

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



Modi's Digital India campaign lands India in the UN's E-Government rankings

- **Scaling 22 places in 4 years to 96th rank**, India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has managed to **break into the top 100 of United Nations E-Government Index (EGDI)**.
- The comprehensive survey released once in two years, **assesses among others, government development at the national level based on telecommunications infrastructure, human capital, and national online presence.**
- The **2018 edition focused on 'Gearing E-Government to Support Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies'** and was launched on July 19.

The EGDI takes into account the **weighted average of three normalized indices – Telecommunications Infrastructure Index (TII), Human Capital Index (HCI) and finally, the Online Service Index (OSI)**. With an overall score of **0.5484**, India has managed to jump 11 ranks from 107 in 2016, in the list topped by Denmark (0.9150) followed by Australia, Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom.

First 'Nepal-India Think Tank' Summit held in Kathmandu

- The **first 'Nepal-India Think Tank' Summit** to foster greater collaboration and knowledge-sharing among the think tanks of the two countries was **held in Kathmandu**.
- **Former Prime Minister of Nepal and Co-Chairman of ruling Nepal Communist Party, Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'** inaugurated the summit.

The summit was jointly organized by the Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Affairs and Nehru Memorial Museum Library. Pushpa Kamal Dahal was the Prime Minister of Nepal from 2008 to 2009 and again from 2016 to 2017. Dahal is also widely known by his nom de guerre "Prachanda".

Parliament passes bill for merger of subsidiary banks with SBI

- The **Parliament has passed the State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill, 2017** with the Lok Sabha approving the amendments sent by the Rajya Sabha.
- The **Bill seeks to repeal the State Bank of India (Subsidiary Banks) Act, 1959, the State Bank of Hyderabad Act, 1956 and further to amend the State Bank of India Act, 1955.**

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.

PM lays foundation of India's first Mobile Open Exchange Zone at WTC Noida

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation of India's first Mobile Open Exchange Zone (MOX) at World Trade Centre, Noida, at a ground breaking ceremony which saw the launch of 81 investment projects worth over Rs 60,000 crore in Uttar Pradesh.
- The Uttar Pradesh government had earlier this year signed a MoU with World Trade Center, Noida, to develop a 'tech zone' as a nucleus of the Mobile Open Exchange Zone (MOX).

Rajasthan first State to implement biofuel policy

- Rajasthan has become the first State in the country to implement the national policy on biofuels unveiled by the Centre in May this year. The desert State will lay emphasis on increasing production of oilseeds and establish a Centre for Excellence in Udaipur to promote research in the fields of alternative fuels and energy resources.
- The policy on biofuels seeks to help farmers dispose of their surplus stock in an economic manner and reduce the country's oil import dependence.

Rajasthan is India's largest state by area, Thar Desert, also known as the Great Indian Desert; More than 60% of the desert lies in the state of Rajasthan, and extends into Gujarat, Punjab, and Haryana. Kalyan Singh is the current Governor of Rajasthan. India's first global counter terrorism and anti-insurgency centre will come up in Jaipur on a 50-acre land.

Startup India Yatra begins in Chhattisgarh

- The Startup India Yatra was launched on July 30th in Raipur. Students queued up in large numbers to register for the first boot camp at Raipur. Startup India Yatra van is equipped with facilities for individuals and startups to pitch their ideas. The boot camps will include presentations on Startup India and Chhattisgarh Startup Policy followed by extensive ideation workshops.

Startup India Yatra has already been held in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh and now it begins in Chhattisgarh. The Startup India initiative of the Government of India envisages building a robust startup ecosystem in the country for nurturing innovation and providing opportunities to budding entrepreneurs.

NITI Aayog to host Investors' Conference for the Holistic Development of Islands

- NITI Aayog will host an Investors' Conference on August 10, 2018 at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra for the Holistic Development of Islands. The Conference will be inaugurated by Shri. Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog. It will attract investment for the sustainable development of eco-tourism projects in Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands.
- NITI Aayog, along with the respective UT Administration is organizing an Investors' Conference on 10th August, 2018, with stakeholders.

Island Development Agency (IDA) an apex body, under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Home Minister was constituted in June 2017, while NITI Aayog has been mandated to steer the Holistic Development of Islands program, along with the respective UT administration/ State Governments.

Ujjwala Yojana achieved target of providing 5 cr free LPG connections to poor families

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pet project Ujjwala Yojana achieved its target of providing 5 crore free LPG connections to poor families. Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan handed over the Ujjwala Connection No. 5 crore to the selected beneficiary at a function in Parliament.

- Ujjwala aims at bringing clean cooking fuel to poor households, identified according to the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC).
- More than 44 per cent of Ujjwala beneficiaries are currently are from SC/ST communities.

Ujjwala Yojana scheme was launched by the Prime Minister on May 1, 2016, in Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh with a target to provide free LPG connections to five crore poor households by March 31, 2019, with a budgetary allocation of 8,000 crore rupees.

NITI Aayog launches Move Hack, global mobility hackathon to crowdsource solutions for future of mobility in India

- NITI Aayog has launched Move Hack, a global mobility hackathon to crowdsource solutions aimed at the future of mobility in India.
- Envisaged to be one of the largest hackathons globally, Move Hack is focused on 10 themes and structured over three legs: online, followed by Singapore leg, and the finals in New Delhi.
- Awards for the hackathon include recognizing top 10 winners with total prize of more than Rs. 2 crore. The winners will be announced during the Move Summit 2018, which is also organised by the NITI Aayog on September 7 and 8.

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, current vice chairman is Dr. Rajiv Kumar and the current chief executive officer is Shri Amitabh Kant.

SAATHI Initiative Launched

- Ministry of Textiles and Ministry of Power have joined hands under the initiative SAATHI(Sustainable and Accelerated Adoption of efficient Textile technologies to Help Small Industries) in order to sustain and accelerate the adoption of energy efficient textile technologies in the power loom sector and cost savings due to use of such technology.
- Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a Public Sector entity under the administrative control of Ministry of Power, will replace old inefficient electric motors with energy efficient IE3 motors which will result in energy and cost saving up to 10-15% in the first phase.

The Powerloom sector in India is predominantly an unorganized sector and has a large number of micro and small units which produce 57 percent of the total cloth in the country. There are 24.86 lakhs Powerloom units in this country, most of whom use obsolete technology.

Government introduces new scheme 'Seva Bhoj Yojna'

- The Ministry of Culture, Government of India has introduced a new scheme namely 'Seva Bhoj Yojna' with a total outlay of Rs. 325.00 Crores for Financial Years 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- The scheme envisages to reimburse the Central Government share of Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) and Integrated Goods and Service Tax (IGST) so as to lessen the financial burden of such Charitable Religious Institutions who provide Food/Prasad/Langar (Community Kitchen)/Bhandara free of cost without any discrimination to Public/Devotees.

The Charitable Religious Institutions such as Temples, Gurudwara, Mosque, Church, Dharmik Ashram, Dargah, Matth, Monasteries etc. which have been in existence for at least five years before applying for financial assistance/grant and who serve free food to at least 5000 people in a month and such institutions covered under Section 10(23BBA) of the Income Tax Act or Institutions registered as Society under Societies Registration Act (XXI of 1860) or as a Public Trust under any law for the time being in force of statutory religious bodies constituted under any Act or institutions registered under Section 12AA of Income Tax Act shall be eligible for grant under the scheme.

India elected president of Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development

- **India** has been elected as the President of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) for a period of two years. **India** got elected against **Iran** during voting which took place at the 44th annual gathering of AIBD in Colombo.
- **Director General of All India Radio F. Sheheryar** was re-elected as chair of the executive board while **Sri Lanka** was elected as vice-chair. Broadcasters from **26 countries** in the region including **India** are full members of the organization.

AIBD, established in 1977 under the auspices of UNESCO, is a unique regional inter-governmental organisation and is mandated to achieve a vibrant and cohesive electronic media environment in the Asia-Pacific region through policy and resource development.

Lok Sabha passes National Sports University Bill

- The Lok Sabha has passed the National Sports University Bill 2018 which seeks to establish a first-of-its-kind sports university in Manipur to promote sports in the country.

Colonel **Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore** AVSM is a former professional shooter. Rathore was appointed as a Cabinet minister with independent charge for Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in 2017. Rathore, who replaced **Vijay Goel**, became the first sportsman to take charge of the sports ministry.

J&K HC gets first woman judge

- The Jammu and Kashmir High Court got its first woman judge in 90 years as President Ram Nath Kovind issued warrants appointing advocate **Sindhu Sharma** and former district and sessions judge **Rashid Ali Dar** to the bench. **Sindhu Sharma** was sworn in as a judge along with **Rashid Ali Dar** in the summer capital Srinagar.

Sindhu Sharma, daughter of a retired judge of state High Court, **O.P.Sharma**, has served as the Assistant Solicitor General while **Rashid Ali Dar** is a retired District and Sessions Judge of the state. **Sindhu Sharma** belongs to Jammu while **Rashid Ali Dar** belongs to Badgam district of the Valley. The Jammu and Kashmir High Court was established in 1928 by then Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh.

Justice Mittal is J&K HC Chief Justice

- The Central government notified the appointment of Delhi High Court Acting Chief Justice **Gita Mittal** as the new Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court.
- Justice Mittal will be the first woman Chief Justice of J&K High Court. The Centre also notified the appointment of Patna High Court Chief Justice **Rajendra Menon** as the Delhi High Court Chief Justice.

Justice **Vijaya K Tahilramani**, a judge of the Bombay HC, has been elevated as the chief justice of the Madras HC. Justice **M K Shah** of the Gujarat HC has been elevated as chief justice of the Patna HC as the incumbent, Justice **Menon**, will now head the Delhi HC. Justice **Kalpesh Satyendra Jhaveri**, a judge of the Rajasthan HC, has been elevated as the chief justice of the Odisha HC. He replaces Justice **Vineet Saran**, who has been elevated to the Supreme Court. Justice **Annirudha Bose**, a judge of the Calcutta HC, has been elevated as the chief justice of the Jharkhand HC. Justice **Hrishikesh Roy** of the Kerala HC has been elevated as its chief justice.

Odisha gets its first 'skill museum'

- Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** inaugurated the State's first 'skill museum' at the Industrial Training Institute in Cuttack. The museum, which will run under the auspices of the Odisha Skills Development Authority, is spread over an area of 2,600 sq. ft. and showcases several ancient and modern equipment and machinery.

- Inaugurating the museum, Mr. Patnaik said the **facility will boost the aspirations of the youth and hone their skills as it is designed to connect ancient skills with modern skills and link to future ones.**

Unemployed youths in Andhra to now get Rs 1,000 monthly allowance

- The Chandrababu Naidu-led Andhra Pradesh government has decided to give an allowance of Rs 1,000 per month to the all the unemployed youth in the state under the "Mukhyamantri Yuva Nestam" scheme. Any unemployed youth with a degree or diploma between the age of 22 and 35 can avail the benefit.

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.

World's first thermal battery plant unveiled in Andhra Pradesh

- The world's first-ever facility to create thermal batteries was **inaugurated in Andhra Pradesh.**
- The state's Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu was present at the unveiling of the plant that will see thermal batteries being manufactured by Bharat Energy Storage Technology Private Limited (BEST).
- These batteries are based on alternative sources of energy production, and their presence is expected to reduce the dependence on fossil fuels.
- By 2025, BEST aims to expand the capacity of its thermal battery plant to 10GW. This technology, patented in India by Dr Patrick Glynn in 2016, scores over Li-ion batteries due to lesser heat sensitivity, as well as a smaller carbon footprint.
- Thermal batteries use thermal energy to operate, i.e., the energy created by temperature differences. Therefore, the energy transfer in thermal batteries helps store heat when heat travels from one part of the battery setup to the other.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has launched a scale-out plan to transition 6 million farms/farmers cultivating 8 million hectares of land from conventional synthetic chemical agriculture to Zero-Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) by 2024, making Andhra Pradesh India's first 100 per cent natural farming state. The Andhra Pradesh police, who lead in using crime data analytics and big data applications, have now become the first in the country to complete automation of the State Crime Records Bureau (SCRB). Andhra Pradesh secured the top spot in the ease of doing annual business ranking of states and Union Territories by the World Bank and Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP). Telangana and Haryana came at second and third positions, respectively. 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.

'Shaur nahin' mobile app launched in Shimla, Manali

- Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched 'horn not ok' awareness campaign and 'shaur nahin' (no noise) mobile application. As part of the first phase, the campaign has been launched in Shimla and Manali, adding that blowing horn creates unnecessary noise pollution and is harmful to health.

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.

Scheme for girl child launched in Bihar

- Amid a barrage of attacks over the Muzaffarpur sex scandal, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has launched an ambitious scheme which promises to provide Rs. 54,100 from the birth of a girl child till she graduates.
- Mr. Kumar launched the ‘Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana’ and expressed his government’s resolve for empowerment of women. The ‘Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana’ will be run by three departments — education, health and social welfare.

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.

SC notifies norms for ‘senior advocate’ status

- The **Supreme Court** has notified guidelines for according ‘senior advocate’ designation to lawyers and constituted a five-member permanent committee headed by the **Chief Justice of India** to shortlist candidates.
- The names will then be sent to the **Full Court**, comprising all apex court judges, for a decision. Candidates can apply or the committee can suo motu recommend a candidate to the Full Court.

The committee would meet twice a year in **January and July**. It would have a **permanent secretariat** to facilitate the collating of details of the probable candidates. The finalised guidelines are titled “**Supreme Court Guidelines to regulate Conferment of Designation of Senior Advocates, 2018.**”

Parliament passes Criminal Law Amendment Bill, providing death sentence for raping girls below 12 years of age

- The **Parliament** passed the **Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2018** with the **Rajya Sabha** clearing it by a voice vote. The **Lok Sabha** had passed the bill last month.
- The bill replaces the **Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance** promulgated on **April 21** this year. The bill stipulates stringent punishment for perpetrators of rape, particularly of girls below 12 years and death sentence has been provided for rapists of girls under 12 years.
- **Gangrape** of a girl under 12 years of age will invite punishment of jail term for the rest of life or death.
- In case of rape of a girl under 16 years, the minimum punishment has been increased from 10 to 20 years, extendable to life imprisonment.

Shri Nitin Gadkari Launches Bidder Information Management System and Bhoomi Rashi - PFMS Linkage Portals

- The Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shipping, Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation **Shri Nitin Gadkari** launched **Bidder Information Management System (BIMS)** and **Bhoomi Rashi** and **PFMS** linkage - two IT initiatives of the **Road Transport & Highways Ministry** that are aimed at expediting pre construction processes relating to bidding and land acquisition respectively.
- **BIMS** is aimed at streamlining the process of pre-qualification of bidders for **EPC Mode** of contracts for **National Highway works** with enhanced transparency and objectivity.
- The portal will work as a data base of information about bidders, covering basic details, civil works experience, cash accruals and network, annual turnover etc.

Bhoomi Rashi, the portal developed by **MoRTH** and **NIC**, comprises the entire revenue data of the country, right down to **6.4 lakh villages**.

SC/ST Amendment Bill passed in Lok Sabha

- The Lok Sabha unanimously passed a Bill to reverse the effects of a Supreme Court order concerning certain safeguards against arrests under the SC/ST law.
- The Bill seeks to amend the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989.
- Notwithstanding any court ruling, the renewed Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Bill, 2018, rules out any provision for anticipatory bail for a person accused of atrocities against people from SC or ST communities.
- Moreover, no preliminary enquiry will be required to register a criminal case, and an arrest under this proposed law would not be subject to any approval. An FIR will be filed based on complaints of crimes against people from Dalit and tribal communities without any questions, it entails.

The Supreme Court had on March 20, 2018, introduced protective provisions in the SC/ST (PoA) Act, 1989, to permit anticipatory bail —despite a section of the Act denying it — and laying down a preliminary enquiry by police before any action is taken.

Startup India's Academia Alliance Programme

- To fulfill the Government of India's mission to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship in the country, Startup India launched the Startup Academia Alliance programme, a unique mentorship opportunity between academic scholars and startups working in similar domains.
- The Startup Academia Alliance aims to reduce the gap between scientific research and its industrial applications in order to increase the efficacy of these technologies and to widen their impact.

The first phase of Startup Academia Alliance was kickstarted through partnering with Regional Centre for Biotechnology, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), Council on Energy, Environment and Water, and TERI School of Advanced Studies.

SC now has 3 women judges

- With the swearing-in of Justice Indira Banerjee, the Supreme Court, for the first time in its history, has three sitting women judges.
- Justice Banerjee was sworn in by Chief Justice Dipak Misra along with Justices Vineet Saran and K.M. Joseph.
- The two other women judges are Justices R. Banumathi and Indu Malhotra, the first Supreme Court woman judge who was directly appointed from the Bar.
- Justice Banerjee is the eighth woman judge in the Supreme Court since Independence. Among the three sitting women judges, Justice Banumathi is the seniormost.

Justices KM Joseph, Indira Banerjee, Vineet Saran sworn in as Supreme Court judges

- Justice Indira Banerjee, Vineet Saran and K M Joseph took oath as judges of the Supreme Court, taking the total strength of the apex court to 25 out of a sanctioned 31.
- The oath was administered to them by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra in a packed courtroom in the presence of all judges, law officers and advocates.
- While Justice Banerjee was the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, Justices Saran and Joseph were the Chief Justices of Orissa and Uttarakhand High Courts respectively.

The Collegium system is one where the Chief Justice of India and a forum of four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court recommend appointments and transfers of judges. However, it has no place in the Indian Constitution. The system was evolved through Supreme Court judgments in the Three Judges Cases.

Manohar Parrikar launches Goa's new app-based taxi service

- Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar and Tourism Minister Manohar Ajgaonkar flagged off the Goa Tourism Development Corporation's app-based taxi service in Panaji.
- The app-based taxi service, called "GoaMiles", would ensure that commuters are not cheated and at the same time would increase the earnings of taxi drivers by "two to three" times.

Goa is a state in India within the coastal region known as the Konkan, in Western India. It is India's smallest state by area and the fourth smallest by population. Panaji is the state's capital, while Vasco da Gama is its largest city. Mridula Sinha is the current Governor of Goa. Goa is a former Portuguese province; the Portuguese overseas territory of Portuguese India existed for about 450 years until it was annexed by India in 1961.

Citizens of 165 Countries will get e-visa facility when visiting India

- Seeking to promote tourism, the Union government has extended e-visa facility for citizens of 165 countries at 25 airports and five seaports.
- Tourism Minister K J Alphons also said the government has launched the 'Incredible India 2.0' campaign, marking a shift from generic promotions to market-specific promotional plans.

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.

Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve Becomes 11th Biosphere Reserve from India to be Included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves

- The Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve has become the 11th Biosphere Reserve from India that has been included in the UNESCO designated World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR). The decision to include Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve in WNBR was taken at the 30th Session of International Coordinating Council (ICC) of Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme of UNESCO held at Palembang, Indonesia, from July 23-27, 2018. India has 18 Biosphere Reserves and with the inclusion of Khangchendzonga, the number of internationally designated WNBR has become 11, with 7 Biosphere Reserves being domestic Biosphere Reserves.
- Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve in Sikkim is one of the highest ecosystems in the world, reaching elevations of 1, 220 metres above sea-level.

Khangchendzonga National Park also Kanchenjunga Biosphere Reserve is a National Park and was inscribed to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites list in July 2016, becoming the first "Mixed Heritage" site of India.

Sh. Hardeep Puri launched Swachh Survekshan 2019, ODF+ & ODF ++ Protocols

- Shri Hardeep S Puri, Minister of State (I/C), Housing & Urban Affairs launched the Swachh Survekshan 2019 on 10th August 2018 in New Delhi. Parallely, a slew of new initiatives under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) as well as the Ease of Living Index also launched.
- In a bid to scale up the coverage of the ranking exercise and encourage towns and cities to actively implement mission initiatives in a timely and innovative manner, MoHUA now proposes to conduct its fourth survey – Swachh Survekshan 2019 – planned to be conducted from 4th – 31st January 2019 - to rank all cities under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U).
- The Swachh Survekshan 2019 toolkit that was launched will contain the detailed survey methodology and component indicators with scores to help cities to prepare themselves for taking the survey.

- Under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), urban areas of 18 states, and a total of 3,223 cities have become Open Defecation Free, and 2,712 cities among them have been certified as ODF through an independent third party. With urban India poised to become ODF before the end of the Mission period, it is now time to consolidate our ODF achievements to make it sustainable, and address the issue of holistic sanitation, by addressing the entire sanitation value chain.
- The SBM ODF Plus and SBM ODF Plus Plus protocols that are planned to be launched are geared towards this objective.

Hardeep Singh Puri is the current Union Minister of State with Independent Charge in the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. He is a 1974 batch Indian Foreign Service officer who served as the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations from 2009 to 2013. He is elected unopposed in a bypoll to a Rajya Sabha seat from Uttar Pradesh.

Commerce & Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu launches Mobile App Niryat Mitra

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Aviation Suresh Prabhu launched Niryat Mitra – mobile App in New Delhi. The app developed by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) is available both on Android and on IOS platforms.
- It provides wide range of information required to undertake international trade right from the policy provisions for export and import, applicable GST rate, available export incentives, tariff, preferential tariff, market access requirements – SPS and TBT measures.

Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu is also the current Minister of Civil Aviation of India, under the Narendra Modi government. He currently represents Andhra Pradesh in the Upper House of Indian Parliament. He was the Union Railway Minister of India from November 2014 to September 2017.

President of India inaugurates ‘one district one product’ summit in Lucknow

- The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, visited Uttar Pradesh and inaugurated the ‘One District One Product’ Summit in Lucknow aimed at showcasing its traditional cottage industries and crafts.
- On the occasion, the government exchanged MoUs with e-commerce major Amazon, Wipro, GE Healthcare, Quality Circle of India (QCI) and India's leading bourses -- the BSE and National Stock Exchange (NSE). These entities would help the MSMEs and cottage industries by providing training, branding, marketing and other institutional support.
- The primary articles of exports from UP include leather goods, carpets, textiles, pearls, furniture, glassware, brassware, woodworks, iron and steel articles, and machinery equipment, among others. The President noted that under the ‘One District One Product’ scheme, the state government has set a goal of providing employment to 25 lakh people in five years through the financial assistance of Rs. 25,000 crores.

NDA candidate Harivansh elected as Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha

- NDA candidate and JD(U) MP Harivansh Narayan Singh was elected the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, defeating Opposition candidate and Congress MP B.K. Hariprasad. The final tally of votes showed 125 for Mr. Harivansh and 101 for Mr. Hariprasad. Four Congress MPs had polled their vote twice. They had sent in paper ballots, thinking that their votes had not been electronically recorded.
- This is the first significant victory scored by the ruling NDA in the Rajya Sabha, where the Opposition is in majority, and could pave the way for an assertive BJP. With 73 MPs, the BJP is now the largest party in the House. S.V.Krishnamoorthy Rao is the first Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

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.

PM Modi announces setting up of 12 modern biofuel refineries

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that 12 modern biofuel refineries worth ten thousand crore rupees will be established across the country.
- Prime Minister launched web portal PARIVESH, a single window for environmental, wildlife, forest and Coastal Regulation Zone clearances. He also released a book on National Biofuel Policy 2018.

The Prime Minister said, the government is targeting ten per cent ethanol blending in petrol by 2022 and 20 per cent by 2030. These 12 modern biofuel refineries will provide employment to 1.5 lakh youth. He was addressing an event on the occasion of World Biofuel Day 2018 in New Delhi.

Sitharaman, Yogi launched defence industrial corridor in Aligarh

- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched a defence industrial corridor in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh.
- Six nodal points, Agra, Aligarh, Lucknow, Kanpur, Chitrakoot and Jhansi have been identified in state for the corridor.
- The government has announced two corridors — one in Tamil Nadu and the other in UP.

The first of the two defence industrial production corridors, as announced in the Union Budget, will link Chennai and Bengaluru.

Cabinet approves joint issue of postage stamp between India and South Africa

- Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was apprised of joint issue of Postage Stamps on India-South Africa on the theme, "20 Years of Strategic Partnership between India and South Africa". The joint stamps were released in June 2018.
- The Commemorative Postage Stamps on India-South Africa: Joint Issue depicts image of Deendayal Upadhyaya and Oliver Reginald Tambo of South Africa. An MoU was signed to this effect between India and South Africa in May 2018.

Parliament passes Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2018

- Parliament has passed the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2018 with the Rajya Sabha approving it.
- The Bill seeks to clarify that allottees under a real estate project should be treated as financial creditor.
- As per the bill, home buyers will get due representation in the Committee of Creditors that takes a call on resolution proposals, making them an integral part of the decision making process.
- The Bill allows the withdrawal of a resolution application submitted to the National Company Law Tribunal under the Code. This decision can be taken with the approval of 90 per cent of the committee of creditors.

Justice Rajendra Menon takes charge as Chief Justice of Delhi HC

- Justice Rajendra Menon was sworn in as Chief Justice of Delhi High Court in a ceremony held at the Raj Niwas in New Delhi.

- Delhi Lt Governor Anil Bajjal administered the oath of office to Menon, who was earlier the Chief Justice of Patna High Court.

Justice Rajendra Menon hails from Jabalpur, in Madhya Pradesh. He was a judge and later the Acting Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, and later the Chief Justice of the Patna High Court.

Gita Mittal becomes first woman to be sworn in as J&K Chief Justice

- Justice Gita Mittal was sworn in as the first woman Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court.
- After the court's registrar general read out the warrant of Mittal's appointment, she was administered the oath of office by Governor NN Vohra at a ceremony at Raj Bhavan in Srinagar.
- Justice Mittal earlier served as a Delhi High Court judge for 14 years, out of which 15 months were as the acting Chief Justice.

Justice Gita Mittal received the Distinguished Alumna Award in 2008 from the Vice President of India, awarded by the Lady Shriram College for Women. In 2018, President Ram Nath Kovind awarded Justice Gita Mittal with the Nari Shakti Puruskar, India's highest civilian honour for women.

Act allowing death sentence for rape of children gets President's assent

- President Ram Nath Kovind has given assent to the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018, that provides for stringent punishment, including death penalty for those convicted of raping girls below the age of 12 years.
- The amendment replaces the criminal law amendment ordinance promulgated on April 21 after the rape and murder of a minor girl in Kathua and another woman in Unnao.
- According to the new law, in case of rape of a girl under 16 years, the minimum punishment has been increased from 10 years to 20 years, extendable to imprisonment for rest of life, which means jail term till the convicts "natural life". The punishment for gang rape of a girl below 16 years will invariably be imprisonment for the rest of life of the convict.

Santhali becomes India's first tribal language to get own Wikipedia edition

- Santhali has become the first Indian tribal language to get a Wikipedia edition in its own script after the Santhali Wikipedia went live earlier this month.
- "The Santhali Wikipedia got approval from the language committee of the Wikimedia Foundation on June 28 and went live on August 2," said Jayanta Nath of the Indian chapter of Wikimedia Foundation, which runs Wikipedia.
- Santhali is written in Ol Chiki script and spoken by 6.4 million people, according to the 2001 census, in India alone and its speakers live mostly in Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and Assam. It is also spoken in Bangladesh and Nepal.

Santhali is a recognized regional language of India per the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India lists the official languages of the Republic of India. As Per Articles 344(1) and 351 of the Indian Constitution, the eighth schedule recognized 22 languages as official regional languages of India.

India gets first all-women SWAT team, all 36 commandos from northeast

- Delhi Police inducted India's first all-woman Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team for anti-terrorist operations.
- Delhi Police Commissioner Amulya Patnaik, who was behind the idea of the SWAT team, said, "The team is ready to take on hostage crises and terror strikes in urban areas. The members of this all-women SWAT team received better ratings at the Police Training College in Jharoda Kalan than their male counterparts."

- After rigorous training of around 15 months from specialists all across India and abroad, **36 women commandos from the northeastern states have been inducted into this squad.** While 13 members are from Assam, rest of them hail from Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Manipur.

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.** The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

India hands over first lot of newly-built houses to Indian-origin people in Sri Lanka

- **India handed over the first lot of houses built under a USD 350 million project for Indian-origin people, mostly Tamils, in Sri Lanka's tea plantation areas.**
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** joined the special ceremony through video conferencing **at Dunsinane Estate in Nuwara Eliya city to hand over the houses constructed under the Indian Housing Project, the largest one by India in any country.**

The Tamils, mostly residing in the central hill areas of the Sri Lanka, were brought from India by British rulers during the 19th century to work in coffee plantations in Sri Lanka.

Chhattisgarh first state to provide Right to Skills' Development to youth

- **Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh** said that **his state is the first among the 28 other states in the country to provide Right to Skills' Development to the youth.** Around 2.7 lakh youth has already been employed in several fields. Trained individuals have also been working in cities like Bengaluru and Chennai".
- The Chief Minister's comments came after he along with **Union Minister of State for Skill Development Anant Kumar Hegde** flagged off fifteen Skill Chariots to launch the government's project of 'Skills on Wheels' in the state.

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.

Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurates NDMC Smart City projects

- The Union Home Minister **Shri Rajnath Singh** has said the rollout of the Smart City projects will help New Delhi emerge as a world class city. He recalled that **New Delhi was among the 20 cities included in January, 2016 in the First Phase of the Smart City Mission** announced by the Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi**.
- The various projects inaugurated by **Shri Rajnath Singh** include **Smart Poles, Solar Tree, Ideation Centre, 50 LED interactive screens, Ambedkar Vatika** and two hi-tech nurseries, four mechanical road sweepers, two litter picking machines and ten auto tippers. He also **launched MTNL's hi-speed Broadband on Optical Fiber & Hi-Speed Wi-Fi in Connaught Place.**

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.

CJI launches mobile apps for e-filing of cases

- The Supreme Court took a giant step towards digitisation of courts across the country by **launching three applications to facilitate e-filing of cases, making digital payments and service of judicial notices through smartphones to the litigants.**

- Chief Justice Dipak Misra said the e-committee of the apex court has launched the applications – **e-courts services, E-pay and NSTEP (National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes)** – and these would pave the way of quality and speedy justice to litigants.

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.

First project under Swadesh Darshan Scheme inaugurated in Manipur

- Manipur Governor Dr. Najma Heptulla has inaugurated first thematic tourism project under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme the 'North East Circuit: Imphal & Khongjom' in Imphal.
- The project which covers two sites - Kangla Fort in Imphal and Khongjom - was taken up in 2015 at an estimated cost of over about Rs 72 crore under the Union Ministry of Tourism.
- Kangla Fort is one of the most important historic and archaeological sites of Manipur located in the heart of the Imphal city. It served as the seat of Manipur's power till 1891.
- Swadesh Darshan scheme is one of the flagship schemes of Ministry of tourism for development of thematic circuits in the country in a planned and prioritised manner. The scheme was launched in 2014 -15 and as on date the Ministry has sanctioned 70 projects for Rs.5708.88 Crore to 29 States and UTs under the Scheme.

Northeast India (officially North Eastern Region) is the easternmost region of India representing both a geographic and political administrative division of the country. It comprises eight states – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Siliguri Corridor or Chicken's Neck is a narrow stretch of land of about 22 kilometres, located in the Indian state of West Bengal, which connects India's northeastern states to the rest of India.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi healthcare scheme to be launched from September 25

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement in his Independence Day address that the Ayushman Bharat-National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM) will be launched on September 25 on the day of Pandit Deen Dayal's birth anniversary.
- Tara Devi from Rudraprayag in Uttarakhand is the first beneficiary to successfully register in what government officials are referring to as the "golden list".

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). The scheme is the world's largest healthcare programme because of the size of India's population.

700 Km-long human chain formed along India-Pak border in Rajasthan

- Nearly five lakh people joined hands to form a 700 km-long human chain along the India-Pakistan border in Rajasthan to honour martyrs and boost morale of soldiers on the eve of Independence Day.
- The event, 'Shahadat ko Salam', was organised to instil a sense of patriotism.

- Participants holding the tricolour and balloons formed the chain passing through **four frontier districts of Rajasthan -- Sriganganagar, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, and Barmer.**

Rajasthan is India's largest state by area, Thar Desert, also known as the Great Indian Desert; More than 60% of the desert lies in the state of Rajasthan, and extends into Gujarat, Punjab, and Haryana. Kalyan Singh is the current Governor of Rajasthan. India's first global counter terrorism and anti-insurgency centre will come up in Jaipur on a 50-acre land. Sardar Patel Global Center for Security, Counter Terrorism and Anti-insurgency was part of Chief Minister Vasundhar Raje's 2018 budget announcement.

Campaign launched to create awareness among children to identify sexual abuse

- **Amnesty International India launched a new campaign aimed at creating awareness among children to help them understand and identify sexual abuse.**
- **The campaign 'Our Safety, Our Rights' seeks to empower children to speak up and report sexual abuse without fear.**

Amnesty International is a London-based non-governmental organization focused on human rights. Salil Shetty is currently serves as Secretary General of the human rights organization Amnesty International.

Haryana's first civil airport in Hisar dedicated to the public

- **Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar dedicated the state's first civil airport at Hisar to the people of Haryana, saying it would open the possibilities of creating an economic corridor and vibrant industrial ecosystem.**
- **Under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-UDAN, airline namely M/s Pinnacle Airways Limited has bid for two routes--Delhi-Hisar and Hisar-Chandigarh.**

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.

Sushma Swaraj inaugurates Panini Language Laboratory in Mauritius

- **External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated "Panini Language Laboratory" at Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) in Mauritius. The lab, gifted by the Indian government, will help MGI in teaching Indian languages in Mauritius.**
- **She also met former Prime Minister of Mauritius, Paul Berenger on the sidelines of 11th Vishwa Hindi Conference.**

Smt. Sushma Swaraj is the current Minister of External Affairs of India and she is a Member of Parliament from the Vidisha constituency in Madhya Pradesh.

NDRF launches biggest ever rescue & relief operation in flood-affected Kerala

- **The NDRF has the biggest ever relief and rescue operation in flood-affected Kerala. A total of 58 teams have been deputed to work in the state out of which 55 are working on the ground.**
- **This is the highest ever deployment of NDRF in a single state since its raising in 2006. The NDRF has evacuated more than 10,000 people from rain and flood-battered areas.**

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is a specialised force constituted "for the purpose of specialist response to a threatening disaster situation or disaster" under the Disaster Management Act, 2005. The "Apex Body for Disaster Management" in India is the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). The Chairman of the NDMA is the Prime Minister.

Centre launches 'Digital northeast vision' in Guwahati

- The Central Government which aims to improve digital connectivity and infuse digital literacy in all the states of the country recently launched the 'Digital Northeast Vision Document 2022' in Guwahati.
- Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad and Chief Ministers of the northeastern states launched the programme.
- North East Indian region has become the newest member of the Centre's flagship programme 'Digital India' initiative. Digital India was launched in 2015 by the Centre with a vision to transform the country into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.
- 'Digital Northeast India Vision 2022' envisages in implementing the initiative throughout the North East through optimum utilization of information, communication, and technology.

44,000 crore freight corridor on east coast in the works

- The Indian Railways plans to invest 44,000 crore to build a 1,100-km greenfield freight corridor on the east coast connecting Kharagpur in West Bengal with Vijaywada in Andhra Pradesh.
- The corridor, which is expected to carry about 200 million tonnes of freight per annum, is likely to be announced in the budget proposal for 2019-20. The construction work on the corridor will begin only after the DFCC delivers the 3,300-km long eastern and western freight corridors.

The first phase of the two dedicated freight corridors project, India's first mega railway project since Independence, being constructed at the cost of 81,000 crore, is likely to be completed by the year end. The 1,500-km long western freight corridor runs from Dadri near Delhi to Jawahar Lal Nehru Port Trust in Mumbai while the 1,800-km eastern corridor is from Ludhiana in Punjab to Dankuni in West Bengal.

India, Thailand complete two-week-long 'Exercise Maitree'

- The Indian Army and the Royal Thai Army completed a two-week-long platoon level annual joint military 'Exercise Maitree' aimed at strengthening partnership and cooperation between them.
- 'Exercise Maitree' commenced on August 6 in Thailand. The exercise last year was held in Himachal Pradesh.
- This year, the exercise began with a cross-training period involving familiarisation training between the two armies to evolve drills and procedures involved in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist operations in urban, rural and jungle terrain under the United Nations mandate.

The first Indo-Thailand Military Exercise MAITREE concluded at Krabi, Thailand on July 29, 2016. The exercise had commenced on 15 July 2016 under the aegis of the Royal Thailand Army. The two armies are scheduled to take part in the first military exercise of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) to be hosted by India in September. BIMSTEC members include India, Bangladesh, Bhutan Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Satya Pal Malik is new Jammu-Kashmir Governor, replaces N N Vohra

- Bihar Governor Satya Pal Malik was appointed as the new governor of Jammu and Kashmir. The appointment was approved by President Ram Nath Kovind. Lal ji Tandon will replace Malik as the Bihar Governor.

- Among other changes, the President appointed **Satyadev Narayan Arya** as the **Governor of Haryana** and **Baby Rani Maurya** as the **Governor of Uttarakhand**. **Ganga Prasad**, the **Governor of Meghalaya**, has been transferred and appointed as **Governor of Sikkim**.
- **Tathagata Roy**, the **Governor of Tripura**, has been given charge of **Meghalaya**, while **Haryana Governor Kaptan Singh Solanki** has been appointed as **Governor of Tripura**.

The governors and lieutenant-governors/administrators of the states and union territories of India have similar powers and functions at the state level as that of the President of India at Union level. The governor is appointed by the President of India for a term of five years, and holds office at the President's pleasure. The governor is de jure head of the state government; all its executive actions are taken in the governor's name. The governor appoints the chief minister of a state. The Constitution of India also empowers the governor to act upon his or her own discretion, such as the ability to appoint or dismiss a ministry, recommend President's rule, or reserve bills for the President's assent. He or she also appoints the Advocate General and the chairman and members of the State Public Service Commission. The union territories of Andaman and Nicobar, Delhi and Puducherry are headed by lieutenant-governors.

Supreme Court quashes NOTA in Rajya Sabha polls

- The Supreme Court quashed the Election Commission order providing for use of the “None of the Above” option (Nota) in Rajya Sabha elections. “NOTA will destroy the concept of value of a vote and representation and encourage defection that shall open the doors for corruption which is a malignant disorder”.
- NOTA was introduced in Lok Sabha polls following a 2013 decision of the Supreme Court. The EC extended this to Rajya Sabha polls via a notification in January 2014. Thereafter, biennial elections to 76 Rajya Sabha seats across 21 states in 2014, eight seats across three states in 2015, 70 seats across 21 states in 2016, 10 seats across three states in 2017, and 58 seats across 16 states this year have been held. The **NOTA option** was provided on the ballot paper after the name of the last candidate in each of these biennial elections held since 2014.

"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.

New Chhattisgarh capital to be named Atal Nagar in memory of late PM

- Chhattisgarh's proposed capital, **Naya Raipur**, will now be named **Atal Nagar** after former Prime Minister **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**, the state government decided.
- Also commemorating the former prime minister's contribution to the nation by undertaking another series of nuclear tests in 1998, a battalion of the Chhattisgarh Armed Force (CAF) will be called the **Pokhran Battalion**. On Chhattisgarh formation day, celebrated on October 1, the “**Atal Bihari Vajpayee Sushasan award**” will be given to panchayats and urban bodies for good governance.

Chhattisgarh was formed on 1 November 2000 by partitioning 10 Chhattisgarhi and 6 Gond 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.

First-ever IAF-RMAF joint air exercise begins in Malaysia

- The first-ever joint air exercise involving the Indian Air Force and the Royal Malaysian Air Force commenced at Subang Air Base in Malaysia. This is the inaugural bilateral exercise between IAF & RMAF.

- In a formal ceremony, exercise was inaugurated by Gp Capt CUV Rao, team leader IAF & Col Mahadzer, ex director of RMAF.

IAF-RMAF joint air exercise is a platform to exchange Knowledge & Good practices with each other. The exercise seeks to deepen defence and military ties between the two countries.

President inaugurates “International Buddhist Conclave 2018”

- The President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates the “International Buddhist Conclave (IBC), 2018” in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on 23rd August, 2018. The Minister of State (Independent charge), Shri K.J. Alphons presided over the inaugural function.
- The Conclave is being organized by the Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the State Governments of Maharashtra, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh from 23rd – 26th August, 2018 at New Delhi and Ajanta (Maharashtra), followed by site visits to Rajgir, Nalanda and Bodhgaya (Bihar) and Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh). During the inaugural session of the Conclave, the Ministry launched its website landofbuddha.in and a new film showcasing the Buddhist sites in the country.

Presently, it is estimated that there are nearly 500 million Buddhists all over the World and majority of them live in East Asia, South East Asia and Far East countries. The “ASEAN” was the Guest of Honor during IBC, 2016 and Japan was the ‘Partner Country for IBC-2018. India has decided to organize 6th International Buddhist Conclave on the theme, “Buddha Path – The Living Heritage”.

Kempegowda International second fastest growing airport in world

- Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) has emerged as the second fastest growing airport in the world in the first half of 2018 in terms of actual growth in number of passengers. It has recorded 1, 58, 50,352 flyers during the six-month period, with an addition of 41, 80,852 passengers over the corresponding period last year.
- Only Tokyo's Haneda International has bettered KIA's growth. RoutesOnline, a company focussing on the quality and standards of aviation globally made public its report on major airports in the world. Only airports which have crossed a figure of 2.5 million passengers in the first six months of 2018 have been considered for analysis.
- New Delhi's airport is placed sixth (with a growth of 32,76,183) while Hyderabad is placed 17th in terms of actual growth of passengers (20,97,087 passengers). However, when only passenger growth percentages for 2018 are compared for all the airports, Bengaluru's KIA is placed eighth with China's Quanzhou Jinjiang International topping the table.

Kempegowda International Airport is an international airport serving Bangalore, the capital of the Indian state of Karnataka. The airport opened in May 2008. It is named after Kempe Gowda I, the founder of Bangalore. Kempegowda International Airport became Karnataka's first fully solar powered airport developed by CleanMax Solar.

India's First ISTS connected Wind Power Project Commissioned

- Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI) conducted India's first auction of wind power projects in February 2017 in which tariff of Rs. 3.46 was discovered, which was much lower than feed in tariffs in vogue those days.
- This was a 1000 MW bid for projects to be connected on ISTS (Inter State Transmission System) wherein power generated from one state (renewable resource rich state) could be transmitted to other renewable deficient states. Mytrah, Inox, Ostro, Green Infa and Adani were winners of the bid.

- A part capacity of 126 MW, located in Bhuj (Gujarat) was commissioned by M/s Ostro on 24.08.2018, ahead of schedule. This 126 MW ISTS project marks the beginning of capacity additions in wind power based on market discovered tariffs, in line with the Government's plan of 175 GW RE by the year 2022.

Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje opens India's biggest techno-hub in Jaipur

- Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje has inaugurated the India's biggest Bhamashah Techno Hub in Jhalana Industrial Area of Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- Raje said the country's biggest centre equipped with the ultra-modern technology will help around 700 entrepreneurs to work under one roof and realise their dreams.
- Jaipur is the capital city of the Rajasthan. It was founded in 1727 by Jai Singh II, the ruler of Amer, and 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.

Rajasthan is India's largest state by area, Thar Desert, also known as the Great Indian Desert; More than 60% of the desert lies in the state of Rajasthan, and extends into Gujarat, Punjab, and Haryana. Kalyan Singh is the current Governor of Rajasthan. India's first global counter terrorism and anti-insurgency centre will come up in Jaipur on a 50-acre land.

India and Singapore signed the Second Protocol amending the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)

- India and Singapore signed the Second Protocol amending the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) in New Delhi. The signing of the Second Protocol, amending CECA, will boost bilateral trade between India and Singapore.
- The CECA was the first comprehensive agreement covering trade in goods, services and investments, which India had signed with any of its trading partners. The CECA was signed on 29th June, 2005 and its first review was concluded on 1st October, 2007.

Singapore is the second largest trading partner of India within ASEAN and India is the largest trading partner of Singapore in South Asia, with a bilateral trade of USD 17.7 billion in 2017-18. Singapore's trade with India constitutes about 21.8% of our total trade with ASEAN and 2.3% of our global trade. India had a trade surplus of USD 2.73 billion with Singapore in 2017-18.

Former President Pranab Mukherjee launched the National Electoral Transformation or NETA mobile application

- Former President Pranab Mukherjee launched the National Electoral Transformation or NETA mobile application, a platform where voters can review and rate their elected representatives and hold them accountable as well.
- "A good democracy cannot function without informed voters, good leaders, accountability and complete transparency," Mukherjee said at the launch of the mobile app, which is the brainchild of 27-year-old entrepreneur Pratham Mittal.
- Inspired by the US' approval system, the app seeks to let users rate their MLAs and MPs. It is also being viewed as an instrument to gauge voter sentiment across constituencies in the country. To ensure participation, the app requires a combination of mediums like the app itself, IVR calls, SMS and even offline activation leveraging ASHA and anganwadi workers to collate data on evolving political inclinations.

Pranab Kumar Mukherjee served as the 13th President of India from 2012 until 2017. Prior to his election as President, Mukherjee was Union Finance Minister from 2009 to 2012.

Odisha Cabinet gives approval for Legislative Council in state

- The Odisha government approved a proposal for setting up a Legislative Council in the state. A proposal in this regard was approved at the Cabinet meeting presided over by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Parliamentary Affairs Minister B K Aarukha.
- The proposed Legislative Council will have 49 members; the minister said adding that the state will have to spend Rs 35 crore annually for the creation of the Vidhan Parishad.
- At present, there are seven states which are having Legislative Council. They are Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.

Under Article 169 of the constitution, Parliament may by law create or abolish the second chamber in a state if the Legislative Assembly of that state passes a resolution to that effect by a special majority. As per article 171 clause (1) of the Indian Constitution, the total number of members in the Legislative Council of a state shall not exceed one third of the total number of the members in the Legislative Assembly of that state and the total number of members in the Legislative Council of a state shall in no case be less than 40.

India's first biofuel powered flight undertakes maiden voyage

- A blend of oil from jatropha seeds and aviation turbine fuel propelled the India's first ever bio jet fuel-powered flight between Dehradun and Delhi.
- A historic flight powered by indigenously produced aviation biofuel based on patented technology of CSIR-IIP Dehradun was flagged off from Dehradun airport by Uttarakhand CM Shri Trivendra Singh Rawat. The Spicejet flight, featuring a latest generation Q400 aircraft powered by, was received at Delhi airport by Union Ministers Shri Nitin Gadkari, Dr Harsh Vardhan, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Shri Suresh Prabhu and Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation Shri Jayant Sinha.
- With this maiden flight India joins the exclusive club of nations using biofuel in aviation. The use of bio jet fuel, apart from reducing greenhouse gas emissions by about 15 percent and sulfur oxides (SOx) emissions by over 99 percent

In a first in Indian aviation, SpiceJet operated a demonstration flight powered by biofuel. The airline's Q400 plane has conducted a flight at Dehradun. The biofuel for the SpiceJet flight has been developed by Indian Institute of Petroleum, Dehradun. The first-ever flight using biofuel was flown ten years ago by the Virgin Atlantic airlines between London and Amsterdam. The International

Sushma Swaraj opens 'Jaipur Foot' camp in Vietnam

- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated the 'Jaipur Foot' camp in Vietnam and met with 500 Vietnamese beneficiaries of the free India-made prosthetic limb. Swaraj is in Vietnam on the first leg of her four-day two-nation tour which aims at deepening India's strategic cooperation with Vietnam and Cambodia — the key countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region.
- The Jaipur-based Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS) has started an artificial limb fitment camp in association with the central government at Myanmar's Yangon city.
- The camp is being organised as per an agreement between BMVSS and the Ministry of External Affairs for providing 5,000 'Jaipur Foot' to the needy amputees of various countries. Last month, the BMVSS organised camps in Vietnam. "In both Myanmar and Vietnam, 1,000 disabled people will be provided with 'Jaipur Foot'.

Sushma Swaraj is former Supreme Court lawyer, she is the second woman to be India's Minister of External Affairs, after Indira Gandhi. At the age of 25 in 1977, she became the youngest cabinet minister of north Indian state of Haryana. She is the current Minister of External Affairs of India and she is a Member of Parliament from the Vidisha constituency in Madhya Pradesh.

29 states and UTs have signed MoU for implementation of Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Abhiyan

- “29 states and UTs have signed the MoU and have started working on implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna. The pilots have started in 16 States / UTs. Other states/UTs will also start pilots before fully launching the scheme on 25th September”.
- The national rollout of the PMJAY scheme will happen on September 25, the birth anniversary of RSS ideologue Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay. The funding for the scheme will be shared – 60:40 for all states and UTs with their own legislature, 90:10 in NE states and the three Himalayan states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal and Uttarakhand and 100 per cent Central funding for UTs without a legislature.

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).

Odisha to come up with single revenue code

- The Odisha government has proposed to come up with a single revenue act by merging various revenue laws enacted at different point in times.
- The draft ‘Odisha Land and Revenue Code’ has been prepared by taking into consideration the Odisha Survey and Settlement Act, 1958, the Odisha Special Survey and the Settlement Act 2012, the Odisha Government Land Settlement Act, 1962, the Odisha Prevention of Land Encroachment Act, 1972, the Odisha Land Reforms Act, 1960, the Odisha Consolidation of Holdings and Prevention of Fragmentation of Land Act 1972 and the Odisha Estates Abolition Act, 1951.

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.

World’s Biggest Open Innovation Model - ‘Smart India Hackathon- 2019’ launched

- The third edition of World’s Biggest Open Innovation Model - Smart India Hackathon 2019 was launched by the Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Shri Prakash Javadekar in New Delhi.
- MHRD, AICTE, Persistent Systems and i4c have joined hands to make a hat trick with their highly popular and innovative Smart India Hackathon initiative (SIH). SIH-2019 is a nationwide initiative to provide students a platform to solve some of pressing problems we face in our daily lives, and thus inculcate a culture of product innovation and a mindset of problem solving.
- Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that in this new edition of SIH-2019 over 1 Lakh+ students from around 3000 institutions will have the opportunity to work on challenges faced within the Public Sector Organizations and the Union Ministries. And for the first time, it will also include problem statements from industry as well as NGOs.

Smart India Hackathon is a unique initiative to identify new and disruptive digital technology innovations for solving the challenges faced by our country.

Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) launched in New Delhi

- In yet another game changing initiative, the **Union Minister for HRD, Shri Prakash Javadekar** and **Union Minister of State for HRD, Dr. Satya Pal Singh** launched the **Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)** at AICTE, New Delhi.
- The new ranking – named **Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)** – will be formally **launched on October 15**, the birth anniversary of former President APJ Abdul Kalam. The **first results will be declared on February 28, 2019**, which is also **Science Day**.
- **To ensure that Innovation is primary fulcrum of all HEIs**, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), and Government of India is **introducing ‘Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)’ to systematically rank education institutions and universities primarily on innovation related indicators. ARIIA considers all major indicators which are commonly used globally to rank most innovative education institutions/ universities in the world.**

ARIIA - named after Atal Bihari Vajpayee- will primarily focus on **5 main parameters**. 1. **Budget Expenses and Revenue generated through Innovation and entrepreneurship development (20%)**, 2. **Facilitating access to advance centres / facilities and entrepreneurial support system (10%)**, 3. **Idea to Entrepreneurship (54%)**, 4. **Development of Innovation Ecosystems Supported through Teaching & Learning (10%)**, 5. **Best innovative solutions Developed In-house for Improving Governance of Your Institution (6%)**.

International



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.

UAE launches amnesty scheme for overstayers

- The **UAE launched a landmark three-month visa amnesty programme** that will benefit hundreds of **illegal foreign workers, including Indians**, who are overstaying their permits. The programme allows the workers to leave the country without paying penalty and also gives those six months to find a job.
- The **UAE is home to 2.8 million Indian expatriates**, the largest expatriate community in the country.

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.

Former WWE Champion Kane wins election to become Knox County, Tennessee mayor

- **Glenn Jacobs**, more commonly known by his in-ring moniker **Kane**, won the elections to become the next mayor of **Knox County, Tennessee**.
- The **Big Red Monster**, who has been part of the **WWE industry** for over two decades, won the **Republican primary** in a tight contest earlier this year. Jacobs easily got past Democrat candidate **Linda Haney** to win the top political office in Tennessee County.

Glenn Thomas Jacobs is an **American professional wrestler, businessman, actor, and politician**. A **Republican**, he is the **Mayor-elect of Knox County, Tennessee** and will be sworn in to succeed **Tim Burchett** on **September 1, 2018**.

Emmerson Mnangagwa of ZANU-PF party wins Presidential election in Zimbabwe

- **Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa**, a former ally of ousted **President Robert Mugabe**, has won country's landmark **Presidential election**.
- With all **10 provinces** declared, **Mnangagwa** won **50.8 per cent** of votes to **44.3 per cent** for opposition leader **Nelson Chamisa** of **MDC party**.
- **Zimbabwe Electoral Commission** declared **ZANU-PF party's Mnangagwa**, a duly declared elected president. **Mnangagwa** needed over **50 per cent** of the vote to secure victory without a second-round run-off.

Zimbabwe is a **landlocked country** located in **southern Africa** and **Harare** is the **capital and most populous city** of **Zimbabwe**. **Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa** is serving as the **third and current President of Zimbabwe** since **24 November 2017**.

Iran officially joins ASEAN treaty

- The **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** ratified **Iran's membership** in the **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)**.
- In a ceremony on the sidelines of the **51st Asean Foreign Ministers' Meeting** in **Singapore**, **Iran** officially **joined the TAC treaty** in the presence of **Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif**.

The **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia** is a **peace treaty** among **Southeast Asian countries** established by the founding members of the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**, a geo-political and economic organization of **10 countries** located in **Southeast Asia**. On **24 February 1976**, the treaty was signed into force by the leaders of the original members of **ASEAN**.

China, SE Asian states hold naval drills

- **China and Southeast Asian states** held simulated naval exercises this week for the first time, as they seek to lower long-running tensions in disputed waters.
- The "table-top" exercises at a **Singapore naval base** came ahead of the first naval drills between the **10 members** of the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** and **Beijing**, scheduled for **October**.
- **Four ASEAN states - Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam** - have rival claims with **Beijing** over territory in the flashpoint **South China Sea**.

South China Sea is a marginal sea that is part of the **Pacific Ocean**, encompassing an area from the **Karimata and Malacca Straits** to the **Strait of Taiwan**. States and territories with borders on the sea (clockwise from north) include: the **People's Republic of China, Republic of Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore, and Vietnam**.

PHC rejects Justice Deepak Raj Joshee as next Chief Justice of Nepal

- In Nepal, the Parliamentary Hearing Special Committee has rejected the nomination of Acting Chief Justice Deepak Raj Joshee to the post of Chief Justice.
- Justice Joshee is the senior-most judge of the Supreme Court and Constitutional Council had recommended his name as new Chief Justice in June this year.

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. Nepal is a landlocked country in South Asia located in the Himalaya. Nepalese rupee is the official currency of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.

US pledges nearly \$300 million security funding for Southeast Asia

- US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pledged to provide nearly \$300 million in new security funding for Southeast Asia, as China forges ahead with plans to bolster its engagement in the region. Pompeo unveiled the figure to reporters on the sidelines of a meeting of foreign ministers from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and other officials from around the world in Singapore.

UK unveils new organ donation plan to address Indian-origin shortages

- The UK government announced new plans to change the law for organ and tissue donation to address the urgent need for organs within Indian-origin communities in the country. The proposed new system of consent for organ and tissue donation is expected to come into effect in England in 2020 as part of a drive to help black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people desperately waiting for a life-saving transplant.
- Under the new presumed consent system, those who do not want to donate their organs will be able to record their decision on the state-funded National Health Service (NHS) Organ Donor Register (ODR). "Organ donation is, of course, a deeply personal choice, and for many, their faith will play an important factor in their decision," said Jackie Doyle-Price, UK's Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Mental Health and Inequalities.

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.

World's First Intertidal Art Gallery Opens in Maldives

- An intertidal art gallery, filled with around 30 sculptures acting as a habitat for coral and other marine species, was opened in the Maldives.
- The gallery, called the Coralarium, is located at the Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi resort. At a depth of 3 m in the lagoon, it features semi-submerged exhibits that disappear and reappear as the tide goes in and out.

Maldives is a South Asian sovereign state, located in the Indian Ocean, situated in the Arabian Sea. Male is the capital and most populated city, traditionally called the "King's Island" for its central location. Maldivian rufiyaa is the currency of the Maldives. Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom is the current President of the Maldives, in office since 2013.

Russia names action-movie star Seagal as envoy for US

- Russia has appointed action movie star Steven Seagal as a special envoy for humanitarian ties with the United States.

- Seagal's portfolio in the unpaid position would be to "facilitate relations between Russia and the United States in the humanitarian field, including cooperation in culture, arts, and public and youth exchanges."
- Seagal is an accomplished martial artist — like Russian President Vladimir Putin. The actor, who was granted Russian citizenship in 2016.

Vladimir Putin first became President of Russia in 1999. He has held the office since then except for one term when Dmitry Medvedev was in office due to term-limit restrictions. The presidential term in Russia is six years but it was four years during Putin's first two terms. A дума is a Russian assembly with advisory or legislative functions. Moscow is the capital and most populous city of Russia. Russian ruble or rouble is the currency of the Russian Federation.

Imran Khan's party nominates him as Pakistan's next PM

- Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) officially nominated him to be Pakistan's next Prime Minister. To assume office, Mr. Khan will face a vote in Parliament in which he will have to defeat a rival candidate fielded by the Opposition.

South Sudan's warring leaders sign peace deal to share power

- South Sudan's President Salva Kiir and rebel opposition leader Riek Machar have signed a peace deal to share power in a transitional government, the latest effort to end a five-year civil war.
- Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir attended the signing ceremony in Sudan's capital, Khartoum. Several African leaders also witnessed including the presidents of Uganda, Kenya and Djibouti.

South Sudan is a landlocked country in East-Central Africa. Juba is the capital and largest city of the Republic of South Sudan. South Sudanese pound is the official currency of the Republic of South Sudan.

Australia's population hits 25 million, 10 years earlier than projected

- Australia's population will hit a record 25 million almost a decade earlier than projected, as it attracts hundreds of thousands of migrants each year, latest government data shows.
- Every minute, one person arrives to live in Australia, the data shows, underpinning demand for everything from homes to cars, schools and hospitals, and boosting the country's economic fortunes.
- Australia's economic success is built on migration with more than a third of the population born overseas, according to the latest census data which shows England, China, New Zealand and India as the top countries where migrants come from.

Australia is the largest country in Oceania and the world's sixth-largest country by total area. Australia's capital is Canberra, and its largest city is Sydney. Malcolm Bligh Turnbull is serving as the 29th and current Prime Minister of Australia. Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth and queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon.

Exercise SCO Peace Mission 2018

- As part of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) initiatives, SCO Peace Mission Exercise is conducted biennially for SCO member states.
- The joint exercise for the year 2018 will be conducted by Central Military Commission of Russia from 22 August to 29 August 2018 at Chebarkul, Chelyabinsk, Russia. This will be a historic occasion due to the maiden participation of India post becoming a full member of the SCO in June 2017.

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.

Rashida Tlaib set to become first Muslim woman in US Congress

- **Rashida Tlaib is set to become the first Muslim woman elected to Congress after comfortably winning her Democratic primary election in the US state of Michigan.** The 42-year-old, who is the daughter of Palestinian immigrants, won primary in the state's 13th congressional district, securing 33.6 percent of the vote, compared with the 28.5 percent her nearest rival Brenda Jones received. No Republicans or third-party candidates entered the primary, meaning Tlaib is set to win the seat in November's election for a two-year term that will begin in January.
- **In 2006, Keith Ellison, a Democrat from Minnesota, became the first Muslim elected to Congress.** He is currently running for attorney general in his home state. Andre Carson, a Democratic representative from Indiana, was the second Muslim to serve in Congress. He was elected in 2008.

Colombia recognises Palestine as sovereign state

- **Colombia recognised Palestine as a sovereign state in the days before new President Ivan Duque took office.** Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos has decided to recognise Palestine as a free, independent and sovereign state.
- **Before the announcement, Colombia had been one of only two countries in the region, along with Panama, not to recognise Palestinian statehood.** Bogota, an ally of the United States, has historically maintained close ties with Israel.

Colombia is situated in the northwest of South America, with territories in Central America. Bogotá is the capital and largest city of Colombia. Juan Manuel Santos was the sole recipient of the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize.

Ivan Duque sworn in as Colombia's 60th president

- **Colombia's President-elect Ivan Duque has been sworn in as the country's 60th president,** amid concern over the influence he will have on the country's peace process.
- **More than 12,000 police were deployed in the historic centre of the capital Bogota for Duque's inauguration.** Duque, a former senator, defeated left-leaning candidate, Gustavo Petro, in a presidential runoff in June with 54 percent of the vote.
- **As the youngest president in Colombia's recent history,** Duque is expected to appoint a cabinet consisting largely of little-known technocrats, with the same number of women and men.

Ivan Duque Marquez is the current President of Colombia, in office since 7 August 2018. He was the presidential candidate for the Democratic Centre Party for the election in 2018. The peso is the currency of Colombia.

Trump nominates Indian-American law professor to privacy, civil agency

- **US President Donald Trump has nominated a prominent Indian-American law professor and legal expert to an agency on privacy and civil liberties.**
- **Aditya Bamzai, a professor at University of Virginia's School of Law,** has been nominated by Trump to be a member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board for the remainder of a six-year term expiring January, 29, 2020.

Chile's Bachelet to be next UN human rights chief

- Former Chilean president Michelle Bachelet has been appointed the next UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. 193-member UN General Assembly approved her appointment.
- She will replace Jordanian diplomat Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini.
- She was the first Executive Director of UN-Women between 2010 and 2013. She has also served as Minister of Defence and Minister of Health in Chile.

United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world. The headquarters of UNHRC is in Geneva, Switzerland. The UNHRC was established by the UN General Assembly on March 15, 2006 to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights.

Israel opens visa application centre in Kolkata

- To encourage more Indian travellers to visit Israel, Embassy of Israel has opened a visa application centre in the Kolkata city for tourists from West Bengal and the north eastern states.
- Additionally, visa applications in jurisdiction under the New Delhi centre are also acceptable at the new Kolkata Centre. The visa application categories include B1 for employment, B2 for business, tourism, meeting or conference and A2 for students.

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.

Vienna is the world's 'most liveable city'

- Austria's capital Vienna has beaten Melbourne to be ranked the "world's most liveable city" in a new annual survey released, ending the southern Australian city's seven-year reign. It is the first time a European metropolis has topped the annual chart compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit.
- Each year, 140 cities are given scores out of 100 on factors such as living standards, crime, transport infrastructure, access to education and healthcare, and political and economic stability.
- Vienna scored a "near-ideal" 99.1, beating Melbourne into second place on 98.4. Japan's Osaka took third place. Australia had Melbourne, Sydney (fifth) and Adelaide (10th) while Canada had Calgary (fourth), Vancouver (sixth) and Toronto (joint seventh).

Damascus retained last place, followed by the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka, and Lagos in Nigeria. The survey does not include several of the world's most dangerous capitals, such as Baghdad and Kabul. South Asian cities rank low in Liveability index. Delhi ranks at 112th then Mumbai next at 117th. The EIU, the research and analysis division of The Economist Group describes itself as the world leader in global business intelligence.

Indonesian island lifted 10 inches by deadly quake

- According to the Scientists, the powerful Indonesian earthquake that killed more than 300 people lifted the island it struck by as much as 25 centimetres (10 inches).
- Using satellite images of Lombok from the days following the Aug. 5 quake, scientists from NASA and the California Institute of Technology's joint rapid imaging project made a ground deformation map and measured changes in the island's surface. In the northwest of the island near the epicenter, the rupturing faultline lifted the earth by a quarter of a metre. In other places it dropped by 5-15 centimetres (2-6 inches).

Indonesia is a **transcontinental unitary** sovereign state located mainly in **Southeast Asia**, with some territories in Oceania. It is the **world's largest island country**, with more than **thirteen thousand islands**. **Jakarta** is the **capital and largest city** of Indonesia. **Joko Widodo** also known as **Jokowi** is the **seventh and current President** of Indonesia. The **rupiah (Rp)** is the **official currency** of Indonesia.

China detains 1 million ethnic Uighurs in secret camps, says UN Reports

- A UN human rights committee has heard there are **credible reports** that **China is holding a million Uighurs** in "counter-extremism centres". **Human rights groups** including **Amnesty International** and **Human Rights Watch** have submitted reports to the UN committee documenting claims of **mass imprisonment**, in camps where inmates are forced to swear loyalty to Chinese President **Xi Jinping**.

The **Uighurs** are a **Muslim ethnic minority** mostly based in **China's Xinjiang province**. They make up around **45%** of the population there. **Xinjiang** is officially designated as an **autonomous region** within China, like **Tibet** to its south.

Nepal-India Literature Festival 2018 held in Birgunj

- **Nepal-India Literature Festival 2018** was held in **Birgunj, Nepal**. Inaugurating the festival **Chief Minister of Province 2 Mohammad Lalbabu Raut** said that it will play an important role in further **strengthening Indo-Nepal ties**.
- On this occasion **eminent writers** from both the countries were also **felicitated**. **Around 250 participants** from **India and Nepal** attended the two day festival. The event is organised by **Nepal India Co-operation Forum**.

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**. **Nepal** is a **landlocked country** in **South Asia** located in the **Himalaya**. **Nepalese rupee** is the **official currency** of the **Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal**.

Paraguay: Mario Abdo Benítez sworn in as new President

- In **Paraguay**, **Mario Abdo Benítez** has been **sworn in** as the **new President** after defeating his liberal rival.
- **Mr Abdo Benítez** is the **son of a close aide** to **ex-military dictator Alfredo Stroessner**, and has faced criticism for defending the former leader's record. He replaces **Horacio Cartes**.

Paraguay is a **landlocked country** in **central South America**; **Asuncion** is the **capital and largest city** of Paraguay. The **guarani** is the **national currency unit** of Paraguay.

Ibrahim Boubacar Keita wins re-election as president of Mali

- **Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita** has been **re-elected** as **president** after **beating opposition candidate, Soumaila Cisse**, in a runoff vote.
- The **Ministry of Territorial Administration** declared **Keita** the **winner of the repeat poll** held with **67 percent** of ballots cast

Mali is a **landlocked country** in **West Africa**, a region **geologically identified** with the **West African Craton**. **Mali** is the **eighth-largest country** in **Africa**. **Bamako** is the **capital and largest city** of **Mali**. **Ibrahim Boubacar Keita** or as he is often known, **IBK**, has been **President of Mali** since **2013**. **West African CFA franc** is the **currency** of **eight independent states** in **West Africa**: **Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo**.

Indian, Singapore navies to commemorate 25th anniversary of maritime bilateral exercise

- The navies of India and Singapore will conduct joint exercises in September to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the maritime bilateral relations between the two countries.
- The bilateral naval exercise will be the longest uninterrupted naval exercise that India has with any country in the world.
- Singapore is the gateway to the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and a broader East.

World Congress of Philosophy opens in Beijing

- The 24th World Congress of Philosophy (WCP) opened in Beijing. It is the first time that the quinquennial event is being held in China.
- Themed "Learning To Be Human," the event will include more than 1,000 activities, such as plenary sessions, symposia, lectures and roundtables, according to the Chinese Organizing Committee of WCP 2018.

This year's event is organized by the International Federation of Philosophical Societies, and Peking University. The first WCP was held in 1900 in Paris and has become one of the largest philosophical events across the world.

Chinese military conducts live fire drill in Tibet

- A digital combat unit of China's military has conducted live fire drills in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, which Chinese experts say displayed the country's determination to build a strong army capable of winning a war in all weathers and territories.
- The drills, carried out by the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) digital combat unit in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, mainly tested the complete digital combat system in the extreme environment

National People's Congress is the national legislature of the People's Republic of China. With 2,980 members in 2018, it is the largest parliamentary body in the world. China's currency yuan joins the International Monetary Fund's basket of reserve currencies.

Imran Khan elected as Pakistan new Prime Minister

- Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), chairman Imran Khan has been elected as Pakistan's new prime minister.
- The Cricketer-turned politician Khan, secured 176 votes while his only rival and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz chief Shahbaz Sharif got 96 votes in the polling that took place in the National Assembly.
- Khan has taken the oath as Pakistan's 22nd prime minister. After the announcement of the result by National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser, PML-N lawmakers chanted slogans against Khan and protested in the house.

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.

Eleventh World Hindi Conference concluded in Mauritius

- The 11th World Hindi Conference concluded in Mauritius. Prime Minister of Mauritius Praveen Kumar Jagannath has inaugurated the conference in Port Louis.
- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and some other ministers attended it. "Hindi World and Indian Culture" is the theme of conference.
- This is also first time that representatives from all 29 states and Union Territories of Delhi, Chandigarh and Puducherry attended the conference.

World Hindi Conference or Vishva Hindi Sammelan is a world conference on Hindi language. First World Hindi Conference was inaugurated on 10 January 1975 by then Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi. The 10th World Hindi Conference (WHC) is organized from 10-12 September 2015 in the city of Bhopal by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India in partnership with the Government of Madhya Pradesh.

Ten-day festival of historic Esala Maha Perehera begins in Sri Lanka

- In Sri Lanka, the ten-day festival of the historic Esala Maha Perehera began in Kandy with a grand procession. The procession set off from the biggest Buddhist temple in Sri Lanka, Sri Dalada Maligawa at an auspicious time.

The Esala Perahera is one of the oldest and grandest of all Buddhist festivals in Sri Lanka, featuring dancers, jugglers, musicians, fire-breathers and lavishly decorated elephants. This is held in Esala (July or August) which is the month that is believed to commemorate the first teaching given by the Buddha after he attained enlightenment.

Greece finally exits bailouts after years of stinging austerity

- After years of stinging austerity measures, Greece emerged from its third and last bailout, although officials warn the country still has a "long way to go". "For the first time since early 2010 Greece can stand on its own feet.
- The European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund loaned debt-ravaged Greece a total of 289 billion euros (\$330 billion) in three successive programmes in 2010, 2012 and 2015.

Greece, historically also known as Hellas is a country located in Southern Europe. Athens is the nation's capital and largest city, followed by Thessaloniki. Greece is considered the cradle of Western civilization being the birthplace of democracy and Olympic Games. Alexis Tsipras has been serving as the Prime Minister of Greece since 2015. Prokopios Pavlopoulos has been serving as the President of Greece since 2015. The euro is the official currency of the Greece.

US lawmaker to introduce legislation to posthumously award Mahatma Gandhi a Congressional Gold Medal

- An influential American lawmaker, Carolyn Maloney has said that she will introduce a historic legislation to posthumously award Mahatma Gandhi a Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian award in the US, for inspiring peaceful movements for civil rights around the world.
- Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney from New York made the announcement at the 38th India Day Parade, the annual extravaganza celebrating India's Independence Day.

Congressional Gold Medal is an award bestowed by the United States Congress; the Congressional Gold Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom are the highest civilian awards in the United States. It is awarded to persons "who have performed an achievement that has an impact on American history and culture that is likely to be recognized as a major achievement in the recipient's field long after the achievement." The medal was first awarded in 1776 by the Second Continental Congress to General George Washington.

Saudi Arabia to execute first woman activist

- Saudi Arabia's public prosecutor is seeking the death penalty against five human rights activists from the kingdom's Eastern Province currently on trial in a secretive terrorism court, groups including Human Rights Watch (HRW) said.

- Among the detainees is **Israa al-Ghomgham**, whom Saudi activists said was the first woman to possibly face the death penalty for rights-related work. Charges against her include incitement to protest and providing moral support to rioters.

Saudi Arabia is a sovereign Arab state in Western Asia. Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Middle East. **Riyadh** is the capital and most populous city of Saudi Arabia. **Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud** has been King of Saudi Arabia, Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, and Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques since 23 January 2015. **Mohammad bin Salman** is the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, also serving as First Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs and Minister of Defense—the world's youngest office holder at the time. Saudi riyal is the currency of Saudi Arabia.

Australian treasurer Scott Morrison becomes new prime minister

- Australian Treasurer **Scott Morrison** becomes Australia's new prime minister after winning a Liberal party leadership vote, ending an internecine battle that has scarred the conservative government ahead of an election due by May 2019.
- **Scott Morrison** was sworn in as Australia's 30th prime minister at Government House evening as the sun set on an extraordinary week in Canberra.
- **Scott Morrison** was sworn in as Australia's seventh prime minister in 11 years after a stunning party revolt against **Malcolm Turnbull**, which the new leader admitted had left the government "bruised and battered".
- a **Turnbull ally** who served as treasurer, who won a party vote 45-40. He was officially sworn in as Australia's 30th prime minister in a ceremony in the capital. **Environment minister Josh Frydenberg** -- who was elected as the deputy Liberal leader -- was sworn in as treasurer.

Australia is the largest country in Oceania and the world's sixth-largest country by total area. Australia's capital is **Canberra**, and its largest city is **Sydney**. **Elizabeth II** is the Head of the Commonwealth and queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon.

South Korean court raises ex-president Park Geun-hye's jail term to 25 years

- A South Korean appeals court sentenced former President **Park Geun-hye** to 25 years in jail in a case arising from a far-reaching corruption scandal that toppled her from power in 2017. **Park** became South Korea's first democratically elected leader to be forced from office when the Constitutional Court removed her over a scandal that landed the heads of two conglomerates in jail.
- The court also fined **Park**, the daughter of a former military dictator, 20 billion won (\$17.86 million) after finding her guilty of charges including abuse of power, bribery and coercion. A lower court had jailed **Park** for 24 years in April. Prosecutors appealed against that decision, seeking a tougher sentence. **Park** had given up on appeals.

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.

Indian, Pakistani troops take part for the first time in SCO military drill

- Exercise Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Peace Mission 2018, the latest in 'Peace Mission' series formally started on 24 August 2018 at **Chebarkul**, Russia. The opening ceremony was conducted in **Chebarkul**, Russia with military contingents of the all eight SCO member nations participating in this exercise.

- For the first time, the militaries of India and Pakistan are taking part in a mega anti-terror drill of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Russia aimed at expanding cooperation among the member countries to deal with the growing menace of terrorism and extremism.
- India is participating in the drill for the first time since becoming a full member of the SCO in June 2017. As part of the SCO initiatives, the SCO Peace Mission Exercise is conducted biennially for the SCO member states.

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.

Japan to be country partner for Make in Odisha Conclave-2018

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced that Japan will be the country partner for the Make in Odisha Conclave-2018.
- Japan will be 'Country Partner' to the Make in Odisha conclave, SBI is banking partner for the event. The biennale Make in Odisha Conclave 2018 will be held in Bhubaneswar from November 11-15.

Tokyo is the capital city of Japan and yen is the official currency of Japan and it is the third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market after the United States dollar and the euro. Tokyo will host the 2020 Summer Olympics and the 2020 Summer Paralympics. Shinzo Abe is serving as the 57th Prime Minister of Japan and Akihito is the current Emperor of Japan.

Sweden launches "Feminist Foreign Policy" manual

- Sweden released a handbook of its "feminist foreign policy" for rights groups and foreign governments, showcasing lessons from the Scandinavian nation's flagship approach to promoting women's rights globally.
- The manual, published on the government's website in English weeks before a September 9 general election, is derived from four years of work to place gender equality at the heart of the country's international agenda.
- The growing influence of women in Sweden's own foreign service is encapsulated by a graphic showing the rapid increase in women in the post of ambassador for the country, from just 10 percent in 1996 to 40 percent in 2016.

European Union to ban halogen bulbs from September 1

- The European Union is all set to ban the use of halogen light bulbs and households are expected to switch to LED lights, starting next month. While the manufacturers can sell their existing stock, they will not be allowed to reorder any more from September 1, 2018.
- The ban is a part of the final stage of the European Union energy rules, directive (EC 244/2009) that has banned less efficient light sources, with the aim of improving energy efficiency and cutting the carbon footprint across the EU. The union had earlier banned the traditional incandescent light bulbs in 2009.

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.

G20 member nations to promote policies that bridges all forms of digital divide

- At the G20 Digital Economy Ministerial Meeting in Salta, in the north-west of Argentina, G20 ministers and senior officials issued a declaration that reflects the G20's commitment towards promoting "policies and actions that catalyze digital transformations.
- The Digital Economy Ministerial Meeting, held on 23-24 August, was attended by 33 heads of delegation- Ministers, senior officials and representatives from invited countries and international organizations, like EU, UNCTAD, ITU etc. India was represented by Union Minister for Electronics and IT & Law and Justice, Sh. Ravi Shankar Prasad.
- The G20 member nations agreed to promote digital government and digital infrastructure, strengthen the digital skills of the workforce, deepen the analysis towards digital economy measurement, and to share experiences and lesson learned".

The G20 or Group of Twenty is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union. It was founded in 1999; the G20 aims to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability. Membership of the G20 consists of 19 individual countries plus the European Union (EU).

Zimbabwe's President Emmerson Mnangagwa takes oath as US censure hangs over vote

- Emmerson Mnangagwa urged Zimbabwe to unite behind his presidency, as he took the oath of office following a divisive election that US observers said had called the country's democratic credentials into question. The Constitutional Court confirmed Mnangagwa as president, dismissing a challenge by the man he beat in the July 30 ballot, Nelson Chamisa.
- He took the oath before Chief Justice Luke Malaba who, together with eight other judges, had ruled against opposition leader Chamisa's petition. In the election, Mnangagwa just reached the threshold of 50 percent of votes that he needed to avoid a runoff.

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country located in southern Africa and Harare is the capital and most populous city of Zimbabwe. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa is serving as the third and current President of Zimbabwe.

The third edition of Indian Ocean Conference is held at Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam

- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated the 3rd Indian Ocean Conference in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. She also unveiled the bust of Mahatma Gandhi in the Chancery building at the Embassy of India in Hanoi. Theme for this year conference is "Building Regional Architectures".

Indian Ocean Conference initiated by India Foundation along with its partners from Singapore, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh is an annual effort to bring together Heads of States/Governments, Ministers, Thought Leaders, scholars, diplomats, bureaucrats and practitioners from across the region. Two successful editions of the Conference have been hosted so far in 2016 and 2017 in Singapore and Sri Lanka respectively.

US, Mexico agree to overhaul NAFTA

- The United States and Mexico agreed to overhaul the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), putting pressure on Canada to agree to the new terms on auto trade and other issues to remain part of the three-nation pact.
- US President Donald Trump and outgoing Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto said talks with Canada would begin immediately, though Trump threatened he could put tariffs on Canadian-made cars if a three-way deal could not be reached.

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is an agreement signed by Canada, Mexico, and the United States, creating a trilateral trade bloc in North America. The agreement came into force on January 1, 1994.

SCO Peace Mission Exercise 2018 culminated on 29 August 2018

- The SCO Peace Mission Exercise 2018 culminated on 29 August 2018 after days of joint training amongst multinational forces of eight SCO nations. In the joint multinational exercise which began on 24 Aug 2018 the SCO nations conducted training focused on combating terrorism. The closing ceremony was conducted at the drill ground of 255th Inter Services Firing Ranges, Chebarkul, Russia.
- In this fifth edition of SCO Peace Mission Exercise where India participated for the first time, the focus was on conduct of counter terrorist operations in a multinational joint service environment.

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.

Russia, China set to launch joint military exercises

- China will join Russia in a giant military exercise, sending a message of deterrence to the U.S. which has designated Beijing and Moscow as “revisionist powers”.
- The five-day Vostok 2018 exercises, to be held from September 11, will be bigger than Zapad 81 — the mammoth manoeuvres carried out in Eastern Europe by the former Soviet Union in 1981.
- Mongolia will be the third country participating in the drills. The Vostok-2018 will involve 300,000 troops.

India, Pakistan hold talks on Indus Waters Treaty, first bilateral meet since Imran Khan became PM

- India and Pakistan commenced crucial talks on various aspects of the Indus Waters Treaty in Lahore, the first bilateral engagement since Prime Minister Imran Khan took office. The first round of the two-day meeting is held at the National Engineering Services Pakistan.
- The water commissioners of Pakistan and India are required to meet twice a year and arrange technical visits to projects' sites and critical river head works, but Pakistan had been facing a lot of problems in timely meetings and visits. The Indian side is being represented by a delegation of the Indian Water Commission led by Commissioner P K Saxena whereas Pakistan Commissioner for Indus Waters Syed Meher Ali Shah and his delegation are representing Pakistan.

India and Pakistan signed the Indus Water Treaty in September 1960 after nine years of negotiations, with the World Bank being a signatory. According to this treaty, waters of the three western rivers (the Jhelum, the Chenab, and the Indus itself) were allocated to Pakistan, and those of the three eastern rivers (the Ravi, the Beas, and the Sutlej) were allocated to India.

ECONOMY AND FINANCE



Economy News

Cabinet clears more than 46 amendments under GST law

- **Union Cabinet** took many other key decisions, which **include approving 46 amendments under GST law, including hiking the threshold limit for availing composition scheme dealers to Rs 1.5 crore**, among other things.
- In all, there are **46 amendments that will allow employers to claim input tax credit on facilities like food, transport and insurance** provided to employees under any law. **Oil and gas producers** got a nod **to explore for shale oil and gas and coal bed methane** under the existing contracts, and **Rs 1,258 crore interest-free loans** were approved to revive three fertiliser units. **Extra budgetary resources of Rs 15,000 crore** were allotted for **Swachh Bharat via NABARD**.

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**.

e-way bill made mandatory for inter-State goods movement

- Concerned at the loss of revenue, the **State government** has decided to **tighten the e-way bill norms** and make it **mandatory for inter-State goods movement**.
- The government is said to be **losing over Rs. 400 crore** because of **tax evasion**, mainly because the **e-way bill system** has not been fully operational.

E-way bill is an **electronic way bill** for movement of goods which can be **generated on the eWay Bill Portal**. Transport of goods of more than **Rs. 50,000** (Single Invoice/bill/delivery challan) in value in a vehicle cannot be made by a registered person without an e-way bill.

Delhi replaces Gujarat to top 'most investor-friendly' destination list

- **Delhi** has **toppled Gujarat** from the top spot in a list of 21 states and union territories with the most **investment potential**, according to a report by economic think-tank **NCAER**.
- The **national capital** is followed by **Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Haryana, Maharashtra, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka** and **West Bengal**.

- The ranking of 20 states and one Union Territory of Delhi was based on six pillars -- land, labour, infrastructure, economic climate, governance and political stability and business perceptions.

NCAER launched the N-SIPI (State Investment Potential Index) series in March 2016. Gujarat had topped both the previous editions of the ranking. Assam, Jharkhand and Bihar are ranked among the least favourable states for investment.

India imposes safeguard duty on solar cell imports for two years

- India imposed safeguard duty on solar cells imports from China and Malaysia for two years to protect domestic players from steep rise in the inbound shipments of the product.
- This was recommended by the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), under the commerce ministry.
- As per the notification of the finance ministry, 25 per cent safeguard duty has been imposed for July 30 to July 29, 2019, which will gradually come down to 20 per cent during July 30, 2019 to January 29, 2020 and 15 per cent during January 30, 2020 to July 29, 2020.

India is targeting to 100 gigawatt (GW) solar capacity by 2022. Solar cells, electrical devices that convert sunlight directly into electricity, are imported primarily from China, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan. Imports of the cells from these countries account for more than 90 per cent of the total inbound shipments in the country.

RBI retains GDP growth forecast at 7.4 per cent for FY 2018-19

- In the third bi-monthly monetary policy statement for 2018-19, Reserve Bank of India increases policy repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.5%. Reverse repo rate stands at 6.25%.
- CPI Inflation For first Half of 2018-19 is projected to be at 4.8-4.9% and for Second Half it is projected at 4.7%. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) retained the GDP forecast for the current fiscal at 7.4 per cent even as it flagged global trade tensions for Indian exports.

Monetary policy is the process by which the monetary authority of a country, typically the central bank or currency board, controls either the cost of very short-term borrowing or the monetary base, often targeting an inflation rate or interest rate to ensure price stability and general trust in the currency. Monetary Policy Committee of India is a committee of the Reserve Bank of India that is responsible for fixing the benchmark interest rate in India. The committee comprises six members - three officials of the Reserve Bank of India and three external members nominated by the Government of India.

Kerala is the most energy-efficient State

- Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab and Rajasthan have done exceedingly well in adopting energy efficiency measures in the first ever serious attempt to map energy efficiency attained by the States.
- Kerala, with 77 points, leads among the States and Union Territories, followed by Rajasthan (68) and Andhra Pradesh (66.5) in the first edition of the State Energy Efficiency Preparedness Index, brought out jointly by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and NITI Aayog.

The Index has been developed taking into account sector-wise energy consumption, energy saving potential and States' influence in implementing energy efficiency. The Index examines States' policies and regulations, financing mechanisms, institutional capacity, adoption of energy efficiency measures and energy savings achieved. The Index has a total of 63 indicators — 59 across buildings, industry, municipalities, transport, agriculture and Discoms, and 4 cross-cutting indicators.

Digital payments market in India set to touch one trillion dollar in next 5 years

- Niti Aayog has said that the **digital payments market in India is set to become a trillion-dollar industry** in the next five years. It will be led by growth in mobile payments which are slated to rise to 190 billion dollars by 2023 from 10 billion dollars in 2017-18.

Government launches free software for editing text on scanned images

- The IT ministry launched a desktop software e-Aksharayan to enable editing of text printed on scanned documents and it can be downloaded for free from its website.
- "e-Aksharayan is a desktop software for converting scanned printed Indian language documents into a fully editable text format in Unicode encoding. The software supports editing in seven Indian languages - Hindi, Bangla, Malayalam, Gurmukhi, Tamil, and Kannada & Assamese. There exist some gap in Internet accessibility and 90 per cent of the gap is due to non-availability of content in Indian languages

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) is a part of the Union Government of the Republic of India. It was carved out of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology on 19 July 2016. 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.

India's GDP growth to rise to 7.5% this fiscal

- India's economic growth momentum is likely to pick up further in the April-June period and the country is expected to clock GDP growth of 7.5 per cent in this financial year, says a Morgan Stanley report.
- India's gross domestic product (GDP) grew at the fastest pace in seven quarters at 7.7 per cent on robust performance by manufacturing and service sectors as well as good farm output. "In aggregate, we expect GDP growth to pick up to 7.5 per cent in this financial year as against 6.7 per cent in 2017-18," Morgan Stanley said in a research note.

Morgan Stanley is an American multinational investment bank and financial services company headquartered at 1585 Broadway in the Morgan Stanley Building, Midtown Manhattan, New York City. The original Morgan Stanley, formed by J.P. Morgan & Co. partners Henry Sturgis Morgan (grandson of J.P. Morgan), Harold Stanley and others, came into existence on September 16, 1935.

Japan dethrones China to become world's second-biggest stock market

- China just lost its ranking as the world's number two stock market. Chinese equities were worth \$6.09 trillion, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. That compares with \$6.17 trillion in Japan. The US has the world's largest stock market at just over \$31 trillion.

NHAI signs pact with SBI for largest unsecured loan at lowest interest

- National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has signed an agreement with State Bank of India for raising an unsecured loan of Rs 250 billion for 10 years with a three-year moratorium on repayment.
- This is the largest loan amount to have been sanctioned to NHAI in one stroke by any institution and at the lowest rate of 7.9 per cent. This is also the largest long-term unsecured loan sanctioned by SBI at a time to any entity.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is an autonomous agency of the Government of India, responsible for management of a network of over 50,000 km of National Highways out of 1,15,000 km in India. The NHAI was created through the promulgation of the National Highways Authority of India Act, 1988. NHAI has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation for satellite mapping of highways.

The 29th GST Council meet sets up committee to look at MSME grievances

- To address the issues, challenges and concerns of the **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)**, the **apex decision making body of GST Council** in its 29th meeting has decided to **create a sub-committee headed by MoS Finance Shiv Pratap Shukla to look into various issues** and submit a report.
- The GST Council has also decided to run a **pilot to provide cashback for digital transactions carried out through. To promote digital transaction**, increase compliance and collection in taxes, RuPay Debit and UPI-based transaction will **get cashback of 20% for the GST paid, capped at Rs 100.**

The **Union Cabinet** chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has **approved change in the basis of classifying Micro, Small and Medium enterprises from ‘investment in plant & machinery/equipment’ to ‘annual turnover’**. A micro enterprise will be defined as a unit where the annual turnover does not exceed five crore rupees; A small enterprise will be defined as a unit where the annual turnover is more than five crore rupees but does not exceed Rs 75 crore; A medium enterprise will be defined as a unit where the annual turnover is more than seventy five crore rupees but does not exceed Rs 250 crore.

Government launches Defence India Startup Challenge

- The **Indian government launched its Startup India mission in 2015**, and has **since been promoting startups across sectors** and trying to addressing issues relating to them at various levels. The **Defence India Startup Challenge plans to leverage defence startups** and connect them with the Indian forces
- **Shortlisted startups & MSMEs will be provided aid of up to \$220K (INR 1.5 Cr) to meet the challenge.**

Now, with a view to **leverage defence-related startups and strengthen their collaboration with the defence forces — the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force — minister of defence Nirmala Sitharaman launched the Defence India Startup Challenge** on August 4, 2018. A **joint initiative of the Atal Innovation Mission, the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP)**, and the Defence Innovation Organisation (a ministry of defence initiative), the Defence India Startup Challenge is looking for startups **to innovate in 11 categories.**

Government has allowed 100% FDI under automatic route in educational institutions

- As per consolidated FDI Policy, 2017, the **Government has allowed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) up to 100% under automatic route in the educational institutions** subject to applicable laws/sectoral rules/regulations/ security conditions.

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.**

Global Innovation Index, GII- 2018 launched in India

- **India’s rank on the Global Innovation Index (GII) has improved from 60 in 2017 to 57 in 2018.** India has been consistently climbing the **GII ranking for the past two years.**
- **Government and industry must synergise their efforts to promote R&D and innovation in the country.** This was stated by **Ratan P Watal, Principal Adviser, and NITI Aayog & Member Secretary of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister at the India launch of Global Innovation Index 2018 in New Delhi on 8th August 2018.**
- The event was organized by the **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) – one of the founding partners of GII along with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), in collaboration with the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).**

UAE top source of inward remittances in 2016-17

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has emerged as the top source of inward remittances, while Kerala has received the maximum funds sent from abroad, according to the Reserve Bank of India's survey of inward remittances for 2016-17.
- UAE's share in total remittances was 26.9%, followed by the United States (22.9%), Saudi Arabia (11.6%), Qatar (6.5%) and Kuwait (5.5%).
- According to the survey, 82% of the total remittances received by India originated from eight countries — UAE, the U.S., Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, the United Kingdom and Malaysia.
- Among destinations, Kerala has the highest share with 19%, followed by Maharashtra (16.7%), Karnataka (15%), Tamil Nadu (8%) and Delhi (5.9%). Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu together received 58.7% of total remittances.

The rupee drawing arrangement (RDA) is the most popular channel of remittances which accounts for 75.2% of remittances, followed by SWIFT (19.5%), direct transfers (3.4%) and cheques and drafts (1.9%). Private banks got the lions share in total remittances with 74.1%, while public sector banks share was 17.3% and the remaining with foreign banks.

Indian-American among 3 women honoured at 19th IACCGH gala in Houston

- Indian-American Aruna Vishwanathan was among the three women honoured with 'Women in Business: Making a Difference Award' at the 19th annual Indo-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston (IACCGH) gala.
- Vishwanathan and two American women - Carlecia Wright and Jewel Smith - were among the people honoured last evening for their outstanding contributions in entrepreneurship, economic development, innovation and passion for community service.
- Vishwanathan is the Chief Operating Manager at Alphax Decision Sciences, a company that develops enterprise scale predictive, prescriptive artificial intelligence software and cloud infrastructure solutions.

IACCGH is a major driver in inbound and outbound business delegations to India that helps in expanding markets, product lines and diversification for businesses. The awards were presented by Harris County Judge Ed Emmett and Consul General of India in Houston, Dr Anupam Ray. Since its inception in 1999, IACCGH has leveraged its ties with other chambers of commerce and economic agencies to promote bilateral trade between Houston and India.

Pune gets first spot in Ease of Living Index, Delhi languishes at 65th spot

- Pune is the most liveable city, followed closely by Navi Mumbai and Greater Mumbai in a ranking of 111 Indian cities with the national capital ranked at a lowly 65 on the Ease of Living Index released by the government.
- Thane is the fourth Maharashtra city that made it to the top 10 in the list. Other cities ranked among the best 10 are Tirupati, Chandigarh, Raipur, Indore, Vijaywada and Bhopal.
- Notably, none of the cities in big states like Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have made it to the top 10. Chennai has been ranked 14, Hyderabad at 27 and Bengaluru at 85. Kolkata had refused to participate in the survey. Gurugram is at the 88th spot.

Rampur in Uttar Pradesh is at the bottom of the list that has Jammu and Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir at 95 and 100. The Ease of Living Index was launched by Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri. The survey based on four parameters -- governance, social institutions, economic and physical infrastructure -- was conducted in 111 cities across the country.

India's richest women: Smitha Crishna, Roshni Nadar top list

- The survey, prepared by Kotak Wealth-Hurun, features **Smitha Crishna**, the third generation heir of the Godrej empire, as the **wealthiest Indian women** with **net worth of Rs 37,570 crore**.
- The **total wealth of each women featured in the top 100 women exceeds Rs 1,000 crore**, while their average income is around Rs 4,000 crore.
- **Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw** is the **only richest self-made women** -- with the **total wealth of Rs 24,790 crore** - who could **make it to the top 100**.
- Following **Smitha** is **HCL CEO and Executive Director Roshni Nadar**, whose **net worth is around Rs 30,200 crore**. She is the **daughter of the billionaire businessman Shiv Nadar**.
- On the third spot is **Indu Jain of Bennett Coleman and Co Group**, whose total wealth is estimated to be **around Rs 26,240 crore**.

The threshold for the top 10 richest women this year was over **Rs.8, 000 crore**, while the average wealth of each of these 100 women was about **Rs.4, 000 crore**. **Eight Padma awardees** are also on the list. **Mumbai and Delhi** each host **25 super-rich women**, followed by **Bengaluru** with **14**.

UPI 2.0 set to be launched by Urjit Patel

- After multiple delays and a few roadblocks the updated version of **UPI commonly known as UPI 2.0** launched by the **National Payments Corporation of India** at an event in **Mumbai**.
- The **Reserve Bank of India Governor Urjit Patel** along with **State Bank of India chairman Rajnish Kumar** and **Nandan Nilekani the non-executive chairman of Infosys** are formally launched the updated version.

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is an **instant real-time payment system** developed by **National Payments Corporation of India** facilitating **inter-bank transactions** and launched in **2016**. The interface is regulated by the **Reserve Bank of India** and works by **instantly transferring funds between two bank accounts** on a **mobile platform**.

88 per cent rural households have savings account: NABARD survey

- The financial inclusion drive has resulted in proliferation of bank accounts in rural areas with **88.1 per cent of households having savings accounts**, said a survey by **NABARD**.
- **Incidence of Indebtedness (IOD)**, which is a **proportion of households having outstanding debt** on the date of the survey, was **52.5 per cent** and **42.8 per cent** for **agricultural and non-agricultural households**, respectively.
- The survey, with reference year of **2016-17**, covered **40,327 rural households**. It highlighted that the **average annual income of an agricultural household is Rs 1, 07,172** compared to **Rs 87,228** for families engaged only in **non-agricultural activities**. The survey was conducted on a **pan-India basis**, drawing samples from as many as **2016 villages in 245 districts and 29 states**.

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**".

India's current account deficit to widen to 2.5% of GDP in FY19: Moody

- **India's current account deficit (CAD)** will **widen to 2.5 per cent of the GDP** in the current fiscal due to **higher oil prices** that has been accentuated by **rupee depreciation**, report by **Moody's**.
- "**India's current account deficit is likely to widen to 2.5 per cent in FY 2018-19**, up from **1.5 per cent** in fiscal **2017** due to **higher oil prices** and **strong non-oil import demand** as **domestic demand accelerates**".

Moody's Investors Service is a leading provider of credit ratings, research, and risk analysis. The company was incorporated in 1914 and is based in New York, New York. Moody's Investors Service, Inc. operates as a subsidiary of Moody's Corporation.

Germany's current account surplus is set to remain the world's largest this year

- **Germany's current account surplus is set to remain the world's largest this year, according to the Ifo economic institute**, in an estimate that is likely to renew criticism of Chancellor Angela Merkel's economic and fiscal policies.
- **Germany's current account surplus** — which measures the flow of goods, services and investments — **will remain the world's largest for the third year running in 2018 at \$299 billion, followed by Japan with \$200 billion, according to Ifo estimates.**

The Netherlands are likely to come in third with a current account surplus of roughly 110 billion dollars while China will not be among the top three surplus countries due to a surge in imports and lower returns from capital held abroad.

US imposes preliminary anti-dumping duties of over 50 per cent on metal pipes made in India

- The US has announced hefty preliminary anti-dumping duties on metal pipes imported from India, China and four other countries, in an aggressive tactic by the Trump administration to protect the American industry and lower the trade deficit. Six US pipe manufacturers had filed the anti-dumping complaint with the Commerce Department in January.
- India has been slapped with an anti-dumping duty of 50.55 per cent. US imports of the pipe from India last year totalled USD 294.7 million.

Department of Commerce developing National Logistics Portal

- A National Logistics Portal is being developed by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to ensure ease of trading in the international and domestic markets. The portal will link all the stakeholders of EXIM, domestic trade and movement and all trade activities on a single platform.
- India's logistics sector is highly defragmented and the aim is to reduce the logistics cost from the present 14% of GDP to less than 10% by 2022.
- As per the Economic Survey 2017-18, the Indian logistics sector provides livelihood to more than 22 million people and improving the sector will facilitate 10 % decrease in indirect logistics cost leading to the growth of 5 to 8% in exports.

The 6th RCEP Ministerial Meeting begins in Singapore

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu is led the Indian delegation for the 6th RCEP Trade Ministers' Meeting which begins in Singapore.
- The Minister participated in the meeting consisting of 10 ASEAN countries and six ASEAN FTA partners namely, India, China, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand. The meeting is being held on 30th-31st August 2018.
- On 1st September 2018, Suresh Prabhu took part in the 6th East-Asia Economic Ministers' Meeting (EAS-EMM), attended by Trade and Economic Ministers of 10 ASEAN countries and 8 Dialogue Partners of ASEAN including India, China, US, Russia, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a proposed **free trade agreement (FTA)** between the **ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam) **and the six Asia-Pacific states with which ASEAN has existing free trade agreements** (Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand). **RCEP is the world's largest economic bloc, covering nearly half of the global economy.**

CEPR, NITI Aayog join hands for IBC 2018 to address issues of India's Banking Sector

- **Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR)** along with its **knowledge partner and the government Think Tank, NITI Aayog** organized two-day **India Banking Conclave 2018 (IBC)** in **New Delhi** between August 23-24, 2018.
- The **conclave, planned with the objective of making the banking sector more adaptable to face multiple future challenges** in the coming years, was addressed by Union Ministers such as Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley, Railways Minister Piyush Goyal and Civil Aviation Minister, Suresh Prabhu, apart from other important dignitaries such as BJP President, Amit Shah and Vice Chairman NITI Aayog, Rajiv Kumar.

Government of India and the World Bank signed \$300 Million Agreement to help scale-up India's Energy Efficiency Program

- The **Government of India and the World Bank** signed a **\$220 million Loan Agreement** and a **\$80 million Guarantee Agreement** for the **India Energy Efficiency Scale-Up Program**. The **Program, to be implemented by the Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL)**, will help **scale-up the deployment of energy saving measures** in residential and public sectors, strengthen EESL's institutional capacity, and enhance its access to commercial financing.
- The **investments under the Program** are expected to **avoid lifetime greenhouse gas emissions of 170 million tons of CO₂**, and contribute to **avoiding an estimated 10 GW of additional generation capacity**. This would be **over 50 percent of the National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency target of 19.6 GW** indicated in India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Accord.

India remains preferred destination for FDI as domestic consumption remains strong

- **India remains a preferred destination for foreign direct investment (FDI)** as domestic consumption remains strong, according to **RBI annual report**.
- **India received \$37.3 billion capital inflow in 2017-18** as compared to **\$36.3 billion in the previous fiscal**. During the 2015-16, the country received **\$36.06 billion**.
- Giving details of FDI flow, the report said, the **increase in foreign capital flow was mainly due to higher flows into the communication services, retail and wholesale trade, financial services and computer services**.
- In terms of sources, **FDI inflows were concentrated mostly in Mauritius and Singapore that accounted for about 61 per cent of total equity investments**.

According to the UNCTAD's Investment Trends Monitor (2018), India was the 10th largest recipient of global FDI in 2017 and remained the topmost destination for greenfield capital investment – even ahead of China and the US, if reckoned on an approval basis (FDI market intelligence 2017).

Banks in News

Mauritius's SBM gets RBI approval for subsidiary

- **Mauritius-based SBM Group** has received **Reserve Bank of India** approval to operate in the country through a wholly owned subsidiary and it is the first foreign lender to receive such a licence after local incorporation was introduced in 2013.
- **Singapore's DBS Bank** is also awaiting final approval from the RBI to bring its 12 branches in India under a wholly owned subsidiary.

State Bank of Mauritius (SBM) is a bank in Mauritius. It is licensed as a commercial bank by the Bank of Mauritius, the national banking regulator. The government of Mauritius established State Bank of Mauritius in 1973. SBM opened its first overseas branch in Mumbai, India.

HDFC awarded best performing lending institution in CLSS schemes

- **Leading mortgage lender HDFC** has been awarded the best performing primary lending institution in credit linked subsidy scheme (CLSS) for the EWS (Economically Weaker Section) and LIG (Low Income Group) category.
- **CLSS** was introduced in June 2015 under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) for home loans to customers from the EWS as well as LIG and was extended to the Middle Income Group from April 2017. The award was given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

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**.

Cabinet approves LIC's acquisition of 51% stake in IDBI Bank

- **Union Cabinet**, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has cleared the **Life Insurance Corporation's** acquisition of 51 per cent stake in the debt-ridden **IDBI Bank**. The approval of the deal means **LIC** will raise its stake in the bank from the current 8 per cent to 51 per cent, which makes it a majority holder. As per the proposal, **IDBI Bank** will issue preferential shares to **LIC** to raise money.
- The **LIC stake buy** will help the bank get capital support of Rs 10,000-13,000 crore. With the acquisition of a majority stake, **LIC** is expected to appoint at least four members on the bank's board.

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.

Bandhan Bank surpasses YES Bank market cap; becomes 7th most valued bank

- **Bandhan Bank** has surpassed **YES Bank's** market capitalisation (market cap) to become the sixth most valuable private sector bank and seventh most valued listed lender. **HDFC Bank** is the most valuable private sector bank in the India followed by **Kotak Mahindra Bank**.

Bandhan Bank Ltd. is an Indian banking and financial services company headquartered in Kolkata, West Bengal. **Bandhan**, which started as a micro-finance company in 2001, received banking licence by Reserve Bank of India in 2014 the first micro finance company to receive banking license in India. **Chandra Shekhar Ghosh** is the founder and chairman managing director of **Bandhan**.

PM Modi to launch India Post Payments Bank

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 21 will launch long-awaited India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) that will have at least one branch in every district and focus on financial services in rural areas.
- "The Prime Minister has given time on August 21 to launch IPPB. Two branches of the bank are already operational. Rest of the 648 branches will be launched across country in every district".

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.

SBI launches unified payment terminal- MOPAD

- State Bank of India (SBI) launched the Multi-Option Payment Acceptance Device or MOPAD, a unified payment option that accepts multiple payment methods.
- Under this, customers will be able to pay through credit or debit cards, Bharat QR, Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and SBI Buddy (e-wallet) at a Point of Sale (PoS) terminal. This initiative aims at providing digital convenience to customers and ease of doing business for merchants at the same time.

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.

Axis Bank introduces iris authentication for Aadhaar-based transactions

- Axis Bank has become the first bank in the country to introduce Iris Scan Authentication feature for Aadhaar-based transactions through its micro ATM tablets.
- This service, which requires a customer to scan their iris on a tablet, will boost the bank's financial inclusion efforts by making Aadhaar authentication process hassle-free and offering easier access to digital banking for consumers especially in the rural parts of the country.

Axis Bank is the third largest of the private-sector banks in India offering a comprehensive suite of financial products. The bank has its head office in Mumbai and registered office in Ahmedabad. Shikha Sharma is the managing director and CEO of Axis Bank.

Exim Bank signs MoU with BRICS development banks

- Exim Bank of India has signed a multilateral cooperation agreement with member development banks of BRICS to undertake "collaborative research" in distributed ledger/blockchain technology.
- The MoU — signed by Exim Bank Managing Director David Rasquinha — was an outcome of the discussions the member development banks had during their annual meeting, with the objective of strengthening the cooperation under the BRICS Interbank Cooperation Mechanism. Under this umbrella agreement, the signatories have agreed to constitute a joint research working group which will formulate the research agenda and targeted outcome.

HSBC launches online platform MyDeal to raise funds via capital markets

- **HSBC has launched a new digital platform to simplify capital raising process through capital markets by providing real-time access to information** such as investors' feedback, profiles, and client orders and deal pricing.
- The **platform—MyDeal**, contains **all the information relating to a client's capital markets transaction**, and is updated on real time basis.
- In its pilot phase, **MyDeal has raised over \$25 billion in the first seven months** through over 30 transactions globally.

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**.

PayPal partners with HDFC Bank to drive incremental digital spends

- **Global technology platform PayPal** has **partnered with private lender HDFC Bank** to **drive incremental digital spend**.
- **HDFC cards will be presented as a payment option** during enrollment and subsequent payments, with the ability for consumers to easily open PayPal accounts and set it as their preferred payment method.

PayPal Holdings, Inc. is an **American company operating a worldwide online payments system** that **supports online money transfers and serves as an electronic alternative** to traditional paper methods like cheques and money orders. It is **headquartered in California and founded in 1998**.

World Bank launches world-first blockchain bond

- The **World Bank** has **priced the world's first public bond created and managed using only blockchain in a A\$100 million (\$73.16 million) deal** designed to test how the technology might improve decades-old bond sales practices.
- **Commonwealth Bank of Australia**, the **sole manager of the deal**, said in a statement that the two-year bonds had priced to yield 2.251 percent.
- The **prototype deal**, dubbed a **"Bondi" bond - standing for Blockchain Operated New Debt Instrument** as well as a **reference to Australia's most famous beach** - is being viewed as an initial step in moving bond sales away from manual processes towards faster and cheaper automation.

The **World Bank** is a **vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries** around the world. The **World Bank Group** comprises **five institutions managed by their member countries**. It was **established in 1944**, the **World Bank Group** is **headquartered in Washington, D.C.** **Jim Yong Kim** has been serving as the **12th President of the World Bank** since July 1, 2012. There are **189 countries**, which are currently members in **World Bank**.

PNB ranked as top PSU bank in online transactions in India: FinMin report

- **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** said a **Department of Financial Services report** has **rated it as number one state-owned bank in terms of digital transactions**.
- The **Nirav Modi scam-hit bank** is also **rated as the sixth overall amongst all banks in India for digital performance**, **PNB** said in a statement.
- "Based on the recent findings of DFS, **PNB is ranked number one PSU bank in digital transactions in India**."

Punjab National Bank (PNB) is an Indian multinational banking and financial services company. It is a state-owned corporation based in New Delhi, India. Punjab National Bank was registered on 19 May 1894 under the Indian Companies Act, with its office in Anarkali Bazaar, Lahore, in present-day Pakistan. Sunil Mehta is the current MD & CEO of PNB. In February 2018, PNB was part of India's biggest ever fraud in which two junior officers at a single branch had illegally steered \$1.77 billion in fraudulent loans to companies, most of them controlled by billionaire jeweller Nirav Modi.

SBI ranked as India's most patriotic brand: Survey

- India's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) is considered to be the most patriotic brand, according to a survey, followed by Tata Motors, Patanjali, Reliance Jio and BSNL.
- Around 16% respondents ranked SBI to be the most patriotic brand overall, followed by Tata Motors and Patanjali with 8% each, and Reliance Jio and BSNL with 6% each, the survey conducted by UK-based online market research and data analytics firm YouGov.
- In the financial sector, SBI lead the chart with 47% respondents considering it to be the most patriotic brand, followed by LIC with 16%. Nirma emerged as the most patriotic brand in the homecare products category.
- In the auto sector, Tata Motors emerged as the most patriotic brand with about 30% of the respondents voted.

Axis Securities becomes the first bank subsidiary to enter the commodity broking business

- Axis Securities has launched commodity broking services through its membership with MCX and become the first bank subsidiary to enter the commodity broking business.
- All existing Axis Direct customers can now trade in 29 commodity futures and five options contracts, covering bullion, industrial metals, energy and agricultural segments, simply through a one-time online registration process.
- With this launch, Axis Direct has expanded its overall investment product bouquet, which includes equities, mutual funds, initial public offerings, derivatives, bonds, debentures, exchange traded funds, and company fixed deposits and overseas trading.

Axis Bank is the third largest of the private-sector banks in India offering a comprehensive suite of financial products. The bank has its head office in Mumbai and registered office in Ahmedabad. Shikha Sharma is the current managing director and CEO of Axis Bank.

DBS named world's best bank in nod to its digital innovation

- DBS Bank has been named the world's best bank by Global Finance magazine, in a reflection of its ability to invest in digital innovation while still maintaining stable operations for its customers.
- DBS is the first Asian bank to receive the accolade from the New York-based publication, which last year gave the title to ING Bank.
- Other banks that received accolades include Japan's Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, which was named Best Corporate Bank, and France's Societe Generale, which won Best Derivatives Bank.

DBS Bank is a multinational banking and financial services corporation headquartered in Marina Bay, Singapore. The company was known as The Development Bank of Singapore Limited, before the present name was adopted in July 2003 to reflect its changing role as a regional bank. The bank was set up by the Government of Singapore in July 1968 to take over the industrial financing activities from the Economic Development Board. DBS Bank is the largest bank in South East Asia by assets and among the larger banks in Asia.

Firms in News

Reliance Industries reclaims most valued company status in m-cap, replaces TCS

- **Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL)** regained its status as the country's most valued firm by market capitalisation (m-cap), replacing Tata Group's Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) from the top slot.
- TCS had first replaced RIL as the most valued firm more than five years ago.

RIL's market valuation stood at Rs 7, 51,414.89 crore, which is Rs 8,192.73 crore more than that of TCS' Rs 7, 43,222.16 crore m-cap. TCS is now at the second position in m-cap ranking followed by **HDFC Bank** with an m-cap of Rs 5,75,185.44 crore, **HUL** (Rs 3,74,827.99 crore) and **ITC** (Rs 3,63,149.63 crore).

Nokia bags world's first big 5G deal worth \$3.5 billion

- **T-Mobile US** named **Nokia** to supply it with **\$3.5 billion** in next-generation **5G network** gears, marking the world's largest 5G deal so far and solid evidence of a new wireless upgrade cycle starting to take root.
- **T-Mobile**, the third biggest U.S. mobile carrier, said the **Nokia deal** would help to deliver the first nationwide 5G services in the United States, where T-Mobile in April agreed to a merger with Sprint to create a more formidable rival to U.S. telecom giants Verizon and AT&T.

Nokia is a Finnish multinational telecommunications, information technology, and consumer electronics company, founded in 1865. Nokia's headquarters are in Espoo, in the greater Helsinki metropolitan area, Finland. Knut Fredrik Idestam is best known as a founder of Nokia.

Indian Oil tops 7 Indian firms on Fortune 500 list, RIL jumps 55 places

- Seven Indian companies have made it to the latest Fortune 500 list of the world's biggest corporations in terms of revenue, with state-owned **IOC** continuing to be the highest ranked Indian firm and **Reliance Industries** jumping 55 places.
- In the list topped by retail giant **Walmart**, **Indian Oil Corp (IOC)** with 23 per cent rise in revenues at USD 65.9 billion was ranked 137th, up from the 168th position in 2017.
- Richest Indian **Mukesh Ambani-led RIL** was the top private sector company from the country as it jumped from 203rd rank last year to 148th. It had revenue of USD 62.3 billion in 2017-18.

State-run explorer **Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC)**, which did not figure in the 2017 list, returned among the **Forbes 500** with a ranking of 197th. State-run electric utility, **State Grid Corp of China**, is at second position in the **Fortune 500** of 2018. State-run oil marketer **Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL)** moved up to 314th position, from 360th last year, while government-owned **State Bank of India (SBI)** improved one place over last year to be at 216. **Tata Motors** improved its ranking to 232, from 247th last year. Private firm **Rajesh Exports** was the seventh Indian company on the list at the ranking of 405 as it fell over a hundred spots from 295 last year.

Apple becomes first US Company to hit \$1 trillion in stock market valuation

- **Apple Inc** became the first \$1 trillion publicly listed U.S. Company crowning a decade-long rise fueled by its ubiquitous **iPhone** that transformed it from a niche player in personal computers into a global powerhouse spanning entertainment and communications.

Apple Inc. is an American multinational technology company headquartered in California, that designs, develops, and sells consumer electronics, computer software, and online services. It was founded by **Steve Jobs**, **Steve Wozniak**, and **Ronald Wayne** in April 1976 to develop and sell Wozniak's **Apple I** personal computer. It was incorporated as **Apple Computer, Inc.** in January 1977. **Tim Cook** is the Chief Executive Officer.

Google plans censored search engine

- Google is developing a new version of its search engine that will conform to China's censorship laws. The company shut down the engine in 2010, complaining that free speech was being limited.
- But online news site **The Intercept** says Google has been working on a project code-named **Dragonfly** that will block terms like human rights and religion, a move sure to anger activists.

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.

Tech Mahindra, Government of Telangana collaborate to launch India's first blockchain district

- The Telangana State Information Technology, Electronics and Communication department (ITE&C) has signed an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the global digital transformation provider **Tech Mahindra** to launch India's first Blockchain District in the state of Telangana.
- The Blockchain District will provide an opportunity for the Blockchain ecosystem in India to collaborate and work towards building a Blockchain District in the State of Telangana and transforming India as the Blockchain capital of the world.

Tech Mahindra Limited is an Indian multinational provider of information technology (IT), networking technology solutions and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) to various industry verticals and horizontals. **Anand Mahindra** is the Chairman of Tech Mahindra, which is headquartered at Pune. Mahindra & Mahindra started a joint venture with **British Telecom** in 1986 as a technology outsourcing firm.

Worth \$1.02 trillion, one Apple equals India's top 50 firms put together

- The value of one Apple Inc is now nearly the same as the cumulative value of India's top 50 blue chip companies. The iPhone maker's market capitalisation at \$1.02 trillion is a few million away from Nifty 50 index's value of \$1.18 trillion and may soon surpass it if the Cupertino-based technology giant continues its stellar run on the bourses.
- The world's top five technology companies — Apple, Alphabet, Microsoft, Amazon and Facebook — boast of a total market capitalisation of \$4.1 trillion, more than thrice that of India's Nifty 50 companies and nearly twice that of India's total market cap.

SC allows RCom to sell telecom assets worth Rs 181 billion to Reliance Jio

- The Supreme Court allowed Anil Ambani-owned Reliance Communications (RCom) to sell its telecom assets worth about Rs 181 billion to Reliance Jio, controlled by his elder brother Mukesh Ambani. The transaction will help RCom reduce its debt by half while giving crucial infrastructure, including spectrum, to RJio.
- The entire proceeds of the sale will go to RCom's lenders, which have not been paid since June last year when the company's financials deteriorated due to an intense pricing battle initiated by Jio.

Reliance Communications (RCom) is a telecommunication company headquartered in Navi Mumbai, India. Reliance Communications was founded in India in 2002. A subsidiary of Reliance Group, its services include GSM (voice; 2G, 3G and 4G), fixed-line broadband and voice, and direct-to-home satellite television (depending upon area in India). The company ended its 2G and 3G service (including all voice service), offering only 4G data service, on 29 December 2017 as a result of debt and a failed merger with Aircel. Anil Dhirubhai Ambani is the chairman of Reliance Group.

France's IDEMIA gets NPCI stamp for RuPay cards

- French company IDEMIA, a global leader in augmented identity has become the first company to be given the certification to manufacture and personalise RuPay chip contact and contactless cards on the qSPARC v2 platform.
- The qSPARC is a dual interface open loop payment specification, with the option of loading multiple payment applications – up to 20 payment applications – on a single card.

The certification is issued by the National Payments Corporation of India, after testing all payment scenarios, and thus ensuring that the cards manufactured by IDEMIA will work seamlessly at all payment acceptance devices. With this, cardholders can use a single card for multiple payment options such as for the Metro, bus, parking, toll, loyalty, and at retail outlets. The first version of this card was deployed in Kochi Metro, Bangalore Bus Transport, and Ahmedabad Smart City.

Android 9 Pie

- Google's next version of Android finally has a name: "Pie". It's rolling out right now and is packed with new features, from extended battery life to new gesture navigation.
- Pie marks one of the biggest changes in the way Android looks and feels in some years, with a more colourful interface, a collection of new movement animations and rounded edges on almost everything. It's still as fast as Android Oreo, at least on Google's Pixel smartphones

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. It is now headquartered in California, USA. Pichai Sundararajan is the current chief executive officer (CEO) of Google Inc.

Nikhil Nanda appointed as Chairman and MD of Escorts

- Farm and construction equipment maker Escorts appointed Nikhil Nanda as the chairman and managing director (CMD) of the company to succeed his father Rajan Nanda, who passed away earlier this week. The board unanimously appointed Mr. Nikhil Nanda as the CMD.

Escorts Group is an Indian engineering company that operates in the sectors of agri-machinery, construction and material handling equipment, and railway equipment. Headquartered in Faridabad, Haryana, the company was launched in 1944.

Paytm acquires Bengaluru-based Balance Technology

- Digital payments major Paytm said it has acquired Bengaluru-based savings management start-up, Balance Technology, for an undisclosed amount. The acquisition will help One97 Communications, which operates the Paytm brand, further enhance its user and merchant interfaces, Paytm said in a statement.
- The six-member team of Balance Technology has joined the SoftBank and Alibaba-backed company's product and design team.

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.

'Tata remains most valuable brand'

- The Tata brand remained India's most valuable brand this year as per the latest findings by Brand Finance, a U.K.-based independent brand valuation and strategy consultancy.

- After years of below 5% growth in brand value, the **Tata group** surged ahead with 9% growth in brand value, estimated at \$14.2 billion.
- At this valuation, **Tata's brand value** is even higher than **Airtel's** (\$6.7 billion) and **Infosys's** (\$6 billion), which are No. 2 and No. 3, respectively.
- **LIC**, ranked fourth in brand value at \$6 billion, has seen a value erosion of 13%. **HCL**, whose brand value has been estimated at \$4.6 billion, has seen a 2% appreciation.

Tata Group is an **Indian multinational conglomerate holding company** headquartered in **Mumbai, Maharashtra**. It was founded in 1868 by **Jamshedji Tata**. **Tata Group** is owned by **Tata Sons**, a registered charity. **Natarajan Chandrasekaran** is the chairman of **Tata Sons**.

BSNL launches VOIP based phone service – WINGS

- **Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL)** has launched **BSNL WINGS** a **VOIP based service**. In **WINGS**, there is no **SIM** or **cable wiring** as is a **VOIP service** through an app.
- The **WINGS service** offers **unlimited free audio/video calling for one year**. The service can be activated with a one-time fee of **Rs. 1,099 (Rs 1,297 with GST)**.

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)**.

TCS overtakes RIL to become most valued Indian company

- **Tata Consultancy Services** pipped **Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)** to regain the crown of **India's most valued company** in terms of **market capitalisation**.
- At the end of trade on **BSE**, the market capitalisation (m-cap) of **TCS** stood at **Rs 7,69,065.04 crore**, **Rs 8,420.31 crore** more than **RIL's Rs 7,60,644.73 crore**.

Tata Consultancy Services Limited (TCS) is an **Indian multinational information technology (IT) service, consulting and business solutions company** headquartered in **Mumbai, Maharashtra**. It is a subsidiary of the **Tata Group**. On **12 January 2017**, **N. Chandrashekar** is the current chairman for **Tata Sons**.

PhonePe partners IRCTC for digital payments

- **Flipkart-owned payments platform PhonePe** has signed a partnership with **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)** to facilitate **digital payments**.
- With this partnership, **users will be able to make use of PhonePe as a payment option on the IRCTC Rail connect Android app** for their travel bookings. **PhonePe** currently allows users to make payments using **UPI, credit & debit cards and its own wallet**.

PhonePe is **financial technology company** headquartered in **Bangalore, India**. It was founded in **December, 2015**. It provides an online payment system based on **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**, which is a new process in electronic funds transfer launched by **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**. In **April 2016**, the company was acquired by **Flipkart**.

HAL becomes first PSU to transact on TReDS

- **Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL)** has become the first public sector enterprise to make a transaction on the **"TReDS platform"**.

- According to the NSE-SIDBI joint venture, TReDS is an online electronic institutional mechanism for facilitating the financing of trade receivables of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) through multiple financiers.
- "Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) executed its first digitized invoice discounting transaction on RXIL TReDS platform, when it accepted the digital invoice uploaded by Narendra Udyog, a Nasik based MSME (micro category) vendor earlier this week".

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is an Indian state-owned aerospace and defence company headquartered in Bangalore, India. It is governed under the management of the Indian Ministry of Defence.

Walmart completes acquisition of majority stake in Flipkart for \$16 bn

- Walmart, the world's largest retailer, has completed the acquisition of majority stake in India's leading e-commerce marketplace, Flipkart.
- Walmart and Flipkart announced the completion of the \$16-billion deal that would see the US giant taking ownership of 77 per cent stake in the Indian firm.
- The deal, which is the largest of its kind globally, was announced in May and received the nod from India's competition watchdog earlier this month.

Flipkart Pvt Ltd. is an Indian electronic commerce company based in Bengaluru, India. Founded by Sachin Bansal and Binny Bansal in 2007, the company initially focused on book sales, before expanding into other product categories such as consumer electronics, fashion, and lifestyle products. Kalyan Krishnamurthy is the current chief executive officer of Flipkart.

Walmart Inc. is an American multinational retail corporation that operates a chain of hypermarkets, discount department stores, and grocery stores. Headquartered in Bentonville, Arkansas, the company was founded by Sam Walton in 1962 and incorporated on October 31, 1969. Carl Douglas McMillon is the current president and chief executive officer (CEO) of Walmart Inc. Greg Penner was named the chairman of Walmart on June 5, 2015.

Paytm launches AI Cloud with Alibaba for developers, start-ups, enterprises

- After launching a mobile wallet, financial services, an online marketplace, among other verticals, **One97 Communications**, the company that owns Paytm, has announced the launch of its artificial intelligence (AI) cloud computing platform Paytm AI Cloud for developers, start-ups, and enterprises in partnership with global tech giant Alibaba.
- The AI-powered cloud computing platform offers a suite of business-centric apps for organisations that need solutions for cloud computing. Microsoft and Amazon are few of the biggest cloud service providers in the country.

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.

Flipkart acquires AI startup Liv.ai

- Indian e-commerce major Flipkart has augmented its capability to roll out voice-based shopping on its platform to compete with rival Amazon's Alexa by acquiring Bengaluru-based artificial intelligence startup Liv.ai. Flipkart was acquired Liv.ai for almost \$40 million
- This development comes as ecommerce companies in India have shifted their focus to tier II and beyond areas and target the next 200-300 million online shoppers.

- The startup, which set up shop in 2015, has built capabilities in speech recognition and translation in 10 different Indian languages. The acquisition is Flipkart's first after US retail giant Walmart acquired a 77 per cent stake in the e-commerce firm for \$16 billion. The deal is the largest transaction of its kind in the world and gives Walmart a foothold in the fast-growing Indian e-commerce and retail markets.

Liv.ai was launched in 2015 by three IIT-Kharagpur graduates, Subodh Kumar, Kishore Mundra and Sanjeev Kumar, Liv claims to be the only company in India to be able to convert speech to text in nine regional languages including Hindi, Bengali, Punjabi and Tamil, apart from English.

Reliance Power wins \$56-mn arbitration award in Indonesia coal mine dispute

- Reliance Power Netherlands BV, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reliance Power, has won an international arbitration award of \$56 Million against Prestige Capital Holdings Ltd (a Seychelles based Company) and Kokos Jiang.
- In 2010, Reliance Power had acquired 100 per cent economic interest in three coal mining concessions in Indonesia. This was acquired from Sugico Group, which is owned by Jiang. The contractual dispute is in relation to issues faced over starting operations under these mining concessions.

Reliance Power Limited is part of the Reliance Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group. It was established to develop, construct and operate power projects in the Indian and international markets. The company is the sole distributor of electricity to consumers in the suburbs of Mumbai. In 2008, Anil Ambani is also credited with India's largest IPO of Reliance Power which was subscribed in less than 60-second on offer, fastest in the history of Indian capital markets till date.

Goldman Sachs hires ex-RBI employee Prachi Mishra as chief India economist

- Goldman Sachs, a leading global investment bank and active investor in India, announced the appointment of Prachi Mishra as a managing director and chief India economist. She will be based in Mumbai. Prior to joining Goldman Sachs, Mishra was the deputy division chief of the western hemisphere department at the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- Previously, she was the head of the strategic research unit at the Reserve Bank of India from February 2016 to May 2017. She was also a specialist adviser at the RBI between November 2014 and February 2016. Mishra was the first lateral recruit at the RBI. Prior to that, she worked as a senior economist at both the IMF and the Government of India's Ministry of Finance.

The Goldman Sachs Group is leading global investment banking, securities and investment management firm that provides a wide range of financial services to a substantial and diversified client base that includes corporations, financial institutions, governments and individuals. Founded in 1869, the firm is headquartered in New York and maintains offices in all major financial centres around the world.

Google launches Navlekha for Indian Language Publishers

- Google has launched a platform for Indian language publishers to digitise their content, at the annual Google for India event held in New Delhi.
- This initiative is called Navlekha, a word derived from Sanskrit meaning "a new way to write".

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.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



Union Earth Sciences Ministry unveiled a blueprint of the ‘Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)’

- Looking to emulate the success of the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** in designing and launching satellites, the Centre has drawn up a five-year, Rs. 8,000 crore plan to explore the deep recesses of the ocean.
- The **Union Earth Sciences Ministry** — tasked with coordinating the exercise — unveiled a blueprint of the ‘**Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)**’.
- “The mission proposes to explore the deep ocean similar to the space exploration started by **ISRO** about 35 years ago”.

India has been allotted a site of **75,000 square kilometres** in the **Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB)** by the **UN International Sea Bed Authority** for exploitation of **polymetallic nodules (PMN)**. These are rocks scattered on the seabed containing iron, manganese, nickel and cobalt. “It is envisaged that **10% of recovery of that large reserve can meet the energy requirement of India for the next 100 years**. It has been estimated that **380 million metric tonnes of polymetallic nodules** are available at the bottom of the seas in the Central Indian Ocean. **India’s Exclusive Economic Zone** spreads over **2.2 million square kilometres** and in the deep sea, lies “unexplored and unutilised.”

China launches high-resolution Earth observation satellite to monitor BRI

- **China** successfully launched an optical remote sensing satellite, as part of its **high-resolution Earth observation project** which will also provide data for the **Belt and Road Initiative**.
- The **Gaofen-11** satellite was launched on a **Long March 4B** rocket from the **Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center** in northern **Shanxi Province**.

World's first mission to touch the Sun set to launch

- **NASA's Parker Solar Probe**, mankind's first mission to 'touch' the **Sun**, has been moved to its launch pad and is on schedule take off next week.
- The **car-sized spacecraft** will travel directly into the **Sun's atmosphere**, about four million miles from its surface - and more than seven times closer than any spacecraft has come before, thanks to its innovative **Thermal Protection System**.

Sunita Williams among 9 astronauts named by NASA for human spaceflight

- **Indian-origin astronaut Sunita Williams** is among the nine astronauts named by **NASA** for its first human spaceflight programme since the retirement of the space shuttle in 2011.
- The astronauts will fly on spacecraft developed by **SpaceX** and **Boeing** as part of the **US space agency's Commercial Crew programme** to send humans to the **International Space Station (ISS)** on private US spacecraft.

- **Williams has been named for the Boeing programme to the ISS**, the first test flight scheduled to take place in the middle of 2019.

Sunita Pandya Williams is an American astronaut and United States Navy officer of Indo-Slovenian descent. She formerly held the records for total spacewalks by a woman (seven) and most spacewalk time for a woman (50 hours, 40 minutes). In 2012, she served as a flight engineer on Expedition 32 and then commander of Expedition 33.

Indian scientists build 'nervous system' of World's Largest Radio Telescope, the SKA

- A team of Indian scientists — led by National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA) — claims to have finished its part in Phase 1 of the ambitious Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Telescope project. The team has designed the Telescope Manager (TM).
- This also is the first team to finish its module among the 12 international engineering teams working on the SKA. The TM — considered the observatory's nervous system — will control, monitor and operate the SKA telescopes.

In September of 1993, there were efforts to build a large telescope with worldwide efforts to answer a few of the fundamental questions of the universe. In 2000, a MoU was signed between 11 core countries to merge and develop one of the largest satellites in the world. The SKA organisation, which stands for the Square Kilometre Array took responsibility to develop the world's largest radio telescope with its initial phase costing about 650 Million Euros. The SKA will be located in two continents-Africa and Australia-and will be run by the finest scientists and engineers of our time.

China hails a 'successful' test of a new hypersonic weapon

- China has successfully tested a new hypersonic aircraft, a potential "hypersonic strike weapon" that could one day be capable of carrying multiple nuclear warheads and evading all existing defense networks like the US missile shields.
- The Xingkong-2 (Starry Sky-2) hypersonic experimental waverider vehicle designed by the China Academy of Aerospace Aerodynamics in Beijing can reportedly achieve a top speed six times the velocity of sound.

Centre launches portal for scientific research, funding

- The Union science ministry's communication wing, Vigyan Prasar, has launched the India Science Technology and Innovation portal that can help with such queries.
- Currently the portal can be queried for information about the organisations carrying out research, those funding them, international collaborations, the scientists involved in the research, the states in which they are being carried out, their achievements and impact. The portal follows a launch this week of India Science (indiascience.in), an Internet-based science channel, to showcase the developments in science and technology in India.

World's first mission to touch the Sun lifts off

- NASA's Parker Solar Probe, mankind's first mission to 'touch' the Sun, has been launched on a seven-year long journey to unlock the mysteries of our star's fiery outer atmosphere and its effects on space weather.
- Liftoff took place from Space Launch Complex 37 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in the US. The launch of the United Launch Alliance Delta IV Heavy rocket carrying the spacecraft was scrubbed due to a violation of a launch limit, resulting in a hold.
- The car-sized spacecraft will travel directly into the Sun's atmosphere, about four million miles from its surface - and more than seven times closer than any spacecraft has come before, thanks to its innovative Thermal Protection System. The USD 1.5 billion mission will perform the closest-ever observations of a star when it travels through the Sun's outer atmosphere, called the corona.

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

PM Modi announces manned space mission taking Indian astronauts to space on board 'Gaganyaan' by 2022

- **ISRO Chairman K Sivan** has reciprocated **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day** announcement that an **Indian astronaut will be sent into space by 2022 on board Gaganyaan**.
- The space agency had already developed the necessary technology; he added that the **Human Spaceflight Programme is achievable**.

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.

Chandrayaan-2 to be launched in January-March window in 2019

- **India's second moon mission Chandrayaan-2** will now be launched in the **January-March window in 2019** instead of later this year as the **design was changed to enable it to land on the lunar surface**.
- **ISRO would have two missions Chandrayan-2** by **GSLV Mark 3** and the **PSLV P45** launching **RA-SAT 2B** next year. The focus area of these launches was to **enhance the communication so that rural India gets high bandwidth data connectivity**, somewhere between **80 GBPS to 100 GBPS**

Chandrayaan-2 is India's second lunar exploration mission after **Chandrayaan-1**. Developed by the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**, the mission is planned to be launched to the Moon by a **Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III (GSLV Mk III)**. It includes a **lunar orbiter, lander and rover**, all developed by India. If successful, **Chandrayaan-2** will be the **first-ever mission to land a rover near the lunar south pole**.

Iran Unveils Next Generation Missile

- **Iran unveiled a next generation short-range ballistic missile** and vowed to further boost its capabilities.
- The new **Fateh Mobin missile** had "**successfully passed its tests**" and could strike targets on land and sea. **Fateh Mobin** is "**100-percent domestically made missile**."

Aditya-L1 is India's first mission to study the Sun

- **India's ambitious space agency ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation)** is getting ready to **launch its very own probe to study the Sun called the Aditya-L1**.
- The satellite is being targeted to launch sometime between **2019 – 2020**. Initially the mission was **dubbed as the Aditya-1** and was only said to carry a **payload of 400kg**, which consisted of the **Visible Emission Line Coronagraph**. The satellite was planned to be launched in an **800 km low earth orbit**. However, the agency then realized that a **satellite placed in the halo orbit around the Lagrangian point 1 (L1) of the Sun-Earth system** has an **advantage of continuously observing the Sun without being affected by any occultation or eclipse**.

Aditya-1 mission has now been revised to "**Aditya-L1 mission**" and will be inserted in a **halo orbit around the L1, which is 1.5 million km from the Earth**. The satellite carries additional six payloads with enhanced science scope and objectives.

International team of scientists including 18 Indian scientists decode complex wheat genome

- In a major scientific breakthrough, a **team of international researchers, including 18 from India** decoded the **wheat genome**, considered insurmountable so far. The **information generated will help to identify genes controlling complex** agronomic traits such as yield, grain quality, resistance to diseases and pests, as well as tolerance to drought, heat, water logging and salinity.
- The **DNA sequence** has been ordered and it represents the **highest quality genome sequence generated to date for the bread wheat**.
- The **reference genome covers 94% (14.5 Gb) of the entire wheat genome**. The bread wheat has a complex hexaploid genome which is **40 times larger than that of the rice genome** and **5 times larger than the human genome**.

A team of 18 **Indian scientists** co-authoring this paper, led by **Dr. Kuldeep Singh at Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) Ludhiana**, **Professor J. P. Khurana** at the University of Delhi South Campus, and **Professor Nagendra Singh** at ICAR-National Research Centre on Plant Biotechnology, New Delhi, **contributed to the decoding of Chromosome 2A of the wheat genome**. The **availability of high quality reference genome** would **accelerate the breeding of climate-resilient wheat varieties** to feed the ever-increasing world population and help address global food security in the decades to come.

India successfully tests indigenously Anti-Tank Guided Missile ‘HELINA’ in Pokhran

- **India** has successfully flight tested the **indigenously developed helicopter launched Anti-Tank Guided Missile ‘HELINA’** from Pokhran in Rajasthan. The weapon system was integrated with live warhead and has destroyed the targets with high precision.
- The **indigenously designed and developed guided bombs Smart Anti Airfield Weapon (SAAW)** was also successfully flight tested from IAF aircraft at Chandan range in Jaisalmer. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has congratulated the DRDO and the Indian Army on the successful flight tests..

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. Dr G. Satheesh Reddy is the Chairman, DRDO** and Secretary, Department of Defence R&D.

Iran unveils first fully-indigenously made fighter jet

- **Iran** unveiled its first domestic fighter jet at a defence show in **Tehran**. Images on state television showed **President Hassan Rouhani** sitting in the cockpit of the new “**Kowsar**” plane at the National Defence Industry exhibition.
- It is a **fourth-generation fighter**, with “**advanced avionics**” and **multi-purpose radar**, the Tasnim news agency said, adding that it was “**100-percent indigenously made**”.

Iran also known as **Persia** is a sovereign state in **Western Asia**. **Tehran** is the **capital of Iran** and **Tehran Province**. **Sayyid Ali Hosseini Khamenei** is a marja and the second and current **Supreme Leader of Iran**, in office since 1989. **Iranian rial** is the **currency of Iran**.

Chandrayaan-I data confirms presence of ice on Moon

- Using data from a **NASA instrument** aboard the **Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft**, a team of scientists has confirmed there is **water ice on the surface of the Moon**.
- In the darkest and coldest parts of Moon's polar regions, the **team led by Shuai Li of the University of Hawaii and Brown University** for the first time directly observed definitive evidence of **water ice on the Moon's surface**.

- **NASA's Moon Mineralogy Mapper (M3) instrument M3**, aboard the **Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft -- launched in 2008 by the Indian Space Research Organisation --** was uniquely equipped to confirm the presence of solid ice on the Moon.

Chandrayaan-1, India's first mission to Moon, was launched successfully on **October 22, 2008** from **SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota**. The spacecraft was orbiting around the Moon at a height of **100 km** from the lunar surface for chemical, mineralogical and photo-geologic mapping of the Moon. The spacecraft carried **11 scientific instruments built in India, USA, UK, Germany, Sweden and Bulgaria**.

Stratolaunch announces reusable space plane

- **Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen's space company Stratolaunch unveiled details of launch vehicles** that will carry satellites to multiple orbits and inclinations on a single mission. It also announced a **reusable space cargo plane** it is developing that will be used to carry cargo to and from Earth and a follow-on variant that could carry people.
- With its rockets, **Allen's Stratolaunch Systems Corp** is trying to **cash in on higher demand in the coming years for vessels** that can put satellites into orbit. Rather than blasting off from a launch pad, **Stratolaunch's rockets will drop at high altitude from underneath the company's six-engine, twin-fuselage airplane** – the largest ever built by wingspan of 386 feet. The four vehicles expected to **enter into service by 2020** will also help in launching small and medium-sized payloads into low Earth orbit.

Stratolaunch Systems Corporation is an American space transportation venture developing a new air launch to orbit system, with its corporate headquarters located in **Seattle, Washington**. The project was officially announced in **December 2011** by Microsoft co-founder **Paul G. Allen** and Scaled Composites founder **Burt Rutan**, who had previously collaborated on the creation of **SpaceShipOne**.

European wind survey satellite launched from French Guyana

- A rocket holding the **Aeolus wind surveying satellite launched from Europe's spaceport Kourou, French Guyana, the European Space Agency (ESA) confirmed**. The satellite will be placed at an altitude of **320 kilometers (200 miles)** above the Earth.
- The **Aeolus satellite, named after the keeper of the winds in Greek mythology, is equipped with a Doppler wind lidar** – an advanced laser system designed to measure global wind patterns from space. It has been described as the world's first space mission to acquire profiles of the Earth's wind on a global scale.

European Space Agency is an intergovernmental organisation of **22 member states** dedicated to the exploration of space. Established in **1975** and headquartered in **Paris, France**. The **ESA collaborated with NASA on the International Ultraviolet Explorer (IUE)**, the world's first high-orbit telescope, which was launched in **1978**.

Fabless Chip Design Incubator (FabCI), a first of its kind incubator launched in India by IIT Hyderabad

- The **Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IITH)** has launched an exclusive Incubator to boost the chip design sector. The **Fabless Chip Design Incubator (FabCI)** a first of its kind in India will focus on creating an ecosystem for grooming startups in chip design.
- It will provide a bouquet of offerings including **free software tools with leading technology partners in Electronic Design Automation (EDA)**, a characterization facility for testing the chips and equipment for performing DC and RF characterization. The goal is to incubate at least **50 'Make-in-India' chip design companies** that can compete globally and generate Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs).

Fabless manufacturing is the design and sale of hardware devices and semiconductor chips. The first fabless semiconductor company, the Western Design Center, was founded in 1978. Xilinx, founded in 1984, was the first to "truly" separate the design of chips from their manufacture.

NASA launching advanced laser to measure Earth's changing Ice

- NASA will launch into space the most advanced laser instrument of its kind, beginning a mission to measure – in unprecedented detail – changes in the heights of Earth's polar ice.
- NASA's Ice, Cloud and land Elevation Satellite-2 (ICESat-2) will measure the average annual elevation change of land ice covering Greenland and Antarctica to within the width of a pencil, capturing 60,000 measurements every second.
- ICESat-2 will extend and improve upon NASA's 15-year record of monitoring the change in polar ice heights, which started in 2003 with the first ICESat mission and continued in 2009 with NASA's Operation IceBridge, an airborne research campaign that kept track of the accelerating rate of change.

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.

NASA probe captures first images of asteroid Benu

- NASA's Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security-Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx) spacecraft has captured the first glimpse of its distant target — asteroid Benu — after almost two years of journey.
- Launched on September 8, 2016, the OSIRIS-REx, which is NASA's first mission to visit a near-Earth asteroid, is scheduled to arrive at Benu on December 3. It will help unveil the mysteries of our solar system's formation, the US space agency said in a statement. The spacecraft's PolyCam camera obtained the image from a distance of 1.4 million miles (2.2 million km) or almost six times the distance between the Earth and the Moon, on August 17.

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.

In a first for Nepal, robots to serve food at a restaurant

- A newly-launched restaurant in the Nepalese capital is using robots as waiters under the slogan, "where food meets technology". The Naulo Restaurant ("naulo" means new in Nepali) operates with the help of five robots, three named Ginger and two named Ferry, designed and manufactured by Paaila Technology, a Nepali company established by six young engineers, specializing in robotics and artificial intelligence (AI) technology. "Naulo is the first digitalized robotic restaurant not just in Nepal, but also in South Asia.
- Robot Ginger is powered with swarm intelligence, speech recognition, natural language processing, and auto-dock ability, among others. The robot also cracks jokes and answers basic IQ questions in both English and Nepali.

Paaila Technology entered the hospitality sector after the operation of its first humanoid robot named Pari stationed in a branch of Nepal SBI Bank.

Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved for procurement for the Services amounting to approximately Rs. 46,000 crore

- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Hon'ble Defence Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman, met on 25 Aug 2018 and accorded approval for procurement for the Services amounting to approximately Rs. 46,000 crores.
- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), in a landmark decision approved procurement of 111 Utility Helicopters for the Indian Navy at a cost of over Rs. 21,000 crores. This is the first project under the MoD's prestigious Strategic Partnership (SP) Model that aims at providing significant fillip to the Government's 'Make in India' programme. SP Model envisages indigenous manufacturing of major defence platforms by an Indian Strategic Partner, who will collaborate with foreign OEM, acquire niche technologies and set up production facilities in the Country.

Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) under the chairman of Defence Minister was constituted in 2001 for overall guidance of the defence procurement planning process. The objective of the Defence Acquisition Council is to ensure expeditious procurement of the approved requirements of the Armed Forces in terms of capabilities sought and time frame prescribed by optimally utilizing the allocated budgetary resources.

World's smallest medical robot sets Guinness record

- Scientists from USA have set a new Guinness World Record by creating the smallest medical robot – a device measuring just 120 nanometres that could assist in future cancer and Alzheimer's treatments.
- The series of nanorobots was created by Soutik Betal during his doctoral research at University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) in the US could one day lead to huge medical advancements.
- The nanocomposites are made of two different types of multifunctional oxide materials in a "core and shell" configuration. The core is magnetic and changes 'shape' in response to magnetic fields. The ferroelectric shell converts pressure into electric potentials. The magneto-elasto-electric coupled effect in the nanocomposites act as arms and legs that move the nanoparticle around to interact with targeted biological cells.

Aeolus satellite launched in 'world-first' space mission to map Earth's winds

- Europe launched a rocket from French Guyana, to put a satellite into orbit as part of what company Arianespace called the world's first space mission to map the Earth's wind on a global scale. The satellite – named Aeolus after the guardian of wind in Greek mythology – will be placed at an altitude of 320km (200 miles) above the Earth.
- It is part of the Copernicus project, a joint initiative of the European Union and the European Space Agency (ESA) to track environmental damage and aid disaster relief operations. Aeolus is equipped with a single instrument: a Doppler wind lidar – an advanced laser system designed to accurately measure global wind patterns from space.

ISRO to send first Indian into Space by 2022 as announced by PM

- As announced by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during his Independence Day address, India's first Indian human mission will be launched by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) by 2022. This was stated by the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Development of North-Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh.
- The programme will make India the fourth nation in the world to launch a Human Spaceflight Mission. So far, only the USA, Russia and China have launched human spaceflight missions.

Indian Human Spaceflight Programme (HSP) was created by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to develop the technology needed to launch crewed orbital spacecraft into low Earth orbit. The first crewed flight is planned with a spacecraft called Gaganyaan for December 2021 on a home-grown GSLV-III rocket.

Chandrayaan 2 to be launched in January 2019

- **Chandrayaan-2, ISRO's "most complex mission", is scheduled to be launched in January next year** after experts suggested changes to avert failure, its chief K Sivan said.
- The changes suggested have also led to increase in the weight of the mission and it would now be launched with the help of GLSV Mark III launcher. The window period to launch the mission starts on January 3, 2019 and ends on February 16, 2019.
- The lander will also land near the South Pole, which has remained unexplored, Sivan said. The ISRO also aims to launch 19 missions up to March 2019. These missions include launch of four satellites to accomplish the Digital India programme by providing higher bandwidth for connectivity.

Chandrayaan-1 was India's first lunar probe. It was launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation in October 2008, and operated until August 2009. India launched the spacecraft using a PSLV-XL rocket from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Andhra Pradesh. Chandrayaan-2 is India's second lunar exploration mission after Chandrayaan-1. The mission is planned to be launched to the Moon by a Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III (GSLV Mk III).

NASA working for better cancer treatments in space

- Astronauts aboard the International Space Station (ISS) are conducting a blood cell experiment which may improve treatments for cancer. In a new video published by the US space agency as part of the AngieX Cancer Therapy study, the teams led by NASA astronaut Serena Aunon-Chancellor were shown examining endothelial cells that come from blood vessels.
- Several cartridge-shaped containers on board the ISS currently host the cells as they undergo varying amounts of chemotherapy exposure. The team is conducting blood experiments in space because sometimes, cells act differently in the weightless environment of orbiting spacecraft, called microgravity. Because these orbiting cells perform more like they normally do inside the body, cancer researchers can more accurately test the cells for chemotherapy responses

Jupiter's Great Red Spot reveals signs of water

- NASA scientists peering deep inside Jupiter's Great Red Spot — a storm raging on the planet for over 350 years — has detected signs of water above the planet's deepest clouds.
- The pressure of the water combined with their measurements of another oxygen-bearing gas, carbon monoxide; imply that Jupiter has more oxygen than the Sun.

Jupiter is the fifth planet from the Sun and the largest in the Solar System. Jupiter has at least 79 moons.

Inventions/Discoveries

Doctors from Mangaluru's KMC identify rare bloodgroup 'P null' phenotype

- A team of doctors, led by Shamee Shastry from the Blood Bank of Kasturba Medical College (KMC) has identified a rare blood group called "pp" or "P null" phenotype.
- A press release issued by the Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) in New Delhi recently said that ABO and Rh D are the commonly typed blood group systems.
- However, there are more than 200 minor blood group antigens known besides A, B and Rh.

Scientists discover new shape called scutoid after studying human cells

- Scientists from USA-EU have discovered a new shape called scutoid while studying nature's way of moulding tissue to form the skin, cavity linings and the building blocks of organs. The shape has five sides on one end and six on the other and a triangular surface on one of its longer edges. Scientists have referred to it as a twisted prism kind of shape that allows the tissue to mould around organs.
- The research that is the result of USA-EU collaboration first discovered the existence of the new shape through computations modelling, which was later confirmed through experiments investigating its presence in different kinds of tissues and animals.

'World's most wear-resistant metal alloy created'

- US scientists claim to have engineered a platinum-gold alloy that may be the most wear-resistant metal in the world.
- It is 100 times more durable than high-strength steel, making it the first alloy in the same class as diamond and sapphire, nature's most wear-resistant materials.
- According to the researchers from the Sandia National Laboratories in the US, a set of tires made from the alloy would have to skid around Earth's equator 500 times before wearing out the tread.

The team was able to achieve thermal stability when combining the metals by developing a method which involved changing the grain boundary energies. The result is an alloy that is comparable to sapphire and diamond-like carbon (DLC) in terms of its constitution. The platinum-gold alloy is so resistant to wearing that one mile (1.6 kilometre) of skidding using the hypothetical tyres mentioned above would wear out only a single layer of atoms of the platinum-gold alloy.

Novel sponge-like material can remove harmful dyes from water

- Scientists from USA have created a sponge-like material using wood pulp and small bits of metal that can remove harmful dyes in water in a matter of seconds.
- Globally, about 700,000 metric tonnes of dye is produced each year to colour our clothing, eye shadow, toys and vending machine candy.
- During manufacturing, about a tenth of all dye products are discharged into the waste stream.

Chinese scientists create first single-chromosome yeast

- Chinese scientists claimed to have created the first single-chromosome yeast while not affecting the majority of its functions, a breakthrough that could help in furthering research related to aging and diseases in humans.
- Brewer's yeast, one-third of whose genome is said to share ancestry with humans, has 16 chromosomes. However, Chinese scientists have managed to fit nearly all its genetic material into just one chromosome while not affecting the majority of its functions, according to a paper released on the website of the journal Nature.

- **Qin Zhongjun**, a molecular biologist at the Centre for Excellence in Molecular Plant Sciences of the Shanghai Institute of Plant Physiology and Ecology under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and his team used CRISPR-Cas9 genome-editing to create a single-chromosome yeast strain.

Trove of forty-four exoplanets in solar systems far away discovered by scientists

- **Scientists at the University of Tokyo in Japan** have discovered a trove of forty-four exoplanets in solar systems beyond our own in one go, dwarfing the usual number of confirmations from extrasolar surveys. The findings will improve existing models of solar systems, and may help researchers investigate exoplanet atmospheres. Novel techniques developed to validate the find could accelerate the confirmation of more extrasolar planet candidates.
- **Astronomers pooled data from NASA's Kepler and the ESA's Gaia space telescopes.** They confirmed existence of these 44 exoplanets and described various details about them. A portion of the findings yield some surprising characteristics.

An exoplanet or extrasolar planet is a planet outside our solar system. The first evidence of an exoplanet was noted as early as 1917, but was not recognized as such. However, the first scientific detection of an exoplanet was in 1988, although it was not accepted as an exoplanet until later. The first confirmed detection occurred in 1992. As of 1 August 2018, there are 3,815 confirmed planets in 2,853 systems, with 633 systems having more than one planet.

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

- **Chinese researchers** have developed the world's first-ever 4D printing for ceramics that are mechanically robust and can have complex shapes, offering broad potential applications in telecommunications, electronics and even space exploration.
- **Researchers at City University of Hong Kong** reported in a study published in the journal Science Advances a novel "ceramic ink," a mixture of polymers and ceramic nanoparticles. The 3D-printed ceramic precursors printed with this novel ink are soft and can be stretched three times beyond their initial length, according to the study.
- **4D printing** is conventional 3D printing combined with the additional element of time as the fourth dimension, where the printed objects can re-shape or self-assemble themselves over time with external stimuli, such as mechanical force, temperature, or a magnetic field.

The earliest known form of printing as applied to paper was woodblock printing, which appeared in China before 220 A.D. Later developments in printing technology include the movable type invented by Bi Sheng around 1040 AD and the printing press invented by Johannes Gutenberg in the 15th century.

US Scientists have developed a wireless 'in-body GPS' system

- **US Scientists** have developed a wireless 'in-body GPS' system that can pinpoint the location of ingestible implants and track tumours inside the body.
- In animal tests, the team demonstrated that the system dubbed ReMix can track the implants with centimetre-level accuracy. Similar implants could be used to deliver drugs to specific regions in the body.
- To test ReMix, researchers from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in the US first implanted a small marker in animal tissues.
- This was based on a wireless technology that the researchers previously demonstrated to detect heart rate, breathing, and movement.
- One potential application for ReMix is in proton therapy, a type of cancer treatment that involves bombarding tumours with beams of magnet-controlled protons.

Most lithium-rich giant star discovered

- Chinese scientists have discovered the most lithium-rich giant star ever known – with lithium abundance 3,000 times higher than normal – which could shed new light on the evolution of the universe.
- The star is in the direction of Ophiuchus, north side of the Galactic disk, with a distance of 4,500 light years to Earth, said researchers at National Astronomical Observatories of China (NAOC) and Chinese Academy of Sciences.
- “The discovery of this star has largely increased the upper limit of the observed lithium abundance, and provides a potential explanation to the extremely lithium-rich case”.

Lithium is considered one of the three elements synthesised in the Big Bang, together with Hydrogen and Helium. The abundance of the three elements was regarded as the strongest evidence of the Big Bang, which describes how the universe expanded from a very high-density and high-temperature state.

Bronze Age fort found in Romania

- Romanian and German archaeologists have discovered a prehistoric fortress dating back as far as 3,400 years in western Romania.
- Golgatan, a researcher at the Archaeology Institute in Cluj northwestern Romania had completed a dig uncovering 55 hectares of the 80-hectare site, built between 1400 B.C. and 1200 B.C., located near the town of Santana.

Indian telescope spots distant radio galaxy

- Astronomers have used an Indian telescope to discover the most distant radio galaxy ever known, located at a distance of 12 billion light-years. The galaxy, from a time when the universe was only 7% of its current age was found using the Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT) in Pune.
- GMRT is an array of thirty fully steerable parabolic radio telescopes of 45-metre diameter. It is operated by the National Centre for Radio Astrophysics.
- The distance to this galaxy was determined using the Gemini North telescope in Hawaii and the Large Binocular Telescope in Arizona.

World's largest 3D-printed reef installed in Maldives to help save corals

- The world's largest 3D printed reef was installed at Summer Island in the Maldives, in what is hoped could be a new technology-driven method to help coral reefs survive a warming climate.
- The artificial reef, made from hundreds of ceramic and concrete modules, was submerged at Summer Island's 'Blue Lagoon' – a sandy part of the lagoon, where the resort hopes to create a new coral reef ecosystem.
- The project started in Melbourne, Australia, where industrial designer Alex Goad of Reef Design Lab used computing modeling to design reef structures that resembled the coral reefs found naturally in the Maldives. A large 3D printer took 24 hours to print moulds of the reef structures.

Maldives is a South Asian sovereign state, located in the Indian Ocean, situated in the Arabian Sea. Male is the capital and most populated city, traditionally called the "King's Island" for its central location. Maldivian rufiyaa is the currency of the Maldives. Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom is the current President of the Maldives, in office since 2013.

Health/ Disease

Platelets kill up to 60% of malaria parasites

- **Platelets found in the blood** are the **first line of defence** in patients with malaria, **killing up to 60 per cent of the malarial parasites circulating in the bloodstream.**
- These are important findings and are the **first direct evidence of protection by platelets in any human infectious disease,"** said the lead author, **doctoral student Steven Kho** from the **Menzies School of Health Research, an Australia-based non-profit organisation.**
- The study, involved 376 people, with and without malaria, from Papua, Indonesia and Sabah, Malaysia.

New low protein wheat breeds offer hope for gluten allergies

- **Researchers have for the first time bred low allergy wheat varieties,** in an attempt towards **reducing the proteins in wheat** that are **responsible for diseases** such as **coeliac and baker's asthma or wheat dependent exercise induced anaphylaxis (WDEIA).**
- **Researchers have developed the first complete representation of proteins related to different forms of immune response in humans,** which has helped us to **accurately determine the genetic variability of these proteins** and their environmental vulnerability.

EU-India joined hands to develop new Influenza vaccine

- The **Indian government and the European Union (EU) joined hands for Rs. 240 crore research programme to develop a Next Generation Influenza Vaccine** to protect citizens worldwide. Both the EU and the Department of Biotechnology have also **committed EUR 15 million each to fund this joint call for the program named "Horizon 2020".**

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT



Early Warning System for Air Pollution

- “A task force under the chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Earth Science (MoES) with representatives of expert institutions has been set up to build a strategy for developing an early warning system on air quality, as well as the dissemination of warning to public. The reason to set up an early warning system for air pollution is to further strengthen the air quality forecast.
- Establishing early warning system and dissemination protocol to inform public and enforcing agencies about episodic high pollution events in advance is amongst the priorities identified for improving management.

The first Indian monitoring and early warning system for air pollution was launched on May 12, 2017, in the nation's fifth most populous city, Ahmedabad with the hope that it will reduce the health impacts and deaths from air pollution, a growing problem in a country with nine of the world's 20 most polluted cities in 2016, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

New species of orchid found in Peruvian jungle

- Botanists have discovered a new species of orchid in Peru's central Amazonian rainforest. The new species of orchid was recently discovered in the Tingo Maria National Park.
- The orchid was given the name "Andinia tingomariana" by the US Department of Biological and Ecological Organisms in honor of the protected natural area where it was discovered.

Mumbai gives India its first baby penguin

- The first Humboldt penguin to be born in India or as someone put it, ‘the freedom baby’, born on August 15.
- It weighed 75 gm and was reported to be healthy. The average weight of a healthy newborn penguin is 60-80 gm.

Mr Molt is the youngest male; Flipper is the oldest female in the zoo's. After mating in captivity, the penguin pair 'Mr Molt' and 'Flipper' finally delivered an egg in July at the Veer Jijabai Bhonsale Udyan, or Mumbai Zoo.

99-million-year-old beetle discovered trapped in amber

- Scientists at the University of Bristol in the UK have discovered a beetle trapped in amber that dates back to 99 million years, a finding that may help better understand the relationship between ancient flowering plants and pollinators.
- Researchers found an ancient boganiid beetle preserved in Burmese amber for an estimated 99 million years along with grains of cycad pollen.

- It was named **Cretoparacucujus cycadophilus**- a combination of Greek word **kykas** (meaning, cycad) and **philia** (meaning, friendly love or affection).

Never-Before-Seen Megalithic Mass Grave from 5,000 Years Ago Discovered in Kenya

- It was **5,000 years ago**. In Africa's shifting environment, an early society came together **on the shores of Kenya's Lake Turkana**, and they built something so rare and remarkable, researchers have never seen anything quite like it.
- The **communal cemetery site**, in a region known as the **Turkana Basin**, is thought to have been in **use between about 5,000 to 4,300 years ago**.
- The **megalith pillars** used to mark the grave were sourced from up to a kilometre away from the site, along with smaller stone circles and cairns added around the cemetery.

First genetic bank for rare species inaugurated in Hyderabad

- **India's first genetic resource bank**, which could have **far reaching implications in conservation and revival of extinct and endangered species** in the near future, was **inaugurated at Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology's (CCMB) Laboratory of Conservation of Endangered Species (LaCONES) facility in Hyderabad**.
- Dubbed as **National Wildlife Genetic Resource Bank** and inaugurated by Union Minister for Science and Technology and Environment, Forest and Climate Change, **Dr. Harsh Vardhan**, the genetic bank will **cryopreserve living cell lines, gametes and embryos of endangered wild animal species in India**.

Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) is an **Indian biotechnology research establishment located in Hyderabad** that operates under the aegis of the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research**. CCMB is a designated **"Center of Excellence"** by the **Global Molecular and Cell Biology Network, UNESCO**. CCMB was set up initially as a semi-autonomous Centre on **1 April 1977**.

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

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.

Saina Nehwal becomes first woman to reach eight consecutive quarter-finals

- **Saina Nehwal** became the first woman to reach the quarter-finals of **BWF World Championships** for **eight consecutive times**.
- **Nehwal, who had clinched a silver and a bronze at the 2015 and 2017 editions**, has been consistently giving strong performances at the tournament, **becoming the only woman to reach the last-eight stage since 2009 at the ongoing BWF World Championships**.

Sunil Chhetri named 'Asian Icon' by AFC

- **Talismanic Indian football captain Sunil Chhetri** was named an **'Asian Icon'** by the game's continental governing body on his **34th birthday** and received effusive praise for rivalling the world's greatest players of his generation in scoring goals.

- **Chhetri is currently the highest goal-scoring active Asian player with 64 strikes from 101 matches and third in the world after superstars Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi.**

Bhullar wins Fiji International to claim first win on European Tour

- **India's Gaganjeet Bhullar chipped in from off the green to record an eagle on the 17th hole to propel himself to a one-shot victory in the Fiji International over Australia's Anthony Quayle at the Natadola Bay Championship Golf Course.**

Kohli on top of the world

- **Virat Kohli broke new ground by topping the International Cricket Council Test batting rankings for the first time in his career when the latest edition was published.**
- **Kohli is the seventh Indian and the first since Sachin Tendulkar in June 2011, to hold the No. 1 Test spot.**
- **Rahul Dravid, Gautam Gambhir, Sunil Gavaskar, Virender Sehwag and Dilip Vengsarkar are the other India batsmen to have been in the top spot during their Test careers.**

Marin makes history with third world title

- **Carolina Marin claimed a slice of history as the Spaniard became the first woman to win three badminton World titles with an emphatic victory over P.V. Sindhu of India.**
- **Kento Momota became the first Japanese man to win the badminton World Championships, putting behind him a gambling scandal that threatened to ruin his career.**

400m hurdles World Champion Nicholas Bett dies in road accident

- **Former 400m hurdles world champion Nicholas Bett has died after being involved in a car crash in his home country of Kenya, aged 28.**
- **Bett was killed while driving near Nandi County in west Kenya, just one day after competing in the Continental Championships in Nigeria. The hurdler made history in 2015 when he became his country's first athlete to win a World Championships gold medal in a short distance race, and he is also a two-time African Championship medallist.**

Neeraj Chopra named India's flag-bearer for Asian Games opening ceremony

- **Star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra was named the Indian contingent's flag-bearer for the Asian Games opening ceremony to be held on August 18 in Jakarta.**

Anderson becomes first bowler to take 100 Test wickets at Lord's

- **England pace spearhead James Anderson, became the first bowler in the history of Test cricket to pick up 100 wickets at Lord's.**
- **Anderson got rid of Indian opener, Murali Vijay for the second time in the match - the right-hander edging one to the keeper after the ball jagged back in sharply. The England swing bowler hit a round 550 scalps with Vijay wicket, and his next target will be to surpass Aussie Glenn McGrath's mark of 563 and become the most successful pace bowler of all time. McGrath is fourth in the list of most Test wicket-takers, behind Muttiah Muralitharan (800), Shane Warne (708) and Anil Kumble (619).**

Brooks Koepka holds off Tiger Woods to win PGA Championship

- **Brooks Koepka fought off an inspired challenge from Tiger Woods to win the PGA Championship, giving the big-hitting American his second major title this season.**
- **Koepka withstood stifling pressure and sweltering heat to card a four-under 66 good enough for a two-shot victory over Woods, who was chasing his first major title in a decade and came close by returning a 64, his lowest final round in a major.**

- Koepka, who finished on 16-under-264, has now **won three of the last seven majors and became the fifth golfer and first since Woods in 2000 to capture both the PGA and U.S. Open in the same year.**

Rafael Nadal ends Stefanos Tsitsipas' Toronto run for 80th title

- **Rafael Nadal won his 80th ATP World Tour title– and spoiled Stefanos Tsitsipas' 20th birthday.**
- The top-ranked Nadal beat the unseeded Greek upstart 6-2, 7-6 (4) **for his fourth Rogers Cup crown and fifth victory of the year.** He has **33 ATP World Tour Masters 1000 titles.** The 32-year-old Spanish star also **won the Rogers Cup in Toronto in 2008 and Montreal in 2005 and 2013.**

Lionel Messi wins record 33rd title as Barcelona win Spanish Super Cup

- **Lionel Messi won his 33rd title with Barcelona to become the most successful player in the Catalan club's history.** Barcelona beat Sevilla 2-1 in the Spanish Super Cup as Messi overtook Andres Iniesta, who had 32 titles when he left this summer for the Japanese league.

Virat Kohli loses top spot in ICC Test rankings to out-of-action Steve Smith

- **Virat Kohli lost his number one position in the ICC Test rankings for batsmen, dropping to second after a forgettable performance in the recently concluded second Test against England.** **Former Australian captain Steve Smith, who is currently serving a one-year ban following a ball-tampering scandal, has replaced Kohli at the top.**
- **England paceman James Anderson has become only the seventh England bowler and the first in 38 years from his country to breach the 900-point mark in the rankings for after an excellent performance in the second Test against India.**

Vaishali R becomes India's latest Woman Grandmaster

- **Vaishali R, became India's latest Woman Grandmaster (WGM) after earning her third and final WGM norm at Riga Technical University Open at Latvia.**

Chhetri to get Best Sportsperson award from CSJC

- **India football captain Sunil Chhetri will get the 'Best Sportsperson of the Year' honour at the Calcutta Sports Journalists' Club annual awards function.**
- **Davis Cupper Akhtar Ali, international cricketer Arun Lal and 1962 Asian Games gold medal winning footballer Arun Ghosh will get Lifetime Achievement awards.**

Sarin, Arjun become country's 53rd and 54th GMs

- **Nihal Sarin became India's 53rd Grandmaster** after attaining his third and final GM-norm in the Abu Dhabi Masters.
- **Telangana boy E. Arjun also became a GM, India's 54th, in the same tournament.**

Indian Classic Junior Open Squash: Unseeded Fadte, Sanya clinch junior titles

- **Goa's Yash Fadte capped his wonderful run by clinching the boys Under-19 title in the 3rd Indian Classic Junior Open Squash Tournament in Mumbai.**
- **The 16-year-old Fadte defeated another unseeded player, Chaitanya Shah of Mumbai, 11-8, 11-6, 9-11, 11-5 in the final to emerge champion.**

Teen cyclist creates history by claiming India's first ever medal

- **Teen cyclist Esow Alben has created history by claiming India's first ever medal - a silver- at the UCI Junior Track Cycling World Championships in Aigle, Switzerland.**

- The **17-year-old from Andaman and Nicobar trains in Delhi** at the Sports Authority of India's National Cycling Academy.

Bajrang Punia wins 1st gold medal for India in final of Men's Freestyle 65 kg

- A dominating Bajrang Punia opened India's gold medal account by defeating Japan's Daichi Takatani 11-8 in the **final of Men's Freestyle 65 kg. Category** at the Asian Games 2018.
- India opened its medal account with a bronze by Apurvi Chandela and Ravi Kumar in rifle mixed team shooting event.

First women wrestler to win gold medal: Vinesh Phogat

- Vinesh Phogat created history by becoming the first Indian woman wrestler to win a gold medal at the Asian Games, brushing aside her rivals with remarkable ease in the **50kg category**. It was **second gold** for Indian wrestlers after Bajrang Punia's win in the 65kg freestyle category.

Rishabh Pant became the first Indian batsman to open account in Test cricket with a six

- Rishabh Pant made his Test debut during the third match against England at Trent Bridge, Nottingham. The 20-year-old became **India's 291st Test player**. The left-handed batsman, while making his Test debut, also became the **fifth-youngest wicketkeeper to play Test cricket for India** and the sixth to make his debut before turning 21. He became the **first Indian batsman to open his account in Test cricket with a six**.
- Young Rishabh Pant became the fourth Indian wicket-keeper to take five catches on Test debut during the second day of the third Test against England. Pant joined the elite club of Naren Tamhane (vs Pakistan in 1955), Kiran More (vs England in 1986) and Naman Ojha (vs Sri Lanka in 2015), all of whom took five catches on their Test debuts.

Virat Kohli became the highest scoring Indian captain in away Tests

- Virat Kohli became the highest scoring Indian captain in on foreign countries Tests. He surpassed Sourav Ganguly, who had scored 1693 runs in 43 innings at an average of 43.41.
- As a captain, Kohli has scored 1731 in 30 innings at an average of 59.68. Kohli's 23rd Test century moved him level with Steve Smith, who is top of the Test batting rankings. Kohli's 23rd ton saw him go past Mohammad Azharuddin's tally of 426 runs to become the Indian captain with most runs in a series in England.

Asian Games 2018: 16-year-old Saurabh Chaudhary blows away top guns to shoot gold

- Saurabh Chaudhary clinched gold, while Abhishek Verma bagged the bronze medal in men's 10m Air Pistol shooting event at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta.
- Saurabh Chaudhary became only the fifth Indian shooter to claim a gold in Asian Games history, beating a field of multiple world and Olympic champions in the 10m air pistol finals in Indonesia.

PV Sindhu seventh in Forbes list of highest paid women sportspersons

- PV Sindhu is seventh on the Forbes list of highest-earning women sportspersons in the world. Despite badminton's semi-professional status in most parts of the world, the Rio Olympics silver medallist earned **\$8.5 million in the period between June 2017 and June 2018** — this includes her prize winnings and endorsement deals.
- While the list is headed by tennis legend Serena Williams, the surprise was Sindhu pipping tennis's current World No. 1 Simona Halep and German Angelique Kerber, winner of three Grand Slam singles titles including Wimbledon 2018.

David Beckham to receive UEFA President's Award

- UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin has paid tribute to former England captain David Beckham, calling him "a true football icon of his generation" after selecting the former Manchester United FC and Real Madrid CF midfielder to receive the 2018 UEFA President's Award.
- Beckham, who will receive this award in Monaco later this year, made 762 appearances for club and country, scoring 130 goals. He won the UEFA Champions League with Manchester United in 1999, helping his boyhood club defeat FC Bayern München 2-1 in one of the most thrilling finals in the history of the competition. Beckham is one of a select band of English players to have been capped over 100 times for their country. He made a total of 115 appearances, scoring 17 goals and had the honour of playing in three FIFA World Cups and two UEFA EUROs.

Virat Kohli overtakes Don Bradman, Ricky Ponting with this unique feat as captain

- Virat Kohli scored 200 runs in the third Test at Trent Bridge and also brought up his 23rd test century. Kohli was declared the 'Man of the Match' after India beat England by 203 runs at Trent Bridge. With his great show in the win, Kohli became the first Test captain to score 200 runs or more seven times in a winning cause.
- He achieved this feat overtaking the two legendary Australians — Sir Don Bradman and Ricky Ponting. Bradman and Ponting have each scored 200 or more runs in a winning cause six times.
- Virat Kohli also became the second most successful Indian test captain with win. Kohli has overtaken former skipper Sourav Ganguly, who had 21 Test wins from 49 Tests, with 22nd Test victories. MS Dhoni remains the most successful Indian captain with 27 wins to his name from 60 Tests.
- Kohli also regained the top spot in ICC Test rankings with his great show at Trent Bridge. Kohli now has 937 points, which is the 11th best ever in terms of rating points.

Asian Games 2018: India settles for silver after losing to Iran in Women's Kabaddi Final

- After India Men's Kabaddi team went down 27-24 in the semifinal against Iran, India Women's team suffered another big upset in Kabaddi as they lost 27-24 in the final match and had to settle for a silver medal.
- India started off brilliantly, taking a lead of 5 points, 13-8 at one stage in the first half. But Iran defence held their nerves and took three points in the final few minutes of the first half to close the gap to 13-11.

Asian Games 2018: Gold medal for Rohan Bopanna-Divij Sharan

- Top seeded men's doubles pairing of Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan won India's second medal in tennis – after bronze for Ankita Raina in women's singles – at Palembang in the Asian Games. The duo produced clinical display of attacking tennis to beat the Kazakhstan pairing of Aleksander Bublik and Denis Yevseyev 6-3, 6-4 in 52 minutes.
- India have claimed the men's doubles gold on four occasions at the Asian Games, the last pair being Somdev Devvarman and Sanam Singh in the 2010 Guangzhou edition. Mahesh Bhupathi and Leander Paes remain the most successful Indian men's doubles pair in the Asian Games history, having claimed back-to-back gold medals in the 2002 and 2006 Games.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has congratulated Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan on winning Gold in Men's Doubles Tennis event at the 18th Asian Games 2018 in Jakarta - Palembang, Indonesia.

India's youngest Asian Games medallist, Shardul Vihan

- Shardul Vihan clinched the silver medal in the men's double trap shooting event at the 18th Asian Games that are being held in Indonesia this year. In a closely fought match against his Korean counterpart, Vihan shot 73 to claim the silver medal, while 34-year-old Shin Hyun-woo bagged the gold medal with a score of 74.

- As a 14-year-old, **Vihan** had grabbed four gold medals at **Shotgun Nationals Championship** last year. **Shardul** became the third Indian to medal in the double trap event at the Asian Games. **Ronjan Sodhi** won gold in 2010 while **Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore** won silver in 2010.

Asian Games 2018: Fouaad Mirza wins India's first individual Equestrian medal

- **Fouaad Mirza** became the first Indian to win an Asian Games individual medal in the equestrian event since 1982 besides guiding the country to a second-place finish in the team competition.
- **Mirza** won the silver medal in individual jumping with a score of **26.40**, while Japan's **Oiwa Yoshiaki** clinched the gold with a score of **22.70**. China's **Hua Tian Alex** finished in third position to win the bronze medal, with a score of **27.10**.
- The **Indian team**, comprising **Rakesh Kumar**, **Ashish Malik** and **Jitender Singh** apart from **Mirza**, also claimed the silver with a score of **121.30**, the feats coming days after their last-minute arrival owing to infighting in the Equestrian Federation of India.

Asian Games 2018:

- The 18th edition of the Asian Games officially kicks off in Indonesian capital **Jakarta**.
- The official logo and mascots for the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta have been unveiled during a ceremony at the host city's Presidential Palace.
- The trio of animal mascots are said to reflect Indonesia's diversity, with the east of the country being represented by bird of paradise "**Bhin Bhin**", the west by one-horned rhinoceros "**Ika**" and the central area by Bawean deer "**Atung**". The three mascots replaced **Derawan**, which drew fierce criticism from across the country.
- The new logo, themed "**Energy of Asia**", depicts an aerial view of **Gelora Bung Karno Stadium**, which was built for when **Jakarta** hosted the 1962 Asian Games.

China crowned Arena of Valor champion as esports makes historical Asiad debut

- **China** defeated **Taiwan** to win the first ever **Arena of Valor** gold medal, as esports made a splashy debut as an exhibition event at the 2018 Asian Games.
- Competitive video gaming, dubbed esports, is appearing for the first time at a major multi-sport event. Organizer **Kenneth Kwok**, who heads the Asian Esports Federation, opened the competition by saying it was a "historical moment" for esports and the first step towards inclusion in the Olympic Games.

Star Indian shuttler P.V. Sindhu became the first Indian shuttler to reach the final of badminton singles competition at the 2018 Asian Games

- **Star Indian shuttler P.V. Sindhu** created history as she stormed into the women's single badminton final at the 2018 Asian Games but her compatriot **Saina Nehwal** had to settle for a bronze.
- After defeating World No.2 **Akane Yagamuchi** of Japan 21-17, 15-21, 21-10 in the semis, the 23-year-old became the first Indian shuttler to reach the final of badminton singles competition at the Asiad.
- **Nehwal** had to settle for bronze after suffering a 21-17, 21-14 defeat in the semis. The 28-year-old's bronze is the first individual badminton medal at the Asiad for India in 36 years.

Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian javelin thrower to win an Asian Games gold medal

- **Neeraj Chopra** became the first Indian javelin thrower to win an Asian Games gold medal as he shattered his own national record by clearing a distance of **88.06m** at **Jakarta**.

- **Chopra's gold is India's only second medal in javelin throw in Asian Games history after Gurtej Singh won a bronze in 1982 in New Delhi.** The 20-year-old's winning throw came in his third attempt. He began with 83.46m and fouled the second attempt.
- **Liu Qizhen of China was a distance second with a best throw of 82.22m while Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem won the bronze with a 80.75 effort.**

Japan halts India's march to Tokyo

- **India women's hockey team loses gold-medal match and an opportunity to book a berth for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.** India women's hockey team went down 1-2 to Japan in the final of the 18th Asian Games to extend wait for a gold medal. **This is their first gold medal in women's hockey at the Asian Games.**

Sarita Gaekwad, the girl who once ran barefoot is now gold medallist

- **Sarita Gaekwad, daughter of a farm labourer who was part of the women's 4X400 relay team which won a gold at Asiad, once used to run barefoot. Gaekwad hails from a remote village in the tribal-dominated Dang district of Gujarat.**
- **After the Indian relay team's feat at Asian Games in Indonesia, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced an award of Rs 1 crore for Gaekwad.** As she is a former student of Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, its Vice Chancellor Shivendra Gupta also announced an award of Rs 2 lakh for her.

Amit Panghal wins gold medal in men's 49 kg boxing

- **Amit Panghal (49kg) became only the eighth Indian boxer ever to claim a gold medal at the Asian Games with a stunning tactical win over reigning Olympic and Asian champion Hasanboy Dusmatov in the summit clash.** The 22-year-old Armyman, the only Indian to make the finals, prevailed 3-2 against the more fancied **Dusmatov**, who had beaten him in a split verdict in last year's world championships.
- **Vijender Singh and Vikas Krishan were the last set of male gold-medallists for India at the Asian Games.** They had won their yellow metal at the 2010 Guangzhou edition. **Vikas (75kg) settled for a bronze this time.** In the 2014 Games, M C Mary Kom was the lone gold-medallist for India.

Pranab Bardhan, Shibhnath Sarkar win bridge gold for India

- **Pranab Bardhan became the oldest man in Indian contingent to win a medal at the 18th Asian Games as he joined forces with Shibhnath Sarkar to clinch gold in men's pair event of the bridge competition.**
- **The 60-year-old Bardhan and his 56-year old partner finished the men's pair event with a score of 384 as they edged out China's Lixin Yang and Gang Chen, who finished with 378 points after five round of competition.** Bridge made its debut at the Asian Games, this year.

India wins first medal in table tennis as men's team clinches bronze

- **Indian table tennis men's team settled for a historic bronze medal after losing 0-3 to South Korea in a lop-sided semifinal at the 18th Asian Games.**
- **The team comprising G Sathian, Achanta Sharath Kamal and A Amalraj couldn't put up a fight against the mighty Koreans, who set up a summit clash against defending champions China in a repeat of 2014 edition.** This is the **first time India has won a medal in table tennis in the Asian Games, since tables tennis was introduced in Asian Games in 1958.**

PV Sindhu becomes first Indian to win badminton silver at Asian Games

- **PV Sindhu created history by becoming the first Indian badminton player to win a silver medal at the Asian Games.** The Olympic silver medallist - who became the first Indian to reach an Asian Games singles final - lost 21-13 21-16 to Taiwanese world number one Tai Tzu Ying in Jakarta. Tai became first shuttler to win gold for Chinese Taipei.

- Sindhu's compatriot Saina Nehwal won bronze to become the first Indian woman to win an individual badminton medal at the Asian Games in 36 years. In 1982, Syed Modi won men's singles bronze at the Games in New Delhi.

Manjit Singh wins gold, Jinson Johnson silver in Men's 800m at Asian Games

- Manjit Singh won gold while Jinson Johnson won silver in the men's 800m final at Asian Games 2018 as Indian athletes continued to dominate the tracks in Indonesia. Manjit clocked 1:46.15 while Johnson clocked 1:46.35 to make it a memorable double for India.
- The last time Indians had won Asiad gold-silver in the 800m was 67 years ago in the inaugural edition in New Delhi in 1951 through Ranjit Singh and Kulwant Singh. Overall, this was India's sixth gold medal in the men's 800m race.
- India won silver in the mixed 4x400m relay through Muhammed Anas, M.R. Poovamma, Hima Das and Arokia Rajiv, finishing behind Bahrain

Arpinder Singh clinches gold in men's Triple Jump

- Arpinder Singh clinched India's first men's triple jump gold in 48 years, with a jump of 16.77m in the Asian Games.
- Arpinder, who has been without a medal in multi-sporting events since winning a bronze in the 2014 Commonwealth Games, produced a best jump of 16.77m, which he came up with in his third attempt.
- Ruslan Kurbanov of Uzbekistan took the silver with a best jump of 16.62m, while Shuo Cao of China was third with an effort of 16.56m.

Dutee Chand wins silver in women's 200m

- Dutee Chand from Odisha joined her illustrious compatriots such as PT Usha in the list of athletes who have won more than one medal at the Asian Games as she added a silver to her kitty after finishing second earlier in the women's 100m dash.
- She crossed the finishing line in 23.20 seconds, behind Bahrain's Edidiong Odiong who clinched the gold in 22.96. The bronze went to China's Wei Yongli (23.27).
- It has been an outstanding show by the 22-year-old Odisha sprinter who was not allowed to compete in 2014-15 under the IAAF's hyperandrogenism policy due to which she missed the 2014 Commonwealth and Asian Games. She fought and won a case against this policy at the Court of Arbitration for Sports.

Jinson and women's relay team strike gold

- Jinson Johnson won Gold Medal in the men's 1500 metres race event at the Asian Games.

Swapna Barman becomes first Indian heptathlete to win Asian Games gold

- Swapna Barman created history by becoming the first Indian heptathlete to win an Asian Games gold.
- The 21-year-old Barman logged 6026 points from the seven events competed for two days. En route to the title, she won the high jump (1003 points) and javelin throw (872 points) events and finished second-best in shot put (707 points) and long jump (865 points).

Sport Events

Netherlands crowned world champions for record 8th time

- In Women's Hockey, the Netherlands have been crowned the world champions for a record eighth time.
- The defending champions recorded a stunning 6-0 victory over Ireland in the summit clash at London
- Kitty van Male, finished the tournament as the top scorer with eight goals.
- Spain won the third place match by beating Australia 3-1 to claim their first ever World Cup medal.
- India finished the tournament at the 8th spot.

Football: Indian U-20 team defeat Argentina in Cotif Cup in Spain

- The Indian Under-20 football team created history when they defeated Argentina, 2-1 in their final match of the Cotif Cup in Spain.

T10 League gets International Cricket Council (ICC) sanction

- The ICC has officially sanctioned the second season of T10 League to be held in Sharjah from November 23.
- The apex body's validation comes as a shot in the arm for the league that will have two new teams, making it a strong eight-team affair.

Tokyo Olympics 2020 to up security with facial recognition system

- Tokyo 2020 will be the first Olympics to use facial recognition technology to increase security around all venues.
- Games organisers have linked up with Japanese telecommunications and information technology giant NEC to develop the first system of this kind to be implemented at an Olympics.

New Delhi to host World Cup in 2020

- The Indian shooters preparing for the Tokyo Olympics will have top-class competition at home as the International Shooting Federation (ISSF) has awarded a World Cup in principle to India in 2020.
- The assurance was given to the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) president, Raninder Singh, during the ISSF's ongoing executive committee meeting in Vienna.

BCCI hands over Asia Cup hosting rights to Emirates Cricket Board

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has handed over the hosting rights of next month's Asia Cup to the Emirates Cricket Board.
- Asia Cup will be held from September 15 to 28 in Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Indian eves win SAFF U-15 Championship defeating Bangladesh

- India defeated Bangladesh in the final of the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Under-15 Women's Championship in Thimpu, Bhutan.
- This is the second edition of the Championship. Bangladesh had won the inaugural edition last year, beating India, 1-0 in the final played at Dhaka.

Asian Games begin in Indonesian capital Jakarta

- The 18th edition of the Asian Games officially kicks off in Indonesian capital Jakarta.

- The official logo and mascots for the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta have been unveiled during a ceremony at the host city's Presidential Palace.
- The trio of animal mascots are said to reflect Indonesia's diversity, with the east of the country being represented by bird of paradise "Bhin Bhin", the west by one-horned rhinoceros "Ika" and the central area by Bawean deer "Atung". The three mascots replaced Derawan, which drew fierce criticism from across the country.
- The new logo, themed "Energy of Asia", depicts an aerial view of Gelora Bung Karno Stadium, which was built for when Jakarta hosted the 1962 Asian Games.

From Paragliding to Pencak Silat, first time sports at Asian Games

- Apart from these rollersports, jet skiing, contract bridge, kurash and basketball (3×3) are some of the sporting disciplines that will be making their entry among the 58 other events at the Games. As one of the most diverse events, the Asian Games will once again be a visual spectacle for fans across the globe.

Odisha will host the Men's Hockey World Cup 2018 tournament for the first time

- Ahead of the 2018 Mens Hockey World Cup Tournament in the state, Odisha government has decided to launch a build-up campaign in 17 cities from August 29.
- Odisha is organising the the Men's Hockey World Cup tournament for the first time. The tournament will begin on November 28 and will continue till December 16 at the Kalinga stadium.

Kho-Kho gets recognition from Olympic Council of Asia

- The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) has given recognition to India's indigenous sport of Kho-Kho, a development that has been welcomed by Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore.
- Kho-Kho will now be included as a demonstration sport in the Asian Indoor Games, with the possibility of being included as a discipline in the next Asian Games.

North Korea to host 2019 Asian youth weightlifting championships

- The 2019 Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships will be held in the North Korean capital Pyongyang, a signal that the secretive country may be coming in from the sporting cold.
- At the Asian Games weightlifting in Jakarta, which North Korea have dominated winning seven golds, the Asian Weightlifting Federation and North Korea's Sports Minister Kim Il Guk signed an agreement for North Korea to hold the championships from October 27 next year.

Union Government approves Kho Kho team's participation in first International Championship

- The Sports Ministry approved the participation of a Kho Kho team from India in the first International Kho Kho Championships to be held in England from September 1 to 4.
- "Financial support for participation of the Kho Kho team in an international event has been approved for the first time in relaxation of extant guidelines of the Ministry, which lay down that sports disciplines like Kho Kho, which are categorised as 'Others', will not be eligible for financial support for participation in international sporting events," Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore said.

AWARDS



Gopalkrishna Gandhi 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.

Javed Akhtar bestowed with Shalaka Samman, highest honour of Hindi Sahitya Academy

- Hindi Academy Delhi has given its highest Shalaka Samman for 2017-18 to lyricist and poet Javed Akhtar.
- The award was given to him at a function in New Delhi which was chaired by Academy vice chairman Vishnu Khare and inaugurated by Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia. The award includes a cash reward of Rs 5 lakh.

Indian-origin mathematician Akshay Venkatesh wins Fields medal

- India-origin mathematician Akshay Venkatesh was awarded the prestigious Fields medal. The 36-year-old was chosen as one of the four winners of the prize, which is commonly referred to as the Nobel prize for mathematics.
- He was recognised for his “profound contributions to an exceptionally broad range of subjects in mathematics”. The Fields medal is awarded once in four years to the most promising mathematicians under the age of 40.
- The other recipients were Caucher Birkar, a Cambridge University professor of Iranian Kurdish origin, Peter Scholze, a German who teaches at the University of Bonn and Alessio Figalli, an Italian at ETH Zurich.
- The awards were presented on the occasion of the International Congress of Mathematicians in Rio de Janeiro. The winners also receive a cash prize of C \$15,000.

Sepoy Vrahma Pal Singh selected for Kirti Chakra posthumously

- **Sepoy Vrahma Pal Singh** was selected for the **Kirti Chakra** posthumously for his valour in an operation where three Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists including Masood Azhar's nephew were gunned down.
- **Singh** is the lone winner of the **Kirti Chakra**, there are 20 from the armed forces who have been honoured with the **Shaurya Chakra** — the third highest peace-time gallantry award.

Kirti Chakra is an **Indian military decoration** awarded for valour, courageous action or self-sacrifice away from the field of battle. It may be awarded to civilians as well as military personnel, including posthumous awards. It is the **peacetime equivalent** of the **Maha Vir Chakra**. It is second in order of precedence of peacetime gallantry awards; it comes after **Ashoka Chakra** and before **Shaurya Chakra**. Before 1967, the award was known as the **Ashoka Chakra, Class II**. It was established as the "**Ashoka Chakra, Class II**" by the President of India, 4 January 1952 (with effect from 15 August 1947). The statutes were revised and the decoration renamed on 27 January 1967.

Shaurya Chakra for Major Aditya, Aurangzeb

- **Major Aditya Kumar** who fired on a stone-throwing mob and **Rifleman Aurangzeb** who was abducted and killed by terrorists, both in **Jammu and Kashmir**, were selected for the **Shaurya Chakra** on the eve of Independence Day. **Sepoy Vrahma Pal Singh** was selected for the **Kirti Chakra** posthumously for his act of bravery in a counter-insurgency operation.
- In addition, all six women officers, who completed a global circumnavigation trip on sailing vessel **INSV Tarini** early this year, have been selected for **Nao Sena medals (Gallantry)**.

Shaurya Chakra is an **Indian military decoration** awarded for valour, courageous action or self-sacrifice while not engaged in direct action with the enemy. It may be awarded to civilians as well as military personnel, sometimes posthumously. It is third in order of precedence of peacetime gallantry awards and comes after the **Ashoka Chakra** and the **Kirti Chakra**. It precedes the **Sena Medal**. It was established as the "**Ashoka Chakra, Class III**" by the President of India, 4 January 1952 (with effect from 15 August 1947). The statutes were revised and the decoration renamed on 27 January 1967. Before 1967, the award was known as the **Ashoka Chakra, Class III**.

Former Army chief Gen Dalbir Singh awarded with US 'Legion of Merit'

- **Former Army chief Gen Dalbir Singh** has been awarded with **United States (US) 'Legion of Merit'**.
- The award was given to Singh for exceptionally meritorious service as **Chief of Army Staff** from August 2014 to December 2016.

Legion of Merit (LOM) is a **military award** of the **United States Armed Forces** that is given for **exceptionally meritorious conduct** in the performance of outstanding services and achievements. The **Legion of Merit (Commander degree)** is one of only two **United States military decorations** to be issued as a neck order (the other being the **Medal of Honor**) and the only **United States military decoration** which may be issued in award degrees (much like an order of chivalry or certain **Orders of Merit**). In **October 1942**, **Brazilian Army Brigadier General Amaro Soares Bittencourt** became the first person awarded the **Legion of Merit (Commander)**.

Assamese film ' Xhoixobote Dhemalite' bags another award at US fest

- "**Xhoixobote Dhemalite**" (**Rainbow fields**), an **Assamese film** dealing with the sensitive issue of children growing up in violent times, has won another award - this time for screenplay at a **US festival**.

- The **Bidyut Kotoky**-directed film bagged the best screenplay award at **Treasure Coast International Film Festival** in Florida. It received nominations in five categories.
- Last month, "**Xhoixobote Dhemalite**" became the first Assamese film to be commercially released in the US. Besides, it won three awards, including that of best film, in the **Love international Film Festival**, Los Angeles.

Gopalkrishna Gandhi conferred with Rajiv Sadbhavna Award

- **Former West Bengal Governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi** was honoured with this year's **Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavna Award** for promoting communal harmony and peace. The award was presented on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister **Rajiv Gandhi**. **Rajiv Gandhi** was born on **August 20, 1944**, to former Prime Minister **Indira Gandhi** and **Feroz Gandhi**.

Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award is an Indian award given for outstanding contribution towards promotion of communal harmony, national integration and peace. The award was instituted by **All India Congress Committee of the Indian National Congress Party (INC)**, in **1992** to commemorate the lasting contribution made by the former Prime Minister **Rajiv Gandhi**, carries a citation and a cash award of **Rs. ten lakhs**.

Mumbai neurosurgeon named for Dr B.C. Roy award

- **Eminent neurosurgeon Dr B.K. Misra** has been named for this year's prestigious **Dr B.C. Roy National Award** as an **Eminent Medical Person of the Year**. The highest medical honour of India, instituted by the **Medical Council of India** in **1962**, it will be given away by **President Ram Nath Kovind** on **July 1** next year, the **National Doctors Day**.
- **Misra** is the **Head of Department of Surgery** as well as **Neurosurgery** and **Gamma Knife Radiosurgery** at **Mumbai's P.D. Hinduja Hospital**.

The award is named after **Bidhan Chandra Roy**, a medical doctor and a former chief minister of the Indian state of **West Bengal**. In India, the **National Doctors' Day** is celebrated in his memory every year on **July 1**.

Forbes Marshall wins Golden Flame Award for energy efficiency improvement

- **Forbes Marshall** recently won the **Gold Flame Award** in the **Energy Efficiency Improvement** category of the **Best Energy Services Company**, in recognition of contribution to reduce energy use through energy management efforts. The **Sri Lanka National Efficiency Awards 2018** are instituted by **Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority**. The ceremony was held under the patronage of the **President of Sri Lanka, Maithripala Sirisena** in **Colombo** on **21st August 2018**.
- **Forbes Marshall** is a **leading manufacturer of steam engineering and control instrumentation solutions**. For over seventy years, our products and services are helping Industry save energy, improve process quality.

Indra Nooyi to get Asia Game Changer award by global cultural organisation

- **PepsiCo's India-born CEO Indra Nooyi** will be honoured with the **Game Changer of the Year** award by a global cultural organisation in recognition of her business achievements, humanitarian record and advocacy for women and girls around the world.
- The **2018 Asia Game Changer Awards** will be given in **October** to **individuals and institutions** who have **broken barriers, defined courage, worked miracles**, and in turn inspired their fellow citizens of the world.

The **Asia Game Changer Awards**, launched by the **Asia Society** in **2014**, are designed to fill a vital gap, **identifying and honoring true leaders** who are making a **positive contribution to the future of Asia**. These awards are bestowed annually to **individuals, organizations, and movements** that have **inspired, enlightened, and shown true leadership** in areas that reflect **Asia Society's** core pillars of policy and business, arts and culture, and education.

PERSONS IN NEWS

TRAI chairman R.S. Sharma gets extension

- The Union government extended the term of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) chairman R.S. Sharma till September 2020.
- His term was to end this week. As per the government notification, he will remain in post till September 30, 2020, when he turns 65.

Ajay Data, first Indian in ICANN

- The nominating committee of Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) has selected Ajay Data, Founder & CEO of Data XGen Plus and a global leader in email linguistic services, as a new council member of Country Code Supporting Organisation (ccNSO).
- Ajay Data is the first Indian to have been selected as a member of ccNSO and will be representing India at a global level. He will be the custodian of Asia, Australia and Pacific Islands as a member of ccNSO.

Marie Curie tops BBC History poll of women who changed the world

- Marie Curie, the pioneering scientist who was the first person to win two Nobel prizes, has topped a poll asking which woman has had the most significant impact on world history.
- BBC History magazine compiled a list of “100 women who changed the world”, chosen by 10 experts, and asked its readers to help rank them.
- Polish-born Curie, who undertook pioneering research into radioactivity in the early 20th century, was voted number one, followed by Rosa Parks, Emmeline Pankhurst, Ada Lovelace and Rosalind Franklin.

Indra Nooyi to step down as PepsiCo CEO

- Fifty-four-year-old Ramon Laguarta will succeed Ms. Nooyi as CEO on October 3.
- Ms. Nooyi will remain Chairman until early 2019 to ensure a smooth and seamless transition.

Rekha Sharma is New National Commission for Women Chairperson

- NCW member Rekha Sharma has been appointed as the chairperson of the National Commission for Women.
- Ms Sharma, 54, was earlier a member of the Commission and was holding the additional charge of chairperson after Lalitha Kumaramangalam demitted office in September last year. She belongs to Haryana.

Ashish Kumar Bhutani appointed CEO of PM crop insurance scheme

- Senior bureaucrat Ashish Kumar Bhutani has been appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY). Bhutani, has been appointed to the post till May 9, 2020. It was launched in 2016; the PMFBY is in line with one nation – one scheme theme.

Government accepts NHB MD Sriram Kalyanaraman's resignation

- National Housing Bank (NHB) Managing Director Sriram Kalyanaraman has resigned amidst allegations of favouring housing finance companies.
- The government has accepted the resignation and also ordered a vigilance inquiry against him.

Akshay Kumar kick-starts government's road safety awareness campaign

- Pressing on the often-repeated phrase on the roads “Sadak kya tere baap ki hain” filmstar and road safety brand ambassador Akshay Kumar kick-started his awareness campaign for the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Indian-origin cancer expert elected to top UK post

- Sudha Sundar, a women’s cancer expert based at the University of Birmingham, has been elected president of the British Gynaecological Cancer Society (BGCS), making her the first female gynaecological oncologist to be elected to the post.

Delhi's health official wins WHO award on Tobacco Control Initiative

- Delhi government's additional director of health S K Arora has been awarded the prestigious WHO World No Tobacco Day 2018 Award for his extraordinary contribution towards tobacco control.
- He was presented the award by Henk Bakedam, WHO India country head at an august gathering on August 16.

The World's Highest-Paid Actresses 2018: Scarlett Johansson Steals The Spotlight With \$40.5 Million

- Scarlett Johansson leads this year's ranking with \$40.5 million in pretax earnings between June 1, 2017 and June 1, 2018, making her acting's top-earning female lead.
- Johansson edges Angelina Jolie (No. 2; \$28 million) who returns to the ranking thanks largely to her upfront pay for Maleficent 2. Jennifer Aniston (No. 3; \$19.5 million) still earns big bucks 14 years after the conclusion of Friends, making most of her money by endorsing the likes of Emirates airlines, Smartwater and Aveeno.

Akshay Kumar, Salman Khan among top-10 highest paid actors in Forbes list

- Akshay Kumar has emerged as the seventh highest-paid actor in the world. He earned \$40.5 million in 2018, according to Forbes magazine. The Gold actor is closely followed by his contemporary Salman Khan in the ninth place, who raked in \$38.5 million.
- Akshay and Salman are the only two Bollywood actors to make it to the top 10 highest-paid actors’ list compiled by the publication. Akshay, who was 10th, last year, upped his game by \$3 million. Khan stayed at his ninth rank, but with an increase of \$1.5 million in his earnings for this year. Shah Rukh Khan, who was at the eighth spot in 2017, did not find a place in the list this year

Dr G. Satheesh Reddy appointed Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman, DRDO

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Dr G. Satheesh Reddy, Distinguished Scientist and Scientific Adviser to Defence Minister (SA to RM) to the post of Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development (DDR&D) and Chairman, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- He holds the distinction of being inducted as Fellow of Royal Institute of Navigation (FRIN), London, Royal Aeronautical Society, UK (FRAeS) and Foreign Member of the Academy of Navigation & Motion Control, Russia.

Arun Jaitley re-appointed as Finance Minister three months after kidney transplant

- Arun Jaitley, who stepped aside as Finance Minister in mid-May to undergo a kidney transplant, was reappointed as Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs.
- The President of India, as advised by the Prime Minister, has directed to assign the portfolios of the Minister of Finance and Minister of Corporate Affairs to Arun Jaitley.

Retired judge T P Sharma appointed as the new chief Lokayukt of the Chhattisgarh state

- Retired judge of the Chhattisgarh High Court T P Sharma was appointed the new chief Lokayukt of the state.
- Sharma will head the Chhattisgarh Lok Ayog, set up to deal with corruption cases against public servants. Sharma, the state's fourth chief Lokayukt, will succeed Justice (retired) Shambhu Nath Shrivastava, who was appointed to the post on August 14, 2013.

U K Varma appointed Assocham Secretary General

- Industry chamber Assocham appointed former bureaucrat Uday Kumar Varma as its new Secretary General. He succeeds DS Rawat who held the position for nearly 14 years, Assocham said in a statement.
- Varma retired from the position of Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India on June 30, 2013, and has extensive administrative experience at the highest levels of administration both in the state government (of Madhya Pradesh) and central government.

Tahira Safdar becomes first woman to head a Pakistan high court

- Justice Tahira Safdar was sworn in as the first woman Balochistan High Court chief justice. Safdar, who is the first woman to ever take the position of a high court chief justice in Pakistan, was sworn in at a ceremony held at the Governor House in Balochistan. Senior judges and lawyers were present during the ceremony.
- She made history in 1982 when she became the first woman civil judge in Balochistan.

Abhay K first Indian poet to record poems at Library of Congress

- Indian poet-diplomat Abhay K has become the first Indian poet invited to record his poems at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. in 'The Poet and the Poem' series conducted by poet Grace Cavalieri.
- The prestigious reading series recorded at the Library of Congress since 1997 has featured major American poets such as Robert Hass, Richard Blanco, Eavan Boland, Billy Collins, Rita Dove, Louise Glück, Donal Hall, Terance Hayes, Juan Felipe Herrera, Ted Kooser, Philip Levine, W.S. Merwin, Naomi Shihab Nye, Robert Pinsky, Charles Simic, Natasha Trethewey, Monica Youn, Tracey K. Smith among others.

Kochhar reappointed to ICICI Sec board

- Chanda Kochhar has been reappointed as a director on the board of ICICI Securities with ICICI Bank, which has a 79.22% stake in the broking and investment banking entity, voting in favour of the reappointment.

Satya Tripathi appointed Assistant Secretary-General & Head of New York Office of UNEP

- UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has appointed veteran Indian development economist and UN official Satya S Tripathi as Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- Tripathi, who will succeed Elliott Harris of Trinidad and Tobago, has since 2017 served as Senior Adviser on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at UNEP. Tripathi was previously the Director and Executive Head of the United Nations Office for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries Coordination in Indonesia, as well as for the United Nations Recovery Coordinator for the USD 7 billion post-tsunami and post-conflict recovery efforts in Aceh and Nias.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is an agency of United Nations and coordinates its environmental activities, assisting developing countries in implementing environmentally sound policies and practices. It was founded by Maurice Strong, its first director, as a result of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm Conference) in June 1972. UNEP headquarters was established in Nairobi, Kenya, on 5 June 1972.

Obituary

V S Naipaul, Nobel Prize winning author, passes away

- **V.S. Naipaul, the Trinidad-born Nobel laureate whose precise and lyrical writing in such novels as “A Bend in the River” and “A House for Mr Biswas” and brittle, misanthropic personality made him one of the world’s most admired and contentious writers, passed away in London.**
- **Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul known as Sir Vidia Naipaul or Sir V. S. Naipaul was a Caribbean writer of Indian descent and Nobel Laureate who was born in Trinidad with British citizenship. Naipaul’s work reflected his personal journey from Trinidad to London and various stops in developing countries. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2001 “for having united perceptive narrative and incorruptible scrutiny in works that compel us to see the presence of suppressed histories.”**

Karunanidhi dies at age of 94

- **Muthuvel Karunanidhi, the towering Dravidian icon whose intellectual prowess and pragmatism shaped the political narrative in Tamil Nadu over the past few decades, has died at the Kauvery Hospital in Chennai. He was 94.**
- **Muthuvel Karunanidhi was an Indian writer and politician who served as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for almost two decades over five terms between 1969 and 2011. In 1969, Mr Karunanidhi became for the first time Chief Minister after DMK ideologue CN Annadurai died in office.**
- **He was named Dakshinamurthy, which he later changed to Karunanidhi. He was known as Kalaignar, a scholar of arts, for his literary work. He was one of the few politicians who did not lose even one election to the Legislative Assembly. He entered the 50th year as the president of DMK late last month, the longest tenure by a person as head of one of Tamil Nadu's major Dravidian parties.**

Atal Bihari Vajpayee passes away

- **Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the first non-Congress Prime Minister to complete a full term in office at the head of a coalition he stitched together with his moderate politics and charismatic appeal, died of multiple health complications at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi.**

Atal Bihari Vajpayee served three terms as the Prime Minister of India: first for a term of 13 days in 1996, then for a period of 13 months from 1998 to 1999, and finally, for a full term from 1999 to 2004. A member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), he was the first Indian prime minister who was not a member of the Indian National Congress party to have served a full five-year term in office. He was a member of the Indian Parliament for over four decades, having been elected to the Lok Sabha, the lower house, ten times, and twice to the Rajya Sabha, the upper house. During his tenure as prime minister, India carried out the Pokhran-II nuclear tests in 1998. He was conferred India's highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, by the President of India, Pranab Mukherjee in 2015. The administration of Narendra Modi declared in 2014 that Vajpayee's birthday, 25 December, would be marked as Good Governance Day.

Somnath Chatterjee, former Lok Sabha Speaker passed away

- **Somnath Chatterjee, former Lok Sabha Speaker, passed away following a multi-organ failure in New Delhi.**
- **Chatterjee was the Speaker in the first five-year term (2004-2009) of the United Progressive Alliance government and was elected to Parliament’s Lower House for ten times since 1971. He was expelled from the CPM in July 2008 for refusing to resign as Speaker after his party CPM withdrew support from the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government.**

Former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan passes away

- **Former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan died in Switzerland.** He was the **first black African** to become UN secretary-general.
- **Mr Annan served two terms as UN chief from 1997 to 2006.** He later served as the UN special envoy for Syria, leading efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.
- **He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001** for helping to revitalise the international body, during a period that coincided with the Iraq War and the HIV/Aids pandemic.

Kofi Atta Annan was a Ghanaian diplomat who served as the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations, from **January 1997 to December 2006**. He was appointed as the Secretary-General on **13 December 1996** by the Security Council, and later confirmed by the General Assembly, making him the first office holder to be elected from the UN staff itself. He was re-elected for a second term in **2001**, and was succeeded as Secretary-General by Ban Ki-moon on **1 January 2007**.

Kuldip Nayar, renowned journalist, author and human rights activist passed away

- **Kuldip Nayar, renowned journalist, author and human rights activist passed away in Delhi.** Nayar, a former editor of The Indian Express, was also the author of **15 books** including “Beyond the Lines”, “India after Nehru” and “Emergency Retold”.
- In 2015, he was honoured with ‘Lifetime Achievement Award’ for his contribution to journalism at the eighth edition of the Ramnath Goenka Excellence awards. Nayar also served as High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom in 1990 and as a member of the Rajya Sabha in 1997.



MISCELLANEOUS

“The Walled City of Jaipur, Rajasthan, India” is the next proposed site for UNESCO World Heritage recognition

- The site namely “The Walled City of Jaipur, Rajasthan, India” has been proposed for World Heritage.
- As per Operation Guidelines 2017, only one site can be nominated by the state party each year.
- The recognition of World Heritage is a matter of great pride. It impacts the local economy by giving a boost to domestic and international tourism leading to increased employment Generation, creation of World class infrastructure and augmentation of sale of local handicrafts, handlooms and heritage memorabilia.
- There are a total of 37 World Heritage sites in India at Present.

Kadaknath chicken meat from Jhabua gets GI tag

- The famous Kadaknath chicken meat from Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh has now got a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- The tag denotes that the product comes from a particular geographical area, and often enhances its commercial value.

Govt approves e-auction of 683 private FM radio channels covering 236 cities

- The Government has approved e-auction of 683 private FM radio channels covering 236 cities.
- These include 175 cities having a population above one lakh and up to 3 lakh besides 10 cities in border areas of Jammu and Kashmir and North Eastern states having a population of up to one lakh.

KTDC launches India's first state-run all-woman hotel project

- Kerala, Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran launched the work on India's first public sector hotel run entirely by women for women in the Thiruvananthapuram.
- A flagship project of the Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC), the hotel named ‘Hostess’ will come up in six months at the KTDFC complex at the main bus station in the heart of the city, adjacent to the Central Railway Station.

FICCI FLO launches mobile app for women's wellness

- FICCI Ladies Organisation, the women's wing of Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has launched a mobile application aimed at creating awareness on preventive healthcare.
- The mobile application "WOW" (Wellness of Women) is backed by city-based Apollo Hospitals Group that offers access to renowned doctors and provides health tips.

"No Horn" campaign launched in Shimla, Manali

- Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched an awareness campaign named "Horn Not Ok" along with a statewide mobile app "Shoor Nahin" or no noise in Shimla and Manali in which the drivers will be motivated not to use horns.

Indian law expert Tarunabh Khaitan at Oxford wins research prize

- Tarunabh Khaitan, a law academic affiliated with the universities of Oxford and Melbourne, has been declared the winner of the inaugural Letten Prize for young researchers launched by the Letten Foundation and the Young Academy of Norway.

Army on track for BIMSTEC exercise in September

- The armies of all seven BIMSTEC countries — India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Thailand and Myanmar — will be participating in the exercise.
- The Indian army conducted the final co-ordinating conference for the Joint Military Exercise (MILEX-18) in Pune.
- MILEX-18 will be held at the Foreign Training Node at Aundh Military Station in Pune in September.

KITE chief wins global award

- K. Anvar Sadath, vice chairman and executive director of the Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education (KITE), has won the International Contributions Award given by the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT), USA.

The latest book ‘The Unending Game: A Former R&AW Chief's Insights into Espionage’

- Ex-RAW (Research & Analysis Wing) Chief Vikram Sood's latest book ‘The Unending Game: A Former R&AW Chief's Insights into Espionage’ is a brilliant tour de force of **not only espionage — past and present — but also of the security challenges of our times and of the future**, particularly in the virtual world of cyber space.

Twinkle Khanna s third novel to be out in September

- After Mrs Funnybones and The Legend of Lakshmi Prasad, actor-turned-author Twinkle Khanna is all set to come up with her **third book, Pyjamas are Forgiving**, in September.

Govt approves research projects worth over Rs 100 crore under ‘IMPRINT-2’ scheme

- Union Government has approved 122 new research projects of 112 crore rupees under its Impacting Research Innovation and Technology ‘IMPRINT-2’ scheme.
- The initiative aims to advance research in energy, security, and healthcare domains in the high education institutions.
- IMPRINT is the first of its kind government supported initiative to address the major science and engineering challenges that India must address and champion to enable, empower and embolden the nation for inclusive growth and self-reliance.
- The proposals were approved at the IMPRINT 2 Apex Committee meeting held in New Delhi.

Mughalsarai junction renamed as Deen Dayal Upadhyaya railway station

- In Uttar Pradesh, Mughalsarai junction has been renamed as Deen Dayal Upadhyaya railway station.
- BJP President Amit Shah inaugurated the new railway station. They also flagged off a goods train with an all-women crew and a passenger train. This was the first time an all women crew ran a goods train.

Nod for extending PMGSY beyond 12th five year plan

- The government approved the continuation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) beyond the 12th five year plan period.
- The decision taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs would help in connecting 38,412 habitations at an estimated cost of Rs 84, 934 crore.
- The target of connecting 1,78,184 eligible habitations under PMGSY was expected to be completed by March 2019. Almost 95% of these habitations had been sanctioned road connectivity and 91% habitations had been connected.

Ikea's first India store opens in Hyderabad

- **Swedish home furnishings major IKEA** opened its first store in India in Hyderabad, kicking off its retail journey five years after it received approval to invest in the country's single-brand retail sector.
- **Ikea aims to reach 200 million people in India** in the next three years and its journey is going to be based on affordability and accessibility, the **Swedish home furnishings chain's Group Chief Executive Officer Jesper Brodin** said on the eve of the launch of the company's first Indian store in Hyderabad. After Hyderabad, **Ikea's second store** would be in Mumbai next year, followed by Bengaluru and Delhi-NCR.

NGT forms panel to monitor rejuvenation project of Ganga

- The **National Green Tribunal** constituted a committee, to be headed by a former Allahabad High Court judge, for monitoring the rejuvenation project of Ganga from Haridwar to Unnao in Uttar Pradesh.

All-women expedition to Mt. Manirang

- The **Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports & Information and Broadcasting Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore** flagged off an **all-women expedition to Mt. Manirang (6593Mt/21631 ft) in Himachal Pradesh**. The expedition commemorates the **silver jubilee of 1993 Women Everest expedition**.
- **Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore** commended the effort of **India Mountaineering Foundation** to send the **all women expedition team to Mt. Manirang** to commemorate the silver jubilee of the 1993 expedition. The 19-member expedition team to **Mt. Manirang is being led by Ms Bimla Negi**, a veteran mountaineer who was a member of the 1993 team.
- The expedition is expected to make the summit attempt around 24th August, 2018. The **Indo-Nepalese women's Everest expedition in 1993** was the **first all women expedition**, launched by **Indian Mountaineering foundation**, funded by the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**.

Project "SWAYAM" of HRD Ministry provides one integrated platform

- The **Ministry of HRD** has embarked on a major and new initiative Project called 'Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds' (SWAYAM), which will provide one integrated platform and portal for online courses. This covers all higher education subjects and skill sector courses. The objective is to ensure that the every student in our country has access to the best quality higher education at the affordable cost.
- The **Hon`ble President of India** on 9th July, 2017 launched the SWAYAM platform, which can be reached at "<http://swayam.gov.in>". At present about 1550+ MOOCs courses are listed on SWAYAM of which 800+ courses are already delivered.

Unnat Bharat Programme 2.0 covers 750 Higher Educational Institutes

- The **Government** has recently launched **Unnat Bharat Abhiyan 2.0**, which is the phase-2 of scheme. It covers 750 Higher Educational Institutes.
- **Unnat Bharat Abhiyan** aims to link the **Higher Education Institutions with atleast (5) villages**, so that these institutions can contribute to the economic and social betterment of these village communities using their knowledge base.
- **Unnat Bharat Abhiyan** is inspired by the vision of transformational change in rural development processes by leveraging knowledge institutions to help build the architecture of an Inclusive India. It also aims to create a virtuous cycle between the society and an inclusive university system, with the latter providing knowledge base; practices for emerging livelihoods and to upgrade the capabilities of both the public and private sectors.

President of India inaugurates ‘Festival of Democracy’ in Thiruvananthapuram

- The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, inaugurated the ‘Festival of Democracy’ in Thiruvananthapuram to mark the conclusion of the diamond jubilee celebrations of the Kerala legislative assembly.

Navy launches Operation Madad

- The Southern Naval Command at Kochi has rescued scores of people stranded in the flood-hit areas of Kerala as part of the Indian Navy’s “Operation Madad” for the rain and landslide-ravaged state. The Indian Army also launched a major rescue and relief operation in Kerala.
- The operation was launched to assist the state administration and undertake disaster relief operations due to unprecedented flooding in many parts of Kerala following incessant rainfall and release of excess water from Idukki and other dams.
- The Indian Army has launched a major rescue and relief operation in flood-ravaged Kerala.
- An army spokesperson said Karnataka and Kerala Sub area Headquartered at Bangalore was controlling the "Operation Sahyog" in Kerala.

Vice President releases the Book ‘Bebak Baat’ authored by Shri Vijay Goyal

- The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has said that continuous communication between public representatives and the public is crucial for development of our nation.
- He was addressing the gathering after releasing the Book ‘Bebak Baat’, authored by the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Statistics & Programme Implementation, Shri Vijay Goel.

‘Sarabhai Centenary’ programmes begin

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will have a year-long Vikram Sarabhai centenary celebration starting in August 2019 to honour the visionary scientist and legendary founding father.
- In a few months’ time, it plans to roll out a dedicated ISRO TV channel, showcasing space applications, developments and science issues, targeting young viewers and people in remote areas in their language.
- The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh disclosed that Jammu will be the first city in North India to get a full-fledged Space Technology Research Centre, devoted to research, academics and post-graduation study.

Vikram Sarabhai, the architect of the Indian space programme, the first ISRO chief and renowned cosmic ray scientist, was born on August 12, 1919. ISRO’s tributes to Sarabhai start with naming the first Indian moon landing spacecraft of the Chandrayaan-2 mission ‘Vikram’. The mission is planned for early 2019.

“PARIVESH” – an environmental single window hub for Environment, Forest, Wildlife and CRZ clearances launched

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, launched PARIVESH (Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub) on the occasion of World Biofuel Day in New Delhi. PARIVESH is a Single-Window Integrated Environmental Management System, developed in pursuance of the spirit of ‘Digital India’ initiated by the Prime Minister and capturing the essence of Minimum Government and Maximum Governance.
- “PARIVESH” is a workflow based application, based on the concept of web architecture. It has been rolled out for online submission, monitoring and management of proposals submitted by Project Proponents to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC), as well as to the State Level Environmental Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAA).

Promotion of Zero Budget Natural Farming

- NITI Aayog held a meeting on 9th July, 2018 to discuss the promotion of Zero budget Natural Farming. Government of India has been promoting organic farming in the country through the dedicated schemes of Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) since 2015-16 and also through Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).
- Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under Network Project on Organic Farming (NPOF) and All India Coordinated Research Projects (AICRP) on Integrated Farming Systems, has initiated an experiment on “Evaluation of zero budget farming practices in basmati rice-wheat system” at Modipuram (Uttar Pradesh), Ludhiana (Punjab), Pantnagar (Uttarakhand) and Kurukshetra (Haryana) from rabi 2017 to study the zero budget farming practices on productivity, economics and soil health including soil organic carbon and soil fertility.

Centre unlocks over 66 thousand crore green fund to increase country's forest cover

- The Centre has unlocked more than 66,000 crore rupees to increase the country's forest cover.
- The fund is an accumulated amount of money which user agencies have been depositing as compensation for diverting forest land for non-forest purposes, including industries and infrastructure, over the last 10 years.

SC approves colour coding of vehicles as per fuel type

- The Supreme Court approved a proposal submitted by the Union of India (UOI) to colour-code vehicles in New Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR) according to the fuel they run on, in an effort to help counter air pollution.
- The apex court ruling allows for blue stickers to be used for vehicles running on petrol and CNG, and orange stickers for diesel vehicles. However, it clarified that this would only be applicable in Delhi and NCR.

Ministry of Railways launches “Digital Screens” to spread awareness about Indian Railways Heritage

- In the wake of Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision for creating digital museums at stations using QR code, Ministry of Railway has made “digital screens” operational at 22 stations on this Independence Day as an innovative low cost solution to spread awareness among public about the opulent heritage of Indian Railways.
- The short films will showcase heritage buildings, locomotives and much more to make people aware of the rich heritage of Indian Railways. For now, the digital screens have been set up at New Delhi, Hazrat Nizamuddin, Howrah, Sealdah, Jaipur, Agra Cantonment, Coimbatore, Lucknow, Varanasi and other railway stations.

FSSAI sets up panel to review red-labelling draft amid stakeholder concern

- Union Government has put on hold the draft that proposes red-labelling of packaged food products containing high levels of fat, sugar and salt.
- The expert panel will be headed by B Sesikeran, former director of National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) as also the current director Hemalatha, besides Doctor Nikhil Tandon.

International Conference on Recent Advances in Food Processing Technology (iCRAFPT) gets underway at IIFPT, Thanjavur

- International Conference on Recent Advances in Food Processing Technology (iCRAFPT) got underway at Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology, Thanjavur in Tamilnadu.
- The Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology (IIFPT), a premier national Institute working under the administrative control of Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Government of India functioning from its headquarters in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu.

Water aerodrome proposal gets Civil Aviation Ministry nod

- The Civil Aviation Ministry has approved a proposal for setting up of water aerodromes in the country, with Chilika Lake in Odisha, Sardar Sarovar Dam and Sabarmati River Front in Gujarat being identified in the first phase for development of such facilities. Under the proposal, water aerodrome would be set up near locations of tourist and religious importance.
- The Airports Authority of India has already identified the sites in Odisha, Gujarat, Assam, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh where water aerodrome would be developed.

Jodhpur, Marwar in Rajasthan cleanest railway stations in India

- Jodhpur and Marwar railway stations in Rajasthan were declared the cleanest in the third cleanliness survey, released by railway minister Piyush Goyal.
- Releasing the cleanliness survey report, railway minister Piyush Goyal said, “Jodhpur has emerged as the cleanest station in A1 station category. Last year, Visakhapatnam was at the first spot.
- The minister also said that in A category stations, Marwar in Rajasthan topped the list, followed by Phulera in Rajasthan at number two, and Warangal in Telangana at number three.
- The South Central Railway (SCR) was declared the second cleanest zone. The SCR was at the fourth spot last year.

Green Mysuru initiative launched

- The 72nd Independence Day celebrations in the Mysuru region also saw the launch of the Green Mysuru drive, as part of the ‘Hasiru Karnataka’ initiative, to increase the green cover in the region.
- Mysuru is the third most populous city after Hubli–Dharwad and second single largest city in Karnataka State.

Mamata lifts income ceiling for Kanyashree scheme

- West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced that there would not be any ceiling for a family's annual earnings to be a beneficiary under the UN award winning Kanyashree scheme.
- Kanyashree is a conditional cash transfer scheme aiming at improving the status and well-being of the girl child by incentivising schooling of teenage girls and delaying their marriages until the age of 18. It received the United Nations Public Service Award last year.
- Currently, girls who belong to families with annual family income not more than Rs 1.20 lakh is entitled to get the benefits.

Goa to digitise all historical records

- Goa's archives, considered to be one of the oldest in Asia, will now be digitised under the Centre's 'Smart City Mission. The archives — a collection of lakhs of historical documents and records providing information about the coastal state and its people — are presently housed in a Portuguese-era building in the state capital Panaji.
- Goa has several records in its archives dating back to the time when the state was under the Portuguese rule. The state was liberated from the 450-year-old colonial rule in 1961.

Telangana launches two human welfare schemes on Independence Day

- Telangana celebrated the 72nd Independence Day was celebrated by launching two major schemes - free eye screening for all citizens and life insurance for farmers.
- Under "Kanti Velugu", the entire population of 3.7 crore will be provided free eye care. The authorities will not only conduct eye screening but will also provide free medicines, spectacles and arrange for free surgeries, if required.

- Rao also announced the implementation of another scheme, "Rytu Bima", aimed at providing life insurance cover of Rs. 5 lakh to every farmer.
- The government will cover 28 lakh farmers aged between 18 and 59 years. The government will bear the annual premium of Rs. 2,271 per farmer. It has already paid Rs. 636 crore towards premium to Life Insurance Corp.

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.

Cyclone Warning Centre to be set up in Thiruvananthapuram

- With several incidents of tropical cyclones and severe weather events striking over Kerala and Karnataka coasts in the recent times, the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences is proposing to set up a Cyclone Warning Centre in Thiruvananthapuram.
- The Ministry is planning to set up the Centre in another one month. At present, IMD has cyclone warning centres only at Chennai, Vishakhapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Mumbai.
- The Ministry is also planning to set up another C-Band Doppler Weather Radar at Mangalore by end of 2019, which will cover the northern parts of Kerala. At present, there are two Doppler Weather Radars in the state, at Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram.

India building new fighter jet

- The Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), India's next indigenous fighter, is expected to make its first flight by 2032. Development work on the jet is under way.
- "The AMCA will feature geometric stealth and will initially fly with two GE-414 engines. Once we develop our own engine, it can be replaced with that.
- "There are two major ways of making a military platform stealthier. One is geometric stealth and other is material stealth.
- In geometric stealth, the shape of the aircraft is designed at such angles so as to deflect away maximum radar waves thereby minimising its radar cross section.
- In material stealth, radar-absorbing materials are used in making the aircraft which will absorb the radio waves thus reducing the radar footprint.

Rajasthan to develop model Atal Seva Kendra to honour late PM

- As a mark of tribute to Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Rajasthan government is planning to develop a model Atal Seva Kendra, which will house literature, information and other objects related to the late Prime Minister's life, along with state-of-the-art public utility e-service facilities.
- The model Atal Seva Kendra will be unique and act as a living memorial to Vajpayee, said Rajasthan's panchayati raj minister Rajendra Singh Rathore. Rajasthan has nearly 10,000 Atal Seva Kendras (earlier called Rajiv Gandhi Seva Kendras) at village panchayat and panchayat samiti levels which provide public utility services to rural people. It also has 33 Atal Suvidha Kendras at district level.

World-class interpretation centre to come up in Bhitarkanika

- The Odisha government has decided to set up a state-of-the-art interpretation centre at Bhitarkanika National Park to showcase its flora, fauna and rich biodiversity. At present, the national park has an interpretation centre at Dangmal but it has proved to be inadequate in preserving the vast reserve of the finest biodiversity hotspots of the state.

- The national park is said to house 70 per cent of the country's estuarine crocodile or saltwater crocodiles, conservation of which was started way back in 1975. The crocodile population at Bhitarkanika is estimated to be 1698 as per the latest census.

NITI Aayog launches 5 Thematic Reports on Sustainable Development in Indian Himalayan Region

- Recognizing the uniqueness of the Himalayas and the challenges for sustainable development, NITI Aayog had set up 5 Working Groups (WGs) in June 2017 to prepare a roadmap for actions in 5 thematic areas.
- The themes include: Inventory and Revival of Springs in Himalayas for Water Security, Sustainable Tourism in Indian Himalayan Region, Transformative Approach to Shifting Cultivation, Strengthening Skill & Entrepreneurship Landscape in Himalayas and Data/Information for Informed Decision Making. While these thematic areas are quite significant for the Himalayas.

ICOMOS launches initiative to save cultural heritage damaged in flood-hit Kerala

- The ICOMOS, a global monument conservation body, has launched an initiative to assess the damage to the rich cultural and built heritage in flood-devastated Kerala and set up an emergency response platform.
- Rome-based ICCROM is an inter-governmental organisation dedicated to the preservation of cultural heritage worldwide through training, information, research, cooperation and advocacy programmes. ICOMOS is also an advisory body to the UNESCO for cultural heritage, in particular for implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

35% of cyber-attacks on Indian sites from China

- According to the report by CERT-In, the maximum number of cyber-attacks on official Indian websites are from China, US and Russia. It has also flagged the possibility of “malicious actors from Pakistan using German and Canadian cyberspace for intruding into Indian cyberspace and carrying out malicious activities”.
- The report, prepared by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), which comes under the ministry, analysed cyber-attacks from April-June 2018. CERT-In is the nodal agency which deals with cyber security threats like hacking and phishing. It collects analyses and disseminates information on “cyber incidents”, and also issues alerts on “cyber security incidents”.
- The cyber-attacks from China made up 35% of the total number of cyber-attacks on official Indian websites, followed by US (17%), Russia (15%), Pakistan (9%), Canada (7%) and Germany (5%),” the report says.

NCRB to track complaints on sexual violence

- A high-level meeting was convened to discuss recommendations on ways to curb “sexual violence” videos involving women and children.
- It was decided in the meeting that the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) would be the designated nodal agency for monitoring the complaints received on a government portal that records child pornography and sexual violence videos.
- National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) is an Indian government agency responsible for collecting and analysing crime data as defined by the Indian Penal Code (IPC). NCRB is headquartered in New Delhi and NCRB was set-up in 1986.

Vice President releases Book 'Colonial Syndrome: The Videshi Mind Set in Modern India'

- The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has said that Share and Care is the core philosophy of our nation. He was addressing the gathering after releasing the Book 'Colonial Syndrome: The Videshi Mind Set in Modern India', written by Prof. Rama Krishna Rao, in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

- The Vice President talked about the initiatives he has taken as the Chairman of Rajya Sabha, such as allowing members to speak in their mother tongue by providing simultaneous translation to Rajya Sabha members and advising ministers and members not to use the term "beg" while tabling the listed official papers in the House.

Commute-related pollution: Kolkata shines among megacities

- An analysis of 14 cities in India, including six mega cities and eight metropolises, on how they fare when it comes to pollution and energy consumption from urban commuting, places Kolkata as the top-performing megacity. Bhopal leads the list on the lowest overall emissions. Delhi and Hyderabad are the two cities that fare at the bottom of the table in terms of pollution and energy use.
- The report titled 'The Urban Commute and How it Contributes to Pollution and Energy', compiled by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), was released in Kolkata. Anumita Roychowdhury, executive director-research and advocacy, CSE, said air pollution was a national crisis and road transport was the sector showing the highest increase in emission of greenhouse gases.

Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary: Indian Railway coaches to display Swachh Bharat logo, national flag

- All coaches of the Indian Railways will now display the logo of the government's pet project Swachh Bharat and the national flag as part of the national transporter's plans to celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The Railway Board has said that the 'Swachhta Pakhwara' from September 15-October 2, would mark the beginning of the railways' plans to commemorate Gandhi's birth anniversary.
- It has identified 43 stations with special association with Mahatma Gandhi which will be painted thematically while 28 others near iconic places would undergo massive cleanliness drives. Among the 43 stations are Delhi, Lucknow, Mumbai, Surat, Danapur, Asansol, Bengaluru, Vadosara and among the iconic stations are Puri, Amritsar, Haridwar, and Kurukshetra.

Indore-Manmad rail line: Gadkari, Goyal, MP, Maharashtra sign Rs 90 bn MoU

- The shipping and railway ministries along with Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra governments entered into a pact to implement around Rs 90 billion Indore-Manmad rail project.
- "We are starting a very big railway project from Indore to Manmad. Indore is a commercial hub and from here the containers by using Central railways will come to Manmad and from Manmad they (containers) will go to JNPT (Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust)," Shipping Minister Nitin Gadkari told. The project will reduce the distance from Mumbai/ Pune to key central India locations by 171 km.

Parliamentary panel to seek sops to boost digital payments

- A Parliamentary standing committee plans to ask the Union finance ministry to incentivise digital payments across platforms and even for so-called merchant transactions in a move that could provide another boost to electronic or cashless payments.
- The panel, a lawmaker said on condition of anonymity, will recommend that transactions on digital platforms (phone, e-wallets, credit card) should also be eligible for incentives that are currently available only on BHIM-based applications.
- This person added that it will also ask for the incentivisation of transactions other than the payment of insurance premiums and fuel purchases that are currently eligible.

Mumbai international airport gets new name

- Mumbai's international airport will now be known as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport. Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved a proposal from the Civil Aviation Ministry in this regard. In 2016, the Maharashtra Assembly had urged the Centre to change the name of the airport.

Cabinet approves O-SMART Umbrella scheme

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the umbrella scheme which comprised of ocean services, technology, observations, resources modeling and science under the O-SMART nomenclature.
- The scheme is charted for implementation during the period from 2017-18 to 2019-20 at an overall cost of Rs.1623 crores, and would encompass a total of 16 sub-projects addressing ocean development activities like services, technology, resources, observations, and science.
- The services under this O-SMART will provide economic benefits to a number of user communities in the coastal areas, namely fisheries as this will help in reducing the search time for fishermen resulting savings in the fuel cost.
- Currently, five lakh fishermen communities are receiving this information daily through the mobile, which includes allocation of fish potential and local weather conditions in the coastal waters.

40% districts in south India got deficient rainfall, shows IMD data

- More than 40 per cent districts in south India witnessed deficient rainfall this monsoon, the India Meteorological Department data revealed, despite Kerala experiencing excessive precipitation. The worst hit state by deficient rainfall in South India was Tamil Nadu, according to the IMD data. Of its 32 districts, 20 received deficient rainfall while one reported large deficiency.
- At the country-level, the IMD said there was a 27 per cent rainfall deficiency in east and northeast India, followed by minus 3 and minus 1 in northwest and central India respectively.

Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) opens its first regional centre in Odisha

- The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), one of India's premier avian research institutes, has started operating its first regional centre on the campus of Wetland Research and Training Centre near Chilika Lake, Odisha.
- With opening up its branch in Odisha, the BNHS would be engaged in identifying the air route of the foreign birds flocking the Chilika lake during winter, sample collection, training related to bird census, publishing bird migration atlas books, examining various diseases among the birds and to review the condition of the Nalabana bird sanctuary along with counting the birds.

Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister launches online portal for Common Carrier Capacity booking on GAIL's pipelines

- The Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Shri Dharmendra Pradhan launched an online portal for enabling easy, efficient and transparent booking of Common carrier capacity for natural gas transmission services under GAIL's pipelines. It would be a first step to facilitate gas trading on hub or exchange traded platform in India.
- Launching the portal, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan said that the portal is a transparent, market-friendly component in the gas trading system. The online portal www.gailonline.com is the first of its kind in the natural gas sector of the country, to provide gas consumers the facility to register pipeline capacity bookings online and endeavours to continue the practice of serving on first come-first served basis.

Jharkhand organised world's largest water colour festival

- 56 Internationally renowned artists from 24 countries and 25 Indian states participated in the world's largest water colour festival – the International Water Colour Festival (IWCF) 2018, held under the aegis of Department of Tourism, Art-Culture, Sports & Youth Affairs, and Government of Jharkhand.
- The five-day international festival was held at Audrey House, Ranchi from 23rd – 27th August 2018. Raghubar Das, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Jharkhand was the Chief Guest for the event.

Two new projects under Heritage and North East Circuits of Swadesh Dashan Scheme sanctioned in Punjab and Tripura

- The Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned two new projects under Heritage and North East Circuits of Swadesh Dashan Scheme for Rs. 164.95 Crores in Punjab and Tripura. Under Heritage Circuit in the state of Punjab, the project covers sites of Anandpur Sahib – Fatehgarh Sahib – Chamkaur Sahib – Ferozpur – Amritsar – Khatkar Kalan – Kalanour – Patiala at the cost of Rs. 99.95 crores.
- Under North East Circuit in Tripura, the sites of Surma Cherra- Unakoti- Jampui Hills- Gunabati-Bhunaneshwari- Matabari- Neermahal- Boxanagar- Chotta khola- Pilak- Avangchaarra are covered with total project cost of Rs. 65 Crores. The project envisaged infrastructural development of the sites with special emphasis on developing an Interpretation Centre, Tourist Visitor Centres, Cafeteria, Last Mile Connectivity, Illumination of sites and monuments, Wayside Amenities, Floating Jetties, Camping Grounds, Parking Facilities, Adventure Activities, Ghat Development at above sites.

Memorandum of Understanding signed for the construction of Lakhwar Multi-Purpose project

- Shri Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Shipping and Road Transport & Highways signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh - Shri Yogi Adityanath, Rajasthan - Smt Vasundhara Raje , Uttarakhand -Shri Trivendra Singh Rawat, Haryana- Shri Manohar Lal, Delhi - Shri Arvind Kejriwal, and Himachal Pradesh - Shri Jai Ram Thakur in New Delhi for the construction of Rs. 3966.51 crore Lakhwar Multi-Purpose project in the Upper Yamuna Basin.

India, Government of Rajasthan and World Bank sign a \$250 Million Agreement to support electricity distribution sector reforms

- The Government of India, the Government of Rajasthan and the World Bank signed a \$250 million Development Policy Loan (DPL) to support the Government of Rajasthan in improving the performance of its Electricity Distribution Sector under the State's 24x7 Power for All program.
- The Second Programmatic Electricity Distribution Reform Development Policy Loan for Rajasthan is the second in the series of two operations planned for a comprehensive turnaround of Rajasthan's electricity distribution sector. The First Loan closed in March 2017. The Electricity Distribution Utilities (DISCOMs) in Rajasthan provide electricity to about 9.5 million customers.

NVIDIA becomes NITI Aayog's deep learning partner for 'MoveHack' mobility hackathon

- Computer chip manufacturer NVIDIA collaborated with NITI Aayog as its Deep learning technology partner to support the government think-tank's "MoveHack" which is a global mobility hackathon to crowdsource solutions aimed at the future of mobility in India.
- Deep learning technology is a subset of machine learning (ML) in artificial intelligence (AI) that has networks capable of learning unsupervised from data that is unstructured or unlabelled.

Madhya Pradesh: "Mil -Banche" programme to be organised in govt schools of state

- In Madhya Pradesh, in a first of its kind initiative, "Mil -Banche", an interactive programme between schools and society is being organized in all government schools of the state.
- This programme is being organized in the state for multi-dimensional development of children through language skill up-gradation, reading other books in addition to textbooks, developing interest in understanding and other co-curricular activities in government schools.

Akshay Kumar's 'Gold' becomes first Bollywood film to release in Saudi Arabia

- Akshay Kumar-fronted "Gold" has become the first Bollywood film ever to release in Saudi Arabia. The Reema Kagti-directed sports film is only the second movie after Rajinikanth's hit social drama, "Kaala" to hit the theatres in the Gulf country.
- **Gold: The Dream That United Our Nation** is a 2018 Indian historical sports-drama film based upon the national hockey team's title at the 1948 Summer Olympics, directed by Reema Kagti and produced by Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar

Baby Rani Maurya sworn in as new Uttarakhand governor

- Baby Rani Maurya was sworn in as the new governor of Uttarakhand. The oath of office and secrecy was administered to Maurya by the acting Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court Rajiv Sharma at a ceremony held at Raj Bhawan.
- The function was attended by Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat, his cabinet colleagues and a host of distinguished people and senior officials. **Maurya, a former mayor of Agra, was nominated as governor of Uttarakhand** on August 21. **She replaces Krishna Kant Paul** whose five-year tenure ended recently.



IMPORTANT DAYS

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.

Earth Overshoot Day

- **Earth Overshoot Day** marks the date when humanity has used more from nature than our planet can renew in that entire year.
- As humans use more and more of the Earth's natural resources, this date is arriving sooner each year. While Earth Overshoot Day was marked on 2 August in 2017, it has arrived on 1 August in 2018. Since the day started being observed in 1986, this is the earliest point in the year on which it has ever fallen. Earth Overshoot Day is calculated by Global Footprint Network.

Fourth National Handloom Day

- The National Handloom Day is celebrated in Nagade, Tal- Yeola, Nashik district on August 7.

Nation observes 76th anniversary of Quit India movement

- August 9, 2018 is the 76th anniversary of Quit India movement. On this day in 1942, father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi gave the clarion call of Do or Die to all Indians to drive away Britishers from the country.
- The movement had begun from Gwalia Tank in Mumbai. The day is observed as August Kranti Day every year.
- Quit India Movement, or the India August Movement, was a movement launched at the Bombay session of the All-India Congress Committee by Mahatma Gandhi in August 1942, during World War II, demanding an end to British Rule of India.

World Biofuel day observed on 10th August 2018

- **World Biofuel Day** is observed every year on 10th August to create awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels as an alternative to conventional fossil fuels and to highlight the various efforts made by the Government in the biofuel sector.
- The World Biofuel Day is being observed by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas for the last three years.
- This year, World Biofuel Day programme is held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on 10th August, 2018.

International Youth Day

- **International Youth Day (IYD)** is an awareness day designated by the United Nations. The purpose of the day is to draw attention to a given set of cultural and legal issues surrounding youth. The first IYD was observed on 12 August, 2000.
- The theme for International Youth Day 2018 is "Safe Spaces for Youth". This year's event will facilitate a dialogue on safe spaces between governments, UN agencies, academia, civil society, and -most importantly- youth groups, with the goal of offering practical solutions to the challenges of creating youth-friendly spaces.

World Elephant Day

- On August 12, 2012, the inaugural World Elephant Day was launched to bring attention to the urgent plight of Asian and African elephants. The elephant is loved, revered and respected by people and cultures around the world, yet we balance on the brink of seeing the last of this magnificent creature.

World Photography Day 2018

- The World Photography Day celebrated on August 19 commemorates the artistry of a photographer.
- The birth of this day dates back to 1839 when Joseph Nicéphore Niépce's associate Louis Daguerre developed a daguerreotype process the details of which were introduced the same year.

World Mosquito Day 2018

- World Mosquito Day, observed annually on 20 August, is a commemoration of British doctor Sir Ronald Ross's discovery in 1897 that female mosquitoes transmit malaria between humans.
- World Mosquito Day was first established in 1897, when the link between mosquitoes and malaria transmission was discovered by a British doctor Sir Ronald Ross. The female Anopheles mosquitoes were responsible for transmitting the malaria parasite.

International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition

- International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition, August 23 of each year, the day designated by UNESCO to memorialize the transatlantic slave trade.
- In the night of 22 to 23 August 1791, men and women, torn from Africa and sold into slavery, revolted against the slave system to obtain freedom and independence for Haiti, gained in 1804. The uprising was a turning point in human history, greatly impacting the establishment of universal human rights, for which we are all indebted.
- UNESCO is marking International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition to pay tribute to all those who fought for freedom, and, in their name, to continue teaching about their story and the values therein.

International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism

- The General Assembly established 21 August as the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism in order to honor and support the victims and survivors of terrorism and to promote and protect the full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- By proclaiming an International Day dedicated to victims, the General Assembly reaffirmed that the promotion and the protection of human rights and the rule of law at the national; and international levels are essential for preventing and combating terrorism.

International Day against Nuclear Tests

- The International Day against Nuclear Tests is observed on August 29. It was established on December 2, 2009 at the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly by the resolution, which was adopted unanimously.
- The resolution was initiated by Kazakhstan together with several sponsors and cosponsors to commemorate the closure of the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site on August 29, 1991.

National Sports Day in India celebrated on 29 August

- The National Sports Day in India is celebrated on 29 August each year. This day marks the birthday of Major Dhyan Chand Singh, the hockey player who won gold medals in Olympics for India in the years 1928, 1932 and 1936.
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QUESTIONS

1. How many World Heritage sites are there in India at Present?
(a) 30 (b) 35 (c) 36 (d) 37
2. World Ranger Day is celebrated worldwide on:
(a) 29 June (b) 30 July (c) 31 July (d) 30 June
3. The 24th Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award to be given to _____ for his outstanding contribution towards the promotion of communal harmony, peace and goodwill.
(a) Pranab Mukherji (b) Gopalkrishna Gandhi
(c) Dr. Manmohan Singh (d) Kapil Sibal
4. The IT ministry launched a desktop software _____ to enable editing of text printed on scanned documents and it can be downloaded for free from its website.
(a) e-Aksharayan (b) e-Digitalprint (c) e-Sevaprint (d) e-Mygovprint
5. What is the India rank in the latest United Nations E-Government Index (EGDI)?
(a) 75 (b) 85 (c) 96 (d) 100
6. Who among the following has inaugurated the first 'Nepal-India Think Tank' Summit held in Kathmandu?
(a) Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda (b) Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli
(c) Bidhya Devi Bhandari (d) Narendra Modi
7. Which among the following countries has become the first South Asian country to get access to America's cutting-edge technology known as 'Strategic Trade Authorisation' status (STA-1)?
(a) India (b) China (c) Pakistan (d) Sri Lanka
8. SBM Group has become the first foreign lender to receive Reserve Bank of India approval to operate in the country through a wholly owned subsidiary route. It is based in:
(a) Mauritius (b) Singapore (c) Japan (d) China
9. Recently, which among the following companies has regained its status as the country's most valued firm by market capitalisation (m-cap)?
(a) Tata Consultancy Services Limited (b) Infosys Limited
(c) Reliance Industries Ltd (d) HCL Technologies
10. Recently, which among the following countries has successfully launched an optical remote sensing satellite 'Gaofen-11'?
(a) Japan (b) South Korea (c) China (d) India
11. Which among the following states has become the first State in the country to implement the national policy on biofuels unveiled by the Centre in May this year?
(a) Rajasthan (b) Kerala (c) Bihar (d) Andhra Pradesh
12. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation of India's first Mobile Open Exchange Zone (MOX) at World Trade Centre in:
(a) Mumbai (b) Kolkata (c) New Delhi (d) Noida

13. Which among the following will host an Investors' Conference on August 10, 2018 at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra for the Holistic Development of Islands?
(a) Ministry of External Affairs (b) NITI Aayog
(c) Ministry of Finance (d) Ministry of DONAR
14. Recently, which among the following countries has launched a landmark three-month visa amnesty programme that will benefit hundreds of illegal foreign workers, including Indians for overstaying?
(a) UAE (b) USA (c) UK (d) Germany
15. T-Mobile US named _____ to supply it with \$3.5 billion in next-generation 5G network gears, marking the world's largest 5G deal so far.
(a) Vodafone (b) Nokia (c) Reliance Jio (d) Airtel
16. Scientists from _____ have discovered a new shape called scutoid while studying nature's way of moulding tissue to form the skin, cavity linings and the building blocks of organs.
(a) Japan (b) Israel (c) USA-EU (d) China
17. The blueprint for the 'Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)' was unveiled by:
(a) NASA (b) Union Ministry of Earth Sciences
(c) ISRO (d) CERN
18. Which among the following cities will implement the odd-even car policy during the 18th Asian Games held from August 18 to September 2?
(a) New Delhi (b) Beijing (c) Jakarta (d) Katmandu
19. Earth Overshoot Day was marked on 2 August in 2017; it has arrived on _____ in 2018.
(a) 29 July (b) 30 July (c) 31 July (d) 1 August
20. India's first public sector hotel run entirely by women for women was launched in:
(a) Goa (b) Kerala (c) Bihar (d) Andhra Pradesh
21. Who became the first woman to reach the quarter-finals of BWF World Championships for eight consecutive times recently?
(a) P.V.Sindhu (b) Carolina Marin (c) Saina Nehwal (d) Tai Tzu-ying
22. The National Handloom Day 2018 is celebrated every year on:
(a) 5th August (b) 7th August (c) 11th August (d) 14th August
23. Name the India-origin mathematician, who is awarded the prestigious Fields medal, commonly referred to as the Nobel Prize for mathematics.
(a) Deepak Ahuja (b) Vyomkesh Sharan Bannerjee
(c) Shashank Chudasma (d) Akshay Venkatesh
24. According to the first edition of the State Energy Efficiency Preparedness Index, brought out jointly by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and NITI Aayog, which Indian state is the most energy-efficient state?
(a) Goa (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Gujarat
25. How many Indian companies have made into the latest Fortune 500 list of the world's biggest corporations in terms of revenue?
(a) Three (b) Five (c) Seven (d) Eleven

26. Parker Solar Probe, mankind's first mission to 'touch' the Sun is on schedule takes off next week. Parker Solar Probe is a planned robotic spacecraft of:
(a) ISRO (b) JAXA (c) CERN (d) NASA
27. Recently, who launched a logo and tagline for Geographical Indications (GI) to increase awareness about intellectual property rights (IPRs) in the country?
(a) Shri Ramnath Kovind (b) Shri Narendra Modi
(c) Shri Suresh Prabhu (d) Shri Peeyush Goyal
28. Who among the following has won Zimbabwe's landmark Presidential election recently?
(a) Emmerson Mnangagwa (b) Grace Mugabe
(c) Nelson Chamisa (d) Robert Mugabe
29. Which of the following Indian ministries has introduced a new scheme namely 'Seva Bhoj Yojna' with a total outlay of Rs. 325.00 Crores for Financial Years 2018-19 and 2019-20?
(a) Ministry of Culture
(b) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
(c) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
(d) Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises
30. Recently, President Shri Ram Nath Kovind gave away the Outstanding Parliamentarian awards. Who won the award for the year 2017?
(a) Hukum Dev Narayan (b) Dr Najma Heptullah
(c) Ghulam Nabi Azad (d) Bhartruhari Mahtab
31. The Lok Sabha has passed the National Sports University Bill 2018 which seeks to establish first-of-its-kind sports universities in _____ to promote sports in the country.
(a) Manipur (b) Nagaland (c) Mizoram (d) Meghalaya
32. Recently, Hindi Academy Delhi has given its highest Shalaka Samman for 2017-18 to:
(a) Prasoon Joshi (b) Anupam Kher (c) Javed Akhtar (d) Amitabh Bacchhan
33. Recently, which of the following country has been elected as the President of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) for a period of two years?
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Iran (c) India (d) Nepal
34. Which of the following Indian states has signed a MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with Tech Mahindra to launch India's first Blockchain District in the state?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Telangana (c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
35. The first appointed woman judge of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court is:
(a) Deepti Rawal (b) Rashmi Hingoo (c) Aditi Natarani (d) Sindhu Sharma
36. Which Indian state government has decided to give an allowance of Rs 1,000 per month to the all the unemployed youth in the state under the "Mukhyamantri Yuva Nestam" scheme?
(a) Telanagana (b) Karnataka (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Tamil Nadu
37. The famous Kadaknath chicken meat from _____ has now got a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
(a) Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh (b) Gulbarga, Karnataka
(c) Indore, Madhya Pradesh (d) Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh

38. Recently, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) ratified _____ membership in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC).
(a) Bangladesh (b) Iran (c) Iraq (d) Bhutan
39. According to data compiled by Bloomberg, which of the following countries has the world's largest stock market?
(a) USA (b) Russia (c) Japan (d) China
40. Which of the following companies became the first \$1 trillion publicly listed U.S. Company recently?
(a) Alphabet (b) Apple Inc (c) Exxon Mobil (d) General Motors
41. According to a latest report by economic think-tank NCAER, _____ has toppled Gujarat from the top spot in a list of 21 states and union territories with the most investment potential.
(a) Telangana (b) Delhi (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Uttar Pradesh
42. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the State's first 'skill museum' at the Industrial Training Institute in:
(a) Cuttack (b) Bhubaneswar (c) Puri (d) Rourkela
43. Which among the following countries announced new plans to change the law for organ and tissue donation to address the urgent need for organs within Indian-origin communities?
(a) France (b) Germany (c) USA (d) UK
44. The value of one Apple Inc is now nearly the same as the cumulative value of India's top _____ blue chip companies.
(a) 25 (b) 50 (c) 75 (d) 100
45. IDEMIA has become the first company to be given the certification to manufacture and personalise RuPay chip contact and contactless cards on the qSPARC v2 platform. This company is based in:
(a) USA (b) France (c) UK (d) China
46. Scientists from _____ claimed to have created the first single-chromosome yeast while not affecting the majority of its functions that could help in furthering research related to aging and diseases in humans.
(a) Israel (b) France (c) Japan (d) China
47. England emerged victorious in their 1000th Test held between India and England. England's first ever Test match was played against:
(a) Australia (b) South Africa (c) West Indies (d) New Zealand
48. Gaganjeet Singh Bhullar is associated with which among the following sports?
(a) Badminton (b) Hockey (c) Golf (d) Tennis
49. To address the issues, challenges and concerns of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), GST Council has created a sub-committee headed by:
(a) Shiv Pratap Shukla (b) Manish Sisodia (c) Sushil Modi (d) Himanta Biswa Sarma
50. Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched an awareness campaign named "Horn Not Ok" in:
(a) Shimla (b) Manali (c) Dehradun (d) Both a and b
51. Who among the following Indian cricketers topped the International Cricket Council Test batting rankings for the first time in his career in the latest edition?
(a) Cheteshwar Pujara (b) Shikhar Dhawan (c) Virat Kohli (d) Rohit Sharma

52. The world's first-ever facility to create thermal batteries was inaugurated in:
(a) Telangana (b) Odisha (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Karnataka
53. Recently, which Indian states launched 'horn not ok' awareness campaign and 'shaur nahin' (no noise) mobile application?
(a) Uttarakhand (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Sikkim (d) Jammu & Kashmir
54. Who has been appointed as the first woman Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court?
(a) Sulakshana Shah (b) Divya Mukherjee (c) Deepti Ranawat (d) Gita Mittal
55. Which of the following countries has appointed movie star Steven Seagal as a special envoy to the U.S?
(a) France (b) Germany (c) Russia (d) Belgium
56. Recently, World's First Intertidal Art Gallery Opened in:
(a) Mauritius (b) Maldives (c) Indonesia (d) Singapore
57. Which Indian states launched the 'Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana', an ambitious scheme which promises to provide Rs. 54,100 from the birth of a girl child till her graduates?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Rajasthan (d) Bihar
58. Which among the following Hockey teams has been crowned as the world champions for a record eighth time in women Hockey?
(a) Australia (b) France (c) India (d) Netherlands
59. Who became the first woman to win three badminton World titles with an emphatic victory over P.V. Sindhu of India recently?
(a) Carolina Marin (b) Akane Yamaguchi (c) Tai Tzu-ying (d) Nozomi Okuhara
60. Who won the men's singles Washington Open tennis tournament recently?
(a) Alexander Zverev (b) Alex De Minaur (c) Andy Murray (d) Rohan Bopanna
61. International Youth Day 2018 is celebrated on:
(a) 9th August (b) 11th August (c) 12th August (d) 17th August
62. The Supreme Court has notified guidelines for according 'senior advocate' designation to lawyers and constituted a five-member permanent committee headed by the _____ to shortlist candidates.
(a) Union Law Minister (b) Chief Justice of India
(c) Attorney General of India (d) Advocate General of India
63. Name the first Indian, who have been selected as a member of Country Code Supporting Organisation (ccNSO) and will be representing India at a global level.
(a) Deepak Bahera (b) Ajay Data (c) Janmejaya Rahate (d) Aditya Uppal
64. Which among the following countries recently tested Xingkong-2 (Starry Sky-2) hypersonic experimental waverider vehicle?
(a) Japan (b) China (c) Russia (d) Thailand
65. In October 2018, Indra Nooyi will step down as the CEO of:
(a) Microsoft (b) PepsiCo (c) HDFC Bank (d) Biocon

66. Recently, The President of India inaugurated the 'Festival of Democracy' to mark the conclusion of the diamond jubilee celebrations of the:
(a) Karnataka legislative assembly (b) Kerala legislative assembly
(c) Kerala High Court (d) Maharashtra legislative assembly
67. Recently, Union Government has approved _____ new research projects of 112 crore rupees under its Impacting Research Innovation and Technology 'IMPRINT-2' scheme.
(a) 76 (b) 99 (c) 122 (d) 165
68. Who has been declared the winner of the inaugural Letten Prize for young researchers launched by the Letten Foundation and the Young Academy of Norway recently?
(a) Arun Parashar (b) Neehal Rana (c) Tarunabh Khaitan (d) Ajitabh Shukla
69. Recently, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu M Karunanidhi passed away. He was the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for:
(a) Three Times (b) Four Times (c) Five Times (d) Seven Times
70. Which will be the first Olympics to use facial recognition technology to increase security around all venues?
(a) Los Angeles, 2028 (b) Tokyo 2020 (c) Beijing 2022 (d) Paris, 2024
71. After Mrs Funnybones and The Legend of Lakshmi Prasad, which actor-turned-author is coming up with her third book, Pyjamas are forgiving?
(a) Twinkle Khanna (b) Rekha (c) Shilpa Shetty (d) Simi Garewal
72. Recently scientists of which of the following countries have discovered the most lithium-rich giant star ever known with lithium abundance 3,000 times higher than normal?
(a) USA (b) Russia (c) China (d) India
73. As per the latest government data, Australia's population will hit a record _____ million almost a decade earlier than projected, as it attracts hundreds of thousands of migrants each year.
(a) 15 (b) 20 (c) 25 (d) 35
74. For the first time in the history, Supreme Court has three sitting women judges. Who among the following is not among the three?
(a) Justice R. Banumathi (b) Justice Indu Malhotra
(c) Justice V.K. Tahilramani (d) Justice Indira Banerjee
75. Recently, in order to promote tourism, Union Government has extended e-visa facility for citizens of _____ countries at 25 airports and five seaports.
(a) 85 (b) 115 (c) 165 (d) 198
76. Which of the following companies has launched its next version of Android and finally has a name "Pie"?
(a) Microsoft (b) Google (c) Apple (d) Oracle
77. The Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve has become the _____ Biosphere Reserve from India that has been included in the UNESCO designated World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR).
(a) 11th (b) 12th (c) 13th (d) 14th
78. Shri Hardeep S Puri, Minister of State (I/C), Housing & Urban Affairs launched the Swachh Survekshan 2019 in:
(a) Mumbai (b) New Delhi (c) Varanasi (d) Patna

79. The Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports & Information and Broadcasting Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore flagged off an all-women expedition to Mt. Manirang in:
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Sikkim (c) Jammu & Kashmir (d) Uttarakhand
80. Who is set to become the first Muslim woman elected to Congress after comfortably winning her Democratic primary election in the US state of Michigan?
(a) Sonia Khan (b) Tansu Ciller (c) Khaleda Zia (d) Rashida Tlaib
81. US President Donald Trump has nominated _____ a prominent Indian-American law professor and legal expert to an agency on privacy and civil liberties.
(a) Akhil Reed Amar (b) Aditya Bamzai (c) Neal Kumar Katyal (d) Dabbala Rajagopal
82. Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Aviation Suresh Prabhu launched Niryat Mitra - mobile App in New Delhi. This app is developed by:
(a) Federation of Indian Export Organisations (b) National Payment Corporation of India
(c) ASSOCHAM (d) NITI Aayog
83. Swedish home furnishings major IKEA opened its first store in India in:
(a) Mumbai (b) Pune (c) Hyderabad (d) Chennai
84. Which among the following banks has launched the Multi-Option Payment Acceptance Device or MOPAD, a unified payment option that accepts multiple payment methods?
(a) HDFC Bank (b) State Bank of India (c) ICICI Bank (d) Axis Bank
85. In May, Walmart announced the acquisition of _____ stake in Flipkart, the biggest takeover by the U.S. Company till date.
(a) 57% (b) 67% (c) 77% (d) 87%
86. Who has been elected as the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha in August 2018?
(a) Harivansh Narayan Singh (b) B.K. Hariprasad
(c) P. J. Kurien (d) Benoy Viswam
87. The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, visited Uttar Pradesh and inaugurated the 'One District One Product' Summit in:
(a) Agra (b) Varanasi (c) Lucknow (d) Kanpur
88. Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was apprised of joint issue of Postage Stamps on the theme, "20 Years of Strategic Partnership between India and _____".
(a) Nepal (b) Bangladesh (c) Mexico (d) South Africa
89. Ivan Duque has been sworn in as the 60th president of:
(a) Serbia (b) Colombia (c) Panama (d) Iran
90. As per consolidated FDI Policy, 2017, the Government has allowed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) up to _____% under automatic route in the educational institutions.
(a) 49 (b) 51 (c) 71 (d) 100
91. India's rank on the Global Innovation Index (GII) has improved from 60 in 2017 to _____ in 2018.
(a) 37 (b) 47 (c) 50 (d) 57

92. Scientists at the University of Tokyo in Japan have discovered a trove of _____ exoplanets in solar systems.
(a) 20 (b) 26 (c) 34 (d) 44
93. Former 400m hurdles World Championships gold medalist Nicholas Bett has died after being involved in a car crash in his home country of:
(a) Kenya (b) Nigeria (c) France (d) UK
94. August 9, 2018 is the 76th anniversary of:
(a) Non Co-operation movement (b) Civil Disobedience movement
(c) Quit India movement (d) Swadeshi movement
95. 'SWAYAM' Project has been in the news: this project is associated with:
(a) Banking (b) Education (c) Health (d) All of the above
96. World Biofuel Day is observed every year on _____ to create awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels as an alternative to conventional fossil fuels.
(a) 5th August (b) 7th August (c) 31st July (d) 10th August
97. Who among the following was named the Indian contingent's flag-bearer for the Asian Games opening ceremony to be held in Jakarta?
(a) Saina Nehwal (b) Neeraj Chopra (c) Devinder Singh Kang (d) Srikanth Kidambi
98. Name the web portal launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which is a single window for environmental, wildlife, forest and Coastal Regulation Zone clearances.
(a) Saarthak (b) Parivesh (c) Saakaar (d) Sulabh
99. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will launch a defence industrial corridor in:
(a) Lucknow (b) Meerut (c) Moradabad (d) Aligarh
100. SCO Peace Mission Exercise is conducted biennially for SCO member states. The joint exercise for the year 2018 will be conducted in:
(a) China (b) India (c) Russia (d) Uzbekistan
101. Recently, Justice Rajendra Menon was sworn in as Chief Justice of:
(a) Bombay High Court (b) Calcutta High Court (c) Allahabad High Court (d) Delhi High Court
102. Who is the new chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW)?
(a) Rekha Sharma (b) Shyama Ganguly (c) Mamta Kalia (d) Usha Ananthasubramaniam
103. Recently, Michelle Bachelet has been appointed the next UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Michelle Bachelet is former President of:
(a) Bulgaria (b) Chile (c) Liberia (d) Peru
104. The first bank in the country to introduce Iris Scan Authentication feature for Aadhaar-based transactions through its micro ATM tablets is:
(a) HDFC Bank (b) ICICI Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) IDFC Bank
105. According to the Reserve Bank of India's survey of inward remittances for 2016-17. Which destinations have emerged as the top source of inward remittances in India?
(a) UAE (b) USA (c) Qatar (d) Russia

106. Justice Gita Mittal was sworn in as the first woman Chief Justice of:
(a) Patna High Court (b) Hyderabad High Court
(c) Jammu and Kashmir High Court (d) Arunachal Pradesh High Court
107. The Southern Naval Command at Kochi has rescued scores of people stranded in the flood-hit areas of Kerala as part of the Indian Navy's "_____ " for the rain and landslide-ravaged state.
(a) Operation Cactus (b) Operation Madad (c) Operation Nestam (d) Operation Help
108. V.S. Naipaul has passed away; he was a Caribbean writer of Indian descent and Nobel Laureate who was born in _____with British citizenship.
(a) Trinidad (b) Tokyo (c) London (d) New Delhi
109. BBC History magazine compiled a list of "100 women who changed the world", who among the following women topped the list?
(a) Theresa May (b) Sushma Swaraj
(c) Angela Dorothea Merkel (d) Marie Curie
110. Indian-American _____was among the three women honoured with 'Women in Business: Making a Difference Award' at the 19th annual Indo-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston (IACCGH) gala.
(a) Aruna Vishwanathan (b) Sunita Rathore (c) Anitha Singh (d) Lakshmi Bharati
111. Recently, which among the following banks has signed a multilateral cooperation agreement with member development banks of BRICS to undertake "collaborative research" in distributed ledger/blockchain technology?
(a) ICICI Bank (b) Exim Bank of India (c) HDFC Bank (d) SBI Bank
112. Embassy of Israel has opened a visa application centre in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Kolkata (d) Chennai
113. Recently, which among the following has become the first Indian tribal language to get a Wikipedia edition in its own script after the Santhali Wikipedia went live?
(a) Maithili (b) Santhali (c) Konkani (d) Odia
114. International Shooting Federation (ISSF) has awarded a World Cup 2020 to be hosted by:
(a) USA (b) China (c) UK (d) India
115. Who among the following cricketers has become the first bowler in the history of Test cricket to pick up 100 wickets at Lord's?
(a) Stuart Broad (b) James Anderson (c) Glen McGrath (d) Muttiah Muralitharan
116. India handed over the first lot of houses built under a USD 350 million project for Indian-origin people in:
(a) Bhutan (b) Nepal (c) Afghanistan (d) Sri Lanka
117. According to the scientists, the powerful earthquake in _____ has killed more than 300 people and lifted the island it struck by as much as 25 centimetres (10 inches).
(a) Indonesia (b) Greenland (c) Scotland (d) Maldives
118. The first mission to 'touch' the Sun was launched by:
(a) ISRO (b) CERN (c) JAXA (d) NASA

119. India's second _____ mission Chandrayaan-2 will now be launched in the January-March window in 2019 instead of later this year.
(a) Sun (b) Moon (c) Mars (d) Jupiter
120. Somnath Chatterjee has passed away, he was a former:
(a) Rajya Sabha Chairman (b) Lok Sabha Speaker
(c) Vice President (d) President of India
121. International Youth Day (IYD) is observed every year on:
(a) 10 August (b) 11 August (c) 12 August (d) 13 August
122. Who was the first chairman of ISRO?
(a) Satish Dhawan (b) Madhavan Nair (c) Vikram Sarabhai (d) UR Rao
123. Rafael Nadal won his _____ ATP World Tour title by defeating unseeded Stefanos Tsitsipas for his fourth Rogers Cup crown and fifth victory of the year.
(a) 60th (b) 70th (c) 80th (d) 90th
124. Lionel Messi won his _____ title with Barcelona to become the most successful player in the Catalan club's history.
(a) 23rd (b) 33rd (c) 43rd (d) 53rd
125. Goa's archives, considered to be one of the oldest in Asia, will now be digitised under the Centre's 'Smart City Mission'. The state was liberated from the 450-year-old colonial rule in:
(a) 1957 (b) 1961 (c) 1965 (d) 1951
126. India's first all-woman Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team for anti-terrorist operations inducted in:
(a) Mumbai (b) New Delhi (c) Chennai (d) Hyderabad
127. The first state in the country to provide Right to Skills Development to the youth is:
(a) Rajasthan (b) Chhattisgarh (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Bihar
128. According to the UN human rights committee, which among the following countries is holding a million Uighurs in "counter-extremism centres"?
(a) India (b) Nepal (c) Myanmar (d) China
129. According to the latest Ease of Living Index released by the Union Government, which is the most liveable city in India?
(a) Pune (b) Navi Mumbai (c) Chennai (d) Kochi
130. According to the latest survey conducted by UK-based online market research and data analytics firm YouGov. Which is considered to be the most patriotic brand in India?
(a) Tata Motors (b) Patanjali (c) Reliance Jio (d) State Bank of India
131. India's first genetic resource bank, which could have far reaching implications in conservation and revival of extinct and endangered species in the near future, was inaugurated in:
(a) Chennai (b) Hyderabad (c) Pune (d) Kolkata
132. The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, launched PARIVESH (Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub on the occasion of World Biofuel Day in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Bhopal (c) Patna (d) Surat

133. Jodhpur and Marwar railway stations in _____ were declared the cleanest in the third cleanliness survey, released by railway minister Piyush Goyal.
(a) Rajasthan (b) Jharkhand (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
134. The first city in North India to get a full-fledged Space Technology Research Centre, devoted to research, academics and post-graduation study is:
(a) Amritsar (b) Jammu (c) Shimla (d) Dehradun
135. Astronomers have used an Indian telescope to discover the most distant radio galaxy ever known, located at a distance of _____ billion light-years.
(a) 6 (b) 9 (c) 12 (d) 16
136. Who among the following are awarded the Shaurya Chakra this year?
(a) Major Shashank Gogoi and Major Aditya Kumar
(b) Major Aditya Kumar and Rifleman Aurangzeb
(c) Sepoy Vrahma Pal Singh and Major Shashank Gogoi
(d) Rifleman Aurangzeb and Sepoy Vrahma Pal Singh
137. Recently, The Supreme Court approved a proposal submitted by the Union of India (UOI) to colour-code vehicles in:
(a) New Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR)
(b) Mumbai and Nagpur
(c) Uttar Pradesh and Bihar
(d) Kolkata and North West Bengal
138. According to the annual chart compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit, which is ranked as the "world's most liveable city"?
(a) Melbourne (b) Brussels (c) Amsterdam (d) Vienna
139. Recently, Nepal-India Literature Festival 2018 was held in:
(a) Birgunj (b) Kathmandu (c) New Delhi (d) Pokhara
140. According to Brand Finance, a U.K.-based independent brand valuation and strategy consultancy, which is India's most valuable brand this year?
(a) Reliance Brand (b) Adani Wilmar Brand (c) Tata Brand (d) Aditya Birla Brand
141. Recently, new Fateh Mobin missile has been launched by:
(a) Pakistan (b) Iran (b) Iraq (c) Israel
142. Who became the India's latest Woman Grandmaster (WGM) after earning her third and final WGM norm at Riga Technical University Open at Latvia?
(a) Vaishali R (b) Ashwini Nag (c) Rukamini Riar (d) Geetanjali Saha
143. Who has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) recently?
(a) Siddharth Nagar (b) Mahesh C Rane (c) Ashok Maharat (d) Ashish Kumar Bhutani
144. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the starting of health insurance scheme, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Abhiyan (PMJAA) from:
(a) 15th August (b) 31st August (c) 25th September (d) 1st December

145. Who became India's 53rd Grandmaster after attaining his third and final GM-norm in the Abu Dhabi Masters recently?
(a) Nihal Sarin (b) Atul Nadkar (c) Debank Gochak (d) Animesh Divyakirti
146. Name the road safety brand ambassador, who kick-started his awareness campaign for the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways recently.
(a) Akshay Kumar (b) Salman Khan (c) Shahrukh Khan (d) Aamir Khan
147. Recently, Nearly five lakh people joined hands to form a 700 km-long human chain along the India-Pakistan border in:
(a) Gujarat (b) Rajasthan (c) Punjab (d) Jammu & Kashmir
148. Who inaugurated first thematic tourism project under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme the 'North East Circuit: Imphal & Khongjom' in Imphal recently?
(a) Shri N Biren Singh (b) Shri K J Alfons (c) Dr. Najma Heptulla (d) Shri Mahesh Sharma
149. Recently, Mario Abdo Benitez has been sworn in as the new President of:
(a) Uruguay (b) Chile (c) Sweden (d) Paraguay
150. Recently, PM Modi announced manned space mission taking Indian astronauts to space on board 'Gaganyaan' by year:
(a) 2019 (b) 2020 (c) 2022 (d) 2025
151. According to the survey prepared by Kotak Wealth-Hurun, who is the wealthiest Indian women with net worth of Rs 37,570 crore?
(a) Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (b) Roshni Nadar
(c) Indu Jain (d) Smitha Crishna
152. Recently, Botanists have discovered a new species of orchid "Andinia tingomariana" in the Tingo Maria National Park of:
(a) Sweden (b) Norway (c) Peru (d) Chile
153. Recently, Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the first non-Congress Prime Minister to complete a full term in office passed away. He was the _____ Prime Minister of India.
(a) Ninth (b) Tenth (c) Eleventh (d) Twelfth
154. Recently, Haryana's Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar dedicated the state's first civil airport to the people of state, which is built at:
(a) Karnal (b) Gurugram (c) Rohtak (d) Hisar
155. Ease of Living Index to empower citizens in aspiring for a better quality of life has been launched by:
(a) NITI Aayog
(b) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
(c) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
(d) Ministry of Home Affairs
156. Recently, India's first Humboldt baby penguin was born in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Kolkata (d) Kochi

157. Recently, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita has been re-elected as president of:
(a) Suriname (b) Mali (c) Haiti (d) Mexico
158. Which Indian states launched "Kanti Velugu", under which the entire population of 3.7 crore will be provided free eye care?
(a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Jharkhand
159. Recently, the 24th World Congress of Philosophy (WCP) for the first time was opened in:
(a) India (b) China (c) Japan (d) Russia
160. This bilateral naval exercise is to be the longest uninterrupted naval exercise that India is to have with which of the following countries in the world?
(a) Mauritius (b) Singapore (c) Maldives (d) Nepal
161. In August 2018, which of the following companies regained the crown of India's most valued company in terms of market capitalisation?
(a) TCS (b) RIL (c) Flipkart (d) Wipro
162. The 18th edition of the Asian Games officially kicked off in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Kuala Lumpur (c) Jakarta (d) Tokyo
163. Recently, The government has put on hold the draft that proposes red-labelling of packaged food products containing high levels of fat, sugar and salt. The expert panel will be headed by:
(a) Sushma Kalia (b) Anand Rajan (c) B Sesikaran (d) Deepak Rawat
164. Who has been elected as Pakistan's new prime minister recently?
(a) Shahbaz Sharif (b) Bilawal Zardari (c) Imran Khan (d) Aaamna Sharif
165. The 11th World Hindi Conference is concluded in:
(a) Maldives (b) USA (c) Mauritius (d) Fiji
166. Recently, the ten-day festival of the historic "Esala Maha Perehera" began in which of the following countries with a grand procession?
(a) Nepal (b) Sri Lanka (c) Myanmar (d) Bhutan
167. Name the teen cyclist, who has created history by claiming India's first ever medal - silver- at the UCI Junior Track Cycling World Championships in Aigle, Switzerland.
(a) Esow Alben (b) Sukirti Khandpal (c) Sukant Deshmukh (d) Joe Manuel
168. In September 2018, the 2018 Asia Cup cricket tournament is scheduled to be held in:
(a) United Arab Emirates (b) Afghanistan
(c) Bangladesh (d) India
169. India's ambitious space agency ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) is getting ready to launch its very own probe to study the Sun called:
(a) Aditya-C2 (b) Aditya-L1 (c) Aditya-N4 (d) Aditya-M7
170. Name the officer, who has been awarded the prestigious WHO World No Tobacco Day 2018 Award for his extraordinary contribution towards tobacco control recently.
(a) Aditya Nagar (b) Mohammad Adnan Kamal Pasha
(c) Gaurav Gupta (d) S K Arora

171. Recently, which of the following PSU's has become the first public sector enterprise to make a transaction on the "TReDS platform"?
- (a) SAIL (b) BHEL (c) GAIL (d) HAL
172. Recently, the Central Government launched the 'Digital Northeast Vision Document 2022' in:
- (a) Agartala (b) Gangtok (c) Shillong (d) Guwahati
173. Recently, the NDRF has launched the biggest ever relief and rescue operation in flood-affected state of:
- (a) Gujarat (b) Kerala (c) Karnataka (d) Uttarakhand
174. The Indian Railways plans to invest 44,000 crore to build a 1,100-km Greenfield freight corridor on the east coast connecting:
- (a) Kolkata in West Bengal with Vizag in Andhra Pradesh
(b) Kharagpur in West Bengal with Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh
(c) Hugli in West Bengal with Bhubaneswar in Odisha
(d) Siliguri in West Bengal with Chennai in Tamil Nadu
175. According to Forbes, who among the following actresses leads in this year's ranking with \$40.5 million in pretax earnings between June 1, 2017 and June 1, 2018?
- (a) Angelina Jolie (b) Kate Winslett (c) Emma Watson (d) Scarlett Johansson
176. 'Exercise Maitree' is an annual joint military exercise aimed at strengthening partnership and cooperation between India and_____.
- (a) Myanmar (b) Nepal (c) Thailand (d) Bhutan
177. Which among the following sports is not included for the first time in Asian Games played in Indonesia this year?
- (a) Basketball (3×3) (b) Kurash (c) Jet Skiing (d) Football
178. Which of the following companies has completed the acquisition of majority stake in India's leading e-commerce marketplace, Flipkart recently?
- (a) Amazon (b) Alibaba (c) Walmart (d) Snapdeal
179. According to Moody's report, India's current account deficit (CAD) will widen to _____per cent of the GDP in the current fiscal due to higher oil prices that has been accentuated by rupee depreciation.
- (a) 0.5 (b) 1 (c) 1.5 (d) 2.5
180. Recently, Kofi Annan has been passed away in Switzerland. He was the former_____.
- (a) President of Nigeria (b) UN secretary-general
(c) Prime Minister of Poland (d) President of Amnesty International
181. What is the name of the indigenously developed Anti-Tank Guided Missile that India has successfully flight tested from Pokhran in Rajasthan recently?
- (a) Selena (b) Helina (c) Sabrina (d) Galena
182. Who opened India's gold medal account in ongoing Asian games in the final of Men's Freestyle 65 kilogram category?
- (a) Yogeshwar Dutt (b) Bajrang Punia (c) Vijay Kumar (d) Sushil Kumar
183. Recently, who has been awarded with United States (US) 'Legion of Merit' award?
- (a) Gen Bikram Singh (b) Gen Bipin Rawat (c) Gen Dalbir Singh (d) Gen Deepak Kapoor

184. The 'Congressional Gold Medal' is the highest civilian award in which among the following countries?
(a) France (b) USA (c) Brazil (d) Germany
185. Which among the following countries unveiled its first domestic fighter jet "Kowsar" plane in August 2018?
(a) Iran (b) Iraq (c) India (d) Indonesia
186. Paytm has announced the launch of its artificial intelligence (AI) cloud computing platform 'Paytm AI Cloud' for developers, start-ups, and enterprises in partnership with _____.
(a) Alibaba (b) Microsoft (c) Google (d) Flipkart
187. According to the Ifo economic institute, which among the following countries current account surplus is set to remain the world's largest this year?
(a) USA (b) Russia (c) UK (d) Germany
188. Who has become the first Indian woman wrestler to win a gold medal at the Asian Games 2018 in the 50kg category?
(a) Shakshi Malik (b) Vinesh Phogat (c) Kavita Devi (d) Babita Kumari
189. Who became the first Indian batsman to open his account in Test cricket with a six?
(a) Virender Sehwag (b) M. S. Dhoni (c) Rishabh Pant (d) Virat Kohli
190. Virat Kohli became the highest scoring Indian captain in on foreign countries Tests. He surpassed record of _____.
(a) Sourav Ganguly (b) Rahul Dravid (c) M. S. Dhoni (d) Kapil Dev
191. World Mosquito Day is observed every year on:
(a) 18 August (b) 19 August (c) 20 August (d) 21 August
192. Chhattisgarh's proposed new capital 'Naya Raipur' will now be named as:
(a) Vikas Nagar (b) Modi Nagar (c) Atal Nagar (d) Deen Dayal Nagar
193. The first-ever joint air exercise involving the _____ and the Royal Malaysian Air Force commenced at Subang Air Base in Malaysia.
(a) Indian Air Force (b) USA Air Force (c) China Air Force (d) Indonesia Air Force
194. Bihar Governor Satya Pal Malik was appointed as the new governor of:
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Sikkim (d) Jammu and Kashmir
195. The Supreme Court quashed the Election Commission order providing for use of the "None of the Above" option (Nota) in:
(a) Rajya Sabha elections (b) Lok Sabha elections
(c) State Assembly elections (d) Panchayat elections
196. The world's first-ever 4D printing for ceramics has been developed by the scientists from:
(a) India (b) China (c) USA (d) UK
197. Using data from a NASA instrument aboard the Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft, a team of scientists has confirmed there is water ice on the surface of the _____.
(a) Mars (b) Saturn (c) Sun (d) Moon

198. Saurabh Chaudhary became only the _____ Indian shooter to win gold in Asian Games history in the 10m air pistol finals held in Indonesia.
(a) Third (b) Fourth (c) Fifth (d) Sixth
199. Union Ministry of Earth Sciences is proposing to set up a Cyclone Warning Centre in:
(a) Patna (b) Panaji (c) Thiruvananthapuram (d) Amaravati
200. Gopalkrishna Gandhi was honoured with this year's Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavna Award for promoting communal harmony and peace. The award was presented on the birth anniversary of:
(a) Indira Gandhi (b) Rajiv Gandhi (c) Atal Bihari Vajpayee (d) Jawaharlal Nehru
201. International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism is observed every year on:
(a) 18 August (b) 19 August (c) 20 August (d) 21 August
202. Retired judge T P Sharma was appointed as the new chief Lokayukt of:
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Sikkim (d) Chhattisgarh
203. The President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates the "International Buddhist Conclave (IBC), 2018" in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Hyderabad (d) Shimla
204. Which among the following has emerged as the second fastest growing airport in the world in the first half of 2018 in terms of actual growth in number of passengers?
(a) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (b) Indira Gandhi International Airport
(c) Kempegowda International Airport (d) Chatrapati Shivaji International Airport
205. Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen's space company _____ unveiled details of launch vehicles that will carry satellites to multiple orbits and inclinations on a single mission.
(a) Stratolaunch (b) SpaceX (c) AlphaX (d) Rosmoslaunch
206. Which among the following states of India will host the Men's Hockey World Cup 2018 tournament for the first time?
(a) Punjab (b) Haryana (c) Odisha (d) Bihar
207. Who among the following Indian players is seventh on the Forbes list of highest-earning women sportspersons in the world?
(a) Saina Nehwal (b) PV Sindhu (c) Sania Mirza (d) Mithali Raj
208. UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin has chosen David Beckham as the recipient of this year's UEFA President's Award. David Beckham hails from:
(a) England (b) Germany (c) Spain (d) Poland
209. "Xhoixobote Dhemalite" (Rainbow fields) became the first Assamese film to be commercially released in:
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) USA (c) China (d) Mexico
210. Kuldeep Nayar has been passed away in Delhi, he is a/an:
(a) Journalist (b) Author (c) Human rights activist (d) All of the above
211. India's biggest 'Bhamashah Techno Hub' was inaugurated in:
(a) Mumbai (b) New Delhi (c) Chennai (d) Jaipur

212. Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced that _____ will be the country partner for the Make in Odisha Conclave-2018.
(a) USA (b) UK (c) Japan (d) Germany
213. Which among the following companies has become the first Indian company to cross Rs 8 trillion in market capitalization?
(a) Reliance Industries (b) Tata Group (c) Adhani Group (d) Godrej Group
214. A rocket holding the 'Aeolus wind surveying satellite' was launched by:
(a) NASA (b) ISRO (c) ESA (d) JAXA
215. The world's largest 3D printed reef was installed in:
(a) Australia (b) Greenland (c) Maldives (d) India
216. The Fabless Chip Design Incubator (FabCI) is a first of its kind incubator in India launched by:
(a) IIT- Hyderabad (b) IIT- Chennai (c) IIT- Bombay (d) IIT- Kolkata
217. Scientists from _____ have developed a wireless 'ReMix' in-body GPS system that can pinpoint the location of ingestible implants and track tumours inside the body.
(a) UK (b) USA (c) Israel (d) China
218. The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) has given recognition to India's indigenous sport _____ to be included as a demonstration sport in the Asian Indoor Games.
(a) Kho-Kho (b) Kabadi (c) Ball throw (d) Tug of war
219. According to Forbes magazine, who among the following has emerged as the seventh highest-paid actor in the world?
(a) Aamir Khan (b) Akshay Kumar (c) Salman Khan (d) Shah Rukh Khan
220. International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition is observed every year on:
(a) 18 August (b) 21 August (c) 22 August (d) 23 August
221. India's first auction of wind power projects was commissioned by Ostro Energy Private Limited located in:
(a) Bhuj (b) Pune (c) Amaravati (d) Kanpur
222. Which among the following countries is the second largest trading partner of India within ASEAN?
(a) Malaysia (b) Singapore (c) Indonesia (d) Vietnam
223. According to the report by CERT-In, the maximum number of cyber-attacks on official Indian websites are from which among the following countries?
(a) China (b) USA (c) Russia (d) All of the above
224. International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) has launched an initiative to assess the damage to the rich cultural and built heritage in flood-devastated Kerala. ICOMOS is headquartered in:
(a) Rome (b) London (c) Tokyo (d) New York
225. Who has won the Liberal party leadership vote to become the Australia's new prime minister?
(a) Julie Bishop (b) Scott Morrison (c) Peter Dutton (d) Malcolm Bell

226. Who is the first democratically elected leader to be forced from office when the Constitutional Court removed her over a scandal that landed the heads of two conglomerates in jail?
(a) Dilma Vana Rousseff (b) Laura Chinchilla Miranda
(c) Park Geun-hye (d) Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
227. Exercise Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Peace Mission 2018 is the latest in 'Peace Mission' series formally started in:
(a) India (b) Pakistan (c) China (d) Russia
228. Which among the following organization is all set to ban the use of halogen light bulbs from next month?
(a) African Union (b) Asian Union (c) European Union (d) United Nations
229. Who has become the first Test captain to score 200 runs or more seven times in a winning cause?
(a) Sachin Tendulkar (b) Virat Kohli (c) Sir Don Bradman (d) Ricky Ponting
230. Which among the following countries Men's Doubles Tennis players won the Gold Medal in Men's Doubles Tennis event at the 18th Asian Games 2018 in Jakarta?
(a) India (b) China (c) Indonesia (d) Singapore
231. Recently, which among the following state governments approved a proposal for setting up a Legislative Council in the state?
(a) Bihar (b) Odisha (c) Sikkim (d) Tamil Nadu
232. Recently, who among the following has launched the National Electoral Transformation or NETA mobile application, a platform where voters can review and rate their elected representatives?
(a) Pranab Mukherjee (b) Ram Nath Kovind (c) Manmohan Singh (d) Narendra Modi
233. Scott Morrison was sworn in as Prime Minister of:
(a) Austria (b) Greece (c) Australia (d) Canada
234. Recently, which among the following countries has released a handbook of its "feminist foreign policy" for rights groups and foreign governments to promoting women's rights globally?
(a) Norway (b) Denmark (c) Spain (d) Sweden
235. Recently, which among the following has priced the world's first public bond created and managed using only blockchain?
(a) BRICS Bank (b) Asian Development Bank
(c) World Bank (d) AIIB
236. Who has been appointed as the Secretary General of the Industry chamber Assocham?
(a) Vinay Kumar Verma (b) Uday Kumar Varma (c) Ajith Seth (d) Vijay Kumar
237. Which among the following will launch Ice, Cloud and land Elevation Satellite-2 (ICESat-2) into space to measure in unprecedented detail changes in the heights of Earth's polar ice?
(a) ISRA (b) JAXA (c) CERN (d) NASA
238. Who became the first Indian to win an Asian Games individual medal in the equestrian event since 1982?
(a) Siddarth Pandey (b) Fouaad Mirza (c) Rahul Jain (d) Durga Prasad

239. Who has been appointed as the Chairman of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)?
(a) Dr G. Satheesh Reddy (b) Tapan Misra
(c) Nandini Harinath (d) T.K. Anuradha
240. The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has released the Book 'Colonial Syndrome: The Videshi Mind Set in Modern India', written by:
(a) Aruna Roy (b) Prof. Rama Krishna Rao
(c) Prof. Vinod Khanna (d) Vikram Seth
241. Baby Rani Maurya was sworn in as the new governor of:
(a) Bihar (b) Uttarakhand (c) Sikkim (d) Tamil Nadu
242. In a first in Indian aviation, which among the following has operated a demonstration flight powered by biofuel in August 2018?
(a) AirIndia (b) GiAir (c) SpiceJet (d) Indigo
243. The G20 Digital Economy Ministerial Meeting 2018 was held in:
(a) Mexico (b) Germany (c) USA (d) Argentina
244. Emmerson Mnangagwa took the oath as the President of:
(a) Zambia (b) Zimbabwe (c) Poland (d) South Sudan
245. According to the latest report by Department of Financial Services, which among the following banks has rated as the number one state-owned bank in terms of digital transactions?
(a) Andhra Bank (b) State Bank of India (c) Syndicate Bank (d) Punjab National Bank
246. Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security-Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx) spacecraft has captured the first glimpse of its distant target asteroid 'Bennu'. OSIRIS-Rex was spacecraft launched by:
(a) ISRA (b) JAXA (c) CERN (d) NASA
247. Naulo is the first digitalized robotic restaurant not just in Nepal, but also in:
(a) Africa (b) South America (c) South Asia (d) Europe
248. Recently, which among the following countries has defeated Taiwan to win the first ever Arena of Valor gold medal in Asian Games 2018?
(a) India (b) Japan (c) Indonesia (d) China
249. According to the latest data by India Meteorological Department, the worst hit state by deficient rainfall in South India was:
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Karnataka
250. Who among the following will be honoured with the Game Changer of the Year award by a global cultural organisation in recognition of her business achievements, humanitarian record and advocacy for women and girls around the world?
(a) Nita Ambani (b) Chanda Kochar (c) Sikha Sharma (d) Indra Nooyi
251. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated the 'Jaipur Foot' camp in
(a) Vietnam (b) Indonesia (c) Bhutan (d) Bangladesh

252. "29 states and UTs have signed the MoU and have started working on implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna. The national rollout of the PMJAY scheme will happen on September 25, the birth anniversary of:
(a) Atal Bihari Vajpayee (b) L. K. Advani
(c) Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay (d) Jaya Prakash Narayanan
253. A blend of oil from jatropha seeds and aviation turbine fuel propelled the India's first ever bio jet fuel-powered flight between:
(a) Mumbai and Delhi (b) Chennai and Delhi (c) Dehradun and Delhi (d) Hyderabad and Delhi
254. The third edition of Indian Ocean Conference is held in:
(a) Indonesia (b) India (c) Vietnam (d) Bangladesh
255. According to the latest report by Global Finance magazine, which among the following banks has been named the world's best bank?
(a) HSBC Bank (b) ICICI Bank (c) DBS Bank (d) SBI Bank
256. Who has been appointed as the managing director and chief India economist of Goldman Sachs?
(a) Jignesh Singh (b) Prachi Mishra (c) Prathap Kumar Sinha (d) Ajit Rawat
257. Who has become the first Indian shuttler to reach the final of badminton singles competition at the Asian Games?
(a) Saina Nehwal (b) P.V. Sindhu
(c) Gutta Jwala (d) Ashwini Ponnappa
258. Who has become the first Indian javelin thrower to win an Asian Games gold medal?
(a) Devendra Jhajharia (b) Rajesh Kumar Bind (c) Neeraj Chopra (d) Davinder Singh Kang
259. Who has set the world record for the most economical bowling spell in T20 history in August 2018?
(a) Mohammad Irfan (b) James Anderson (c) Mohammad Amir (d) Sunil Narine
260. Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) has started operating its first regional centre on the campus of Wetland Research and Training Centre in:
(a) Bihar (b) Odisha (c) Sikkim (d) Tamil Nadu
261. India's first Indian human mission will be launched by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) by:
(a) 2019 (b) 2020 (c) 2021 (d) 2022
262. Which among the following Indian States has proposed to come up with a single revenue act by merging various revenue laws enacted at different point in times?
(a) Bihar (b) Odisha (c) Sikkim (d) Tamil Nadu
263. World's largest water colour festival 'International Water Colour Festival (IWCF) 2018' was held in:
(a) Goa (b) Jharkhand (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Tamil Nadu
264. Which among the following has become the first bank subsidiary to enter the commodity broking business in August 2018?
(a) ICICI Securities (b) HDFC Securities (c) Axis Securities (d) SBI Securities
265. Scientists from _____ have set a new Guinness World Record by creating the smallest medical robot - a device measuring just 120 nanometres that could assist in future cancer and Alzheimer's treatments.
(a) USA (b) China (c) UK (d) Israel

266. The satellite named 'Aeolus' is the world's first space mission to map the Earth's wind on a global scale launched by:
(a) JAXA (b) NASA (c) ISRO (d) European Space Agency
267. The Indian government and _____ joined hands for Rs. 240 crore research programme to develop a Next Generation Influenza Vaccine to protect citizens worldwide.
(a) European Union (b) World Bank (c) African Union (d) United Nations
268. Which among the following countries table tennis men's team has won the first medal in table tennis in the Asian Games 2018, since tables tennis introduced in Asian Games in 1958?
(a) China (b) Japan (c) India (d) South Korea
269. Who has become the first Indian badminton player to win a silver medal at the Asian Games?
(a) Saina Nehwal (b) P.V. Sindhu
(c) Gutta Jwala (d) Ashwini Ponnappa
270. Who has won the gold medal in the men's 800m final at Asian Games 2018?
(a) Jinson Johnson (b) Manjit Singh (c) Ranjit Singh (d) Kulwant Singh
271. The third edition of World's Biggest Open Innovation Model - Smart India Hackathon 2019 was launched in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Chennai (d) Bengaluru
272. The SCO Peace Mission Exercise 2018 closing ceremony was conducted at the drill ground of 255th Inter Services Firing Ranges, Chebarkul located in:
(a) India (b) Russia (c) China (d) Kazakhstan
273. India and Pakistan commenced crucial talks on various aspects of the Indus Waters Treaty, the first bilateral engagement since Prime Minister Imran Khan took office. India and Pakistan signed the treaty in:
(a) 1950 (b) 1956 (c) 1960 (d) 1998
274. According to RBI annual report, which among the following countries remains a preferred destination for foreign direct investment (FDI)?
(a) India (b) China (c) Singapore (d) Japan
275. Chandrayaan-2, ISRO's "most complex mission", is scheduled to be launched in January next year. This mission will now be launched with the help of:
(a) GLSV Mark II (b) GLSV Mark III (c) GLSV Mark IV (d) GLSV Mark V
276. Who has clinched India's first men's triple jump gold in 48 years at the Asian Games 2018?
(a) Amrender Singh (b) Akash Chopra (c) Arpinder Singh (d) Vinod Kumar
277. Dutee Chand joined her illustrious compatriots such as PT Usha in the list of athletes who have won more than one medal at the Asian Games. Dutee Chand hails from:
(a) Assam (b) Manipur (c) Odisha (d) Kerala
278. The International Day against Nuclear Tests is observed every year on:
(a) August 27 (b) August 28 (c) August 29 (d) August 30
279. The National Sports Day in India is celebrated every year on:
(a) August 26 (b) August 28 (c) August 29 (d) August 30

280. Who has been appointed as the Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)?
(a) Arun Kumar Singh (b) Satya S Tripathi
(c) Navtej Sarna (d) Subrahmanyam Jaishankar
281. Which Indian international airport will now be known as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport?
(a) Nagpur (b) Mumbai (c) Pune (d) Panaji
282. Name the footballer, who has been named as the UEFA Men's player of the year.
(a) Luka Modric (b) Cristiano Ronaldo (c) Mohamed Salah (d) Lionel Messi
283. Name the first Bollywood film, which has been released in Saudi Arabia recently.
(a) Satyamev Jayate (b) Genius (c) Gold (d) Stree
284. In a first of its kind initiative, which among the following Indian states started "Mil -Banche" an interactive programme between schools and society is being organized in all government schools of the state?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Bihar (d) Uttarakhand
285. Who has become the first Indian Heptathlete to win an Asian Games gold recently?
(a) Sangeeta Chanu (b) Suchitra Pillai (c) Ankita Bhargava (d) Swapna Barman
286. Recently, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved "O-SMART" Umbrella scheme which will particularly benefit the:
(a) Students (b) Lawyers (c) Fishermen (d) Engineers
287. Recently, NASA scientists peering deep inside Jupiter's Great Red Spot, a storm raging on the planet for over 350 years has detected signs of _____ above the planet's deepest clouds.
(a) Oxygen (b) Water (c) Hydrogen (d) Clouds
288. The five-day Vostok 2018 exercises scheduled to be held from September 11 is a military exercise between:
(a) Russia and Japan (b) USA and Germany (c) Russia and China (d) France and Germany
289. Name the Indian, who has won Gold Medal in the men's 1500 metres race event at the Asian Games recently.
(a) Amar Mahajan (b) Deepak Hooda (c) Jinson Johnson (d) Prashant Raman
290. India Post started its long-awaited payments bank by launching _____ branches across the country, making it the fourth such entity to start operations.
(a) 400 (b) 520 (c) 585 (d) 650

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. d The site namely "The Walled City of Jaipur, Rajasthan, India" has been proposed for World Heritage. There are a total of 37 World Heritage sites in India at Present.
2. c 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.
3. b 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.
4. a The IT ministry launched a desktop software e-Aksharayan to enable editing of text printed on scanned documents and it can be downloaded for free from its website.
5. c Scaling 22 places in 4 years to 96th rank, India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has managed to break into the top 100 of United Nations E-Government Index (EGDI).
6. a The first 'Nepal-India Think Tank' Summit to foster greater collaboration and knowledge-sharing among the think tanks of the two countries was held in Kathmandu. Former Prime Minister of Nepal and Co-Chairman of ruling Nepal Communist Party, Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' inaugurated the summit.
7. a India becomes first South Asian country to get access to America's cutting-edge technology known as 'Strategic Trade Authorisation' status (STA-1). Currently there are 36 countries on STA-1 list. India is the only South Asian country to be on the list. Other Asian countries designated as STA-1 are Japan and South Korea.
8. a Mauritius-based SBM Group has received Reserve Bank of India approval to operate in the country through a wholly owned subsidiary the first foreign lender to receive such a licence after local incorporation was introduced in 2013.
9. c Reliance Industries Ltd has regained its status as the country's most valued firm by market capitalisation (m-cap), replacing Tata Group's TCS from the top slot.
10. c China successfully launched an optical remote sensing satellite, as part of its high-resolution Earth observation project which will also provide data for the Belt and Road Initiative. The Gaofen-11 satellite was launched on a Long March 4B rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in northern Shanxi Province.
11. a Rajasthan has become the first State in the country to implement the national policy on biofuels unveiled by the Centre in May this year.
12. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation of India's first Mobile Open Exchange Zone (MOX) at World Trade Centre in Noida.
13. b NITI Aayog will host an Investors' Conference on August 10, 2018 at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra for the Holistic Development of Islands.
14. a The UAE launched a landmark three-month visa amnesty programme that will benefit hundreds of illegal foreign workers, including Indians, who are overstaying their permits.
15. b T-Mobile US named Nokia to supply it with \$3.5 billion in next-generation 5G network gears, marking the world's largest 5G deal so far and solid evidence of a new wireless upgrade cycle starting to take root.
16. c Scientists from USA-EU have discovered a new shape called scutoid while studying nature's way of moulding tissue to form the skin, cavity linings and the building blocks of organs. The shape has five sides on one end and six on the other and a triangular surface on one of its longer edges.

17. b The Union Ministry of Earth Sciences - tasked with coordinating the exercise - unveiled a blueprint of the 'Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)'. Centre has drawn up a five-year, Rs. 8,000 crore plans to explore the deep recesses of the ocean. "The mission proposes to explore the deep ocean similar to the space exploration started by ISRO about 35 years ago".
18. c Jakarta, along with Palembang, will host the 18th Asian Games. Jakarta will implement the odd-even car policy during the 18th Asian Games which will be held in Indonesia from August 18 to September 2.
19. d Earth Overshoot Day marks the date when humanity has used more from nature than our planet can renew in that entire year. As humans use more and more of the Earth's natural resources, this date is arriving sooner each year. While Earth Overshoot Day was marked on 2 August in 2017, it has arrived on 1 August in 2018.
20. b Kerala, Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran launched the work on India's first public sector hotel run entirely by women for women in the Thiruvananthapuram.
21. c Saina Nehwal became the first woman to reach the quarter-finals of BWF World Championships for eight consecutive times.
22. b The National Handloom Day is observed every year on 7 August to honour the handloom weavers in the country.
23. d India-origin mathematician Akshay Venkatesh was awarded the prestigious Fields medal. The 36-year-old was chosen as one of the four winners of the prize, which is commonly referred to as the Nobel prize for mathematics.
24. b Kerala, with 77 points, leads among the States and Union Territories, followed by Rajasthan (68) and Andhra Pradesh (66.5) in the first edition of the State Energy Efficiency Preparedness Index, brought out jointly by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and NITI Aayog.
25. c Seven Indian companies have made it to the latest Fortune 500 list of the world's biggest corporations in terms of revenue, with state-owned IOC continuing to be the highest ranked Indian firm and Reliance Industries jumping 55 places.
26. d NASA's Parker Solar Probe, mankind's first mission to 'touch' the Sun, has been moved to its launch pad and is on schedule take off next week.
27. c 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.
28. a Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa, a former ally of ousted President Robert Mugabe, has won country's landmark Presidential election.
29. a The Ministry of Culture, Government of India has introduced a new scheme namely 'Seva Bhoj Yojna' with a total outlay of Rs. 325.00 Crores for Financial Years 2018-19 and 2019-20.
30. d Dr Najma Heptullah won the award for 2013, Hukum Dev Narayan for 2014, Ghulam Nabi Azad for 2015, Dinesh Trivedi for 2016 and Bhartruhari Mahtab for 2017.
31. a The Lok Sabha has passed the National Sports University Bill 2018 which seeks to establish a first-of-its-kind sports university in Manipur to promote sports in the country.
32. c Hindi Academy Delhi has given its highest Shalaka Samman for 2017-18 to lyricist and poet Javed Akhtar.
33. c India has been elected as the President of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) for a period of two years.
34. b The Telangana State Information Technology, Electronics and Communication department (ITE&C) has signed a MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the global digital transformation provider Tech Mahindra to launch India's first Blockchain District in the state of Telangana.

35. d The Jammu and Kashmir High Court got its first woman judge in 90 years as President Ram Nath Kovind issued warrants appointing advocate Sindhu Sharma and former district and sessions judge Rashid Ali Dar to the bench.
36. c The Chandrababu Naidu-led Andhra Pradesh government has decided to give an allowance of Rs 1,000 per month to the all the unemployed youth in the state under the "Mukhyamantri Yuva Nestam" scheme. Any unemployed youth with a degree or diploma between the age of 22 and 35 can avail the benefit.
37. a The famous Kadaknath chicken meat from Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh has now got a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
38. b The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) ratified Iran's membership in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC).
39. a China just lost its ranking as the world's number two stock market. Chinese equities were worth \$6.09 trillion, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. That compares with \$6.17 trillion in Japan. The US has the world's largest stock market at just over \$31 trillion.
40. b Apple Inc became the first \$1 trillion publicly listed U.S. company crowning a decade-long rise fueled by its ubiquitous iPhone that transformed it from a niche player in personal computers into a global powerhouse spanning entertainment and communications.
41. b Delhi has toppled Gujarat from the top spot in a list of 21 states and union territories with the most investment potential, according to a report by economic think-tank NCAER. The national capital is followed by Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Haryana, Maharashtra, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka and West Bengal.
42. a Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the State's first 'skill museum' at the Industrial Training Institute in Cuttack. The museum, which will run under the auspices of the Odisha Skills Development Authority, is spread over an area of 2,600 sq. ft. and showcases several ancient and modern equipment and machinery.
43. d The UK government announced new plans to change the law for organ and tissue donation to address the urgent need for organs within Indian-origin communities in the country.
44. b The value of one Apple Inc is now nearly the same as the cumulative value of India's top 50 blue chip companies. The iPhone maker's market capitalisation at \$1.02 trillion is a few million away from Nifty 50 index's value of \$1.18 trillion and may soon surpass it if the Cupertino-based technology giant continues its stellar run on the bourses.
45. b French company IDEMIA, a global leader in augmented identity, said it has become the first company to be given the certification to manufacture and personalise RuPay chip contact and contactless cards on the qSPARC v2 platform.
46. d Chinese scientists claimed to have created the first single-chromosome yeast while not affecting the majority of its functions, a breakthrough that could help in furthering research related to aging and diseases in humans.
47. a England emerged victorious in their 1000th Test. Ben Stokes took the wicket of Virat Kohli as England won the first Test at Edgbaston by 31runs. The first Test between India and England was the 1000th Test match for England. England's first ever Test match was played when a team arranged and led by James Lillywhite played Australia between March 15 and March 19, 1877.
48. c India's Gaganjeet Bhullar chipped in from off the green to record an eagle on the 17th hole to propel himself to a one-shot victory in the Fiji International over Australia's Anthony Quayle at the Natadola Bay Championship Golf Course. Gaganjeet Singh Bhullar is an Indian professional golfer.
49. a To address the issues, challenges and concerns of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), the apex decision making body of GST Council in its 29th meeting has decided to create a sub-committee headed by MoS Finance Shiv Pratap Shukla to look into various issues and submit a report.
50. d Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched an awareness campaign named "Horn Not Ok" along with a statewide mobile app "Shoor Nahin" or no noise in Shimla and Manali in which the drivers will be motivated not to use horns.

51. c Virat Kohli broke new ground by topping the International Cricket Council Test batting rankings for the first time in his career when the latest edition was published.
52. c The world's first-ever facility to create thermal batteries was inaugurated in Andhra Pradesh.
53. b Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched 'horn not ok' awareness campaign and 'shaur nahin' (no noise) mobile application.
54. d Acting Chief Justice of Delhi High Court, Justice Gita Mittal has been appointed as the Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court. She is set to become the first woman Chief Justice of the High Court.
55. c Russia has appointed movie star Steven Seagal as a special envoy to the U.S. Mr. Seagal's role would be to "facilitate relations... including cooperation in culture, arts, public and youth exchanges."
56. b An intertidal art gallery, filled with around 30 sculptures acting as a habitat for coral and other marine species, was opened in the Maldives.
57. d Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has launched an ambitious scheme which promises to provide Rs. 54,100 from the birth of a girl child till her graduates. Mr. Kumar launched the 'Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana' and expressed his government's resolve for empowerment of women.
58. d In Women's Hockey, the Netherlands have been crowned the world champions for a record eighth time.
59. a Carolina Marin claimed a slice of history as the Spaniard became the first woman to win three badminton World titles with an emphatic victory over P.V. Sindhu of India.
60. a World number three Alexander Zverev beat teenager Alex De Minaur to defend his Washington Open title.
61. c 12 August was first designated International Youth Day by the UN General Assembly in 1999, and serves as an annual celebration of the role of young women and men as essential partners in change, and an opportunity to raise awareness of challenges and problems facing the world's youth.
62. b The Supreme Court has notified guidelines for according 'senior advocate' designation to lawyers and constituted a five-member permanent committee headed by the Chief Justice of India to shortlist candidates.
63. b Ajay Data is the first Indian to have been selected as a member of ccNSO and will be representing India at a global level. He will be the custodian of Asia, Australia and Pacific Islands as a member of ccNSO.
64. b The Xingkong-2 (Starry Sky-2) hypersonic experimental waverider vehicle designed by the China Academy of Aerospace Aerodynamics in Beijing can reportedly achieve a top speed six times the velocity of sound.
65. b Indra Nooyi to step down as PepsiCo CEO.
66. b The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, inaugurated the 'Festival of Democracy' in Thiruvananthapuram to mark the conclusion of the diamond jubilee celebrations of the Kerala legislative assembly.
67. c Union Government has approved 122 new research projects of 112 crore rupees under its Impacting Research Innovation and Technology 'IMPRINT-2' scheme.
68. c Tarunabh Khaitan, a law academic affiliated with the universities of Oxford and Melbourne, has been declared the winner of the inaugural Letten Prize for young researchers launched by the Letten Foundation and the Young Academy of Norway.
69. c DMK stalwart and five-time chief minister of Tamil Nadu, M Karunanidhi, passed away at the age of 94 after battling illness for a long time.
70. b Tokyo 2020 will be the first Olympics to use facial recognition technology to increase security around all venues.

71. a After Mrs Funnybones and The Legend of Lakshmi Prasad , actor-turned-author Twinkle Khanna is all set to come up with her third book, Pyjamas are Forgiving , in September.
72. c Chinese scientists have discovered the most lithium-rich giant star ever known - with lithium abundance 3,000 times higher than normal - which could shed new light on the evolution of the universe.
73. c Australia's population will hit a record 25 million almost a decade earlier than projected, as it attracts hundreds of thousands of migrants each year, latest government data shows.
74. c With the swearing-in of Justice Indira Banerjee, the Supreme Court, for the first time in its history, has three sitting women judges .The two other women judges are Justices R. Banumathi and Indu Malhotra, the first Supreme Court woman judge who was directly appointed from the Bar.
75. c Seeking to promote tourism, the government has extended e-visa facility for citizens of 165 countries at 25 airports and five seaports.
76. b Google's next version of Android finally has a name: "Pie". It's rolling out right now and is packed with new features, from extended battery life to new gesture navigation.
77. a The Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve has become the 11th Biosphere Reserve from India that has been included in the UNESCO designated World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR).
78. b Shri Hardeep S Puri, Minister of State (I/C), Housing & Urban Affairs launched the Swachh Survekshan 2019 on 10th August 2018 in New Delhi. Parallely, a slew of new initiatives under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) as well as the Ease of Living Index will also be launched.
79. a The Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports & Information and Broadcasting Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore flagged off an all-women expedition to Mt. Manirang (6593Mt/21631 ft) in Himachal Pradesh.
80. d Rashida Tlaib is set to become the first Muslim woman elected to Congress after comfortably winning her Democratic primary election in the US state of Michigan. The 42-year-old, who is the daughter of Palestinian immigrants, won primary in the state's 13th congressional district, securing 33.6 percent of the vote, compared with the 28.5 percent her nearest rival Brenda Jones received.
81. b US President Donald Trump has nominated Aditya Bamzai, a prominent Indian-American law professor and legal expert to an agency on privacy and civil liberties. Aditya Bamzai, a professor at University of Virginia's School of Law, has been nominated by Trump to be a member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board for the remainder of a six-year term expiring January, 29, 2020.
82. a Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Aviation Suresh Prabhu launched Niryat Mitra - mobile App in New Delhi. The app developed by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) is available both on Android and on IOS platforms.
83. c Swedish home furnishings major IKEA opened its first store in India in Hyderabad, kicking off its retail journey five years after it received approval to invest in the country's single-brand retail sector.
84. b State Bank of India (SBI) launched the Multi-Option Payment Acceptance Device or MOPAD, a unified payment option that accepts multiple payment methods. Under this, customers will be able to pay through credit or debit cards, Bharat QR, Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and SBI Buddy (e-wallet) at a Point of Sale (PoS) terminal.
85. c The Competition Commission has approved U.S. retail giant Walmart's proposed acquisition of Flipkart. In May, Walmart announced the acquisition of 77% stake in Flipkart, the biggest takeover by the U.S. Company till date.
86. a NDA candidate and JD(U) MP Harivansh Narayan Singh was elected the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, defeating Opposition candidate and Congress MP B.K. Hariprasad. The final tally of votes showed 125 for Mr. Harivansh and 101 for Mr. Hariprasad.

87. c The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, visited Uttar Pradesh and inaugurated the 'One District One Product' Summit in Lucknow aimed at showcasing its traditional cottage industries and crafts.
88. d Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was apprised of joint issue of Postage Stamps on India-South Africa on the theme, "20 Years of Strategic Partnership between India and South Africa". The joint stamps were released in June 2018.
89. b Colombia's President-elect Ivan Duque has been sworn in as the country's 60th president, amid concern over the influence he will have on the country's peace process.
90. d As per consolidated FDI Policy, 2017, the Government has allowed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) up to 100% under automatic route in the educational institutions subject to applicable laws/sectoral rules/regulations/ security conditions.
91. d Global Innovation Index, GII- 2018 launched in India. India's rank on the Global Innovation Index (GII) has improved from 60 in 2017 to 57 in 2018. India has been consistently climbing the GII ranking for the past two years.
92. d Scientists at the University of Tokyo in Japan have discovered a trove of forty-four exoplanets in solar systems beyond our own in one go, dwarfing the usual number of confirmations from extrasolar surveys.
93. a Former 400m hurdles world champion Nicholas Bett has died after being involved in a car crash in his home country of Kenya, aged 28. The hurdler made history in 2015 when he became his country's first athlete to win a World Championships gold medal in a short distance race, and he is also a two-time African Championship medallist.
94. c August 9, 2018 is the 76th anniversary of Quit India movement. On this day in 1942, father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi gave the clarion call of Do or Die to all Indians to drive away Britishers from the country. The movement had begun from Gwalia Tank in Mumbai. The day is observed as August Kranti Day every year.
95. b The Ministry of HRD has embarked on a major and new initiative Project called 'Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds' (SWAYAM), which will provide one integrated platform and portal for online courses. The objective is to ensure that the every student in our country has access to the best quality higher education at the affordable cost.
96. d World Biofuel Day is observed every year on 10th August to create awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels as an alternative to conventional fossil fuels and to highlight the various efforts made by the Government in the biofuel sector.
97. b Star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra was named the Indian contingent's flag-bearer for the Asian Games opening ceremony to be held on August 18 in Jakarta.
98. b Prime Minister launched web portal PARIVESH, a single window for environmental, wildlife, forest and Coastal Regulation Zone clearances.
99. d Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will launch a defence industrial corridor in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh.
100. c The joint exercise for the year 2018 will be conducted by Central Military Commission of Russia from 22 August to 29 August 2018 at Chebarkul, Chelyabinsk, Russia.
101. d Justice Rajendra Menon was sworn in as Chief Justice of Delhi High Court in a ceremony held at the Raj Niwas in New Delhi.
102. a NCW member Rekha Sharma has been appointed as the chairperson of the National Commission for Women.
103. b Former Chilean president Michelle Bachelet has been appointed the next UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. 193-member UN General Assembly approved her appointment.
104. c Axis Bank has become the first bank in the country to introduce Iris Scan Authentication feature for Aadhaar-based transactions through its micro ATM tablets.

105. a UAE's share in total remittances was 26.9%, followed by the United States (22.9%), Saudi Arabia (11.6%), Qatar (6.5%) and Kuwait (5.5%).
106. c Justice Gita Mittal was sworn in as the first woman Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court. After the court's registrar general read out the warrant of Mittal's appointment, she was administered the oath of office by Governor NN Vohra at a ceremony at Raj Bhavan in Srinagar.
107. b The Southern Naval Command at Kochi has rescued scores of people stranded in the flood-hit areas of Kerala as part of the Indian Navy's "Operation Madad" for the rain and landslide-ravaged state. The Indian Army also launched a major rescue and relief operation in Kerala.
108. a V.S. Naipaul, the Trinidad-born Nobel laureate whose precise and lyrical writing in such novels as "A Bend in the River" and "A House for Mr Biswas" and brittle, misanthropic personality made him one of the world's most admired and contentious writers, passed away in London. Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul known as Sir Vidia Naipaul or Sir V. S. Naipaul was a Caribbean writer of Indian descent and Nobel Laureate who was born in Trinidad with British citizenship.
109. d Marie Curie, the pioneering scientist who was the first person to win two Nobel prizes, has topped a poll asking which woman has had the most significant impact on world history. BBC History magazine compiled a list of "100 women who changed the world", chosen by 10 experts, and asked its readers to help rank them.
110. a Indian-American Aruna Vishwanathan was among the three women honoured with 'Women in Business: Making a Difference Award' at the 19th annual Indo-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston (IACCGH) gala.
111. b Exim Bank of India has signed a multilateral cooperation agreement with member development banks of BRICS to undertake "collaborative research" in distributed ledger/blockchain technology.
112. c To encourage more Indian travellers to visit Israel, Embassy of Israel has opened a visa application centre in the Kolkata city for tourists from West Bengal and the north eastern states.
113. b Santhali has become the first Indian tribal language to get a Wikipedia edition in its own script after the Santhali Wikipedia went live earlier this month.
114. d The Indian shooters preparing for the Tokyo Olympics will have top-class competition at home as the International Shooting Federation (ISSF) has awarded a World Cup in principle to India in 2020.
115. b England pace spearhead James Anderson, became the first bowler in the history of Test cricket to pick up 100 wickets at Lord's.
116. d India handed over the first lot of houses built under a USD 350 million project for Indian-origin people, mostly Tamils, in Sri Lanka's tea plantation areas. Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined the special ceremony through video conferencing at Dunsinane Estate in Nuwara Eliya city to hand over the houses constructed under the Indian Housing Project, the largest one by India in any country.
117. a Scientists say the powerful Indonesian earthquake that killed more than 300 people and lifted the island it struck by as much as 25 centimetres (10 inches).
118. d NASA's Parker Solar Probe, mankind's first mission to 'touch' the Sun, has been launched on a seven-year long journey to unlock the mysteries of our star's fiery outer atmosphere and its effects on space weather.
119. b India's second moon mission Chandrayaan-2 will now be launched in the January-March window in 2019 instead of later this year as the design was changed to enable it to land on the lunar surface, a top ISRO official said. "We have planned to launch Chandrayaan mission in January 3. We are fixing with that (date) and targeting that.
120. b Somnath Chatterjee, former Lok Sabha Speaker, passed away following a multi-organ failure at a city hospital. Chatterjee was the Speaker in the first five-year term (2004-2009) of the United Progressive Alliance government and was elected to Parliament's Lower House for ten times since 1971.

121. c International Youth Day (IYD) is an awareness day designated by the United Nations. The purpose of the day is to draw attention to a given set of cultural and legal issues surrounding youth. The first IYD was observed on 12 August, 2000.
122. c The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will have a year-long Vikram Sarabhai centenary celebration starting in August 2019 to honour the visionary scientist and legendary founding father. Sarabhai, the architect of the Indian space programme, the first ISRO chief and renowned cosmic ray scientist, was born on August 12, 1919.
123. c Rafael Nadal won his 80th ATP World Tour title- and spoiled Stefanos Tsitsipas' 20th birthday. The top-ranked Nadal beat the unseeded Greek upstart 6-2, 7-6 (4) for his fourth Rogers Cup crown and fifth victory of the year. He has 33 ATP World Tour Masters 1000 titles.
124. b Lionel Messi won his 33rd title with Barcelona to become the most successful player in the Catalan club's history. Barcelona beat Sevilla 2-1 in the Spanish Super Cup as Messi overtook Andres Iniesta, who had 32 titles when he left this summer for the Japanese league.
125. b Goa's archives, considered to be one of the oldest in Asia, will now be digitised under the Centre's 'Smart City Mission', Minister Vijai Sardesai said. Goa has several records in its archives dating back to the time when the state was under the Portuguese rule. The state was liberated from the 450-year-old colonial rule in 1961.
126. b Ahead of the Independence Day, the Delhi Police inducted India's first all-woman Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team for anti-terrorist operations.
127. b Chhattisgarh is the first state in the country to provide Right to Skills Development to the youth. Around 2.7 lakh youth has already been employed in several fields.
128. d A UN human rights committee has heard there are credible reports that China is holding a million Uighurs in "counter-extremism centres". Gay McDougall, a member of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, raised the claims at a two-day UN meeting on China.
129. a Pune is the most liveable city, followed closely by Navi Mumbai and Greater Mumbai in a ranking of 111 Indian cities with the national capital ranked at a lowly 65 on the Ease of Living Index released by the government.
130. d India's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) is considered to be the most patriotic brand, according to a survey, followed by Tata Motors, Patanjali, Reliance Jio and BSNL. The survey conducted by UK-based online market research and data analytics firm YouGov.
131. b India's first genetic resource bank, which could have far reaching implications in conservation and revival of extinct and endangered species in the near future, was inaugurated at Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology's (CCMB) Laboratory of Conservation of Endangered Species (LaCONES) facility in Hyderabad.
132. a The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, launched PARIVESH (Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub) on the occasion of World Biofuel Day in New Delhi. PARIVESH is a Single-Window Integrated Environmental Management System, developed in pursuance of the spirit of 'Digital India' initiated by the Prime Minister and capturing the essence of Minimum Government and Maximum Governance.
133. a Jodhpur and Marwar railway stations in Rajasthan were declared the cleanest in the third cleanliness survey, released by railway minister Piyush Goyal. The survey was conducted by the Quality Council of India (QCI) on the 407 major railway stations (75 A1 category and 332 A category stations). The first survey was conducted by the IRCTC in 2016, the second by QCI.
134. b The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh disclosed that Jammu will be the first city in North India to get a full-fledged Space Technology Research Centre, devoted to research, academics and post-graduation study.

135. c Astronomers have used an Indian telescope to discover the most distant radio galaxy ever known, located at a distance of 12 billion light-years.
136. b Major Aditya Kumar who fired on a stone-throwing mob and Rifleman Aurangzeb who was abducted and killed by terrorists, both in Jammu and Kashmir, were selected for the Shaurya Chakra on the eve of Independence Day. Sepoy Vrahma Pal Singh was selected for the Kirti Chakra posthumously for his act of bravery in a counter-insurgency operation.
137. a The Supreme Court approved a proposal submitted by the Union of India (UOI) to colour-code vehicles in New Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR) according to the fuel they run on, in an effort to help counter air pollution.
138. d Austria's capital Vienna has beaten Melbourne to be ranked the "world's most liveable city" in a new annual survey released, ending the southern Australian city's seven-year reign.
139. a Nepal-India Literature Festival 2018 was held in Birgunj, Nepal.
140. c The Tata brand remained India's most valuable brand this year as per the latest findings by Brand Finance, a U.K.-based independent brand valuation and strategy consultancy. After years of below 5% growth in brand value, the Tata group surged ahead with 9% growth in brand value, estimated at \$14.2 billion.
141. b Iran unveiled a next generation short-range ballistic missile and vowed to further boost its capabilities. The new Fateh Mobin missile had "successfully passed its tests" and could strike targets on land and sea.
142. a Vaishali R, became India's latest Woman Grandmaster (WGM) after earning her third and final WGM norm at Riga Technical University Open at Latvia.
143. d Senior bureaucrat Ashish Kumar Bhutani has been appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).
144. c PM healthcare scheme, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Abhiyan (PMJAA) will start from September 25.
145. a Nihal Sarin became India's 53rd Grandmaster after attaining his third and final GM-norm in the Abu Dhabi Masters.
146. a Pressing on the often-repeated phrase on the roads "Sadak kya tere baap ki hain" filmstar and road safety brand ambassador Akshay Kumar kick-started his awareness campaign for the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
147. b Nearly five lakh people joined hands to form a 700 km-long human chain along the India-Pakistan border in Rajasthan to honour martyrs and boost morale of soldiers on the eve of Independence Day.
148. c Manipur Governor Dr. Najma Heptulla has inaugurated first thematic tourism project under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme the 'North East Circuit: Imphal & Khongjom' in Imphal.
149. d In Paraguay, Mario Abdo Benítez has been sworn in as the new President after defeating his liberal rival.
150. c PM Modi announces manned space mission taking Indian astronauts to space on board 'Gaganyaan' by 2022.
151. d The survey, prepared by Kotak Wealth-Hurun, features Smitha Crishna, the third generation heir of the Godrej empire, as the wealthiest Indian women with net worth of Rs 37,570 crore.
152. c Botanists have discovered a new species of orchid in Peru's central Amazonian rainforest. The new species of orchid was recently discovered in the Tingo Maria National Park.
153. b Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the first non-Congress Prime Minister to complete a full term in office passed away. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was sworn in as the 10th Prime Minister of India.
154. d Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar dedicated the state's first civil airport at Hisar to the people of Haryana, saying it would open the possibilities of creating an economic corridor and vibrant industrial ecosystem.

155. b Ease of Living Index launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on 13th August 2018 has attracted wide public enthusiasm and provided an opportunity to Urban Planners, Municipal Authorities and public at large a baseline data for wider public debate.
156. b Mumbai gives India its first baby penguin.
157. b Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita has been re-elected as president after beating opposition candidate, Soumaila Cisse, in a runoff vote.
158. a Telangana celebrated the 72nd Independence Day was celebrated by launching two major schemes - free eye screening for all citizens and life insurance for farmers. Under "Kanti Velugu", the entire population of 3.7 crore will be provided free eye care. The authorities will not only conduct eye screening but will also provide free medicines, spectacles and arrange for free surgeries, if required.
159. b The 24th World Congress of Philosophy (WCP) opened in Beijing. It is the first time that the quinquennial event is being held in China.
160. b Indian and Singapore navies will commemorate 25th anniversary of maritime bilateral exercise.
161. a Tata Consultancy Services pipped Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) to regain the crown of India's most valued company in terms of market capitalisation.
162. c The 18th edition of the Asian Games officially kicks off in Indonesian capital Jakarta.
163. c The expert panel will be headed by B Sesikeran, former director of National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) as also the current director Hemalatha, besides Doctor Nikhil Tandon.
164. c Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), chairman Imran Khan has been elected as Pakistan's new prime minister.
165. c The 11th World Hindi Conference concluded in Mauritius. Prime Minister of Mauritius Praveen Kumar Jagannath inaugurated the conference in Port Louis.
166. b In Sri Lanka, the ten-day festival of the historic Esala Maha Perehera began in Kandy with a grand procession.
167. a Teen cyclist Esow Alben has created history by claiming India's first ever medal - a silver- at the UCI Junior Track Cycling World Championships in Aigle, Switzerland.
168. a The 2018 Asia Cup will be a One Day International (ODI) cricket tournament scheduled to be held in the United Arab Emirates in September 2018.
169. b India's ambitious space agency ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) is getting ready to launch its very own probe to study the Sun called the Aditya-L1.
170. d Delhi government's additional director of health S K Arora has been awarded the prestigious WHO World No Tobacco Day 2018 Award for his extraordinary contribution towards tobacco control.
171. d Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has become the first public sector enterprise to make a transaction on the "TReDS platform".
172. d The Central Government which aims to improve digital connectivity and infuse digital literacy in all the states of the country recently launched the 'Digital Northeast Vision Document 2022' in Guwahati.
173. b The NDRF has the biggest ever relief and rescue operation in flood-affected Kerala. A total of 58 teams have been deputed to work in the state out of which 55 are working on the ground.

174. b The Indian Railways plans to invest 44,000 crore to build a 1,100-km greenfield freight corridor on the east coast connecting Kharagpur in West Bengal with Vijaywada in Andhra Pradesh.
175. d Scarlett Johansson leads this year's ranking with \$40.5 million in pretax earnings between June 1, 2017 and June 1, 2018, making her acting's top-earning female lead.
176. c The Indian Army and the Royal Thai Army completed a two-week-long platoon level annual joint military exercise aimed at strengthening partnership and cooperation between them. 'Exercise Maitree' commenced on August 6 in Thailand.
177. d Apart from these roller sports, jet skiing, contract bridge, kurash and basketball (3×3) are some of the sporting disciplines that will be making their entry among the 58 other events at the Games. As one of the most diverse events, the Asian Games will once again be a visual spectacle for fans across the globe.
178. c Walmart, the world's largest retailer, has completed the acquisition of majority stake in India's leading e-commerce marketplace, Flipkart.
179. d India's current account deficit (CAD) will widen to 2.5 per cent of the GDP in the current fiscal due to higher oil prices that has been accentuated by rupee depreciation, Moody's and other experts have said.
180. b Former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan died in Switzerland. He was 80. He was the first black African to become UN secretary-general.
181. b India has successfully flight tested the indigenously developed helicopter launched Anti-Tank Guided Missile 'HELINA' from Pokhran in Rajasthan.
182. b A dominating Bajrang Punia opened India's gold medal account by defeating Japan's Daichi Takatani 11-8 in the final of Men's Freestyle 65 kg. Category.
183. c Former Army chief Gen Dalbir Singh has been awarded with United States (US) 'Legion of Merit'.
184. b An influential American lawmaker, Carolyn Maloney from New York has said that she will introduce a historic legislation to posthumously award Mahatma Gandhi a Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian award in the US, for inspiring peaceful movements for civil rights around the world.
185. a Iran unveiled its first domestic fighter jet "Kowsar" plane at a defence show in Tehran. Images on state television showed President Hassan Rouhani sitting in the cockpit of the new "Kowsar" plane at the National Defence Industry exhibition.
186. a After launching a mobile wallet, financial services, an online marketplace, among other verticals, One97 Communications, the company that owns Paytm, has announced the launch of its artificial intelligence (AI) cloud computing platform Paytm AI Cloud for developers, start-ups, and enterprises in partnership with global tech giant Alibaba.
187. d Germany's current account surplus is set to remain the world's largest this year, according to the Ifo economic institute, in an estimate that is likely to renew criticism of Chancellor Angela Merkel's economic and fiscal policies.
188. b Vinesh Phogat created history by becoming the first Indian woman wrestler to win a gold medal at the Asian Games, brushing aside her rivals with remarkable ease in the 50kg category.
189. c Rishabh Pant made his Test debut during the third match against England at Trent Bridge, Nottingham. He became the first Indian batsman to open his account in Test cricket with a six.
190. a Virat Kohli became the highest scoring Indian captain in on foreign countries Tests. He surpassed Sourav Ganguly, who had scored 1693 runs in 43 innings at an average of 43.41.
191. c World Mosquito Day, observed annually on 20 August, is a commemoration of British doctor Sir Ronald Ross's discovery in 1897 that female mosquitoes transmit malaria between humans.

192. c Chhattisgarh's proposed capital, Naya Raipur, will now be named Atal Nagar after former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the state government decided.
193. a The first-ever joint air exercise involving the Indian Air Force and the Royal Malaysian Air Force commenced at Subang Air Base in Malaysia.
194. d Bihar Governor Satya Pal Malik was appointed as the new governor of Jammu and Kashmir. The appointment was approved by President Ram Nath Kovind. Lal ji Tandon will replace Malik as the Bihar Governor.
195. a The Supreme Court quashed the Election Commission order providing for use of the "None of the Above" option (Nota) in Rajya Sabha elections. The NOTA option was provided on the ballot paper after the name of the last candidate in each of these biennial elections held since 2014.
196. b Chinese researchers have developed the world's first-ever 4D printing for ceramics that are mechanically robust and can have complex shapes, offering broad potential applications in telecommunications, electronics and even space exploration.
197. d Using data from a NASA instrument aboard the Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft, a team of scientists has confirmed there is water ice on the surface of the Moon.
198. c Saurabh Chaudhary clinched gold, while Abhishek Verma bagged the bronze medal in men's 10m Air Pistol shooting event at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta. Saurabh Chaudhary became only the fifth Indian shooter to claim gold in Asian Games history, beating a field of multiple world and Olympic champions in the 10m air pistol finals in Indonesia.
199. c With several incidents of tropical cyclones and severe weather events striking over Kerala and Karnataka coasts in the recent times, the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences is proposing to set up a Cyclone Warning Centre in Thiruvananthapuram.
200. b Former West Bengal Governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi was honoured with this year's Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award for promoting communal harmony and peace. The award was presented on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
201. d The General Assembly established 21 August as the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism in order to honor and support the victims and survivors of terrorism and to promote and protect the full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.
202. d Retired judge of the Chhattisgarh High Court T P Sharma was appointed the new chief Lokayukt of the state.
203. a The President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates the "International Buddhist Conclave (IBC), 2018" in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on 23rd August, 2018. India has decided to organize 6th International Buddhist Conclave on the theme, "Buddha Path - The Living Heritage".
204. c Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) has emerged as the second fastest growing airport in the world in the first half of 2018 in terms of actual growth in number of passengers. It has recorded 1, 58, 50,352 flyers during the six-month period, with an addition of 41, 80,852 passengers over the corresponding period last year.
205. a Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen's space company Stratolaunch unveiled details of launch vehicles that will carry satellites to multiple orbits and inclinations on a single mission. It also announced a reusable space cargo plane it is developing that will be used to carry cargo to and from Earth and a follow-on variant that could carry people.
206. c Ahead of the 2018 Mens Hockey World Cup Tournament in the state, Odisha government has decided to launch a build-up campaign in 17 cities from August 29. Odisha is organising the Men's Hockey World Cup 2018 tournament for the first time.
207. b PV Sindhu is seventh on the Forbes list of highest-earning women sportspersons in the world. Despite badminton's semi-professional status in most parts of the world, the Rio Olympics silver medallist earned \$8.5 million in the period between June 2017 and June 2018 - this includes her prize winnings and endorsement deals.

208. a UEFA President Aleksander ?eferin has paid tribute to former England captain David Beckham, calling him "a true football icon of his generation" after selecting the former Manchester United FC and Real Madrid CF midfielder to receive the 2018 UEFA President's Award.
209. b "Xhoixobote Dhemalite" (Rainbow fields), an Assamese film dealing with the sensitive issue of children growing up in violent times, has won another award - this time for screenplay at a US festival. Last month, "Xhoixobote Dhemalite" became the first Assamese film to be commercially released in the US.
210. d Kuldeep Nayar, renowned journalist, author and human rights activist passed away in Delhi. Nayar, a former editor of The Indian Express, was also the author of 15 books including "Beyond the Lines", "India after Nehru" and "Emergency Retold".
211. d Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje inaugurated India's biggest Bhamashah Techno Hub in Jhalana Industrial Area of Jaipur. Raje said the country's biggest centre equipped with the ultra-modern technology will help around 700 entrepreneurs to work under one roof and realise their dreams.
212. c Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced that Japan will be the country partner for the Make in Odisha Conclave-2018.
213. a Reliance Industries (RIL) became the first Indian company to cross Rs 8 trillion in market capitalisation. The stock gained 1.9 per cent to close at Rs 1,270; valuing the Mukesh Ambani-led firm at Rs 8.05 trillion (\$115 billion at current exchange rate of Rs 70.11 for a dollar).
214. c A rocket holding the Aeolus wind surveying satellite launched from Europe's spaceport Kourou, French Guyana, the European Space Agency (ESA) confirmed. The satellite will be placed at an altitude of 320 kilometers (200 miles) above the Earth.
215. c The world's largest 3D printed reef was installed at Summer Island in the Maldives, in what is hoped could be a new technology-driven method to help coral reefs survive a warming climate.
216. a The Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IITH) has launched an exclusive Incubator to boost the chip design sector. The Fabless Chip Design Incubator (FabCI) a first of its kind in India will focus on creating an ecosystem for grooming startups in chip design.
217. b US Scientists have developed a wireless 'ReMix' in-body GPS system that can pinpoint the location of ingestible implants and track tumours inside the body. In animal tests, the team demonstrated that the system dubbed ReMix can track the implants with centimetre-level accuracy. Similar implants could be used to deliver drugs to specific regions in the body.
218. a The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) has given recognition to India's indigenous sport of Kho-Kho, a development that has been welcomed by Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore. Kho-Kho will now be included as a demonstration sport in the Asian Indoor Games, with the possibility of being included as a discipline in the next Asian Games.
219. b Akshay Kumar has emerged as the seventh highest-paid actor in the world. He earned \$40.5 million in 2018, according to Forbes magazine. The Gold actor is closely followed by his contemporary Salman Khan in the ninth place, who raked in \$38.5 million.
220. d International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition, August 23 of each year, the day designated by UNESCO to memorialize the transatlantic slave trade.
221. a Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI) conducted India's first auction of wind power projects in February 2017 in which tariff of Rs. 3.46 was discovered, which was much lower than feed in tariffs in vogue those days. A part capacity of 126 MW, located in Bhuj (Gujarat) was commissioned by M/s Ostro on 24.08.2018, ahead of schedule.
222. b India and Singapore signed the Second Protocol amending the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) in New Delhi. Singapore is the second largest trading partner of India within ASEAN and India is the largest trading partner of Singapore in South Asia, with a bilateral trade of USD 17.7 billion in 2017-18.

223. d According to the report by CERT-In, the maximum number of cyber-attacks on official Indian websites are from China, US and Russia. It has also flagged the possibility of "malicious actors from Pakistan using German and Canadian cyberspace for intruding into Indian cyberspace and carrying out malicious activities".
224. a International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), a global monument conservation body, has launched an initiative to assess the damage to the rich cultural and built heritage in flood-devastated Kerala and set up an emergency response platform. Rome-based ICCROM is an inter-governmental organisation dedicated to the preservation of cultural heritage worldwide through training, information, research, cooperation and advocacy programmes.
225. b Australian Treasurer Scott Morrison will become Australia's new prime minister after winning a Liberal party leadership vote, ending an internecine battle that has scarred the conservative government ahead of an election due by May 2019.
226. c A South Korean appeals court sentenced former President Park Geun-hye to 25 years in jail in a case arising from a far-reaching corruption scandal that toppled her from power in 2017. Park became South Korea's first democratically elected leader to be forced from office when the Constitutional Court removed her over a scandal that landed the heads of two conglomerates in jail.
227. d Exercise Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Peace Mission 2018, the latest in 'Peace Mission' series formally started on 24 August 2018 at Chebarkul, Russia. The opening ceremony was conducted in Chebarkul, Russia with military contingents of the all eight SCO member nations participating in this exercise.
228. c The European Union is all set to ban the use of halogen light bulbs and households are expected to switch to LED lights, starting next month. While the manufacturers can sell their existing stock, they will not be allowed to reorder any more from September 1, 2018.
229. b Virat Kohli became the first Test captain to score 200 runs or more seven times in a winning cause. He achieved this feat overtaking the two legendary Australians - Sir Don Bradman and Ricky Ponting. Bradman and Ponting have each scored 200 or more runs in a winning cause six times.
230. a The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has congratulated Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan on winning Gold in Men's Doubles Tennis event at the 18th Asian Games 2018 in Jakarta - Palembang, Indonesia.
231. b The Odisha government approved a proposal for setting up a Legislative Council in the state. A proposal in this regard was approved at the Cabinet meeting here presided over by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Parliamentary Affairs Minister B K Aarukha.
232. a Former President Pranab Mukherjee launched the National Electoral Transformation or NETA mobile application, a platform where voters can review and rate their elected representatives and hold them accountable as well.
233. c Scott Morrison was sworn in as Australia's 30th prime minister at Government House evening as the sun set on an extraordinary week in Canberra. Scott Morrison was sworn in as Australia's seventh prime minister in 11 years after a stunning party revolt against Malcolm Turnbull.
234. d Sweden released a handbook of its "feminist foreign policy" for rights groups and foreign governments, showcasing lessons from the Scandinavian nation's flagship approach to promoting women's rights globally.
235. c The World Bank has priced the world's first public bond created and managed using only blockchain in a A\$100 million (\$73.16 million) deal designed to test how the technology might improve decades-old bond sales practices.
236. b Industry chamber Assocham appointed former bureaucrat Uday Kumar Varma as its new Secretary General. He succeeds DS Rawat who held the position for nearly 14 years, Assocham said in a statement.
237. d NASA will launch into space the most advanced laser instrument of its kind, beginning a mission to measure - in unprecedented detail - changes in the heights of Earth's polar ice. NASA's Ice, Cloud and land Elevation Satellite-2 (ICESat-2) will measure the average annual elevation change of land ice covering Greenland and Antarctica to within the width of a pencil, capturing 60,000 measurements every second.

238. b Fouaad Mirza became the first Indian to win an Asian Games individual medal in the equestrian event since 1982 besides guiding the country to a second-place finish in the team competition.
239. a The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Dr G. Satheesh Reddy, Distinguished Scientist and Scientific Adviser to Defence Minister (SA to RM) to the post of Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development (DDR&D) and Chairman, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
240. b The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has said that Share and Care is the core philosophy of our nation. He was addressing the gathering after releasing the Book 'Colonial Syndrome: The Videshi Mind Set in Modern India', written by Prof. Rama Krishna Rao, in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
241. b Baby Rani Maurya was sworn in as the new governor of Uttarakhand. The oath of office and secrecy was administered to Maurya by the acting Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court Rajiv Sharma at a ceremony held at Raj Bhawan.
242. c In a first in Indian aviation, SpiceJet operated a demonstration flight powered by biofuel. The airline's Q400 plane has conducted a flight at Dehradun. The first-ever flight using biofuel was flown ten years ago by the Virgin Atlantic airlines between London and Amsterdam.
243. c At the G20 Digital Economy Ministerial Meeting in Salta, in the north-west of Argentina, G20 ministers and senior officials issued a declaration that reflects the G20's commitment towards promoting "policies and actions that catalyze digital transformations.
244. b Emmerson Mnangagwa urged Zimbabwe to unite behind his presidency, as he took the oath of office following a divisive election that US observers said had called the country's democratic credentials into question.
245. d Punjab National Bank (PNB) said a Department of Financial Services report has rated it as number one state-owned bank in terms of digital transactions.
246. d NASA's Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security-Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx) spacecraft has captured the first glimpse of its distant target - asteroid Bennu - after almost two years of journey.
247. c A newly-launched restaurant in the Nepalese capital is using robots as waiters under the slogan, "where food meets technology". The Naulo Restaurant ("naulo" means new in Nepali) operates with the help of five robots, three named Ginger and two named Ferry, designed and manufactured by Paaila Technology, a Nepali company established by six young engineers, specializing in robotics and artificial intelligence (AI) technology. Naulo is the first digitalized robotic restaurant not just in Nepal, but also in South Asia.
248. d China defeated Taiwan to win the first ever Arena of Valor gold medal, as esports made a splashy debut as an exhibition event at the 2018 Asian Games.
249. b More than 40 per cent districts in south India witnessed deficient rainfall this monsoon, the India Meteorological Department data revealed, despite Kerala experiencing excessive precipitation. The worst hit state by deficient rainfall in South India was Tamil Nadu, according to the IMD data.
250. d PepsiCo's India-born CEO Indra Nooyi will be honoured with the Game Changer of the Year award by a global cultural organisation in recognition of her business achievements, humanitarian record and advocacy for women and girls around the world.
251. a External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated the 'Jaipur Foot' camp in Vietnam and met with 500 Vietnamese beneficiaries of the free India-made prosthetic limb.
252. c "29 states and UTs have signed the MoU and have started working on implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna. The national rollout of the PMJAY scheme will happen on September 25, the birth anniversary of RSS ideologue Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay.

253. c A blend of oil from jatropha seeds and aviation turbine fuel propelled the India's first ever bio jet fuel-powered flight between Dehradun and Delhi.
254. c External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated the 3rd Indian Ocean Conference in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. She also unveiled the bust of Mahatma Gandhi in the Chancery building at the Embassy of India in Hanoi. The third edition of Indian Ocean Conference is being held at Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam.
255. c DBS Bank has been named the world's best bank by Global Finance magazine, in a reflection of its ability to invest in digital innovation while still maintaining stable operations for its customers.
256. b Goldman Sachs, a leading global investment bank and active investor in India, announced the appointment of Prachi Mishra as a managing director and chief India economist. She will be based in Mumbai. Prior to joining Goldman Sachs, Mishra was the deputy division chief of the western hemisphere department at the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
257. b Star Indian shuttler P.V. Sindhu created history as she stormed into the women's single badminton final at the 2018 Asian Games but her compatriot Saina Nehwal had to settle for a bronze. After defeating World No.2 Akane Yagamuchi of Japan 21-17, 15-21, 21-10 in the semis, the 23-year-old became the first Indian shuttler to reach the final of badminton singles competition at the Asiad.
258. c Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian javelin thrower to win an Asian Games gold medal as he shattered his own national record by clearing a distance of 88.06m at Jakarta. Chopra's gold is India's only second medal in javelin throw in Asian Games history after Gurtej Singh won a bronze in 1982 in New Delhi.
259. a Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Irfan has set the world record for the most economical bowling spell in T20 history while playing for the Barbados Tridents in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL).
260. b The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), one of India's premier avian research institutes, has started operating its first regional centre on the campus of Wetland Research and Training Centre near Chilika Lake, Odisha.
261. d As announced by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during his Independence Day address, India's first Indian human mission will be launched by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) by 2022.
262. b The Odisha government has proposed to come up with a single revenue act by merging various revenue laws enacted at different point in times.
263. b World's largest water colour festival - the International Water Colour Festival (IWCF) 2018, held under the aegis of Department of Tourism, Art-Culture, Sports & Youth Affairs, Government of Jharkhand.
264. c Axis Securities has launched commodity broking services through its membership with MCX and become the first bank subsidiary to enter the commodity broking business.
265. a Scientists from USA have set a new Guinness World Record by creating the smallest medical robot - a device measuring just 120 nanometres that could assist in future cancer and Alzheimer's treatments.
266. d The satellite named 'Aeolus' is the world's first space mission to map the Earth's wind on a global scale launched by European Space Agency from French Guyana.
267. a The Indian government and the European Union (EU) joined hands for Rs. 240 crore research programme to develop a Next Generation Influenza Vaccine to protect citizens worldwide.
268. c Indian table tennis men's team settled for a historic bronze medal after losing 0-3 to South Korea in a lop-sided semifinal at the 18th Asian Games. This is the first time India has won a medal in table tennis in the Asian Games, since tables tennis was introduced in Asian Games in 1958.
269. b PV Sindhu created history by becoming the first Indian badminton player to win a silver medal at the Asian Games.

270. b Manjit Singh won gold while Jinson Johnson won silver in the men's 800m final at Asian Games 2018 as Indian athletes continued to dominate the tracks in Indonesia. Manjit clocked 1:46.15 while Johnson clocked 1:46.35 to make it a memorable double for India.
271. a The third edition of World's Biggest Open Innovation Model - Smart India Hackathon 2019 was launched by the Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Shri Prakash Javadekar in New Delhi.
272. b The SCO Peace Mission Exercise 2018 culminated on 29 August 2018 after days of joint training amongst multinational forces of eight SCO nations. The closing ceremony was conducted at the drill ground of 255th Inter Services Firing Ranges, Chebarkul, Russia. In this fifth edition of SCO Peace Mission Exercise, India participated for the first time.
273. c India and Pakistan commenced crucial talks on various aspects of the Indus Waters Treaty in Lahore, the first bilateral engagement since Prime Minister Imran Khan took office. India and Pakistan signed the treaty in 1960 after nine years of negotiations, with the World Bank being a signatory.
274. a India remains a preferred destination for foreign direct investment (FDI) as domestic consumption remains strong, according to RBI annual report. According to the UNCTAD's Investment Trends Monitor (2018), India was the 10th largest recipient of global FDI in 2017.
275. b Chandrayaan-2, ISRO's "most complex mission", is scheduled to be launched in January next year after experts suggested changes to avert failure, its chief K Sivan said. The changes suggested have also led to increase in the weight of the mission and it would now be launched with the help of GLSV Mark III launcher.
276. c Arpinder Singh clinched India's first men's triple jump gold in 48 years, with a jump of 16.77m in the Asian Games.
277. c Dutee Chand from Odisha joined her illustrious compatriots such as PT Usha in the list of athletes who have won more than one medal at the Asian Games as she added a silver to her kitty after finishing second earlier in the women's 100m dash.
278. c The International Day against Nuclear Tests is observed on August 29. It was established on December 2, 2009 at the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly by the resolution 64/35, which was adopted unanimously.
279. c The National Sports Day in India is celebrated on 29 August each year. This day marks the birthday of Major Dhyan Chand Singh, the hockey player who won gold medals in Olympics for India in the years 1928, 1932 and 1936.
280. b UN Secretary General António Guterres has appointed veteran Indian development economist and UN official Satya S Tripathi as Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
281. b Mumbai's international airport will now be known as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport.
282. a Luka Modric has been named UEFA Men's Player of the Year ahead of former Real Madrid team-mate Cristiano Ronaldo and Liverpool forward Mohamed Salah.
283. c Akshay Kumar-fronted "Gold" has become the first Bollywood film ever to release in Saudi Arabia.
284. b In Madhya Pradesh, in a first of its kind initiative, "Mil -Banche", an interactive programme between schools and society is being organized in all government schools of the state .
285. d Swapna Barman created history by becoming the first Indian heptathlete to win an Asian Games gold.
286. c The services under this O-SMART will provide economic benefits to a number of user communities in the coastal areas, namely fisheries as this will help in reducing the search time for fishermen resulting savings in the fuel cost.
287. b NASA scientists peering deep inside Jupiter's Great Red Spot - a storm raging on the planet for over 350 years - has detected signs of water above the planet's deepest clouds.

288. c China will join Russia in a giant military exercise, sending a message of deterrence to the U.S. which has designated Beijing and Moscow as "revisionist powers".
289. c Jinson Johnson won Gold Medal in the men's 1500 metres race event at the Asian Games.
290. d India Post started its long-awaited payments bank by launching 650 branches across the country, making it the fourth such entity to start operations.

