupted galaxy was the third-largest member of the local group of galaxies, after the Milky Way and Andromeda galaxies.

Advanced Air defence interceptor missile successfully test fired from Abdul Kalam Island

- The advanced Air defence interceptor missile has been successfully test fired from Abdul Kalam Island.
- The missile has been built with indigenous technology. It has an explosive-carrying capacity of 1.2 tonnes and can hit the target from a distance of 20 km.
- The interceptor took off from Abdul Kalam Island in Bhadrak district at 11.25 am and hit the target at a height of 20 kms in the sky.

Dr. Abdul Kalam Island, formerly known as Wheeler Island, is an island off the coast of Odisha, India. The Integrated Test Range missile testing facility is located on the island. The island was originally named after English commandant Lieutenant Wheeler. On 4 September 2015, the island was renamed to honour the late Indian president, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.

Inventions/Discoveries

Three B.Tech students in Tamil Nadu develop India's first self-driving wheelchair

- Three final-year engineering students of Amritha Vishwa Vidyapeetham University in Coimbatore have developed a self-driving wheelchair called 'Self-E' with an autonomous navigation system which ensured easy travel of users from one place to another without user intervention.
- The Robotic Operating System (ROS) helps navigate automatically making it user-friendly.
- The user can touch any point on the generated map, and the wheelchair will drive to that place automatically navigating its own path and avoiding obstacles.

The three students who designed the Self-E wheelchair – Chinta Ravi Teja, Sarath Sreekanth and Akhil Raj – have been working for the last two years as junior researchers at the same college. The newly designed wheelchair maps the surrounding environment, including dynamic and static obstacles such as people, walls, pillars, tables, chairs, etc. using a laser sensor called LiDAR which will be facilitated in any Android smartphone or tablet through a specially developed app.

India-Korea Technology Exchange Centre Inaugurated

- The India-Korea Technology Exchange Centre was inaugurated by the Minister of State (I/C) MSME Giriraj Singh and Minister of SMEs and Start-ups of Republic of Korea, Hong Jong- hak in New Delhi. The

India-Korea Technology Exchange Centre has been established at the **National Small Industries Corporation** premises in **New Delhi**.

Giriraj Singh is the **Member of Parliament** from the **Nawada** parliamentary constituency in the **16th Lok Sabha**, and formerly serves as **Minister of Cooperative, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Resource Development** in the Government of **Bihar**.

India's genetically modified crop area fifth largest in world

- **India has the world's fifth largest cultivated area under genetically modified (GM) crops**, at 11.4 million hectares (mh) in 2017.
- But unlike other big growers, **its entire GM crop area is under a single crop cotton incorporating genes from the *Bacillus thuringiensis* or Bt soil bacterium** coding for resistance against heliothis bollworm insect pests.
- The **country with the highest area under transgenic crops, at 75 mh, is the United States**. According to the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA), the 75 mh GM acreage comprised 34.05 mh soyabean, 33.84 mh maize (corn), 4.58 mh cotton, 1.22 mh alfalfa, 0.876 mh canola, 0.458 mh sugar-beet, 3,000 hectares potato and around 1,000 hectares each of apples, squash and papaya.

Rare double asteroid discovered: NASA

- **An asteroid discovered last year is actually two objects, each about 900 metres in size** and orbiting each other, new observations by **three of the world's largest radio telescopes** have revealed.
- **Near-Earth asteroid 2017 YE5** was **discovered with observations provided by the Morocco Oukaimeden Sky Survey** in December last year, but no details about the asteroid's physical properties were known until the end of June, NASA said in a statement.
- **This is only the fourth "equal mass" binary near-Earth asteroid ever detected**, consisting of two objects nearly identical in size, orbiting each other.
- On June 21, the **asteroid 2017 YE5 made its closest approach to Earth for at least the next 170 years** On June 21 and 22, observations by **NASA's Goldstone Solar System Radar (GSSR) in California** showed the first signs that **2017 YE5 could be a binary system**.

Scientists perform world's first 3D, colour X-ray on human body

- **Scientists in New Zealand have performed the first ever 3D colour X-ray on humans**, with the support of **CERN physics lab**.
- Medical experts have suggested that the **newly developed technique will help improve the medical field diagnosis**. CERN's physics lab helped with the imaging technology while **Universities of Otago and Canterbury** helped with developing the X-ray.

The **new device is based on the traditional black-and-white X-ray technology**, which incorporates CERN's particle-tracking technology. The **new colour X-ray imaging technique is able to produce clearer and more accurate images** which would **help doctors in getting more accurate diagnoses to the patients**.

Tamil Nadu students made World's smallest satellite

- **A group of engineering students in Tamil Nadu have made a new experimental satellite which could set a new world record as the world's lightest and cheapest**. The satellite, which can literally fit into the palm of one's hand, was made at a cost of just **Rs. 15,000** and weighs slightly lesser than a **medium-sized egg**. The **satellite was developed by four first-year engineering students** and is called the '**Jaihind-1S**'. It can be used to gather data about weather conditions.

- The **Jaihind** satellite, shaped like a small four-centimetre cube, will be launched from a NASA facility in August. The **Jaihind**, which weighs a mere 33.39 grams, achieved its light weight as a result of the decision to 3D-print its outer casing.

The 'Jaihind' was developed by first-year engineering students KJ Harikrishnan, P Amarnath, G Sudhi and T Giri Prasad, from the Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science in Kelambakkam near Chennai.

IIT-Madras unveils "world's first" remotely operable LEAP microscope

- The **Indian Institute of Technology-Madras** launched a **Rs 40 crore** remotely operable microscope, claimed to be the **world's first** of its kind, that would enable precise view of atoms of a material.
- The **Local Electrode Atom Probe (LEAP)** had been developed in a collaborative exercise involving eight top research institutions in the country, spearheaded by IIT-M.
- Though there were several such devices available across world, the **LEAP** inaugurated at IIT-Madras was the first one that can be operated through a special terminal by researchers divided geographically

Indian Institute of Technology Madras is a public engineering institute located in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. As one of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), it is recognised as an **Institute of National Importance**. It was founded in 1959 with technical and financial assistance from the former government of West Germany; it was the **third IIT** that was established by the Government of India.

'World first' melanoma blood test

- **Australian researchers** have developed a blood test for melanoma in its early stages, calling it a "world first" breakthrough that could save many lives.
- The scientists, from Edith Cowan University, said the test could help doctors detect skin cancer before it spreads through a person's body. "Patients who have their melanoma detected in its early stage have a five-year survival rate between 90% and 99%.

IISc's rare feat in test for superconductivity

- For the first time, researchers from the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru** have been able to achieve superconductivity at ambient temperature and pressure. A large number of materials have been found to undergo normal to superconducting transitions. But such transitions require extremely low temperature and/or extremely high pressure.
- A material is said to exhibit superconductivity when it is able to conduct electric current with practically zero resistance.
- So unlike the conventionally used materials such as copper and steel, a **superconductor** can carry a current indefinitely without losing any energy.

ICRISAT to release India's first biofortified jowar with more iron, zinc

- In a major boon to millions of people suffering from anaemia due to iron deficiency, city-based **International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)** has developed a new variety of jowar (sorghum) which contains 50 -300 percent more iron than the normal varieties.

ICRISAT is an International organization which conducts agricultural research for rural development, headquartered in Patancheru (Hyderabad, Telangana).

Health/ Disease

Vaccine-preventable rabies is India's most fatal infection

- Encephalitis and H1N1 outbreaks grab headlines, but the world's most deadly viral infection that kills everyone it infects is rabies, against which Louis Pasteur developed a vaccine in 1885.
- Rabies is the only disease that had a 100% death rate in India in 2017, compared to 12% for Japanese encephalitis and 6% for H1N1, popularly known as swine flu, according to data from the National Health Profile 2018.
- This 100% vaccine-preventable viral disease that spreads to people through bites or scratches of animals, mostly infected dogs, almost always causes death the world over after clinical symptoms appear, according to the World Health Organisation, which has set a target of "zero human rabies deaths by 2030".

Rabies is a viral disease that causes inflammation of the brain in humans and other mammals. Rabies is caused by lyssaviruses, including the rabies virus and Australian bat lyssavirus. Almost all human cases of rabies were fatal until a vaccine was developed in 1885 by Louis Pasteur and Émile Roux.

Kerala govt declares Kozhikode, Malappuram districts as Nipah virus free

- Kozhikode and Malappuram districts, where 17 people died of Nipah in May, were declared free of the virus by the Kerala government. "A decision to declare both districts as Nipah virus free was taken by the government as no fresh cases have been reported after June 1," Health Minister K K Shylaja said.

Scientists discover new method to view proteins in human cells

- A team of scientists at the University of Warwick have produced a new method of microscopy to help view proteins under human cells.
- These scientists have procured a tagging device named FerriTag, which uses a protein shell used to contain iron cells in human bodies. This device uses electron microscopy to allow proteins to be viewed at a precise scale.

National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme launched

- Union Government launched the National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme in New Delhi on World Hepatitis Day.
- The Health Ministry said, the programme proposes to offer free drugs and diagnostics for hepatitis B and C at all government hospitals. Viral hepatitis is inflammation of the liver due to a viral infection.

"With this initiative, Government is strongly committed to work towards elimination of viral hepatitis by 2030." Shri Nadda further said that the Ministry has already launched a campaign to end TB by 2025, five years ahead of global target. Shri Nadda stated that the government has also launched the 'Test and Treat Policy for HIV' wherein as soon as a person is tested and found to be positive, he will be provided with ART irrespective of his CD count or clinical stage.

New Ebola virus found in Sierra Leone

- A new Ebola virus has been found in bats in Sierra Leone, two years after the end of an outbreak that killed over 11,000 across West Africa.
- It is not yet known whether the new Bombali species of the virus — which researchers say could be transmitted to humans — can develop into the deadly Ebola disease.

Ebola virus was first discovered in 1976 near the Ebola River in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo. Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) is a **rare and deadly disease** most commonly affecting people and nonhuman primates (monkeys, gorillas, and chimpanzees). It is caused by an infection with one of five known Ebola virus species.

Japanese scientists announced the first human trial to treat Parkinson's disease

- **Japanese scientists announced the first human trial to treat Parkinson's disease** by injecting stem cells into **brain**, building on an earlier trial on primates. The research team at **Kyoto University** plans to inject five million **induced Pluripotent Stem (iPS) cells**, which have the potential to develop into any cell in the body, into a **patient's brain**, the university said in a press release.

Parkinson's disease is a **chronic, degenerative neurological disorder** that affects the body's motor system, often causing shaking and other difficulties in movement. **Worldwide, about 10 million people** have the illness, according to the Parkinson's Disease Foundation.



ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT



Seven new wasp species found in Amazon forests

- An international team of researchers has discovered seven new wasp species belonging to the genus **Clistopyga** from Peru, Venezuela and Colombia in the Amazon rainforests.
- The most notable among them is **Clistopyga crassicaudata**, named after its distinctly thickened ovipositor.
- The **ovipositor** is a tube-like organ present in many insects that helps in laying eggs and also in injecting venom.

Amazon Rainforest, also known as **Amazonia** or **Amazon Jungle**, is one of the world's greatest natural resources and covers most of the **Amazon Basin** of **South America**. It has been described as the “**Lungs of our Planet**“. This region includes territory belonging to nine nations. The majority of the forest is contained within **Brazil**, with **60% of the rainforest**, followed by Peru with 13%, Colombia with 10%, and with minor amounts in Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana.

Bacteria develop resistance even without exposure to antibiotics

- The **IISER Pune** team found **E. coli** coped better when exposure to complex, unpredictable environment continued for 100 days.
- The environment where bacteria such as **E. coli** thrive can be complex with different stresses being present at the same time and changing unpredictably at different time scales daily or seasonal. Researchers at Pune's **Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER)** found exciting results when they replicated these conditions in the lab **E. coli** developed resistance to antibiotics and heavy metals even when the bacteria were not exposed to them.

World's beaches are being eroded in protected marine areas

- The world's sandy shorelines are declining in protected marine areas which could threaten plant and animal species and cultural heritage sites, a global survey of beaches with satellites data from **NASA** and the **US Geological Survey** shows.
- About 24 per cent of sandy beaches worldwide are eroding, while 27 per cent are growing. Africa has the highest proportion of sandy beaches (66 per cent) and Europe has the lowest (22 per cent).

Myanmar joins International Solar Alliance

- Myanmar has joined the **India-initiated International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, becoming the **68th member** of the grouping that is aiming at optimum utilisation of solar energy.

- **Myanmar Minister for International Cooperation Kyaw Tin** handed over the ISA Framework Agreement to External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj during a bilateral meeting in **New Delhi on the margins of this year's Delhi Dialogue**, the **premier annual track 1.5 event to discuss politico-security, economic and socio-cultural engagement between India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) bloc.**

The **International Solar Alliance** is a common platform for cooperation among sun-rich countries lying fully or partially between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. The initiative was launched at the **UN Climate Change Conference in Paris at the end of 2015** by the then, **President of France and the Prime Minister of India**. In January 2016, **Narendra Modi**, and the then, **French President François Hollande** jointly laid the foundation stone of the **International Solar Alliance headquarters** and inaugurated the interim Secretariat at the **National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gwalpahari, Gurugram, India.**

Scientists call our era the Meghalayan Age

- When the **"Meghalayan" Age began 4,200 years ago**, the famous **Indus Valley statuette of a dancing girl** had already been made, **three superbly-crafted Egyptian pyramids** towered above the Nile near what are now **Cairo, and the Latin alphabet** -- the building blocks of the script your mind is transcribing into thought this very instant -- did not yet exist. Given that **our geological age is named after an Indian state called the "abode of the clouds"**.

The **Late Holocene Meghalayan Age** was ratified as the most recent unit of the **Geologic Time Scale** after many years of research. **Meghalayan Age is unique among the many intervals of the Geologic Time Scale in that its beginning coincides with a global cultural event produced by a global climatic event**, said **Stanley Finney**, a professor at Long Beach State University in the US and Secretary General of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) in France.

Largest dinosaur foot ever discovered

- **Measuring almost a metre wide**, the **largest recorded dinosaur foot ever recorded** came from a **brachiosaur**, palaeontologists have revealed.
- **One of the biggest creatures ever to walk the earth**, The **150 million-year-old fossil** was discovered in **Wyoming, in 1998.**

The **research team from USA** used **3D scanning** and detailed measurements to compare the specimen to feet from numerous dinosaur species – allowing them to confirm for the **first time the fossil is the largest ever found.**

India's Carbon-Dioxide Emission to Rise 3.8-3.9 Gigatonnes by 2030

- **India's carbon-dioxide emission will rise to 3.8-3.9 gigatonnes by 2030 not 3.8-4.9 gigatonnes** as was projected earlier, which is consistent with the **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) pledge made at the 2015 Paris summit**, according to a study by an Indian think-tank.
- According to the study by the Centre for Policy Research, even if emissions reach to the said level by 2030, **India's expected per capita emissions will be lower than today's global average.**

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

Dutee Chand sets national 100m record

- **Dutee Chand** broke her **national 100 metres mark** as the athlete embroiled in a battle to overturn the world body's gender rule took centre stage on the final day of the **Inter State Athletics Championships**.

Rahul Dravid inducted into ICC Hall of Fame

- **Rahul Dravid** was inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame, becoming only the **fifth Indian** to receive the honour after **Bishan Singh Bedi, Kapil Dev, Sunil Gavaskar and Anil Kumble**.
- The **Indian cricket legend** was inducted along with former **Australia captain Ricky Ponting** and **England batting great Claire Taylor**.
- With **13,288 runs** in **164 Test matches**, **Dravid** is fourth on the list of all-time highest run getters in the longest format of the game behind only **Sachin Tendulkar, Ponting and Jacques Kallis**.

Lewis Hamilton retires from Austrian GP as Max Verstappen wins

- **Lewis Hamilton** lost the world championship lead after retiring from a sobering **Austrian Grand Prix** for Mercedes, as **Max Verstappen** took an unexpected victory for **Red Bull**.

Lee Chong Wei nets historic 12th Malaysia Open title

- Malaysian veteran **Lee Chong Wei** beat young Japanese shuttler **Kento Momota** 21-17, 23-21 to grab the **Malaysia Open** title for a historic twelfth time.

Bajrang Punia claims gold medal at Tbilisi Grand Prix

- **Bajrang Punia** emerged champion at the **Tbilisi Grand Prix** in the **65kg** category after outplaying **Iranian** wrestler **Mehran Nasiri** in the final in **Georgia**.
- The **2018 Commonwealth Games** gold medallist recorded a comfortable **9-3** win over the **Iranian**.

MS Dhoni becomes third India cricketer to play 500 international matches

- **MS Dhoni** added yet another milestone to his glittering career after completing **500 international games** when playing in the second **T20I** against **England** at **Sophia Gardens, Cardiff**.
- **Dhoni** is now the **ninth player** in the history of cricket and only the **third Indian player**, after **Sachin Tendulkar (664 matches)** and **Rahul Dravid (509)**, to complete 500 international games.
- **MS Dhoni** is the only captain in the world to win all the **ICC Trophies**.

Dipa Karmakar becomes first Indian gymnast to win gold in global event

- **Dipa Karmakar** scripted history by becoming the first Indian gymnast to clinch a gold medal at a global event of FIG Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup at Mersin, Turkey.
- This is **Dipa's** first medal in a World Challenge Cup.
- The **24-year-old** from Tripura, who had finished fourth in vault event at the 2016 Rio Olympics, scored **14.150** to clinch gold. She had topped the qualification with a score of **13.400**.

Anju Khosla - Oldest Indian woman to complete Ironman Triathlon

- At **52**, **Anju Khosla** has just become the oldest Indian woman to complete an **Ironman Triathlon** – one of the toughest one-day sporting events. The New Delhi resident completed her first full Ironman Triathlon, in Carinthia, Austria, in 15 hours, 54 minutes and 54 seconds.
- It comprises **3.86 km** swimming leg, **180.25 km** bike leg followed by a marathon (**42.2 km**), to be completed without a break.

Rohit Sharma becomes second player to score three T20I centuries

- **Rohit Sharma** slammed an unbeaten hundred against England in the third and final T20I in Bristol to help India clinch the T20I series. It was **Rohit's** third in T20Is, joining **Colin Munro** as the leading century-maker in the format.
- **Rohit Sharma** also becomes the first player to score three hundreds across each format – Test, ODI, and T20I.

MS Dhoni first wicketkeeper to take five catches in a T20I

- **MS Dhoni** in the third T20I at Bristol between India and England, **Dhoni** took five catches and became the first wicket-keeper to achieve this feat in a T20I match. **Dhoni** reached the milestone when he took the catch of **Liam Plunket** off **Siddarth Kaul** in the last over of England's innings.
- However, this was not the only feat achieved by the Indian keeper as he also became the first wicketkeeper to take **50 catches** in T20 Internationals. With 87 dismissals (54 catches and 33 stumpings) in 93 matches, **Dhoni** leads the charts. Recently, **Dhoni** also became the third Indian player to complete **500 international appearances**.

Dipika Pallikal to represent Asia in CGF AAC

- Squash player **Dipika Pallikal** has been appointed as Asia's representative in the prestigious Athletes Advisory Commission of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF). The appointment was made by the CGF. Each continent is represented by one athlete in CGFAAC.

Sebastian Vettel wins British GP, Lewis Hamilton second at Silverstone

- **Sebastian Vettel** won a thrilling British Grand Prix for Ferrari to deny **Lewis Hamilton** a fifth successive home victory and move eight points clear at the top of the Formula One standings.
- The win was **Vettel's** fourth of the season, 51st of his career, and once-dominant champions **Mercedes' first** defeat at Silverstone since 2012 before the V6 turbo hybrid era started.

India's Dalabehera bags bronze in Junior World Weightlifting

- Indian lifter **Jhilli Dalabehera** bagged the bronze medal in the 2018 IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships at Taskent.

Hima Das becomes first Indian woman to win gold at IAAF World U-20

- **Hima Das created history by becoming the first Indian woman to win a gold at the IAAF World Under- 20 Athletics Championships** in Tampere, Finland. She clinched the top spot in the women's 400 meters final race on the third day of the competitions. The 18-year-old Das clocked 51.46 seconds to win the gold.

Anderson becomes first South African man to reach the Wimbledon final for 97 years

- **Kevin Anderson reached his first Wimbledon final** with a heart-stopping 7-6(6) 6-7(5) 6-7(9) 6-4 26-24 **win over the sport's perennial ultra-marathon man John Isner**. After being kept on the run for six hours and 36 minutes, the longest ever singles semi-final at the All England Club.
- **Anderson has become the first South African man to reach the Wimbledon final for 97 years**. Brian Norton was the last South African man to reach the final in 1921.

MS Dhoni becomes 4th Indian batsman to score 10,000 runs in ODIs

- **Mahendra Singh Dhoni became the fourth Indian to reach the milestone of 10,000 runs in ODIs** during the second match of the three-game series against England.
- The 37-year-old former **India skipper joined an elite list which features some of India's greatest batsmen in Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid**.
- **Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara is the only wicketkeeper-batsman to feature in the list with 14,234 runs to his name**. He is the second highest run-getter in the ODIs, behind only the legendary Sachin Tendulkar.
- **Dhoni also became the fourth wicket-keeper to complete 300 ODI catches after Adam Gilchrist (417), Mark Boucher (403) and Kumar Sangakkara (402)**.

Novak Djokovic wins his fourth Wimbledon singles title and 13th Grand Slam

- **Novak Djokovic swept aside South Africa's Kevin Anderson in straight sets 6-2, 6-2, 7-6(3) to win his fourth Wimbledon singles title and 13th Grand Slam**.

Serena Williams stunned by Angelique Kerber in Wimbledon 2018 final

- **In Tennis, Angelique Kerber stunned 23-time Grand Slam champion Serena Williams to lift her first Wimbledon title**.
- The 11th seeded German defeated Serena, a seven-time winner, in straight sets, 6-3, 6-3 to add to her 2016 Australian Open and US Open trophies.
- **With the win, Kerber has become the first German woman to win the title since Steffi Graf in 1996**. Serena was bidding a record-equaling 24th major trophy.

Brij Bhushan to be Chef de Mission

- **Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Saran Singh is set to be named the Chef de Mission of the Asian Games-bound Indian contingent**.

Modric wins Golden Ball; Mbappe named best young player; Golden Glove to Courtois

- **Luka Modric, Croatia: The superstar midfielder earned the tournament's best player award**, serving as the heart and soul of the team's dream run to the final.
- **Kylian Mbappe, France was awarded FIFA Young Player Award**.
- **Harry Kane, England has been awarded the Golden Boot Award**.
- **Thibaut Courtois, Belgium has been awarded Golden Glove Award**.

Thailand Open 2018: PV Sindhu defeated in the final

- India's star shuttler PV Sindhu, seeded second, suffered a 15-21, 18-21 defeat to fourth seed Nozomi Okuhara of Japan in straight games to settle for runners-up spot in the Thailand Open at the Nimibutr Stadium in Bangkok.

Wrestler Vinesh Phogat grabs gold at Grand Prix of Spain

- Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat grabbed gold at the Spanish Grand Prix in Madrid, conceding just one point in five bouts en route the dominating title victory.
- The 23-year-old Vinesh outclassed Canada's Natasha Fox 10-0 in the final to claim her second consecutive gold. She had won gold at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in the 50kg category.

Marc Marquez wins German Grand Prix to extend championship lead

- Honda's Marc Marquez cruised to his ninth consecutive German Grand Prix victory to extend his MotoGP lead.
- The Spaniard has now won in the top category at Sachsenring for the past six years and three times in the smaller classes before that.

Hima Das to be Assam's first ever sports ambassador

- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has confirmed that Indian Athlete Hima Das is named as the first sports ambassador of the state.
- The announcement came after Hima Das recently became the first Indian woman to win gold at IAAF World U-20 Athletics Championships.

Neeraj Chopra strikes gold at French meet

- India's star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra comfortably won the gold at the Sotteville Athletics meet in France, beating a competitive field which included 2012 London Olympics gold-medallist Keshorn Walcott.
- Chopra's throw of 85.17m put him way ahead of the field, including Moldova's Andrian Mardare (81.48m) and Lithuania's Edis Matusevicius (79.31m), who finished second and third respectively.

Michael Stich, Helena Sukova to join International Tennis Hall of Fame

- Former Wimbledon champion Michael Stich of Germany and 14-time Grand Slam doubles champion Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic will be inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame.
- Stich and Sukova will be enshrined in ceremonies at the ATP Hall of Fame Classic in the sporting showplace at Newport, Rhode Island.

Divya Kakran wins silver in Junior Asian Wrestling Championships

- Divya Kakran (68kg) won silver and Reena (55kg) and Karuna (76kg) claimed bronze in women's freestyle at the Junior Asian Wrestling Championships in New Delhi.
- Japanese wrestlers dominated, winning three of the five gold medals.
- Commonwealth Games bronze medallist, Divya, a contender for gold, lost to Meerim Zhumanazarova of Kyrgyzstan in the final.

Mansi settles for silver, Swati claims bronze at Junior Asian Wrestling in New Delhi

- India bagged Silver and a Bronze medal in Women's Freestyle Wrestling at the Junior Asian Championships in New Delhi.
- In the 57 kilogram category, Mansi had to settle for Silver after she lost to Japan's Akie Hanai in the Final.

- The **Bronze medal** was won by **Swati** in the **53 kg** division.

Fakhar Zaman's double ton helps Pakistan crush Zimbabwe again

- **Fakhar Zaman** blazed **Pakistan's** first ever double century in a one-day international in his **team's** record **244-run** victory against **Zimbabwe**.
- **Zaman's** unbeaten **210 off 156 balls** guided **Pakistan** to its highest ever **ODI total of 399-1** after Pakistan won its first toss of the series and elected to bat.

Chhetri, Kamala get AIFF honours

- **Sunil Chhetri** has been declared the **2017 Player of the Year** by the **All India Football Federation (AIFF)**. Chhetri was the undisputed winner for his domestic and international performances and excellent conduct on and off the field. The **Woman Player of the Year** award was given to **Kamala Devi**.

Liverpool make Brazilian world's most expensive goalkeeper

- **Liverpool** have made **Roma's Alisson** the world's most expensive goalkeeper by signing him on a six-year deal. The Reds have not revealed how much they have paid for the **Brazil number one** but **Roma** said the deal is worth up to **£66.8m (72.5m euros)**.

Asian Junior Badminton 2018: Lakshya Sen earned historic gold medal

- **India's** rising badminton talent **Lakshya Sen** created history as he went on to bag the gold medal in men's singles competition at the **Badminton Asia Junior Championships 2018** in **Jakarta**.
- The **16-year old** defeated the top seed and the **World No. 1 Kunlavut Vitidsarn** in straight games **21-19, 21-18** to bag the top honour at the event.

Lewis Hamilton wins German Grand Prix

- **Lewis Hamilton** regained the championship winning the **German Grand Prix** after **Sebastian Vettel** crashed while leading near the end.

Manu-Sumeeth win Lagos International title

- The senior national badminton champions **Mannu Attri** and **Sumeeth Reddy** won the men's doubles title at **Lagos International Badminton**.
- The defending champions retained the title after thrashing their **Indian counterpart S. Vaibhav and Prakash Raj** **21-12, 22-12** in the final match. In another **all-India final** **Kuhoo Garg** and **Ria Mukherjee** defeated **Krishma Wadekar** and **V Harika** **21-10 21-18** in women's doubles event.

Johnson beats first-time ATP finalist Ramkumar to win Newport title

- **American third seed Steve Johnson** beat first-time ATP finalist **Indian Ramkumar Ramanathan** **7-5 3-6 6-2** at the **Hall of Fame Open** in **Newport, Rhode Island**, for his fourth career title and second of 2018.
- With the win, Johnson brought an end to world number 161 **Ramkumar's** bid to become the first player from **India** to win an ATP singles title since mentor **Leander Paes** prevailed in **Newport** 20 years ago.

MS Dhoni highest individual taxpayer in Jharkhand for 2017-18

- **Cricketer** and former **India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni** has been the highest taxpaying individual in **Jharkhand** for the financial year of **2017-18**. The **Indian wicket-keeper batsman** paid **Rs 12.17 crore** income tax last fiscal, **Rs 1.24 crore** higher than the **2016-17**. "Dhoni had paid **Rs 10.93 crore** as income tax in **2016-17** but he was not the highest taxpayer in that fiscal".

Vishnu Priya, Dhanvir set new records

- Punjab shot putter Dhanvir Singh and Kerala's 400m hurdler J. Vishnu Priya set new records in the 15th National youth athletics championships which concluded in Vadodara.
- Dhanvir's first throw, 19.66m, bettered Navtej Singh's seven-year-old meet record of 19.34m and he finished with a day's best of 19.69m.

Pawan Shah smashes second highest individual score in Under-19 internationals

- In Cricket, Pawan Shah smashed 282, the second highest individual score in Under-19 internationals as India posted a mammoth 613 for 8 against hosts Sri Lanka in the first innings on the second day of the final 'Youth Test' in Hambantota.

Pavard's stunning strike against Argentina voted best goal of FIFA World Cup

- In Football, Frenchman Benjamin Pavard's stunning strike against Argentina has been voted the best goal of the FIFA World Cup that was held in Russia.
- The 22-year-old Stuttgart defender ran onto a left-wing cross from Lucas Hernandez and sent a right-footed half-volley spinning into the top corner to level eventual champions France's last-16 tie with Argentina at 2-2 in the 57th minute.

Virat Kohli in top 10 of Instagram Rich List 2018; Cristiano Ronaldo on top

- According to the Instagram Rich List released by HopperHQ.com, an Instagram post scheduling tool, Virat Kohli is at ninth position in a list of athletes who can charge the most money for sponsored posts on the photo-sharing app.
- The list shows that Kohli can demand up to USD 120,000 (Rs. 82 lakh approx.) to share any sponsored post with his over 23 million followers.
- Cristiano Ronaldo, who recently finalised a big-money move to Juventus, tops the list followed by fellow footballers Neymar, Lionel Messi, David Beckham, Gareth Bale, Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Luis Suarez.

Virat Kohli receives Barmy Army's International Cricketer of the Year awards

- Virat Kohli was presented with the International Cricket of the Year for 2017 and 2018 by England's Barmy Army.

Mohun Bagan Ratna for former India defender Pradip Chowdhury

- Pradip Choudhury, who formed the central defensive pair with Subroto Bhattacharya when Mohun Bagan took on Pele's Cosmos team in 1977, was conferred the Mohun Bagan Ratna 2018 at the annual day of the 129-year-old club in Kolkata.
- Shilton Paul was given the Best Footballer for the Year award and Sudip Chatterjee was handed the Best Cricketer of the Year honour. Sourav Das was the Best Youth Footballer.

Baker Breaks 100m Backstroke World Record

- Kathleen Baker set a world record of 58.00sec to win the 100m backstroke at the US swimming championships. Baker, silver medalist in the event at the 2016 Rio Olympics, improved on the world record of 58.10 set by Canadian Kylie Masse at the World Championships in Budapest on July 25 of last year.

Dustin Johnson wins first Canadian Open golf crown

- World number one Dustin Johnson rebounded from a shock early exit at the British Open to capture the Canadian Open title for his third victory of 2018.
- The win was the 19th title of his career and comes just over a week after he failed to make the cut at Carnoustie.

- **Johnson also becomes the first player since Tiger Woods (2005-09)** with at least three wins in three consecutive seasons on the US Tour.

Neeraj strikes gold

- **Star Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra won gold in the Savo Games in Finland** with an impressive performance. He **beat his Chinese Taipei rival Chao-Tsun Cheng** as the duo warmed up for an Asian Games showdown.
- **Neeraj, the reigning Commonwealth Games gold medallist and Asian season leader, threw 85.69m** in the event **held at Lapinlahti, Finland**, where he is undergoing training as part of preparations for the Asian Games.

Sourabh Verma wins Russia Open

- **Former national champion Sourabh Verma won his first title since 2016 after defeating Japan's Koki Watanabe 18-21, 21-12, 21-17 in the final of the Russia Open in Vladivostok.** His last title had come at the **Chinese Taipei Masters in October 2016.** Verma, who has slipped to **65 in the world rankings** after form and injury struggles over the past year, won a seesawing final that lasted for exactly an hour.

Sport Events

India crushes Iran to lift title

- **India demolished Iran 44-26 in the final to emerge as the Kabaddi Masters Dubai 2018 champion.**
- A marauding India ran over Iran in a one-sided summit clash. Raiders Ajay Thakur and Monu Goyat picked up touches at will, while the famed Iranian defence crumbled on the big stage. **Surjeet Singh (7 points) stood out as the best among the antis.**

India Go Down Fighting To Australia in Champions Trophy Hockey Final

- **India lost 1-3 to Australia in shootout in the summit clash of Champions Trophy hockey in Breda, the Netherlands.**

IOA announces 524-member contingent of athletes for Asian Games

- The **Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has announced a 524- member contingent of athletes for the Asian Games in Indonesia** beginning from 18th of next month.
- The contingent comprises **277 men and 247 women athletes.**
- The **IOA has decided against sending the men and women football teams this time as they are ineligible under the existing criteria set by the Olympic body.**

Legalise Gambling, Betting On Sports, Says Law Commission

- **Gambling and betting on sports including cricket should be legalised,** the **Law Commission** told the centre pitching for stronger laws **to curb match fixing and incidents of cheating.**

Sports Authority of India set to be renamed as Sports India

- More than 34 years after coming into existence, the **Sports Authority of India is set to be renamed as Sports India.**
- The **sports body, established in 1984, organised its 50th General Body meeting,** where it was also decided that coaches will be given a say in decision making and the food expenses for athletes will also be increased.

France reach 2018 World Cup final, beat Belgium 1-0

- France qualified for the 2018 World Cup final with a 1-0 win over Belgium in Saint Petersburg. Samuel Umtiti headed in a corner swung in by Antoine Griezmann in the 51st-minute to give France the lead. **With this win France has reached their third World Cup final.**

Mario Mandzukic stars as Croatia down England to enter first FIFA World Cup final

- Croatia will play France in the FIFA World Cup 2018 final after they beat England 2-1 -- thanks to a Mario Mandzukic goal in the second period of extra time.
- Croatia booked their place in the final of the FIFA World Cup for the first time in their history.
- Croatia, a small east European nation of just 40 lakh population, became the lowest ranked team ever to reach a World Cup final to be held on Sunday in Moscow.
- With such a modest population, they are the smallest country to get to a World Cup final since Uruguay back in 1950.

Tokyo 2020 Olympic torch relay to start in Fukushima

- Tokyo Olympic organizers said the torch relay for the 2020 Games will start on March 26 that year in Fukushima Prefecture, which was heavily hit by the 2011 earthquake-tsunami-nuclear disaster.

India bag four medals at Asia Cup Archery

- India has bagged four medals in the Asia Cup World Archery Ranking Tournament Stage 3 in Taipei.
- The feat comprised 3 silver medals and a bronze. India also finished joint third with Iran in the championship.
- Korea topped the tally with 14 medals, 8 of them being gold. Taipei bagged 5 medals, two of them being gold.

France takes the FIFA World cup home after 20 years

- France's first goal came off a Croatian's head. The second was scored with the aid of the Argentine referee, and became the first video-assistant-reviewed goal in World Cup final history.
- The title is France's second and the first since it won on home soil in 1998, and it ended a thrilling run by Croatia. The Croats survived three consecutive extra-time games and two penalty shootouts to reach their first final.
- France head coach Didier Deschamps became the third ever individual to win the World Cup as a player and as manager after Mario Zagallo and Franz Beckenbauer.

IOC announce seven new events for 2022 Olympics

- Seven new events will be included in the programme for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has confirmed.
- The next Winter Olympics will now include: women's monobob, Big Air freestyle skiing for men and women, plus mixed team events in short track speed skating, ski jumping, ski aerials and snowboardcross.

IOC sends a signal appointing a young Afghan girl

- By nominating woman Afghan basketball player, IOC sends a signal to countries where women face obstacles to pursue sports. The International Olympic Committee named a young Afghan woman, Samira Asghari, among nine candidates for membership of the body in a move to boost women's rights.

India finishes 18th

- Kenya topped the medals table at the IAAF World under-20 athletics championships with six gold, four silver and one bronze medal while India, which won a lone gold through quarter-miler Hima Das, finished in the 18th spot.

- Japan was the best Asian nation in the table with six medals, including two golds and two silvers.

Boxing: India bag seven Gold medals to finish at the top of Vojvodina youth tournament

- Indian boxers ruled the ring at the Golden Glove of Vojvodina youth tournament at Subotica in Serbia, ending with a whopping seven Gold medals to claim the overall top spot.
- India claimed the numero uno position with 17 medals - 7 Gold, 6 Silver and 4 Bronze. The Gold medal winners were Aman, Akash Kumar, S. Barun Singh, Vijaydeep, Nitu, Divya Pawar, and Lalita.

India bags 8 medals at Junior Asian Wrestling Championship

- India won 8 medals in the Junior Asian Wrestling Championship which concluded in New Delhi. The medals comprised 2 gold, 3 silver and as many bronze. Sachin Rathi won the gold after winning the bout in the 74 kilogram category.
- Iran with 189 points topped the team championship. India with 173 points finished second while Uzbekistan with 128 points came third.

Miraitowa and Someity: Tokyo 2020 Olympics mascots revealed

- Meet Miraitowa and Someity – the smiling, waving mascots charged with building excitement for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics.
- The name of the Olympics mascot, Miraitowa, fuses the Japanese words for future and eternity. Someity, the Paralympics mascot, is derived from Somei-yoshino, a type of cherry blossom, and is a play on words with the English phrase “So mighty”.

World Junior Squash Championships begins in Chennai

- The Men's team event of the World Junior Squash Championships begins in Chennai.
- A total of 24 countries, divided into eight groups, are taking part.

734 youngsters shortlisted under the KHELO INDIA TALENT DEVELOPMENT Scheme

- Following the successful conduct of the Khelo India School Games, Sports Authority of India took another significant step towards the development of sports, cleared 734 players for a scholarship programme under Khelo India Talent Identification Development scheme.

Indian women's compound archery team creates history ahead of Asian Games

- Indian women's compound archery team created history by scaling to the top of the world rankings in the recently published chart which is bound to give a big boost ahead of next month's Asian Games in Indonesia.

Kenya to host 2020 IAAF World U-20 championships

- The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) has chosen Kenya to host the 2020 World under 20 championships.
- The event will come three years after Nairobi staged the U-18 world championships, an event which went off smoothly despite leading nations such as the United States, Britain, Canada and Australia pulling out citing insecurity in the country.

International Army Games 2018 declared open in Moscow

- The International Army Games 2018 at Patriot Park in Moscow region was declared open by Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu. Indian teams are taking part in two major competitions-- Tank Biathlon event at Alabino ranges, Moscow region and Elbrus Ring competition in Caucasus Mountains.

- The games are being held from July 28 to August 11 at 24 training grounds in **seven countries namely Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Iran, Kazakhstan, China and Russia**. It is for the **first time that Armenia and Iran** are co-hosting events of the Army Games.

Egypt beat England to win World Junior squash team title

- **Egypt defeated England, 2-0 to win the boy's title at the WSF-World Junior Squash team championship in Chennai. Egypt's Marwan Tarek**, who lost the individual championship final, **defeated Nick Wall of England in straight games**. The first game saw Tarek poised to win easily before Wall fought back to 10-all. The Egyptian, however, snatched it on extra points and rode the momentum to seal the tie.



AWARDS



Swedish intellectuals form new literature prize in Nobel protest

- **More than 100 Swedish intellectuals have joined forces to form a new prize-giving body** in protest after the Swedish Academy, which selects Nobel laureates, was plunged into crisis over its long-standing ties to a man accused of assaulting several women.
- The **alternative honour serves to denounce “bias, arrogance and sexism,”** according to its founders The New Academy, whose members include authors, artists and journalists.
- The **new literature award — which carries a prize of one million kronor (around 97,000 euros, \$113,000) raised from crowdfunding and donations — will be handed out at a December 10 ceremony, the same day as the Nobel banquet.**
- The new literature prize is the latest award to be dubbed an alternative to the Nobel, joining the Swedish Right Livelihood Award honouring those who work to improve the planet, and Finland’s Millennium Technology Prize.

Artist Anjolie Ela Menon conferred the Kalidas Award for visual arts

- **Noted artist Anjolie Ela Menon, received the National Kalidas Samman for visual arts from the Madhya Pradesh government.**
- The award was conferred in recognition of her insightful and sensitive portrayal of the identity and spirit of women through her meaningful paintings in a variety of media.

Michael Ondaatje's 'The English Patient' voted best-ever Man Booker Prize winner in 50 years

- **Michael Ondaatje's 'The English Patient' was named the greatest-ever winner of the Man Booker Prize** at an event celebrating five decades of the prestigious literary award.
- The **Canadian writer's tale of love and conflict during World War II was awarded the Golden Man Booker Prize** for fiction after winning a public vote.
- **'The English Patient' won the Booker in 1992 and was made into a 1996 movie starring Ralph Fiennes and Juliette Binoche that won nine Academy Awards.**

Man Booker Prize for Fiction is a literary prize awarded each year for the best original novel written in the English language and published in the UK. Percy Howard Newby was the first winner of the Booker Prize, his novel *Something to Answer For* having received the inaugural award in 1969. In 1970, Bernice Rubens became the first woman to win the Booker Prize, for *The Elected Member*. The 2017 prize was awarded to George Saunders for *Lincoln in the Bardo*.

India's ICZM Project wins World Bank's internal award

- India's Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) project has won the World Bank's internal award for exceptional performance in achieving many development goals, a top Environment Ministry official said.
- Union Environment secretary C K Mishra said the ICZM project is among the eight projects awarded, selected out of 42 final nominations received from the World Bank Task Teams in the South Asian Countries.

Prem Watsa named 'NRI of the Year Award'

- Prem Watsa, founder of Fairfax Financial Holdings, was conferred the Special Jury 'NRI of the Year Award' at the fifth edition of Times NOW & ICICI Bank, NRI of the Year Awards 2018. Indian football team captain Sunil Chhetri was presented with the 'Global Indian Icon' award.
- The Times Network and ICICI Bank awards were hosted in Mumbai. Times Now and ICICI Bank NRI of the Year Awards powered by Global Indian International School (GIIS) are now the most watched awards in the non-resident Indian (NRI) community.

Aruna Sairam gets Sangita Kalanidhi Award

- Prominent Carnatic vocalist Aruna Sairam has been selected for this year's Sangita Kalanidhi Award, instituted by the Music Academy, Chennai awarded yearly to a Carnatic Musician.

France FIFA World Cup 2018 victors to get Legion of Honour

- France's victorious World Cup players will all be awarded the Legion of Honour.
- No date has yet been set for the ceremony to hand over France's highest award for "exceptional service" to the nation, which follows the team's 4-2, wins over Croatia in Russia.
- Legion of Honour (full name: National Order of the Legion of Honour) is the highest French order of merit for military and civil merits, established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte and retained by all the divergent governments and regimes later holding power in France, up to the present.

Michael Ondaatje named in Man Booker Prize long list

- Canadian author Michael Ondaatje has again made the Man Booker Prize list with his latest novel "Warlight," weeks after his book "The English Patient" was named the best work of fiction from the last five decades of the literary prize.
- Organizers announced the 13 books in the long list for the prestigious award, chosen from 171 submissions this year the highest number of titles that has been put forward in the prize's 50-year history.
- Ondaatje's "The English Patient," which won the Booker in 1992, was named winner of the Golden Man Booker winner on July 8, a special award to mark the Booker's 50th anniversary.

Man Booker Prize for Fiction (formerly known as the Booker-McConnell Prize and commonly known simply as the Booker Prize) is a literary prize awarded each year for the best original novel written in the English language and published in the UK. It was instituted in 1969 and Bernice Rubens became the first woman to win the Booker Prize, for *The Elected Member* in 1970.

Man Booker prize 2018 longlist includes graphic novel for the first time

- Nick Drnaso's **Sabrina**, the **first graphic novel** ever to reach the **Booker longlist**, explores the chilling effect of 24-hour news after a girl has disappeared.
- Judges picked it as a **contender for the £50,000 prize** ahead of titles from former winners including **Pat Barker**, Julian Barnes, Peter Carey and Alan Hollinghurst.

Ramakanta Rath conferred Odisha's highest literary award

- Eminent poet **Ramakanta Rath** was conferred with the the state's highest literary award **Atibadi Jagannath Das Samman** for 2018.
- **Culture and Tourism Minister Ashok Chandra Panda** conferred the award to **Rath** at a special function organised by **Odisha Sahitya Akademi**.

Gopalkrishna Gandhi to be honoured with Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award

- The **24th Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award** to be given to **Gopalkrishna Gandhi** for his **outstanding contribution** towards the promotion of communal harmony, peace and goodwill
- The **Congress party** announced that the the **24th Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award** will go to **former West Bengal Governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi** “for his outstanding contribution towards the promotion of communal harmony, peace and goodwill”.
- The **Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award** is awarded on the occasion of the birth anniversary of late **former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi**. It was instituted to commemorate the lasting contribution made by him to promote peace, communal harmony and fight against violence. It carries a citation and cash award of **Rs. 10 lakh**.

Two Indians among Ramon Magsaysay Award winners

- **Two Indians, Bharat Vatwani and Sonam Wangchuk** are among the six winners of this year's **Ramon Magsaysay Award**.
- The awards declared are regarded as the **Asian version of the Nobel Prize**.
- The **Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation** said in its citation that **Vatwani** is being recognised for his **tremendous courage and healing compassion in embracing India's mentally-afflicted destitutes**.
- **Wangchuk** has been recognised for his **uniquely systematic, collaborative and community-driven reform of learning systems in remote northern India**, improving the life opportunities of **Ladakhi youth in Jammu and Kashmir**.
- The **others award winners** are from **Cambodia, East Timor, Philippines and Vietnam**.

Ramon Magsaysay Award is an annual award established to perpetuate former **Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay's** example of **integrity in governance, courageous service to the people, and pragmatic idealism within a democratic society**. The prize was established in **April 1957** by the trustees of the **Rockefeller Brothers Fund** based in **New York City** with the concurrence of the **Philippine government**.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Pakistan gets its first Sikh newsreader

- In a first, a Sikh man has been hired as an anchor by a news channel in Pakistan.
- Harmeet Singh, who is a resident of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province's Chakesar city, has joined the Public News channel.
- Manmeet Kaur had become the first female Sikh reporter in Pakistan.

Mukesh Ambani gets another 5 years as Reliance Chairman

- Shareholders of Reliance Industries have approved giving Mukesh Ambani another five years as the Chairman and Managing Director of the company.
- Ambani has been on the board of Reliance Industries Ltd since 1977 and was elevated as Chairman of the company after the death of his father and group patriarch Dhirubhai Ambani in July 2002.
- After Dhirubhai Ambani's demise on July 6, 2002, Mukesh was elected Chairman and Managing Director of RIL, while younger brother Anil was elected Vice Chairman and MD. The two siblings parted ways in 2005 and divided the business their father created between them.

Indian-origin lawyer named acting head of DEA by Trump administration

- Uttam Dhillon, an Indian-origin lawyer serving in the White House, has been named the acting administrator of the drug enforcement administration (DEA), the agency that combats the smuggling and use of narcotics in the US.

India's Satyarup Siddhanta scales world's highest volcano, Mt Ojos del Salado

- Satyarup Siddhanta has become the second Indian mountaineer after Malli Mastan Babu to climb Mt Ojos del Salado, the highest volcano in the world.
- Ojos del Salado is a stratovolcano (a volcano built up of alternate layers of lava and ash) in the Andes on the Argentina-Chile border and the highest active volcano in the world at 6,893 metres (22,615 ft).
- Satyarup is also set to be the first Indian to climb Mt Sidley, the highest volcano of Antarctica, which will help him realise the dream of scaling seven summits and seven volcanic summits.

8-year-old yoga champion named 'British Indian of the Year'

- An eight-year-old Indian-origin schoolboy who is the under-11 UK national yoga champion has been named the British Indian of the Year for his achievements in the field.
- Ishwar Sharma has won a string of titles in both individual and artistic yoga, most recently a gold medal representing Great Britain at the World Student Games 2018 in Winnipeg, Canada, in June.

Amitabh Malhotra appointed HSBC India Head - Investment Banking

- The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Ltd. said it had appointed Amitabh Malhotra as the head of investment banking for HSBC India.
- Mr. Malhotra will lead the Investment Banking and Equity Capital Markets business, a release said. Prior to HSBC, he has worked at Rothschild India. He has also worked with KPMG and J.P. Morgan.

UK foreign minister Boris Johnson resigns over Brexit discord

- Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson quit over Prime Minister Theresa May's plans to leave the European Union, the second resignation in a day leaving the British leader's Brexit plans all but in tatters.

US President Donald Trump nominates Brett Kavanaugh as Supreme Court Judge

- US President Donald Trump has **nominated conservative Brett Kavanaugh** as the Supreme Court Judge to succeed Justice Anthony Kennedy, who announced his retirement recently.
- **Kavanaugh of Maryland**, currently a judge in the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Ambani brothers, Salman, Priyanka in top 500 global entertainment leaders

- **Billionaire Ambani brothers Mukesh and Anil** and Bollywood superstars **Salman Khan and Priyanka Chopra** are among the dozen **Indians** named in Variety magazine's list of **500 most influential business leaders** shaping the global \$ 2 trillion entertainment industry.
- Other Indians in the list include writer-director **Karan Johar**, Star India CEO **Uday Shankar**, Essel Group Chairman **Subhash Chandra**, **Aditya Chopra** of **Yash Raj Films**, **Balaji Telefilms'** **Ekta Kapoor**, **Zee Entertainment CEO Punit Goenka** and **Siddharth Kapur** of The Film and Television Producers Guild of India Ltd.
- "Variety500 is an index of the **500 most influential business leaders** shaping the global \$2 trillion entertainment industry," Variety said on its website. "Updated annually, the Variety500 reflects the accomplishments of its members over the previous 12 months."

Anurag Thakur made BJP chief whip

- **Hamirpur MP Anurag Thakur** has been **appointed the BJP's chief whip in the Lok Sabha**.
- The appointment was announced on the eve of the monsoon session of Parliament with Mr. **Thakur replacing Ramesh Singh**, who has been appointed **Madhya Pradesh BJP chief** and is preoccupied with the Assembly elections there at the end of the year.

Prof Anil D Sahasrabudhe reappointed AICTE Chairman

- The union government has renewed the appointment of **Prof Anil D Sahasrabudhe** as the **chairman of the technical and professional education regulator All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)**.
- **Prof. Sahasrabudhe**, who was a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati joined AICTE as **Chairman on July 17, 2015**.

Amazon's founder Jeff Bezos becomes the richest person in modern history

- **Jeff Bezos** is the **richest person in modern history**.
- The **Amazon.com Inc. founder's net worth broke \$150 billion**, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
- That's about **\$55 billion more than Microsoft Corp. co-founder Bill Gates**, the world's second-richest person.

Youngest Indian Girl who climbed Everest, Now Scales Mount Kilimanjaro in three day

- There's no stopping **17-year-old Shivangi Pathak**. After becoming the **youngest Indian woman to reach the peak of Mount Everest**, Shivangi has set a new record. The **Haryana girl** has scaled **Africa's highest peak, Mount Kilimanjaro in three days**.

Ramachandra Guha pens 'the most ambitious book' on Mahatma Gandhi

- **Renowned historian and author of several bestselling books**, including the highly acclaimed "**India After Gandhi**" and "**Gandhi Before India**", **Ramachandra Guha** has **penned a new book on the father of the nation**, which has just gone to the press and will be out in September.
 - **Billed as the most definitive new biography of Gandhi**, the upcoming book is titled "**Gandhi: The years that changed the world (1914-1948)**" and will be published by Penguin Random House India.
-

MISCELLANEOUS

Mumbai Airport among least Punctual Airports in the World

- The IGI airport in Delhi, the 16th busiest in the world, ranked poorly in flight punctuality, securing the 451st position among the 513 airports worldwide, according to a study conducted by OAG, a global leader in providing flight information.
- The Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai, the second busiest in the country, fared much worse in flight punctuality as it was ranked fifth least punctual airport in the world, just ahead of airports such as Jakarta Soekarno-Hatta Airport in Indonesia and Islamabad airport in Pakistan.

Indians awarded by President Trump

- At least two dozen children of Indian descent were among the 161 young students honoured by President last month at the White House.
- They were selected for the Presidential Scholars Programme, considered the nation's highest honour for high school students.

Mumbai's Victorian and Art Deco buildings get World Heritage tag

- The Elephanta Caves and the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) in Mumbai now have a companion on the UNSECO World Heritage Site List.
- The city's Victorian and Art Deco ensembles were given the green light by the International Council for Monuments and Sites, an advisory body to the UNSECO, thus securing India its 37th World Heritage site, and Maharashtra its fifth.
- The buildings around the Fort, Churchgate and Marine Drive areas of the city, with notable structures such as the Bombay High Court, Elphinstone College, the National Gallery of Modern Art and CSMT, form a part of the collection of Victorian, Neo-Classical and Indo-Saracenic architecture in the city.
- Residential buildings along Oval Maidan and around the Cricket Club of India, and the first row of buildings along Marine Drive, as well as the Regal and Eros cinema theatres, are part of the Art Deco cluster. Mumbai's Victorian buildings are amongst the finest and most cohesive 19th century Victorian architecture in the world, and the city's Art Deco buildings of the 20th century make up the second largest homogenous collection in the world.

In a first, CRPF inducts 500 women personnel to counter protesters in Kashmir

- In a first, a special contingent of about 500 women CRPF personnel has been dispatched to Kashmir valley for regular security duties and tackles the unruly crowds and stone-pelters, including women.
- The CRPF, India's largest paramilitary force with about 3 lakh personnel, has about 60 battalions deployed in Jammu and Kashmir for law and order and counter-militancy operations.

'More than 19,500 mother tongues spoken in India'

- More than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongues, according to the latest analysis of a Registrar General and Census Commissioner Census released this week. There are 121 languages which are spoken by 10,000 or more people in India, which has a population of 121 crores, it said. The Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, said since a household may consist of persons related by blood or of unrelated persons or a mix of both, it is absolutely necessary to ask every person about her or his mother tongue.
- The number of such raw returns of mother tongues has totalled 19,569, the report of the 2011 census said. However, 96.71 per cent population in the country has one of the 22 scheduled languages as their mother tongue.

Puducherry's first woman DGP Sundari Nanda assumes charge

- IPS officer Sundari Nanda assumed charge as Puducherry Director General of Police, becoming the first woman to head the force in the Union Territory.
- A 1988 batch officer, she was transferred to Puducherry from the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

Madhya Pradesh government launches outstanding power bill waiver scheme 'Sambal'

- In Madhya Pradesh, the government has launched an outstanding power bill waiver scheme and subsidised power scheme 'Sambal' for labourers and poor families.
- Under the scheme, the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families would be provided electricity at a cost of 200 rupees per month.
- One crore 83 lakh workers registered under Sambal Yojana in the state till now. Under this scheme, outstanding electricity bill worth five thousand 179 crores rupees is to be waived off.

"Behdienkhlam" festival at Jowai, Meghalaya

- The Union Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (I/C), Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh attended the famous 4-day Meghalaya Annual Cultural Festival, "Behdienkhlam", held every year at the small peripheral town of Jowai, Meghalaya.

EC launches Braille-enabled Voter IDs

- The Election Commission launched voter identity cards with Braille label to ensure greater participation of persons with visual impairment in the electoral process.
- The Commission also unveiled a strategic framework on "Accessible Elections".

Dr. Mahesh Shrama inaugurates exhibition titled "Arth - art for earth"

- Union Minister of State for Culture (I/c), Dr. Mahesh Shrama inaugurated exhibition titled "Arth - art for earth" at IGNCA, New Delhi 'ARTH - ART FOR EARTH' by Manav Gupta consists of "Excavations in Hymns of Clay"-a suite of environmental art installations by Manav Gupta weaving all of them with a storyline and poetry.
- It is an evolving site, specific and dynamic engagement with the space it has an interface with - whether it be the Travelling or the Permanent editions.

The book of Ansari's speeches, titled Dare I question: Reflections on Contemporary Challenges

- The book of Former vice-president Hamid Ansari's speeches, titled Dare I question: Reflections on Contemporary Challenges, is to be released on July 17 in Delhi by former chief justice of India Justice T S Thakur.
- As Foreign Service officer, Ansari had served in West Asia and was India's Permanent Representative to the UN. He also served as vice-chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University and chairman of the National Minorities Commission before becoming vice-president.

Kerala, Delhi startups win Global Impact challenge

- Kerala-based startup Ajna and Brun Health from Delhi won the Global Impact Challenge (GIC), jointly organised by the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) and US-based Singularity University, at the "grand finale" in Thiruvananthapuram.
- EasyKrishi (Karnataka), SunEmison Solar (Chhattisgarh), and SignNEXT Assistive Technology LLP (Kerala) were declared the top three performers behind the winners.

- They were awarded certificates and cash prize of Rs 50,000 each. The India GIC, which began on July 2, was aimed at identifying inspiring startups trying to find solutions addressing global challenges in learning, healthcare and environment sectors.

Stainless steel charkha unveiled at Sabarmati riverfront

- BJP president Amit Shah has unveiled a stainless steel Charkha at the Sabarmati riverfront in Ahmedabad.
- The charkha, which is 21 feet in length, 11 feet in height, and 6.5 feet in breadth, is made of chromium-nickel stainless steel and is installed on the Sabarmati Riverfront near the Riverfront Park, right across the Sabarmati Ashram.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurates 16th Workshop on Greenhouse Gas Inventories in Asia

- Union Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan has inaugurated the 16th Workshop on Greenhouse Gas Inventories in Asia (WGIA16). Dr. Harsh Vardhan stressed that while efforts of experts are necessary, there is also a need for an active involvement of people in the fight against climate change.

Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani gives approval for Rs 39-cr ‘Seema Darshan’ project

- Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has given in-principle approval for the 39-crore rupees ‘Seema Darshan’ project for developing more infrastructure facilities from T-Junction to Zero Point at Nadabet near Suigam in Banaskantha district to instil patriotism through a unique Gujarat initiative for border tourism.

Aadhaar must for health mission cover

- Union government has mandated the use of Aadhaar card for administering its massive Ayushman Bharat, or National Health Mission, that assures a Rs 5 lakh health cover to 10 crore families.
- While possessing an Aadhaar card isn’t mandatory to avail services, a proof of enrolment, or request for enrolment, is mandatory.

Government allows photography at all protected monuments except Ajanta Caves, Leh Palace and Taj Mahal

- The Archaeological Survey of India has issued an order allowing photography within the premises of all centrally protected monuments or sites, except at Ajanta Caves, Leh Palace and Taj Mahal.

Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar inaugurates 17th World Sanskrit Conference in Vancouver, Canada

- Human Resource Development Minister Shri Prakash Javadekar inaugurates the 17th World Sanskrit Conference is held at Vancouver, Canada from 9th July to 13th July, 2018.
- The World Sanskrit Conference is held in various countries across the globe once in every three years and so far it has been held thrice in India.

The book “Winning Like Sourav: Think & Succeed Like Ganguly” written by Abhirup Bhattacharya

- The book titled “Winning Like Sourav: Think & Succeed Like Ganguly” has written by Abhirup Bhattacharya. Bhattacharya says the book, replete with statistics and anecdotes, is not a biography but attempts at drawing management lessons and inspiration from the life of an exemplary skipper like Ganguly.
- Bhattacharya, who previously authored “Winning Like Virat: Think and Success Like Kohli”, says it was during Ganguly’s tenure that several youngsters came to the fore and created a new core for the team.

Kolkata gets all-woman police squad

- **Kolkata Police unleashed a new weapon against eve-teasers, stalkers and roadside Romeos: an all-woman motorbike squad.**
- **“Introducing “The Winners” — a special all-women patrolling team to combat and prevent crimes like molestation, eve-teasing etc. to make public places safer for women,”.**

Proposal for construction of break water harbour in Konkan

- **The Nivati-Medha break water harbour in the Konkan region of Maharashtra is being considered under “12 Champion Sectors initiative” of the Ministry of Commerce. It was informed by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry and Civil Aviation after a meeting with Rajan Teli, former member of Maharashtra Legislative Council, from the Konkan region.**

Panel for automatic suspension in RS

- **The rules review committee set up by Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu has, in its interim report, made two key recommendations: automatic suspension of wilful offenders and changing question-hour timing.**
- **The two-member committee is headed by former secretary general of Rajya Sabha V.K. Agnihotri.**
- **The report has to be approved by the Rules Committee of the Upper House, which is headed by Mr. Naidu and has members from across parties.**

Reliance pitched board member Mashelkar as Jio’s Chancellor

- **Scientist R A Mashelkar, who was reappointed as “national research professor” in 2016 by the NDA-II government and currently heads the National Innovation Foundation under the Department of Science and Technology, was pitched to the government committee as the Chancellor of Reliance Foundation’s proposed Jio Institute.**
- **Apart from Mashelkar, who is also the chairman of the Reliance Innovation Council, Dipak C Jain, former director of Sasin Graduate Institute of Business Administration in Bangkok, will serve as the Vice Chancellor (V-C) of Jio Institute.**

World famous Rath Yatra is celebrated in Odisha

- **The Jagannath Rath Yatra falls on July 14 this year. The festival marks the journey of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra (Lord Jagannath’s elder brother) and Goddess Subhadra (Lord Jagannath’s sister) from Jagannath temple in Puri to Gundicha temple. Devotees pull the three colourfully decorated chariots which carry the three idols of the deities.**
- **Lord Jagannath Ratha Yatra is a major Hindu festival that commences on Dwitiya Tithi during Shukla Paksha of Ashada month. Currently it falls in month of June or July in Gregorian calendar. This year, temple city Puri hosted its 141st annual Rath Yatra.**

BBC World Service launches its first Gujarati language television news bulletin

- **The BBC World Service has launched its first Gujarati language television news bulletin. ‘BBC Samachar’ will be broadcast live five days a week from Delhi.**
- **The launch is part of a wider BBC World Service expansion, which has seen 12 new language services launched around the world over the last 12 months.**
- **Four new language services have been launched online in India - Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi and Telugu.**

Second National Tourism Conclave organised in Rajasthan

- **The second National Tourism Conclave was organised in Jaipur as top officials of the state tourism department said a number of “pro-tourism” projects being executed in the state would give a major boost to the sector.**

JK Rowling's next book Lethal White to release under her pseudonym Robert Galbraith

- JK Rowling will come out with the fourth novel in the series about the exploits of private investigator Cormoran Strike on 18 September under her pseudonym Robert Galbraith.
- Lethal White is billed by publishers Hachette as the most epic Robert Galbraith novel yet, a gripping mystery and a page-turning next instalment in the ongoing story of Strike and his assistant Robin Ellacott.

Salman Khan, Akshay Kumar among world's 100 highest-paid entertainers

- Bollywood actors Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar (for the second successive year) have made it to the 'World's 100 highest-paid entertainers', released by Forbes.
- Another popular superstar Shah Rukh Khan – who was ranked 65th in the Forbes 2017 list – has dropped out of this year's Forbes list.
- Akshay Kumar has secured the 76th spot – tied with Scarlett Johansson -- in the 2018 top 100 list with earnings of Rs 270 crore (\$40.5 million) this year. Salman Khan's earnings in 2017-18 so far have been Rs 251 crore (\$37.7 million) which gave him the 82nd spot.

South Africa pays tribute to Nelson Mandela

- South Africa marked 100 years since Nelson Mandela's birth, with Barack Obama hosting a youth leadership project as Archbishop Desmond Tutu led emotional tributes to the late anti-apartheid icon.

Pondicherry International Film Festival

- Started in 2017, Pickurflick Indie Film Festival aims to showcase independent cinema from across the globe. The festival celebrates the true spirit of indie film making and provides a platform where Indie film makers can showcase & get recognition for their work.
- The annual edition from this year onwards has been renamed as Pondicherry international film festival 2018 (PIFF 2018).

Named 'highest paid actor' by Forbes - Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson - started

- Forbes has named Hollywood actor Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson the highest paid actor in the world. He has become one of Hollywood's most bankable star, by earning double the money than what he earned in 2017. His earning at \$124 million last year was the largest ever recorded on the Forbes celebrity list.

Sahapedia's India Heritage Walk fete wins PATA award

- India Heritage Walk Festival, a collaboration of Sahapedia and YES Arts & Culture, has been awarded the PATA Gold Award 2018 for its recently concluded pan-India event.
- Sahapedia is an open online resource on the arts, cultures and heritage of India.

Mizo Hnahthlak festival unfolds the colourful traditional ethos of Mizoram

- In yet another celebration to revive unity and brotherhood- socially and culturally- the first international festival of Mizoram was organised in Aizawl, which brought the Mizo ethnic community from across borders.
- Mizoram, one of the hill states of India and located at the easternmost part of the Northeast region, came alive as people in the region thronged Dengthuama Hall in Aizawl city and celebrated the first international cultural festival of the Mizo ethnic group with pomp and gaiety.

Centre Forms Panel to Tackle Industrial Pollution near Taj Mahal

- The union government has formed a committee comprising officials of the environment ministry, experts from NEERI, IITs and various other forums to look into the issue of industrial pollution around the iconic Taj Mahal.

- **The committee** will be headed by C K Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- A high-level inter-ministerial meeting was held in Delhi to deliberate on the issues and action to be taken on a war footing **to conserve the iconic Mughal monument, days after a rap from the Supreme Court on the issue.**

India accounts for 1/5th of global deaths from floods

- **India accounts for one-fifth of global deaths due to floods**, according to government data that lends perspective to a new World Bank study that says climate change will **lower the standards of living of nearly half of the country's population by 2050.**
- **As many as 107,487 people died due to heavy rains and floods across India over 64 years** between 1953 and 2017.

Environment Ministry Reintroduces Award for Hindi Authors

- The environment ministry has **decided to re-introduce a scheme for awarding Indian authors** for their original work in Hindi on subjects related to environment including pollution and climate change.
- The **Medini Puraskar Yojna**, which aims at promoting original writing of books in Hindi, will have four awards for authors of various environmental topics.

‘Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India’ Scheme

- Scheme titled ‘Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India’ is being implemented by the Ministry of Culture with the objective of reinvigorating and revitalizing various institutions, groups, individuals, identified non-MoC institutions, non-government organisations, researchers and scholars so that they may engage in activities/ projects **for strengthening, protecting, preserving and promoting the rich intangible cultural heritage of India.**

Yadagirigutta temple gets ISO certification

- In a first in Telangana, Lord Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple located at Yadadri, Telangana got ISO certification.
- The ISO certification was **given for the temple on environment, hygiene, security, management and power supply aspects.** It was issued by HYM International Certification Private Limited.

NCERT textbooks to now have QR code

- With the objective of helping students understand chapters better by watching a film or reading additional content on laptops and digital boards, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is all set to introduce QR code in their textbooks.
- Quick Response (QR) Code is a machine-readable code consisting of an array of black and white squares, typically used for storing web-links or other information for reading by the camera on a smart-phone.

U.P. police to set up ‘Digital Armies’

- To curb incidents of lynching and violence due to fake news on social media, the U.P. police will set up ‘Digital Armies’ of prominent residents to keep a vigil on inflammatory posts and rumour-mongering.
- All the 1,469 police stations in the State will have a WhatsApp group consisting 250 members including ex-servicemen, doctors and journalists.

NITI Aayog mulls using PSUs’ CSR funds on ‘aspirational districts’

- The NITI Aayog is seeking to realign the deployment of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in accordance with the pressing requirements in aspirational districts.
- The realignment would be **focussed on health, nutrition and education.** It is expected to make a visible impact as the CSR funds of these enterprises are **in the excess of Rs.3, 200 crore a year.**

Manoj Sinha inaugurates Ghazipur Regional Rail Training Institute

- In a bid to strengthen the expertise and capabilities of the employees of North-Eastern Railways, Minister of State for Railways Manoj Sinha inaugurated Regional Rail Training Institute (RRTI) at Uttar Pradesh's Ghazipur. He also inaugurated the newly constructed washing pit at Ghazipur City station.

India's BRO completes key road in Bhutan

- India's Border Roads Organisation has completed construction of a strategically key road in Bhutan, linking the neighbouring country's border town of Phuentshogling with its capital city of Thimphu.
- The nearly 30-km long Damchu–Chukha road, which crisscrosses rugged and difficult terrain, has been constructed at a cost of Rs 287 crore under India-assisted development projects in the Himalayan nation.

Nearly 2.67 lakh more houses sanctioned for urban poor in 10 states under PMAY (U)

- The Centre approved construction of nearly 2.67 lakh more affordable houses for the poor in 10 states under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (Urban), with Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra being allocated over 50,000 housing units each.
- According to the official, with the sanctioning of 2,67,546 more housing units, after subsuming projects under the Rajiv Awas Yojana, the total number of houses being funded under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna would be 53,74,306 houses.

Indian Railways will launch 'Mission Satyanishtha' to wipe out corruption

- All the 13 lakh employees of the Indian Railways will take turns to swear an oath publicly to “bring about integrity” and “eradicate corruption” – beginning with the top brass and carrying on to the lowest levels in the organisation throughout the year.
- Termed “Mission Satyanishtha”, the program will involve railwaymen attending formal training course on probity and integrity in public life.

Hotel Mumbai to premiere at Toronto International Film Festival

- Hotel Mumbai, a movie about the 2008 terrorist attacks on Mumbai, specifically the siege of Taj Mahal Palace and Tower Hotel, will have its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival that kicks off on September 6.
- The American-Australian production, directed by newbie Anthony Maras, stars Dev Patel and Anupam Kher in major roles; Patel also happens to be one of its producers.

Assam government to set up separate directorate for Divyangs

- The Assam government has decided to set up a separate directorate for the Divyangs. Social Welfare department to give 1 thousand rupees per month to all Divyangs as stipend.

Gadkari launched development projects worth Rs. 5,400 crore in Madhya Pradesh

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari launched development projects worth 5,400 crore rupees in Guna district of Madhya Pradesh.
- He also inaugurated 188 km of newly constructed road of three National Highways and laid the foundation stone for 226 km road of five National Highways at a function at Lal Parade ground in Guna.

Four Indian-origin names in list of Fortune's 40 young influential people

- Four persons of India-origin, including three women, have been named by Fortune among 40 of the most influential and inspiring young people in business under the age of 40. Instagram Cofounder and CEO Kevin Systrom and Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, both 34, are tied for first place on the Fortune '40 Under 40' list.

- Chief Finance Officer of the US' largest automaker, General Motors **Dhivya Suryadevara** comes in at the 4th spot, followed by Vimeo CEO Anjali Sud (14), Cofounder and Co-CEO of Robinhood Baiju Bhatt (24) and Female Founders Fund founding partner Anu Duggal (32).
- For the first time ever, Fortune also assembled a supplementary honour roll of the most impressive, young superstars who are transforming business at the leading edge of finance and technology.

International Children's Film Festival inaugurated

- West Bengal Governor K N Tripathi inaugurated the 18th International Children's Film Festival in which 36 films from 17 countries would be screened.
- The Governor also called for screening of one children's film in every cinema hall of the state every month.

Four new varsities to come up in West Bengal

- The West Bengal Cabinet gave its nod for setting up four new universities in the State.
- The universities would be run by the government and come up in Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, South Dinajpur and Murshidabad districts

Minister of Railways Inducts Five New Track Maintenance Machines

- Indian Railway had earlier introduced latest state of the art integrated track maintenance technology by way of inducting thirteen 09-3X Dynamic Tamping Express machines.
- Five new machines have been inducted which includes three highly efficient Dynamic Track Temping Machines, one Ballast Cleaning Machine and one Points and Crossings Tamping Machine.

Lok Sabha passes Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill

- The Lok Sabha passed the Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill, 2017 which has the provision of allowing a court trying an offence related to cheque bouncing, to direct the drawer to pay interim compensation to the complainant.

Former CIL chief P Bhattacharya's book traces journey of loss-making PSU

- The story of Coal India Ltd's (CIL) transformation from a hugely loss-making enterprise since its formation in the 70s into a profitable Maharatna PSU is told by its former chairman Partha Sarathi Bhattacharyya, who was among those who engineered the success.
- In "When Coal Turned Gold: The Making of a Maharatna Company", Bhattacharyya, the then chairman of Coal India Ltd who spearheaded the initial public offering (IPO) in 2010, comes live with a first-hand account of what caused such resounding success.

India, Japan holds Maritime Affairs Dialogue

- India and Japan held the fourth round of Maritime Affairs Dialogue in New Delhi during which key issues related to the Indo-Pacific region and maritime security were discussed.

World's oldest person, Chiyo Miyako, dies in Japan

- The oldest person in the world has died at age 117, officials in her home state in Japan. Chiyo Miyako, who was known to her family members as "the goddess," died, said officials in Kanagawa prefecture, south of Tokyo.
- Guinness World Records has confirmed that she was the world's oldest person. Her replacement is yet to be announced by Guinness, but according to media reports, the new oldest person is Kane Tanaka, a 115-year-old woman who lives in a nursing home in Fukuoka, a city in southern Japan.
- Miyako, born on May 2, 1901, became the world's oldest person in April after Nabi Tajima, a fellow Japanese national from the southern Kikai Island, died at age 117.

Government launches Swachh Bharat Internship to promote involvement of students in rural cleanliness

- Government of India launched a “Swachh Bharat Summer Internship- 100 hours of Swachhta” programme for the students of Universities and Higher Education Institutions.
- The students are to devote approximately 100 hours conducting Swachhta- related activities in villages selected by them and approved by their parent institution. The participants are to conduct (i) Information-Education- Communication activities for increasing awareness of village people about sanitation and hygiene and (ii) Solid Waste Management related activities in villages.

In Assam's updated citizen register, names of over 40 lakh not included

- The names of around 40 lakh of 3.29 crore applicants were missing from the Supreme-Court mandated final draft of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) released. The NRC has been updated for the first time since 1951 to account for illegal migration from neighbouring Bangladesh.
- The NRC is an exercise which was first carried out in 1951 to enumerate the citizens, their houses and holdings. The list was updated to weed out illegal immigrants as per a provision of the Assam Accord signed in 1985 after a six-year agitation against Bangladeshis.

Teen first Asian to swim UK-France channel

- A city college student, Prabhat Koli (19), who crossed the English Channel when he was 16, has become the first Asian to swim the choppy water from Jersey (an Island in the UK) to France in cold weather.
- The long-distance sea swimmer covered 25km in 6 hours and 54 minutes. He started off from La Coupe Point of Jersey, behind St Catherine's backwater and touched the shore of St Germain Plage on the Normandy coast of France.

Amul awarded marketer of year

- Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd. (GCMMF), the marketers of the popular Amul brand of milk and dairy products, was awarded the 'Marketer of the Year' award by the International Advertising Association of India (IAAI).
- Amul, the brand worth Rs 41,000 crore, is marketed by the GCMMF, the biggest cooperative owned by 36 lakh farmers of Gujarat. Amul, the most preferred brand in milk and dairy products, is not only known for its cooperative structure and farmer's faith, but is also known for its marketing and advertizing strategies.

GI logo, tagline launched

- Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu launched a logo and tagline for Geographical Indications (GI) to increase awareness about intellectual property rights (IPRs) in the country.
- A GI product is primarily an agricultural, natural or a manufactured product (handicraft and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory. Darjeeling Tea, Tirupati Laddu, Kangra Paintings, Nagpur Orange and Kashmir Pashmina are among the registered GIs in India.

Third BRICS Film Festival concluded with India Day

- The 3rd BRICS Film Festival took place in Durban, South Africa, along with the International Durban Film Festival (DIFF) from 22-27th July, 2018. The last day of the festival was celebrated as India Country Day, followed by Awards and Closing Ceremony.
- Awards won by Indian films in the 3rd BRICS Film Festival, Durban, South Africa: Best Actress: Bhanita Das, Village Rockstars, and Best Film: Newton by Amit Masurkar and Special Jury Award: Village Rockstars by Rima Das.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of Parliamentarism

- For the first time, 30 June this year is celebrated as the **International Day of Parliamentarism**. It is also the date, in 1889, on which the **Inter-Parliamentary Union** — the global organization of parliaments — was established.
- This Day celebrates parliaments and the ways in which parliamentary systems of government improve the day-to-day lives of people the world over. It is also an opportunity for parliaments to take stock, identify challenges, and ways to address them effectively.

International Day of Cooperatives 7 July

- On 7 July 2018, members of cooperatives around the world celebrate the **International Day of Cooperatives**.
- The theme of the day is ‘Sustainable societies through cooperation’ they will show how, thanks to their values, principles and governance structures, cooperatives have sustainability and resilience at their core, with concern for community as the seventh of their guiding principles.

Varanasi to host Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2019

- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2019** will be held in the holy city of Varanasi in January 2019.
- The theme of the three-day event, which is being organised in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's parliamentary constituency, will be 'Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India'.

World Population Day

- The UN estimated that it was 11 July, 1987, which the world's population reached five billion people. Since then it has been celebrated on this date every year.
- World Population day will run on the theme "Family Planning is a Human right" this year.

Malala Day

- Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate. On 12 July 2013, Yousafzai's 16th birthday, she spoke at the UN to call for worldwide access to education. The UN dubbed the event "Malala Day".

World Youth Skills Day

- To raise awareness on the importance of investing in youth skills development, the **United Nations General Assembly** designated 15 July every year as **World Youth Skills Day**.

Nelson Mandela Day

- **Nelson Mandela International Day 2018** marks 100 years since the birth of Nelson Mandela (18 July 1918). The Centenary is an occasion to reflect on his life and legacy, and to follow his call to “make of the world a better place.” The Nelson Mandela Foundation is dedicating this year's Mandela Day to Action Against Poverty, honouring Nelson Mandela's leadership and devotion to fighting poverty and promoting social justice for all.
- South Africa celebrates the 100th anniversary of Nelson Mandela's birth this week with a **flagship speech** by former U.S. President Barack Obama and an outpouring of memories and tributes to the late anti-apartheid leader.

19th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas being celebrated

- The 19th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas is celebrated. The day marks India's victory over Pakistan in the 1999 Kargil War and remembers those who sacrificed their lives for the country.
- On 26th July, 1999, India successfully took command of the high outposts which had been lost to Pakistani intruders. The war was fought for more than 60 days.

Word Hepatitis Day

- World Hepatitis Day, observed on July 28 every year, aims to raise global awareness of hepatitis — a group of infectious diseases known as Hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E — and encourage prevention, diagnosis and treatment. Hepatitis affects hundreds of millions of people worldwide, causing acute and chronic disease and killing close to 1.4 million people every year.
- The theme for World Hepatitis Day 2018 is "Test. Treat. Hepatitis".

International Tiger Day 2018

- Every year, July 29 is celebrated as the Global Tiger Day to raise awareness about the endangered big cats. It was created when 13 countries came together in 2009 and pledged to double the world's Tiger population by 2022 -- the next "Year of the Tiger" on the Asian lunar calendar.
- As per the assessment of the Status of Tigers, Co-predators and Prey (2014), the number of tigers in India is estimated at 2,226 as compared to the 2010 estimate of 1,706.

Earth Overshoot Day- 2018

- In 2018, Earth Overshoot Day lands on August 1. Earth Overshoot Day marks the date when humanity has exhausted nature's budget for the year.
- For the rest of the year, we are maintaining our ecological deficit by drawing down local resource stocks and accumulating carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

World Day against Trafficking in Persons

- World Day against Trafficking in Persons is observed all over the world on 30th July 2018.
- This year, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has chosen 'responding to the trafficking of children and young people' as the focus of the World Day.
- This year's campaign highlights the fact that almost a third of trafficking victims are children. The theme draws attention to the issues faced by trafficked children and to possible action initiatives linked to safeguarding and ensuring justice for child victims.

World Ranger Day

- World Ranger Day is celebrated worldwide on July 31st to commemorate Rangers killed or injured in the line of duty and to celebrate the work Rangers do to protect the planet's natural treasures and cultural heritage.

QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following districts has been ranked first among 108 'aspirational districts' by the NITI Aayog on the basis of incremental development over two months from March 31 this year?
(a) Dahod (b) Varanasi (c) Jabalpur (d) Bhagalpur
2. The first state in India to pass the Freedom of Religion Act in 1978 is:
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Assam (c) Nagaland (d) Odisha
3. Aadhaar Virtual ID has become operational recently, the Virtual ID is a _____digit random number mapped with Aadhaar number that can only be generated, replaced or revoked by the Aadhaar number holder.
(a) 8 (b) 10 (c) 12 (d) 16
4. According to a study conducted by OAG recently, which of the following Indian airports fared much worse in flight punctuality as it was ranked fifth least punctual airport in the world?
(a) Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi
(b) Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai
(c) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport in Ahmedabad
(d) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyderabad
5. Recently, which of the following E-commerce firm has received shareholders' approval to set up a payments bank and raise Rs. 2,000 crore?
(a) Flipkart (b) Snapdeal (c) Infibeam (d) Jabong
6. Which of the following teams won the Kabaddi Masters Dubai 2018 championship recently?
(a) Pakistan (b) Iran (c) India (d) Australia
7. Which of the following sites in India were given the green light by the International Council for Monuments and Sites, an advisory body to the UNSECO, thus securing India its 37th World Heritage site?
(a) Historic City of Ahmedabad
(b) Great Himalayan National Park
(c) The Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai
(d) The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier
8. Members of the Lok Sabha can ask only up to _____questions per day from the upcoming session of the House.
(a) Three (b) Five (c) Seven (d) Ten
9. Asia's first arbitration centre specialised in intellectual property is slated to open in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Beijing (c) Moscow (d) Tokyo
10. Recently, how many pre-Islamic Iranian archeological sites have been added by UNESCO to its World Heritage List?
(a) 5 (b) 8 (c) 10 (d) 12
11. According to the latest data from the Swiss National Bank (SNB), India has moved up to _____ place in terms of money parked by its citizens and companies with Swiss banks.
(a) 63 (b) 69 (c) 73 (d) 83

12. According to data from the National Health Profile 2018, which is the only disease that had a 100% death rate in India in 2017?
(a) Japanese encephalitis (b) AIDS (c) H1N1 (d) Rabies
13. Union government of India celebrates 'GST Day' on:
(a) June 1 (b) April 1 (c) July 1 (d) March 1
14. India's largest paramilitary force is:
(a) ITBP (b) CRPF (c) BSF (d) SSB
15. According to the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, more than _____ languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongues.
(a) 10,500 (b) 15,500 (c) 19,500 (d) 20,000
16. Who among the following Indian Cricketers was inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame in July 2018?
(a) Sachin Tendulkar (b) Sourav Ganguly (c) Rahul Dravid (d) VVS Lakshman
17. Which of the following is to be the first state in India to have country's first Khadi mall?
(a) Odisha (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Jharkhand
18. Recently, the government has set up a 13-member committee to upgrade the norms for computation of economic data at states and districts level in the backdrop of plans to revise the base year for National Accounts or GDP calculation. The Committee for Sub-National Accounts will be headed by:
(a) Ravindra H Dholakia (b) Deepak R Bharadwaj (c) Ravi K Nair (d) Rahul L Chahar
19. Recently, the United Nations has placed Chiribiquete national park on its list of world heritage sites. Chiribiquete national park is located in:
(a) Colombia (b) Peru (c) Fiji (d) Ukraine
20. Recently, the leftist Andrés Manuel López Obrador was elected as the president of:
(a) Colombia (b) Mexico (c) Chile (d) Paraguay
21. Which of the following has become the first oil public sector undertaking (PSU) to adopt an online legal compliance system by introducing 'Legatrix' recently?
(a) Nagapattanam Refinery Ltd (b) Digboi Refinery Ltd
(c) Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (d) Tatipaka Refinery Ltd
22. Which of the following states/ Union territories recently launched 'Happiness Curriculum' for school student's upto class 8th?
(a) Puducherry (b) Delhi (c) Goa (d) Sikkim
23. Who won the Austrian Grand Prix 2018 Formula -1 recently?
(a) Valtteri Bottas (b) Lewis Hamilton (c) Nico Rosberg (d) Max Verstappen
24. Which of the following teams won the 2018 Men's Hockey Champions Trophy recently held in Breda, Netherlands?
(a) Netherlands (b) Belgium (c) India (d) Australia
25. India's first e-waste recycling unit will come up in:
(a) Mysore (b) Bengaluru (c) Varanasi (d) Chandigarh

26. Which of the following is to organize India's First Global Mobility Summit in September 2018?
(a) Finance Ministry (b) NITI Aayog
(c) Reserve Bank of India (d) Ministry of Communication
27. The Election Commission launched an Android-based mobile application named _____ for citizens to share proof of malpractices by political parties, their candidates and activists when the Model Code of Conduct is in force.
(a) cElection (b) cSatark (c) cVigil (d) cWatch
28. The Chhattisgarh government will set up a tribal museum in:
(a) Bilaspur (b) Bhilai (c) Durg (d) Naya Raipur
29. Name the committee, which was formed with a view to tackle Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) and creating credit capacity.
(a) Sunil Mehta Panel (b) Deepak Kalra Panel
(c) Amit Ranjan Panel (d) Gaurav Rana Panel
30. Recently, In order to stimulate the 5G ecosystem in India, Swedish telecommunications company Ericsson formally launched the India's first "Centre of Excellence (CoE) and Innovation Lab" for 5G at:
(a) IIT Roorkee (b) BITS Mesra (c) NIT Warangal (d) IIT Delhi
31. Behdienkhlam festival is celebrated in the month of July. This festival is celebrated by _____ tribe in Meghalaya.
(a) Garo (b) Khasi (c) Jaintia (d) Tharu
32. Recently, Tata Power has its arm Tata Power Renewable Energy Ltd (TPREL) commissioned 100 MW (50 MW x 2) solar capacity at Anthapuramu Solar Park in:
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Karnataka (c) Kerala (d) Telangana
33. Which of the following state governments announced the Defence Manufacturing policy giving sops to entrepreneurs, willing to invest while projecting an investment of Rs 50,000 crore in the next five years and generate 2.5 lakh jobs?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Maharashtra
34. Which of the following is to be the first central paramilitary force to opt for e-ticketing instead of the railway warrant under an agreement signed with the IRCTC?
(a) Central Reserve Police Force (b) National Security Guard
(c) Sashastra Seema Bal (d) Central Industrial Security Force
35. Which Indian state government and NITI Aayog have signed a statement of intent (SoI) on strengthening collaboration in the areas of Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, IoT (Internet of Things) and other emerging technologies recently?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Telangana (c) Karnataka (d) Kerala
36. Which of the following countries is set to build an underwater museum in Lake Titicaca?
(a) Uganda (b) Bolivia (c) Chile (d) Uruguay
37. Recently, Engineering students of _____ have developed a self-driving wheelchair called 'Self-E' with an autonomous navigation system which ensured easy travel of users from one place to another without user intervention.
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Maharashtra (c) Gujarat (d) West Bengal

38. Which of the following is released India's first bio fortified jowar with more iron and zinc?
(a) ICAR (b) ICARDA (c) ICRISAT (d) IFAD
39. Recently, which of the following states became the first U.S. State to enact a ban on oxybenzone and octinoxate the substance which are harmful to corals?
(a) Alaska (b) Hawaii (c) California (d) Michigan
40. Taudhakpur, a remote village can be termed as the India's first SmartGaon located in:
(a) Haryana (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Bihar (d) Andhra Pradesh
41. The _____high court declared the entire animal kingdom, including birds and aquatic animals, as a legal entity having rights of a "living person" in July, 2018.
(a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat (c) West Bengal (d) Uttarakhand
42. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) will be setting up a 'Design University for Gaming' in:
(a) Visakhapatnam (b) Kolkata (c) Mumbai (d) New Delhi
43. To increase investment in higher educational institutions, the Union Cabinet approved a proposal for expanding the scope of Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) by expanding its capital base to Rs 10,000 crore and tasking it to mobilise Rs 1 trillion by:
(a) 2020 (b) 2021 (c) 2022 (d) 2025
44. Union Minister of Coal, Railways, Finance & Corporate Affairs, Shri Piyush Goyal launched the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS) and Mobile Application 'Khan Prahari'. He is currently a Member of Rajya Sabha from:
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Gujarat (d) Rajasthan
45. The _____rejected a highly controversial EU copyright law proposal that has pitted Beatles legend Paul McCartney against internet giants and the creators of Wikipedia.
(a) European Parliament (b) United Nations
(c) World Trade Organization (d) All of the above
46. The world's first digital psychedelic art museum without guide maps was unveiled in:
(a) Beijing (b) London (c) Tokyo (d) Moscow
47. Project Sashakt has been in the news, it is related to which among the following?
(a) Coal (b) Education
(c) Non-performing assets (NPAs) (d) Goods and Service Tax
48. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted its first 'pad abort' test - crucial for proposed human spaceflight programme. ISRO was formed in:
(a) 1959 (b) 1969 (c) 1979 (d) 1980
49. Bajrang Punia emerged champion at the Tbilisi Grand Prix in the 65kg category in the final held in:
(a) Georgia (b) Russia (c) France (d) Italy
50. Who has been named as the new chairperson of National Green Tribunal (NGT) for a term of five years?
(a) Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel (b) Justice Rama Reddy
(c) Justice Devendra Kumar Sikri (d) Justice Subhendra Kumar Shukla

51. For the first time, this year the International Day of Parliamentarism is celebrated on:
(a) 25th June (b) 30th June (c) 2nd July (d) 5th July
52. India would operate Sri Lanka's loss-making Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport located in:
(a) Kandy (b) Hambantota (c) Jaffna (d) Colombo
53. Which of the following Indian bank has gone past Russia's Sberbank to become the most valuable bank in the emerging market outside China?
(a) HDFC Bank (b) ICICI Bank (c) State Bank of India (d) Yes Bank
54. Which of the following Indian companies has become the first Indian company to record PBDIT (Profit before Depreciation Interest and Taxes) of over \$10 billion?
(a) TCS (b) Wipro (c) Reliance (d) Adani Wilmar
55. Recently, Indian IT industry apex body Nasscom opened a Centre of Excellence for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in:
(a) Hyderabad (b) Lucknow (c) Chennai (d) Bengaluru
56. Who has become the third India cricketer to play 500 international matches?
(a) Suresh Raina (b) Mahendra Singh Dhoni
(c) Virat Kohli (d) Umesh Yadav
57. Recently, A team of scientists at the University of Warwick have produced a new method of microscopy to help view _____ under human cells.
(a) Fats (b) Proteins (c) Vitamins (d) Blood
58. Recently, An accountability court in Pakistan sentenced which of the following former Prime Minister to 10 years in prison in one of the three corruption cases against him in the high-profile Panama Papers scandal?
(a) Nawaz Sharif (b) M.M. Soomro
(c) Raja Pervaiz Ashraf (d) Yousaf Raza Gillani
59. Who has become the first Indian gymnast to clinch a gold medal at a global event of FIG Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup at Mersin, Turkey?
(a) Aruna Reddy (b) Dipa Karmakar (c) Milkha Singh (d) Dipthi Sharma
60. Who has become the oldest Indian woman to complete an Ironman Triathlon in Carinthia, Austria in July 2018?
(a) Sunita Raghavan (b) Sujatha Verma (c) Anju Khosla (d) Kalpana Jwala
61. The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is organised a two-day International Round Table Conference on "Data for New India" in:
(a) Mumbai (b) Chennai (c) Bengaluru (d) New Delhi
62. According to the latest Bloomberg Billionaires Index, who has overtaken Warren Buffett as the world's third-richest person?
(a) Mark Zuckerberg (b) Mukesh Ambani (c) Jack Ma (d) Tim Cook
63. The famous 'planet-hunting' telescope 'Kepler' is being put into hibernation as it has almost run out of fuel launched by:
(a) NASA (b) ISRO (c) CERN (d) RSA

64. _____based startup Ajna and Brun Health from _____won the Global Impact Challenge (GIC), jointly organised by the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) and US-based Singularity University, at the "grand finale" in Thiruvananthapuram.
(a) Sikkim and Goa (b) Kerala and Delhi
(c) Andhra Pradesh and Haryana (d) Uttar Pradesh and Manipur
65. The book titled 'Dare I question: Reflections on Contemporary Challenges' is associated with:
(a) Indira Gandhi (b) Hamid Ansari
(c) P.V. Narasimharao (d) Dr. Manmohan Singh
66. The new literature prize is the latest award to be dubbed an alternative to the Nobel, joining the Swedish _____honouring those who work to improve the planet.
(a) Right Livelihood Award (b) Millennium Technology Prize
(c) Man Bookers Prize (d) Abel Prize
67. International Day of Cooperatives is celebrated every year on:
(a) 7 June (b) 7 July (c) 8 July (d) 9 July
68. The Union Human Resource Development Ministry has granted the Institution of Eminence (IoE) status to:
(a) IIT Delhi (b) IIT Bombay (c) IISc Bangalore (d) All of the above
69. Who among the following has resigned as the 'Brexit' Secretary in July 2018?
(a) Abhraham John (b) David Davis (c) Stafford Johnson (d) Nike Halle
70. Who has been named as the greatest-ever winner of the Man Booker Prize in July 2018?
(a) J. K. Rowling (b) Michael Ondaatje (c) Stephen King (d) Thomas Pynchon
71. Samsung has set up the world's largest mobile factory in:
(a) Noida (b) Beijing (c) Seoul (d) Tokyo
72. Tayyip Erdogan is associated with which among the following countries?
(a) Syria (b) Libya (c) Turkey (d) Nigerai
73. Human Resource Development Minister Shri Prakash Javadekar inaugurates the 17th World Sanskrit Conference is held in:
(a) USA (b) France (c) Canada (d) Japan
74. Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code has been in the news, it is related to:
(a) Black money (b) Homosexuality (c) Suicide (d) Corruption
75. Who has been appointed as Asia's representative in the prestigious Athletes Advisory Commission of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF)?
(a) Saurav Ghosal (b) Dipika Pallikal (c) Joshna Chinappa (d) Cyrus Poncha
76. Who has become the first player to score three international hundreds across each format - Test, ODI, and T20?
(a) Colin Munro (b) Virat Kohli (c) Rohit Sharma (d) Chris Gayle
77. Who is the first the wicketkeeper in the world to take 50 catches in T20 Internationals?
(a) Kumara Sangakara (b) M. S. Dhoni (c) Jos Butler (d) Adam Gilchrist

78. In September 2018, the first India Tourism Mart will be organized in:
(a) Gurugram (b) New Delhi (c) Lucknow (d) Indore
79. India is set to hold the tenth edition of Delhi Dialogue, the premier annual event to discuss politico-security, economic and socio-cultural engagement between India and _____.
(a) Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
(b) South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)
(c) Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)
(d) Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)
80. Recently, Indian Railways has introduced Double Stack Dwarf Container Services. This freight train was flagged off from:
(a) Rajkot Railway station (b) Nasik Railway station
(c) Kalyan Railway station (d) Jaipur City Railway station
81. Recently, how many higher education institutions have been named Institutions of Eminence (IoE) by the Centre?
(a) Three (b) Five (c) Six (d) Nine
82. Which was the first state in India to ban use of plastic bags in 2009?
(a) Haryana (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Uttar Pradesh
83. Recently, Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved 503-million US Dollar lining project of the Son canal in:
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Bihar (c) West Bengal (d) Jharkhand
84. Shri Venkaiah Naidu has become the first Chairman of Rajya Sabha to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with visiting President of the Senate of the Republic of:
(a) Norway (b) Nigeria (c) Uganda (d) Rwanda
85. Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, released the final rankings of States in Ease of Doing Business. This ranking was topped by:
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Telangana (c) Haryana (d) Gujarat
86. According to a study on 'world leaders on social media' conducted by communications firm Burson Cohn & Wolfe (BCW), Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the _____ most followed world leader on Twitter.
(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fourth (d) Fifth
87. According to a study on 'world leaders on social media' conducted by communications firm Burson Cohn & Wolfe (BCW), who is the most followed female world leader on Twitter?
(a) Ivanka Trump (b) Smriti Zubin Irani (c) Sushma Swaraj (d) Angela Dorothea Merkel
88. From the forthcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament, Rajya Sabha MPs will be able to speak in the House in any of the 22 Indian languages listed in the:
(a) 5th Schedule of the Indian Constitution (b) 6th Schedule of the Indian Constitution
(c) 7th Schedule of the Indian Constitution (d) 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution
89. According to a report by US venture capital and startup database CB Insights, New Delhi and _____ had among the highest number of startup investment rounds greater than \$100 million since 2014.
(a) Bengaluru (b) Mumbai (c) Hyderabad (d) Kolkata
90. The book titled "Winning Like Sourav: Think & Succeed Like Ganguly" has written by:
(a) Vinod Garg (b) Abhirup Bhattacharya (c) Vikram Seth (d) Aravind Adiga

91. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2019 will be held in:
(a) Chennai (b) Pune (c) Varanasi (d) Ranchi
92. Which among the following countries pledged a package of \$20 billion in loans and \$1.6 billion in financial aid to countries in the Middle East, as part of its "oil and gas plus" model.
(a) India (b) China (c) USA (d) UK
93. Which among the following countries has qualified for the 2018 World Cup final over Belgium in Saint Petersburg, Russia?
(a) France (b) Uruguay (c) Croatia (d) England
94. India's first private sector unit for manufacturing unmanned air vehicles (UAV) and light bullet proof vehicles (LBPV) will be set up in:
(a) Kanpur (b) Katihar (c) Kota (d) Kottayam
95. Which of the following mobile operators has unveiled the country's first internet telephony service that will allow users to dial any telephone number in India through its mobile app?
(a) BSNL (b) Bharti Airtel (c) Reliance Jio (d) Idea Cellular
96. Recently, NITI Aayog has proposed _____ action plan for combating air pollution in ten most polluted cities in the country, including Delhi, Kanpur and Varanasi.
(a) 8- point (b) 10- point (c) 15-point (d) 20-point
97. Which of the following is the only the second Indian business house after the Tata group to cross the Rs 10 trillion market capitalisation mark?
(a) Reliance Group (b) Birla Group (c) HDFC Group (d) Adani Wilmar Group
98. According to the latest Global Innovation Index (GII) 2018 rankings released in New York. The rank of India in this ranking is:
(a) 34th (b) 43rd (c) 52nd (d) 57th
99. According to updated World Bank figures for 2017, India has become the world's _____ biggest economy.
(a) Third (b) Fifth (c) Sixth (d) Tenth
100. The theme of World Population Day 2018 is:
(a) Family Planning- Empowering People, Developing Nations
(b) Family Planning is a Human right
(c) Vulnerable Populations in Emergencies
(d) Investing in teenage girls
101. Which of the following teams reached the final of the FIFA World Cup-2018 for the first time in the history?
(a) Panama (b) Iceland (c) Croatia (d) Senegal
102. Recently, in a first of its kind initiative in India _____ government will appoint girls as a district Brand Ambassador under the Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao scheme.
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Bihar
103. Recently, the new Czech government won a mandatory confidence vote in the lower house of Parliament. At present the Prime Minister of Czech Republic is:
(a) Vaclav Klaus (b) Andrej Babis (c) Bahrslav Sobotka (d) Milos Zeman

104. Recently, according to property consultant CBRE, which of the following Indian places has become ninth most expensive office location in the world?
(a) Connaught Place, New Delhi (b) Khan Market, New Delhi
(c) Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC), Mumbai (d) The central business district (CBD) of Nariman Point
105. Recently, how many Indian-origin women have made it to the Forbes' list of America's 60 richest self-made women?
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Five (d) Seven
106. Recently, which of the following Indian institutes featured among the top 100 in the Times Higher Education Golden Age University Rankings and top 50 in the Emerging University Rankings?
(a) IIT Kanpur (b) IIT Kharagpur (c) IIT Delhi (d) IISc Bengaluru
107. According to the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA), India has the world's _____ largest cultivated area under genetically modified (GM) crops.
(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fifth (d) Ninth
108. The first Indian woman to win gold at the IAAF World Under- 20 Athletics Championships in Tampere, Finland is:
(a) Hima Das (b) Mausomi Mukherjee (c) Deepa Rani (d) Sakshi Nair
109. India's first 2+2 dialogue with the _____ will take place in the first week of September 2018.
(a) USA (b) China (c) Japan (d) France
110. Which among the following state governments has constituted 'Heritage Cabinet' to preserve the history and culture of that state?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Kerala (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Odisha
111. Which among the following states of India has topped other states in per capita revenue collection under GST?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Haryana (d) Gujarat
112. Which among the following countries has become the sixth European country to grant the right to self-determination of transgender identity in July 2018?
(a) Denmark (b) Malta (c) Sweden (d) Portugal
113. According to the latest Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Mukesh Ambani overtook _____ to become Asia's richest person in July 2018.
(a) Lee Shau-Kei (b) Jack Ma (c) Wang Wei (d) Wang Jianlin
114. Johnson & Johnson has been ordered to pay nearly \$4.7bn in damages to 22 women who claim the company's talcum powder contributed to them developing ovarian cancer. Johnson & Johnson is a/an:
(a) American multinational pharmaceutical company
(b) Canada multinational pharmaceutical company
(c) Australian multinational pharmaceutical company
(d) UK multinational pharmaceutical company
115. Which is the only fourth "equal mass" binary near-Earth asteroid ever detected, consisting of two objects nearly identical in size, orbiting each other in July 2018?
(a) Near-Earth asteroid 2017 YE5 (b) Far-Earth asteroid 2018 AE5
(c) Near-Earth asteroid 2018 AE5 (d) Far-Earth asteroid 2018 AE4

116. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has launched the Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 (SSG 2018) in:
(a) Varanasi (b) New Delhi (c) Mumbai (d) Hyderabad
117. Who has become the first South African man to reach the Wimbledon final for 97 years in July 2018?
(a) Brian Norton (b) Kevin Anderson (c) John Isner (d) Andree Nel
118. Which among the following has opened India's first dormitory facility at MG Road Metro Station?
(a) Delhi Metro Rail Limited (b) Kochi Metro Rail Limited (c) Chennai Metro Rail Limited (d) Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited
119. UN chief Antonio Guterres has established a first-of-its-kind panel on digital cooperation. The high-level panel on digital cooperation will be co-chaired by:
(a) Melinda Gates (b) Jack Ma (c) Amandeep Singh Gill (d) Both a and b
120. For the first time ever, United Nations member states, except the _____, have agreed on a deal to better manage international migration, address its challenges, strengthen migrant rights and contribute to sustainable development.
(a) USA (b) UK (c) Russia (d) China
121. Who has been named the British Indian of the Year for his achievements in the field of Yoga?
(a) Vinod Sharma (b) Ishwar Sharma (c) Rakesh Jain (d) Vijay Shankar
122. According to the latest report by Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), India's economic growth is poised to rise to _____ in 2018.
(a) 7.0% (b) 7.2% (c) 7.4% (d) 7.8%
123. Walt Disney's \$71 billion deal with 21st Century Fox won the endorsement of influential proxy advisers. Walter Elias Disney was a/an:
(a) American company (b) Canada company (c) Australian company (d) UK company
124. Recently, Scientists in _____ have performed the first ever 3D colour X-ray on humans, with the support of CERN physics lab.
(a) New Zealand (b) USA (c) UK (d) Japan
125. A group of engineering students in _____ have made a new experimental satellite 'Jaihind-1S' which could set a new world record as the world's lightest and cheapest.
(a) New Delhi (b) Pune (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Mumbai
126. Which among the following countries has unveiled a powerful radio telescope 'MeerKAT', part of an international project that will provide new details on the Milky Way and other galaxies?
(a) India (b) France (c) South Africa (d) South Korea
127. Mahendra Singh Dhoni became the _____ Indian to reach the milestone of 10,000 runs in ODIs during the second match of the three-game series against England.
(a) Third (b) Fourth (c) Fifth (d) Sixth
128. Which among the following countries clinched their second World Cup Football title recently?
(a) Germany (b) Italy (c) Spain (d) France

129. Militaries of India and Pakistan will be part of a mega anti-terror drill in August 2018 which is being organized by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). This drill is being organized in:
(a) Pakistan (b) Tajikistan (c) Russia (d) India
130. Recently, Prime Minister Jack Guy Lafontant resigned following deadly violence and looting sparked by a now-abandoned plan to raise fuel prices, triggering a fraught process to form a new government. Jack Guy Lafontant was Prime Minister of:
(a) Monaco (b) Panama (c) Haiti (d) Fiji
131. Which of the following countries has for the first time been elected to the Human Rights Council, filling the seat vacated by the United States, which withdrew from the body last month?
(a) Ireland (b) Iceland (c) Sweden (d) Denmark
132. Which of the following countries has become the vice-chair (regional head) of the Asia Pacific region of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) for a period of two years to June 2020?
(a) India (b) Indonesia (c) Japan (d) Malaysia
133. Recently, the second National Tourism Conclave was organised in:
(a) Kanpur (b) Jaipur (c) Nagpur (d) Udaipur
134. The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has constituted a _____ Member Committee, headed by the Secretary of Ministry of Corporate Affairs, for review of the penal provisions in the Companies Act, 2013.
(a) Three (b) Five (c) Seven (d) Ten
135. Who among the following won his fourth Wimbledon men singles title and overall his 13th Grand Slam?
(a) Roger Federer (b) Rafael Nadal (c) Andy Murray (d) Novak Djokovic
136. Nelson Mandela International Day is celebrated every year across the World on:
(a) 11th July (b) 13th July (c) 15th July (d) 18th July
137. With the launch of cost-effective innovative water project _____ state will soon provide the cheapest drinking water in the world.
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Rajasthan (c) Bihar (d) Gujarat
138. Which of the following Indian states launched the 'Paudhagiri' campaign, aimed at increasing the green cover in the state?
(a) Punjab (b) Rajasthan (c) Haryana (d) Chhattisgarh
139. The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is to be organized in January 2019. The theme of the 2019 Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention is:
(a) Global Indian- Inclusive Growth
(b) Redefining Engagement with the Indian Diaspora
(c) Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India
(d) Ancient Route, New Journey: Diaspora in the Dynamic ASEAN INDIA Partnership
140. Name the Indian institute, which has unveiled "world's first" remotely operable LEAP microscope.
(a) IIT Madras (b) IIT Delhi (c) IIT Bombay (d) IIT Kanpur
141. According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, who among the following became the richest person in modern history recently?
(a) Jeff Bezos (b) Jack Ma (c) Warren Buffet (d) Bill Gates

142. Recently, the Life Insurance Corporation, board gave approval to the acquisition of up to 51 per cent stake in which of the following banks?
(a) Canara Bank (b) Indian Overseas Bank (c) IDBI Bank (d) Indian Bank
143. Which of the following banks has joined hands with 12 global leaders to announce the launch of the seventh edition of 'Transformation Series'?
(a) ICICI Bank (b) Yes Bank (c) HDFC Bank (d) IDFC Bank
144. Name the e-commerce app, which has been introduced by IFFCO that would cater to 5.5 crore farmers already associated with the cooperative?
(a) I-Bazaar (b) I-Market (c) I-Mandi (d) I-Shopping
145. Which of the following countries is set to launch 300 satellites to provide worldwide low-orbit communications, known as the Hongyan constellation?
(a) Japan (b) South Korea (c) China (d) Russia
146. Who among the following won the Thailand Open 2018 women's singles badminton final?
(a) PV Sindhu (b) Nozomi Okuhara (c) Carolina Marin (d) Saina Nehwal
147. Who among the following won the FIFA World Cup 2018 best player of the tournament (Golden Ball) award?
(a) Luka Modric (b) Eden Hazard (c) Harry Kane (d) Antoine Griezmann
148. Indian Railways is set to get first dedicated corridor for freight trains on August 15, 2018. The dedicated corridor will be between:
(a) Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh and Kota in Rajasthan
(b) Dadri in Uttar Pradesh and Phulera in Rajasthan
(c) Meerut in Uttar Pradesh and Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan
(d) Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh and Kamakhya in Assam
149. Recently, Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan laid the foundation stone of India's first skill training institute in:
(a) Odisha (b) Jharkhand (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
150. Recently, Union government has formed a committee comprising officials of the environment ministry to look into the issue of industrial pollution around the iconic Taj Mahal. The committee will be headed by:
(a) Dr Samar Arothe (b) Shri Lakshman Nair (c) Shri Anand Rai (d) Shri C K Mishra
151. According to government data that lends perspective to a new World Bank study that says climate change will lower the standards of living of nearly half of the country's population by 2050. India accounts forof global deaths due to floods.
(a) Two-third (b) One-tenth (c) One-fifth (d) Three-fourth
152. Which of the following countries is set to host the fourth BIMSTEC Summit in August 2018?
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Thailand (c) Nepal (d) Bhutan
153. According to the 2018 'Soft Power 30' index, which of the following countries has topped an annual global ranking of nations?
(a) France (b) USA (c) UK (d) Germany

154. Recently, which of the following countries has declared a 60-day state of emergency in order to ensure security from the menace of drug trafficking in its border region?
(a) Chile (b) Peru (c) Mexico (d) Chad
155. According to a Forbes list of the world's 100 highest-paid entertainers 2018, who among the following topped the Forbes list?
(a) Kylie Jenner (b) Floyd Mayweather (c) George Clooney (d) Dwayne Johnson
156. Recently, a dozen new moons have been discovered around Jupiter bringing its total number of moons to:
(a) 67 (b) 69 (c) 79 (d) 83
157. Recently, World Youth Skills Day 2018 was celebrated on:
(a) 12th July (b) 15th July (c) 5th July (d) 2nd July
158. Nelson Mandela International Day is celebrated as every year on 18th July across the world. Nelson Mandela was the first black president of:
(a) Zimbabwe (b) South Africa (c) USA (d) Portugal
159. Who among the following has been named as the first sports ambassador of Assam?
(a) Shushila Likmabam (b) Hima Das (c) Baichung Bhutia (d) Renu Bala Chanu
160. Which of the following country researchers have developed a blood test for melanoma in its early stages, calling it a "world first" breakthrough that could save many lives?
(a) China (b) Japan (c) Australia (d) New Zealand
161. Recently, Stock exchange major BSE has secured a "trademark" for its iconic building -- Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers -- located on Dalal Street in:
(a) Kolkata (b) Mumbai (c) New Delhi (d) Bengaluru
162. Which of the following non-banking finance company received NABARD 2018 award for its service to self-help group (SHG) linkage in Tamil Nadu for the fiscal year 2017-18?
(a) Delite Micro Finance Ltd (b) Repco Micro Finance Ltd
(c) Cemco Micro Finance Ltd (d) Profer Micro Finance Ltd
163. Recently, the European Union and _____ have signed one of the world's biggest free trade deals, covering nearly a third of the world's GDP.
(a) China (b) India (c) Japan (d) Canada
164. Who has been appointed as the chairman of the technical and professional education regulator All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) recently?
(a) Prof Anil D Sahasrabudhe (b) Prof Aditya Deewan
(c) Prof Deepankar Shukla (d) Prof Rajesh N Ranga
165. The Indian Air Force for the first time is participating with fighter aircraft in Exercise Pitch Black 2018 (PB-18), which is scheduled to be held in:
(a) Germany (b) France (c) New Zealand (d) Australia
166. The 10th edition of the Delhi Dialogue concluded in New Delhi. The theme of this dialogue is:
(a) ASEAN-India Relations: Charting the Course for the Next 25 Years
(b) Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Co-operation
(c) ASEAN-India Relations: A New Paradigm
(d) ASEAN-India: Shaping the Post 2015 Agenda

167. Name India's javelin thrower, who won the gold at the Sotteville Athletics meet in France.
(a) Kashinath Naik (b) Ravinder Singh Khaira
(c) Neeraj Chopra (d) Davinder Singh Kang
168. According to Forbes, who is the highest paid actor in the world at present?
(a) Salman Khan (b) George Clooney (c) Dwayne Johnson (d) Brad Pitt
169. Recently Gopal Das Neeraj passed away in New Delhi. He was a famous renowned:
(a) Hindi Poet (b) Kathak Dancer (c) Telugu Film Director (d) Aerospace Scientist
170. Which of the following Indian states launched "Abhar aapki sewa ka" app for pensioners recently?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Chhattisgarh
171. The Reserve Bank of India will issue new Rs. 100 notes. "The new denomination has motif of Rani ki Vav on the reverse. Rani ki Vav is a UNESCO's World Heritage Site located in:
(a) Rajasthan (b) Gujarat (c) Haryana (d) Madhya Pradesh
172. According to Asian Development Bank (ADB), which of the following countries is fastest growing economy in Asia?
(a) Japan (b) China (c) India (d) Singapore
173. The Government has set a target of installing _____ of solar capacity by 2022 in the country.
(a) 10 GW (b) 25 GW (c) 60 GW (d) 100 GW
174. National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) is running "Ganga Vriksharopan Abhiyan" in how many Ganga basin states?
(a) Three (b) Four (c) Five (d) Seven
175. Recently, the 2018 BRICS Media Forum was concluded in:
(a) Cape Town (b) Brasilia (c) New Delhi (d) Shanghai
176. Name the lawn tennis player, who was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in July 2018.
(a) Andre Agassi and Martina Hingis (b) Michael Farad and Monica Seles
(c) Michael Stich and Helena Sukova (d) Monica Seles and Martina Hingis
177. According to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), how many new events will be included in the programme for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics?
(a) Four (b) Five (c) Seven (d) Eleven
178. Who among the following Pakistani player scored Pakistan's first ever double century in a one-day international against Zimbabwe recently?
(a) Shoaib Malik (b) Imam-ul-Haq (c) Asif Ali (d) Fakhar Zaman
179. Recently, NASA launched tools to increase commercial use of satellite data. NASA is an independent space agency of:
(a) USA (b) France (c) China (d) Japan
180. Recently, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh launched the Student Police Cadet (SPC) programme in:
(a) Noida (b) Gurugram (c) Faridabad (d) Gwalior

181. Which of the following Indian states signed an agreement to implement the Centre's health insurance scheme under the joint banner "Ayushman Bharat - Swasthya Sathi"?
- (a) Assam (b) West Bengal (c) Punjab (d) Karnataka
182. Which of the following countries is set to host the inaugural round of the two-plus-two dialogue with the United States?
- (a) China (b) India (c) Japan (d) Singapore
183. Recently, the 8th BRICS Health Ministers meeting was held in:
- (a) Durban (b) New Delhi (c) Beijing (d) Sao Paulo
184. Which of the following Indian states launched the e-Pragati portal recently?
- (a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Karnataka
185. Recently, which of the following countries declared itself as 'Nation-State of the Jewish People'?
- (a) Argentina (b) Israel (c) Mexico (d) Jordan
186. Recently, Indian Railways declared that it will have 100 per cent bio toilets by year:
- (a) 2019 (b) 2020 (c) 2021 (d) 2022
187. Recently, Allahabad Bank proposed to close its only foreign branch in _____ as part of rationalisation of its overseas operations.
- (a) Abu Dhabi (b) Hong Kong (c) Singapore (d) Australia
188. Who has been declared as the 2017 Player of the Year by the All India Football Federation (AIFF) in July 2018?
- (a) Amrinder Singh (b) Sunil Chhetri (c) Vishal Kaith (d) Pritam Kotal
189. How many medals did India win in the Junior Asian Wrestling Championship 2018?
- (a) 4 (b) 5 (c) 8 (d) 10
190. Which among the following states has topped the list of states with maximum solar power generation capacity approved under solar parks in India?
- (a) Gujarat (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Rajasthan (d) Tamil Nadu
191. India Heritage Walk Festival, a collaboration of _____ and YES Arts & Culture, has been awarded the PATA Gold Award 2018 for its recently concluded pan-India event.
- (a) Thailand (b) Sahapedia
(c) Kerala Tourism Department (d) Andhra Pradesh
192. The first Mizo Hnahthlak International festival was organised in:
- (a) Aizawl (b) New Delhi (c) Imphal (d) Gangtok
193. Which among the following cities has launched an action plan to become the world's most walkable city in July 2018?
- (a) Beijing (b) New Delhi (c) London (d) Tokyo
194. The GST Council approved quarterly filing of return for the small taxpayers having turnover below Rs. _____Cr as an optional facility.
- (a) 3 (b) 4 (c) 5 (d) 7

195. Who among the following Indians named in Variety magazine's list of 500 most influential business leaders shaping the global \$ 2 trillion entertainment industry?
(a) Salman Khan (b) Priyanka Chopra (c) Anil Ambani (d) All of the above
196. Which among the following countries has joined the India-initiated International Solar Alliance (ISA) as the 68th member of the grouping?
(a) USA (b) Nepal (c) Pakistan (d) Myanmar
197. NABARD launched the Centre for Climate Change the first of its kind in South East Asia for accelerating concerted climate action in:
(a) Lucknow (b) Mumbai (c) New Delhi (d) Hyderabad
198. With the objective of helping students understand chapters better by watching a film or reading additional content on laptops and digital boards, NCERT is all set to introduce QR code in their textbooks. What is the meaning for QR?
(a) Quick Reply (b) Quad core Research
(c) Quick Response (d) Quality Recognition
199. Who won men's singles competition at the Badminton Asia Junior Championships 2018 held in Jakarta?
(a) Lakshya Sen (b) Alaukik Batra (c) Deepak Ratra (d) Shashank Khetan
200. Recently, Minister for Science and Technology Harsh Vardhan has unveiled the first of a kind Air Quality and Weather Forecast System, SAFAR in:
(a) Mumbai (b) New Delhi (c) Hyderabad (d) Hisar
201. Which of the following Indian cities is all set to host India's first ceramics triennale?
(a) Bhubaneswar (b) Jaipur (c) Hyderabad (d) Chennai
202. Recently, Lord Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple located at Yadadri got ISO certification. This temple is located in Indian state of:
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Telangana (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Kerala
203. Which of the following Indian ministries has decided to re-introduce a scheme "Medini Puraskar Yojna" for awarding Indian authors for their original work in Hindi on subjects related to environment including pollution and climate change?
(a) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(b) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
(c) Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation
(d) Ministry of Earth Sciences
204. Recently, Indian Government has reduced the minimum annual deposit requirement for accounts under Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana to _____ from Rs. 1,000 earlier.
(a) Rs. 250 (b) Rs. 400 (c) Rs. 500 (d) Rs. 750
205. According to the Public Affairs Index 2018, which of the following Indian states has topped the Public Affairs Index (PAI) for 2018 as the best-governed state for the third consecutive year?
(a) Rajasthan (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Kerala (d) Andhra Pradesh
206. What is the name of the internet satellite to be launched by Facebook in early 2019?
(a) Allowen (b) Athena (c) Atlas (d) Holower

207. Recently, the Men's team event of the World Junior Squash Championships began in:
(a) Chennai (b) Mumbai (c) Kolkata (d) Lucknow
208. Recently, who beat first-time ATP finalist Indian Ramkumar Ramanathan at the Hall of Fame tennis Open championship in Newport?
(a) Jonson (b) Thomas Bach
(c) Steve Johnson (d) Albert Schweitzer
209. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first Indian premier to visit Rwanda. The currency and capital of Rwanda is:
(a) Pound and Dakar (b) Franc and Kigali
(c) Dollar and Rabat (d) Sterling and Abuja
210. Recently, the first meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on Border Haats was concluded in:
(a) Shillong (b) Kolkata (c) Agartala (d) Guwahati
211. Recently, Union Government set up high level committee to check mob lynching incidents in the country. Who among the following will chair this committee?
(a) Union Home Minister (b) Union Home Secretary
(c) Secretary Lok Sabha (d) DGP's of each state
212. Recently, Pakistan got its first-ever woman Chief Justice of a high court. What is the name of the Chief Justice and the State for which she is appointed as the Chief justice?
(a) Tahira Safdar, Balochistan (b) Sameena Khan, Sindh
(c) Rukshana Aslam, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (d) Nahida Akhter, Punjab
213. Which is the only authorised bank to issue and encash the electoral bonds under the Electoral Bond Scheme, 2018?
(a) Punjab National Bank (b) State Bank of India (c) Reserve Bank of India (d) Bank of Baroda
214. What is the rank of India in the 2018 AT Kearney FDI Confidence Index?
(a) 4th (b) 7th (c) 9th (d) 11th
215. In 2018, World Hepatitis Day is observed on:
(a) 25th July (b) 28th July (c) 29th July (d) 1st August
216. Which of the following places is likely to get its first Hindu temple by 2020?
(a) Abu Dhabi (b) Aleppo (c) Dubai (d) Sharjah
217. Recently, the Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 (SSG 2018) announced by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation was launched by three States. Which state was not included in this list?
(a) Bihar (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Maharashtra (d) Jharkhand
218. In which Indian state acid attack victims have been included under disability and they will be eligible to get all benefits of various schemes of the government as per Disabilities Act 2016?
(a) Odisha (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Uttar Pradesh
219. Recently, which of the following districts becomes the First Open Defecation Free (ODF) District in Bihar?
(a) Siwan (b) Sitamarhi (c) Gaya (d) Katiyar
220. Name the author, who has made into the Man Booker Prize list with his latest novel "Warlight".
(a) George Saunders (b) Michael Ondaatje (c) Paul Beatty (d) Julian Barnes

221. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted 200 cows to villagers who do not yet own a cow under Girinka Programme of:
(a) Zaire (b) Zimbabwe (c) Rwanda (d) Liberia
222. Which among the following has constituted a 16-member committee to examine motor third party insurance pricing aspects and make recommendations on the premium rates for 2019-20?
(a) IRDAI (b) RBI (c) Finance Ministry (d) NITI Aayog
223. Which among the following Indian states has emerged as the leading State for renewable energy in India this year?
(a) Kerala (b) Gujarat (c) Karnataka (d) Maharashtra
224. According to the prediction by IMF, which of the following countries inflation is to reach 1 million percent by the end of this year as the government continues to print money to cover a growing budget hole?
(a) Chile (b) Peru (c) Paraguay (d) Venezuela
225. The 19th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas is celebrated on:
(a) 23rd July (b) 21st July (c) 26th July (d) 18th July
226. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has addressed the 10th BRICS Summit held in:
(a) Durban (b) Moscow (c) Brasilia (d) Johannesburg
227. Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh has inaugurated the second Conference of Young Superintendent of Police being organized by Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D) in:
(a) Kolkata (b) Jaipur (c) New Delhi (d) Kochi
228. President Ram Nath Kovind launched "Sanchar Kranti Yojna", under which 50 lakh smartphones will be distributed free of cost to the people of:
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Chhattisgarh (c) Haryana (d) Bihar
229. Recently, A massive underground lake has been detected for the first time on _____ raising the possibility that more water and maybe even life exists there.
(a) Venus (b) Mars (c) Jupiter (d) Saturn
230. Recently, which of the following States/ Union territories announced the 'Mukhyamantri Kisan Aaye Badhotri Solar Yojna'?
(a) Puducherry (b) Delhi (c) Assam (d) Goa
231. Which of the following countries will hold an international conference of female parliamentarians named "The International Congress of Parliamentary Women's Caucuses" in September 2018?
(a) Finland (b) Ireland (c) Mexico (d) Canada
232. Which of the following countries will host the next ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASEM) in October 2018?
(a) Thailand (b) Laos (c) Singapore (d) Myanmar
233. A new biography of Mahatma Gandhi titled "Gandhi: The years that changed the world (1914-1948)" is penned by:
(a) Dwijendra Narayan Jha (b) Romila Thapar
(c) Ramachandra Guha (d) Irfan Habib

234. Which of the following Indian International airports has been chosen for the prestigious Champion of Earth Prize - 2018 instituted by the United Nations (UN)?
(a) Indira Gandhi International Airport
(b) Goa International Airport
(c) Cochin International Airport
(d) Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport
235. Name the two Indians, who are among the six winners of this year's Ramon Magsaysay Award.
(a) Bharat Vatwani and Sonam Wangchuk
(b) Deepanshu Rana and Gautam Yadav
(c) Bezwada Wilson and Ramit Narayan
(d) Rajendra Singh and Kailash Satyarthi
236. Recently, the 18th International Children's Film Festival was inaugurated in:
(a) Kolkata
(b) Hyderabad
(c) Panaji
(d) New Delhi
237. How many persons of India-origin have been named by Fortune among 40 of the most influential and inspiring young people in business under the age of 40?
(a) Two
(b) Three
(c) Four
(d) Seven
238. According to the study by the Centre for Policy Research, India's carbon-dioxide emission will rise to _____ by year 2030.
(a) 2.3-2.4 gigatonnes
(b) 2.7-2.9 gigatonnes
(c) 3.2-3.3 gigatonnes
(d) 3.8-3.9 gigatonnes
239. In 2018, Earth Overshoot Day is to be observed on:
(a) 30th July
(b) 1st August
(c) 5th August
(d) 15th August
240. According to the Instagram Rich List released by HopperHQ.com, which Indian player is at ninth position in a list of athletes who can charge the most money for sponsored posts on the photo-sharing app?
(a) Sania Mirza
(b) Virat Kohli
(c) Mahendra Singh Dhoni
(d) Saina Nehwal
241. Recently the shares of which of the following companies plunged in the biggest one-day drop in stock-market history?
(a) Microsoft
(b) Amazon
(c) Facebook
(d) Alibaba
242. Recently, Pakistan's cricket star-turned politician Imran Khan declared victory for his party in the Pakistan's general election. The name of the political party of Imran Khan is:
(a) Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal
(b) Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N)
(c) Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party (PTI)
(d) Pakistan People's Party (PPP)
243. The theme for "World Hepatitis Day 2018" is:
(a) Eliminate Hepatitis
(b) Go. End. Tackle
(c) Test. Treat. Hepatitis
(d) Hepatitis the curse
244. Who among the following cricketers was presented with the International Cricketer of the Year award for 2017 and 2018 by England's Barmy Army?
(a) Joe Root
(b) Virat Kohli
(c) Jos Butler
(d) Mahendra Singh Dhoni
245. The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) has chosen _____ to host the 2020 World under 20 championships.
(a) France
(b) Zimbabwe
(c) Kenya
(d) Canada

246. Recently, Skywatchers in almost every part of the world witnessed the longest lunar eclipse of the century. The lunar eclipse was not visible in the continent of:
(a) Europe (b) Africa (c) North America (d) South America
247. Recently, which of the following committee has stated that regulations suggested in the draft data protection bill will require the government to make changes to the Aadhaar Act?
(a) Justice Gyan Sudha Misra committee (b) Justice BN Srikrishna committee
(c) Justice Makandeya Kaatju committee (d) Justice Duleep Rawat committee
248. Recently, the Union government has decided to allow sugar mills to manufacture ethanol directly from sugarcane juice or intermediate product called:
(a) A-molasses (b) B-molasses (c) D-molasses (d) G-molasses
249. The Indian Coast Guard has conducted a bilateral table-top exercise on maritime pollution response with _____ Coast Guard at the regional headquarters (North East) of the ICG Kolkata.
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Mauritius (c) Maldives (d) Bangladesh
250. Which of the following Indian states has come out with an 'Urban Sanitation and Cleanliness Policy' for better management of solid and liquid waste in cities recently?
(a) Gujarat (b) Kerala (c) Karnataka (d) Himachal Pradesh
251. AngelHack the world's largest hackathon organisers conducted the Global Hackathon series in:
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Kerala (c) Goa (d) Andhra Pradesh
252. SoftBank Group Corp will launch a digital payments service in Japan, and has partnered _____ for the service.
(a) Freecharge (b) Flipkart (c) Jio Pay (d) Paytm
253. India's first permanent campus of 'National Skill Training Institute (NSTI)' for Women was launched in:
(a) Mohali (b) New Delhi (c) Varanasi (d) Patna
254. Who was conferred the Mohun Bagan Ratna 2018 at the annual day of the 129-year-old club in Kolkata in July 2018?
(a) Pradip Choudhury (b) Sunil Chhetri (c) Bhaichung Bhutia (d) Subrata Pal
255. 'Johannesburg Declaration' has been in the news, this declaration is adopted by:
(a) SAARC Countries (b) BRICS Countries (c) ASEAN (d) United Nations
256. Nepal-India Think Tank Summit 2018 for the first time will be held in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Kathmandu (c) Mumbai (d) Patan
257. Which among the following countries has been designated as a nodal centre for preparing 'flash-flood forecasts' by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)?
(a) Vietnam (b) Sri Lanka (c) Myanmar (d) India
258. Which among the following software companies has toppled Wipro to become the third-largest software services company in India in terms of dollar revenue?
(a) Tata Consultancy Services Limited (b) Infosys Limited
(c) HCL Technologies (d) Larsen & Toubro Infotech
259. India's fourth most valued firm in terms of market valuation is:
(a) ITC (b) RIL (c) TCS (d) HDFC Bank

260. Who among the following set a world record of 58.00sec to win the 100m backstroke at the US swimming championships?
(a) Kathleen Baker (b) Melissa Jeanette Franklin
(c) Jennifer Beth Thompson (d) Krisztina Egerszegi
261. Who has become the youngest Indian woman to reach the peak of Mount Everest?
(a) Sunita Nigam (b) Shivangi Pathak (c) Surya Kumari (d) Anita Subramanyam
262. Global Tiger Day is celebrated every year on:
(a) June 29 (b) July 29 (c) July 27 (d) July 28
263. Which among the following state governments has announced that it will implement its own food security act from Gandhi Jayanti on October 2, 2018?
(a) West Bengal (b) Kerala (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Odisha
264. Which among the following has proposed a common nodal energy ministry on the lines of the model followed in various other countries to streamline governance?
(a) 15th Finance Commission (b) NITI Aayog
(c) National Development Council (d) Prime Minister office
265. Which among the following state governments has approved a proposal for setting up a riverine port on river Mahanadi in Kendrapara district?
(a) Jharkhand (b) Chhattisgarh (c) Odisha (d) Madhya Pradesh
266. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman formally handed over two types of indigenously built high-power multi-fuel engines to the Army. The engines were manufactured for the first time under the Centre's Make in India programme by
(a) Engine Factory (b) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
(c) Defence Research and Development Organisation (d) All of the above
267. The first Indian American ever to be CEO of either the Democratic National Committee or the Republican National Committee is:
(a) Pramila Jayapal (b) Seema Nanda (c) Kamala Devi Harris (d) Raja Krishnamoorthi
268. A panel of experts has suggested one single database for inflation, industrial output and employment to give credibility to India's growth numbers and to set up a National Integrated Data System (NIDS). The panel is headed by:
(a) Professor NL Sarda (b) Professor Srikrishna (c) Professor Ramakanth (d) Amitab Kanth
269. The Indian Catholic priest, Fr Richard D'Souza and astrophysics researcher who found conclusive evidence of a long lost galaxy, the third biggest after Andromeda and the Milky Way. What is name of the new long lost galaxy?
(a) N32g (b) A32p (c) D18p (d) M32p
270. Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) is latest satellite to search for planets outside our solar system, known as exoplanets launched by:
(a) ISRO (b) NASA (c) CERN (d) JAXA
271. World number one Dustin Johnson won the Canadian Open title for his third victory of 2018. The win was the _____ title of his career.
(a) 11th (b) 15th (c) 19th (d) 20th

272. Name the oldest person in the world, who passed away in July 2018.
(a) Kane Tanaka (b) Chiyo Miyako (c) Nabi Tajima (d) Suni Kuraka
273. World Day against Trafficking in Persons is observed all over the world on:
(a) 29 June (b) 30 July (c) 31 July (d) 30 June
274. Who has become the first Asian to swim the choppy water from Jersey (an Island in the UK) to France in cold weather in July 2018?
(a) Ishan Kiran (b) Prabhat Koli (c) Virat Raghavan (d) Punkaj Jain
275. The 3rd BRICS Film Festival took place in:
(a) South Africa (b) India (c) China (d) Brazil
276. Which among the following countries has won the boy's title at the WSF-World Junior Squash team championship in Chennai?
(a) Russia (b) Egypt (c) England (d) India
277. The International Army Games 2018 was declared open in:
(a) Beijing (b) New Delhi (c) Tokyo (d) Moscow
278. Which among the following countries has scientists announced the first human trial to treat Parkinson's disease by injecting stem cells into brain in July 2018?
(a) India (b) China (c) USA (d) Japan
279. Who has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer for HSBC India in July 2018?
(a) Surendra Rosha (b) Anil Agarwal (c) Vijay Kumar (d) Praveen Takur
280. Which among the following countries has granted to India 'Strategic Trade Authorisation' status (STA-1)?
(a) France (b) Russia (c) UK (d) USA
281. The Supreme Court reserved for judgment a PIL petition, which won the full support of the Centre, seeking to scrap the 'NOTA' option in:
(a) Lok Sabha election (b) Rajya Sabha election (c) Panchayat election (d) All of the above
282. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched 81 projects worth close to Rs 60,000 crore during a 'Ground Breaking Ceremony' in:
(a) Surat (b) Amravati (c) Lucknow (d) Patna

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. a Dahod district in Gujarat has been ranked first among 108 'aspirational districts' by the NITI Aayog on the basis of incremental development over two months from March 31 this year.
2. d The state passed the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act in 1978, becoming the third state in the country after Odisha (1967) and Madhya Pradesh (1968) to do so.
3. d The Virtual ID is a 16-digit random number mapped with Aadhaar number. It can only be generated, replaced or revoked by the Aadhaar number holder.
4. b The Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai, the second busiest in the country, fared much worse in flight punctuality as it was ranked fifth least punctual airport in the world, just ahead of airports such as Jakarta Soekarno-Hatta Airport in Indonesia and Islamabad airport in Pakistan.
5. c E-commerce firm Infibeam has received shareholders' approval to expand business in IT segment, set up a payments bank and raise Rs. 2,000 crore.
6. c India demolished Iran 44-26 in the final to emerge as the Kabaddi Masters Dubai 2018 champion.
7. c The city's Victorian and Art Deco ensembles were given the green light by the International Council for Monuments and Sites, an advisory body to the UNSECO, thus securing India its 37th World Heritage site, and Maharashtra its fifth.
8. b Members of the Lok Sabha can ask only up to five questions per day from the upcoming session of the House, an official press release stated. The release pointed out that the members, according to Direction 10B of the Lok Sabha Speaker, could give notices for posing more than 10 questions a day till now. The Direction 10B has been amended due to the count of notices for the questions exceeding 230 per day.
9. d Asia's first arbitration centre specialised in intellectual property is slated to open in Tokyo in September to resolve the growing number of disputes in the region.
10. b UNESCO added eight pre-Islamic Iranian archeological sites to its World Heritage List, the UN agency announced at a meeting in the Bahraini capital.
11. c India has moved up to 73rd place in terms of money parked by its citizens and companies with Swiss banks, while the UK remains on the top. India had slipped to 88th place with a 44 per cent plunge in such funds during 2016, but the latest data from the Swiss National Bank (SNB) shows an increase of over 50 per cent during 2017 to CHF 1.01 billion.
12. d Encephalitis and H1N1 outbreaks grab headlines, but the world's most deadly viral infection that kills everyone it infects is rabies, against which Louis Pasteur developed a vaccine in 1885. Rabies is the only disease that had a 100% death rate in India in 2017, compared to 12% for Japanese encephalitis and 6% for H1N1, popularly known as swine flu, according to data from the National Health Profile 2018.
13. c Union government celebrates July 1, 2018, as 'GST Day' to mark the first anniversary of the new indirect tax regime at the Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. Goods and Services Tax (GST) was rolled out in the intervening night of June 30 and July 1, last year, in a ceremony held in the Central Hall of Parliament. The GST tax came into effect from July 1, 2017 through the implementation of One Hundred and First Amendment of the Constitution of India by the Indian government.
14. b In a first, a special contingent of about 500 women CRPF personnel has been dispatched to Kashmir valley for regular security duties and tackles the unruly crowds and stone-pelters, including women. The CRPF, India's largest paramilitary force with about 3 lakh personnel, has about 60 battalions deployed in Jammu and Kashmir for law and order and counter-militancy operations.

15. c According to the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, more than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongues.
16. c Rahul Dravid was inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame, becoming only the fifth Indian to receive the honour after Bishan Singh Bedi, Kapil Dev, Sunil Gavaskar and Anil Kumble. The Indian cricket legend was inducted along with former Australia captain Ricky Ponting and England batting great Claire Taylor.
17. d The first 'Khadi Mall' of the country will be opened in Jharkhand soon, Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das announced.
18. a The Committee for Sub-National Accounts will be headed by Ravindra H Dholakia, a retired professor of IIM Ahmedabad.
19. a The United Nations has placed Colombia's Chiribiquete national park on its list of world heritage sites.
20. b The leftist Andrés Manuel López Obrador was elected president of Mexico in a landslide victory that upended the nation's political establishment and handed him a sweeping mandate to reshape the country.
21. c Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL) in Assam has become the first oil public sector undertaking (PSU) to adopt an online legal compliance system by introducing 'Legatrix'.
22. b The Delhi government launched 'Happiness Curriculum' for school students, with the Dalai Lama gracing the occasion and saying that India can help the world overcome "negative emotions" of the mankind.
23. d Lewis Hamilton lost the world championship lead after retiring from a sobering Austrian Grand Prix for Mercedes, as Max Verstappen took an unexpected victory for Red Bull.
24. d Australia won their 15th title by defeating India in the final after penalties
25. b India's first e-waste recycling unit will come up in Bengaluru. The unit, to be set up by the ministry, is likely to be ready in four months, and is in keeping with the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan drive.
26. b NITI Aayog, in collaboration with various ministries and industry partners, is organising 'MOVE: Global Mobility Summit' in New Delhi on 7th and 8th September, 2018.
27. c The Election Commission launched an Android-based mobile application named "cVigil" for citizens to share proof of malpractices by political parties, their candidates and activists when the Model Code of Conduct is in force.
28. d The Chhattisgarh government will set up a tribal museum in the state's upcoming new capital Naya Raipur with a view to exhibit culture and tradition of scheduled tribes.
29. a The Sunil Mehta committee which was formed with a view to tackle Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) and creating credit capacity submitted its report with recommendations to Finance Minister Piyush Goyal.
30. d In a bid to stimulate the 5G ecosystem in India, Swedish telecommunications company Ericsson formally launched the India's first "Centre of Excellence (CoE) and Innovation Lab" for 5G at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi.
31. c Most popular festival of the Jaintia tribe, Behdienkhlam is celebrated in the month of July for good health, property and bumper harvest. Although Behdienkhlam is celebrated all over the Jaintia hills, the main spectacle happens in the town of Jowai, about 64 km away from Shillong.
32. a Tata Power has its arm Tata Power Renewable Energy Ltd (TPREL) commissioned 100 MW (50 MW x 2) solar capacity at Anthapuramu Solar Park, Andhra Pradesh.
33. b Uttar Pradesh State Government announced the much-awaited Defence Manufacturing policy giving sops to entrepreneurs, willing to invest while projecting an investment of Rs 50,000 crore in the next five years and generate 2.5 lakh jobs.

34. b The National Security Guard will be the first central paramilitary force to opt for e-ticketing instead of the railway warrant under an agreement signed with the IRCTC.
35. b The Telangana government and NITI Aayog have signed a statement of intent (SoI) on strengthening collaboration in the areas of Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, IoT (Internet of Things) and other emerging technologies.
36. b Bolivia is to build an underwater museum in its sacred Lake Titicaca.
37. a Three final-year engineering students of Amritha Vishwa Vidyapeetham University in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu have developed a self-driving wheelchair called 'Self-E' with an autonomous navigation system which ensured easy travel of users from one place to another without user intervention.
38. c In a major boon to millions of people suffering from anaemia due to iron deficiency, city-based International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) has developed a new variety of jowar (sorghum) which contains 50 -300 percent more iron than the normal varieties.
39. b Hawaii became the first U.S. State to enact a ban on oxybenzone and octinoxate. The prohibition takes effect in 2021. Scientists have found the two substances can be toxic to coral, which are a vital part of the ocean ecosystem and a popular draw for tourists.
40. b The brainchild of two IT professionals -- Yogesh Sahu and Rajnish Bajpai, 'SmartGaon' is essentially a mobile app that not only connects the village internally and with the urban world, but also serves as a one-stop information centre and a marketplace for farmers. All initiatives undertaken in the village are updated, recorded, tracked and monitored on the app. Taudhakpur, a remote village in Raebareli, which can be termed as the country's first SmartGaon.
41. d The Uttarakhand high court declared the entire animal kingdom, including birds and aquatic animals, as a legal entity having rights of a "living person", a year after according similar right to Ganga and Yamuna that was subsequently stayed by the Supreme Court.
42. a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) will be setting up a 'Design University for Gaming' in Visakhapatnam.
43. c To increase investment in higher educational institutions, the Union Cabinet approved a proposal for expanding the scope of Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) by expanding its capital base to Rs 10,000 crore and tasking it to mobilise Rs 1 trillion by 2022.
44. b Union Minister of Coal, Railways, Finance & Corporate Affairs, Shri Piyush Goyal launched the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS) and Mobile Application 'Khan Prahari' developed by CMPDI, Ranchi a Subsidiary of CIL and Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space Application and Geo-informatics (BISAG) at a ceremony at, New Delhi. He is currently a Member of Rajya Sabha from Maharashtra.
45. a The European Parliament rejected a highly controversial EU copyright law proposal that has pitted Beatles legend Paul McCartney against internet giants and the creators of Wikipedia.
46. c The world's first digital psychedelic art museum without guide maps was unveiled in Tokyo.
47. c Banks have finalised an inter-creditor agreement and are working on details of an asset management company as part of a five-pronged mechanism they have identified to resolve the issue of mounting non-performing assets (NPAs) under Project Sashakt.
48. b The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted its first 'pad abort' test - crucial for proposed human spaceflight programme - at Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. ISRO was formed in 1969.
49. a Bajrang Punia emerged champion at the Tbilisi Grand Prix in the 65kg category after outplaying Iranian wrestler Mehran Nasiri in the final in Georgia.
50. a Supreme Court judge Adarsh Kumar Goel was named NGT chief for five years.

51. b For the first time, 30 June this year is celebrated as the International Day of Parliamentarism.
52. b India would operate Sri Lanka's loss-making Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport in Hambantota.
53. a HDFC Bank has gone past Russia's Sberbank to become the most valuable bank in the emerging market outside China. HDFC Bank's current market capitalisation is \$78.4 billion against Sberbank's \$74.4 billion.
54. c Reliance has become the first Indian company to record PBDIT (Profit Before Depreciation Interest and Taxes) of over \$10 billion.
55. d Indian IT industry apex body Nasscom opened a Centre of Excellence for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Bengaluru.
56. b MS Dhoni added yet another milestone to his glittering career after completing 500 international games when playing in the second T20I against England at Sophia Gardens, Cardiff.
57. b A team of scientists at the University of Warwick have produced a new method of microscopy to help view proteins under human cells.
58. a An accountability court in Pakistan sentenced ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to 10 years in prison in one of the three corruption cases against him in the high-profile Panama Papers scandal.
59. b Dipa Karmakar scripted history by becoming the first Indian gymnast to clinch a gold medal at a global event of FIG Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup at Mersin, Turkey. This is Dipa's first medal in a World Challenge Cup.
60. c At 52, Anju Khosla has just become the oldest Indian woman to complete an Ironman Triathlon - one of the toughest one-day sporting events. The New Delhi resident completed her first full Ironman Triathlon, in Carinthia, Austria, in 15 hours, 54 minutes and 54 seconds.
61. d The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is organised a two-day International Round Table Conference on "Data for New India" in New Delhi during 9-10th July, 2018.
62. a Facebook Inc. co-founder Mark Zuckerberg has overtaken Warren Buffett as the world's third-richest person, further solidifying technology as the most robust creator of wealth.
63. a NASA's famous 'planet-hunting' telescope 'Kepler' is being put into hibernation as it has almost run out of fuel launched in 2009. The Space agency announced that the Kepler team received an indication of the spacecraft fuel tank running low which prompted the agency to put the spacecraft in a 'hibernation-like' state.
64. b Kerala-based startup Ajna and Brun Health from Delhi won the Global Impact Challenge (GIC), jointly organised by the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) and US-based Singularity University, at the "grand finale" in Thiruvananthapuram.
65. b The book of Former vice-president Hamid Ansari's speeches, titled Dare I question: Reflections on Contemporary Challenges, is set to be released on July 17 in Delhi by former chief justice of India Justice T S Thakur.
66. a More than 100 Swedish intellectuals have joined forces to form a new prize-giving body in protest after the Swedish Academy, which selects Nobel laureates, was plunged into crisis over its long-standing ties to a man accused of assaulting several women. The new literature prize is the latest award to be dubbed an alternative to the Nobel, joining the Swedish Right Livelihood Award honouring those who work to improve the planet, and Finland's Millennium Technology Prize.
67. b On 7 July 2018, members of cooperatives around the world celebrate the International Day of Cooperatives. Through the slogan Sustainable societies through cooperation they will show how, thanks to their values, principles and governance structures, cooperatives have sustainability and resilience at their core, with concern for community as the seventh of their guiding principles.

68. d The Union Human Resource Development Ministry has granted the Institution of Eminence (IoE) status to IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay and IISc Bangalore. Along with them, in the private sector, the Manipal Academy of Higher Education, BITS Pilani and Jio Institute granted institution of eminence tag. The UGC had received 103 applications including JNU and Delhi University for IoE status.
69. b Brexit Secretary David Davis has resigned because he was not willing to be "a reluctant conscript" to Prime Minister Theresa May's European Union exit plan, delivering a blow to a British leader struggling to end divisions in her cabinet.
70. b Michael Ondaatje's 'The English Patient' was named the greatest-ever winner of the Man Booker Prize at an event celebrating five decades of the prestigious literary award. The Canadian writer's tale of love and conflict during World War II was awarded the Golden Man Booker Prize for fiction after winning a public vote.
71. a Samsung has set up what is the world's largest mobile factory at Sector 81 in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. Not China or South Korea -- and certainly not the US -- the tag of housing the world's largest mobile factory has straight away put Noida on top of the world manufacturing map when it comes to consumer electronics.
72. c Turkey's Tayyip Erdogan is sworn in as president of Turkey with sweeping new powers over a country he has dominated and reshaped during his 15-year rule.
73. c Human Resource Development Minister Shri Prakash Javadekar inaugurates the 17th World Sanskrit Conference is held at Vancouver, Canada from 9th July to 13th July, 2018.
74. b The Supreme Court refused to defer the hearing on a clutch of petitions against Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code that criminalises homosexuality.
75. b Squash player Dipika Pallikal has been appointed as Asia's representative in the prestigious Athletes Advisory Commission of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF). The appointment was made by the CGF.
76. c Rohit Sharma is the first Indian Cricketer to score three T20 International centuries. Rohit Sharma also becomes the first player to score three hundreds across each format - Test, ODI, and T20I.
77. b MS Dhoni became the first wicketkeeper in the world to take 50 catches in T20 Internationals. With 87 dismissals (54 catches and 33 stumpings) in 93 matches, Dhoni leads the charts. Recently, Dhoni also became the third Indian player to complete 500 international appearances.
78. b The first India Tourism Mart will be organized in New Delhi from 16th of September to create a global tourism mart for India on lines of major international travel marts.
79. a India is set to hold the tenth edition of Delhi Dialogue, the premier annual event to discuss politico-security, economic and socio-cultural engagement between India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), on 19-20 July.
80. a Indian Railways has introduced Double Stack Dwarf Container Services. This freight train was flagged off on 7th July, 2018 from Western Railway's Rajkot railway station on its maiden commercial run.
81. c Six higher education institutions, including the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, the Indian Institutes of Technology at Mumbai and Delhi, and the proposed Jio Institute of the Reliance Foundation, have been named Institutions of Eminence (IoE) by the Centre.
82. b Himachal Pradesh was the first state in country to ban use of plastic bags in 2009.
83. b Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved 503-million US Dollar lining project of the Son canal in Shahabad-Bhojpur region of Bihar which would benefit the agriculture sector immensely in the region.
84. d Rajya Sabha has, for the first time in 76 years since it came into being, entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a foreign counterpart for promoting inter-parliamentary dialogue. Shri Venkaiah Naidu, has, in the process, become the

first Chairman of Rajya Sabha to sign such an agreement when he inked an MOU with the visiting President of the Senate of the Republic of Rwanda, Mr. Bernard Makuza.

85. a Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, released the final rankings of States in Ease of Doing Business in New Delhi. The top rankers are Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Haryana. Jharkhand and Gujarat stood fourth and fifth respectively.
86. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the third most followed world leader on Twitter with 42 million followers on his personal account @NarendraModi, according to a study on 'world leaders on social media' conducted by communications firm Burson Cohn & Wolfe (BCW). As of May 18, 2018, Modi is just behind US President Donald Trump and Pope Francis. The official account of the Prime Minister @PMOIndia boasts of the fourth largest following with 26 million followers.
87. c According to a study on 'world leaders on social media' conducted by communications firm Burson Cohn & Wolfe (BCW), Sushma Swaraj, India's External Affairs Minister also made it to the top 10 list of the most followed world leaders, with more than 10 million followers on Twitter. She also happens to be the most followed female world leader, as well as foreign minister on Twitter with 11 million followers.
88. d From the forthcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament, Rajya Sabha MPs will be able to speak in the House in any of the 22 Indian languages listed in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution, Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu said.
89. a New Delhi and Bengaluru had among the highest number of startup investment rounds greater than \$100 million since 2014. Bengaluru had 21 and New Delhi 18, according to a report by US venture capital and startup database CB Insights.
90. b The book "Winning Like Sourav: Think & Succeed Like Ganguly" has written by Abhirup Bhattacharya.
91. c Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2019 will be held in the holy city of Varanasi in January 2019. The theme of the three-day event, which is being organised in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's parliamentary constituency, will be the 'Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India'.
92. b Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged a package of \$20 billion in loans and \$1.6 billion in financial aid to countries in the Middle East, as part of what he called an "oil and gas plus" model to revive economic growth in the region.
93. a France qualified for the 2018 World Cup final with a 1-0 win over Belgium in Saint Petersburg. Samuel Umtiti headed in a corner swung in by Antoine Griezmann in the 51st-minute to give France the lead. With this win France has reached their third World Cup final.
94. c India's first private sector unit for manufacturing unmanned air vehicles (UAV) and light bullet proof vehicles (LBPV) will be set up by DCM Shriram Industries Group on the campus of Shriram Rayons in Kota.
95. a State-run telecom firm BSNL unveiled the country's first internet telephony service that will allow users to dial any telephone number in India through its mobile app.
96. c Niti Aayog has proposed 15-point action plan for combating air pollution in ten most polluted cities in the country, including Delhi, Kanpur and Varanasi.
97. c Deepak Parekh-led financial services conglomerate HDFC Group saw the market capitalisation of its listed firms cross the Rs 10 trillion mark, making it only the second Indian business house after the Tata group to achieve this feat.
98. d India was ranked 57th in the latest Global Innovation Index (GII) rankings released in New York.
99. c India has become the world's sixth-biggest economy, pushing France into seventh place, according to updated World Bank figures for 2017.
100. b The theme World Population day is "Family Planning is a Human right" this year.
101. c Croatia booked their place in the final of the FIFA World Cup for the first time in their history.

102. b In Madhya Pradesh, in a first of its kind initiative, the state government will appoint girls as a district Brand Ambassador who has recorded significant achievements in any field under the Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao scheme.
103. b Andrej Babis is a Czech politician of Slovak origin who has been the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic since December 2017
104. a New Delhi's Connaught Place has moved one position higher to become ninth most expensive office location in the world with an annual rent of \$153 per sq ft, according to property consultant CBRE.
105. a Indian-origin technology executives Jayshree Ullal and Neerja Sethi have made it to the Forbes' list of America's 60 richest self-made women, with 21-year-old reality-TV star and entrepreneur Kylie Jenner the youngest to be featured in the power list.
106. b The Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, features among the top 100 in the Times Higher Education Golden Age University Rankings and top 50 in the Emerging University Rankings.
107. c India has the world's fifth largest cultivated area under genetically modified (GM) crops, at 11.4 million hectares (mh) in 2017.
108. a Hima Das created history by becoming the first Indian woman to win a gold at the IAAF World Under- 20 Athletics Championships in Tempere, Finland.
109. a India's first 2+2 dialogue with the US, which was postponed this month, would now take place in the first week of September, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said. Sitharaman said the agenda during the talks would be on developing and strengthening defence cooperation.
110. d Odisha State Government constituted Heritage Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to preserve the history and culture of Odisha. Its aim is to spread and preserve history and culture of Odisha and enrich Odia language further.
111. c Haryana has topped other states in per capita revenue collection under GST, and is also the fourth highest generator of e-way bills in the country, state Finance Minister Abhimanyu said. Haryana's per capita revenue collection under GST is the highest in the country at Rs.1876.
112. d The Portuguese parliament approved a law that will allow citizens to change their gender and name from the age of 16 without a medical report showing "identity disruption". Portugal joins Denmark, Malta, Sweden, Ireland and Norway to become "the sixth European country to grant the right to self-determination of transgender identity... without the guardianship of a third party and without a diagnosis of identity disruption".
113. b Mukesh Ambani overtook Alibaba Group founder Jack Ma to become Asia's richest person as he positions Reliance Industries Ltd. to disrupt the e-commerce space in India.
114. a Johnson & Johnson has been ordered to pay nearly \$4.7bn (£3.58bn) in damages to 22 women who claim the company's talcum powder contributed to them developing ovarian cancer, marking the sixth-largest product-defect verdict in US history. Johnson & Johnson is an American multinational medical devices, pharmaceutical and consumer packaged goods manufacturing company founded in 1886.
115. a Near-Earth asteroid 2017 YE5 was discovered with observations provided by the Morocco Oukaimeden Sky Survey in December last year, but no details about the asteroid's physical properties were known until the end of June, NASA said in a statement. This is only the fourth "equal mass" binary near-Earth asteroid ever detected, consisting of two objects nearly identical in size, orbiting each other.
116. b The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation launches the Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 (SSG 2018) in New Delhi. An independent survey agency will conduct the survey in all districts from 1st to 31st August 2018, and the results will be announced in the form of a ranking of all districts and states on the basis of quantitative and qualitative sanitation (Swachhata) parameters.

117. b Kevin Anderson reached his first Wimbledon final with a heart-stopping 7-6(6) 6-7(5) 6-7(9) 6-4 26-24 win over the sport's perennial ultra-marathon man John Isner. Anderson has become the first South African man to reach the Wimbledon final for 97 years. Brian Norton was the last South African man to reach the final in 1921.
118. b Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) has opened India's first dormitory facility at MG Road Metro Station.
119. d UN chief Antonio Guterres has established a first-of-its-kind panel on digital cooperation aimed at addressing concerns of cybersecurity threats and rise in hate speech and named senior Indian diplomat Amandeep Singh Gill as the executive director of the panel's secretariat. The high-level panel on digital cooperation will be co-chaired by US philanthropist Melinda Gates and China-based Alibaba founder Jack Ma.
120. a For the first time ever, United Nations member states, except the USA, have agreed on a deal to better manage international migration, address its challenges, strengthen migrant rights and contribute to sustainable development.
121. b An eight-year-old, Indian-origin schoolboy, Ishwar Sharma is the under-11 UK national yoga champion has been named the British Indian of the Year for his achievements in the field.
122. c India's economic growth is poised to rise to 7.4% in 2018 and 7.5% in 2019 as the economy has been able to navigate through growth obstacles due to demonetisation and impact of GST rollout, a report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) showed.
123. a Walt Disney's \$71 billion deal with 21st Century Fox won the endorsement of influential proxy advisers Institutional Shareholder Services Inc. and Glass Lewis & Co., giving the entertainment giant another edge over rival suitor Comcast. Walter Elias Disney was an American entrepreneur, animator, voice actor and film producer.
124. a Scientists in New Zealand have performed the first ever 3D colour X-ray on humans, with the support of CERN physics lab.
125. c A group of engineering students in Tamil Nadu have made a new experimental satellite which could set a new world record as the world's lightest and cheapest. The satellite was developed by four first-year engineering students and is called the 'Jaihind-1S'. The 'Jaihind' was developed by first-year engineering students KJ Harikrishnan, P Amarnath, G Sudhi and T Giri Prasad, from the Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science in Kelambakkam near Chennai.
126. c South Africa has unveiled a powerful radio telescope 'MeerKAT', part of an international project that scientists say will provide new details on the Milky Way and other galaxies.
127. b Mahendra Singh Dhoni became the fourth Indian to reach the milestone of 10,000 runs in ODIs during the second match of the three-game series against England. The 37-year-old former India skipper joined an elite list which features some of India's greatest batsmen in Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid.
128. d France clinched their second World Cup Football title.
129. c Militaries of India and Pakistan will be part of a mega anti-terror drill in Russia next month which is being organised by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) with an aim to expand cooperation among the member countries to deal with terrorism and extremism.
130. c Embattled Haiti Prime Minister Jack Guy Lafontant resigned following deadly violence and looting sparked by a now-abandoned plan to raise fuel prices, triggering a fraught process to form a new government. Mr. Lafontant was facing a potential vote of no confidence.
131. b Iceland has for the first time been elected to the Human Rights Council, filling the seat vacated by the United States, which withdrew from the body last month, citing bias.
132. a India has become the vice-chair (regional head) of the Asia Pacific region of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) for a period of two years to June, 2020.

133. b The second National Tourism Conclave was organised in Jaipur as top officials of the state tourism department said a number of "pro-tourism" projects being executed in the state would give a major boost to the sector.
134. d The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has constituted a 10 Member Committee, headed by the Secretary of Ministry of Corporate Affairs, for review of the penal provisions in the Companies Act, 2013 may be setup to examine 'de-criminalisation' of certain offences.
135. d Novak Djokovic swept aside South Africa's Kevin Anderson in straight sets to win his fourth Wimbledon singles title and 13th Grand Slam.
136. d Nelson Mandela International Day is an annual international day in honour of Nelson Mandela celebrated each year on 18 July, Mandela's birthday.
137. c With the launch of cost-effective innovative water project, Bihar will soon provide the cheapest drinking water in the world.
138. c Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched the 'Paudhagiri' campaign, aimed at increasing the green cover in the state.
139. c The theme of the 15th PBD Convention is: Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India.
140. a The Indian Institute of Technology-Madras launched a Rs 40 crore remotely operable microscope, claimed to be the world's first of its kind, that would enable precise view of atoms of a material.
141. a Jeff Bezos is the richest person in modern history. The Amazon.com Inc. founder's net worth broke \$150 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
142. c The Life Insurance Corporation, LIC, board gave approval to the acquisition of up to 51 per cent stake in debt-ridden IDBI Bank.
143. b YES Bank, through partnerships with tech giants such as Microsoft, Cisco, IBM and Adobe, is looking to address India's urban development concerns through that route. The bank has joined hands with 12 global leaders as it prepares to announce the launch of the seventh edition of 'Transformation Series'.
144. c Fertiliser major IFFCO has partnered with Singapore-based technology firm iMandi to start an e-commerce platform for farmers, with an investment of about Rs.80 crore.
145. c China plans to launch 300 low-orbit satellites to provide worldwide communication services, with the first in the series to be launched later this year. The first in the 300-satellite array -- known as the Hongyan constellation -- is set to be launched by the end of this year.
146. b India's star shuttler PV Sindhu, seeded second, suffered a 15-21, 18-21 defeat to fourth seed Nozomi Okuhara of Japan in straight games to settle for runners-up spot in the Thailand Open at the Nimibutr Stadium in Bangkok.
147. a England captain Harry Kane has won the Golden Boot after finishing as the World Cup's top scorer with Croatia's Luka Modric winning the Golden Ball for being the player of the tournament.
148. b Indian Railways is set to get its first publicly-owned dedicated corridor for freight trains on August 15, when the country will be celebrating its 72nd Independence Day. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to dedicate to the nation a 190-km railway line between Dadri in Uttar Pradesh and Phulera in Rajasthan, which fall under the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC).
149. a Laying the foundation stone of India's first skill training institute at Barang near Bhubaneswar, Dharmendra Pradhan said the Centre's endeavour is yet another step to empower the youth of the State and make them job ready for industries.

150. d The government has formed a committee comprising officials of the environment ministry, experts from NEERI, IITs and various other forums to look into the issue of industrial pollution around the iconic Taj Mahal. The committee will be headed by C K Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
151. c India accounts for one-fifth of global deaths due to floods, according to government data that lends perspective to a new World Bank study that says climate change will lower the standards of living of nearly half of the country's population by 2050.
152. c Nepal will host the fourth BIMSTEC Summit on August 30 and 31 in Kathmandu.
153. c The UK has topped an annual global ranking of nations' soft power, with France placed second on the list of 30 countries which does not feature India.
154. b Peru declared a 60-day state of emergency on its Colombian border to ensure security from the menace of drug trafficking in a region.
155. b Bollywood actors Akshay Kumar and Salman Khan are among the world's 100 highest-paid entertainers, according to a Forbes list topped by American boxer Floyd Mayweather.
156. c A dozen new moons have been discovered around Jupiter, bringing its total number of moons to 79, the most for any planet in solar system. One of the moons has been called a "real oddball" due to its tiny size.
157. b To raise awareness on the importance of investing in youth skills development, the United Nations General Assembly designate 15 July as World Youth Skills Day.
158. b Nelson Mandela was Black Nationalist and the first black president of South Africa (1994-99).
159. b Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has confirmed that Indian Athlete Hima Das will be named as the first sports ambassador of the state.
160. c Australian researchers have developed a blood test for melanoma in its early stages, calling it a "world first" breakthrough that could save many lives.
161. b Dalal Street in downtown Mumbai, India is the address of the Bombay Stock Exchange and several related financial firms and institutions.
162. b Repco Micro Finance Ltd, a non-banking finance company promoted by Repco Bank, received Nabard 2018 award for its service to self-help group (SHG) linkage in Tamil Nadu for the fiscal year 2017-18.
163. c The European Union and Japan have signed one of the world's biggest free trade deals, covering nearly a third of the world's GDP.
164. a The union government has renewed the appointment of Prof Anil D Sahasrabudhe as the chairman of the technical and professional education regulator All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).
165. d Ex Pitch Black is a biennial multi-national large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).
166. b External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj delivered the key-note address of the two-day event, the theme of which is, 'Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Co-operation'.
167. c India's star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra comfortably won the gold at the Sotteville Athletics meet in France, beating a competitive field which included 2012 London Olympics gold-medallist Keshorn Walcott.
168. c Forbes has named Hollywood actor Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson the highest paid actor in the world. He has become one of Hollywood's most bankable star, by earning double the money than what he earned in 2017.

169. a Hindi poet Gopal Das Neeraj passed away in New Delhi last evening after a prolonged illness. His famous poetic works include Asawari, Lahar Pukare and Paran Geet.
170. d Chhattisgarh CM Raman Singh launches "Abhar aapki sewa ka" app for pensioners.
171. b Rani ki vav is an intricately constructed stepwell situated in the town of Patan in Gujarat, India.
172. c Led by India, South Asia will continue to be the fastest growing economic area despite new trade tensions in Asia and Pacific region, Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in a new report.
173. d A target of installing 175 GW of renewable energy capacity by the year 2022 has been set, which includes 100 GW from solar, 60 GW from wind, 10 GW from bio-power and 5 GW from small hydro-power.
174. c National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) is running "Ganga Vriksharopan Abhiyan" in five main stem Ganga basin states - Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.
175. a A decision to establish a BRICS Media Academy and a BRICS news portal were among those taken at the 2018 BRICS Media Forum at Cape Town in South Africa.
176. c Former Wimbledon champion Michael Stich of Germany and 14-time Grand Slam doubles champion Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic will be inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame.
177. c Seven new events will be included in the programme for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has confirmed. The next Winter Olympics will now include: women's monobob, Big Air freestyle skiing for men and women, plus mixed team events in short track speed skating, ski jumping, ski aerials and snowboard cross.
178. d Fakhar Zaman blazed Pakistan's first ever double century in a one-day international in his team's record 244-run victory against Zimbabwe.
179. a The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research.
180. b Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh launched the Student Police Cadet (SPC) programme in Gurgaon.
181. b The West Bengal government signed an agreement to implement the Centre's health insurance scheme under the joint banner "Ayushman Bharat - Swasthya Sathi".
182. b India will host the inaugural round of the two-plus-two dialogue with the United States on September 6.
183. a Shri J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare participated in the '8th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting at Durban, South Africa.
184. b Digital technologies, judiciously used, make for good governance and transparency in administration, according to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. He launched e-Pragati core at Amaravati.
185. b Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel has long demanded that the Palestinians acknowledge his country's existence as the "nation-state of the Jewish people."
186. a Indian Railways will have 100 per cent bio toilets by next year that will make tracks safe and eliminate defecation on the rail lines, Railway Minister Piyush Goyal.
187. b State-owned Allahabad Bank said it proposes to close its only foreign branch in Hong Kong as part of rationalisation of its overseas operations.

188. b Sunil Chhetri has been declared the 2017 Player of the Year by the All India Football Federation (AIFF). Chhetri was the undisputed winner for his domestic and international performances and excellent conduct on and off the field. The Woman Player of the Year award was given to Kamala Devi.
189. c India won 8 medals in the Junior Asian Wrestling Championship which concluded in New Delhi. The medals comprised 2 gold, 3 silver and as many bronze. Sachin Rathi won the gold after winning the bout in the 74 kilogram category.
190. a Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan have topped the list of states with maximum solar power generation capacity approved under solar parks in India, according to fresh data of total 26,449 Megawatt capacity projects released by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).
191. b India Heritage Walk Festival, a collaboration of Sahapedia and YES Arts & Culture, has been awarded the PATA Gold Award 2018 for its recently concluded pan-India event. Sahapedia is an open online resource on the arts, cultures and heritage of India.
192. a The first Mizo Hnahthlak International festival was organised in Aizawl, which brought the Mizo ethnic community from across borders.
193. c The British capital, London has launched an action plan to become the world's most walkable city. The 'Walking Action Plan', released by the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan's team earlier this week, aims to encourage a million additional walking trips each day by 2024.
194. c The GST Council approved quarterly filing of return for the small taxpayers having turnover below Rs. 5 Cr as an optional facility. 93% of the taxpayers have a turnover of less than Rs 5 Cr and these taxpayers would benefit substantially from the simplification measures proposed improving their ease of doing business.
195. d Billionaire Ambani brothers Mukesh and Anil and Bollywood superstars Salman Khan and Priyanka Chopra are among the dozen Indians named in Variety magazine's list of 500 most influential business leaders shaping the global \$ 2 trillion entertainment industry.
196. d Myanmar has joined the India-initiated International Solar Alliance (ISA), becoming the 68th member of the grouping that is aiming at optimum utilisation of solar energy.
197. a NABARD launched the Centre for Climate Change the first of its kind in South East Asia for accelerating concerted climate action by various stakeholders in government, private, financial and non -government actors in Lucknow.
198. c QR code (abbreviated from Quick Response Code) is the trademark for a type of matrix barcode (or two-dimensional barcode) first designed in 1994 for the automotive industry in Japan.
199. a India's rising badminton talent Lakshya Sen created history as he went on to bag the gold medal in men's singles competition at the Badminton Asia Junior Championships 2018 in Jakarta.
200. b Minister for Science and Technology Harsh Vardhan has unveiled the first of a kind Air Quality and Weather Forecast System, SAFAR at Chandni Chowk in New Delhi.
201. b Jaipur is all set to host India's first ceramics triennale.
202. b In a first in Telangana, Lord Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple located at Yadadri got ISO certification.
203. a The environment ministry has decided to re-introduce a scheme for awarding Indian authors for their original work in Hindi on subjects related to environment including pollution and climate change.
204. a Government has reduced the minimum annual deposit requirement for accounts under Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana to Rs. 250 from Rs. 1,000 earlier.

205. c Kerala has topped the Public Affairs Index (PAI) for 2018 as the best-governed state for the third consecutive year since 2016 among large states,".
206. b Facebook is working on launching Athena, its own Internet satellite, early in 2019.
207. a The Men's team event of the World Junior Squash Championships begins in Chennai. A total of 24 countries, divided into eight groups, are taking part.
208. c American third seed Steve Johnson beat first-time ATP finalist Indian Ramkumar Ramanathan 7-5 3-6 6-2 at the Hall of Fame Open in Newport, Rhode Island, for his fourth career title and second of 2018.
209. b Kigali is the capital and largest city of Rwanda. The Rwandan franc is the currency of Rwanda. It is subdivided into 100 centimes.
210. c The first meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on Border Haats concluded in Agartala, Tripura.
211. b Union Government set up high level committee chaired by Union Home Secretary to check mob lynching.
212. a Pakistan has got its first-ever woman Chief Justice of a high court. Justice Tahira Safdar was named as the Chief Justice of the Balochistan High Court by Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar.
213. b SBI is the only authorised bank to issue and encash these bonds under the Electoral Bond Scheme, 2018 which kicked in from January 2, 2018.
214. d India ranks 11 in the 2018 AT Kearney FDI Confidence Index, down from 8 in 2017 and 9 in 2016.
215. b World Hepatitis Day, observed on July 28 every year, aims to raise global awareness of hepatitis a group of infectious diseases known as Hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E and encourage prevention, diagnosis and treatment.
216. a Abu Dhabi is likely to get its first Hindu temple by 2020 with a legal entity been registered with the local government for its construction.
217. a Swachh Survekshan Grameen launched in UP, Jharkhand and Maharashtra
218. b In Madhya Pradesh, acid attack victims have been included under disability and they will be eligible to get all benefits of various schemes of the government as per Disabilities Act 2016.
219. b Bihar finally made its presence felt in the sanitation mission, as the district of Sitamarhi became the first open defecation free (ODF) district of the state.
220. b Canadian author Michael Ondaatje has again made the Man Booker Prize list with his latest novel "Warlight," weeks after his book "The English Patient" was named the best work of fiction from the last five decades of the literary prize.
221. c Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted 200 cows to villagers who do not yet own a cow, under the Rwandan Government's Girinka Programme.
222. a Insurance regulator IRDAI has constituted a 16-member committee to examine motor third party insurance pricing aspects and make recommendations on the premium rates for 2019-20.
223. c With 27% of its power generation coming from renewable energy, Karnataka has emerged the leading State for renewable energy in India this year, pipping Tamil Nadu. The State reached 12.3 gigawatts (GW) of installed capacity as of March 2018.
224. d Venezuela's inflation will skyrocket to 1 million percent by the end of the year as the government continues to print money to cover a growing budget hole, the International Monetary Fund predicted.
225. c Kargil Vijay Diwas, named after the success of Operation Vijay. On 26 July 1999, India successfully took command of the high outposts which had been lost to Pakistani intruders.

226. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi has addressed the 10th BRICS Summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa.
227. c Home Minister Rajnath Singh has inaugurated the second conference of young Superintendents of Police in New Delhi.
228. b President Ram Nath Kovind launched Chhattisgarh government's Sanchar Kranti Yojna at Jagdalpur in the Naxal-affected Bastar region of Chhattisgarh.
229. b A massive underground lake has been detected for the first time on Mars, raising the possibility that more water - and maybe even life - exists there.
230. b Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced the 'Mukhyamantri Kisan Aaye Badhotri Solar Yojna' which aims to increase the income of farmers by three to five times in the national capital.
231. b Ireland will hold an international conference of female parliamentarians in September.
232. d Myanmar which will host the next Asean Education Ministers Meeting (ASEM) in October seeks to boost its education sector by cooperating with India, China and the US among others.
233. c Renowned historian and author of several bestselling books, including the highly acclaimed "India After Gandhi" and "Gandhi Before India", Ramachandra Guha has penned a new book on the father of the nation, which has just gone to the press and will be out in September.
234. c The Cochin International Airport in Kerala, the first fully solar-powered airport in the world, has been chosen for the prestigious Champion of Earth Prize - 2018 instituted by the United Nations (UN).
235. a Two Indians, Bharat Vatwani and Sonam Wangchuk are among the six winners of this year's Ramon Magsaysay Award.
236. a West Bengal Governor K N Tripathi inaugurated the 18th International Children's Film Festival in which 36 films from 17 countries would be screened.
237. c Four persons of India-origin, including three women, have been named by Fortune among 40 of the most influential and inspiring young people in business under the age of 40.
238. d India's carbon-dioxide emission will rise to 3.8-3.9 gigatonnes by 2030 not 3.8-4.9 gigatonnes as was projected earlier, which is consistent with the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) pledge made at the 2015 Paris summit, according to a study by an Indian think-tank.
239. b In 2018, Earth Overshoot Day lands on August 1. Earth Overshoot Day marks the date when humanity has exhausted nature's budget for the year.
240. b According to the Instagram Rich List released by HopperHQ.com, an Instagram post scheduling tool, Virat Kohli is at ninth position in a list of athletes who can charge the most money for sponsored posts on the photo-sharing app.
241. c The shares of Facebook plunged in the biggest one-day drop in stock-market history. The 19 per-cent drop vaporized 119 billion US dollars of the company's stock-market value, resulting into CEO Mark Zuckerberg's worth fall by roughly 16 billion dollars.
242. c Pakistan's cricket star-turned politician Imran Khan declared victory for his party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party (PTI), in the country's general election.
243. c WHO theme for the World Hepatitis Day 2018 is "Test. Treat. Hepatitis".
244. b Virat Kohli was presented with the International Cricket of the Year for 2017 and 2018 by England's Barmy Army.
245. c The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) has chosen Kenya to host the 2020 World under 20 championships.

246. c Where skies were free of cloud, the spectacle was visible almost everywhere around the world, with the exception of North America. The eclipse had already started by the time the Moon rose over the UK and Western Europe.
247. b The Justice BN Srikrishna committee has stated that regulations suggested in the draft data protection bill will require the government to make changes to the Aadhaar Act.
248. b The Union government has decided to allow sugar mills to manufacture ethanol directly from sugarcane juice or intermediate product called B-molasses.
249. d The Indian Coast Guard has conducted a bilateral table-top exercise on maritime pollution response with Bangladesh Coast Guard at the regional headquarters (North East) of the ICG Kolkata.
250. a The Gujarat government came out with an 'Urban Sanitation and Cleanliness Policy' for better management of solid and liquid waste in cities.
251. b AngelHack, the world's largest hackathon organisers, conducted the Global Hackathon series in the Kerala Startup Mission at Kinfra Hi-Tech Park in Kalamassery on July 28 and 29.
252. d SoftBank Group Corp will launch a digital payments service in Japan, and has partnered Paytm for the service.
253. a The Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, laid the foundation stone for permanent campus of National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) for Women at Mohali, Punjab. This is the first NSTI Institute for Punjab and only one of its kinds in India which is exclusively for women.
254. a Pradip Choudhury, who formed the central defensive pair with Subroto Bhattacharya when Mohun Bagan took on Pele's Cosmos team in 1977, was conferred the Mohun Bagan Ratna 2018 at the annual day of the 129-year-old club in Kolkata.
255. b "We, the heads of state and government, express satisfaction regarding the achievements of BRICS over the last 10 years as a strong demonstration of BRICS cooperation toward the attainment of peace, harmony and shared development and prosperity, and deliberated on ways to consolidate them further," the leaders said in their Johannesburg Declaration. The declaration was made on the second day of the 10th BRICS Summit underway in Johannesburg.
256. b Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Affairs (AIDA) and Nehru Memorial Museum Library (NMML) is going to jointly host Nepal-India Think Tank Summit 2018 for the first time in Kathmandu on July 31.
257. d India has been designated as a nodal centre for preparing flash-flood forecasts by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). That means India will have to develop a customised model that can issue advance warning of floods in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand, according to Dr. Madhavan Rajeevan, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences.
258. c HCL Technologies has toppled Wipro to become the third-largest software services company in India in terms of dollar revenue, clocking a top line of \$2.05 billion during the June quarter. The IT services revenue of Wipro during the same quarter was \$2.02 billion.
259. a ITC went past Hindustan Unilever to become the country's fourth most valued firm in terms of market valuation helped by a smart surge in its share price. ITC also became the most valued FMCG Company. TCS is the country's most valued firm with a market cap of Rs 7,43,930.44 crore followed by RIL (Rs 7,15,772.03 crore), HDFC Bank (Rs 5,82,044.68 crore), ITC and HUL in the top five order on BSE.
260. a Kathleen Baker set a world record of 58.00sec to win the 100m backstroke at the US swimming championships. Baker, silver medalist in the event at the 2016 Rio Olympics, improved on the world record of 58.10 set by Canadian Kylie Masse at the World Championships in Budapest on July 25 of last year.
261. b There's no stopping 17-year-old Shivangi Pathak. After becoming the youngest Indian woman to reach the peak of Mount Everest, Shivangi has set a new record. The Haryana girl has scaled Africa's highest peak, Mount Kilimanjaro in three days.

262. b Every year, July 29 is celebrated as the Global Tiger Day to raise awareness about the endangered big cats. It was created when 13 countries came together in 2009 and pledged to double the world's Tiger population by 2022 -- the next "Year of the Tiger" on the Asian lunar calendar.
263. d Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced that the state government would implement its own food security act from Gandhi Jayanti on October 2.
264. b The NITI Aayog has proposed a common nodal energy ministry on the lines of the model followed in various other countries to streamline governance among different ministries and departments pertaining to the crucial sector and speed up decision-making.
265. c The Odisha government approved a proposal for setting up a riverine port on river Mahanadi in Kendrapara district.
266. a Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman formally handed over two types of indigenously built high-power multi-fuel engines to the Army. The engines were manufactured for the first time under the Centre's Make in India programme by the Engine Factory.
267. b Indian American Seema Nanda, who took over as CEO of the opposition Democratic National Committee last week, has vowed to fight for the "soul of the country" and help elect Democrats in every corner of the US. Nanda, the first Indian American ever to be CEO of either the DNC or the Republican National Committee took over reigns of the main opposition party last week on July 23
268. a A panel of experts has suggested one single database for inflation, industrial output and employment to give credibility to India's growth numbers and improve the consistency of key statistics.
A committee on analytics under IIT, Mumbai professor NL Sarda has told the government to set up a National Integrated Data System (NIDS), citing lack of metadata or additional contextual information as a major deficiency for all indicators.
269. d The Indian Catholic priest, Fr Richard D'Souza and astrophysics researcher who found conclusive evidence of a long lost galaxy, the third biggest after Andromeda and the Milky Way, said that like many others before him he nearly gave up on the search. He along with fellow researcher Eric Bell hit upon conclusive evidence of galaxy named M32p that was "shredded and cannibalised" by the Milky Way's galactic neighbour Andromeda about two billion years ago.
270. b NASA's latest planet hunting probe - the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) - has started its search for new worlds around nearby stars, the US Space agency said. TESS is NASA's latest satellite to search for planets outside our solar system, known as exoplanets.
271. c World number one Dustin Johnson rebounded from a shock early exit at the British Open to capture the Canadian Open title for his third victory of 2018. The win was the 19th title of his career and comes just over a week after he failed to make the cut at Carnoustie.
272. b The oldest person in the world has died at age 117, officials in her home state in Japan. Chiyo Miyako, who was known to her family members as "the goddess," died, said officials in Kanagawa prefecture, south of Tokyo.
273. b World Day against Trafficking in Persons is observed all over the world on 30th July 2018. This year, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has chosen 'responding to the trafficking of children and young people' as the focus of the World Day.
274. b A city college student, Prabhat Koli (19), who crossed the English Channel when he was 16, has become the first Asian to swim the choppy water from Jersey (an Island in the UK) to France in cold weather.
275. a The 3rd BRICS Film Festival took place in Durban, South Africa, along with the International Durban Film Festival (DIFF) from 22-27th July, 2018.
276. b Egypt defeated England, 2-0 to win the boy's title at the WSF-World Junior Squash team championship in Chennai.

277. d The International Army Games 2018 at Patriot Park in Moscow region was declared open by Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu.
278. d Japanese scientists announced the first human trial to treat Parkinson's disease by injecting stem cells into brain, building on an earlier trial on primates.
279. a The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) announced the appointment of Surendra Rosha as Chief Executive Officer for HSBC India, subject to regulatory approvals.
280. d At the start of the first-ever Indo-Pacific Business Forum, Ross announced that the Trump administration has granted to India strategic trade authorisation status STA-1. Currently, 36 countries, mostly all NATO nations, have this status.
281. b The Supreme Court reserved for judgment a PIL petition, which won the full support of the Centre, seeking to scrap the 'NOTA' option in Rajya Sabha election.
282. c Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched 81 projects worth close to Rs 60,000 crore during a 'Ground Breaking Ceremony' in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

