

# **MANTHAN**

## **Current Affairs Supplement**

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# Preface

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**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**



**Bengaluru became the first Indian city to come up with a fire safety blueprint**

- Bengaluru became the first Indian city to come up with a city-specific fire safety blueprint to be implemented over the next five years beginning this year.

**CJI Dipak Misra decided to recommend removal of Justice Shukla**

- Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra has decided to recommend the removal of Allahabad High Court judge Justice S N Shukla as part of an in-house procedure after he was found guilty of misconduct by an internal probe into a medical college admission scam.

**India slipped to 42nd place on EIU Democracy Index**

- India has slipped to 42nd place from 32nd place last year and remains classified among "flawed democracies" on the Economist Intelligence Unit's annual Global Democracy Index amid the "rise of conservative religious ideologies" and increase in vigilantism and violence against minorities as well as other dissenting voices.
- While Norway has again topped the list, followed by Iceland and Sweden.

**Indian Railways set to get first high-speed electric locomotive in March**

- Indian Railways' new 12,000 horsepower electric locomotive -- being produced in collaboration with Alstom of France and which can run at speeds of up to 120 kmph -- would be rolled out in March when French President Emmanuel Macron visits India.
- The assembly of the first 12,000 hp locomotive at Bihar's Madhepura plant is complete and its trials are on.

**Over 2 crore new toilets to be built under the Swachh Bharat Mission**

- Over two crore toilets will be constructed across the country under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) in the next fiscal, with the government also proposing to launch a new scheme called GOBAR-DHAN for solid waste management.
- A scheme called the Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBAR-DHAN) for the management and conversion of cattle dung and solid waste in farms to compost, fertiliser, bio-CNG.

**India joined Ashgabat agreement**

- India has joined the Ashgabat agreement, which envisages setting up of an international transport and transit corridor linking central Asia with the Persian Gulf to significantly ramp up trade and investment.
- Besides Turkmenistan, the other founding members of the agreement are Iran, Oman and Uzbekistan and these countries had signed the pact on April 25, 2011.

## **Jaitley announced new tunnel at Sela pass in Arunachal**

- Finance Minister Arun Jaitley announced the government's plan to build a tunnel through the Sela Pass located between the Tawang and West Kameng districts of Arunachal Pradesh at an elevation of 13,700 ft which will ensure faster movement of troops in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh bordering China.

## **First defence industrial corridor between Chennai and Bengaluru**

- The first of the two defence industrial production corridors, as announced in the Union Budget, will link Chennai and Bengaluru, According to the Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

## **Uttar Pradesh government inaugurated the state's first ever butterfly park in Kanpur**

- The Uttar Pradesh government has inaugurated the state's first ever butterfly park in Kanpur to preserve the ecosystem.

## **Task force set up to study AI application in military**

- The Department of Defence Production has constituted a task force headed by Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran to study use of artificial intelligence, which it said has potential to provide military superiority apart from driving technology-driven economic growth.

## **The first ever International Kala Mela inaugurated by the Vice President**

- The First ever International Kala Mela was inaugurated by the Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu in New Delhi.
- The International Kala Mela has been organised by the Lalit Kala Akademi in partnership with IGNCA of the Ministry of Culture. More than 800 artists from across the world are taking part in the Festival.

## **No diesel locomotives will be allowed in Delhi area after March 2019**

- Railway Minister Piyush Goyal has been informed by the railway board that no diesel locomotives will be allowed in the Delhi area after March 2019, indicating that the national transporter was on track to completely phase out such locomotives by 2022.

## **Centre Sanctions New Project to Control Pollution of River Sal at Navelin, Goa**

- The Centre sanctioned a new project to control pollution in River Sal at Navelim town in Goa.
- The project was sanctioned by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change under the National River Conservation Plan and would cost of Rs. 61.74 cr.

## **SC to set up fresh constitution bench to examine aspects of citizenship of immigrants in Assam**

- The Supreme Court will set up a fresh Constitution Bench to examine the validity of various aspects of a provision of the Citizenship Act 1955, including the cut-off date for awarding citizenship to Bangladeshi immigrants in Assam.

## **Rashtrapati Bhavan hosted Nobel Laureates Seminar**

- Rashtrapati Bhavan hosted a one-day Nobel Laureates Seminar, organised by the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India in association with the Nobel Foundation.

## **CJs appointed for five States**

- The Centre appointed five new chief justices for High Courts in Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya and poll-bound Tripura.

- **Justice Tarun Agarwala**, the Chief Justice of **Allahabad High Court**, has been **appointed Meghalaya High Court Chief Justice** and **Justice Abhilasha Kumari**, Gujarat High Court judge was **appointed Manipur High Court Chief Justice**.

### President of India inaugurated the Mahamastakabhisheka Mahotsav 2018

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- **The President of India**, Shri Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the **Mahamastakabhisheka Mahotsav 2018** of **Gommateshwara Bhagwan Sri Bahubali Swami** at **Shravanabelagola**.
- The Mahamastakabhisheka Mahotsav is **celebrated once every 12 years**. It has been **celebrated for about a 1,000 years**.

### 'Gobardhan Yojana' launched to support farmers

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- The **Haryana government** has launched the '**Gobardhan Yojana**' to provide for the sale of **organic manure and cow urine** with an aim to benefit farmer.

### National Meet on Grassroot Informatics- VIVID 2018

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- **National Informatics Centre (NIC)** has organized a three-day **National Meet on Grassroot Informatics-VIVID 2018** in **New Delhi**.
- The event was **inaugurated** by **Electronics and Information Technology minister Ravi Shankar Prasad** at **India Habitat Centre**. The theme for **VIVID 2018** is - **Cyber Security and Innovation**.

### Government gives approval, financial sanction to build 12 nuclear power reactors

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- Out of the **12 nuclear reactors**, **10** will be **indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors** and **two Light Water Reactors** will be established in cooperation with the **Russia**.
- **Two PHWRs** each will be set up in **Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Haryana**, while **four** will be established in **Rajasthan**, the two **LWRs** each having a capacity of **1,000 MW** will come up at **Kudankulam** in **Tamil Nadu**.

### Karnataka panel proposes 3-colour official state flag

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- A committee led by chairman of **Kannada Development Authority G S Siddaramaya**, the nine-member committee has **recommended a flag with the yellow and red of the unofficial flag to be separated by white in the middle with the state symbol on it**. If adopted with clearance from the **MHA**, **Karnataka** will be the **second state** after **Jammu and Kashmir** to have an official state flag.

### NITI Aayog organized two-day Conference on Jobs and Livelihood opportunities with CII

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- **NITI Aayog** has organized a **two-day Conference on Jobs and Livelihood opportunities** in collaboration with **Confederation of Indian Industries, CII** at **Dr. Ambedkar International Centre** in the capital.

### First ever Mega distribution camp graced by the President of India

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- A **Mega Camp for Distribution of Aids and Assistive Devices to Divyangjan and Senior Citizens** under **ADIP & Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana** was organized by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India** at **Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh)** on **11th February 2018**.
- This was the **first ever Mega distribution camp** to be graced by the **President of India**.

### Kerala topped Niti Aayog's comprehensive Health Index report

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- The health index report, **prepared by NITI Aayog**, has ranked **Punjab second** in overall performance by larger states in the country.
- According to the report, **among the larger states (21)**, **Kerala** has topped the list, followed by **Punjab** and **Tamil Nadu**.

## "Swachh Bharat Sanitation Park" inaugurated in Delhi

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- The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, in collaboration with the Environmental Sanitation Institute and Tata Trusts, has developed a Sanitation Park which was inaugurated in the Capital.
- The Sanitation Park was developed at CGO Complex in New Delhi with an objective to create awareness on various safe technological options.

## Union Home Minister to inaugurate "Hunar Haat"

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- Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh has formally inaugurated "Hunar Haat", at Baba Khadak Singh Marg, Connaught Place, New Delhi.
- The theme of "Hunar Haat" being organized by the Ministry of Minority Affairs is "Development with Dignity".

## IT ministry sets up panels for artificial intelligence roadmap

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- The ministry of electronics and IT has formed four committees to prepare a roadmap for the national artificial intelligence programme.
- The committees will be headed by IIT directors and experts from industry bodies such as Nasscom.
- The four committees will be for citizen centric services; data platforms; skilling, reskilling and R&D; and legal regulatory and cybersecurity.

## Indian Railways launched 'Voluntary Safety Reporting'

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- Indian Railways launched the "Voluntary Safety Reporting" website for its 13 lakh employees who can now report internal lapses in safety operations and hazards anonymously.

## India, Palestine signed six infrastructure agreements

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- India and Palestine signed six agreements on the infrastructural development in the Palestine.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between India and Palestine for setting up of a India-Palestine Super-specialty hospital at Beit Sahour in Bethelhem Governorate at a cost of USD 30 million
- A MOU was signed by the two countries for the construction of an India Palestine Centre for empowering women, "Turathi" at a cost of USD 5 million.

## Delhi government, MoEF jointly launched 'Clean Air Campaign'

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- The Delhi government and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change jointly launched the Clean Air Campaign, which will continue for 2 weeks till February 23.

## Indian Prime Minister inaugurated project for first Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi

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- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the project for the first Hindu temple to be built in UAE capital Abu Dhabi. The name of the temple is Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS) Temple.
- The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi is Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The currency of the UAE is United Arab Emirates dirham.

## International Conference on Unani Medicine concluded

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- The two day International Conference on Unani Medicine organized by Ministry of AYUSH through the Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM) on 150th birth anniversary of Hakim Ajmal Khan concluded in New Delhi.
- Mohammad Ajmal Khan better known as Hakim Ajmal Khan was a famous physician in Delhi, India and one of the founders of the Jamia Millia Islamia University.



## PM Narendra Modi visited 125-year-old Shiva temple in Muscat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the 125-year-old Shiva Temple in Muscat's Matrah area (Oman), one of the oldest in the region. The temple was constructed by the merchant community from Gujarat. Adi Motishwar Mahadev, Motishwar Mahadev and Hanuman are its deities.
- He also visited the iconic Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, the main & biggest mosque of Oman, inaugurated in 2001.

## India is ranked 10th in the world in the forest and tree cover

- As per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2017, "India is ranked 10th in the world, with 24.4% of land area under forest and tree cover, even though it accounts for 2.4 % of the world surface area and sustains the needs of 17 % of human and 18 % livestock population".
- India ranks among the top ten countries of the world in terms of forest area, despite the fact that none of the other 9 countries has a population density of more than 150 persons per sq km, compared to India, which has a population density of 382 persons per sq km.
- As per the latest FAO report, India is ranked 8th in the list of Top Ten nations reporting the greatest annual net gain in forest area.
- As per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2017, Andhra Pradesh (2141 sq km), followed by Karnataka (1101 sq km) and Kerala (1043 sq km) have shown the maximum increase in forest cover. "Madhya Pradesh has the largest forest cover of 77,414 sq km in the country in terms of area, followed by Arunachal Pradesh with 66,964 sq km and Chhattisgarh (55,547 sq km).
- In terms of percentage of forest cover with respect to the total geographical area, Lakshadweep with (90.33 per cent) has the highest forest cover, followed by Mizoram (86.27 per cent) and Andaman & Nicobar Island (81.73 per cent)".
- While overall green cover, including tree patches outside recorded forest areas, reported an incremental 1% increase (8,021 sq km) over the last assessment year in 2015.

## Shri Nitin Gadkari released India's first ever Highway Capacity Manual

- The Minister of Road Transport & Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Shri Nitin Gadkari released India's first ever Highway Capacity Manual in New Delhi.
- The manual, known as Indo-HCM, has been developed by CSIR – CRRI on the basis of an extensive, country-wide study of the traffic characteristics on different categories of roads like single lane, two-lane, multi-lane urban roads, inter-urban highways and expressways and the associated intersections on these roads.
- The study involved seven academic institutions including IITs at Roorkee, Mumbai and Guwahati, School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, Indian Institute of Engineering and Science and Technology, Shibpur, Sardar Vallabhai Patel National Institute of Technology, Surat and Anna University, Chennai.

## Foundation stone for the first dairy plant laid in Bihar

- The Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shri Radha Mohan Singh laid the foundation stone for the first dairy plant in Motihari of East Champaran District, Bihar. About 80 million farmers are connected with the dairy business and they rear 80% of the total milch cattle.
- According to the minister, for the first time in the country Rashtriya Gokul Mission was launched in December 2014 for the conservation and promotion of the indigenous breeds.

## Mumbai to have India's first artificial intelligence centre

- In a first in the country, Maharashtra government will be setting up an institute for artificial intelligence (AI) in Mumbai. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis will unveil the plan for the institute during the Magnetic Maharashtra Summit and at the Global Economic Conference in Canada next month.



## President of India hosted 'LPG Panchayat' in New Delhi

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- The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, hosted an 'LPG Panchayat' 2018 at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.
- The LPG Panchayat was organised by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas with an aim to provide a platform for LPG consumers to interact with each other, promote mutual learning and share experiences. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas intends to conduct 1 lakh such Panchayats across India before March 31, 2019.

## R.K. Singh inaugurated 'Indian Power Stations 2018'

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- Union Minister of State (IC) for Power and New and Renewable Energy, Shri R.K. Singh inaugurated the 'Indian Power Stations 2018' - three-day International Conference on Operations and Maintenance in New Delhi.
- The Minister exhorted the NTPC to become India's power sector multinational by setting up power plants in other Nations and become world's largest power producer.

## Jogighopa is set to become India's gateway to South-East Asia

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- Jogighopa, a small town in Assam, is set to become India's gateway to South-East Asia as well as the rest of the North-East with the road ministry gearing up to develop a multimodal logistics park (MMLP) there with road, rail, waterways and air transport facilities.
- A special purpose vehicle, backed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), will be created to execute the project.

## For the first time India hosted World Congress on Information Technology Summit

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- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed The World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT), a global IT summit held in Hyderabad to discuss how digitisation is going to shape India and the industry.
- National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom) has also begun its 26th edition of its annual flagship event – The Nasscom India Leadership Forum which is happening in collaboration with the World Congress for Information Technology and in partnership with the Telangana government.
- This is for the first time that the WICT was held in the country.

## President of India inaugurated international conference 'Agricon 2018' and 'Agriexpo 2018'

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- The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, inaugurated the international conference 'Agricon 2018' and 'Agriexpo 2018' at Chandrashekhar Azad University of Agriculture & Technology (CSAUT), Kanpur.

## India's first online radio station launched

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- India's first online radio station was launched in New Delhi. Deeper penetration of smart phones and internet data has given fillip to several non-conventional services and Radio Umang is one of them.
- With 24 hours programming, it has found listeners in Hindi speaking regions of India and in over 60 countries worldwide. Themed around love, peace and happiness, the station airs enriching talk shows and soothing soulful music.
- Radio Umang app is available in Google Play Store and coming soon on Appstore.

## Bengal becomes first state to opt out of 'Modicare'

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- Bengal became the first state to opt out of the National Health Protection Scheme unveiled in the Union Budget, with CM Mamata Banerjee announcing the state will not "waste" its hard-earned resources to contribute its share to the programme.

- The Finance Minister announced the world's largest government funded health care programme titled **National Health Protection Scheme** to cover over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) providing coverage upto 5 lakh rupees per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.

### Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated Gigabit Connectivity with Sri Lanka

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- **Union Minister for Law and Justice and Electronics and IT Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad** has inaugurated the gigabit connectivity between the **National Knowledge Network of India** and **LEARN network of Sri Lanka**.
- This dedicated high speed internet connectivity will **boost the collaboration among the academic institutions of India and Sri Lanka**.

### Karnataka gets more Cauvery water

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- The **Supreme Court** increased Karnataka's entitlement of **Cauvery River** by 14.75 tmcft to 284.75 tmcft and reduced Tamil Nadu's share to 404.25 tmcft while keeping allocations for Kerala and Puducherry unchanged.
- **Kerala** will access 30 tmcft and **Puducherry** 7 tmcft and the award that now has the SC's seal can be re-examined only after 15 years, in 2033.
- The Supreme Court has also decided to **set up a Cauvery Water Board** to look into the allocation and timely release of the water to all parties concerned.
- **Cauvery River** is flowing through the states of **Karnataka and Tamil Nadu**. It is the **third largest** after **Godavari and Krishna** in south India and the **largest in Tamilnadu**. The river's basin covers three states and a Union Territory as follows: **Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, and Puducherry**.

### Union Government to set up 562 more Ekalavya schools

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- **Union Government** will set up **562 more Ekalavya Model Residential Schools** in tribal areas of the country.
- **Ekalavya Model Residential Schools** will be set up on par with **Navodaya Vidyalayas** to provide the best quality education to the tribal children in their own environment by 2022 in every block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons with special facilities for preserving local art and culture besides providing training in sports and skill development.

### National Conference under the title of “Agriculture 2022 – Doubling Farmers’ Income”

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- The **Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW)** is organized a **National Conference** under the title of “**Agriculture 2022 – Doubling Farmers’ Income**” at **National Agriculture Science Complex (NASC), Pusa, New Delhi**.
- The main aim of the conference is to build a consensus around appropriate recommendations that will help in shaping and sharpening the vision of the Government on **Doubling Farmers’ Income** by 2022 into actionable points.

### Vice President of India inaugurated the international Theatre Olympics held in India for the first time

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- The **Vice President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu** inaugurated the **8th international Theatre Olympics** being held in India for the first time at the majestic **Red Fort in New Delhi**.
- The 51-day-long event will be theatrical extravaganza is being hosted in India by the **National School of Drama** under the aegis of **Ministry of Culture**.
- The theme of the **8th Theatre Olympics** is “**Flag of Friendship**” that aims to bridge borders and bring people of different cultures, beliefs and ideologies together through the medium of theatrical art.

- The **Theatre Olympics** was established in 1993 at Delphi, Greece. Being an international theatre festival, the Theatre Olympics presents some of the greatest theatre practitioners from around the world. Since 1993, the Theatre Olympics has been held seven times in the following countries: Japan (1999), Russia (2001), Turkey (2006), South Korea (2010), China (2014), Poland (2016).

### Sex ratio at birth dips in 17 of 21 large States, Gujarat records 53 points fall

- The sex ratio at birth (SRB) saw a decline in 17 out of 21 large States of the country, with Gujarat recording an alarming dip of 53 points, a report released by the Niti Aayog stated and stressed on the need to check sex-selective abortion.
- According to the report, among the 17 States which recorded substantial drop of 10 points or more, in Gujarat the SRB fell to 854 females from 907 females per 1,000 males born registering a drop of 53 points from 2012-14 (base year) to 2013-15 (reference year) in this indicator.

### Avani Chaturvedi becomes the first Indian woman to fly a fighter aircraft solo

- Avani Chaturvedi has become the first Indian woman to fly a fighter aircraft solo when she flew a MiG-21 bison in her first solo flight". She undertook the sortie from IAF's Jamnagar base, Gujarat, India.

Ms Chaturvedi was one of the first three female fighter pilots to be inducted into the Indian air force. Three women pilots, Ms Chaturvedi, Ms Bhawana Kanth and Ms Mohana Singh, had undergone strenuous training programme to fly fighter jets.

### India, Indonesia begin joint 'Garuda Shakti' exercise

- A special task force of the Indian Army and the Indonesian Army began sixth Garuda Shakti exercise in Bandung (Indonesia). The exercise is conducted on a reciprocal basis and its first edition was conducted in the year 2012 in India.

### Jaipur's Gandhi Nagar becomes country's first all-women railway station

- Jaipur's Gandhi Nagar railway station has become the first non-suburban station in the country to be completely operated by women.
- Neelam Jatav will be Gandhi Nagar's first woman station superintendent.

### Union Government sets up the "NITI Forum for Northeast"

- The Union Government has issued order setting up the 'Niti Forum for North-East' in New Delhi. The forum will be co-chaired by the Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog and Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (DoNER).
- The forum will have its Secretariat in the Ministry of DoNER.

The NITI Forum for Northeast is tasked to identify various constraints on the way of accelerated, inclusive and sustainable economic growth in the North East Region of the country and to recommend suitable interventions for addressing identified constraints. It will also review the development status in the NER.

### West Bengal to award India's largest floating solar plant by March

- The West Bengal government was expecting to award the country's single largest grid connected floating solar power project in Murshidabad by March.
- As of December, Kerala has the largest floated PV solar project of 500 Kwh size.

## PM Modi to inaugurate first ever TB India summit in March

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- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the first India TB summit in New Delhi held from March 13 to 16, which is aimed at generating sufficient momentum for his vision of a TB free India by 2025, five years ahead of the global TB elimination target of 2030.
- Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease usually caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (MTB).

## International Conference on Sustainable Biofuels, ICSB 2018

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- A two- day International Conference on Sustainable Biofuels is jointly being organized by Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India on behalf of Mission Innovation and Biofuture Platform at the Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre in New Delhi.
- The Sustainable Biofuel is one of the Seven Mission Innovation Challenges and India Co-leads this along with other countries Brazil, Canada and China.

## ‘Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav’ under ‘Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat’ begins in Madhya Pradesh

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- To celebrate the idea of unity in diversity, Ministry of Culture is organising a Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav under the Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat matrix at Maan Mandir Fort, Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh beginning February 24 for duration of 7 days. The States paired with Madhya Pradesh are Nagaland and Manipur.

The ‘Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat’ programme, aims to actively enhance interaction between people of diverse cultures living in different States and UTs in India, with the objective of promoting greater mutual understanding amongst them. As per the programme, each year, every State/UT would be paired with another State/UT in India for reciprocal interaction between the people.

## “Andaman & Nicobar Command to Host Milan 2018”

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- The second week of March will witness Andaman & Nicobar Command hosting a multinational mega event MILAN 2018. MILAN is a congregation of littoral navies conducted biennially by Indian Navy at the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, under the aegis of the Andaman and Nicobar Command.
- MILAN 2018 is being held at Port Blair from 06 March to 13 March 2018.
- With the underlying theme of 'Friendship Across the Seas'.

## Kerala deployed ‘Bandicoot’ robots to clean the sewers

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- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan launched an initiative to end the practice of manual scavenging in the state and deploy robots to clean the sewers.
- ‘Bandicoot,’ a robot developed by startup Genrobotics, will gradually be deployed across the state after testing it in Thiruvananthapuram. A robot called Bandicoot has been developed by a group of young engineers who run a startup named Genrobotics.

## Intermodal stations to come up in 15 cities

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- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has prioritized 15 cities across the country for development of intermodal stations (IMS), of which Nagpur and Varanasi have been selected as the pilot projects. The detailed pre-feasibility studies for Nagpur and Varanasi, and the development of DPRs for these cities is in the final stages.

### Meenangadi village set to become country's first carbon neutral panchayat

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- **Meenangadi**, nestled in the undulating hills of the Western Ghats, Kerala is set to become country's first 'carbon neutral' panchayat — a state of zero carbon footprint achieved when carbon emissions in the atmosphere are cancelled out by an equal amount of sequestration.
- The concept was launched as a pilot project in Meenangadi by state Finance Minister Thomas Isaac in June 2016.

### Haryana proposed death penalty for rapists of girls below 12 years

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- After Madhya Pradesh, now Haryana has proposed to punish rapists of girls below 12 years with a maximum punishment of death penalty. Madhya Pradesh became the first state in the country to introduce this stringent provision by passing the amendments in December 2017.
- "In case of a rape or gangrape of a woman up to 12 years of age, the offence shall now be punishable with death or rigorous imprisonment of not less than 14 years that may extend to imprisonment for life, i.e. for remainder period of persons's natural life and will also be liable for fine," while proposing to insert a provision under Section 376AA of the Indian Penal Code.





## International



### China's online population climbs to 772 million

- **China's online population, the largest in the world, has touched 772 million at the end of last year as 40.74 million new connections were added.**

### U.K. to have memorial to honour Sikh soldiers

- **The U.K. government has agreed to support and fund a memorial to honour the contribution of Sikh soldiers who fought for Britain and its allies during the two World Wars.**

### President Hamid set to be re-elected

- **Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid is all set to be re-elected following his nomination by the ruling Awami League party. The Constitution allows a President to serve two terms**

### India's annual financial allocation to Nepal for 2018-19 doubled under the Union Budget

- **India's annual financial allocation to Nepal for 2018-19 has nearly doubled under the Union Budget presented.**
- **The External Affairs Ministry has been allocated a total Rs. 15,011 crore, which indicates a marginal increase of Rs. 1,321 crore over the previous year's grant.**
- **For India's development and diplomatic engagement under the 'Neighbourhood First' policy, the Budget has allocated Rs. 5545 crore.**
- **Bhutan is traditionally the largest recipient of Ministry's allocation.**

### Bhutan opened its consulate in Guwahati

- **Bhutan became the second country after Bangladesh to open a consulate in Guwahati. Bangladesh had in May last year established a consular office headed by an assistant high commissioner, underlining the city's growing reputation as a trade and connectivity hub of a region of 45.6 million people.**

### International Conference on 'Demetrios Galanos and His Legacy' begins in New Delhi

- **The International Conference on 'Demetrios Galanos and His Legacy' was inaugurated at IGNCA in New Delhi.**
- **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is organizing the 8-days International Conference on, 'Demetrios Galanos and His Legacy'. The 8-day long convention is being held in Delhi and Varanasi, in addition to organizing the exhibition and folk music of Greece.**



## Ecuador votes bar on presidential re-election

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- Ecuadorans voted to bar unlimited re-election for their presidents in a blow to ex-leader Rafael Correa who had been eyeing a comeback in 2021.
- Current President Lenin Moreno showed 64 percent of ballots in favor of scrapping a provision allowing open-ended re-elections.

## Bangladesh appointed new chief justice

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- Bangladesh appointed Syed Mahmud Hossain as the new chief justice, three months after his predecessor and the country's first Hindu chief justice Surendra Kumar Sinha was virtually forced to resign amid "grave" graft allegations.

## Maldives government declared emergency

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- The Maldives government declared a state of emergency for 15 days, amid a spiralling political crisis in the island nation following a Supreme Court order last week to release Opposition leaders from prison.
- Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom is the current President of the Maldives, in office since 2013.

## Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh to be part of India's tiger census

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- For the first time, Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh are to be part of India's tiger census and uniting in arriving at tiger numbers, particularly in regions with shared borders.

## Chile created five national parks over 10m acres in historic act of conservation

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- Chile has created five sprawling national parks to preserve vast tracts of Patagonia – the culmination of more than two decades of land acquisition by the US philanthropists Doug Tompkins and Kristine McDivitt Tompkins and the largest donation of private land to government in South America.
- The five parks, spanning 10.3m acres, were signed into law by Chile's president Michelle Bachelet.

## China to allow Kailash yatra via Nathu La

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- China has agreed to allow pilgrims from India to visit Kailash-Mansarovar in Tibet Autonomous Region through Nathu La.

## Bermuda abolished same-sex marriage after legalising it a year ago

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- Bermuda has become the first jurisdiction in the world to legalise and then repeal same-sex marriage, in what critics have called an unprecedented rollback of civil rights by the British territory.

## First person of Punjabi origin, Jag Badwal elected party president in Canada's Ontario

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- Jag Badwal, a native of Jalandhar, has become the first person of Punjabi origin and Sikh to be elected as president of Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, considered the oldest political outfit in the Canadian province.
- Badwal's election comes just months after a lawyer of Punjabi origin, Jagmeet Singh, made history when he became the first person belonging to a visible minority group, and obviously the first of Indian and Sikh heritage, to be elected leader of one of Canada's three largest national political outfits, the New Democratic Party (NDP).

## Venezuela and Libya lose UN vote for third time in three years

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- Venezuela and Libya have been suspended from voting in the UN General Assembly for the third time in three years because of millions of dollars in unpaid dues to the world body.

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres informed the General Assembly that 14 countries including Venezuela and Libya were in arrears.
- The General Assembly is one of the six main organs of the United Nations, the only one in which all Member States have equal representation: one nation, one vote. All 193 Member States of the United Nations are represented in this unique forum to discuss and work together on a wide array of international issues covered by the UN Charter, such as development, peace and security, international law, etc. It is headquartered in New York, United States.

### CPN-UML named KP Sharma Oli as Nepal's next PM

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- The CPN-UML picked party Chairman KP Sharma Oli as the next Prime Minister of Nepal, over two months after the successful conclusion of historic parliamentary polls. The meeting decided to officially claim formation of the next government with the support from CPN Maoist Centre led by Prachanda.
- KP Sharma Oli served as the country's prime minister from October 11, 2015 to August 3, 2016.

### Presidential term is only five years in Sri Lanka

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- Sri Lanka's Supreme Court has clarified that President Maithripala Sirisena can stay in office only for five years, a week after he sought its opinion on whether he can serve a six-year term.
- Maithripala Sirisena is the 7th and current President of Sri Lanka, since 2015. Ranil Wickremesinghe is the current Prime Minister of Sri Lanka since 9 January 2015. The current president is Bidhya Devi Bhandari, elected in October 2015. She is the first female President of Nepla.

### China to host SCO Summit in port city of Qingdao this June

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- China announced that this year's summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) will be held in the city of Qingdao in June.
- The SCO is comprised of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.
- India and Pakistan joined SCO as full members on 9 June 2017 at a summit in Astana, Kazakhstan. SCO is headquartered in Beijing, China.

### India, UAE to hold first joint naval drill in Gulf

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- The first time Indian Navy will be conducting an exercise in the Gulf with UAE, going beyond the Arabian Sea.
- He also met Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and the ruler of Dubai.
- "Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) formed under the existing defence cooperation agreement has been meeting regularly. The two leaders welcomed the decision taken during the latest round of JDCC held in New Delhi in December 2017 to conduct the first bilateral naval exercise during 2018".

### Indo-US joint military exercise 'Vajra Prahar' held in Seattle

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- The joint military exercise 'Vajra Prahar' was held at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) in Seattle, in which a 45-member Special Forces team from Indian Army's Southern Command trained alongside US soldiers.
- 'Vajra Prahar' is an Indo-US Special Forces joint training exercise conducted alternately in India and the US.

### Singapore Government to impose carbon tax from 2019

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- Firms that produced 25,000 or more greenhouse gases per year will have to pay carbon tax in Singapore from 2019 to encourage firms to further cut emissions.

- The carbon tax will be \$5 per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions in the first instance from 2019 to 2023.

Halimah binti Yacob is the current President of Singapore. She is the first female president in the country's history. Lee Hsien Loong is serving as the 3rd and current Prime Minister of Singapore since 2004. The currency of Singapore is Singapore dollar.

### Saudi Arabia to host first Arab Fashion Week

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- Saudi Arabia is set to host in March its first ever Arab Fashion Week, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has been leading a drive to reform the country's dependence on oil, including expanding the private sector and empowering women.

In January 2018, Saudi women were allowed for the first time ever to enter a football stadium to watch a game and the kingdom is also opening several sectors of the workplace to women. Saudi Arabia has also announced an end to a longstanding ban on women driving, which is to take effect in June.

### Mandarin approved as official language of Pakistan

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- The Pakistani Senate approved a motion to declare Mandarin as one of the official languages of Pakistan.

Mandarin, is a standard language that is the sole official language of both China and Taiwan, and also one of the four official languages of Singapore.

### Largest joint military exercise 'Cobra Gold 2018' concluded in Thailand

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- The largest military exercises in Southeast Asia concluded in Thailand, total of 11,075 soldiers from 29 countries participated in the Cobra Gold 2018 training, held in eastern Thailand.
- The United States was the biggest participant with 6,125 soldiers, followed by hosts Thailand, who sent 4,007 troops to the drills.

### 8th Indo- Seychelles Army exercise "Lamitye" starts

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- The eighth joint military exercise between the Indian Army and Seychelles People's Defence Forces started and will continue till March 4 at Mahe Island, Seychelles.
- The exercise is named "Lamitye" which in the local dialect 'Creole' means friendship.

### Michael McCormack named Australia's new deputy prime minister

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- In Australia, Michael McCormack has been elected new Deputy Prime Minister after being selected as the leader of the country's National Party, the junior partner in the country's coalition government.

### Jordan king's three-day visit begins in India

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- Jordanian king's three-day visit begins in India, King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, a 41st generation direct descendant of Prophet Muhammad, is known for his global initiative to fight radicalisation and terrorism.
- He is also the custodian of the Al-Aqsa mosque, among the holiest Islamic sites, located in the Old City of Jerusalem. Jordan capital is Amman and currency is Jordanian dinar.

### Russia vetoes UN resolution citing Iran sanctions violation

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- Russia vetoed on a UN draft resolution presented by Britain and strongly backed by the United States that would have pressured Iran over its failure to block supplies of missiles to Yemen's Huthi rebels.

### China to amend Constitution for the first time in the last 14 years

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- The Communist Party of China is proposing to amend the country's Constitution for the first time in the last 14 years. One of the proposed changes include removing from the constitution a clause limiting the presidency

to two five-year terms, which would allow President Xi Jinping to continue as president beyond his term limit of 2023.

- The current version of the Constitution was adopted by the 5th National People's Congress on December 4, 1982. It has so far seen four amendments with the last having taken place in 2004 under then-President Hu Jintao.

### Maldives declined India invite for naval exercises 'MILAN-2018'

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- Maldives has declined an Indian invitation to join the MILAN-2018 multilateral naval exercises to be hosted near the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in March 2018, jointly organized by Indian Navy and the National Maritime Foundation.
- The biennial MILAN series of exercises had commenced with just four nations in 1995. MILAN-2018 will be conducted from March 6-13, which will include the crucial sea phase from March 11-13. The theme for MILAN-2018 is "Friendship across the Seas".

### US to overtake Russia as top oil producer by 2019

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- The United States will overtake Russia as the world's biggest oil producer by 2019 at the latest, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), as the country's shale oil boom continues to upend global markets. IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said at an event in Tokyo the United States would overtake Russia as the biggest crude oil producer "definitely next year", if not this year.

### Defence, trade on agenda during Vietnam President visit

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- India and Vietnam have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen their cooperation in nuclear energy. The agreement was one of three MoUs signed during Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang's visit to India.
- The MoU calls for cooperation between the DAE's Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP) and the Vietnam Atomic Energy Institute (VinAtom).
- The GCNEP is a nuclear research and training centre under construction near New Delhi.

### Pakistan riskiest place to be born, Unicef report

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- According to a Unicef report, India's neonatal mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births) is 25.4, which ranks it at 12 among 52 'lower middle-income countries'. The safest nation for birth on the list is Japan.
- Pakistan is the riskiest country to be born in, with one in 22 babies born there dying before they turn one month old, according to a Unicef report.

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| Neonatal mortality rate is the ratio of the number of deaths in one year of children less than 28 days of age to the number of live births in that year. |
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## ECONOMY AND FINANCE



### Economy News

#### India ranked 81 in the Global Talent Competitive Index 2018

- India has jumped 11 ranks from 92 to 81 in the Global Talent Competitive Index (GTCI) for the year 2018 which covered 119 countries and 90 cities on the back of its strengths like talent growth and global knowledge of the talent pool.
- Switzerland maintained its numero uno position, followed by Singapore and the US.
- Among cities, Mumbai and Delhi ranked at the bottom of the 'Global City Talent Competitiveness Index', with a ranking of 89 and 90, respectively.

#### Railways to set up a Coach Factory in Marathwada, Maharashtra

- A high level meeting was held between Union Minister for Railways and Coal, Shri Piyush Goyal and Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Devendra Fadnavis in Mumbai, to discuss the setting up of a massive rail coach factory in Latur, Maharashtra by Indian Railways.

#### Switzerland retained top spot on financial secrecy index

- Switzerland retained its top spot in the financial secrecy index (FSI) 2018, unveiled by the Tax Justice Network (TJN).
- It was followed by the US, Cayman Islands, Hong Kong and Singapore.

#### Aquaculture farms get a boost with Rs 10,000 crore fund

- India's seafood sector hopes that the Rs 10,000 crore funds announced for fisheries and aquaculture infrastructure development will help in developing infrastructure in farms located in remote locations.

#### Central Government sets agri export target of \$100 billion

- The Central Government has proposed to liberalise the export of agricultural commodities as it sets an annual export target of \$100 billion as against the current export value of \$30 billion.
- Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said, latest testing facilities would be set up in 42 mega food parks in the country to screen and enhance the quality of exported products.

#### Maharashtra has largest share in India's export and GST base

- According to the Economic Survey 2017-18, Maharashtra's status as one of the largest states in terms of its economic size and prosperity gives it the largest share in India's exports and the goods and service tax (GST) base.



## India-US trade estimated to touch \$140 bn in 2017

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- Trade between India and the US is estimated to have jumped substantially from \$118 billion in 2016 to \$140 billion in 2017, according to an advocacy group that aims to promote bilateral trade.
- In 2016, India was the ninth largest trading partner of the US and one of the major countries with which America has had trade deficit of more than \$30 billion.

## Assam - Global Investors Summit 2018

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- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the inaugural session of Advantage Assam - Global Investors Summit 2018, in Guwahati. It has been organised by the Assam State Government in association with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

## Indirect tax body to be renamed CBIC by April

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- Rechristening of the apex indirect tax policy making body CBEC to Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is likely to happen by April after the budgetary exercise gets the Parliament's nod.
- With excise duty, service tax and nearly a dozen other central and state levies being subsumed in the Goods and Services Tax rolled out from July 1, the ambit of Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) has widened.

## Indian Railways to create database of contract workers, give benefits like organised sector

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- For the first time, Indian Railways will have a database of workers engaged by contractors in non-operational areas such as housekeeping, cleaning, consultancy, training and other such services, thus keeping an eye out for any violation of labour rights.

## Maharashtra State Cabinet gives nod to fintech policy

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- Maharashtra has become the first state in the country to adopt a comprehensive fintech policy that aims to foster an environment for fintech startups.

## Centre, states to devise mechanism to ensure 1.5 times MSP

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- The Centre and Niti Aayog will hold deliberations with states to come out with a new mechanism to ensure that farmers get 1.5 times of the production cost of their crops.

## Long term capital gains tax to apply on shares sold after April 1

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- The proposed long-term capital gains tax on equity holdings will apply on profits made from sale of shares on or after April 1, 2018.

## Dubai Open's World's First Sustainable Floating Burger Joint

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- The largest and most populous city in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has one more landmark which is likely to become a tourist's delight – a floating food truck! Aqua Pod, which launched Jan. 31 in Dubai's lagoons, is being described as the world's first sustainable floating drive-thru.

## Bihar to Set up Government Body for Student's Credit Card Loan Scheme

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- Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi announced that the state government would set up a corporation to disburse loans for Student's Credit Card (SCC) scheme in view of the banks' reluctance in doing it.

## India ranked 44 out of 50 nations in global IP index

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- India has "increased substantially" its score in the latest international Intellectual Property (IP) index released by the US Chambers of Commerce, ranking 44th out of 50 countries.



## 14 Coastal Economic Zones being developed under Sagarmala

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- For promoting port-led industrialization, **14 Coastal Economic Zones (CEZs)** covering all the Maritime States and Union Territories have been identified as part of the National Perspective Plan under the Sagarmala Programme.

## Forbes released first cryptocurrency rich list; Chris Larsen at the top

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- Forbes has released its first ever list of richest people in cryptocurrency, which is topped by Ripple co-founder Chris Larsen, with an estimated crypto net worth of USD 7.5-8 billion.

## NSE unveils 72 indices for MFs

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- The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has unveiled 72 series of fixed income and hybrid indices that track fixed income assets including government securities, treasury bills, corporate bonds of different credit rating categories, commercial papers, certificate of deposits and overnight rate.

## India – UAE bilateral investments

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- UAE continues to be an important supplier of crude, LNG and LPG to Indian market. UAE is the 5th largest import source and accounts for about 6% of our total crude imports. UAE is also the 3rd largest source of LPG and POL.
- India is already the 3rd largest consumer of energy in the world. It is the 3rd largest importer of oil and 4th largest importer of gas.

## India-Russia Agriculture Business Summit held in New Delhi

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- As a part of the country-wide year-long celebration of India-Russia Diplomatic Relations, since April 2017, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare organised two major events, an India-Russia Agriculture Business Summit held in New Delhi and celebration of 70 years of Agricultural Relationship to be held in Suratgarh, Rajasthan on 14th February 2018.

## India signed first concessional agreement with UAE in oil sector

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- India signed the first concessional agreement with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the oil sector.
- "The single most important agreement that was signed and which reflects a change in energy relationship with the UAE was the one signed between a consortium of the Indian oil companies and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) for the acquisition of 10% participating interest in the offshore Lower Zakum Concession.
- This is the first time ever that the Indian Consortium has received concession in the Gulf.

## Mumbai 12th richest city globally; total wealth at USD 950 billion

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- India's financial capital Mumbai, with a total wealth of USD 950 billion, has been named among the top 15 wealthiest cities globally, while New York topped the list.
- According to a report by New World Wealth, the economic hub of India is the 12th wealthiest city, followed by Toronto with a total wealth of USD 944 billion, Frankfurt (14th, USD 912 billion) and Paris (15th, USD 860 billion).

## Chandrababu Naidu is richest CM, Manik Sarkar poorest

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- According to an analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), with assets worth Rs 177 crore, Chandrababu Naidu, the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, is the richest CM in the country.
- Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu and Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh are the second and third richest CMs, with assets worth Rs.129 crore and Rs.48 crore respectively.

- While the ‘poorest’ Chief Minister, CPI (M) leader and Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar, had total assets worth all of Rs.26 lakh. The second ‘poorest’ was Trinamool Congress leader and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, with assets worth Rs.30 lakh.

### India lets businesses invest in Iran in rupees

- India, for the first time beyond Bhutan and Nepal, will invest in a foreign country Iran through its own national currency Rupee to bypass any trouble arising out of impending US sanctions.

### Prime Minister inaugurated India's Largest Container Terminal in Mumbai

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the country's largest container terminal at Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust in Mumbai, which will raise the cargo handling capacity of the nation's largest container port by 50 per cent.
- The fourth terminal project seeks to double JNPT's capacity to nearly 10 million standard container units and will make it the 33rd biggest port globally.
- Inaugurating the first phase of the fourth terminal of the JNPT, to be operated by the Singapore Ports, through a remote control, Modi also laid the foundation stone for the first phase of the Rs 16,700-core Navi Mumbai international airport in Mumbai.

### India dropped 16 spots to 78th position on globalisation index

- India dropped 16 spots to 78 from 62 among 140 countries in 11 years to 2015 on a globalisation index brought out by international logistics company DHL.

The Global Connectedness Index 2016, the fourth since it was first released in 2011, prepared by Pankaj Ghemawat and Steven A. Altman. Measured by international flows of trade, capital, information and people.

### WhatsApp to launch 'full-feature' inter-bank money transfer service

- WhatsApp will launch a “full feature” inter-bank money transfer service in India, its biggest market, after a test involving a million users.
- NPCI is the body set up by the central bank and lenders to oversee payment services.

WhatsApp was founded in 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koum, both former employees of Yahoo!. WhatsApp Inc., based in Mountain View, California, which was acquired by Facebook in February 2014 for approximately US\$19.3 billion.

### ‘Saudi women can open businesses’

- Women in Saudi Arabia can now open their own businesses without the consent of a husband or male relative, as the kingdom pushes to expand the private sector.
- Prince Mohammed is widely seen as the chief architect behind Saudi Arabia's "Vision 2030" reform programme, which seeks to elevate the percentage of women in the work force from 22 percent to nearly one-third.

### Maharashtra has flagged off country's first ever Hyperloop route between Mumbai and Pune

- In a historic agreement with Virgin Hyperloop One, the state government of Maharashtra has flagged off an ambitious project to build the country's first ever Hyperloop route between Mumbai and Pune.
- The Hyperloop concept was first proposed by Elon Musk, the CEO of SpaceX and Tesla.

## PM Modi launches Nasscom's 'FutureSkills' platform

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Nasscom's platform - FutureSkills - for skill development in eight varied technologies during the inaugural session of the World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT)-2018 held in Hyderabad.

## Maharashtra's first global investor's summit

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 'Magnetic Maharashtra' Convergence Summit 2018 at the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) grounds at Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC).
- This is Maharashtra's first Global Investors Summit and is being regarded as one of the biggest such events, especially on the lines of the 'Make In India' initiative launched by the Prime Minister in 2016 in Mumbai.

## Venezuela's digital coin makes debut

- Venezuela was set to become the first country to launch its own version of bitcoin, a move it hopes will provide a much-needed boost to its credit-stricken economy.
- Petro is backed by Venezuela's crude oil reserves, the largest in the world.

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

## India's first gem and jewellery park in Navi Mumbai

- Maharashtra government is planning to establish India's first gems and Jewellery Park in Navi Mumbai. The 25-acre park will be developed on the lines of the Shenzhen model in China at a cost of Rs 13,500 crore.

## India's first artificial intelligence research institute opened in Mumbai

- Wadhvani AI, India's first research institute dedicated to developing artificial intelligence solutions for social good was inaugurated in Mumbai.
- "Wadhvani AI is a prime example of how the public sector and the private sector can come together with good intentions to build a world-class institute, aimed at benefiting the poor.

## Narendra Modi announces Rs 20,000 crore defence corridor for Bundelkhand

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced second defence industrial corridor in the Bundelkhand region to bring development in one of the most backward regions of Uttar Pradesh, as mentioned in the recent Union Budget.

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

## Uttar Pradesh becomes first Indian state to clear projects digitally

- Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in the country where projects can now be cleared digitally, without any human interface.
- The digital platform, a single-window system called Nivesh Mitra, was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the inauguration session of the UP Investors' Summit.

## India ranked at 81 in 'Corruption Perception Index' 2018

- India has been ranked at 81 out of 180 countries on a 'Corruption Perception Index', in a list released by Transparency International, which named the country among the "worst offenders" in terms of graft and press freedom in the Asia Pacific region.

- In the latest ranking New Zealand and Denmark were placed the highest, with scores of 89 and 88, respectively. On the other hand Syria, South Sudan and Somalia were ranked lowest with scores of 14, 12 and 9, respectively.
- It uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean..

Transparency International is an international non-governmental organization which is based in Berlin, Germany, and was founded in 1993. Its nonprofit purpose is to take action to combat global corruption and prevent criminal activities arising from corruption.

### ‘Only M2M SIMs to have 13-digit numbers’

- Starting July 1, all SIM-based M2M (machine-to-machine) communication devices will carry a 13-digit number, instead of the 10-digit number now.
- However, this is applicable only to numbers used by machines to communicate with other machines and not normal retail mobile numbers.

### Northeast India's first regional Centre for Agriculture with Israeli collaboration to be inaugurated in Mizoram

- NER's first regional Centre for Agriculture with Israeli collaboration to be inaugurated in Mizoram on 7th March. This centre is exclusively for processing of citrus fruits.
- The project has been set up with the tripartite collaboration of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, Government of Israel and State Government of Mizoram. Israel will provide expertise knowledge and professional support.

### Six new user friendly features of National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) Platform launched

- The Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Shri Radha Mohan Singh launched six new features of National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) Platform to make it more users friendly.
- e-NAM is one of the major and important flagship schemes of the Government of India which is being implemented by Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare with the objective of providing competitive and remunerative price to farmers for their produce through online competitive bidding process.

### China becomes the vice chair of Financial Action Task Force

- India congratulated China for becoming the vice chair of the global body, which is mandated to combat terror financing, and hoped Beijing would “uphold and support” the objective of the watchdog in a balanced and objective way.
- FATF placed Pakistan under monitoring in its International Cooperation Review Group until June 2018 for compliance of Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Finance of Terrorism regulations.
- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 by the Ministers of its Member jurisdictions.

### Bihar Growth is higher than National Average

- Bihar clocked a growth rate of 10.3 per cent in 2016-2017 as against 7.5 per cent in the corresponding fiscal a year ago, riding largely on the back of the services sector, according to the latest Economic Survey tabled in the state Assembly.
- Bihar's growth rate is higher than that of the national average of 7.0 per cent, according to the 12th Economic Survey of Bihar.

## Greater Noida authority gets Rs 100-billionn tax relief from Delhi HC

- The **Delhi High Court** exempted the **Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority (GNIDA)** from **paying income tax**, saying it was not carrying out any commercial activity with any profit motive.
- The **income tax department** had issued notices to the Authority to pay **Rs 100 billion** in taxes between **2004 and 2015**.

## Govt ropes in IIFT, ICAI to improve ease of doing business ranking

- **Commerce and industry ministry** has **appointed four institutes**, including **IIFT and ICAI**, to interact with stakeholders and suggest measures to **push India's ranking in World Bank's ease of doing business index**.
- The **National Institute of Construction Management and Research (NICMAR)**, the **Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT)**, the **Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI)** and the **Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI)** are the four institutes that have been roped in for the exercise.
- **As per the latest World bank's Doing Business ranking**, India's position improved by **30 places to 100th**. The government wants India to figure within top 50 in the coming years.

## Five Nordic countries pitch for FTA with India

- The **five Nordic countries of Denmark, Norway, Finland, Iceland and Sweden** pitched for a **Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with India** to increase business ties.
- **Bilateral trade volume between India and the five Nordic countries was USD 4.3 billion**, of which **USD 2.2 billion** was exports to India and the rest imports, according to latest data.

## Banks in News

### Allahabad Bank was the first among the public sector banks (PSBs) to offer shares to its employees

- **Allahabad Bank** was the **first among the public sector banks (PSBs)** to **offer shares to its employees** and got the approval of the board, Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Securities and Exchange Board of India and the Finance Ministry.
- **City-based Allahabad Bank is aiming to raise Rs 2.5-2.7 billion** (Rs 250-270 crore) from the employee share offer which started from **January 31, 2018**.

### Small units to get 180 days to clear bank dues

- The **Reserve Bank of India** announced several measures for **micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)** and **allowed banks and finance companies** to give these units **180 days** to clear their dues.

### FinMin puts out list of 9500 high-risk finance companies

- **Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU)** has released a list of around **9500 Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)**, which have been categorised as **high-risk financial institutions**.
- The **FIU under the Finance Ministry** has released the list on its website showing the names of these NBFCs which have been **found non-compliant to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act rules**.

### From April 1, banks' base rate to be linked with MCLR

- The **base rate** will be **linked with the Marginal Cost of Funds based Lending Rates (MCLR)** from **April 1** to ensure expeditious transmission of the RBI's policy rate to borrowers.



### India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) to enable Digital Payments in Post Offices by April 2018

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- India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) Expansion Programme continues to make brisk progress and a nation-wide roll-out is scheduled beginning April 2018.
- Once the proposed expansion is completed, IPPB will be providing the largest financial inclusion network in the country, covering both urban as well as rural hinterland with ability to provide digital payment services at the doorstep with the help of Postmen and GraminDakSewaks (GDS)
- India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has appointed Mr. Suresh Sethi, the former MD of Vodafone M-Pesa Ltd. as its Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer.

### SBI wrote off bad loans worth over Rs 20,000 crore last fiscal

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- The country's largest lender SBI wrote off bad loans worth Rs 20,339 crore in 2016-17, the highest among all the public sector banks, which had a collective, write off of Rs 81,683 crore for the fiscal.
- As per data from the Reserve Bank, nine public sector banks, out of the total 21, had gross non-performing asset ratio of above 15% (the percentage of bad loans in terms of total loans outstanding) as of September 30, 2017. Fourteen PSBs have gross non-performing asset ratio of over 12%.

### ‘New RBI norms to spur surge in NPAs’

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- The Reserve Bank of India's new norms directing banks to start insolvency proceedings on accounts, if stress is not resolved in 180 days, could result in an increase in bad loans, according to Moody's unit ICRA.
- The RBI said that for accounts where a bank's exposure exceeds Rs. 2,000 crore, a resolution plan must be implemented within 180 days from the date of first default, and in case a resolution is not implemented, lenders should file an insolvency petition within 15 days of the expiry of the 180 days.

### PNB uncovers Rs 11,300-cr fraud

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- Punjab National Bank (PNB) disclosed that it has detected some fraudulent transactions with financial implication of \$1.77 billion (Rs 11,334.4 crore) and the matter has been referred to law enforcement agencies for the recovery.
- Based on these transactions, other banks appear to have advanced money to these customers abroad.

### Inland Waterways Authority of India signed a project agreement with the World Bank

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- Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) signed a project agreement with the World Bank for the implementation of the US \$ 800 million JMVP for capacity augmentation of navigation on National Waterway-1(River Ganga) from Varanasi to Haldia.

### IFC, PNB Housing plan \$800m platform for affordable homes

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- International Finance Corporation (IFC), member of the World Bank Group, is set to enter into a pact with PNB Housing Finance to form an \$800-million platform to support construction of environment-friendly affordable houses across the country.
- This is the second such platform to be formed by IFC after partnering with HDFC in November.

### Yes Bank lists country's first \$600m MTN bond on IndiaINX

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- Private sector lender, Yes Bank announced the listing of the Bank's debut US \$600 million bond issue under its maiden US \$1 billion medium-term note (MTN) bond on country's first international exchange BSE's IndiaINX at the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) at GIFT City.



## RBI sets up panel, asks banks to strengthen SWIFT system

- In the wake of the Rs 11,300 crore fraud at the Punjab National Bank, the Reserve Bank of India has constituted a five member panel under former board member Y H Malegam to look into the wide divergence by banks in asset classification and provisioning and reasons for frauds and measures to prevent it and also asked them to strengthen the SWIFT operating environment.
- The panel will also look into the reasons for high divergence observed in asset classification and provisioning by banks vis-à-vis the RBI's supervisory assessment.

**SWIFT:** Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) provides a network that enables financial institutions worldwide to send and receive information about financial transactions in a secure, standardized and reliable environment.

## Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank begins operations

- Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank became the fourth payments bank to begin operations since issuance of licenses to 11 firms by RBI in August 2015.
- Telecom major Bharti Airtel was the first to begin the payments bank operations in November 2016 and the Aditya Birla group-promoted firm is the latest to join the bandwagon.

## First sale of Electoral Bonds to commence from first March

- According to the Ministry of Finance, State Bank of India has been authorized to issue and encash first Electoral Bonds initially at its four authorised branches from first March, 2018.
- Electoral Bond will be valid for 15 days from the date of issue and bonds will be issued in multiples of Rs.1, 000, Rs.10, 000, Rs.1 lakh, Rs.10 lakh and Rs.1 crore and will be available at specified branches of State Bank of India.

An electoral bond is designed to be a bearer instrument like a Promissory Note — in effect, it will be similar to a bank note that is payable to the bearer on demand and free of interest. It can be purchased by any citizen of India or a body incorporated in India.

## RBI launches Ombudsman Scheme for NBFCs

- The RBI launched 'Ombudsman Scheme' for non-banking financial companies (NBFC) for redressal of complaints against them.
- The offices of the NBFC ombudsmen will function at four metro centres -- Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai and New Delhi.

A non-banking financial company (NBFC) is a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956, NBFCs are doing functions akin to that of banks, however there are a few differences: NBFC cannot accept demand deposits (demand deposits are funds deposited at a depository institution that are payable on demand -- immediately or within a very short period -- like your current or savings accounts.) and it is not a part of the payment and settlement system and as such cannot issue cheques to its customers.

## Moody's upgrades IDBI Bank outlook

- Moody's Investor Service revised state-run lender IDBI Bank's outlook to 'positive' from 'stable'.
- "Moody's has affirmed the long-term local and foreign currency bank deposit rating of IDBI Bank Ltd. at B1, and changed the outlook to positive from stable," according to the rating agency.

## Firms in News

### Development of Industry-first technologies using artificial intelligence

- Microsoft and online marketplace Paisabazaar.com announced that they have entered into a partnership to develop "industry first" innovations on the tech giant's Cloud platform using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning.

### CRISIL, SIDBI Launched India's First MSE Sentiment Index

- The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Arun Jaitley launched CriSidEx , India's first sentiment index for micro and small enterprises ( MSEs) developed jointly by CRISIL & SIDBI.
- CriSidEx is a composite index based on a diffusion index of 8 parameters and measures MSE business sentiment on a scale of 0 (extremely negative) to 200 (extremely positive).

### Assam signed MoU with Ola for app-based river taxi service

- The Assam government and Ola, one of the world's largest and India's leading ride-sharing companies signed an MoU to pilot an app-based river taxi service.

### Omics International to launch in Hyderabad

- Hyderabad-based Omics International, primarily into open-access journals and international scientific conferences, is going to set up a Rs 1,000 crore special economic zone (SEZ) at Chandanagar, Hyderabad, spread over 25 acres.

### ONGC, partners acquire 10% stake in Abu Dhabi oilfield for \$600 million

- ONGC Videsh Ltd and its partners have acquired a 10 per cent in a large offshore oilfield in Abu Dhabi for \$600 million, the first time any Indian company has set foot in oil-rich Emirates.
- OVL, the overseas arm of state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC), Indian Oil Corp (IOC) and a unit of Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL), paid a signing amount of \$600 million for a 10 per cent stake in Abu Dhabi National Oil Co's (ADNOC) 40-year Lower Zakum Concession, Offshore Abu Dhabi.
- This is the first time that Indian oil companies have taken part in an Abu Dhabi oil and gas concession.

### TCS bagged 5-year deal from Marks & Spencer

- India's largest IT services firm Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has expanded its partnership with Marks and Spencer (M&S) to enable the British retail giant become a digital-first business.
- As part of M&S' five-year plan, TCS will be the principal technology partner for the retailer and help drive agility, intelligence, innovation and efficiency. TCS had earlier announced a \$2-plus billion contract win from American insurer Transamerica.

### Milkbasket recognised as 'Startup of the Year' 2017

- Milkbasket, India's first and largest micro-delivery platform has been recognised as 'Startup of the Year' 2017 at the 7th Small Business Awards.
- The startup of the year award is dedicated to young SMEs, aged 7 years or less, with great potential to become big in local/international markets.

### TCS got listed as World's best employer by Top Employer Institute

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has been recognized as the world's best employers by the Top Employer Institute for the consecutive third year.
- TCS picked up the latest Top Employer endorsement for 27 of its individual country teams across Europe, Asia Pacific, North America, Latin America and the Middle East.

- Earlier, TCS was listed as the World's best employer the Forbes 2017 Global 2000 list and featured in the Fortune magazine's Change the World 50.
- The Top Employer rankings are based on the key criteria including Talent Strategy, Workforce Planning, On-boarding, Learning & Development, Performance Management, Leadership Development, Career & Succession Management, Compensation & Benefits and Company Culture.

### LIC equity holding crosses 6 lakh crore for first time ever

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- The market value of LIC portfolio across all NSE listed companies (where its holding is more than 1 per cent), stood at an all-time high of Rs 6.26 lakh crore for the first time at the end of December 2017, witnessing an increase of 14.65 per cent over that in the previous quarter.

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.

### Airtel, Huawei conduct India's first 5G trial

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- Bharti Airtel and Chinese telecom gear maker Huawei have successfully conducted India's first 5G network trial under a test setup at the former's network experience centre in Manesar, Gurgaon.

### India's first 4G LTE telecom system unveiled

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- Telecom Minister Manoj Sinha launched India's first locally developed 4G/LTE telecom system amid an international buyers-sellers meet of telecom industry.
- The system has been designed and developed by India's leading telecom equipment manufacturer, VNL Ltd., keeping in mind requirement for high speed connectivity, particularly in rural areas.

### Reliance Industries won Golden Peacock Award 2017 for CSR

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- Reliance Industries (RIL) has been awarded the Golden Peacock Award 2017 for corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



### Japan successfully launched world's smallest satellite-carrying rocket

- **Japan successfully launched the world's smallest satellite-carrying rocket** following a failed attempt in January last year.
- The rocket about the size of a utility pole, measuring 10 meters in length and 50 centimeters in diameter, **lifted off from the Uchinoura Space Center in Kagoshima Prefecture** and delivered its payload to its intended orbit.

### HAL developed first Hawk-i flight

- **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited** has developed the first flight of Hawk-i with **indigenous Real Time Operating System (RTOS)** for real-time applications execution in a **safe and reliable** manner.
- **Hawk-i is the first indigenous RTOS developed in India** from scratch and certified by Center for Military Airworthiness and Certification (CEMILAC).

### India test-fires nuke-capable Agni-I ballistic missile

- **India successfully test-fired its short-range nuclear capable ballistic missile Agni-I** with a **strike range of over 700 km** from a test range off the Odisha coast.

### SpaceX to launch 'world's most powerful rocket'

- **SpaceX is poised for the first test launch of its Falcon Heavy**, which aims to become the **world's most powerful rocket** in operation, capable of reaching the Moon or Mars.

### Elon Musk's Falcon Heavy rocket launched successfully

- **US entrepreneur Elon Musk** has launched his new rocket, the **Falcon Heavy**, from the **Kennedy Space Center** in Florida.
- The mammoth vehicle - the **most powerful since the shuttle system** - lifted clear of its pad without incident to **soar high over the Atlantic Ocean**.

### India successfully test-fires nuclear capable Prithvi-II

- **India** successfully test-fired its **indigenously developed nuclear capable Prithvi-II missile** as part of a user trial by the Army **from a test range in Odisha**.
- The trial of the **surface-to-surface missile**, which has a **strike range of 350 km**, was carried out from a mobile launcher from launch complex-3 of the **Integrated Test Range at Chandipur**.

## ISRO sets up 473 Village Resource Centres for rural development

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- To demonstrate the potential of satellite technology for development of rural areas, ISRO established 473 Village Resource Centres (VRCs) on a pilot scale, in association with selected NGOs, Trusts and State Government Departments.
- VRCs have provided various space technology enabled services such as tele-healthcare, tele-education, natural resources information, advisories related to agriculture, career guidance to rural students, skill development and vocational training etc.

## Scientists created strange new form of matter “superionic water ice”

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- Scientists at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California have created a “strange” new form of water that behaves like a cross between a liquid and a solid.
- The substance, known as “superionic water ice”, is thought to be a key component in the structure of distant planets in our solar system.

## Russian Soyuz rocket launched toward the International Space Station

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- A Russian Soyuz rocket launched an uncrewed cargo ship toward the International Space Station, kicking off a two-day delivery mission to the orbiting laboratory.
- Soyuz is a family of expendable launch systems developed by OKB-1 and manufactured by Progress Rocket Space Centre in Samara, Russia.
- After the U.S. Space Shuttle program ended in 2011, Soyuz rockets became the only launch vehicle able to transport astronauts to the International Space Station.

## India's biggest Global Conference on Pharma Industry and Medical Devices held in Bengaluru

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- The Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, along with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), has organized India's biggest Global Conference on 'India Pharma & India Medical Device 2018', with the theme - 'Affordable and Quality Healthcare', the 3rd International exhibition and conference on Pharmaceutical & Medical Device sector from 15th-17th February, 2018 in Bengaluru.

## India, Israel to enhance agriculture, S&T, security cooperation

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- India and Israel have agreed to enhance cooperation in the areas of agriculture, science and technology and security.
- This is the first Prime Ministerial visit from Israel to India in 15 years after that of Ariel Sharon in 2003.

## Hubble captures Neptune's foul-smelling storm as it dies

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- NASA's Hubble space telescope has captured Neptune's mysterious dark storm that probably smells like rotten eggs, shrinking out of existence.
- Immense dark storms on Neptune were first discovered in the late 1980s by NASA's Voyager 2 spacecraft.
- NASA's Hubble Space Telescope was launched April 24, 1990, on the space shuttle Discovery from Kennedy Space Center in Florida. .

## ISRO plans to launch India's second space observatory

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- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is planning to launch the country's second AstroSat-2 or space observatory.



AstroSat-2 is India's second dedicated multi-wavelength space observatory, proposed by ISRO to replace the current Astrosat which has been in orbit for two years of its five-year life. In 2015, India joined the United States, Japan, Russia and Europe by having its own space observatory satellite. Astrosat is generally described as India's version of the Hubble telescope that Nasa had put in space in 1990. Astrosat is a one-of-its-kind satellite, which is designed to observe the universe in the visible, ultraviolet, low- and high-energy X-ray regions of the electromagnetic spectrum.

## India test fires medium-range nuclear capable Agni-II missile

- India test-fired its medium-range nuclear-capable Agni-II missile with a strike range of 2,000 km from Abdul Kalam Island off Odisha coast.
- Agni-II missile is a surface-to-surface missile.

## Indigenously-built Saras aircraft successfully completes second test flight

- India's indigenous light transport aircraft SARAS has been successfully test flown for a second time. Saras is the first Indian multi-purpose civilian aircraft in the light transport aircraft.
- The design and development of the SARAS aircraft is being done by the CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories.
- The Indian Air Force has committed to induct 15 such aircraft initially.

## SpaceX launches first of its broadband internet satellites

- US private flight company SpaceX launched its first two test satellites for its global broadband internet in space project.
- A used Falcon 9 rocket blasted off from Space Launch Complex 4E at California's Vandenberg Air Force Base, carrying Spain's PAZ, a radar-imaging satellite, and two SpaceX test satellites for global broadband.

## 'Dhanush' ballistic missile successfully test-fired

- India successfully test-fired the nuclear-capable 'Dhanush' ballistic missile with a strike range of 350 kms from a naval ship off Odisha coast.
- 'Dhanush' missile is capable of carrying a payload of 500 kg and hitting both land and sea-based targets.

**Dhanush:** It is a single-stage, liquid-propelled missile, has already been inducted into the defence services. It is one of the five missiles developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP).

## DRDO successfully carries out test flight of Rustom-2 drone

- India's premier defence research institute DRDO carried out "successful" test flight of its Rustom 2 drone, a medium-altitude long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), at Chalakere in Karnataka's Chitradurga district.
- Rustom 2 is being developed on the lines of predator drones of the US to carry out surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) roles for the armed forces with an endurance of 24 hours.

## China deployed J-20 stealth jet fighter

- With China's air force deploying its "latest stealth jet fighter" – the J-20 Chengdu – one of the provocations could be the Indian Air Force (IAF) deployment of its top-of-the-line Sukhoi-30MKI fighter in Assam, near the disputed Sino-India border.
- The J-20, which is China's first stealth fighter, made its maiden flight in 2011. It was first unveiled at China's Zhuhai Air Show in 2016 and began delivery to the PLAAF in March 2017.



## World's driest desert holds clues to alien life on Mars

- For the first time, researchers have observed specialised bacteria in the world's driest desert that can rebound after lying dormant for decades, a finding that points towards the possibility of alien life lurking in the soils of Mars.
- Scientists from Washington State University (WSU) in the US studied the driest corner of South America's Atacama Desert, where decades pass without any rain.

## Inventions/Discoveries

### Scientists made DNA into electric circuit

- A team of scientists from Duke University, USA has designed a DNA circuit capable of splitting and combining current, much like an adapter that can connect multiple appliances to a wall outlet.
- In the study, a special form, known as G-quadruplex (G4) DNA, is used to improve charge transport properties. G4 DNA is composed of four rather than two strands of DNA that are rich in the nucleotide guanine.

### Neanderthals were first known artists on Earth

- An international team of scientists from the UK, Germany, Spain and France analysed more than 60 carbonate samples from three cave sites in Spain, using new technique called uranium-thorium dating, scientists found that paintings in three caves in Spain were created more than 64,000 years ago – 20,000 years before modern humans arrived in Europe. Scientists have declared Neanderthals were the first known artists on Earth.
- Until now, cave art has been attributed entirely to modern humans, as claims to a possible Neanderthal origin have been hampered by imprecise dating techniques.

### Bacteria turns toxic metals into gold

- The bacterium *C. metallidurans* manages to ingest toxic metallic compounds and still thrive, producing tiny gold nuggets as a side-effect, scientists have found. High concentrations of heavy metals, like copper and gold, are toxic for most living creatures.
- A team of researchers from Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (MLU) and the Technical University of Munich (TUM) in Germany has discovered the molecular processes that take place inside the bacteria.

## Health/ Disease

### '100 new planets discovered beyond our solar system'

- Andrew Mayo, doctoral student at the Technical University of Denmark and his colleagues have confirmed nearly 100 new planets outside our solar system, bringing the total number of exoplanets found using NASA's K2 mission to almost 300.
- The first planet orbiting a star similar to our own sun was detected in 1995. Some 3,600 exoplanets have been found, ranging from rocky Earth-sized planets to large gas giants like Jupiter.

### Camel-based baby formula unveiled

- A UAE-based company has unveiled what it calls the world's first camel-based baby formula, an instant powder mix aimed mainly at infants allergic to cow's milk.

### Indian-origin professor gets \$6 lakh grant to develop lupus cure

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- An Indian-origin professor, Chandra Mohan and his two colleagues at the University of Houston have been awarded a \$600,000 private grant for their path-breaking research to develop a new treatment for lupus.
- “Lupus nephritis (kidney disease) is one of the most serious complications of lupus.

### IISc team identified an early-stage biomarker for Alzheimer’s

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- Researchers at Bengaluru’s Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have identified a potential biomarker for Alzheimer’s disease.
- The biomarker shows up very early in the disease process and well before clinical and even pathological manifestation of the disease.



## **ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT**



### **New plant species from West Bengal**

- **Scientists from the Botanical Survey of India** have identified a **new plant species from two protected National Parks in West Bengal**. Named *Drypetes kalamii*, it is a small shrub found to be shorter version of its close relative *Drypetes ellisii*.

**BSI was formally instituted by East India Company (EIC) on 13 February 1890, headquartered in Kolkata.**

### **Mysterious marine ecosystem hidden beneath Antarctic for 120,000 years to be explored by scientists**

- A team of **scientists from British Antarctic Survey** is setting off to **Antarctica** to explore a region that has been covered by ice for thousands of years.
- When an **iceberg known as A68, which is four times the size of London**, broke away from the **Larsen Ice Shelf in July 2017**, as it moved away from its **chilly birth mom and into the Weddell Sea**, a vast expanse of water saw the light for the **first time in up to 120,000 years**.

### **New spider species named after 'Harry Potter' characters**

- **Scientists in Brazil** have discovered seven new species of spiders and named them after characters from literary classics - including **Lord Varys from the Game of Thrones** and **Aragog from the Harry Potter series**.
- **The Lord of the Rings, The Silmarillion, H P Lovecraft's The Call of Cthulhu and the children's favourite Charlotte's Web and Little Miss Spider** also inspired the names of small cave-dwelling six-eyed spiders inhabiting northern Brazil.

### **Three new eel species found in Bay of Bengal**

- **Scientists at Zoological Survey of India** have discovered three new species of eel along the **northern Bay of Bengal coast**.
  - Dark brown with white dots on the dorsal side, **Gymnothorax pseudotile** was discovered at the **Digha coast of the Bay of Bengal**.
  - The other two species, **Gymnothorax visakhaensis (uniformly brown)** and **Enchelycore propinqua (reddish brown body mottled with irregular creamy white spots)**, were discovered from the **Visakhapatnam coast of the Bay of Bengal**.
  - The **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)** was established on **1st July, 1916** to promote survey, exploration and research leading to the advancement in our knowledge of various aspects of exceptionally rich life of the erstwhile ' **British Indian Empire** '. ZSI is headquartered in **Kolkata**.
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## **SPORTS**



### **Sports Personalities in News**

#### **Anu Kumar**

- **Anu Kumar of Uttarakhand** grabbed the **first gold medal of the Khelo India School Games**, as Tamil Nadu won two of the six gold medals on offer on the opening day of the athletics programme of the Games.

#### **Lai Jia Yi**

- The **4th edition of International Young Chef Olympiad (YCO)** concluded in **New Delhi** with **Lai Jia Yi from Malaysia** winning the **top spot** and **Indian student chef Surya Sekhar Roy Choudhury** claiming the **second position**.
- Touted as the **"World's biggest culinary battle of student chefs"**.

#### **PV Sindhu**

- **Defending champion P V Sindhu** suffered a narrow defeat in a pulsating final against **American Beiwen Zhang** to finish **runner-up at the India Open Super 300 badminton tournament**.

#### **Shi Yuqi**

- All England Championships finalist and fourth seed **Shi Yuqi of China** walked away with the **men's crown** after **beating world no 7 and third seeded Taiwanese Chou Tien Chen**.

#### **Jhulan Goswami**

- India bowler **Jhulan Goswami** became the **first woman to pick 200 ODI wickets**.
- The right-handed bowler **achieved the feat while playing her 166th match**.

#### **MS Dhoni**

- **MS Dhoni** became the **first Indian wicketkeeper** and **fourth in the world to effect 400 dismissals** from behind the stumps in ODIs.
- He took **315 matches to get to the mark** and is **behind Kumar Sangakkara, Adam Gilchrist and Mark Boucher** to be at number four spot in international list. **Sri Lanka's Sangakkara** who tops this list had **482 dismissals**.

## Virat Kohli

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- **Virat Kohli scored 100 out of 160 runs by running** and only 60 from boundaries. In all, he ran 75 singles (75 runs), 11 doubles (22 runs) and one three (3 runs).
- Before Kohli, **only four other batsmen have run 100 or more runs in an ODI innings and none of them are Indians.**

## Shikhar Dhawan

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- **Shikhar Dhawan became the first Indian to score a century in his 100th ODI** when he completed his 13th century in the fourth ODI against South Africa in Johannesburg
- Overall, **Dhawan is the ninth batsman to achieve this feat.**

## Sharmila Nicollet

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- **Sharmila Nicollet has become the first Indian golfer to qualify for the China Ladies PGA Tour.**

## Saurav Ghosal

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- **National champion and top seed Saurav Ghosal made a brilliant rally in the deciding final game to put it across number 2 seed Nicolas Mueller and clinch the title in the \$35,000 Vedanta Indian Open Squash tournament.**

## Steve Smith

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- **Smith claimed his second Allan Border Medal and was voted as the Test Player of the Year at the annual awards.**
- Incidentally, **Smith had also won the coveted medal in 2015** and thus became **only the fifth player to win it on more than one occasion.**

## Ellyse Perry

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- Star allrounder **Ellyse Perry has won the Belinda Clark Award for a second time**, officially confirming her as **Australia's best cricketer** from the past 12 months.
- Having previously won the award in 2016, **Perry was honoured at Allan Border Medal Night in Melbourne** to cap off a 12-month period that also saw her **named the ICC's Cricketer of the Year.**

## Virat Kohli

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- **Virat Kohli became first batsmen ever to score 500 runs in a bilateral series against South Africa** cricket team.

## Sachin Tendulkar

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- Cricket icon **Sachin Tendulkar has been made the brand ambassador of the upcoming T20 Mumbai League** and he feels the league will provide a fine platform for the talented cricketers of the megapolis.

## Roger Federer

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- **Roger Federer became the oldest world number one** when the **20-time Grand Slam title winner** reached the semi-finals of the **Rotterdam Open.**
- The 36-year-old Swiss overcame an early setback to beat Robin Haase of the Netherlands 4-6, 6-1, 6-1 and **will replace old rival Rafael Nadal at the top of the rankings.**

## Yuzuru Hanyu

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- **Japan's Yuzuru Hanyu became the first man since 1952 to defend a Winter Olympics single figure skating gold medal with victory in Pyeongchang.**



- **Hanyu** won with a total score of 317.85, 10.95 points clear of compatriot **Shoma Uno** while Spaniard **Javier Fernandez** took bronze.

### Petra Kvitova

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- **Petra Kvitova** continued her remarkable comeback by **beating Garbine Muguruza** in the **Qatar Open** final for her **13th straight win** and **second consecutive title**.

### Roger Federer

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- **Roger Federer** celebrated his return to the **top of the world rankings** by winning the **Rotterdam Open**, his **97th career title**.
- **Roger Federer**, the oldest No.1 in history, **thrashed Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov 6-2, 6-2** in a **one-sided final**.

### Shoaib Akhtar nam

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- **Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Najam Sethi** has appointed the **world's fastest bowler Shoaib Akhtar** as his **advisor on cricket** and **brand ambassador of the PCB**.

### Virat Kohli

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- India captain **Virat Kohli** became **only the second batsman after South Africa's AB de Villiers**, in the history of the game to **cross the 900-point mark concurrently in Tests and ODIs** in the latest ICC ODI player rankings.

### Jithin Paul

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- The **National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)**, for the **first time in Indian sport**, has **banned an athlete for the possession of an illegal drug**. The disciplinary committee handed over a suspension of four years to **hurdler Jithin Paul**.
- He was **guilty of possessing meldonium**, the drug that led imposing ban on the **tennis star Maria Sharopova** in 2016.

### Aruna Reddy

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- **Aruna Reddy** made history when she **became India's first World Cup medal winner with a bronze** in Melbourne.

### Parupalli Kashyap

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- **Parupalli Kashyap** overcame **Malaysia's June Wei Cheam** in straight games in the **men's singles final** to **clinch the Austrian Open International Challenge**, his **first international title** in over three years.

### Roger Federer

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- **Tennis legend Roger Federer** was recognised with twin honours at the **18th edition of the prestigious Laureus World Sports Awards 2018**.
- The 36-year old was **honoured with the Sportsman of the Year** and **Comeback of the Year** title as he went on to become the **most decorated winner in the history of Laureus World Sports Awards**, taking his total tally to 6.

### Rashid Khan

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- At 19 years of age, highly-rated **Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan** is set to become the **youngest captain in the history of international cricket**.
- The **World's No. 1 ODI and Twenty20 International bowler**, Rashid will lead Afghanistan after regular skipper **Asghar Stanikzai** was diagnosed with appendicitis. **Rashid became the youngest player to be ranked No. 1 in the ICC's Player Rankings across formats**.

## Sport Events

### Vidarbha won first Cooch Behar Trophy

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- Vidarbha recorded another first by winning the U-19 Cooch Behar Trophy in Nagpur.

### Under-19 Cricket World Cup 2018 won by India

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- India recorded a sensational eight-wicket win over Australia in the big final of the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup to become the only side in history to lift the coveted title for a record fourth time, 2000, 2008, 2012 and now 2018.
- Shubman Gill was adjudged the Man of the Tournament for his emphatic 372 runs in 6 matches at a tremendous average of 124, including 3 fifties and 1 hundred.

### National Cycle Polo Championship 2018

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- Maharashtra boys as they emerged champions on the third and concluding day of the 34th Sub Junior, 38th Junior and 40th Senior Men National Cycle Polo Championship at the Kasturchand Park, Nagpur.
- The three-day tournament is jointly organized by the Cycle Polo Federation of India (CPFI), Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC), Nagpur District Amateur Cycle Polo Association and All Maharashtra Cycle Polo Association.

### Haryana crowned champions of Khelo India School Games with 38 gold medals

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- Haryana topped the overall medal tally after claiming 38 gold medals in the inaugural edition of the Khelo India School Games that concluded in New Delhi.
- Overall, Haryana won 102 medals, with 26 silver and 38 bronze. Maharashtra (110) finished second overall while Delhi (94) came third.

### Indra Nooyi appointed ICC's first independent female director

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- PepsiCo Chairman and CEO Indra Nooyi has been appointed to the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board as the governing body's first independent female director.

### India registered their first-ever series victory in South Africa

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- India registered their first-ever series victory in South Africa with a 73-run win over the Proteas in the fifth ODI of the six-match series at St George's Park, Port Elizabeth. Virat Kohli became the first Indian captain to win an ODI series in South Africa.

### Tamil Nadu stun Manipur, win maiden women's National Football Championship

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- Tamil Nadu beat Manipur 2-1 to lift their maiden title in the 23rd edition of the Senior Women's National Football Championship.

### Gold rush for Indian boxers in Serbia meet

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- Indian boxers dominated the seventh Nation's Cup tournament for junior and youth women, claiming 13 medals including 11 gold, and both the team championship trophies, in Sombor, Serbia.

### Anil Khanna to head IOA Finance Commission

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- Senior sports administrator Anil Khanna was named Chairman of the Finance Commission of the Indian Olympic Association, which also formed a four- member advisory committee.

### Pullela Gopichand launches India's largest 'train the trainers' programme

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- Former All-England champion and celebrated badminton coach **Pullela Gopichand** initiated the country's largest 'train the trainers' programme, inducting 1500 Physical Education (PE) teachers from across Gujarat for advanced training.

### Virat Kohli-led India presented with ICC Test Championship mace

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- Captain **Virat Kohli** was presented the prestigious ICC Test Championship mace as India retained the top spot in the team rankings.



## AWARDS



### Carrie Fisher, Leonard Cohen honoured posthumously with Grammys

- Actress Carrie Fisher and singer Leonard Cohen won a posthumous honour each at the **2018 Grammy Awards**.
- Fisher, known for the 'Star Wars' saga, won her **first Grammy** for her narration of "The Princess Diarist" earning the award for spoken word album.
- Cohen, the legendary Canadian singer and songwriter who died at 83 in November last year, **won Best Rock Performance** for "You Want It Darker".

### Maharashtra won best tableau prize

- The **Punjab Regiment** has **bagged the award for the best marching contingent** among the three services and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police among the paramilitary and other **auxiliary forces in the Republic Day parade**.
- **Maharashtra** got the **first prize for the best tableau**.

### Shabnam Asthana won Times Power Woman 2017 award

- The **Times Group** recently celebrated the invaluable contribution of women by introducing **The Times Power Woman 2017 (Pune)** awards. **Shabnam Asthana** was awarded the '**Times Power Women of the Year 2017'-Pune for Global PR**.

### Magahi writer Madhukar awarded Sahitya Akademi's Bhasha Samman

- **Magahi writer Shesh Anand Madhukar**, who has been working extensively for the development of the language, was honoured with this year's **Sahitya Akademi Bhasha Samman** award.
- The **second writer of Magahi language** to be given the award, **Madhurkar** was conferred the award, comprising a **Rs 1 lakh cheque and a memento**, by **Sahitya Akademi President Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari**.

### French honour for Soumitra Chatterjee

- **Veteran Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee** received the **Legion of Honour**, the **highest French civilian award**, 30 years after his mentor and renowned filmmaker **Satyajit Ray** was conferred with the same.

### Film based on Kailash Satyarthi wins top honour at Sundance Festival

- A film on the life of Nobel laureate **Kailash Satyarthi** has won the **US Documentary Grand Jury Award** at the **Sundance Film Festival**.

- The documentary, titled 'Kailash' and directed by debutante Derek Doneen, traces Satyarthi's journey and his efforts to eliminate child trafficking and child labour.

### NITI Aayog's Vinod Paul became the first Indian to receive WHO's prestigious prize

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- In a first for an Indian, NITI Aayog Member Vinod Paul has been chosen to receive WHO prestigious Ihsan Dogramaci Family Health Foundation Prize for his services in the field of family health.

### Parliamentarian Award for 2017

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- The Indian Parliamentary Group decided to confer the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award for 2017 on Biju Janata Dal leader in the Lok Sabha Bhartruhari Mahtab.

### Modi conferred 'Grand Collar of the State of Palestine'

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- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred the 'Grand Collar of the State of Palestine' by President Mahmoud Abbas, recognising his key contribution to promote relations between India and Palestine.
- Mr. Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister to make an official visit to Palestine.
- The Grand Collar is Highest order given to foreign dignitaries — Kings, Heads of State/Government and persons of similar rank.

### Ritu Sarin won International Press Institute's award for excellence in journalism

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- The International Press Institute's Indian National Committee has named Ritu Sarin, Executive Editor-Investigations, as the recipient of the IPI India Award for Excellence in Journalism.
- She has been awarded for her "sustained work in investigation of crimes, political assassinations, terrorism cases frauds and economic offences" throughout her career.

### Del Toro bagged DGA prize for The Shape of Water

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- Guillermo del Toro's bid for Oscars glory was boosted as he took top prize for his fantasy romance movie The Shape of Water at the Directors Guild of America honours — a key predictor for the Academy Awards.

### Sahitya Akademi awards conferred on 23 Indian language writers

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- India's academy of letters conferred the annual Sahitya Akademi Awards for 2017 on litterateurs of 23 regional languages in India.
- The 2017 list of winners include Hindi critic Ramesh Kuntal Megh, Gujarati critic Urmi Ghanshyam Desai, Mamang Dai for her English novel the Black Hill, Shiv Mehta for his work in Dogri, Rita Boro for her work in Bodo, Afsar Ahmed for his Bangla novel, Jayanta Madhab Bora for his Assamese novel 'Moriahola', and TP Ashok for his contribution to Kannada.
- Sahitya Akademi Award is a literary honor in India, which the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters, annually confers on writers of the most outstanding books of literary merit published in any of the major Indian languages recognised by the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi. It was established in 1954.

### Tata Steel bags 'most ethical company' award

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- Tata Steel has been recognised by Ethisphere Institute, a global leader in defining and advancing the standards of ethical business practices, as the World's Most Ethical Company for the year 2018.
- The company has received the award for the sixth time in the 'Metals, Minerals and Mining' category. Tata Steel had been recognised by Ethisphere Institute USA five times earlier, in 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2017.



## India's Umang App wins Best M-Govt Service award

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- India's Umang App was named winner of the Best M-Government Service award in the Accessible Government category while Aadhar won the best emerging technology award at the recently concluded World Government Summit 2018 in Dubai, where India had the status of 'Guest of Honour' country.
- UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) is envisaged to make e-governance. It is developed by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and National e-Governance Division (NeGD) to drive Mobile Governance in India.
- UMANG provides a single platform for all Indian Citizens to access pan India e-Gov services ranging from Central to Local Government bodies and other citizen centric services.

## Asha Bhosle honoured by Rekha at the 5th Yash Chopra Memorial Awards

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- Legendary singer Asha Bhosle was conferred with the fifth Yash Chopra Memorial Award in Mumbai.
- Asha Bhosle, whose illustrious music career spans nearly seven decades and recorded over 11,000 songs in 20 different languages, was selected for the award instituted in the memory of the filmmaker, Yash Chopra.
- The award has been instituted by MP T Subbarami Reddy in the memory of Chopra, who died in 2012, in association with Anu Ranjan and Shashi Ranjan. The award also carries a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh.
- The award commemorates the director-producer by honouring excellence in various spheres of cinema like acting, music etc. The previous recipients of this award were Lata Mangeshkar, Amitabh Bachchan, Rekha and Shah Rukh Khan.

## Deepak Unnikrishnan wins The Hindu Prize

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- Deepak Unnikrishnan, a teacher at New York University Abu Dhabi, won The Hindu Prize, 2017, for his novel *Temporary People*, a book that was described as bringing a "keen insight into the heartrending plight of the 'guest workers' in the UAE."
- The Hindu Literary Prize or The Hindu Best Fiction Award, established in 2010, is an Indian literary award sponsored by *The Hindu Literary Review* which is part of the newspaper *The Hindu*. It recognizes Indian works in English and English translation. The first year, 2010, the award was called *The Hindu Best Fiction Award*.

## Indian engineer part of team awarded sci-tech Oscar

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- An engineer raised in Mumbai, Vikas Sathaye, was part of the team that bagged the scientific and engineering award at the Oscars 2018 Scientific and Technical Awards.
- The four-member team was honoured at the Beverly Hills ceremony "for the concept, design, engineering and implementation of the Shotover K1 Camera System", which the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences describes as a "six-axis stabilised aerial camera mount" that has an "enhanced ability to frame shots while looking straight down".

## IIT student wins clean energy prize

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- A fourth-year undergraduate student of IIT-Kharagpur has won an award at an international conference on 'Clean and Green Energy' in Paris.
- Ankur Mehta, a chemical engineering student, was awarded the 'Best (Oral) Presentation Certificate' at the International Conference on Clean and Green Energy (ICCGE-2018) in Paris.

## Ajinkya Rahane, Rohit Sharma awarded Shiv Chhatrapati State Sports Awards

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- Indian cricket team members Ajinkya Rahane and Rohit Sharma have both been awarded Shiv Chhatrapati State Sports Awards by the Government of Maharashtra.

### Maharashtra honours Ratan Tata with top industrial award

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- Tata Group patriarch Ratan Tata was felicitated by Maharashtra government with Mahaudyog Sanman, a special award for his contribution to the development of the state.

### ITBP receives best marching contingent trophy for record 6th time

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- The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has been adjudged as the best marching contingent among paramilitary and other auxiliary forces marched at Republic Day Parade 2018 at Rajpath.
- ITBP has won the best contingent trophy in the category for the record 6th time. The Force had been adjudged with the best contingent in the years 1998, 1999, 2000, 2004 and 2011.



## PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

### Rajani Pandit

- India's first woman private detective, **Rajani Pandit**, was arrested for allegedly using illegal means to procure call detail records (CDRs) for her clients. Police had busted a gang of detectives and arrested four of them for illegally sourcing and selling CDRs.

### Varun Dhawan

- Actor **Varun Dhawan** has become the youngest Bollywood actor to have a wax statue at **Madame Tussauds** in Hong Kong.

### Amitabh Bachchan

- The Muthoot Group has roped in **Amitabh Bachchan** as brand ambassador to represent them in their national campaigns.

### Sophia Alexandra Duleep Singh

- Indian princess **Sophia Alexandra Duleep Singh** was honoured by the **Royal Mail of the UK**, which marked the centenary of the suffragette movement with eight special stamps. Suffragettes were members of women's organisations in the late-19th and early-20th centuries which advocated the extension of the 'franchise' or the right to vote in public elections, to women.
- Princess **Sophia Alexandra Duleep Singh**, the daughter of **Maharajah Duleep Singh**, is the only woman, who has one among the eight stamps to herself.

### Raj Shah

- An Indian-American, **Raj Shah**, a Republican operative who is formally **Deputy Assistant to President Trump** and also the **Deputy White House Press Secretary**, held centerstage in the **James S Brady** briefing room, becoming the first Indian-American to speak for the US government.

### Nicos Anastasiades

- Nicos Anastasiades** was re-elected as the **President of Cyprus** by a wide margin.
- Anastasiades** defeated left-leaning independent challenger **Stavros Malas** in a runoff election.
- Anastasiades** received **56 percent of the vote**, compared to **44 percent for Malas**, in the final returns.

### Justice Abhilasha Kumari

- Justice Abhilasha Kumari** has become first woman chief justice of the **Manipur high court**. Justice Kumari--daughter of former **Himachal Pradesh** chief minister **Virbhadra Singh**--has served as a **Gujarat high court** judge and chief justice of **Tripura high court**. She is the third full-time chief justice of **Manipur high court**.

### Akshay Kumar

- Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari** has requested Bollywood star **Akshay Kumar** to be the brand ambassador for road safety awareness campaign.

### Jacob Zuma

- Jacob Zuma** resigned as **President of South Africa**, reluctantly heeding orders by the ruling **African National Congress (ANC)** to bring an end to his nine scandal-plagued years in power.
- He served as the **fourth President of South Africa** from the **2009 general election** until his resignation on **14 February 2018**.

## Krishna Kumari

- The Pakistan Peoples Party's Krishna Kumari is poised to become the country's first woman Hindu lawmaker next month, after the party nominated her for the upcoming Senate elections. Kumari will be the first female Hindu lawmaker in Pakistan since 1947, when Pakistan gained independence from Britain.

## SP Pani

- Swayam Prakash Pani took over as the new Inspector General (IG), Kashmir range. Pani is the youngest officer ever to hold the post. He is a 2000-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer. He replaced Muneer Khan.

## Rohan More

- Pune-based swimmer, Rohan More became the first Asian as well as the first Indian to swim across the Ocean Seven.
- Rohan is the youngest person in the world to swim across the Ocean Seven.
- The Ocean's seven marathon consists of seven long-distance open-water swims, which includes the North Channel, the Cook Strait, the Molokai Channel, the English Channel, the Catalina Channel, the Tsugaru Strait and the Strait of Gibraltar.

## Debjani Ghosh is the first woman to head Nasscom

- Intel Corp. veteran Debjani Ghosh will take over as president of the National Association of Software and Services Companies in April, 2018 -- three decades after its formation.
  - Debjani Ghosh will be the first woman to head tech body in 30 years.
- NASSCOM, a not-for-profit industry association, is the apex body for the 154 billion dollar IT BPM industry in India, an industry that has made a phenomenal contribution to India's GDP, exports, employment, infrastructure and global visibility. It was established in 1988.

## Singer Kanika Kapoor becomes first Indian to perform at the Buckingham Palace

- Kanika Kapoor became one of the first Indian artists to perform at the Buckingham Palace, in the presence of Prince of Wales Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall Camilla. She was invited to the palace for a grand gala organised by the royal family to mark the 10th anniversary of the British Asian Trust.

## Government Ropes Nandan Nilekani for developing IT infrastructure

- Former UIDAI chairman Nandan Nilekani will assist the government in developing IT infrastructure for the mega National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS), which seeks to cover 10-crore families.

The Finance Minister announced the world's largest government funded health care programme titled National Health Protection Scheme to cover over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) providing coverage upto 5 lakh rupees per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.

## Appointments

### Lt. Gen Anil Chauhan

- Lt. Gen Anil Chauhan, who has vast experience in counter-insurgency operations, took charge as the new Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) of the Indian Army.
- He succeeds Lt General A K Bhatt who will assume charge of the Srinagar-based 15 Corps.

## Ambula Vaishnavi

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- Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has appointed Ambula Vaishnavi, a ninth standard student, as Amaravati brand ambassador.
- Vaishnavi met the Chief Minister in his office at the Secretariat to explain her efforts in developing the school in her village Mudinepalli.

## Haruhiko Kuroda

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- Japan reappointed central bank chief Haruhiko Kuroda for another term, and chose an advocate of bolder monetary easing as one of his deputies in a strong signal to investors that policymakers are in no rush to turn off a sweeping stimulus program.

## Vijay Kumar

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- Market regulator Sebi has approved appointment of Vijay Kumar as Managing Director and CEO of the country's largest agri-commodity bourse NCDEX.

## Chandrashekar Kambar

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- Kannada litterateur and Jnanpith recipient Chandrashekar Kambar was elected president of the Sahitya Akademi.
- Hindi poet Madhav Koushik was elected vice-president. Dr. Kambar is the third Kannada writer to head the country's premier literary institution after two decades.

## Obituaries

### Pakistan activist Asma Jahangir passed away

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- Asma Jahangir, Pakistan's renowned human rights lawyer, social activist and an outspoken critic of the country's powerful military establishment, passed away due to cardiac arrest in Lahore.
- She was the first woman to serve as the President of Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan.

### Legendary Bollywood actor Sridevi passes away in Dubai

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- Veteran Bollywood actor and Padma Shri awardee Sridevi, who had an illustrious career spanning over four decades, passed away. Sridevi, died due to cardiac arrest in Dubai.

### Former cabinet secretary TSR Subramanian has passed away

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- Former cabinet secretary TSR Subramanian has passed away. He was a 1961 batch Indian Administrative Service officer from Uttar Pradesh Cadre.



## MISCELLANEOUS

### Book authored by P Chidambaram launched

- The book titled ‘Speaking Truth To Power’ authored by P.Chidambaram launched in the national capital.

### Sheila Dikshit's book traces evolution of Delhi through photos

- Former chief minister Sheila Dikshit book **In Dilli Meri Dilli: Before and After 1998** tries to look at Delhi not as someone who was its chief minister for 15 years but as a resident who has lived almost her entire life here.

### South Central Railway became first rail zone with 100% LED lighting at stations

- South Central Railway (SCR) has become the first railway zone in the country to complete 100 per cent LED lighting at all the stations under its jurisdiction.

### Maharashtra is the first state to set up transgender welfare board

- Maharashtra will be the first state to have the Transgender Welfare Board (TWB) and it will be founded with the Maharashtra government making a provision of Rs 5 crore for welfare of the community.

### 3-day-long Buddhist Heritage Festival kicks off in Vijaywada

- The three-day-long ‘Shanti Amaravati Buddhist Heritage Festival’ is being organised by the Andhra Pradesh Tourism department, kicked off at Vijayawada’s Swaraj Maidan.

### Bhumi Pednekar makes it to Forbes' 30 Under 30 list

- Actress Bhumi Pednekar has been named as part of Forbes India's 30 under 30 list.
- Some other names in the list include actors Vicky Kaushal and Mithila Palkar, apart from singer Jubin Nautiyal.

### This Year's Taj Mahotsav will Celebrate Lord Ram Instead of Mughal Culture

- The theme for this year’s Taj Mahotsav will be centred on Lord Ram, rather than India's Mughal heritage.
- The Mahotsav will be held in Shilgram from 18 to 27 February.

### India is invited to 'Janadriyah' festival as guest of honour country

- India is invited to 'Janadriyah' festival as a guest of honour country.
- "Sushma Swaraj visited Saudi Arabia, during which she inaugurated the Janadriyah festival of the Gulf Kingdom.

### 8-year-old Delhi born schoolgirl cracks Maths Hall of Fame in UK

- An eight-year-old Indian-origin schoolgirl, Sohini Roy Chowdhury has entered the UK's Mathletics Hall of Fame, an online mathematics-based competitive tool aimed at primary school pupils.
- Sohini Roy Chowdhury competed with pupils from across Britain and other countries to also make it into the top 100 World Hall of Fame after solving mathematical puzzles with speed and accuracy.

### Dubai named the world's busiest International Airport

- Dubai International Airport says it has held on to its No 1 ranking as the world's busiest airport for international travel, after seeing some 88.2 million passengers in 2017.
- Dubai International Airport first surpassed London Heathrow as the world's busiest airport for international traffic in 2014. It has maintained the title ever since.

- **Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport in Georgia** remains the **world's busiest airport** overall.

### Prime Minister's birthplace is being developed into a major tourist hub

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- With Rs 100 crore budget, Gujarat and the Centre are jointly developing the **historical and ancient town of Vadnagar**, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birth place, as a **major tourist hub**.
- The town full of sites related to **Hinduism and Buddhism** is being showcased as a heritage destination.

### Government launched app to monitor fly ash from thermal plants

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- In order to promote better management of thermal power plants' by-product fly ash, which creates air pollution, if it is not utilised quickly by manufacturing subsequent products such as cement or bricks, Union power minister **R K Singh** launched web-based monitoring system and a mobile application named **"ASH TRACK"** in Delhi.

### Tezpur University ranked 100th in Asia

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- **Tezpur University in Assam** has been ranked **100th in Asia** in an annual universities ranking for the continent this year, improving its position from **131-140 in 2017**.
- At **29th position in Asia**, the **Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore**, topped the list in the country.

### World's tallest hotel opened in Dubai

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- **World's tallest Gevora hotel opened in Dubai** built by the **Al Attar Group** will have **75 floors, 528 rooms** and four restaurants. **Gevora** will take over the world's tallest hotel tag from the **JW Marriott Marquis Hotel** (1,165 feet) on the same **Shaikh Zayed Road**.

### Karnataka gets State's first smart pole Wi-Fi

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- **Congress Leader in Lok Sabha M. Mallikarjun Kharge** inaugurated the **Karnataka State's first Wi-Fi smart pole** providing high speed wi-fi services on the municipal corporation premises in **Kalaburagi**.

### Two Kerala districts will be added to MHA's list of Maoist-affected regions

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- A classification by the **ministry of home affairs (MHA)** on areas affected by left-wing insurgency is likely to include **two districts from Kerala** for the first time in the state's history.
- According to the **A home ministry officials**, **Palakkad and Malappuram districts in Kerala** have been recommended by the state government to receive funds due to increased ultra-left wing activity in the regions.

### Government to launch 'operation digital board'

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- The **Centre and state governments** had resolved to launch **"operation digital board"** and also to initiate a scheme to identify out of school children from **September 2018**.

### First joint estimation of tigers in Sunderbans

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- The first joint estimation of tigers in the **Sunderbans**, spread across **India and Bangladesh**, began with a training workshop.
- **Sunderbans** houses the fifth largest tiger population in the world.

### IIMA to open first overseas extension centre in Dubai

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- **IIM Ahmedabad and UAE's BRS Ventures** have signed a MoU to establish the **business school's first extension centre in Dubai**.
- The **UAE** has been the **gateway and hub for MENA region's business** connects with the world.

## National Banana Festival, 2018 held in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

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- The Union Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Minister, Shri Radha Mohan Singh addressed at the **National Banana Festival, 2018 held in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.**
- **The festival is organised by Centre for Innovation in Science and Social Action in collaboration with a host of agencies including the Kalliyoor grama panchayat, Mitra Niketan Krishi Vigyan Kendra, ICAR-National Centre for Banana, UNESCO, and Central and state government institutions involved in banana research.**
- **Banana is native of India and is widely grown in tropical, sub-tropical, and coastal region of India.**

## Tiger census begins in Odisha

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- The **biennial census of the big cat** began across different forests of Odisha.
- The **state government has joined the National Tiger Census Authority (NTCA)** to count the big cats inhabiting in forests of Odisha.
- While **40 tigers were spotted in Odisha during the previous census in 2016**, the forest and environment department expect the numbers to go up this time.

## Ahmedabad to host state's first 'Queer' meet

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- **Ahmedabad hosted the state's first queer conference, 'Sambandh: The West Zone Queer Conference'** between February 16 to 18. It was **organised by QueerAbad, Ahmedabad's queer-ally support group.**
- The conference was held at the Darpana Academy of Performing Arts, ended with a **Queer Pride Parade and a Queer Mela.**

## Tri-service maritime exercise 'Paschim Lehar' off India's western coast started

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- Around 40 ships, submarines and fighter aircraft participated in **'Paschim Lehar', a tri-service maritime exercise off India's western coast.**
- The objective of the exercise, which commenced on February 12, is to build interoperability.
- "This exercise includes **participation of a large number of ships, submarines and aircraft from the Western Naval Command of the Indian Navy.** Units from Eastern Naval Command, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and the Coast Guard are also participating to build interoperability".

## Kashmir set to host its biggest tourism gathering in 30 years

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- **Kashmir is preparing to host its biggest tourism gathering in three decades**, as major players and policymakers in the travel industry across India will meet in the Valley for a convention in March, offering a ray of hope to the struggling sector.

## Prime Minister Narendra Modi opened 'biggest party office in world'

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- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Bharatiya Janata Party's new headquarters at New Delhi's Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg** in the presence of party president Amit Shah. **BJP's new headquarters is bigger than the office of any other political party in the world.**

## Every Singaporean aged 21 and above will receive up to S\$300 bonus

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- **People with an annual income of S\$28,000 or below will be eligible to receive S\$300**, while those with an income between S\$28,001-S\$100,000 will receive S\$200. And people whose income exceeds S\$100,000 annually will receive S\$100 in Singapore.

## India to get control of key port in Iran for 18 months

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- **India and Iran signed a significant pact which gives New Delhi operational control of a part of the strategically located Chabahar port on the Gulf of Oman for 18 months.**

Chabahar Port is a seaport in Chabahar located in southeastern Iran, on the Gulf of Oman. It serves as Iran's only oceanic port. India-Iran-Afghanistan MoU and plans have committed at least \$21bn to Chabahar-Hajigak corridor, including \$85m for Chabahar port development by India.

### Maharashtra govt to launch cheap sanitary pad scheme on International Women's Day

- The Maharashtra government is all set to roll out its "Asmita Yojana" on the International Women's Day.
- It will be formally launched on March 8, March, 2018.

### Cabinet approved Rs 60,000 crore fund for urban housing plan

- Union Cabinet approved setting up of National Urban Housing Fund (NUHF) for Rs 60,000 crore to meet funds requirement for achieving the target of building 1.2 crore houses in urban areas with partial government support under the PM Awas Yojna (PMAY) scheme.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that a world class satellite station will be built in Mysuru. Over Rs 800 Crore would be spent this modern railway station.

The railway has launched a SRIJAN (or station rejuvenation through joint action) competition to select designs for redeveloping 600 major stations across the country.

### Children aged less than 5 years to get blue Baal Aadhaar

- UIDAI tweeted that children below the age of five years will receive a blue-coloured 'Baal Aadhaar' card.
- While the Baal Aadhaar will not carry biometric details of the child, it will be updated with the information after the child crosses the age of five.

The Kerala government is gearing up to geotag the houses and farms of over 10 lakh livestock and poultry farmers in the state as part of its massive digitisation drive.

### Goa's Agonda beach tops Asia's Travellers' Choice Awards list

- Agonda beach in Goa has been ranked number one in the Asia list of the annual Travellers' Choice awards for beaches.
- Five Indian beaches featured in the Asia list of "Travellers' Choice awards for beaches". Besides Agonda, these include Radhanagar Beach in Andaman and Nicobar Islands at number 4, Benaulim, Mandrem and Palolem beaches in Goa at numbers 15, 18 and 20 respectively.

Gopalganj district of Bihar has set a new record by constructing more than 10,000 toilets in only 100 hours.

### Guwahati organises festival 'Aadi Mahotsava'

- Assam has organised a tribal festival called 'Aadi Mahotsava' at Gandhi Mandir Indoor stadium field in New Delhi to celebrate the ethnic tribal culture of the country.
- The 10-day festival is being conducted by the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India in collaboration with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in an attempt to celebrate the rare art and culture of the tribal communities.

### Assam will mark September 22 as Rhino Day to raise awareness about the animal

- The Assam government will be observing September 22 as Rhino Day to generate public awareness on protection of the one-horned pachyderm.

- “A day dedicated to the approximately 2,500 rhino population in the state will be a tribute to the rhinoceros — the pride of Assam,”.

### Two day National Conference on e-Governance inaugurated in Hyderabad

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- Two day National Conference on e-Governance inaugurated in Hyderabad. The theme of the Conference this year is, ‘Technology for accelerating Development’.

### The foundation stone for National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways and Coasts laid at IIT Chennai

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- **Shri Nitin Gadkari, Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation** laid the **foundation stone for setting up of a National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC), at IIT Chennai.**



## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World Wetlands Day: 2<sup>nd</sup> February

- The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)** in collaboration with **Department of Forests, Assam government** is organised the national-level celebration of **World Wetlands Day (WWD)** on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2018 at Deepor Beel, a Ramsar Site in Guwahati.
- The 2018 theme is 'Wetlands for a sustainable urban future'.

### World Cancer Day: 4<sup>th</sup> February

- **World Cancer Day** is an international day marked on February 4 to raise awareness of cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment.
- World Cancer Day was **founded by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)** to support the goals of the World Cancer Declaration, written in 2008.

### National Deworming Day conducted under health ministry aegis

- The **National Deworming Day** is a single fixed-day approach to treating intestinal worm infections in all children aged 1- 19 years, and is held on 10 February and 10 August each year.

### World Radio Day

- **World Radio Day** is an observance day held annually on 13 February. World Radio Day is about celebrating radio, why we love it and why we need it today more than ever. A day to remember the unique power of radio to touch lives and bring people together across every corner of the globe. It was proclaimed on 3 November 2011 by UNESCO's 36th General Conference after originally being proposed by the Kingdom of Spain.

### World Pangolin Day

- **World Pangolin Day**, celebrated on the 17 February, is a worldwide celebration of the pangolin aimed at raising awareness of its importance and its plight. Global citizens, organizations, businesses, and governments come together on this day to remind us why we should—and will—protect this unique mammal, and now the most trafficked animal, from becoming extinct. .
- There are eight pangolin species four in Asia and four in Africa. Two species are found in India—Indian Pangolins or *Manis crassicaudata*, and Chinese Pangolin or *Manis pentadactyla*. Indian Pangolins are found throughout the country.

### World Day of Social Justice

- Across the globe, the **World Day of Social Justice (WDSJ)** was observed on February 20 with the theme "Workers on the Move: the Quest for Social Justice" by the UN Agencies, social activists, human rights groups, community based organizations and educational institutions.

### International Mother Language Day

- **International Mother Language Day (IMLD)** is a worldwide annual observance held on 21 February to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and promote multilingualism.
- First announced by UNESCO on 17 November 1999, it was formally recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in a resolution establishing 2008 as the International Year of Languages.

### India Will Host World Environment Day on June 5

- India, a country that ranks third from the bottom in the global Environmental Performance Index, will host the World Environment Day this year, on June 5, 2018.

World Environment Day (WED) occurs on 5 June every year, and is the United Nations' principal vehicle for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the protection of our environment. It was first held in 1973.

**QUESTIONS**

1. The first Indian city to come up with a city-specific fire safety blueprint to be implemented over the next five years is:  
(a) Lucknow (b) Chennai (c) Bengaluru (d) Pune
2. Recently, Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra has decided to recommend the removal of Justice S N Shukla after he was found guilty of misconduct. Justice Shukla belongs to:  
(a) Allahabad High Court (b) Bombay High Court (c) Calcutta High Court (d) Uttarakhand High Court
3. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's annual Global Democracy Index 2018, what is the India rank?  
(a) 13th (b) 42nd (c) 47th (d) 53rd
4. At present, which of the following country has the largest online population in the world?  
(a) China (b) India (c) Bangladesh (d) Brazil
5. According to the Global Talent Competitive Index (GTCI) for the year 2018, what is the rank of India?  
(a) 63rd (b) 81st (c) 94th (d) 102nd
6. Which of the following country retained its top spot in the financial secrecy index (FSI) 2018, unveiled by the Tax Justice Network (TJN)?  
(a) Norway (b) Finland (c) Switzerland (d) New Zealand
7. Which of the following book is authored by P Chidambaram?  
(a) The Secret (b) Politics in India (c) I Do What I Do (d) Speaking Truth To Power
8. Recently, Veteran Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee received the Legion of Honour. This is the highest civilian award of:  
(a) Italy (b) France (c) Switzerland (d) Canada
9. Recently, India has joined the Ashgabat agreement. Which among the following country is not founding member of this agreement?  
(a) Oman (b) Kyrgyzstan (c) Turkmenistan (d) Uzbekistan
10. Recently, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley announced the government's plan to build a tunnel through the Sela Pass located in:  
(a) Sikkim (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Uttarakhand
11. Recently, A scheme called the Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBAR-DHAN) is being proposed. It will not manage and convert cattle dung and solid waste in farms to:  
(a) Compost (b) Bio-gas (c) Bio-CNG (d) Methane
12. Recently, the world's longest zip line measuring 2.83 km was opened in:  
(a) Russia (b) Australia (c) Egypt (d) UAE
13. Recently FM Jaitley announced one of the world's largest health protection programmes for the country. This programme will benefit about \_\_\_\_\_ people in India?  
(a) 10 Crore (b) 25 Crore (c) 50 Crore (d) 65 Crore
14. Indian Railways is set to get first high-speed electric locomotive being produced in collaboration with which of the following countries?  
(a) France (b) Germany (c) USA (d) Switzerland
15. For India's development and diplomatic engagement under the 'Neighbourhood First' policy. Which country is traditionally the largest recipient of External Affairs Ministry allocation?  
(a) Bangladesh (b) Nepal (c) Myanmar (d) Bhutan

16. According to the Economic Survey 2017-18, which state has largest share in India's exports and the goods and service tax (GST) base?  
(a) Maharashtra (b) Telangana (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Gujarat
17. The first defence industrial production corridor announced in the Union Budget, will link which of the following two cities?  
(a) Hyderabad and Bengaluru (b) Mumbai and Bengaluru  
(c) Chennai and Bengaluru (d) Chennai and Kolkata
18. Which among the following country has become the second country after Bangladesh to open a consulate in Guwahati?  
(a) Myanmar (b) Bhutan (c) China (d) Sri Lanka
19. Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) signed a project agreement with the World Bank for the implementation of the US \$ 800 million JMVP for capacity augmentation of navigation on:  
(a) National Waterway-1 (b) National Waterway-2 (c) National Waterway-3 (d) National Waterway-4
20. India's first woman private detective is:  
(a) Rajani Pandit (b) Punita Arora  
(c) Padmavathy Bandopadhyay (d) Mitali Madhumita
21. Recently, who has been awarded the 'Times Power Women of the Year 2017'(Pune)?  
(a) Shabnam Asthana (b) Chanda Kochhar (c) Shikha Sharma (d) Aruna Jayanthi
22. Who has been honoured with this year's Sahitya Akademi Bhasha Samman award?  
(a) Ashvin Mehta (b) Shesh Anand Madhukar  
(c) Jatindranath Dowara (d) Rasik Shah
23. World Wetlands Day (WWD) is celebrated every year on:  
(a) 2nd March (b) 2nd February (c) 2nd June (d) 2nd July
24. Recently, Researchers from which country have discovered rare 200 million-year-old ichthyosaur species?  
(a) USA (b) UK (c) India (d) China
25. The Uttar Pradesh government has inaugurated the state's first ever butterfly park in:  
(a) Allahabad (b) Kanpur (c) Lucknow (d) Agra
26. The Department of Defence Production has constituted a task force to study use of artificial intelligence. This task force is headed by:  
(a) N Chandrasekaran (b) Shaktikanta Das (c) Anoop Singh (d) Ashok Lahiri
27. The International Conference on 'Demetrios Galanos and His Legacy' was inaugurated in:  
(a) London (b) Athens (c) New Delhi (d) Beijing
28. India's first sentiment index for micro and small enterprises 'CriSidEx' has developed by:  
(a) CRISIL (b) SIDBI (c) SEBI (d) Both A and B
29. Recently, which country authorities have permitted doctors to create the country's first 'three-parent' babies?  
(a) USA (b) UK (c) Japan (d) Israel
30. Recently, which country has launched its first seismo-electromagnetic satellite to study seismic precursors?  
(a) India (b) France (c) China (d) Brazil
31. The book titled 'Exam Warriors' is authored by:  
(a) Shri Prakash Javadekar (b) Smt Smriti Zubin Irani (c) Shri Narendra Modi (d) Smt Sushma Swaraj
32. World Cancer Day is an international day is observed every year on:  
(a) February 2 (b) February 3 (c) February 4 (d) March 4

33. India has won ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup 2018 by defeating which country?  
(a) England (b) Pakistan (c) Australia (d) South Africa
34. The 4th edition of International Young Chef Olympiad (YCO) won by:  
(a) Lai Jia Yi (b) Surya Sekhar Roy Choudhury  
(c) Chris Galvin (d) Scott Baechler
35. Recently, the First ever International Kala Mela was inaugurated by the Vice President of India in:  
(a) Mathura (b) New Delhi (c) Pune (d) Varanasi
36. According to Railway Minister Piyush Goyal in which of the following area no diesel locomotives will be allowed after March 2019?  
(a) Lucknow (b) Delhi (c) Chandigarh (d) Bhopal
37. The Centre has sanctioned a new project to control pollution in River Sal recently. River Sal is in:  
(a) Goa (b) Sikkim (c) Punjab (d) Gujarat
38. Who has been appointed as the 22nd chief justice of Bangladesh?  
(a) Md. Abdul Wahhab Miah (b) Md. Muzammel Hossain  
(c) A.B.M. Khairul Haque (d) Syed Mahmud Hossain
39. Recently, 'Shanti Amaravati Buddhist Heritage Festival is ' kicked off in:  
(a) Belgaum (b) Vijaywada (c) Nagpur (d) Guwahati
40. Which of the following countries successfully launched the world's smallest satellite-carrying rocket recently?  
(a) China (b) Russia (c) India (d) Japan
41. Which is to be the first Indian state to have Transgender Welfare Board (TWB)?  
(a) West Bengal (b) Odisha (c) Haryana (d) Maharashtra
42. Recently, P V Sindhu suffered defeat in a final against Beiwen Zhang to finish runner-up at the India Open Super 300 badminton tournament. Beiwen Zhang belongs to:  
(a) Canada (b) USA (c) Japan (d) China
43. After the budgetary exercise gets Parliament nod, the apex indirect tax policy-making body CBEC will be renamed as:  
(a) Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)  
(b) Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customer Service (CBIC)  
(c) Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Culture (CBIC)  
(d) The Central Board of Excise (CBE)
44. Recently, the Supreme Court has said that it will set up a fresh Constitution Bench to examine the validity of various aspects of a provision of the Citizenship Act 1955, including the cut-off date for awarding citizenship to Bangladeshi immigrants in:  
(a) West Bengal (b) Assam (c) Meghalaya (d) Tripura
45. Recently, Del Toro bagged the Directors Guild of America award for outstanding directing of:  
(a) The Shape of Water (b) Dunkirk  
(c) Get Out (d) Three Billboards outside Ebbing, Missouri
46. Recently, Which of the following country has declared a state of emergency for 15 days amid a spiralling political crisis in the nation?  
(a) Maldives (b) Mozambique (c) Myanmar (d) Malaysia
47. Recently, Nicos Anastasiades has been re-elected as the President of:  
(a) Georgia (b) Spain (c) Belarus (d) Cyprus

48. Which of the following is the world's busiest airport overall by passenger traffic?  
(a) Beijing Capital International Airport (b) Heathrow Airport  
(c) Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (d) Los Angeles International Airport
49. Who has won the India Open badminton men's title recently?  
(a) Shrikanth Kidambi (b) Shi Yuqi (c) Chou Tien Chen (d) Lee Chong Wei
50. Which of the following Indian Bollywood actresses has been named as part of Forbes India's 30 under 30 list recently?  
(a) Shraddha Kapoor (b) Alia Bhatt (c) Kirti Sanon (d) Bhumi Pednekar
51. Which of the following is the first state in the country to adopt a comprehensive fintech policy that aims to foster an environment for fintech startups?  
(a) Gujarat (b) Maharashtra (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Madhya Pradesh
52. Recently, the President of India inaugurated the Mahamastakabhisheka Mahotsav 2018 of Gommateshwara Bhagwan Sri Bahubali Swami. Mahamastakabhisheka Mahotsav is celebrated once in every:  
(a) 4 Years (b) 8 Years (c) 10 Years (d) 12 Years
53. Name Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birth place, which with Rs 100 crore budget, Gujarat and the Centre are jointly developing as a major tourist hub?  
(a) Vadnagar (b) Maninagar (c) Vadodara (d) Navsari
54. India's tiger census will see coordination of different other countries in estimating the territorial spread of the animal in the subcontinent. Which of the following country is not involved in this coordination?  
(a) Bangladesh (b) Myanmar (c) Bhutan (d) Nepal
55. The proposed long-term capital gains tax on equity holdings will apply on profits made from sale of shares on or after:  
(a) March 1, 2018 (b) April 1, 2018 (c) July 1, 2018 (d) April 30, 2019
56. Recently, the world's first sustainable floating drive-thru is opened in:  
(a) Dubai (b) New York (c) Paris (d) Tokyo
57. Recently, India successfully test-fired its short-range nuclear capable ballistic missile Agni-I. It has a strike range of over:  
(a) 350 Kms (b) 475 Kms (c) 700 Kms (d) 1000 Kms
58. Recently, India is invited to 'Janadriyah' festival as a guest of honour country. 'Janadriyah' festival is celebrated in:  
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Indonesia (c) Maldives (d) Nigeria
59. National Informatics Centre (NIC) is organizing a three-day National Meet on Grassroot Informatics- VIVID 2018 in:  
(a) New Delhi (b) Indore (c) Pune (d) Nagpur
60. Recently, Government gave its approval and financial sanction in 2017 to build two Light nuclear power reactors with cooperation of:  
(a) Japan (b) United Kingdom (c) Russia (d) Germany
61. Indian transport ministry has requested who among the following Bollywood actor to be the brand ambassador for road safety awareness campaign?  
(a) Aamir Khan (b) Akshay Kumar (c) Amitabh Bacchhan (d) Ajay Devgan
62. Which of the following Indian state government set to examine the feasibility of having a separate flag for the state has submitted its report recently?  
(a) Kerala (b) Tripura (c) Karnataka (d) Maharashtra
63. Which of the following state government and Ola, India's leading ride-sharing companies signed a MoU to pilot an app-based river taxi service?  
(a) West Bengal (b) Assam (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Maharashtra



64. The Reserve Bank of India announced several measures for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and allowed banks and finance companies to give these units .....to clear their dues.  
(a) 90 Days (b) 120 Days (c) 180 Days (d) 270 Days
65. Who has become the first woman to pick 200 ODI wickets in cricket recently?  
(a) M Kapp (b) S.R.Taylor (c) M.L.Schutt (d) Jhulan Goswami
66. Who has been declared as the recipient of the IPI India Award for Excellence in Journalism recently?  
(a) Lalitha Suri (b) Ritu Sarin (c) Divya Rana (d) Aishwarya Dhameeja
67. The Centre and NITI Aayog will hold deliberations with states to come out with a new mechanism to ensure that farmers get .....of the production cost of their crops.  
(a) 1.5 times (b) 2.5 times (c) 3 times (d) 5 times
68. Recently, China has agreed to allow pilgrims from India to visit Kailash-Mansarovar in Tibet Autonomous Region through Nathu La. Nathu La pass is in:  
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand (c) Sikkim (d) Arunachal Pradesh
69. According to the 'Times Higher Education' rankings, which of the following universities topped the list in the country?  
(a) Tezpur University (b) Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore  
(c) IIT Bombay (d) IIT Kharagpur
70. Which country has become the first in the world to repeal same-sex marriage recently?  
(a) Belarus (b) Poland (c) Bermuda (d) Latvia
71. Recently, which of the following countries has created five sprawling national parks from the largest donation of private land to the government?  
(a) Mexico (b) Bulgaria (c) Peru (d) Chile
72. According to the latest international Intellectual Property (IP) index released by the US Chambers of Commerce, the current rank of India is:  
(a) 11th (b) 24th (c) 31st (d) 44th
73. How many Coastal Economic Zones (CEZs) covering all the Maritime States and Union Territories have been identified as part of the National Perspective Plan under the Sagarmala Programme?  
(a) 7 (b) 9 (c) 11 (d) 14
74. Recently, Scientists have created a "strange" new form of water that behaves like a cross between a liquid and a solid. Name the substance?  
(a) Superionic water ice (b) Megaionic substantial water  
(c) Super critical ice (d) Critical Ionic water
75. Which of the following Indian states topped the overall medal tally in the inaugural edition of the Khelo India School Games recently?  
(a) Punjab (b) Haryana (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Maharashtra
76. Who was the first Indian cricketer to score more than 100 runs by running in one day international match?  
(a) Shikhar Dhawan (b) Virat Kohli (c) Ajinkya Rahane (d) Rohit Sharma
77. Who has been appointed as the first woman chief justice of the Manipur high court recently?  
(a) Justice Abhilasha Kumari (b) Justice Anandita Shukla  
(c) Justice Supriya Damble (d) Justice Manjula Shetty
78. According to the health index report, prepared by NITI Aayog which of the following states ranked first in overall performance by larger states in the country?  
(a) Punjab (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Maharashtra (d) Kerala

79. The theme of "Hunar Haat" being organized by the Ministry of Minority Affairs this year is:  
(a) Craft Aur Cuisine Ka Sangam (b) Development with Dignity  
(c) Sabka Vikas Sab Aagey (d) Explore your goodness
80. Recently, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) has unveiled \_\_\_\_\_ indices which could act as benchmarks for the mutual fund industry.  
(a) 34 (b) 46 (c) 64 (d) 72
81. Which of the following railway zones has become the first railway zone in the country to complete 100 per cent LED lighting at all the stations under its jurisdiction?  
(a) South Central Railway (b) North Eastern Railway (c) East Central Railway (d) Central Railway
82. In order to promote better management of thermal power plants' by-product fly ash, Union power minister R K Singh launched web-based monitoring system and a mobile application named:  
(a) ASH TRACK (b) GO TRACK (c) MAIN TRACKING (d) ASH STAND
83. The first flight of Hawk-i with indigenous Real Time Operating System (RTOS) in India has been developed by:  
(a) ISRO (b) BARC (c) HAL (d) Indian Air Force
84. Who has been appointed to the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board as the governing body's first independent female director?  
(a) Shikha Sharma (b) Arundhati Bhattacharya (c) Indra Nooyi (d) Kiran Mazumdar Shaw
85. Recently, who has been conferred with the 'Grand Collar of the State of Palestine' by President Mahmoud Abbas?  
(a) Barak Obama (b) Narendra Modi (c) Emmanuel Macron (d) Angela Merkel
86. India and Palestine signed six agreements on the infrastructural development in the Palestine. Palestine is a de jure sovereign state in the:  
(a) Middle East (b) Asia (c) Africa (d) Central Asia
87. Recently, who has become the first Indian-American to speak for the US government?  
(a) Bobby Jindal (b) Kamala Devi Harris (c) Raja Krishnamoorthi (d) Raj Shah
88. Who is the current Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB)?  
(a) Mr. Suresh Sethi (b) Shantanu Narayen (c) Ajay Banga (d) Yogesh Chander Deveshwar
89. Recently, who has been appointed as the brand ambassador of the Muthoot Group?  
(a) Salman Khan (b) Shah Rukh Khan (c) Amitabh Bachchan (d) P.V.Sindhu
90. Which among the following company has been awarded with the Golden Peacock Award 2017 for corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives?  
(a) Reliance Industries (b) Adani Group (c) Tata Group (d) Flipkart
91. Recently, Researchers at \_\_\_\_\_ have identified a potential biomarker for Alzheimer's disease.  
(a) Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (b) Indian Institute of Sciences, Bengaluru  
(c) Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai (d) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
92. National Deworming Day is a single fixed-day approach to treating intestinal worm infections in all children aged 1- 19 years held on:  
(a) 9 February (b) 10 February (c) 11 February (d) 12 February
93. Who has become the first Indian golfer to qualify for the China Ladies PGA Tour?  
(a) Gursimar Badwal (b) Sharmila Nicollet (c) Neha Tripathi (d) Tvesa Malik
94. Who among the following Indian cricketer has become the first Indian to score a century in his 100th ODI?  
(a) Rohit Sharma (b) Virat Kohli (c) Shikhar Dhawan (d) M.S.Dhoni

95. For the first time Indian Navy will be exercising in the Gulf with which of the following countries, going beyond the Arabian Sea?  
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Kuwait (c) United Arab Emirates (d) Oman
96. Name the Indian, who was part of the team that bagged the scientific and engineering award at the Oscars 2018 Scientific and Technical Awards recently.  
(a) Vishal Limaye (b) Sachin Sathe (c) Sandeep Singh Sanyal (d) Vikas Sathaye
97. Recently, the world's tallest 'Gevora hotel' has opened in:  
(a) Melbourne (b) Hong Kong (c) New York (d) Dubai
98. According to a report by New World Wealth, which of the following cities has been named among the top 15 wealthiest cities globally?  
(a) Mumbai (b) New Delhi (c) Kolkata (d) Hyderabad
99. Recently, India has signed the first concessional agreement with the \_\_\_\_\_ in the oil sector.  
(a) UAE (b) Argentina (c) Venezuela (d) Oman
100. Which of the following company and online marketplace Paisabazaar.com announced to have entered into a partnership to develop "industry first" innovations on Cloud platform using artificial intelligence (AI)?  
(a) Intel (b) HP (c) Microsoft (d) Google
101. Recently, Scientists have discovered three new species of eel along \_\_\_\_\_ coast in the past few months.  
(a) Northern Bay of Bengal (b) Southern Arabian Sea  
(c) Mid Indian Ocean (d) Northern Pacific Ocean
102. Recently, a MOU was signed between India and Palestine for the construction of an India Palestine Centre for empowering women, named ..... at a cost of USD 5 million.  
(a) "Turathi" (b) "Saarathi" (c) "Saathi" (d) "Baarathi"
103. As per the latest FAO report, the present rank of India in the list of top ten nations reporting the greatest annual net gain in forest area is:  
(a) Third (b) Fifth (c) Seventh (d) Eighth
104. Who among the following released India's first ever Highway Capacity Manual in New Delhi recently?  
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Nitin Gadkari (c) Shri Rajnath Singh (d) Shri Ramnath Kovind
105. Name the woman who is poised to become Pakistan's first woman Hindu lawmaker after the party nominated her for the upcoming Senate elections?  
(a) Kavita Rani (b) Sushma Rathi (c) Krishna Kumari (d) Alka Kumari
106. Who has become the first person of Punjabi origin and Sikh to be elected as president of Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario?  
(a) Jag Badwal (b) Gurdayal Dhillon (c) Gurcharan Singh (d) Vikram Singh Ahluwalia
107. According to the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and National Election Watch (NEW), who is the richest Chief Minister in the country?  
(a) K Chandrashekar Rao (b) Siddaramaiah (c) Chandrababu Naidu (d) Edappadi K. Palaniswami
108. Which of the following bank wrote off bad loans worth Rs 20,339 crore in 2016-17, the highest among all the public sector banks?  
(a) Punjab National Bank (b) Bank of Baroda (c) State Bank of India (d) Union Bank of India
109. Who among the following Australian woman cricketer has been conferred with the Belinda Clark Medal recently?  
(a) Beth Mooney (b) Megan Schutt (c) Ellyse Perry (d) Meg Lanning

110. Recently IIM Ahmedabad has signed a MoU to establish the business school's first extension centre in:  
(a) Dubai (b) Abu Dhabi (c) Muscat (d) Cairo
111. Who became the first Asian as well as the first Indian to swim across the Ocean Seven recently?  
(a) Shantanu Vaishya (b) Rohan More (c) Deepak Rana (d) Anurag Chudasma
112. Recently, who among the following is elected as the president of the Sahitya Akademi?  
(a) Sri K. Sanjay Murthy (b) Sri Chandrashekar Kambar  
(c) Sri Nand Kishore Pandey (d) Sri Madhav Koushik
113. The Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shri Radha Mohan Singh has laid the foundation stone for the first dairy plant in:  
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Bihar (d) Odisha
114. In a first in the country, one of the State governments will be setting up an institute for artificial intelligence (AI) in:  
(a) Mumbai (b) Kolkata (c) Chennai (d) Hyderabad
115. Which among the following towns is set to become India's gateway to South-East Asia as well as the rest of the North-East?  
(a) Jogighopa (b) Mawlynnong (c) Dikshit (d) Majuli
116. Which country is the third largest consumer of energy in the world?  
(a) China (b) UK (c) USA (d) India
117. Which company has been recognised as the World's Most Ethical Company for the year 2018 by Ethisphere Institute?  
(a) Hindalco (b) Tata Steel (c) RIL (d) Fortune India
118. According to the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2017, what is the overall increase in the forest area over the last assessment year in 2015?  
(a) 1% (b) 2% (c) 3% (d) 4%
119. India's biggest Global Conference on 'India Pharma & India Medical Device 2018' is to be organized in:  
(a) Bengaluru (b) Pune (c) Bhopal (d) Hyderabad
120. Soyuz rocket launched an uncrewed cargo ship toward the International Space Station by which country?  
(a) France (b) Germany (c) Russia (d) Japan
121. World Radio Day is an observance day held annually on:  
(a) 10 February (b) 11 February (c) 12 February (d) 13 February
122. The Vice President of India has inaugurated the India's first Global Theatre Olympics in New Delhi. The Theatre Olympics was established in:  
(a) 1893 (b) 1953 (c) 1993 (d) 1999
123. For the first time in India, World Congress on Information Technology 2018 (WCIT) was held at:  
(a) New Delhi (b) Bengaluru (c) Hyderabad (d) Pune
124. Which of the following two countries have been suspended from voting in the UN General Assembly for the third time in three years because of millions of dollars in unpaid dues?  
(a) Syria and Iraq (b) Bulgaria and Belarus (c) Cuba and Chile (d) Venezuela and Libya
125. Recently, Jacob Zuma has resigned as President of \_\_\_\_\_ African country to bring an end to his nine scandal-plagued years in power.  
(a) Zimbabwe (b) South Africa (c) Ethiopia (d) Liberia

126. Which among the following Indian states two districts will be added to MHA's list of maoist-affected regions for the first time in the state's history?  
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Karnataka (c) Kerala (d) Tripura
127. The first Indian state to opt out of the National Health Protection Scheme unveiled in the Union Budget is:  
(a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) West Bengal (d) Tripura
128. Recently, the President of India inaugurated the international conference 'Agricon 2018' and 'Agriexpo 2018' at:  
(a) Varanasi (b) Patna (c) Pant Nagar (d) Kanpur
129. India's first online radio station launched on the occasion of World Radio Day is:  
(a) Radio Tarang (b) Radio India (c) Radio Umang (d) Radio Bharat
130. Who won the 23rd edition of the Senior Women's National Football Championship recently?  
(a) Mizoram (b) Manipur (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Tamil Nadu
131. Recently, India's biggest Annual Conference on Pharma Industry and Medical Devices - India Pharma 2018 and India Medical Device 2018 began at:  
(a) Bengaluru (b) Hyderabad (c) Nagpur (d) Patna
132. In order to mark World Radio Day, India's first radio festival began in:  
(a) Pune (b) Guwahati (c) Mumbai (d) New Delhi
133. The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 2018 edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS 2018). The theme of the Summit this year is:  
(a) People, Planet and Progress (b) Partnerships for a Resilient Planet  
(c) Development Unified Since 2017 (d) Come together for Sustainable Development
134. Which of the following Indian states has introduced a Bill in the state Assembly to set up a yoga council for regulating the teaching and practice of yoga recently?  
(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Assam (c) Meghalaya (d) Manipur
135. Recently, Hailemariam Desalegn has submitted a letter of resignation. He was the Prime Minister of which of the following countries since year 2012?  
(a) Eritrea (b) Somalia (c) Burundi (d) Ethiopia
136. Who has been named the EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2017?  
(a) Kumarmangalam Birla (b) Sanjiv Bajaj (c) Mangu Singh (d) E. Sreedharan
137. Who became the first football player in Champions League history to score 100 goals for one club recently?  
(a) Lionel Messi (b) Luis Suarez (c) Cristiano Ronaldo (d) Neymar Jr.
138. Union government has announced to set up Ekalavya Model Residential Schools for:  
(a) OBC (b) SC (c) ST (d) All of the above
139. Recently, China has announced that this year's summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) will be held in:  
(a) Qingdao (b) Shenzhen (c) Chengdu (d) Nanjing
140. Recently, the Supreme Court has increased which of the following states/ Union territory share in Cauvery water entitlements?  
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Puducherry (d) Karnataka
141. The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) is organizing a National Conference under the title of "Agriculture 2022 - Doubling Farmers' Income" in:  
(a) Kolkata (b) Pune (c) New Delhi (d) Pune



142. Which Indian bank announced the listing of its debut US \$600 million bond issue on country's first international exchange BSE's India INX at GIFT City recently?  
(a) Bandhan Bank (b) Kotak Mahindra Bank (c) Yes Bank (d) IDFC Bank
143. For the first time beyond Bhutan and Nepal, India will invest in which of the countries through its own national currency Rupee?  
(a) Iraq (b) Iran (c) Afghanistan (d) Bangladesh
144. Recently, NASA's Hubble space telescope has captured which of the following planet mysterious dark storm, that probably smells like rotten eggs?  
(a) Uranus (b) Neptune (c) Saturn (d) Mars
145. Who among the following cricketers has been made the brand ambassador of the upcoming T20 Mumbai League?  
(a) Sachin Tendulkar (b) Vinod Kambli (c) Prithwi Shaw (d) Ajinkya Rahane
146. In 2018, World Pangolin Day is celebrated across the world on:  
(a) 14th February (b) 9th February (c) 17th February (d) 2nd February
147. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the country's largest container terminal at:  
(a) Chennai Port Trust (b) Paradip Port Trust (c) Kandla Port Trust (d) Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust
148. Recently, the National Banana Festival, 2018 was held in:  
(a) Coimbatore (b) Kochi (c) Thiruvananthapuram (d) Warangal
149. The theme of the 8th Theatre Olympics is:  
(a) The city of culture and the arts (b) Flag of Friendship  
(c) Vitality and Creativity (d) Audiovisual Feast
150. According to a report released by the NITI Aayog, which state has seen the maximum decline in sex-selective abortion at birth?  
(a) Rajasthan (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Haryana
151. Which company has been recognised as 'Startup of the Year' 2017 at the 7th Small Business Awards?  
(a) Bugworks Research (b) Milkbasket (c) Swiggy (d) Pandorum Technologies
152. Which of the following companies has been recognized as the world's best employers by the Top Employer Institute for the consecutive third year?  
(a) Tata Consultancy Services (b) Reliance Industries Limited  
(c) Adani Wilmar Limited (d) Infosys
153. Recently, who has been conferred with the fifth Yash Chopra Memorial Award in Mumbai?  
(a) Rekha (b) Poonam Dhillon (c) Asha Bhosle (d) Parineeti Chopra
154. Who became the oldest world number one tennis player after reaching the semi-finals of the Rotterdam Open?  
(a) Stan Wawrinka (b) Roger Federer (c) Andy Murray (d) Rafael Nadal
155. Recently, India and \_\_\_\_\_ have signed a significant pact which gives New Delhi operational control of a part of the strategically located Chabahar port for 18 Months:  
(a) Afghanistan (b) Iraq (c) Iran (d) Sri Lanka
156. Which Indian city has hosted two mega technology events--Nasscom India Leadership Forum (ILF) and the 22nd edition of the World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT) concurrently?  
(a) Bengaluru (b) Hyderabad (c) Chennai (d) Lucknow
157. Which of the following state governments is set to roll out its "Asmita Yojana" on the International Women's Day?  
(a) Gujarat (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Maharashtra

158. The "full feature" inter-bank money transfer service in India will be launched by:  
(a) Facebook (b) WhatsApp (c) Google (d) Hike
159. Who among the following became the first man since 1952 to defend a Winter Olympics single figure skating gold medal with victory in Pyeongchang?  
(a) Yuzuru Hanyu (b) Matthew Renshaw (c) Shoma Uno (d) Javier Fernandez
160. Who among the following initiated the country's largest 'train the trainers' programme, inducting 1500 Physical Education (PE) teachers from across Gujarat for advanced training?  
(a) Prakash Padukone (b) Sania Mirza (c) Saina Nehwal (d) Pullela Gopichand
161. Recently, who became the first Indian artist to perform at the Buckingham Palace?  
(a) Vishal Dadlani (b) Ayaan Malik (c) Kanika Kapoor (d) Shreya Ghosal
162. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that a world class satellite station will be built in:  
(a) Nagpur (b) Mysuru (c) Kanpur (d) Varanasi
163. Recently, sixth Garuda Shakti exercise began between a special task force of the Indian Army and the army of:  
(a) USA (b) Iran (c) Malaysia (d) Indonesia
164. Which of the following countries has decided to proceed with the planned carbon tax from 2019 to encourage firms to further cut emissions?  
(a) Vietnam (b) Belarus (c) Singapore (d) Chile
165. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Nasscom's platform - .....- for skill development in eight varied technologies.  
(a) FutureSkills (b) NurtureSkills (c) GreatIndianSkills (d) IndianSkills
166. Who among the following tennis players has won the Rotterdam Open professional men's tennis tournament in 2018?  
(a) Roger Federer (b) Rafael Nadal (c) Grigor Dimitrov (d) Stan Wawarinka
167. Which of the following countries will host the World Environment Day on June 5, 2018?  
(a) Uganda (b) India (c) Bangladesh (d) China
168. According to a UNICEF latest report, which of the following countries is the riskiest country to be born in, with one in 22 babies born there dying before they turn one month old?  
(a) Afghanistan (b) Iraq (c) Pakistan (d) Nepal
169. Which of the following countries is set to host its first ever Arab Fashion Week in March 2018?  
(a) United Arab Emirates (b) Saudi Arabia (c) Kuwait (d) Qatar
170. Recently, the Pakistani Senate approved a motion to declare Mandarin as one of the official languages of Pakistan. Mandarin is an official language of:  
(a) Afghanistan (b) China (c) India (d) Iran
171. Which of the following countries was set to become the first country to launch its own version of bitcoin?  
(a) Chile (b) Brazil (c) Argentina (d) Venezuela
172. Recently the Reserve Bank of India has constituted a five member panel to look into the wide divergence by banks in asset classification and provisioning and reasons for frauds. Name the Chairman of this panel?  
(a) Shri Y H Malegam (b) Dr. Prasanna Kumar Mohanty  
(c) Shri Sudhir Mankad (d) Dr. Nachiket M. Mor
173. India's first gems and Jewellery Park to be on the lines of the Shenzhen model in China will be developed in:  
(a) Navi Mumbai (b) Mangalore (c) Hyderabad (d) Pune

174. Who has become the first Indian woman to fly a fighter aircraft solo recently?  
(a) Veda Krishnamurthy (b) Sushma Reddy  
(c) Avani Chaturvedi (d) Charu Ganguly
175. Recently, for the first time in the country, which of the following railway stations has deployed a female employee on every single post in the station?  
(a) Habibganj (Bhopal) (b) Gandhinagar (Jaipur)  
(c) Gomti Nagar (Lucknow) (d) Kacheguda (Hyderabad)
176. The Union Government has issued order setting up the 'NITI Forum for North-East'. The forum will be co-chaired by the:  
(a) Chairman of NITI Aayog (b) Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog  
(c) Finance Minister of India (d) Speaker of Lok Sabha
177. How many new features have been added in National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) Platform to make it more users friendly recently?  
(a) Three (b) Four (c) Six (d) Nine
178. Who will be the first woman to head NASSCOM in the history of its three decades formation?  
(a) Sunaina Rajpoot (b) Rewati Agnihotri (c) Jigyasha Ahuja (d) Debjani Ghosh
179. Northeast's first regional Centre for Agriculture with Israeli collaboration is to be inaugurated in:  
(a) Manipur (b) Mizoram (c) Tripura (d) Nagaland
180. One of the two defence industrial corridors mentioned in the budget is proposed in.....region of Uttar Pradesh.  
(a) Bundelkhand (b) Purvanchal (c) Baghelkhand (d) Rohilkhand
181. Across the globe, the World Day of Social Justice (WDSJ) was observed on .....with the theme "Workers on the Move: the Quest for Social Justice" by the UN Agencies.  
(a) 17th February (b) 20th February (c) 21st February (d) 12th February
182. The design and development of the first Indian Saras aircraft is being done by the:  
(a) HAL (b) CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories  
(c) Indigo Airlines (d) Ministry of Civil Aviation
183. The first state in the country where projects can now be cleared digitally, without any human interface is:  
(a) Gujarat (b) Assam (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Punjab
184. According to a list released by Transparency International, what is the present rank of India on a 'Corruption Perception Index'?  
(a) 45th (b) 52nd (c) 74th (d) 81st
185. The first sale of Electoral Bonds will commence from the 1st March for a period of ten days. Which of the following banks has been authorized to issue and encash Electoral Bonds Initially?  
(a) State Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank  
(c) Bank of Baroda (d) Indian Overseas Bank
186. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the first of its kind India Tuberculosis (TB) summit in March 2018 that is aimed at TB free India by:  
(a) 2022 (b) 2024 (c) 2025 (d) 2030
187. The West Bengal government was expecting to award the country's single largest grid connected floating solar power project in:  
(a) Murshidabad (b) Hooghly (c) Howrah (d) Darjeeling

188. Which of the following Indian beaches has been ranked number one in the Asia list of the annual Travellers' Choice awards for beaches?  
(a) Radhanagar beach (b) Mandrem beach (c) Agonda beach (d) Palolem beach
189. Starting from July 1, all SIM-based M2M (machine-to-machine) communication devices will carry \_\_\_\_\_ digit number instead of the present 10-digit number.  
(a) 12-digit number (b) 13-digit number (c) 15-digit number (d) 18-digit number
190. Recently, India has successfully test-fired the nuclear-capable 'Dhanush' ballistic missile with a strike range of:  
(a) 130 Kms (b) 185 Kms (c) 240 Kms (d) 350 Kms
191. To celebrate the idea of unity in diversity, Ministry of Culture is organising a Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav under the Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat matrix in:  
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Maharashtra (d) Rajasthan
192. Recently, the largest military exercise in Southeast Asia was concluded in:  
(a) Thailand (b) Singapore (c) Cambodia (d) Laos
193. Recently, the RBI launched 'Ombudsman Scheme' for non-banking financial companies (NBFC) for redressal of complaints against them. The office of the NBFC ombudsmen will not function at:  
(a) Chennai (b) Hyderabad (c) New Delhi (d) Mumbai
194. Recently an Indian-origin professor at the University of Houston has been awarded a \$600,000 private grant for research to develop a new treatment for lupus. Lupus is a/ an:  
(a) Autoimmune disease in Human beings (b) Disease in plants  
(c) Disease in Zebra (d) Disease in Mammals
195. Recently by using new technique called uranium-thorium dating, who are considered as the first known artists on Earth by the scientists?  
(a) Rudolfensis (b) Habilis (c) Neanderthals (d) Floresiensis
196. UIDAI authorities have introduced blue colour 'Baal Aadhaar' cards, which will be given to children below the age of:  
(a) Two years (b) Three years (c) Four years (d) Five years
197. To promote India's Heritage, Ministry of Culture is organising a week long diversified cultural carnival 'Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav' in Madhya Pradesh at:  
(a) Gwalior (b) Indore (c) Bhopal (d) Khajuraho
198. What is the name of joint military exercise between the Indian Army and Seychelles People's Defence Forces held in 2018?  
(a) Lamitye (b) IndoMitry (c) IndoSeych (d) Garuda
199. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has directed banks to link the SWIFT (Society for World Interbank Financial Telecommunication System platform) with the core banking solutions (CBS) of banks by:  
(a) April 30, 2018 (b) April 30, 2019 (c) April 30, 2020 (d) April 30, 2022
200. India's first locally developed 4G/LTE telecom system amid an international buyers-sellers meet of telecom industry launched in:  
(a) Mumbai (b) New Delhi (c) Hyderabad (d) Chennai
201. Who among the following will assist the government in developing IT infrastructure for the mega National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS)?  
(a) Harsh Agrawal (b) Nandan Nilekani (c) Satya Nadella (d) Srinivas Tamada

202. Which among the following Indian States has organised a tribal festival called 'Aadi Mahotsava' at Gandhi Mandir Indoor stadium field in New Delhi?  
(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Assam (d) Jharkhand
203. Who among the following has become first Indian gymnast to win a World Cup Series medal in Melbourne?  
(a) Dipa Karmakar (b) Aruna Budda Reddy  
(c) Ashish Kumar (d) Kalpana Sureka
204. Who among the following has become first Indian athlete to be banned by NADA for possession of an illegal drug in 2018?  
(a) Seema Punia (b) Vikas Gowda (c) Jithin Paul (d) Krishna Ponia
205. Which among the following states/ Union territories is hosting a multinational mega event MILAN 2018, a congregation of littoral navies conducted biennially by Indian Navy?  
(a) Lakshadweep (b) Andaman and Nicobar Islands  
(c) Uttarakhand (d) Madhya Pradesh
206. Recently the 20th Conference of the Commonwealth Education Ministers (20CCEM) was held in:  
(a) Mauritius (b) New Zealand (c) Fiji (d) Australia
207. Who has been elected as new Deputy Prime Minister of Australia after being selected as the leader of the country's National Party recently?  
(a) Michael McCormack (b) Warren Truss (c) Wayne Swan (d) Anthony Albanese
208. Recently the seventh meeting of Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on Nepal-India relations has been concluded in:  
(a) Lumbini (b) Kathmandu (c) Dharamshala (d) Varanasi
209. The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has released a list of around how many Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), which have been categorised as high-risk financial institutions recently?  
(a) 6500 (b) 7700 (c) 8900 (d) 9500
210. Recently, Commerce and industry ministry has appointed four institutes to suggest measures to push India's ranking in World Bank's ease of doing business index. Which of the following institutes is not among the four?  
(a) National Institute of Construction Management and Research (NICMAR)  
(b) Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT)  
(c) Indian Institute of Science (IISc)  
(d) Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI)
211. The Assam government will be observing .....as Rhino Day to generate public awareness on protection of the one-horned pachyderm.  
(a) July 18 (b) September 22 (c) November 24 (d) December 27
212. India's premier defence research institute DRDO carried out "successful" test flight of its Rustom 2. Rustom 2 is a homemade:  
(a) Light Helicopter (b) Drone (c) Fighter Aircraft (d) Submarine
213. Recently who among the following won the men's singles final to clinch the Austrian Open International Challenge?  
(a) Kidambi Srikanth (b) Prannoy Kumar (c) B Sai Praneeth (d) Parupalli Kashyap
214. Who has been appointed the new Editor-in-Chief of Rajya Sabha Television recently?  
(a) Shri A.Surya Prakash (b) Shri Shashi Shekhar Vempati  
(c) Shri Rahul Mahajan (d) Shri Gurdeep Singh Sappal
215. What is the name of the robot launched by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan to end the practice of manual scavenging in the state?  
(a) Bandicoot (b) Swatchkerala (c) Robokerala (d) Soniacoot



216. Recently, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has prioritized \_\_\_\_\_ cities across the country for development of intermodal stations (IMS).  
(a) 10 (b) 15 (c) 25 (d) 35
217. King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein is associated with which among the following countries?  
(a) Iraq (b) Saudi Arabia (c) Indonesia (d) Jordan
218. Recently, which among the following countries has become the Vice Chair of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)?  
(a) China (b) USA (c) France (d) Canada
219. Which among the following countries is not a Permanent Member (P-5) country in the UNO?  
(a) UK (b) France (c) China (d) Japan
220. According to the latest Economic Survey tabled in the Bihar State Assembly, Bihar's growth rate is higher than that of the national average of \_\_\_\_\_ per cent.  
(a) 5.9 (b) 6.7 (c) 7.0 (d) 8.0
221. Recently, The Delhi High Court exempted the Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority (GNIDA) to pay Rs \_\_\_\_\_ billion in taxes between 2004 and 2015 issued by the income tax department.  
(a) 50 (b) 75 (c) 100 (d) 150
222. The J-20 Chengdu is the "latest stealth jet fighter" launched by:  
(a) Japan (b) China (c) North Korea (d) South Korea
223. Recently, TSR Subramanian has passed away, he was a:  
(a) Former Finance Minister of India (b) Former Cabinet Secretary of India  
(c) Former Attorney General of India (d) Former Chief Justice of India
224. Union Cabinet Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone for setting up of a National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC), at:  
(a) IIT Chennai (b) IIT Mumbai (c) IIT Kochi (d) IIT Kolkata
225. Which among the following panchayats is set to become country's first 'carbon neutral' panchayat?  
(a) Dharnai, Bihar (b) Meenangadi, Kerala (c) Payvihi, Maharashtra (d) Odanthurai, Tamil Nadu
226. The first state in India to introduce a maximum punishment of death penalty for the rapists of girls below 12 years is:  
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Haryana (c) Gujarat (d) Maharashtra
227. According to the China constitution, how many times one can be served as the President of China?  
(a) Two terms (b) Three terms (c) Four terms (d) There is no limit
228. Recently, which among the following countries has declined an Indian invitation to join the MILAN-2018 multilateral naval exercises held in March 2018?  
(a) Indonesia (b) Maldives (c) Afghanistan (d) Sri Lanka
229. According to the latest report by International Energy Agency (IEA), which among the following countries will overtake Russia as the world's biggest oil producer by 2019?  
(a) India (b) China (c) USA (d) Japan
230. Who is the current President of Vietnam?  
(a) Truong Tan Sang (b) Tran Dai Quang (c) Tran Dai Mange (d) Le Hong Anh
231. According to latest data, bilateral trade volume between India and the five Nordic countries was:  
(a) USD 2.3 billion (b) USD 4.3 billion (c) USD 5.3 billion (d) USD 10.3 billion

232. For the first time, Scientists from which country have observed specialised bacteria in the world's driest desert that points towards the possibility of alien life lurking in the soils of Mars?  
(a) USA (b) China (c) France (d) UK
233. Who has been recognised with twin honours at the 18th edition of the prestigious Laureus World Sports Awards 2018?  
(a) Roger Federer (b) Novak Djokovic (c) Rafael Nadal (d) Andrew Barron Murray
234. Name Afghanistan cricket player, who is set to become the youngest captain in the history of international cricket in March 2018.  
(a) Mohammad Shahzad (b) Rashid Khan (c) Asghar Stanikzai (d) Mohammad Nabi



## ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. c Bengaluru became the first Indian city to come up with a city-specific fire safety blueprint to be implemented over the next five years beginning this year.
2. a Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra has decided to recommend the removal of Allahabad High Court judge Justice S N Shukla as part of an in-house procedure after he was found guilty of misconduct by an internal probe into a medical college admission scam.
3. b India has slipped to 42nd place on the Economist Intelligence Unit's annual Global Democracy Index amid the "rise of conservative religious ideologies" and increase in vigilantism and violence against minorities as well as other dissenting voices.
4. a China's online population, the largest in the world, has touched 772 million at the end of last year as 40.74 million new connections were added.
5. b India has jumped 11 ranks from 92 to 81 in the Global Talent Competitive Index (GTCI) for the year 2018 which covered 119 countries and 90 cities on the back of its strengths like talent growth and global knowledge of the talent pool.
6. c Switzerland retained its top spot in the financial secrecy index (FSI) 2018, unveiled by the Tax Justice Network (TJN).
7. d P Chidambaram launched his book 'Speaking Truth to Power'.
8. b Veteran Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee received the Legion of Honour, the highest French civilian award, 30 years after his mentor and renowned filmmaker Satyajit Ray was conferred with the same.
9. b Besides Turkmenistan, the other founding members of the agreement are Iran, Oman and Uzbekistan and these countries had signed the pact on April 25, 2011.
10. c Finance Minister Arun Jaitley announced the government's plan to build a tunnel through the Sela Pass located at an elevation of 13,700 ft which will ensure faster movement of troops in Tawang, a strategically- located town in Arunachal Pradesh bordering China.
11. d A scheme called the Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBAR-DHAN) for the management and conversion of cattle dung and solid waste in farms to compost, fertiliser, bio-CNG.
12. d The UAE is claiming a new world record, which Guinness Records has certified, with the opening of the world's longest zip line, measuring 2.83 km. The 1.74-mile zipline, spanning the equivalent of 28 soccer fields, was certified this week by the Guinness World Records.
13. c Finance Minister Jaitley announced one of the world's largest health protection programmes for the country. This programme will benefit around 50 cr people in India.
14. a Indian Railways' all new 12,000 horsepower electric locomotive -- being produced in collaboration with Alstom of France and which can run at speeds of up to 120 kmph -- would be rolled out in March when French President Emmanuel Macron visits India.
15. d Bhutan is traditionally the largest recipient of Ministry's allocation.
16. a According to the Economic Survey 2017-18, Maharashtra's status as one of the largest states in terms of its economic size and prosperity gives it the largest share in India's exports and the goods and service tax (GST) base.
17. c The first of the two defence industrial production corridors, as announced in the Union Budget, will link Chennai and Bengaluru, according to the Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

18. b Bhutan became the second country after Bangladesh to open a consulate in Guwahati. Bangladesh had in May last year established a consular office headed by an assistant high commissioner, underlining the city's growing reputation as a trade and connectivity hub of a region of 45.6 million people.
19. a Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) signed a project agreement with the World Bank, even as the latter entered into a US \$ 375 million loan agreement with the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance for Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP). The signing of the Agreement follows the approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, for the implementation of the US \$ 800 million JMVP for capacity augmentation of navigation on National Waterway-1(River Ganga) from Varanasi to Haldia.
20. a India's first woman private detective, Rajani Pandit, was arrested for allegedly using illegal means to procure call detail records (CDRs) for her clients. Police had busted a gang of detectives and arrested four of them for illegally sourcing and selling CDRs.
21. a The Times Group recently celebrated the invaluable contribution of women by introducing The Times Power Woman 2017 (Pune) awards. Shabnam Asthana was awarded the 'Times Power Women of the Year 2017'- Pune for Global PR.
22. b Magahi writer Shesh Anand Madhukar, who has been working extensively for the development of the language, was honoured with this year's Sahitya Akademi Bhasha Samman award. The second writer of Magahi language to be given the award, Madhurkar was conferred the award, comprising a Rs 1 lakh cheque and a memento, by Sahitya Akademi President Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari.
23. b The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in collaboration with Department of Forests, Assam government is organised the national-level celebration of World Wetlands Day (WWD) on 2ndFebruary, 2018 at Deepor Beel, a Ramsar Site in Guwahati. The 2018 theme 'Wetlands for a sustainable urban future' marks the role of healthy wetlands play in making cities and towns liveable, through their role in groundwater recharge, buffering floods, filtering wastewater, enhancing landscape aesthetics, providing income generation opportunities and ultimately supporting well-being.
24. b A rare 200 million-year-old ichthyosaur species has been discovered from a private collection, 22 years after it was originally found. Ichthyosaurs were a type of sea-going reptiles that lived during the time of the dinosaurs. In 2016, Dean Lomax from the University of Manchester in the UK described an ichthyosaur skeleton that he had examined in the collections of Leicester's New Walk Museum and Art Gallery.
25. b The Uttar Pradesh government has inaugurated the state's first ever butterfly park in Kanpur to preserve the ecosystem. According to the Kanpur Zoo authority, the butterfly park was constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 1 crore.
26. a The Department of Defence Production has constituted a task force headed by Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran to study use of artificial intelligence, which it said has potential to provide military superiority apart from driving technology-driven economic growth.
27. c The International Conference on 'Demetrios Galanos and His Legacy' was inaugurated at IGNCA in New Delhi. Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is organizing the 8-days International Conference on, 'Demetrios Galanos and His Legacy'.
28. d The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Shri Arun Jaitley launched CriSidEx , India's first sentiment index for micro and small enterprises ( MSEs) developed jointly by CRISIL & SIDBI.
29. b Authorities in the UK have permitted doctors to create the country's first 'three-parent' babies, in a move aimed at preventing passage of incurable genetic diseases from mothers to offsprings.
30. c China launched its first seismo-electromagnetic satellite to study seismic precursors, which might help establish a ground-space earthquake monitoring and forecasting network in the future. Known as Zhangheng 1 in Chinese, it will help scientists monitor the electromagnetic field, ionospheric plasma and high-energy particles for an expected mission life of five years.

31. c Students now will be able to refer to the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's advice on how to tackle exam challenges in his book, 'Exam Warriors'. It seeks to help spread smiles during examinations, viewing them as occasions to celebrate learning with festive joy. The book was launched at a function in Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra in New Delhi.
32. c World Cancer Day is an international day marked on February 4 to raise awareness of cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment.
33. c India pulled off a sensational eight-wicket win over Australia in the big final of the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup to become the only side in history to lift the coveted title for a record fourth time, 2000, 2008, 2012 and now 2018.
34. a The 4th edition of International Young Chef Olympiad (YCO) concluded in New Delhi with Lai Jia Yi from Malaysia winning the top spot and Indian student chef Surya Sekhar Roy Choudhury claiming the second position.
35. b The First ever International Kala Mela was inaugurated by the Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu in New Delhi.
36. b Railway Minister Piyush Goyal said he has been informed by the railway board that no diesel locomotives will be allowed in the Delhi area after March 2019, indicating that the national transporter was on track to completely phase out such locomotives by 2022.
37. a The Centre sanctioned a new project to control pollution in River Sal at Navelim town in Goa.
38. d Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain has been appointed as the 22nd chief justice of the country.
39. b 'Shanti Amaravati Buddhist Heritage Festival' kicked off at Vijayawada's Swaraj Maidan.
40. d Japan successfully launched the world's smallest satellite-carrying rocket following a failed attempt in January last year.
41. d The long pending Transgender Welfare Board (TWB) will be founded with the Maharashtra government making a provision of Rs 5 crore for welfare of the community.
42. b Defending champion P V Sindhu suffered a narrow defeat in a pulsating final against American Beiwen Zhang to finish runner-up at the India Open Super 300 badminton tournament.
43. a Rechristening of the apex indirect tax policy making body CBEC to Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is likely to happen by April after the budgetary exercise gets the Parliament's nod.
44. b The Supreme Court has said that it will set up a fresh Constitution Bench to examine the validity of various aspects of a provision of the Citizenship Act 1955, including the cut-off date for awarding citizenship to Bangladeshi immigrants in Assam.
45. a Guillermo Del Toro's bid for Oscars glory was boosted as he took top prize for his fantasy romance movie The Shape of Water at the Directors Guild of America honours a key predictor for the Academy Awards.
46. a The Maldives government declared a state of emergency for 15 days, amid a spiralling political crisis in the island nation following a Supreme Court order last week to release Opposition leaders from prison.
47. d Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades vowed to push on with attempts to reunify the ethnically divided island nation and to improve the economic fortunes of its people after he was re-elected by a wide margin.
48. c Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport also known as Atlanta Airport, Hartsfield, or Hartsfield-Jackson, is an international airport located 7 miles (11 km) south of Atlanta's central business district, in the U.S. state of Georgia. It has been the world's busiest airport by passenger traffic since 1998.
49. b All England Championships finalist and fourth seed Shi Yuqi of China walked away with the men's crown after beating world no 7 and third seeded Taiwanese Chou Tien Chen.
50. d Actress Bhumi Pednekar has been named as part of Forbes India's 30 under 30 list.



51. b Maharashtra has become the first state in the country to adopt a comprehensive fintech policy that aims to foster an environment for fintech startups.
52. d The Mahamastakabhisheka Mahotsav is celebrated once every 12 years. It has been celebrated for about a 1,000 years.
53. a With Rs 100 crore budget, Gujarat and the Centre are jointly developing the historical and ancient town of Vadnagar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birth place, as a major tourist hub.
54. b India's tiger census, which began late last year, will see coordination with Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh in estimating the territorial spread of the animal in the subcontinent.
55. b The proposed long-term capital gains tax on equity holdings will apply on profits made from sale of shares on or after April 1, 2018.
56. a Dubai has revealed the Aqua Pod concept, the world's first sustainable floating drive-thru, serving a range of burgers.
57. c India successfully test-fired its short-range nuclear capable ballistic missile Agni-I with a strike range of over 700 km from a test range off the Odisha coast.
58. a Al-Jenadriyah is a cultural and heritage festival held in Jenadriyah (or Janadriyah) near Riyadh in Saudi Arabia each year, lasting for two weeks.
59. a National Informatics Centre (NIC) is organizing a three-day National Meet on Grassroot Informatics- VIVID 2018 in New Delhi.
60. c Out of the 12 nuclear reactors, 10 will be indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors and two Light Water Reactors will be established in cooperation with the Russia.
61. b Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari has requested Bollywood star Akshay Kumar to be the brand ambassador for road safety awareness campaign.
62. c A committee constituted by the Kannada and Culture department of the Karnataka government to examine the feasibility of having a separate flag for the state has submitted its report, recommending an official three-coloured flag to replace an unofficial two-coloured one currently used to signify local pride.
63. b The Assam government and Ola, one of the world's largest and India's leading ride-sharing companies signed a MoU to pilot an app-based river taxi service.
64. c The Reserve Bank of India announced several measures for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and allowed banks and finance companies to give these units 180 days to clear their dues.
65. d India bowler Jhulan Goswami became the first woman to pick 200 ODI wickets.
66. b The International Press Institute's Indian National Committee has named Ritu Sarin, Executive Editor- Investigations, as the recipient of the IPI India Award for Excellence in Journalism.
67. a The Centre and NITI Aayog will hold deliberations with states to come out with a new mechanism to ensure that farmers get 1.5 times of the production cost of their crops.
68. c Nathu La is a mountain pass in the Himalayas in East Sikkim district. It connects the Indian state of Sikkim with China's Tibet Autonomous Region.
69. b At 29th position in Asia, the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, topped the list in the country.
70. c Bermuda becomes first nation to repeal same-sex marriage.

71. d Chile has created five sprawling national parks to preserve vast tracts of Patagonia the culmination of more than two decades of land acquisition by the US philanthropists Doug Tompkins and Kristine McDivitt Tompkins and the largest donation of private land to government in South America.
72. d India has "increased substantially" its score in the latest international Intellectual Property (IP) index released by the US Chambers of Commerce, ranking 44th out of 50 countries.
73. d For promoting port-led industrialization, 14 Coastal Economic Zones (CEZs) covering all the Maritime States and Union Territories have been identified as part of the National Perspective Plan under the Sagarmala Programme.
74. a Scientists have created a "strange" new form of water that behaves like a cross between a liquid and a solid. The substance, known as "superionic water ice", is thought to be a key component in the structure of distant planets in our solar system.
75. b Haryana topped the overall medal tally after claiming 38 gold medals in the inaugural edition of the Khelo India School Games that concluded in New Delhi.
76. b Virat Kohli became the first Indian to score more than 100 runs by running.
77. a Justice Abhilasha Kumari became first woman to become the chief justice of the Manipur high court.
78. d According to the report, among the larger states (21), Kerala has topped the list, followed by Punjab and Tamil Nadu.
79. b The theme of "Hunar Haat" being organized by the Ministry of Minority Affairs is "Development with Dignity".
80. d The exchange has introduced a total of 72 indices, which could act as benchmarks for the mutual fund industry that has to realign many of the existing schemes to comply with the recent regulatory diktat related to scheme categories and constituents.
81. a The South Central Railway (SCR) has become the first railway zone in the country to complete 100 per cent LED lighting at all the stations under its jurisdiction.
82. a In order to promote better management of thermal power plants' by-product fly ash, which creates air pollution if it is not utilised quickly by manufacturing subsequent products such as cement or bricks, Union power minister R K Singh launched web-based monitoring system and a mobile application named "ASH TRACK" in Delhi.
83. c The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited has developed the first flight of Hawk-i with indigenous Real Time Operating System (RTOS).
84. c PepsiCo Chairman and CEO Indra Nooyi has been appointed to the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board as the governing body's first independent female director.
85. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred the 'Grand Collar of the State of Palestine' by President Mahmoud Abbas, recognising his key contribution to promote relations between India and Palestine.
86. a India and Palestine signed six agreements on the infrastructural development in the Palestine. Palestine is a de jure sovereign state in the Middle East with East Jerusalem as the designated capital although its administrative center is located in Ramallah.
87. d Raj Shah became the first Indian-American to speak for the US government. Shah was standing in for the regular Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders, who is on vacation.
88. a India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) Expansion Programme continues to make brisk progress and a nation-wide roll-out is scheduled beginning April 2018. India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has appointed Mr. Suresh Sethi, the former MD of Vodafone M-Pesa Ltd. as its Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer.
89. c The Muthoot Group has roped in Amitabh Bachchan as brand ambassador to represent them in their national campaigns.

90. a Reliance Industries (RIL) has been awarded the Golden Peacock Award 2017 for corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.
91. b Researchers at Bengaluru's Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have identified a potential biomarker for Alzheimer's disease.
92. b The National Deworming Day is a single fixed-day approach to treating intestinal worm infections in all children aged 1- 19 years, and is held on 10 February and 10 August each year.
93. b Sharmila Nicollet has become the first Indian golfer to qualify for the China Ladies PGA Tour.
94. c Shikhar Dhawan became the first Indian to score a century in his 100th ODI when he completed his 13th century in the fourth ODI against South Africa in Johannesburg.
95. c UAE, reiterated strong cooperation on combating terrorism and a defence partnership that will see the Indian Navy conducting an exercise in the Gulf waters.
96. d An engineer raised in Mumbai, Vikas Sathaye, was part of the team that bagged the scientific and engineering award at the Oscars 2018 Scientific and Technical Awards.
97. d The world's tallest 'Gevora hotel" has opened in Dubai.
98. a India's financial capital Mumbai, with a total wealth of USD 950 billion, has been named among the top 15 wealthiest cities globally, while New York topped the list.
99. a India has signed the first concessional agreement with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the oil sector.
100. c Microsoft and online marketplace Paisabazaar.com announced that they have entered into a partnership to develop "industry first" innovations on the tech giant's Cloud platform using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning.
101. a Scientists have discovered three new species of eel along the northern Bay of Bengal coast in the past few months.
102. a A MOU was signed by the two countries for the construction of an India Palestine Centre for empowering women, "Turathi" at a cost of USD 5 million.
103. d As per the latest FAO report, India is placed 8th in the list of Top Ten nations reporting the greatest annual net gain in forest area.
104. b The Minister of Road Transport & Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Shri Nitin Gadkari released India's first ever Highway Capacity Manual in New Delhi.
105. c The Pakistan Peoples Party's Krishna Kumari is poised to become the country's first woman Hindu lawmaker next month, after the party nominated her for the upcoming Senate elections.
106. a Jag Badwal, a native of Jalandhar, has become the first person of Punjabi origin and Sikh to be elected as president of Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, considered the oldest political outfit in the Canadian province.
107. c With assets worth Rs 177 crore, Chandrababu Naidu, the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, is the richest CM in the country.
108. c The country's largest lender SBI wrote off bad loans worth Rs 20,339 crore in 2016-17, the highest among all the public sector banks, which had a collective, write off of Rs 81,683 crore for the fiscal.
109. c Ellyse Perry, Australian woman cricketer has been conferred with the Belinda Clark Medal.
110. a IIM Ahmedabad and UAE's BRS Ventures have signed a MoU to establish the business school's first extension centre in Dubai.

111. b Pune-based swimmer, Rohan More became the first Asian as well as the first Indian to swim across the Ocean Seven. Rohan is the youngest person in the world to swim across the Ocean Seven.
112. b Kannada litterateur and Jnanpith recipient Chandrashekar Kambar was elected president of the Sahitya Akademi.
113. c The Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shri Radha Mohan Singh laid the foundation stone for the first dairy plant in Motihari of East Champaran District, Bihar.
114. a In a first in the country, the State government will be setting up an institute for artificial intelligence (AI) in Mumbai.
115. a Jogighopa, a small town in Assam, is set to become India's gateway to South-East Asia as well as the rest of the North-East with the road ministry gearing up to develop a multimodal logistics park (MMLP) there with road, rail, waterways and air transport facilities.
116. d UAE continues to be an important supplier of crude, LNG and LPG to Indian market. UAE is the 5th largest import source and accounts for about 6% of our total crude imports. UAE is also the 3rd largest source of LPG and POL. India is already the 3rd largest consumer of energy in the world. It is the 3rd largest importer of oil and 4th largest importer of gas.
117. b Tata Steel has been recognised by Ethisphere Institute, a global leader in defining and advancing the standards of ethical business practices, as the World's Most Ethical Company for the year 2018.
118. a According to the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2017, overall green cover, including tree patches outside recorded forest areas, reported an incremental 1% increase (8,021 sq km) over the last assessment year in 2015.
119. a The Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, along with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), is organizing India's biggest Global Conference on 'India Pharma & India Medical Device 2018', with the theme - 'Affordable and Quality Healthcare', the 3rd International exhibition and conference on Pharmaceutical & Medical Device sector from 15th-17th February, 2018 in Bengaluru.
120. c A Russian Soyuz rocket launched an uncrewed cargo ship toward the International Space Station, kicking off a two-day delivery mission to the orbiting laboratory. The Soyuz 2.1a rocket and the cargo ship Progress 69 lifted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, carrying about 3 tons of supplies for space station astronauts.
121. d World Radio Day is an observance day held annually on 13 February.
122. c The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has inaugurated the 8th Global Theatre Olympics on 17th February, 2018 at the majestic Red Fort in New Delhi. This Global Theatre Festival is being held in India for the first time. The Theatre Olympics was established in 1993 at Delphi, Greece.
123. c Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed at the World Congress on Information Technology 2018 (WCIT) in Hyderabad.
124. d Venezuela and Libya have been suspended from voting in the UN General Assembly for the third time in three years because of millions of dollars in unpaid dues to the world body.
125. b Jacob Zuma resigned as President of South Africa, reluctantly heeding orders by the ruling African National Congress (ANC) to bring an end to his nine scandal-plagued years in power.
126. c A classification by the ministry of home affairs (MHA) on areas affected by left-wing insurgency is likely to include two districts from Kerala for the first time in the state's history.
127. c Bengal became the first state to opt out of the National Health Protection Scheme unveiled in the Union Budget.
128. d The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, inaugurated the international conference 'Agricon 2018' and 'Agriexpo 2018' at Chandrashekhra Azad University of Agriculture & Technology (CSAUT), Kanpur.
129. c Radio Umang: India's first online radio station launched recently.

130. d Tamil Nadu beat Manipur 2-1 to lift their maiden title in the 23rd edition of the Senior Women's National Football Championship.
131. a India's biggest Annual Conference on Pharma Industry and Medical Devices - India Pharma 2018 and India Medical Device 2018 - begins at Bengaluru.
132. d India's first radio festival was held at the UNESCO House in New Delhi to mark World Radio Day.
133. a The theme of the Summit this year is 'Partnerships for a Resilient Planet', WSDS 2018 seeks to create action frameworks to resolve some of the most urgent challenges facing developing economies in the backdrop of climate change.
134. b The Assam government introduced a Bill in the state Assembly to set up a yoga council for regulating the teaching and practice of yoga.
135. d Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn has submitted a letter of resignation. Hailemariam Desalegn Boshe is an Ethiopian politician who served as Prime Minister of Ethiopia from 2012 to 2018.
136. b Sanjiv Bajaj, managing director of Bajaj Finserv, has been named the EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2017. He will represent India at the EY World Entrepreneur of the Year Award (WEOY) in Monte Carlo from June 13.
137. c Cristiano Ronaldo becomes the first player in Champions League history to score 100 goals for one club
138. The Centre will set up 562 more Ekalavya Model Residential Schools in tribal (ST) areas of the country.
139. a China announced that this year's summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) will be held in the city of Qingdao in June.
140. d The Supreme Court increased Karnataka's entitlement by 14.75 tmcft to 284.75 tmcft and reduced Tamil Nadu's share to 404.25 tmcft while keeping allocations for Kerala and Puducherry unchanged.
141. c The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) has organized a National Conference under the title of "Agriculture 2022 - Doubling Farmers' Income" at National Agriculture Science Complex (NASC), Pusa, New Delhi.
142. c Private sector lender, Yes Bank announced the listing of the Bank's debut US \$600 million bond issue under its maiden US \$1 billion medium-term note (MTN) bond on country's first international exchange BSE's IndiaINX at the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) at GIFT City.
143. b India, for the first time beyond Bhutan and Nepal, will invest in a foreign country Iran through its own national currency Rupee to bypass any trouble arising out of impending US sanctions.
144. b NASA's Hubble space telescope has captured Neptune's mysterious dark storm, that probably smells like rotten eggs, shrinking out of existence.
145. a Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar has been made the brand ambassador of the upcoming T20 Mumbai League and he feels the league will provide a fine platform for the talented cricketers of the megapolis.
146. c World Pangolin Day, celebrated on the third Saturday of February, is a worldwide celebration of the pangolin aimed at raising awareness of its importance and its plight.
147. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the country's largest container terminal at Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust in Mumbai.
148. c The Union Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Minister, Shri Radha Mohan Singh addressed at the National Banana Festival, 2018 held in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.



149. b The theme of the 8th Theatre Olympics is "Flag of Friendship" that aims to bridge borders and bring people of different cultures, beliefs and ideologies together through the medium of theatrical art.
150. c The sex ratio at birth (SRB) saw a decline in 17 out of 21 large States of the country, with Gujarat recording an alarming dip of 53 points, a report released by the Niti Aayog stated and stressed on the need to check sex-selective abortion.
151. b Milkbasket, India's first and largest micro-delivery platform has been recognised as 'Startup of the Year' 2017 at the 7th Small Business Awards.
152. a Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has been recognized as the world's best employers by the Top Employer Institute for the consecutive third year.
153. c Legendary singer Asha Bhosle was conferred with the fifth Yash Chopra Memorial Award in Mumbai.
154. b Roger Federer became the oldest world number one when the 20-time Grand Slam title winner reached the semi-finals of the Rotterdam Open.
155. c India and Iran signed a significant pact which gives New Delhi operational control of a part of the strategically located Chabahar port on the Gulf of Oman for 18 months.
156. b Hyderabad has hosted two mega technology events--Nasscom India Leadership Forum (ILF) and the 22nd edition of the World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT) concurrently.
157. d The Maharashtra government is all set to roll out its "Asmita Yojana" on the International Women's Day(8, March, 2018)..
158. b WhatsApp will launch a "full feature" inter-bank money transfer service in India, its biggest market, after a test involving a million users.
159. a Japan's Yuzuru Hanyu became the first man since 1952 to defend a Winter Olympics single figure skating gold medal with victory in Pyeongchang.
160. d Former All-England champion and celebrated badminton coach Pullela Gopichand initiated the country's largest 'train the trainers' programme, inducting 1500 Physical Education (PE) teachers from across Gujarat for advanced training.
161. c Kanika Kapoor became one of the first Indian artists to perform at the Buckingham Palace, in the presence of Prince of Wales Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall Camilla.
162. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that a world class satellite station will be built in Mysuru.
163. d A special task force of the Indian Army and the Indonesian Army began sixth Garuda Shakti exercise in Bandung (Indonesia).
164. c Singapore will proceed with the planned carbon tax from 2019 to encourage firms to further cut emissions.
165. a Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Nasscom's platform - FutureSkills - for skill development in eight varied technologies.
166. a Roger Federer celebrated his return to the top of the world rankings by winning the Rotterdam Open, his 97th career title.
167. b India, a country that ranks third from the bottom in the global Environmental Performance Index, will host the World Environment Day this year, on June 5.
168. c Pakistan is the riskiest country to be born in, with one in 22 babies born there dying before they turn one month old, according to a Unicef report.
169. b Saudi Arabia is set to host in March its first ever Arab Fashion Week, the Arab Fashion Council announced, overturning decades of draconian policies on arts and entertainment.

170. b Mandarin is the official language of China, but China is not the only place in the world where people speak Mandarin.
171. d Venezuela was set to become the first country to launch its own version of bitcoin, a move it hopes will provide a much-needed boost to its credit-stricken economy.
172. a The Reserve Bank of India has constituted a five member panel under former board member Y H Malegam to look into the wide divergence by banks in asset classification and provisioning and reasons for frauds and measures to prevent it and also asked them to strengthen the SWIFT operating environment.
173. a Navi Mumbai to house India's first gem, Jewellery Park.
174. c Avani Chaturvedi has become the first Indian woman to fly a fighter aircraft solo.
175. b Jaipur's Gandhi Nagar becomes country's first all-women railway station.
176. b The Union Government has issued order setting up the 'Niti Forum for North-East'. The forum will be co-chaired by the Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog and Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (DoNER).
177. c The Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Shri Radha Mohan Singh launched six new features of National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) Platform to make it more users friendly.
178. d Intel Corp. veteran Debjani Ghosh takes over as president of the National Association of Software and Services Companies in April -- three decades after its formation.
179. b Northeast's first regional Centre for Agriculture with Israeli collaboration to be inaugurated in Mizoram on 7th March.
180. a "One of the two defence industrial corridors mentioned in the budget, one is proposed in the Bundelkhand region of the State, which will bring an investment of Rs 20,000 crore and generate employment avenues for 2.5 lakh people," the Prime Minister said at the Investors Summit-2018 here.
181. b Across the globe, the World Day of Social Justice (WDSJ) was observed on February 20 with the theme "Workers on the Move: the Quest for Social Justice" by the UN Agencies, social activists, human rights groups, community based organizations and educational institutions.
182. b Saras will be 20 to 25 per cent cheaper than any imported aircraft in the same category and it will be a 19-seater aircraft instead of a 14-seater. The design and development of the aircraft is being done by the CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories.
183. c Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in the country where projects can now be cleared digitally, without any human interface. The digital platform, a single-window system called Nivesh Mitra, was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the inauguration session of the UP Investors' Summit.
184. d India has been ranked at 81st place out of 180 countries on a 'Corruption Perception Index', in a list released by Transparency International.
185. a The Ministry of Finance said, State Bank of India has been authorized to issue and encash Electoral Bonds initially at its four authorised branches.
186. c All chief ministers will be invited and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the first of its kind event which is aimed at generating sufficient momentum for his vision of a *Tuberculosis* free India by 2025, five years ahead of the global TB elimination target of 2030.
187. The West Bengal government was expecting to award the country's single largest grid connected floating solar power project in Murshidabad by March.
188. c Agonda beach in Goa has been ranked number one in the Asia list of the annual Travellers' Choice awards for beaches.

189. b Starting July 1, all SIM-based M2M (machine-to-machine) communication devices will carry a 13-digit number, instead of the 10-digit number now.
190. d India successfully test-fired the nuclear-capable 'Dhanush' ballistic missile with a strike range of 350 kms from a naval ship off Odisha coast.
191. b To celebrate the idea of unity in diversity, Ministry of Culture is organising a Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav under the Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat matrix in Madhya Pradesh beginning February 24 for duration of 7 days.
192. a The largest military exercises in Southeast Asia concluded in Thailand, after 11 days of drills, social and humanitarian projects and traditional jungle training.
193. b The offices of the NBFC ombudsmen will function at four metro centres -- Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai and New Delhi.
194. a Lupus is a systemic autoimmune disease that occurs when your body's immune system attacks your own tissues and organs.
195. c It's not modern humans but Neanderthals who were the first known artists on Earth, say scientists who found evidence suggesting they may have had an artistic sense similar to modern humans.
196. d According to the UIDAI, those children who are below the age of five years will receive a blue-coloured 'Baal Aadhaar' card.
197. a To promote India's Heritage, Ministry of Culture is organising a week long diversified cultural carnival 'Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav' in Madhya Pradesh that began at Maan Mandir Fort, Gwalior.
198. a The eighth joint military exercise between the Indian Army and Seychelles People's Defence Forces started and will continue till March 4 at Mahe Island, Seychelles. The exercise is named "Lamitye" which in the local dialect 'Creole', means friendship.
199. a The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has directed banks to link the SWIFT (Society for World Interbank Financial Telecommunication System platform) - a global financial messaging service which was misused by jeweller Nirav Modi at Punjab National bank - with the core banking solutions (CBS) of banks by April 30, 2018.
200. b Hon'ble Telecom Minister Shri Manoj Sinha launched India's first locally developed 4G/LTE telecom system amid an international buyers-sellers meet of telecom industry in New Delhi. The system has been designed and developed by India's leading telecom equipment manufacturer, VNL Ltd., keeping in mind requirement for high speed connectivity, particularly in rural areas.
201. b Tech billionaire Nandan Nilekani will assist the government in developing IT infrastructure for the mega National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS), which seeks to cover 10-crore families.
202. c Assam has organised a tribal festival called 'Aadi Mahotsava' at Gandhi Mandir Indoor stadium field, New Delhi to celebrate the ethnic tribal culture of the country. The 10-day festival is being conducted by the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India in collaboration with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in an attempt to celebrate the rare art and culture of the tribal communities.
203. b Aruna Budda Reddy from Hyderabad, Telangana, created history when she became the first Indian gymnast to win a World Cup Series medal in Melbourne.
204. c The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), for the first time in Indian sport, has banned an athlete for the possession of an illegal drug. The disciplinary committee handed over a suspension of four years to hurdler Jithin Paul.
205. b The second week of March will witness Andaman & Nicobar Command hosting a multinational mega event MILAN 2018. MILAN is a congregation of littoral navies conducted biennially by Indian Navy at the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, under the aegis of the Andaman and Nicobar Command.

206. c Dr. Satya Pal Singh, Minister of State, Ministry of Human Resource Development; and Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India led the Indian delegation to the 20th Conference of the Commonwealth Education Ministers (20CCEM) held in Nadi, Fiji during 19-23 February 2018.
207. a In Australia, Michael McCormack has been elected new Deputy Prime Minister after being selected as the leader of the country's National Party, the junior partner in the country's coalition government.
208. b The seventh meeting of Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on Nepal-India relations has concluded in Kathmandu.
209. d Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has released a list of around 9500 Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), which have been categorised as high-risk financial institutions.
210. c The National Institute of Construction Management and Research (NICMAR), the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) are the four institutes that have been roped in for the exercise.
211. b The Assam government will be observing September 22 as Rhino Day to generate public awareness on protection of the one-horned pachyderm.
212. b India's premier defence research institute DRDO carried out "successful" test flight of its Rustom 2 drone, a medium-altitude long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), at Chalakere in Karnataka's Chitradurga district.
213. d Reigning Commonwealth Games champion Parupalli Kashyap overcame Malaysia's June Wei Cheam in straight games in the men's singles final to clinch the Austrian Open International Challenge, his first international title in over three years.
214. c Senior TV journalist Rahul Mahajan has been appointed the new Editor-in-Chief of Rajya Sabha Television.
215. a Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan launched an initiative to end the practice of manual scavenging in the state and deploy robots to clean the sewers. 'Bandicoot,' a robot developed by startup Genrobotics, will gradually be deployed across the state after testing it in Thiruvananthapuram.
216. b The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has prioritized 15 cities across the country for development of intermodal stations (IMS), of which Nagpur and Varanasi have been selected as the pilot projects.
217. d Jordanian king's three-day visit begins in India, King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, a 41st generation direct descendant of Prophet Muhammad, is known for his global initiative to fight radicalisation and terrorism.
218. a India congratulated China for becoming the vice chair of the FATF, which is mandated to combat terror financing, and hoped Beijing would "uphold and support" the objective of the watchdog in a balanced and objective way. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 by the Ministers of its Member jurisdictions.
219. d Russia vetoed a British-drafted UN resolution that took aim at Iran over a report by UN experts that said the country violated an arms embargo by failing to prevent missiles and drones from being supplied to Shiite rebels in Yemen.
220. c Bihar clocked a growth rate of 10.3 per cent in 2016-2017 as against 7.5 per cent in the corresponding fiscal a year ago, riding largely on the back of the services sector, according to the latest Economic Survey tabled in the state Assembly. Bihar's growth rate is higher than that of the national average of 7.0 per cent.
221. c The Delhi High Court exempted the Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority (GNIDA) from paying income tax, saying it was not carrying out any commercial activity with any profit motive. The income tax department had issued notices to the Authority to pay Rs 100 billion in taxes between 2004 and 2015.
222. b With China's air force deploying its "latest stealth jet fighter" - the J-20 Chengdu - one of the provocations could be the Indian Air Force (IAF) deployment of its top-of-the-line Sukhoi-30MKI fighter in Assam, near the disputed Sino-India border. The J-20, which is China's first stealth fighter, made its maiden flight in 2011

223. b Former cabinet secretary TSR Subramanian has passed away aged 79. He was a 1961 batch Indian Administrative Service officer from Uttar Pradesh Cadre.
224. a Shri Nitin Gadkari, Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation laid the foundation stone for setting up of a National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC), at IIT Chennai.
225. b Meenangadi, nestled in the undulating hills of the Western Ghats, Kerala is set to become country's first 'carbon neutral' panchayat - a state of zero carbon footprint achieved when carbon emissions in the atmosphere are cancelled out by an equal amount of sequestration.
226. a After Madhya Pradesh, Haryana has proposed to punish rapists of girls below 12 years with a maximum punishment of death penalty. Madhya Pradesh became the first state in the country to introduce this stringent provision by passing the amendments in December 2017.
227. a The Communist Party of China is proposing to amend the country's Constitution for the first time in the last 14 years. One of the proposed changes include removing from the constitution a clause limiting the presidency to two five-year terms, which would allow President Xi Jinping to continue as president beyond his term limit of 2023. It has so far seen four amendments with the last having taken place in 2004 under then-President Hu Jintao.
228. b Maldives has declined an Indian invitation to join the MILAN-2018 multilateral naval exercises to be hosted near the Andaman and Nicobar Islands next month, Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba told the media on the sidelines of the Indo-Pacific Maritime Dialogue jointly organised by Indian Navy and the National Maritime Foundation. The biennial MILAN series of exercises had commenced with just four nations in 1995. The theme for MILAN-2018 is "Friendship across the Seas".
229. c The United States will overtake Russia as the world's biggest oil producer by 2019 at the latest, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), as the country's shale oil boom continues to upend global markets.
230. b Vietnam President Tran Dai Quang will be arriving in Delhi for a visit later this week, during which maritime security and defence cooperation will dominate the agenda.
231. b The five Nordic countries of Denmark, Norway, Finland, Iceland and Sweden pitched for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with India to increase business ties. Bilateral trade volume between India and the five Nordic countries was USD 4.3 billion, of which USD 2.2 billion was exports to India and the rest imports, according to latest data.
232. a For the first time, researchers have observed specialised bacteria in the world's driest desert that can rebound after lying dormant for decades, a finding that points towards the possibility of alien life lurking in the soils of Mars. Scientists from Washington State University (WSU) in the US studied the driest corner of South America's Atacama Desert, where decades pass without any rain.
233. a Tennis legend Roger Federer was recognised with twin honours at the 18th edition of the prestigious Laureus World Sports Awards. The 36-year old was honoured with the Sportsman of the Year and Comeback of the Year title as he went on to become the most decorated winner in the history of Laureus World Sports Awards, taking his total tally to 6.
234. b At 19 years of age, highly-rated Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan is set to become the youngest captain in the history of international cricket. Rashid became the youngest player to be ranked No. 1 in the ICC's Player Rankings across formats.