

## **JULY - CURRENT AFFAIRS**

- **International Affairs**

### **1. South Korean President Moon Jae-in On 4-Day Visit To India**

South Korean President Moon Jae-in arrived in New Delhi evening on a four-day visit to India. He is being accompanied by First Lady Kim Jung-sook on his maiden visit to the nation. A financing arrangement of 10 billion dollars has been set by the Korean side for infrastructure development in India. Major items of India's exports to Korea are mineral fuels/oil distillates, cereals, iron and steel.

### **2. YouTube Announces \$25 million Investment to Fight Fake News**

Video sharing platform YouTube has announced the investment of \$25 million to counter the spread of fake news on its platform. The investment is part of the \$300 million Google News Initiative which was launched in March 2018.

### **3. 10th BRICS Summit 2018 Begins In Johannesburg**

The 10th edition of BRICS Summit began in Johannesburg, South Africa. It is a 3-day long summit and will be attended by all the BRICS leaders. The theme for this summit is 'BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for inclusive growth and shared prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution'. Modi is likely to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the summit.

### **4. 8th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting Held At Durban**

The 8th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting was held at Durban, South Africa. Indian delegation was led by Mr J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare. He stated that India is committed to eliminating TB by 2025. Highlighting the accomplishments of India in the health sector, he stated India's achievement in reducing the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) by 77%, from 556 per 1,00,000 live births in 1990 to 130 per 1,00,000 live births in 2016, was commended by the Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia Regional Office (SEARO).

### **5. Asia's 1st Patent Arbitration Centre to Open in Tokyo**

Asia's first arbitration centre specialised in intellectual property is slated to open in Tokyo in September 2018 to resolve the growing number of disputes in the region. The International Arbitration Centre in Tokyo (IACT) is set to have around a dozen arbitrators from around the world, who would try to resolve disputes within a period of one year.

### **6. Forbes Releases 2018 'Celebrity 100' List Of World's Highest-Paid Entertainers**

The Forbes has Released the 'Celebrity 100' list of World's Highest-Paid Entertainers. Boxer Floyd Mayweather captures the top spot on Forbes' 20th annual Celebrity 100 ranking of the world's highest-paid celebrities. Few of the famous

names on the list are Leonel Messi 8th, Cristiano Ronaldo 10th. From India, Akshay Kumar (40.5 million dollars) is ranked 76th while Salman Khan (37.7 million dollars) is on the 82<sup>nd</sup> spot.

**The top 3 celebrities on the list are:**

1. Floyd Mayweather (Athlete, Boxing, \$285M)
- 2 George Clooney (British liquor giant, \$239M)
3. Kylie Jenner (Founder, Kylie Cosmetics, \$166.5M)

**7.** As per US State Department's 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report, North Korea has been tagged "worst human trafficking nation" for the 16th straight year, citing the use of forced labour.

**8.** The UN members have unanimously elected Iceland to take a seat on the world body's 47-member Human Rights Council. US had left the UNHRC in June, 2018 calling it a cesspool of political bias for its criticism of Israeli regime's crimes against Palestinians.

**9. 4th BIMSTEC Summit To Be Held In Kathmandu**

The 4th BIMSTEC Summit will be held in Kathmandu, Nepal. The announcement in this regard was made by Nepal's Minister for Foreign Affairs Pradeep Kumar Gyawali. The main focus of the summit will be to increase connectivity between the BIMSTEC nations including roads, airways and transmission lines. BIMSTEC stands for Bay of Bengal Initiatives for Multi-Sectoral, Technical and Economic Cooperation. The group was formed in 1997 and it brings together Bangladesh, Bhutan India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand. Nepal is the current chair of BIMSTEC.

**10. Two Plus Two Dialogue Between India and US To Be Held In New Delhi**

US State Department has announced that the inaugural 'two-plus- two dialogue' between India and the United States will be held in New Delhi in September 2018. Recently, the US had postponed the dialogue due to 'unavoidable reasons'. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defence Secretary James Mattis will travel to India for the dialogue with External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

**11. Nigeria Replaces India to Become World's Largest Poor Population: Brookings Report**

With the persistent decline in poverty, India is no longer a nation having the largest number of poor people in the world, according to a study published by the US-based think tank, Brookings. According to the study, Nigeria has already overtaken India as the country with the largest number of extreme poor in early 2018, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo could soon take over the number 2 spot. The study, titled 'The start of a new poverty narrative' and published in the Brookings' blog, is authored by Homi Kharas, Kristofer Hamel and Martin Hofer.

## **12. Myanmar Joins International Solar Alliance**

Myanmar joined the India-initiated International Solar Alliance (ISA), thus, becoming the 68th signatory to the Framework Agreement of the ISA that aims for optimum utilization of solar energy. Myanmar Minister for International Cooperation, Kyaw Tin handed over the ISA Framework Agreement to External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj during a bilateral meeting on Delhi Dialogue 2018. The International Solar Alliance was launched jointly by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Francois Hollande on the first day of the COP-21 summit at Paris in 2015.

- **National Affairs**

### **1. Goods and Services Tax Day: 1 July**

The Government of India has announced that 1st of July shall be commemorated as 'GST Day'. Union Minister for Railways, Coal, Finance & Corporate Affairs Mr Piyush Goyal presided over as the Chief Guest of the event and Minister of State for Finance. The government of India is celebrating the 1st Anniversary of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) coming into force on 1st July 2017.

### **2. Bhitarkanika National Park Becomes Largest Habitat Of Endangered Estuarine Crocodiles**

The Bhitarkanika National Park (Odisha) has become the largest habitat of the endangered estuarine crocodiles in the country with a record number of their nesting sites spotted in it. Altogether 101 nesting sites of estuarine crocodiles were found this time by enumerators. The nesting spots had registered 25% rise this year. At least 1698 crocodiles, including albino species, were counted this year along the water-bodies of Mahanadi delta region, while the figure recorded last year stood at 1682.

### **3. Behdienkhlam Festival Concludes In Meghalaya**

The Union Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Dr Jitendra Singh attended the famous 4-day Meghalaya Annual Cultural Festival, "Behdienkhlam", held every year at the small peripheral town of Jowai, Meghalaya. On the concluding day of the festival, Dr Jitendra Singh spent time with the visitors from across the region who had come to attend the festival.

### **4. Election Commission of India Launches 'cVigil' App**

Chief Election Commissioner of India Mr Om Prakash Rawat, along with the Election Commissioners Sunil Arora and Ashok Lavasa, launched an Android-based mobile application named 'cVigil' for citizens to report any violation of the model code of conduct during elections. cVIGIL will allow anyone in the election-bound state to report violations of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) that comes into effect from the date of announcement of elections and goes on till a day after the polls.

### **5. MCA Constitutes 10-Member Committee To Review Offences Under Companies Act, 2013**

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has constituted a 10 Member Committee, headed by the Secretary of Ministry of Corporate Affairs Mr Injeti Srinivas, for review of the penal provisions in the Companies Act, 2013. It has been setup to examine 'de-criminalisation' of certain offences. The Committee shall submit its report within thirty days to the Central Government for consideration of its recommendations.

### **6. Maharashtra Government Announces 'Kanya Van Samruddhi Yojana'**

The Maharashtra government announced a new scheme called 'Kanya Van Samruddhi Yojana', wherein farmers families where girl children are born will be given saplings for plantation.

ii. The scheme is aimed at empowering women and promoting tree plantation. The scheme was approved in the cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

### **7. MP Government Launches Subsidised Power Scheme 'Sambal'**

The Madhya Pradesh State Government launched an outstanding power bill waiver scheme and subsidised power scheme called 'Sambal' for labourers and poor families. Under Sambal Yojana, the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families would be provided electricity at a cost of Rs 200 per month. The main objective of the scheme is to make sure that all the households have power facility in the state. In case the bill is lower than Rs 200, the beneficiaries will have to pay the actual bill amount and if the bill amount is crossing Rs 200 then, the difference amount would be subsidised by the state government.

### **8. Lok Sabha Passes Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill**

The Lok Sabha passed the Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill, 2017 which has the provision of allowing a court trying an offence related to cheque bouncing, to direct the drawer to pay interim compensation to the complainant. According to the Minister of State for Finance Shiv Pratap Shukla, 16 lakh cheque bouncing cases are lying in the subordinate courts and 35 thousand cases are in the higher judiciary. The interim compensation will not exceed 20% of the cheque amount and will have to be paid by the drawer within 60 days of the trial court's order to pay such a compensation.

9. The committee set up by the Government of India to look into the issue of industrial pollution around the Taj Mahal is headed by: **Shri C.K. Mishra**

### **10. Law Commission Recommends Regulating Betting**

The Law Commission recommended that gambling and betting on sports, including cricket, be allowed as regulated activities taxable under the direct and indirect tax regimes and used as a source for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI). The commission's report, 'Legal Framework: Gambling and Sports Betting including Cricket in India', recommends a number of changes in the law for regulating betting and generating tax revenues from it.

### **11. Anju Khosla, Oldest Indian Woman To Complete Ironman Triathlon**

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

## **12. Government Sets Up High-Level Committee To Check Mob Lynching**

Considering the increasing incidents of mob lynching, the Union Government constituted a High-Level Committee chaired by the Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba to deliberate in the matter and make recommendations. The Secretary, Department of Justice; Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs; Secretary, Legislative Department; and Secretary, Social Justice and Empowerment are the members of the committee. Mob Lynching is an act to punish (a person) without legal process or authority, especially by hanging, for a perceived offence or as an act of bigotry.

## **13. Government Approves Hike in Minimum Support Price For Kharif Crops**

The government has decided to sharply increase the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Kharif crops, as it responds to concerns about distress in the country's farm economy despite two years of strong monsoons. The MSP for common variety paddy, the most important Kharif crop, will be raised by Rs 200 over last year's Rs 1,550 per quintal. That works out a 13% increase for the financial year ended March 2019 compared to a 5.4% increase in FY18.

## **14. Haryana Top State In Per Capita Revenue Collection Under GST**

Haryana has topped other states in per capita revenue collection under GST and is also the fourth highest generator of e-way bills in the country. The Finance Minister of Haryana Capt. Abhimanyu claimed Haryana has widened the tax base by 82.22% and logged 19% hike in revenue collections. About 1.12 crore e-way bills were generated in Haryana between April 1, 2018 and June 30, 2018, catapulting the state to the position of 4th highest generator of e-way bills in the country.

## **15. Bengaluru to Get India's 1st e-Waste Plant**

Union minister of chemicals and Fertilisers Ananth Kumar announced that the country's first e-waste recycling unit will come up in Bengaluru, Karnataka. The unit is in keeping with the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan drive. A 2016 study by ASSOCHAM and KPMG ranked India among the top five countries in e-waste generation, with an estimated 1.85 million tonnes generated annually. According to the study, computers comprised 70% of the total e-waste and telecommunication equipment accounted for 12%. Bengaluru ranked third after Mumbai and Delhi and generated nearly 92,000 tonnes of e-waste annually.

## **16. The new name of Agartala Airport as approved by the Union Cabinet: Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore Airport**

**17.** The committee set up by the Government of India has decided to set up a committee to suggest measures to strengthen National Cadet Corps (NCC) and National Service Scheme (NSS) is headed by: **Shri Anil Swarup**

## **18. Renowned Poet Gopal Das Neeraj Passes Away**

Hindi poet Gopal Das Neeraj passed away in New Delhi after a prolonged illness. He was 94. His famous poetic works include Asawari, Lahar Pukare and Paran Geet. He won 3 Filmfare awards and penned some of the all-time hits like Likhe jo khat tujhe. He was conferred with Padma Shri in 1991 and Padma Bhushan in 2007.

**19.** The Union Government has reduced minimum yearly deposit required under popular girl child savings scheme, Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana to Rs 250 from Rs 1,000 earlier. This has been lowered to enable more people to enjoy benefits of this scheme. In this regard, Government has amended Sukanya Samriddhi Account Rules, 2016. Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana: It was launched as a small savings scheme under Beti Bacho Beti Padho (BBBP) in January 2015

#### **20. Environment Minister Inaugurates Advanced System Of Air Quality 'SAFAR'**

Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan unveiled a state-of-the-art Air Quality and Weather Forecast System—'SAFAR' (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting) at Chandni Chowk in New Delhi. The Environment Ministry's mission model project 'SAFAR' is being implemented in four cities of India – Delhi, Pune, Mumbai and Ahmedabad as an operational service. First of its kind in the country, the system was developed indigenously by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune and operationalised by India Meteorological Department (IMD).

#### **21. PM Modi Inaugurated World's Largest Mobile Factory In Noida**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South Korean President Moon Jae-in visited Noida and inaugurated the New Mobile Manufacturing Plant of Samsung at Noida. Notably, it will be one of the world's largest mobile factory. With the beginning of this New Plant, India's Make In India and Skill India Will get a major Push in the country. Samsung has Invested close to 5,000 Crore Rupees in this plant and aims to Manufacture 12 Crore Mobile Handsets annually which will result in massive job creation.

#### **22. Public Affairs Index 2018: Kerala Best Governed State, Bihar Worst**

According to the Public Affairs Index 2018, Kerala is the best-governed state in the country, released by a Bengaluru think-tank, Public Affairs Centre. As per the report, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka and Gujarat are among the top five states delivering good governance. Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha ranked the lowest on the index, indicating higher social and economic inequalities. Among smaller states – with the population less than two crore – Himachal Pradesh topped the list of states with good governance, followed by Goa, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura. Meghalaya performed the worst in this list. Manipur, Nagaland, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir were the other poor performers. This year's index also measured how child-friendly each state is. Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Mizoram topped this index.

- **Banking Awareness**

### **1. RBI Licences Bank of China To Operate In India**

The Reserve Bank of India licensed Bank of China to operate in India. This decision comes as part of the commitment made by PM Modi to the Chinese leadership. Bank of China will now have operating offices in India. This will be the second Chinese bank to be operating in the country. As on 1 January, 2018 Industrial & Commercial Bank of China Ltd was operating in India along with 45 other foreign banks. The United Kingdom's Standard Chartered has the highest, 100 branches in India as of now. Bank of China (BOC) headquarters in Beijing. BOC was formally established in February 1912. Chen Siqing is the Chairman of BOC.

### **2. RBI to Issue New Design Rs100 Denomination Banknote**

The Reserve Bank of India will shortly issue Rs100 denomination banknotes in the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series, bearing the signature of Dr Urjit R. Patel, Governor, Reserve Bank of India. The new denomination has Motif of "RANI KI VAV" on the reverse, depicting the country's cultural heritage. The base colour of the note is Lavender. The dimension of the banknote will be 66 mm × 142 mm. All the banknotes in the denomination of Rs100/- issued by the Reserve Bank in the earlier series will continue to be legal tender.

### **3. HDFC Securities Enable MF Transactions Through facebook Messenger**

HDFC securities announced the launch of Mutual Funds transactional capabilities on Facebook Messenger through their virtual assistant, Arya. A subsidiary of HDFC Bank, HDFC securities rolled out a theme called "The Pace of Innovation" which is structured to innovate and provide intuitive and relevant digital solutions to customers and this effort, is in line with the vision.

### **4. Sashakt: 5 Pronged Strategies to Deal with NPAs**

The Sunil Mehta Committee, set up to look into the faster resolution of stressed assets, has recommended the creation of an asset management company for the resolution of stressed loans worth more than Rs500 crore. Finance minister Piyush Goyal announced that government has accepted a report submitted by a committee of bankers led by Punjab National Bank chairman Sunil Mehta. Sunil Mehta committee on bad loans resolution has recommended a five-pronged strategy Project 'SASHAKT' to deal with Non- performing Assets in the country's banking system. The five- pronged strategy includes:

1. SME resolution approach,
2. Bank-led resolution approach,
3. AMC/AIF led resolution approach,
4. NCLT/IBC approach, and
5. Asset-trading platform.



The Mehta Committee has further proposed a Bank Led Resolution Approach (BLRA) for loans between Rs 50 and Rs 500 crore. Under the BLRA approach, financial institutions will enter into an inter- creditor agreement to authorise the lead bank to implement a resolution plan in 180 days.

#### **5. HDFC Bank, Most Valuable Bank In Emerging Market Outside China**

HDFC Bank has gone past Russia's Sberbank to become the most valuable bank in the emerging market outside China. HDFC Bank's current market capitalisation is \$78.4 billion against Sberbank's \$74.4 billion. Chinese banks are leading the pecking order in the emerging market, with Industrial & Commercial Bank of China topping the list with a market cap of \$273.4 billion. Globally, America's JPMorgan Chase is the most valuable with a market cap of \$353 billion, followed by Bank of America at \$282 billion. There are four lenders from India that now rank among the world's 500 most valuable companies. HDFC Bank is followed by its housing finance cousin Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC), Kotak Mahindra Bank and State Bank of India.

#### **6. India Becomes 69th Shareholder of European Bank For Reconstruction & Development**

India has become the 69th shareholder of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). This move paved the way for more joint investment with Indian companies across the bank's regions of operation. The Board of Governors voted unanimously in favour of the country's application. The EBRD aims to promote the private and entrepreneurial initiative in emerging Europe and invests in 38 emerging economies. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is a multilateral development bank set up in 1991 after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Suma Chakrabarti is the President of EBRD. Its headquarters in London, UK.

#### **7. Federal Bank Gets RBI Nod To Enter Bahrain, Kuwait, Singapore**

Private Sector Lender Federal Bank has received the regulatory nod to open offices in Bahrain, Kuwait and Singapore, but is awaiting local clearances before it starts operations. Federal Bank already has representative offices in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and its desire to expand comes even as a majority of its larger peers are downsizing their overseas presence.

#### **8. Decisions in 28th Meeting of GST Council: Complete Highlights**

The 28th meeting of GST Council was held in New Delhi. It reduced tax rates on more than 50 items and exempted sanitary napkins, rakhis, stone, marble, wooden deities and Saal leaves from GST. Finance Minister Piyush Goyal chaired the 28th GST Council meeting in New Delhi. Highlights On the changes that have been made in the meeting:

1. GST on footwear priced below 1,000 rupees will attract 5% rate. GST on imported urea and ethanol sold to oil companies for blending with petrol and diesel has been reduced to 5%.
2. GST rate on handbags, jewellery box, wooden box for paintings, artware of glass, stone endeavour, ornamental framed mirrors and handmade lamps were reduced to 12%.
3. Lithium-ion batteries, vacuum cleaners, food grinders, mixers, storage water heaters, hair dryers, hand dryers, paint, varnishes, water cooler, milk cooler, ice cream coolers, perfumes, toilet sprays and toilet preparation have been brought to 18 from 28% slab.

4. GST council has cleared 46 amendments which will be passed in Parliament. The exemption limit for traders in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim has been increased from 10 lakh to 20 lakh rupees.

#### **9. Andhra Pradesh Tops Ease of Doing Business Rankings**

For the second year in a row, Andhra Pradesh has been ranked as the easiest Indian state to do business in, according to a survey. The Chandrababu Naidu-led state took the pole position in the rankings for Ease of Doing Business that was released by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion and Ministry of Commerce and Industry in Delhi. Telangana came second followed by Haryana, Jharkhand and Gujarat. The north-eastern state of Meghalaya was ranked lowest at 36th.

#### **10. RIL Becomes India's Largest Tax Payer In Private Sector**

Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani at the Reliance Industries' 41st Annual General Meeting announced that Reliance is India's largest payer of Goods and Services Tax (GST), Excise and Customs Duty, and Income Tax in the private sector paying Rs.9844 crore in FY18. Reliance has become the first Indian company to record PBDIT (Profit before Depreciation Interest and Taxes) of over \$10 billion.

#### **11. RBI Cancels Licence Of Alwar Urban Co-Operative Bank**

The Reserve Bank of India has announced that the licence of Alwar Urban Co-operative Bank in Alwar, Rajasthan has been cancelled as it is not in a position to pay its depositors in full as and when their claims accrue, among other reasons. The reasons for the cancellation of the licence were, the bank does not have adequate capital and earning prospects, and hence does not comply with the relevant provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

#### **12. LIC Board Approves IDBI Bank Stake Purchase**

The board of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has approved the proposal for the insurer to hold a 51% stake in IDBI Bank. The announcement was made by Subhash Chandra Garg, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs. The life insurer has around 7.5% stake in LIC at present and will acquire the remaining stake from the government. IDBI Bank Headquarters in Mumbai. B Sriram was appointed as the IDBI Bank's CEO and Managing Director recently.

#### **13. Amazon, 2nd Company To Hit \$900 billion Valuation After Apple**

E-commerce giant Amazon briefly crossed \$900-billion market cap for the first time in its history becoming only the second company after Apple to achieve this milestone. This comes after Amazon announced it sold over 100 million products during its Prime Day sale. Apple is currently the world's most valuable company with a market cap of \$935 billion.

#### **14. Jana Small Finance Bank Launches Commercial Operations**

Jana Small Finance Bank announced the commercial launch of its banking operations, the last microfinance company to convert itself into a small finance bank (SFB), three years after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) gave its in-principle approval. The small finance bank was earlier called Janalakshmi Financial Services and weathered huge losses on account of demonetization.

IMF Cuts India's GDP Growth Forecast To 7.3% in 2018. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has cut India's GDP growth forecast by 10 basis points to 7.3% in the year 2018 and by 30 basis points to 7.5% in 2019, as the international body expects the central bank to tighten the monetary policy faster. The IMF announced that India remains a key driver of global growth and India will still retain its top spot in the global growth league.

#### **15. RIL Becomes India's Largest Tax Payer In Private Sector**

Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani at the Reliance Industries' 41st Annual General Meeting announced that Reliance is India's largest payer of Goods and Services Tax (GST), Excise and Customs Duty, and Income Tax in the private sector paying Rs.9844 crore in FY18.

#### **16. BSNL Launches India's 1st Internet Telephony Service To Enable Making Calls Without SIM**

State-run telecom firm Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) unveiled the country's first internet telephony service that will allow users to dial any telephone number in India through its mobile app. Now BSNL customers will be able to make calls using the company's mobile app "Wings" to any phone number in the country. Using this service, BSNL customers will be able to make calls on any network in the country even by using BSNL wi-fi or any other service provider.

#### **17. India Becomes World's 6th Largest Economy: World Bank**

India has become the world's sixth-biggest economy, pushing France into seventh place, according to updated World Bank figures for 2017. India's gross domestic product (GDP) amounted to \$2.597 trillion at the end of 2017, against \$2.582 trillion for France. The world's top 3 economies are:

1. The United States,
2. China,
3. Japan.

#### **18. Global Innovation Index: Switzerland Tops, India Ranks 57th**

The Global Innovation Index (GII) has ranked India as the 57<sup>th</sup> most innovative nation in the world. The country has improved its ranking from 60th position in 2017. India has been improving steadily since it was ranked 81st in 2015. The GI is being developed jointly by Cornell University, the Paris- based business school Insead and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Geneva. GI ranks 126 economies based on 80 indicators. The Top 3 Countries in Global Innovation Index are:

1. Switzerland,

2. The Netherlands,

3. Sweden.

#### **19. Telecom Department Clears Vodafone-Idea Merger with Riders**

The telecom ministry approved the merger of Vodafone India and Idea Cellular Ltd. that will create the country's largest mobile services operator. The Department of Telecom has cleared the Vodafone-Idea merger, but both companies will have to meet conditions for final approval. The combined operations of Idea and Vodafone will create the country's largest telecom operator worth over \$23 billion. Vodafone will own 45.1% stake in the combined entity, while Kumar Mangalam Birla-led Aditya Birla Group and Idea shareholders would have 26% and 28.9%, respectively.

#### **20. YES Bank Gets SEBI Nod To Launch Mutual Fund Business**

Private lender YES Bank announced that it has received final regulatory approval from the Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to start mutual fund business. This approval is subsequent to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) approval. YES Asset Management (India), a wholly owned subsidiary of YES Bank, will launch fund offerings across the spectrum in both debt and equity markets over the next 6-12 months.

- **Awards & Honours**

**1. Rahul Dravid, 5th Indian to Be Inducted Into ICC Hall of Fame**

Former captains Rahul Dravid of India, Ricky Ponting of Australia and retired England Women wicketkeeper-batter Claire Taylor were inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame 2018 during a glittering ceremony in Dublin, Ireland. Former Team India captain Rahul Dravid has become the fifth Indian cricketer after Anil Kumble, Sunil Gavaskar, Bishan Singh Bedi and Kapil Dev to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame.

**2. Artist Anjolie Ela Menon Conferred Kalidas Award**

Noted artist Anjolie Ela Menon had received the National Kalidas Samman in Delhi for visual arts from the Madhya Pradesh government. With her first solo exhibition being held in Delhi in 1958, Menon is counted among India's most accomplished artists and is the recipient of numerous national and international awards including the Padma Shri.

**3. Indian recipients of Ramon Magsaysay Award 2018**

Dr. Bharat Vatwani: Psychiatrist and founder of Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation in 1989. He works to unite mentally ill street people with their families. He has united 2000 people with their families so far. Sonam Wangchuk: Ladakhi engineer, innovator and education reformist. Founder of Students Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL). He invented the Ice Stupa technique that creates artificial glaciers used for storing winter water in form of conical shaped ice heap.

**4. The renowned vocalist who has been chosen for the 2018 Sangita Kalanidhi Award by the Music Academy, Madras:  
Aruna Sairam**

- **Sports**

### **1. Aaron Finch Posts Highest-Ever T20 Individual Score**

Australian captain Aaron Finch slammed 172(76) against Zimbabwe to register the highest-ever individual score in T20Is, overtaking his own record of 156 runs. The 31-year-old opener smashed 10 sixes and 16 fours in his knock before getting out hit-wicket. Finch and D'Arcy Short shared a 223-run opening stand, which is the highest-ever partnership for any wicket in T20Is.

### **2. Javelin Thrower Neeraj Chopra Wins Gold At Sotteville Athletics Meet**

Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra has clinched a gold medal at the Sotteville Athletics Meet in France. The Indian youngster secured the top spot in the podium with an 85.17m throw. Moldova's Andrian Mardare took the silver medal after he covered a distance of 81.48m. The bronze medal went to Lithuania's Edis Matusevicius, whose best throw of the night was 79.31m.

### **3. Max Verstappen Won Austrian Grand Prix, Lewis Hamilton Retires**

Red Bull's Max Verstappen won the Austrian Grand Prix 2018 title in Austria. Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen finished in the second spot. Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel finished in the third spot. Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton retired from the race due to a mechanical issue in his car.

### **4. Major General VD Dogra Becomes 1st Serving Indian Army Officer to Complete Ironman Competition**

Major General VD Dogra became the first serving Indian Army officer and the only General across the world to have completed a grueling 'Ironman' competition held in Austria. The Ironman is an international triathlon consisting of three consecutive events- 3.8 km of swimming, 180 km cycling and 42.2 km of running (a full marathon). It is considered the toughest one-day sporting event in the world. The competitors have to complete the events in sequence within 17 hours to earn the title of 'Ironman'. Maj Gen Dogra completed the event in 14 hours and 21 minutes.

### **5. 7 New Medal Events Added To Beijing Winter Games 2022**

Planning for its next three Olympic Games, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has added seven medal events to the 2022 Beijing Winter Games, published a 2020 Tokyo Olympics schedule with no agreement on when to race swimming finals, and set a timetable to add new sports to the 2024 Paris Olympics. The next Winter Olympics will now include: women's monobob, Big Air freestyle skiing for men and women, plus mixed team events in short track speed skating, ski jumping, ski aerobics and snowboardcross.

### **6. Dipa Karmakar Clinches Gold Medal at Gymnastics World Cup**

India's premier gymnast Dipa Karmakar clinched a gold medal in the vault event of FIG Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup at Mersin in Turkey. The 24-year-old from Tripura, Dipa Karmakar scored 14.150 to win gold. This is Dipa's first medal in a World Challenge Cup. She had topped the qualification also with a score of 13.400.

#### **7. Wimbledon Championships 2018: Complete List of Winners**

The 2018 Wimbledon Championships is a Grand Slam tennis tournament which takes place at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in Wimbledon, London, United Kingdom. Novak Djokovic won the men's singles Title for the fourth time. Angelique Kerber won the Ladies' Singles title.

#### **8. FIFA World Cup 2018 Concludes | France Emerged As Champions**

The 21st edition of the FIFA World Cup concluded in Luzhniki Stadium in the Russian capital of Moscow. 32 nations, divided into eight groups, battled it out for the coveted trophy in the quadrennial month-long event. France emerged as the champion team of the FIFA World Cup 2018. It has defeated Croatia in a thrilling final by 4-2. It was the second world cup win for France, it first won in 1998.

#### **9. Olympic Medalists to Now Receive Rs 20,000 Pension Per Month**

Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore announced that the rate of pension for sportspersons who have won medals in international competitions and have retired from active sports has been doubled from April 1. At present, the government gives lifelong pension to 588 players under the scheme of 'Pension to Meritorious Sportspersons.' According to the revised rates, Olympic and Para Olympic medallists will get a sum of Rs 20,000 per month each, while gold medallists at World Cups and World Championships in Olympic and Asian Games disciplines will receive Rs 16,000 per month. Silver and bronze medallists at World Cups in Olympic and Asian Games disciplines will receive a sum of Rs 14,000 per month and an equal amount is payable to gold medallists of the Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and Para Asian Games.

#### **10. Australia Wins Hockey Champions Trophy Final 2018**

In the summit clash of the 37th and final edition of the Hockey Champions Trophy at Breda, the Netherlands, India lost to defending champions Australia via penalty shoot-off. The match went into the shoot-off after both the teams were locked at 1-1 in regulation time. It was Australia's record 15th Champions Trophy title. While India won their second consecutive silver medal, hosts the Netherlands bagged the bronze medal.

#### **11. Sreejesh To Lead Indian Hockey Team At Asian Games 2018**

Indian goalkeeper PR Sreejesh will lead the 18-member Indian men's hockey squad while Chinglensana Singh Kangujam will serve as his deputy in the 18th Asian Games, which will begin in Jakarta and Palembang, Indonesia in August 2018.

## **12. Lewis Hamilton Wins German Grand Prix**

Lewis Hamilton won the German Grand Prix 2018 held at Hockenheimring track in Germany. Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton secured the first position. He was followed by Valtteri Bottas of Mercedes in the second position. Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen secured the third position.

## **13. Thailand Open 2018: Nozomi Okuhara Beats PV Sindhu To Win Maiden Title**

India's star shuttler PV Sindhu (seeded second) suffered a defeat to fourth seed Nozomi Okuhara of Japan in straight games inside 50 minutes to settle for runners-up spot in the Thailand Open at the Nimibutr Stadium in Bangkok. In men's singles, Kanta Tsuneyama (Japan) was the winner and Tommy Sugiarto (Indonesia) was runner up.

## **14. Fakhar Zaman, Quickest Player To Reach 1000 Runs In 1- Day Internationals**

Fakhar Zaman recently scored a double century for Pakistan against Zimbabwe and he became the first player from Pakistan to score a double century in a one-day international. He became the quickest player in history to reach 1,000 runs in the format. Fakhar Zaman has broken the record of West Indies cricketer Vivian Richards. Fakhar Zaman took 18 innings to reach the 1000 mark. Vivian Richards had achieved this mark in 21 matches.

## **15. Muhammed Anas Yahiya Breaks Own National Record In 400m**

Star sprinter Muhammed Anas Yahiya once again entered the record books as he broke his own national record to win the 400 metres race at the Cena Noveho Mesta nad Metuji meet in the Czech Republic. Anas set a time of 45.24 seconds to break his own record of 45.31 seconds which he had set during the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast in April 2018.

## **16. IAAF World U20 Championship: Hima Das Bags Gold, Creates History**

18-year-old Indian runner Hima Das created history by becoming the first-ever Indian woman to win an athletics gold on the international stage. Hailing from Assam, Hima finished on top of the podium in the women's 400m event at the IAAF World U20 Championship in Tampere, Finland, clocking 51.46 seconds. 51.13 seconds is her personal best and is now also the Indian U20 national record.

## **17. Tokyo 2020 Committee Officially Launches Olympic Mascots**

The Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee officially launched its Olympic mascots 'Miraitowa' and Paralympic mascot 'Someity' at a ceremony attended by Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike and Committee's President Yoshiro Mori. The name of the blue-checked Olympic mascot 'Miraitowa' is derived from a combination of the Japanese words for future and eternity and seeks to "promote a future full of eternal hope in the hearts of people all over the world". The pink-checked Paralympic mascot 'Someity' owes its name to a type of cherry tree blossom and exhibits enormous mental and physical strength.



- **Books & Authors**

**1. 'The English Patient' By Michael Ondaatje Declared 'Best Booker Prize Winner In 50 Years'**

Michael Ondaatje's bestselling novel 'The English Patient' was announced as the winner of the Golden Man Booker Prize at the Southbank Centre in London. The prize was instituted as part of celebrations to mark the Booker's having completed 50 years.

**2. Michael Ondaatje Named in Man Booker Prize Long List**

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

**3. JK Rowling To Release Next Book 'Lethal White'**

JK Rowling will come out with the fourth novel titled 'Lethal White' in the series about the exploits of private investigator Cormoran Strike in September 2018 under her pseudonym Robert Galbraith.

**4. Ramachandra Guha Pens Book Titled 'Gandhi: The Years That Changed The World (1914-1948)'**