

# COMPETITION GURUKUL



## FM to attend AIIB annual meet in Korea

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley will attend the annual meeting of China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank to be held in mid-June in South Korea.



The Finance Minister is scheduled to attend Board of Governors meeting on 14-15 June sources said. This year's meeting is being co-hosted by the Bank and Korea, and will be held in Jeju Island.

### Points to Remember

AIIB aims to promote economic development of the region by supporting major infrastructure projects. India is the second largest shareholder of AIIB with 7.5 per cent stake after China which has 26.06 per cent voting shares. Russia and Germany have 5.93 per cent, 4.5 per cent stake respectively.

## World Milk Day: 1 June

World Milk Day is a day established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to recognise the importance of milk as a global food.

It has been observed on June 1 each year since 2001.

The day is intended to provide an opportunity to bring attention to activities that are connected with the dairy sector.

## 70th World Health Assembly held in Geneva

The 70th World Health Assembly (WHA) was held in Geneva, Switzerland from 22 to 31 May 2017.

Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Cerebro Spinal Meningitis (CSM) epidemic in Nigeria, prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and election of a new President of the World Health Organisation (WHO) were the agenda of the Assembly.

The WHO Executive Board announced Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus for the post of WHO Director-General.

## Iceland appraised world's most peaceful nation, India 137<sup>th</sup>

Iceland has been named the world's most peaceful nation, besting the Global Peace Index for the tenth back to back year.

New Zealand and Portugal have finished the top three, while Syria has been named the slightest peaceful.

The US has dropped 11 spots to rank 114, while India is positioned 137 out of 163.

## India, Pakistan to become full SCO members at Astana summit

India and Pakistan's admission as full members to the Beijing-backed Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) will be formalised at the political and security grouping's summit in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation headquartered in Beijing was founded in 2001 and comprises Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, besides China as full members.

It is mainly aimed at military cooperation between the members and involves intelligence-sharing, counter-terrorism operations in Central Asia.

Afghanistan, Belarus, India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan have observer status.

## Trump pulls US out of Paris pact

President Donald Trump announced his decision to withdraw the US from the Paris Agreement on climate change and renegotiate the deal that was agreed upon by over 190 countries during the previous Obama administration.



Arguing that countries like China and India are benefiting the most from the Paris Agreement, Trump said that the agreement on climate change was unfair to the United States, as it badly hit its businesses and jobs.

## NASA's first mission to the star set for 2018

Wearing a nearly 5-inch coat of carbon-composite solar shields, NASA's Parker Solar Probe will explore the sun's atmosphere in a mission that begins in the summer of 2018.

NASA is sending a roughly 10-foot-high 'Parker' probe on the historic mission that will put it closer to the sun than any spacecraft has ever reached before.

The specially designed mission will also address questions that couldn't be answered before.

## UN General Assembly elects five non-permanent UNSC members

The UN General Assembly has elected Cote D'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Kuwait, Poland and Peru as the non-permanent members of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2018.

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Cote D'Ivoire got 189 votes, while Equatorial Guinea got 185 votes and Kuwait 188 votes. Poland garnered 190 and Peru 186.

Netherlands was also elected to serve a one-year term it shares with Italy.

Last year, after five rounds of voting, neither Italy nor the Netherlands met the required two-thirds majority for election.

As a result, they announced that they will divide the term, with each serving one year on the Council.

The powerful UN Security Council is made up of 10 elected members and five permanent veto-wielding powers— the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia.

## India slips to 45th spot in IMD's World Competitiveness list

India has been ranked 45th, down four notches from last year, in terms of competitiveness in the annual rankings compiled by IMD which saw Hong Kong topping the list.

US was "pushed out" of the top three slots while Hong Kong consolidated its dominance of the annual rankings for the second year in the list compiled by the International Institute for Management Development's (IMD) World Competitiveness Center.

Switzerland and Singapore were ranked second and third respectively, with the USA at the fourth spot.

## World Environment Day: 5 June

World Environment Day (WED) occurs on 5 June every year, is the United Nation's principal vehicle for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the protection of our environment.

First held in 1974, it has been a flagship campaign for raising awareness on emerging environmental issues from marine pollution and global warming, to sustainable consumption and wildlife crime.

The theme for 2017 is 'Connecting People to nature – in the city and on the land, from the poles to the equator'.

The host country for the year 2017 is Canada.

## Second MI Ministerial to be Held 7-8 June 2017 in Beijing

On 7–8 June 2017, the second Mission Innovation Ministerial (MI-2) will take place in Beijing, China.

MI-2 will bring together energy ministers and other representatives from MI member countries to share knowledge and collaborate on priorities for clean energy innovation.

This event will include ministerial working sessions, opportunities for high-profile announcements, Innovation Challenge discussions, and a series of side events.

MI-2 will be co-located with the eighth Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM8). While MI focuses on breakthrough research and development for the new technologies of tomorrow, the Clean Energy Ministerial focuses on scaling the deployment of clean energy technologies and solutions that are available today.

## Four Arab nations cut diplomatic ties with Qatar as Gulf rift deepens

Four Arab nations cut diplomatic ties with Qatar, further deepening a rift between these nations and that country for its support to Islamist groups.



Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates all announced that they would withdraw their diplomatic staff from Qatar, a gas-rich nation that will host the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Later, Yemen's internationally recognised government also cut ties with Qatar.

## Montenegro becomes 29th and newest NATO member

Montenegro officially became the 29th member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization during a ceremony in Washington at the US State Department's Treaty Room.

The US was one of the organization's 12 founding members in 1949.

Montenegro has marked its pivot to the West by joining NATO despite Russia's opposition.

## India ranked 74<sup>th</sup> in 4G Internet Speed

For all the talk of 4G and high-speed broadband in India, the average download speed — at 5.1Mbps — is less than a third of the global average and only marginally higher than the global 3G speed of 4.4 Mbps.

India ranked 74<sup>th</sup>, came below the likes of Pakistan and Sri Lanka and just ahead of Costa Rica in terms of speed.

Singapore scored the highest in 4G speed while South Korea scored highest in 4G availability. The global average 4G download speed was 16.2 Mbps.

## World Oceans Day: 8 June

World Oceans Day takes place every June 8.

It has been celebrated unofficially since its original proposal in 1992 by Canada's International Centre for

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Ocean Development (ICOD) and the Ocean Institute of Canada (OIC) at the Earth Summit - UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Theme for the year 2017 is 'Our Oceans, Our Future'.

## SCO Summit Begins in Astana

The summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is being held in Astana, Kazakhstan, June 8-9.



Chinese President Xi Jinping, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Russian President Vladimir Putin will attend the summit among others.

In the course of the summit, India and Pakistan will be formally admitted into the SCO.

## One million dollar fund established to bolster BRICS media

The Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) grouping has signaled its intent to expand its footprint in the global media space, with the injection of a one million dollars fund.

During an inaugural session of the BRICS Media Forum, president of Xinhua News Agency and executive president of the Forum, announced that the news agency will invest 1 million U.S. dollars for boosting media cooperation in the five-nation grouping.

The BRICS media forum is the result of a joint initiative by Xinhua News Agency, Brazil's CMA Group, Russia's Sputnik News Agency and Radio, The Hindu group of publications from India, and South Africa's Independent Media.

## India, Pakistan become full members of SCO

Capping a two-year-long process, India and Pakistan have become full members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), a China-dominated security grouping that is increasingly seen as a counterweight to NATO.

India's membership was strongly pushed by Russia while Pakistan's entry into the grouping was backed by China.

With the expansion of the grouping, the SCO will now represent over 40 per cent of humanity and nearly 20 per cent of the global GDP.

The SCO was founded at a Summit in Shanghai in 2001 by the Presidents of Russia, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

India, Iran and Pakistan were admitted as observers at the 2005 Astana Summit.

## UN holds first 'Ocean Conference'

The United Nations has held its first ever summit on protecting the world's seas and waterways.

Member nations are using the Ocean Conference to renew their commitment to combatting rising sea levels, pollution, and harmful fishing practices.

It was co-hosted by the Governments of Fiji and Sweden.

## World Day against Child Labour: 12 June

The World Day against Child Labour is being observed annually across world on 12 June to bring awareness against child labour.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched the World Day Against Child Labour in 2002 to focus attention on the global extent of child labour and the action and efforts needed to eliminate it.

Its theme for the year 2017 is "In conflicts and disasters, protect children from child labour".

## EU, France grant 3.5m euros to curb emissions in India

Aiming to reduce emissions and promote sustainability to help India's smart city programme, France and the European Union has extended a grant of 3.5 million Euros under the 'Mobilise Your City' (MYC) initiative.

Three Indian cities, Nagpur, Kochi and Ahmedabad will get the grant as part of the EU's commitment under the Paris Climate agreement, French Development Agency (AFD).

The MYC, supported by the French and German government, also has financial support from the European Union (EU).

MYC aims to extend help to 100 cities globally to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by promoting sustainable urban transport and to promote sustainability in urban spaces.

## China launches world's largest floating solar farm

China has launched the world's largest floating solar farm.

The 40-megawatt power plant has 160,000 panels resting on a lake that emerged after the collapse of a coal mine in central Anhui province.

China's solar capacity more than doubled in 2016.

## World's smallest & cheapest private jet launched at Rs 12.6 crore

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US-based aviation company Cirrus Aircraft has launched the world's smallest and most affordable private jet called 'Vision Jet' for Rs 12.62 crore.

The jet which had been in making for a decade has only one engine and can cruise at 555 kmph.

It has a maximum operating altitude of 28,000 feet, and takes off from just 620 metres of runway.

## India to be Co-Partner Country in ANUGA 2017

Minister of Food Processing Industries Smt Harsimrat Kaur Badal addressed a Joint Press Conference with the organizers of ANUGA - an international business platform for Food Industry to be held in Cologne, Germany.

She also signed the Memorandum of Understanding for Participation in the ANUGA Exhibition with Ms Katharina C Hamma, Chief Operating Officer, Koelnmesse GmbH (Organizers of ANUGA).

Minister of Food Processing Industries said that it was an honour for India to be a co-partner country in such a prestigious international event.

## VK Singh to attend BRICS Foreign Ministers Meet

Minister of State for External Affairs Gen VK Singh will attend the two-day BRICS Foreign Ministers Meet beginning in Beijing on June 18.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will chair the meet, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lu Kang was quoted as saying by Xinhua.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, South African Foreign Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, and Brazilian Foreign Minister Aloysio Nunes will be present at the meeting.

The Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Summit will be held in September in Xiamen.

## G7 Environment Ministers' Meeting held in Bologna, Italy

G7 Environment Ministers and high representatives, and European Commissioners responsible for environment and climate, met in Bologna on 11-12 June 2017.



It was attended by heads and senior officials of International Organizations and by representatives of universities and firms.

It was aimed to discuss issues ranging from climate change to sustainable development and litter at sea.

Italy holds the G7 presidency for 2017.

## World Blood Donor Day: 14 June

Every year on 14 June, countries around the world celebrate World Blood Donor Day (WBDD).

The event, established in 2004, serves to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products, and to thank blood donors for their voluntary, life-saving gifts of blood. The theme for Blood Donor Day 2017 is "What Can You Do? Give Blood. Give Now. Give Often".

## World Bank approves \$500 million grant package for Afghanistan projects

The World Bank has approved financing worth more than \$500 million for Afghanistan to support a string of projects to boost the economy, help improve service delivery in five cities and support Afghan refugees sent back from Pakistan.

The bank said the six grants, including donor money, worth some \$520 million would help the Afghan government "at a time of uncertainty when risks to the economy are significant."

## India moves up six places to 60th on Global Innovation Index: Report

India has moved up six places to 60th among 130 nations on the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2017, emerging as the top-ranked economy in Central and South Asia.

The index, co-authored by Cornell University, INSEAD and World Intellectual Property Organisation shows India's rise as an emerging innovation centre in Asia, although the country ranks far behind China which occupied the 22nd spot.

In 2017, Switzerland leads the rankings for the seventh consecutive year.

## India Top Remittance-Receiving Country In 2016: UN Report

Indians working across the globe sent home USD 62.7 billion last year, making India the top remittance-receiving country surpassing China, says a UN report.

The 'One Family at a Time' study by the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) said about 200 million migrants globally sent more than USD 445 billion in 2016 as remittances to their families, helping to lift millions out of poverty.

The study said India was the top receiving country for remittances in 2016 at USD 62.7 billion, followed by China (USD 61 billion), the Philippines (USD 30 billion) and Pakistan (USD 20 billion).

## China launches its first X-ray space telescope

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China launched its first x-ray telescope, a significant step in the country's race to develop a space program that can rival that of the US or Russia.

- The Hard X-ray Modulation Telescope (HXMT) took off from China's Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, the country's first satellite launch site, located in Inner Mongolia via a domestically-developed Long March-4B rocket.
- Once in orbit, the telescope will be used to observe high-energy entities like black holes, pulsars and gamma-ray bursts in order to understand more about their energy sources.

## **Katy Perry Just Became the First Person to Reach 100 Million Twitter Followers**

Katy Perry has become the first person to reach 100 million followers on Twitter, making her the most-followed person on the platform.

Perry joined Twitter back in 2009, making her something of an early adopter as a celebrity.

## **World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2017 held in Switzerland**

More than 2,500 information and communication technology (ICT) experts and advocates from around the globe took part in the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2017 (WSIS Forum 2017), where they exchanged knowledge and experiences towards achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

WSIS Forum 2017 was held in Geneva, 12-16 June, and was co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP, in close collaboration with all UN agencies.

The Chair-elect of this year's forum is Mr. Jean Philbert Nsengimana, Minister of Youth and ICT, Government of Rwanda.

## **ASEAN Dengue Day: 15 June**

2017 ASEAN Dengue day was observed on 15 June.

Dengue is one of the fastest growing emerging infectious diseases in the world, and the Asia Pacific region bears 75% of the global burden.

2017 ASEAN Dengue Day Theme is "United Fight Against Dengue".

## **India Wins Re-Election to United Nation's Eco and Social Council**

India has won its re-election to the United Nation's principal body on economic, social and environmental issues, continuing its streak of being elected for a third consecutive term.

India was among 18 nations to be elected to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN with 183 votes. Japan followed India with the second highest votes in the Asia Pacific category.

India was seeking re-election as its current term is set to expire this year.

The ECOSOC has 54 members.

## **106th International Labour Conference, 2017**

The 106th Session of International Labour Conference (ILC) was held from 5-16th June 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland.

An Indian Tripartite Delegation led by the Minister of State for Labour and Employment (Independent Charge), Shri Bandaru Dattatreya participated in the ILC.

In a historic step towards eradication of Child Labour from the country, India ratified International Labour Organizations Convention No 138 (minimum age for employment) and Convention No 182 (worst forms of child labour) to symbolise its commitment and initiatives for eradication of child labour.

## **International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict: 19 June**

On 19 June 2015, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 19 June of each year the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.

The date was chosen to commemorate the adoption on 19 June 2008 of Security Council resolution 1820 (2008), in which the Council condemned sexual violence as a tactic of war and an impediment to peace building.

2017 Theme: "Preventing Sexual Violence Crimes through Justice and Deterrence"

## **World Refugee Day: 20 June**

World Refugee Day, international observance observed June 20 each year, is dedicated to raising awareness of the situation of refugees throughout the world.

On 4 December 2000, the United Nations General Assembly in Resolution 55/76 decided that, from 2001, 20 June would be celebrated as World Refugee Day.

## **Record 65 million people displaced in 2016: UN**

A record 65.6 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced from their homes owing to conflict or persecution by the end of 2016, the United Nations said.

The record number includes 22.5 million refugees, 40.3 million internally displaced people and 2.8 million asylum seekers.

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For the third consecutive year, Turkey hosted the largest number of refugees worldwide, with 2.9 million people. It was followed by Pakistan (1.4 million), Lebanon (1 million), Iran (979,400), Uganda (940,800), and Ethiopia (791,600).

## **Australia announces online visa applications for Indians from 1 July**

The Australian government has announced that Indian nationals can apply for a visitor visa online starting 1 July.

There has been a significant increase in demand for Australian visas in India with the rising popularity of Australia as a holiday destination, an official statement said.

It will offer benefits like 24/7 accessibility, electronic payment of the visa application charge and the ability to check the status of applications lodged online, all through the department's ImmiAccount portal.

## **International Day of Yoga: 21 June**

International Day of Yoga or commonly and unofficially referred to as Yoga Day, is celebrated annually on 21 June since its inception in 2015.

An international day for yoga was declared unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 11 December 2014.

The theme for the 2017 celebration, organized by the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations, is 'Yoga for Health.'

## **2017 BIO International Convention**

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) BIO 2017 is being held in the San Diego Convention Centre, San Diego from 19<sup>th</sup> June to 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2017.

The Indian delegation taking part in the BIO 2017, is being led by Shri Y S Chowdary, Minister of State for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences.

The BIO International Convention is the largest global event for the biotechnology industry and attracts the biggest names in biotech.

The BIO International Convention is hosted by the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO).

## **Eighth Session of the Implementation Review Group of UNCAC at Vienna, Austria**

The Central Vigilance Commissioner Shri K.V. Chowdary presented country statement at the Eighth Session of the Implementation Review Group of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) at Vienna, Austria.

The Eighth Session is being held from June 19<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017.

Shri K.V. Chowdary said that India is fully committed to tackle corruption and adopts a 'zero tolerance' approach as well as minimum Government and maximum Governance.

## **First air corridor between India and Afghanistan inaugurated**

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has inaugurated the first Afghanistan-India air corridor during a ceremony at the Kabul International Airport—a direct route that bypasses Pakistan and is meant to improve commerce.

Ghani said the aim of the route is to create more opportunities and make Afghanistan an exporting nation. Mountain-riddled Afghanistan is a landlocked country and all imports and exports depend on neighbouring countries.

## **China unveils world's first train that runs on virtual tracks**

China has unveiled the world's first 'rainless' train - a train that runs on virtual tracks.

China is also testing a bus that can straddle the road, and allow traffic to pass under it.

The new train is part of China's attempts to develop "intelligent rail express system". Instead of railway tracks, the train runs on rubber tyres.

The train can move at a maximum speed of 70 km/hour.

## **Mumbai continues to be most expensive city for expatriates in India**

Mumbai is the most expensive city for expatriates in India and is ranked higher than major global cities such as Paris, Canberra, Seattle and Vienna, says a report.



According to Mercer's 23rd annual Cost of Living Survey, Mumbai is placed 57th on the list while New Delhi was placed at 99. Chennai (135), Bangalore (166) and Kolkata (184) were the other Indian cities on the list.

Luanda, the capital of Angola, was the costliest city, driven by cost of goods and security, followed by Hong Kong and Tokyo at the second and third places, respectively.

## **India's population to surpass that of China's around 2024: UN**

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India's population could surpass that of China's around 2024, two years later than previously estimated, and is projected to touch 1.5 billion in 2030, according to a UN forecast.

The 2017 Revision, published by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, said that currently China with 1.41 billion inhabitants and India with 1.34 billion remain the two most populous countries, comprising 19 and 18 per cent of the total global population.

In roughly seven years, or around 2024, the population of India is expected to surpass that of China, the report said.

## **Estonia to open the world's first data embassy in Luxembourg**

The world's first ever data embassy is set for launch next year after the Estonian government signed a deal with Luxembourg.

Estonia is planning to keep backup files of its vital information on servers in the duchy in order to guarantee country's digital continuity.

## **Nasa launches world's lightest satellite designed by 18-year-old TN student**

India once again broke a global space record by launching the world's lightest satellite weighing a mere 64 grams, called Kalamsat, designed and developed by 18-year-old Tamil Nadu student Rifath Sharook and his team.



The tiny satellite, named after Abdul Kalam, was flown by a Nasa sounding rocket.

Kalamsat was the only Indian payload in the Nasa mission.

## **UN Public Service Day: 23 June**

The United Nations Public Service Day is celebrated on June 23 of every year.

The UN Public Service Day was designated by the United Nations General Assembly's resolution to "celebrate the value and virtue of public service to the community".

2017 UN Public Service day theme is 'The Future is Now'.

## **International Olympic Day: 23 June**

International Olympic Day is celebrated on June 23 of every year.

It is a day for the world to get active, learn about Olympic values and discover new sports.

Based on the three pillars move, learn and discover, National Olympic Committees are organising sports, cultural and educational activities throughout the world.

## **International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking: 26 June**

By resolution 42/112 of 7 December 1987, the UN General Assembly decided to observe 26 June as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

It aims to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse.

The theme for 2017 is: "Listen First - Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow healthy and safe."

## **Day of the Seafarer: 25 June**

Annual Day of the Seafarer (DotS) is observed on 25 June.

DotS was established in a resolution adopted by the 2010 Diplomatic Conference in Manila to adopt the revised STCW Convention.

Its stated purpose is to recognize the unique contribution made by seafarers from all over the world to international seaborne trade, the world economy and civil society as a whole.

This year's theme is "Seafarers Matter".

## **US Lists China Among Worst Human Trafficking Offenders**

US President Donald Trump's administration hit China over its rights record, listing the country alongside Sudan and North Korea on a list of the world's worst human trafficking offenders.

The State Department downgraded China in its annual "Trafficking in Persons Report," saying Beijing is doing little to combat the phenomenon or protect its victims.

## **Social Progress Index 2017: India ranks 93<sup>rd</sup>**

It is observed that the world incorporating 128 countries scores 64.85 on social progress. It registers a 2.6 percent increase from 2014.

India which is ranked at 93<sup>rd</sup> position performs within the expected range on a relative basis.

Denmark ranked first, followed by Finland and Iceland.

## **US designates Hizbul chief Syed Salahuddin as global terrorist**

The US has designated Hizbul chief Syed Salahuddin as a global terrorist.

Salahuddin joins the likes Lashkar chief Hafiz Mohammed Saeed and Dawood Ibrahim in the list.

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Designations of terrorist individuals and groups expose and isolate organizations and individuals, and result in denial of access to the US financial system.

## Indians become second largest group of migrants in Australia

Indians have become the second largest group of migrants living in Australia since 2011 at 1,63,000, following people of Chinese origin, according to the latest census data.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released the latest figures of the country's fast changing population and demographics that has recorded 1.3 million new migrants settled in Australia since 2011 from around 180 countries, including India and China.

According to official data, Census 2016 recorded new migrants from India at 1,63,000, emerging as the most common country of birth of new arrivals after China at 1,91,000 new migrants.

## Sharjah named World Book Capital

Sharjah has been named the 'World Book Capital' title for 2019 by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).



The honour is a recognition of the emirate's pioneering role in supporting and expanding the local and regional publishing industries.

The accolade is an important addition to Sharjah's existing portfolio of milestones like, Capital of Arab Culture (1998), Capital of Islamic Culture (2014), and Capital of Arab Tourism (2015).

## China Is Building The World's 1st Vertical 'Forest City'

China is building a forest city covered in tree to act like one giant air filter.

The complex will span about a kilometre along the Liujiang River, with office buildings, apartments, schools, and hotels, all engulfed by around 40,000 trees and more than a million plants.

The aim is to have the green towers soak up the air pollution in the area and produce clean oxygen, encouraging the growth of other local flora in the process.

## Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Implement Energy Efficiency Programmes

Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), under the administration of Ministry of Power, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with National Energy Services Company, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to implement energy efficiency programmes and scale-up demand side measures in the Gulf country.

As per the MoU, EESL will provide consultancy and expand the capacity of the National Energy Services Company, which is instituted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to execute energy efficiency programmes.

The move comes in the wake of the Arab Kingdom working ardently towards reducing its power subsidies and introducing energy efficiency initiatives.



## Rajasthan High Court recommends declaration of cow as national animal

The Rajasthan High Court recommended that the Centre declare the cow as a national animal and increase the punishment for cow slaughter to life imprisonment.



In a slew of directions passed on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), the court asked the State Chief Secretary to take steps to get the suggestions implemented.

## Delhi to host India's maiden Mobile Congress from September 27

India is setting the stage for the Indian Mobile Congress (IMC) in September, Communications Minister Manoj Sinha said.

The IMC will be held in September this year for the first time. Then on, it will be an annual event.

The event to be held from September 27 to 29 will be organized by telecom industry body Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) with support from the Department of Telecommunications and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

The Ministry of Skill Development will also be part of the endeavour.

It will be organised in the Pragati Maidan, New Delhi with a budget of around Rs 15 crore.

## Online APAR for Indian Trade Service SPARROW-ITS Launched

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In accordance with the Government of India's policy to introduce online Annual Performance Appraisal Report (APAR) for Group 'A' services, Smt. Rita Teotia, Commerce Secretary launched the SPARROW-ITS (Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window) enable the Indian Trade Service (ITS) officers to fill their APAR online for the year 2016-17 onwards.

The event was attended by Sh. Ajay Bhalla, DGFT and other senior officers of DGFT.

The APARs would be generated and transmitted online to the concerned officers for filling up of the self appraisal.

The officer can then submit the self appraisal online through Digitally Signed Signature (DSC) or through E-sign.

## **Shaktikanta Das retires as Economic Affairs Secretary**

Economic Affairs Secretary Shaktikanta Das retired after serving the government for 37 years in various capacities.

After Das' retirement, Corporate Affairs Secretary Tapan Ray has taken additional charge as the Economic Affairs Secretary.

## **India to have its own GPS system from 2018**

India will be having its own GPS system. 'NavIC' will be operational early 2018.

The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) with an operational name of NavIC is currently being tested for its accuracy and is most likely to be available in the market for public use early next year.

NavIC the name given by PM Narendra Modi after the launch of IRNSS-1G, is designed to provide accurate position information to users within the country.

## **Indian Railways to introduce "book now, pay later" option**

Railways have decided to provide the 'buy tickets now and pay later' service for any Express trains.



IRCTC has collaborated with a Mumbai-based firm ePayLater for adding the new service option.

Through this service, a passenger can book a ticket five days prior to the journey with a service charge of 3.5 per cent and pay it in the next 14 days.

## **Telangana launches T-Wallet**

The Telangana Government has launched a digital wallet, named T-Wallet, which doesn't charge transaction fee from consumers.

It also can be used over the web version. One can top up the wallet using credit or debit cards, Internet banking or through cash at Mee Seva centres.

It allows a maximum transaction of Rs.1 lakh for e-KYC (know your customer) users. For non-KYC users, the limit is set to Rs. 20,000.

## **Maharashtra Launches Web Portal For Job Seekers And Employers**

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis launched a web portal 'Mahaswayam' that will cater to job seekers, employers, entrepreneurs, and training institutes who can avail details regarding skill development and employment.

Earlier, the state government ran three different portals- Maharashtra State Skill Development Society (MSSDS) portal for Skill Development, 'Maharajgar' for employment and 'Mahaswayamrojgar' for entrepreneurship.

These three have now been merged into 'Mahaswayam', making it easier for all beneficiaries as well as the state to keep a track of the demand and supply of workforce.

## **Stamp on noted playwright Balwant Gargi released**

A stamp on noted playwright and theatre director late Balwant Gargi was released.

BJP leader and Chandigarh MP Kirron Kher released the stamp on the commemoration of Balwant Gargi centenary by the Panjab University.

Gargi was the founder-director of the Indian Theatre Department, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Gargi, who was born in 1916 in Bathinda, was awarded the Sahitya Akademi award, the highest Indian literary award, in 1962 for his book Rang Manch. This was followed by the Padma Shri (1972), and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in Punjabi Playwriting in 1998.

## **MODI Fest inaugurated in Bengaluru**

Union Minister of Statistics and Programme Implementation Shri D.V.Sadananda Gowda has inaugurated Making of Developed India Festival - MODI Fest at Malleswaram in Bengaluru.

The objective of the programme was to communicate, on the occasion of completion of three years in office by the Central Government, to the people about the Union Government's achievements over the last 3 years and to convey them about the various Government schemes and initiatives.

## **Varanasi to get India's 1st freight village**

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Varanasi will get the country's first 'freight village' spread over around 100 acres.

The plan to set up this project close to the upcoming multi-modal terminal along the Ganga has attracted major players including Dubai Port World and IL&FS.

A 'Freight Village' is a specialised industrial estate which attracts companies that require logistics services and can cluster to improve their competitiveness.

## **MDWS adopts 2 Ganga Grams in collaboration with Faith Organisations**

Union Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar commissioned two Ganga Grams in the presence of various faith leaders led by Swami Chidanand Saraswati, co-founder of GIWA (Global Interfaith WASH Alliance).



Two villages in the bank of River Ganga, Veerpur Khurd in Dehradun and Mala in Pauri Garhwal have been taken by the Ministry to make them model Ganga villages, in collaboration with GIWA.

The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, in collaboration with State governments, has the mandate to make villages on the bank of River Ganga open Defecation free (ODF).

## **NSDC signs MoU with BIRD ACADEMY for skilling of unemployed youth**

An MoU was signed between National Skill Development Corporation and Bird Academy on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2017 in New Delhi, with regards to skilling of unemployed youth in the aviation and aerospace Sector.

With the signing of the MoU NSDC has agreed to enter into an arrangement with BIRD ACADEMY to train, skill & empower more than 30,000 unemployed youth across various states.

The two organizations will work together to set up training centres and centre of excellence in India.

## **Odisha to have first automatic coastal warning for disasters in India**

The Odisha government is all set to commission the ambitious Early Warning Dissemination System (EWDS) that would enable loud sirens go off simultaneously from towers at 122 locations by July.

Odisha is the first State in India to have developed an automatic public address system that can be activated along its entire coast.

Neighbouring Andhra Pradesh is also building up such capability to face natural calamities.

## **India's heaviest rocket with GSAT-19 all set for maiden flight**

India's heaviest rocket Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle-Mark III (GSLV-Mk III) is all set for its maiden flight into space along with a communications satellite on 5 June 2017.

The rocket, weighing 640 tonnes and standing 43.43 metres tall, will blast off from the second launch pad at India's rocket port at Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

It will carry a 3,136-kg GSAT-19 communications satellite, the heaviest to be lifted by an Indian rocket till date to an altitude of around 179 km above the Earth after just over 16 minutes into the flight.

## **Dr Jitendra Singh announces "Hill Area Development Programme" for Northeast**

The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh announced the launch of, "Hill Area Development Programme" (HADP) for Northeast in Imphal (Manipur).

Elaborating on the new scheme, Dr Jitendra Singh said that the hilly areas of Manipur, Tripura and Assam have a distinct geo-physical entity and are lagging in socio-economic development.

As a result of peculiar topography, he said, there is a wide gap between the hill and valley districts in terms of infrastructure, quality of roads, health and education etc.

The Hill Development Programme, he said, is inspired with a serious research and deliberation of all these factors.

## **Government to implement India's first Rural LED Street Lighting Project in Andhra Pradesh**

Government of India, through the Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) under the Ministry of Power, would be retrofitting 10 lakh conventional street lights with LED lights in Gram Panchayats of 7 districts in Andhra Pradesh.

This is the first project for rural LED street lighting in the country under the Government of India's Street Lighting National Project (SLNP).

In the first phase, the replacement will be undertaken in gram panchayats of the districts of Guntur, Prakasham, Nellore, Kurnool, Kadapa, Ananthapur and Chittoor.

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This replacement drive in rural areas will help the gram panchayats to cumulatively save approximately 147 million units of electricity annually and lead to reduction of 12 crore tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

The entire upfront capital cost of this project is being funded by French Development Agency Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

As part of the project, EESL would be carrying out the entire annual maintenance and warranty replacement in these gram panchayats for a period of 10 years.

## **Pension for single-women launched in Telangana**

The single women pension scheme providing Rs 1,000 financial assistance per month to single women was launched across Telangana.

Officials have identified 1,08,302 beneficiaries in 31 districts.

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao had earlier announced disbursement of pension of Rs 1,000 per month for single women, who have no support.

## **India's first public bicycle sharing project launched in Mysuru**

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah launched India's first public bicycle sharing (PBS) initiative 'Trin Trin' in Mysuru.

While more than 600 cities across the world were already providing bicycles as a commuting option, a number of cities in India including Bengaluru were planning to adopt the public bicycle sharing system.

However, Mysuru, a cultural and heritage city with a population of 12 lakh people, is the first city in India to have a public bicycle sharing system.

## **J P Nadda launches 'Skill for Life, Save a Life' initiative**

Shri J P Nadda, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare launched the 'Skill for Life, Save a Life' initiative at a function.

Speaking on the occasion Shri Nadda said that India enjoys a demographic dividend as more than 65% youth are below the age of 35 years and the Government is determined to seize this opportunity by providing adequate skills and employability to the youth for a strong foundation for continued and sustainable growth.

'Skills for Life, Save a Life' Initiative' aims to upscale the quantity and quality of trained professionals in the healthcare system.

Under this initiative various courses are planned to be initiated targeting specific competencies for healthcare professionals as well as for general public.

## **Modi government to replace UGC, AICTE with one higher education regulator**

The Modi government is all set to scrap the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and replace them with one higher education regulator, tentatively christened Higher Education Empowerment Regulation Agency (HEERA).

The decision to go ahead with this radical change was taken after a meeting on education chaired by the prime minister in early March.

If required, and since setting up a new regulator may take some time, amendments to existing rules will be considered as an interim reform measure.

## **Venkaiah Naidu inaugurates "Saath Hai Viswaas Hai, Ho Raha Vikas Hai" Exhibition**

M. Venkaiah Naidu Minister for Information & Broadcasting has inaugurated the "Saath Hai Viswaas Hai, Ho Raha Vikas Hai" Exhibition at Indira Niketan Park, Sarojini Nagar, New Delhi.

Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore, Minister of State for I&B was also present on the occasion.

The Exhibitions organized by DAVP is being put up across state capitals for duration of 5-7 days which would showcase the achievements of the Government in the last 3 years in various sectors.

## **UP govt to name Mughalsarai railway station after Deendayal Upadhyay**

The Yogi Adityanath cabinet in Uttar Pradesh decided to rename Mughalsarai railway station near Varanasi after RSS ideologue Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya.

A meeting of state cabinet was held under the chairmanship of chief minister Adityanath Yogi that gave its approval for the renaming of the station.

Upadhyay had died under mysterious circumstances while travelling in a train at Mughalsarai station on February 11, 1968.

Mughalsarai is one of the busiest stations of the Eastern Railway.

## **IIT-Delhi, IIT-Bombay, IISc among world's top 200 universities**

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Bombay has broken into the top 200 club in the latest edition of the 'Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings', to join IIT-Delhi and Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, in this group.

With this, India, for the first time, is home to three of the top 200 universities in the world.

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According to the 'QS World University Rankings 2018', IIT-Bombay rank 179 this time.

IIT-Delhi has replaced IISc as the best ranked Indian institution in the world. So, while IIT-Delhi has risen from 185 rank to 172 this year, IISc slipped over 30 places from 152 to 190.

In the overall rankings, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) continues its run as the world's best university for the sixth consecutive year.

## **'DigiYatra' - A New Digital Experience for Air Travellers**

The Ministry of Civil Aviation is adding a Digital experience for Air Travellers through DigiYatra Platform. The 'DigiYatra' is an industry-led initiative co-ordinated by the Ministry in line with the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Digital India's vision to transform the nation into a digitally empowered society.

This follows Air Sewa which brings together all the stakeholders on a common platform for handling customer grievances and disseminating real-time data.

## **AYUSH Minister to inaugurate National Health Editors' Conference**

The second National Health Editors' Conference on Yoga will be inaugurated by Minister of State for AYUSH (Independent Charge), Shri Shripad Yesso Naik at National Media Centre in New Delhi on June 9.



The conference is being organized by Ministry of AYUSH in association with Press Information Bureau (PIB), M/o Information & Broadcasting and Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy (M/o AYUSH) as a part of celebrations of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Day of Yoga on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2017.

The theme of this year's conference is "Yoga for Health and Harmony".

The aim of the conference is to give insight to the journalists about the scientific aspects of yoga & its benefits for human health.

## **1st Indian Railways Human Resources Round Table Conference**

Minister of Railways Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu inaugurated Indian Railways' 1st HR Round Table Conference in New Delhi.

Chairman, Railway Board, Shri A. K. Mital, Member Staff Shri Pradeep Kumar, other Railway Board Members and senior officials were also present on the occasion.

Indian Railways is the biggest civilian employer in the country spanning the length and breadth of the sub-continent within strength of over 13 lakh employees.

The employees are spread over 10 departments in 17 Zones, 6 Production Units and 68 Divisions.

## **Centre approves modifications to 'kambala' Bill**

The Centre has approved the modifications to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Karnataka Amendment) Bill 2017 to pave way for organising 'kambala' in the coming season, according to PP Chaudhary, Union Minister of State for Law and Justice.

The approval by the President will help in the smooth conduct of 'kambala' (the traditional slush track buffalo race) in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts of Karnataka.

The Bill proposes to exempt 'kambala' from the ambit of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960.

## **President launches 'Selfie with Daughter' mobile app**

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee launched a mobile Application 'Selfie with Daughter' at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Selfie-with-Daughter has become a world-wide movement against female foeticide and sex selection.

He hoped that this would eventually help in dealing with the problems arising out of gender imbalance.

The 'Selfie with Daughter' campaign was started by Shri Sunil Jaglan in June 2015 in village Bibipur, Jind, Haryana.

A former Sarpanch, Shri Jaglan has been working in the field of women empowerment and village development.

The aim of the campaign is to motivate society to feel proud to be parents of a girl child which will result in improving the child sex ratio.

## **Thaawarchand Gehlot Inaugurates 'Eastern Regional Conference'**

Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment inaugurated the "Eastern Regional Conference of Eastern Region States on issues relating to Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities".

It was organized by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

Representatives from the States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Sikkim, Tripura, West Bengal participated in the Conference.

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## **SATH program launched by NITI Aayog**

Furthering the agenda for cooperative federalism, NITI Aayog has launched SATH, a program providing 'Sustainable Action for Transforming Human capital' with the State Governments.

The vision of the program is to initiate transformation in the education and health sectors.

The program addresses the need expressed by many states for technical support from NITI.

SATH aims to identify and build three future 'role model' states for health systems.

The program will be implemented by NITI along with McKinsey & Company and IPE Global consortium, who were selected through a competitive bidding process.

## **Madhya Pradesh government launches farmers' debt relief scheme**

Madhya Pradesh government has launched a new debt relief scheme Krishi Rin Samadhan Yojana for farmers.

The cabinet also allocated Rs 1,000 crore for the scheme.

The interest rate on loans would be less, which would in turn also help defaulting farmers get loans.

## **Kolkata to get India's first underwater Metro**

Kolkata will soon have an underwater Metro which will pass through tunnels several feet under the Hooghly.

The first underwater transportation tunnel of India is ready with the second one nearing completion.

The Kolkata Metro transportation tunnel is unique to India because never before in the history of the country has a tunnel been made under a flowing river.

## **India emerged as seventh largest exporter of agri-products globally**

Commerce Secretary Rita Teatota said that while India has emerged as the seventh largest exporter of agri-products globally and opportunities in newer markets have to be searched for further growth.



Goods exports during 2016-17 stood at \$276.28 billion, out of which agri exports comprised of \$33.38 billion.

Vietnam, UAE, Saudi Arabia, USA, Iran, Iraq and Nepal are the major destinations for export of food products from India.

## **Railways to induct 40,000 refurbished coaches**

The Indian Railways is planning to induct about 40,000 coaches with improved interiors and upgraded facilities at an

estimated cost of Rs 8,000 crore to provide world-class comfort to passengers.

According to the plan, coaches will be retrofitted with refurbished interiors, improved seating arrangement and newly designed bio-toilets among other facilities.

The retrofitting would cost about Rs 30 lakh per coach.

The process of refurbishing of coaches with improved interiors is to complete up to 2023.

## **Anuyatra campaign launched in Thiruvananthapuram**

Anuyatra, a campaign of the Kerala government for persons with special needs, was launched by Vice-President Hamid Ansari.

The innovative initiative is aimed at transforming the state to a disabled-friendly one and empower differently-abled children by bringing them to the forefront of the mainstream society.

The MPower programme is managed by the Kerala Social Security Mission (KSSM) under the social justice department.

## **Government launches Tele-Law initiative**

With an aim to make legal aid easily accessible to the marginalized communities and citizens living in rural areas, the government has launched the 'Tele-Law' initiative.

Ministry of Law and Justice partnered with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to provide legal aid through its Common Service Centres (CSC) at the panchayat level.

In the first phase, the 'Tele-Law' scheme will be tested as a pilot across 500 such CSCs in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

## **With 2.5 lakh Child labourers, Uttar Pradesh ranks first**

According to a CRY report, Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of 2,50,672 children engaged in labour, followed by Bihar with 1,28,087 children and Maharashtra where the number stands at 82,847.

While the decade 2001-2011 saw an overall 30% reduction (about 3.2 million) in working children in the age-group of 10-14 years, number of working children within 5-9 years increased by 0.68 million, an increase of 37% from 2001.

## **Govt imposes anti-dumping duty on Chinese ceramic items**

India has imposed anti-dumping duty on import of ceramic table and kitchenware items from China to protect domestic industry against goods being sold at below normal value.

The Department of Revenue in the finance ministry on 12 June issued a notification imposing the anti-dumping duty of \$1.04 per kg on import of ceramic tableware and

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kitchenware, excluding knives and toilet items from China.

Through a separate notification, the government also extended by one year till June 6, 2018 the anti-dumping duty on imports of 'plain gypsum plaster boards' from China, Indonesia, Thailand and the UAE.

## India's first canal top solar PV system at NTPC Mouda

State-run power giant NTPC has energised 150 kWp canal top solar PV System on cooling water (CW) channel inside power station premises at its 2,320 MW, Mouda Thermal Power Project, near Nagpur in Maharashtra.

This novel Solar PV system makes use of side walls of CW channels as load bearing structure thereby significantly decreasing cost of civil and mounting structure.

## Telangana Government Launches Online Cattle Market For Farmers

The Telangana government launched the website to facilitate the buying and selling of cattle online.

The state said that the website – pashubazar.telangana.gov.in – would save the farmers transportation costs, as they need not keep taking them to markets.

The website also mentions that the limit for number of animals that can be registered for sale at one time is five.

## Haryana village to be named after Trump

Sulabh International founder Bindeshwar Pathak has announced that an open defecation-free village in Mewat will be named after U.S. President Donald Trump to build a good relationship between India and the United States.



According to Sulabh, the move will draw the attention of the world towards India's cleanliness campaign 'Swachh Bharat'.

## India-Australia naval exercise 'AUSINDEX 17' begins

Navies of India and Australia are participating in bilateral maritime exercise AUSINDEX-17 with an aim to enhancing interoperability and cooperation between the two forces.

Indian naval ships Jyoti, Shivalik and Kamorta are on a port visit to Freemantle, Australia from June 13 to 17 to join the exercise.

## Mahatma Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram Celebrates 100 Years Today

Sabarmati Ashram, which served as epicentre of the country's freedom struggle during Mahatma Gandhi stay there, will celebrate its centenary today in presence of Babu's grandson and former West Bengal Governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi.

- Gopalkrishna will inaugurate two galleries titled "My Life is My Message and Charkha". He will also release two books titled Letters to Gandhi and Pioneers of Satyagraha.
- "My Life is My Message gallery will have various exhibits depicting Mahatma's entire life while Charkha gallery will showcase various models of charkha (spinning wheels) from across the country,"

## HRD Ministry will organize several programmes to popularise Yoga

Ministry of Human Resource Development has taken various initiatives to promote it among the masses specially the students and faculties in all parts of the country on 3<sup>rd</sup> International Day of Yoga (21<sup>st</sup> June, 2017).

- Yoga Olympiad 2017 is the Second Olympiad involving school children from upper-Primary to secondary stages will be organized by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) from 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> June, 2017 at NCERT, New Delhi.
- The theme for the Yoga Olympiad is 'Yoga for Health and Harmony'.

## IBBI notifies Fast Track Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporates

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has notified the relevant sections 55 to 58 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy code, 2016 pertaining to the Fast Track Process and also notified that fast track process shall apply to the following categories of corporate debtors:

- A small company, as defined under clause (85) of section 2 of the Companies Act, 2013; or
- A Startup (other than the partnership firm), as defined in the notification dated 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2017 of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; or
- An unlisted company with total assets, as reported in the financial statement of the immediately preceding financial year, not exceeding Rs.1 crore.
- The process in these cases shall be completed within a period of 90 days, as against 180 days in other cases.

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## Centre launches IDCF to reduce child deaths due to diarrhea

The health ministry has launched the Intensified Diarrhoea Control Fortnight (IDCF), under which community awareness campaigns on hygiene and promotion of ORS and zinc therapy will be conducted at the state level.

- The IDCF aims to create mass awareness about the most effective and low-cost diarrhoea treatment — a combination of oral rehydration salt (ORS) solution and zinc tablets.
- During the fortnight, ASHA worker would undertake distribution of ORS packets to households with under-five children in her village.

## PM dedicates Kochi Metro to the Nation

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the first phase of Kochi Metro to the nation on Saturday. Kerala Governor P Sathasivam, chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Union urban development minister M Venkaiah Naidu and 'Metro Man' E Sreedharan were among those who accompanied the Prime Minister in the train.

- After cutting the ribbon at the Palarivattom station and took a ride from Palarivattom to Pathadippalam.

## Sushma Swaraj inaugurates KIP for young overseas Indians

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated Know India Programme, KIP, for young overseas Indians at a function in New Delhi.

Mrs Swaraj said, the programme is aimed at promoting awareness on different facets of life in India and the progress made by the country in various fields such as economic and education.

The Know India Programme is a three-week orientation programme for the Indian diaspora.

It provides a unique forum for students and young professionals of Indian origin to visit India, share their views, expectations and experiences and develop closer bonds with the contemporary India.

## CRPF Launches Helpline for Kashmiris Named 'Madadgaar'

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) launched a toll-free helpline called 'Madadgaar' to help Kashmiri people in distress in a bid to regain the lost trust of people in the security forces.

'Madadgaar' is a step to serve the citizens of Kashmir located all over the country.

Besides providing assistance in distress, the helpline would also aid career counselling for those interested in

joining the paramilitary forces and sports activities of the CRPF.

## 114-year-old Taj Palace becomes first Indian building to get trademark

The iconic Taj Mahal Palace in Mumbai has just got itself trademarked.



This makes the 114-year-old building the first in the country to get such a registration.

The hotel, which has been a defining structure of Mumbai's skyline, has joined the elite and small club of trademarked properties in the world which includes the Empire State Building in New York, the Eiffel Tower in Paris and Sydney Opera House.

Usually, logos, brand names, combination of colours, numerals and even sounds are trademarked but the registration of an architectural design has never been attempted since the Trademark Act came into force in 1999.

## Dr. Harshvardhan Launches Mobile App "Celebrating Yoga"

Minister for Science & Technology Dr. Harshvardhan launched a Mobile App "Celebrating Yoga" developed by Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Science & Technology in New Delhi.

The Mobile App has been developed by DST on the occasion of International Yoga Day 2017.

The purpose of the APP is to popularise Yoga and encourage people to participate in it for a scientifically healthy living.

Celebrating Yoga provides a platform to share information and insights about peoples' participation in Yoga activities on the occasion of the International Yoga Day 2017; create awareness and encourage a scientifically healthy living.

## Piyush Goyal Launches Energy Conservation Building Code 2017

Piyush Goyal, Minister of State (IC) for Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy and Mines launched the Energy Conservation Building Code 2017 (ECBC 2017).

Developed by Ministry of Power and Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), ECBC 2017 prescribes the energy

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performance standards for new commercial buildings to be constructed across India.

The updated version of ECBC provides current as well as futuristic advancements in building technology to further reduce building energy consumption and promote low-carbon growth.

## Ram Nath Kovind resigns as Bihar Governor

Bihar Governor Ram Nath Kovind has resigned from the gubernatorial post.

The resignation follows his nomination as the National Democratic Alliance's presidential candidate.



West Bengal Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi will discharge the functions of the Governor of Bihar, in addition to his own duties, it said.

On June 19, the BJP announced the name of 71-year-old Mr. Kovind, a low-profile Dalit leader and a two-term BJP Rajya Sabha member, as its nominee for President.

The presidential election is scheduled for July 17. Mr. Mukherjee completes his five-year term on July 24, 2017.

## Indore India's first city to use robot to control unruly traffic

The number one clean city of India, Indore has got another milestone to its name. This commercial capital of Madhya Pradesh has reportedly become the first city in India where robot is being used on an experimental basis to control its ever growing and unruly traffic.

The traffic police in association with a private engineering college of the city for the first time has installed a metallic robot at a busy MR 9 intersection on an experimental basis to control the chaotic traffic in the locality.

## Free education for girls in Punjab from Nursery to PhD

The Punjab Government has announced free education for girls in government schools and colleges from Nursery to PhD.

Fulfilling another poll promise, he announced free Wi-Fi for 13,000 primary schools and all 48 government colleges.

Reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies has already been increased by the government from 33 per cent to 50 per cent.

## Rajdhani, Shatabdi trains set for revamp under 'Operation Swarn'

After years of complaints by the travelling public, the premium trains are now set for a makeover. The Railway Ministry is set to launch "Operation Swarn" to improve services in Rajdhani and Shatabdi Express trains.

In the first phase, the Mumbai-Delhi Rajdhani Express and Mumbai-Ahmedabad Shatabdi Express have been selected for upgradation.

Work will start from September 26. More trains will be identified in a phased manner.

## India's biggest municipal bonds programme launched in Maharashtra

To finance its 24x7 water supply project, the Pune Municipal Corporation launched India's biggest municipal bonds programme.

The project looks to raise Rs 2,264 crore in five years.

Municipal bonds are debt instruments through which a corporation or municipality raises money from individuals or institutions.

## Union Government launches VAJRA scheme to attract Indian scientists abroad

In a bid to bring together the Indian scientists abroad and India-based researchers for conducting joint researches in India, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) launched a scheme named 'Visiting Advanced Joint Research Faculty' (VAJRA).

Under this scheme, scientists or senior researchers abroad - of Indian origin or otherwise - can collaborate with faculties here.

The broad areas of research like energy, health, advance material and others would be promoted under the scheme.

## Government launches Liveability Index for 116 cities to measure quality of life

The central government has launched the "City Liveability Index" - a first of its kind initiative introduced by the Urban Development Ministry - to measure the quality of life in 116 major cities including capital cities and those with population over one million.

The cities will be assessed on a comprehensive set of 79 parameters to capture the extent and quality of infrastructure including availability of roads, education and health care, mobility, employment opportunities, emergency response, grievance redressal, pollution, availability of open, green spaces, and culture.

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## **PSLV-C38 Successfully Launches 31 Satellites in a Single Flight**

ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle PSLV-C38 successfully launched the 712 kg Cartosat-2 Series Satellite along with 30 co-passenger satellites from Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota.



This is the thirty ninth consecutively successful mission of PSLV.

The total number of Indian satellites launched by PSLV now stands at 48.

One of the 30 co-passenger satellites carried by PSLV-C38 was the 15 kg NIUSAT, a University/Academic Institute satellite from Nurul Islam University, Tamil Nadu, India.

The remaining 29 co-passenger satellites carried were 14 international customer satellites from USA (10), United Kingdom (3), Belgium (3), Italy (3), Austria (1), Chile (1), Czech Republic (1), Finland (1), France (1), Germany (1), Japan (1), Latvia (1), Lithuania (1) and Slovakia (1).

## **Maharashtra government to launch 'My Plant' mobile app on tree plantation**

Maharashtra forest minister Sudhir Mungantiwar announced that a mobile app named 'My Plant', which would help in recording data about tree plantations in the state, would be launched on July 1.

Using this app, people and organisations can feed the data about the saplings they have planted with the forest department, which would help it in creating a database of trees.

The forest department has set a target of planting four crore saplings through public participation between July 1 and 7.

## **Prime Minister Modi and Portuguese Prime Minister Costa launch unique Start-up portal**

Prime Minister Modi and Portuguese Prime Minister Costa launched a unique startup Portal - the India-Portugal International StartUp Hub (IPISH) - in Lisbon.

This is a platform initiated by Startup India and supported by Commerce & Industry Ministry and Startup Portugal to create a mutually supportive entrepreneurial partnership. IPISH hosts a range of tools and will provide information on the start-up hotspots of Bangalore, Delhi and Lisbon; and on associated subjects, such as policy, taxation, and

visa options. It will develop a Go-To-Market Guide to support start-ups.

## **Naidu inaugurates 'Homes For All' property show in Ahmedabad**

Union Minister for Urban Development, Housing and Poverty Alleviation Venkaiah Naidu has inaugurated the 'Homes For All' property show organized by Ahmedabad Municipal corporation and GIHED CREDAI in Ahmedabad.

The minister urged banks to invest more in the infrastructure sector.

On the occasion, Mr. Naidu launched several smart initiatives such as Janmitra Card - 'One Card Many Services', AMC Seva Mobile Application, Ahmedabad Airport Shuttle Service, Intelligent Transit Management System among others.

## **Survey for world's highest rail track to commence in Leh**

The Railways will kick off the final location survey of the 498 km long Bilaspur-Manali-Leh line at Leh in Jammu and Kashmir.

Coming up at a high of 3,300 metres, the strategically important rail project is touted to become the highest rail track in the world, overtaking China's Qinghai-Tibet Railway.

The all-weather Leh rail network is one of the four important railway connectivities identified by the defence ministry along the China border.

## **Govt to observe anti-Emergency day on Jun 25-26**

The government has observed anti-Emergency day on June 25-26 and asked all its ministers to hold programmes across the country to remind people how Emergency was clamped by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975.

Terming the Emergency as a "black day" in the constitutional democracy of independent India, Union Information and Broadcasting Minister M Venkaiah Naidu had written to all ministers, asking them to make themselves available.

## **Aadhaar not valid for travel to Nepal, Bhutan, says Home Ministry**

Aadhaar is not a valid identification document for Indians travelling to Nepal and Bhutan, the Union Home Ministry has said.

Indians can travel to Nepal and Bhutan--countries for which they don't need visas--if they possess a valid national passport or election ID card issued by the Election Commission.

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Moreover, to ease travel, persons over 65 and below 15 years of age can show documents with photographs to confirm their age and identity. These include PAN card, driving license, Central Government Health Service (CGHS) card and ration card but not Aadhaar.

## **Kalraj Mishra Launches Digital MSME Scheme**

Union Minister for MSME Shri Kalraj Mishra launched 'Digital MSME Scheme' and handed over three Memorandums of Understandings to SAP India, Intel and HMT respectively.

These steps would further boost Ministry's effort towards making the Digital India Mission successful.

The Digital MSME Scheme is revolving around Cloud Computing which is emerging as a cost effective and viable alternative in comparison to in-house IT infrastructure installed by MSMEs.

The United Nations has declared 27th June as the UN Day for MSMEs.

## **Communication satellite GSAT-17 launched from French Guiana**

India's latest communication satellite GSAT-17 was successfully launched by a heavy duty rocket of Arianespace from the spaceport of Kourou in French Guiana.

Configured around I-3K extended bus, GSAT-17 with a lift-off mass of about 3,477 kg carries payloads in Normal C-band, Extended C-band and S-band to provide various communication services.

It also carries equipment for meteorological data relay and satellite based search and rescue services being provided by earlier INSAT satellites.

## **Odisha to set up blood bank for cattle**

Odisha is all set to become the first state in the country to have a blood bank for the cattle.

Vice-chancellor of the

Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) Surendra Nath Pasupalak said that the first of its kind blood bank would be established on the premises of OUAT at an estimated cost of Rs. 3.25 crore.

The project will have a 60:40 sharing between the Centre and the state government, the OUAT VC said.



## **Dr Harsh Vardhan and Shri Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurate Swasth Saarthi Abhiyaan**

Union Minister for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences and Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan and Minister of State (I/C) for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, together, inaugurated the Swasth Saarthi Abhiyaan (SSA).

The Swasth Saarthi Abhiyaan (SSA) is a two month long mega campaign focusing on providing preventive healthcare to the auto, taxi and bus drivers of the region.

The SSA event is a unique initiative to address the major issues being faced by public transport drivers of the region, with almost all of them being users of CNG.

## **EC partners with Facebook for voters registration**

Election Commission of India (ECI) is launching a 'Special Drive to enrol left out electors, with a special focus on first time electors from 1st July, 2017, so as to move in the direction of Commission's motto that 'NO VOTER TO BE LEFT BEHIND'.

In order to reach out to maximum eligible voters, the ECI is collaborating with Facebook to launch first Nationwide "Voter Registration Reminder" on 1st July, 2017.

With over 180 million people in India on Facebook, the 'Register Now' button is designed to encourage Indian citizens to register themselves with the Election Commission of India.

On 1st July, a notification of the "voter registration reminder" will be sent to people on Facebook in India who are eligible to vote.

The reminder will be sent out in 13 Indian languages - English, Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Punjabi, Bengali, Urdu, Assamese, Marathi and Oriya.

This is the first time Facebook's voter registration reminder has been rolled out across India. In 2016 and 2017, Chief Electoral Officers made such efforts at state level during their respective state elections.

## **Dr Jitendra Singh launches new training programme 'COMMIT'**

The Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (I/C), Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh launched a new training programme Comprehensive Online Modified Modules on Induction Training (COMMIT) for State Government officials.

The objective of this training programme is to improve the public service delivery mechanism and provide citizen centric administration through capacity building of officials who interact with the citizens on day-to-day basis.

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Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the new training programme will supplement the earlier training programme and the advantage of COMMIT is that it is cost effective and has the potential to cover about 3.3 lakh officials annually, compared to 10,000 officials under existing 12-Day Induction Training Programme (ITP).

## National Statistics Day: 29 June

In recognition of the notable contributions made by Late Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in the fields of statistics, statistical system and economic planning, Government of India in 2007, designated 29th June the birth anniversary of Prof. Mahalanobis, as the "Statistics Day" in the category of Special Days to be celebrated every year at the National level.

The objective of celebration of this Day is to create public awareness about the importance of statistics in socio-economic planning and policy formulation, to acknowledge the contribution of Prof. Mahalanobis and to pay homage to him.

'Administrative Statistics' is this year's theme for the Statistics Day.

## India 1st country to give to UN Tax Fund with \$100,000 contribution

India has contributed \$100,000 to a UN fund to help developing countries actively participate in the discussion of tax issues, becoming the first country to make the contribution.

The UN Tax Trust Fund aims to support the work of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters (the UN Tax Committee).

Voluntary contributions for the fund have been called for by the UN and the committee since its establishment in 2006.

## India's largest container port JNPT hit by ransomware

The government has confirmed that one of the terminals at the Jawahar Lal Nehru Port has been impacted by the latest malware attack.



AP Moller-Maersk, one of the affected entities globally, operates the Gateway Terminals India (GTI) at JNPT, which has a capacity to handle 1.8 million standard container units.

New ransomware virus called Petya has hit 17 APM terminals, including two in Rotterdam and 15 in other parts of the world.

APM Terminals is a subsidiary of shipping giant Maersk, which has confirmed that it is suffering from a cyber attack.

## TN to set up Rs 2350 cr solar photovoltaic power park

The Tamil Nadu government has proposed a series of new initiatives in various sectors, including energy and power, running into many thousands of crores of rupees.



Among the announcements made in the energy sector, the chief minister said the government will set up an Ultra Mega Solar Photovoltaic Power Park in Ramanathapuram district at an estimated cost of Rs 2350 crore.



## ADB and PNB signs \$100 million loan to finance solar rooftop projects



Asian Development Bank

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Punjab National Bank (PNB) has signed a \$100 million loan to be guaranteed by the Government of India that will finance large solar rooftop systems on industrial and commercial buildings throughout India.

The PNB will use the ADB funds to make further loans to various developers and end users to install rooftop solar systems.

This is the first tranche loan of the \$500 million multi tranche finance facility Solar Rooftop Investment Program (SRIP) approved by ADB in 2016.

## India's economic growth will accelerate to 7.5% this fiscal: Moody's

India's economic growth will accelerate to 7.5 per cent in the current fiscal and the government's reform push will help achieve 8 per cent GDP growth rate in about four years, according to Moody's Investors Service.

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Indian economy grew 7.1 per cent in 2016-17 fiscal. The World Bank has recently projected India to clock a 7.2 per cent growth rate in the current fiscal led by reform momentum and improved investment scenario.

## **India signs Loan Agreement with the World Bank for USD 36 Million**

An agreement for IBRD Credit of USD 36 Million from World Bank for “Himachal Pradesh Public Financial Management Capacity Building Program” was signed in New Delhi.

The objective of the project is to improve the efficiency of Public Expenditure Management and Tax Administration in Himachal Pradesh.

The programme size is USD 45 million, of which USD 36 million will be financed by the Bank, and the remaining amount will be funded out of State Budget. The programme duration is 5 years.

## **India's GDP in Q4 grows 6.1%**

India lost its fastest-growing major economy tag in the fourth quarter of 2016-17, with GDP growth coming in at 6.1% compared with China's 6.9% in the same period.

Data from the Ministry of Statistics on Wednesday showed GDP grew 7.1% in the financial year 2016-17, slower than the 8% registered in 2015-16.

The GDP numbers were based on the new 2011-12 base year recently adopted for data including the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) and Wholesale Price Index (WPI).

## **Punjab, UK join hands to promote skill development**

The Punjab government and the United Kingdom decided to join hands for imparting skill training and technical education to the youths of the state in order to provide them better employment opportunities abroad.

Punjab technical education minister Charanjit Singh Channi, after meeting deputy high commissioner of Britain, Andrew Ayre here, said that the Punjab Government was focusing on providing quality education to the youth to enable them get jobs in the leading industries of the world.

As per the MoU, the students who study degree courses in Punjab or UK would be provided dual certificate which would have international recognition.

## **SBI, World Bank finance Rs 400-cr solar projects**

State Bank of India and the World Bank announced that they had financed 100 MW of rooftop solar projects worth Rs 400 crore in India.

The World Bank aid helped the public sector SBI lower the lending rate to project developers, according to SBI Deputy Managing Director Karnam Sekar. “The support from World Bank has helped lowering the interest rate by 3-3.5 per cent from the 11-12 per cent lending rate for a medium-sized solar roof top project,” he said.

SBI has availed of a loan of \$625 million from the World Bank for on-lending to viable Grid-Connected Rooftop Solar PV (GRPV) projects undertaken by developers, aggregators and end-users, for installation of rooftop solar systems.

These will be installed on the rooftops of commercial, institutional and industrial buildings.

## **BoI conducts 'Star Mahotsav'**

Bank of India conducted a mass-contact programme, ‘Star Mahotsav’, across its branch network.

The thrust was in contacting every customer at their doorstep for recovery of bad loans, disbursement of retail loan, including housing and vehicle loan, disbursement under MSME and agriculture, and promotion of its products including debit/credit cards, PoS machines, internet banking, etc.

## **BoB, Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium ink MoU**

Bank of Baroda (BoB) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC).

Under this MoU, BoB would play an active role in providing collateral free loans to Farmers Producer Companies (FPC) for which credit guarantee cover up to 85 percent of the loan amount maximum up to Rs 1 crore will be made available by SFAC.

SFAC is an autonomous society promoted by Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' welfare.

## **RCom-Aircel merged wireless company to be called Aircom**

Reliance Communications' executive Punit Garg said that the merged wireless company with Aircel will be called Aircom.

He said that RCom can monetize 49 percent tower co stake in future through sale or a listing process, while further debt reduction options will include sale of direct-to-home business.

The executive said that the company can also look at strategic transaction in global or Indian enterprise business.

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## **India Signs Loan Agreement with the World Bank for USD 39.2 Million**

An agreement for IBRD Credit of USD 39.2 Million from World Bank for the project “Assam Citizen Centric Service Delivery” was signed.

The programme size is USD 49 million, of which USD 39.2 million will be financed by the Bank, and the remaining amount will be funded-out of State Budget. The programme duration is 5 years.

The objective of the project is to improve access in the delivery of selected public services in Assam.

The Project seeks to enable citizens to access services under the RTPS Act in a timely, efficient, and accountable manner.

The Project adopts an integrated approach to improve access and accountability.

## **India GDP growth to remain flat at 7.1% in 2017-18: HSBC**

India's economic growth is expected to remain flat at 7.1 per cent in current fiscal as investment is still weak and government spending might not be as high given the fiscal consolidation, says an HSBC report.

According to the global financial services major, the GDP growth momentum is slowing since mid-2016 and this trend is expected to continue going forward.

## **World Bank keeps 2017 global growth forecast at 2.7%**

World Bank maintained its forecast for global growth in 2017 and 2018 unchanged at 2.7 per cent and 2.9 per cent, respectively, as manufacturing and trade are picking up and confidence is improving.



However, it expected the advanced economic growth to slow to 1.8 per cent in 2018 and 1.7 per cent in 2019, in line with its forecasts in January.

## **National Aviation University signs MoU with Bird Worldwide Flight Services (India)**

The National Aviation University (NAU) signed a MoU with the Bird Worldwide Flight Services (India) Private Limited on 1st of June 2017, to develop professional aviation and aerospace education programmes and research for the benefit of the Indian civil aviation industry.

Internships and campus placements for eligible students have been incorporated in the provisions.

The focus of the skill development programmes would be on quality of skilling which is aligned to the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF).

## **ICICI Bank commissions solar-powered ATMs 200**

ICICI Bank commissioned over 200 solar powered ATM sites in the last one year as part of its efforts to reduce carbon footprint and use more clean energy.

ICICI Bank has reduced its overall energy consumption in large offices and branches from 198 million units in 2013-14 to 164 million units in 2016-17, saving 34.2 million units in last three years, the bank said.

## **India overtakes China to top global retail index: GRDI**

India has surpassed China to secure the top position among 30 developing countries on ease of doing business, according to a study that cited India's rapidly expanding economy, relaxation of FDI rules and a consumption boom as the key drivers.

The 2017 Global Retail Development Index (GRDI), ranks the top 30 developing countries for retail investment worldwide and analyses 25 macroeconomic and retail-specific variables.

The GRDI, titled 'The Age of Focus', ranks China in second place.

## **SBI to organise mega farmers' meet on June 8**

Ahead of the kharif season, country's largest lender State Bank of India said it will meet nearly 10,000 farmers to understand their credit need and provide finance.

The meeting will be organised at the bank's 15,500 rural and semi-urban branches across the country on June 8.

During the meet, branches will receive applications for fresh loans as well as for renewal or enhancement of existing loan.

## **India provides \$318m credit to develop Sri Lanka railway sector**

The Government of Sri Lanka's Ministry of Finance has signed an agreement to receive \$318m credit from the Government of India for rail development works.

Indian Prime Minister Narendr Modi initially declared the fresh line of credit (LoC) during his official visit to Sri Lanka in March 2015.

The new credit line will used to implement various developments under the supervision of Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation of Sri Lanka, which has prioritised the improvement of passenger transportation

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facilities in order to attract more passengers to use rail services.

## **RBI Announces Second Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy**

The Reserve Bank (RBI) of India in its Second Bi-monthly Monetary Policy kept its repo rate unchanged at 6.25 percent and reverse repo rate unchanged at six percent respectively.

The monetary policy committee (MPC), which is headed by RBI governor Urjit Patel kept the rates unchanged amid most analysts expectation of maintaining a status quo on the policy rate, which stands at 6.25 per cent.

However, the central bank lowered economic growth projection to 7.3 percent from 7.4 percent for FY18.

The apex bank cut the statutory liquidity ratio (SLR) by 50 bps to 20%.

## **Railways to offer 20 stations to Malaysia for redevelopment**

The Indian Railways is firming up plans to join hands with Malaysia to redevelop about 20 stations in Tier-II cities across the country.

Aimed at attracting nearly Rs.1 lakh crore private investment, the station redevelopment project envisages infrastructure revamp at platforms and circulating areas.

For facilitating growth of Tier II cities, the Centre, state and local governments provide a lot of support to transform these not so big cities into business havens and making them India's fastest growing cities.

While cities like Delhi and Mumbai are in Tier-I category, cities such as Faridabad, Cuttack, Amritsar, Jamshedpur, Kochi, Jammu, and Bikaner are considered Tier-II cities.

## **Axis Bank issues biodegradable prepaid gift cards**

Axis Bank Ltd has announced biodegradable prepaid gift cards on the occasion of World Environment Day.

The cards will be acceptable at all domestic merchant outlets and online portals.

Biodegradable plastics can break down safely into their raw materials and do not release harmful substances. They can also be recycled.

## **Wal-Mart Tops Fortune 500 List**

For the fifth year in a row, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (WMT) has taken the top spot in Fortune magazine's ranking of the top 500 companies.

The Arkansas-based company, which is also



the world's largest retailer, reported revenue of \$485.8 billion last year.

That figure is more than double the \$223.6 billion revenue of second-place company on the list, Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

## **Canara bank ties up with New India Assurance**

Canara Bank has inked pact with the state-owned general insurer The New India Assurance Co to sell policies through its branches.

The Bengaluru headquartered public sector lender said this corporate agency distribution tie-up will make available general insurance products from over 6,000 Canara Bank branches in the country.

The tie-up will offer personal products such as motor insurance, home insurance, health insurance, travel insurance besides commercial policy coverages like fire insurance, marine insurance and engineering insurance.

## **India awards road contract to complete Kaladan project in Myanmar**

The Narendra Modi government is finally on course to completing the \$484-million Kaladan multi-modal transport projects in Myanmar that will offer connectivity to Mizoram in India.

Kaladan was the first major project taken up by India in Myanmar.

A Rs1600 crore contract has been awarded for building 109-km road connecting Paletwa river terminal to Zorinpui in Mizoram border.

India completed the construction of Sittwe port, at the estuary of Kaladan river, in trouble-prone Rakhine state of Myanmar last year.

## **YES Bank to fund start-ups at EDII**

Entrepreneurship education and incubator, Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), announced tying up with the private sector lender, YES Bank, to finance start-ups supported by the institution.

Under the tie-up, YES Bank will provide a loan of Rs. 50 lakh to EDII supported start-up, Green Ideology, under the CGTMSE programme (Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises).

## **CSO to change GDP base year to 2017-18 from 2011-12: Gowda**

The Statistics Ministry is set to change the base year of national accounts to 2017-18 from 2011-12 after completion of the

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household consumer expenditure survey and labour force data by the end of 2018.

Earlier in 2015, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) under the Statistics Ministry had changed the base year for tabulating the Gross Domestic Product or size of economy to 2011-12 from 2004-05.

Last month, the CSO has changed the base of Index of Industrial Production (IIP), which measures factory output, to 2011-12 from 2004-05. Besides, the base year of Wholesale Price Index (WPI) has also been changed to 2011-12 from 2004-05.

## **IDBI Bank only PSB to get 'high' rating for code compliance**

According to the Code Compliance Rating of banks done by the Banking Codes and Standards Board of India (BCSBI) 2017, only one (unchanged from the previous survey conducted in 2015) out of 26 public sector banks and eight (nine in the previous survey) out of 17 private sector banks got 'high' rating for their adherence to code compliance.

IDBI Bank was the only public sector bank that got 'high' (H) (85 and above score out of 100) rating in two successive surveys.

The eight private sector banks that got 'high' rating are — Axis Bank, DCB Bank, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, IndusInd Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, RBL Bank and YES Bank.

The three foreign banks — Citibank, HSBC and Standard Chartered Bank — that were surveyed got 'high' ranking. The code compliance rating, may be considered an indicator of the level of implementation of important code provisions at the grassroot level of a bank.

## **RBI Issues New Rs500 banknotes with inset letter 'A'**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced that it has issued Rs 500 denomination notes with inset letter A.

They will be bearing the signature of Urjit R Patel.

However, the old notes with inset letter E, which were introduced after Prime Narendra Modi's demonetisation drive in November 2016 will continue to remain the legal tender.

## **Central Bank of India under RBI's corrective action lens**

Public sector Central Bank of India has been placed under the RBI's watchlist on Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) owing to high bad loans and negative return on assets.

IDBI Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, UCO Bank and Dena Bank have already come under the PCA initiated by the

Reserve Bank of India, which is a noose-tightening on fresh loan disbursement as well as dividend distribution.

PCA is a framework devised by RBI that monitors key areas like capital, asset quality and profitability of banks.

## **Yes Bank partners with TerraPay for faster international remittance**

Private sector lender Yes Bank has partnered with mobile payments switch TerraPay to enable real time money transfer to bank accounts in India.



Powered by

TerraPay's global clearing and settlement service, the partnership will make it faster and convenient for consumers to send money to any bank account.

This means that Indian migrants worldwide can walk into TerraPay's partner outlet anytime and send money to their family and friends back home, instantly in their bank account.

India is the world's largest recipient of remittances.

## **IRDAI takes over management of Sahara Life Insurance**

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has taken over the administration of Sahara India Life Insurance, a first of its kind move in the insurance sector.

It has named RK Sharma, General Manager, IRDAI, as administrator to manage the affairs of the insurer.

The current board of Sahara India Life is headed by Chairman OP Srivastava. Sanjay Agarwal is whole-time director and CEO.

Lucknow-based Sahara India Life Insurance was the first wholly Indian owned life insurance company in the private sector which launched its operations in 2004 with an initial paid-up capital of Rs 157 crore.

## **Google ranked as the world's most valuable brand in 2017**

Technology giant Google has topped the 2017 BrandZ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands list, with a brand value of over \$245 billion.

Further, US tech giants Apple, Microsoft, and Facebook were also among the five most valuable brands.

Notably, Amazon rose three places after achieving the highest dollar value growth, increasing by \$40.3 billion to \$139.3 billion.

## **AIB grants \$150 mn loan to India Infrastructure Fund**

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China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has approved \$150 million equity investment loan to the India Infrastructure Fund, the bank's first such loan to fund private projects.

The bank, in which India is a lead partner, has approved two loans and one equity investment totalling \$324 million to support infrastructure projects in India, Georgia and Tajikistan.

The AIIB was officially established in 2016 with 57 founding members.

With authorised capital of \$100 billion, China is the largest shareholder with 26.06 per cent voting shares.

India is the second largest shareholder with 7.5 per cent followed by Russia 5.93 per cent and Germany with 4.5 per cent.

## **IOC, BPCL, HPCL sign agreement to set up \$40 billion refinery**

State-owned oil firms IOC, BPCL and HPCL has signed an agreement to jointly set up the world's largest refinery and petrochemical complex at Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra at a cost of USD 40 billion.

Indian Oil Corp (IOC) will be the lead partner with 50 per cent stake while Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) will take 25 per cent stake each.

## **Competition Commission slaps Rs 87 crore fine on Hyundai Motor India**

Competition Commission has imposed a penalty of Rs 87 crore on Hyundai Motor India for unfair business practices with respect to providing discounts for cars.

Besides, the company has been directed to cease and desist from such anti-competitive practices.

## **RBI initiates PCA against Bank of Maharashtra**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has initiated "prompt corrective action" (PCA) on state-run lender Bank of Maharashtra in the view of its high non-performing assets (NPAs).

Earlier, the RBI had initiated a PCA on Central Bank of India, IDBI Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, UCO Bank and Dena Bank.

The development follows the 13 April, 2017, revision of the PCA guidelines by the RBI.

## **SBI, Tirumala Milk Products tie up for providing loans to dairy farmers**

State Bank of India has entered into a tie-up with Tirumala Milk Products, a South-based company which was acquired

by Groupe Lactalis in 2014, to provide loans to dairy farmers who supply milk to the latter.

France-based Groupe Lactalis, which also acquired Indore-based Anik Dairy in 2016, wants to double the number of dairy farmers under its fold to three lakh and ramp up the amount of milk it procures daily to 25 lakh litres by 2020 from 14 lakh litres now.

Under its scheme for financing dairy units, SBI offers loans for, among others, construction of shed, and purchase of milch animals, milking machine, and chaff cutter.

## **RBI directs IDBI Bank to start insolvency for Lanco Infra**

Lanco Infratech said the Reserve Bank has directed its lead lender IDBI Bank to initiate insolvency proceedings for the company under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

The company is among 12 firms identified by the central bank with a combined debt of over Rs 1,50,000 crore, a quarter of the total NPAs, for proceedings under the newly enacted Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016.

Total NPAs of the banking system stand at over Rs. 8 lakh crore, of which Rs. 6 lakh crore is with public sector banks.

## **AIB approves Argentina, Madagascar and Tonga as new members**

The board of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has approved the applications of Argentina, Madagascar and Tonga to be members, the China-backed multilateral development bank said.

The three prospective members will officially join once they complete the required domestic processes and deposit the first installment of capital with the bank.

## **India and ADB Sign \$275 Million Loan for Upgrading Urban Services in Madhya Pradesh**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$275 million loan on 19th June, 2017 for improving urban services in 64 small towns in the State of Madhya Pradesh.

The project will develop sustainable, inclusive, and climate-resilient water supply in 64 small and medium-sized towns, and integrated storm water and sewerage infrastructure in two heritage towns of Khajuraho and Rajnagar.

Previous ADB urban investments in the state have improved access to safe drinking water for more than 5 million residents in 4 major cities.

Along with ADB's loan, the Government of Madhya Pradesh will provide counterpart support of \$124 million.

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The project will run for almost five years with an expected completion date of June 2022.

## **Meghalaya Govt signs two MoUs with SBI for digital transaction**

Meghalaya government signed two MoUs with the State Bank of India as a part of an initiative towards migrating government transactions to digital mode.

With implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), these MoUs are expected to give dealers and other citizens the desired platform for conducting financial transactions with the state government on a digital platform.

The state government has already established a new treasury called as Cyber Treasury, which dedicatedly handles all online transactions of government.

## **RBI releases names of the 5 members in Overseeing Committee to tackle bad loans**

The Reserve Bank of India announced the names of five members of the Overseeing Committee (OC) which looks into the resolution of stressed accounts where a company's exposure exceeds Rs 500 crore.

The five members include existing members former Chief Vigilance Commissioner Pradeep Kumar who will be the Chairman and former State Bank of India Chairman Janki Ballabh.

The committee will comprise three other members – former chairman of Canara Bank MBN Rao, non-executive chairman of L&T Finance Holdings YM Deosthalee and former SEBI whole-time member S Raman.

## **India's first single-wallet contactless, Open Loop Metro Card launched**

Axis Bank, India's third largest private sector bank in association with Kochi Metro Rail Corporation (KMRL) has launched KMRL Axis Bank 'Kochi1' Card.

This is India's first open loop EMV contactless metro card that would make travel a convenient and hassle free experience for commuters in Kochi.

Axis Bank has partnered with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in developing this transit EMV contactless specification on interoperable open standards.

## **World Bank sanctions 44 million dollars for ASPIRe**

World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved a loan assistance of 44 million dollars for the Assam State Public Finance Institutional Reforms (ASPIRe) Project.

The loan was sanctioned by World Bank (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development).

The project aims at improving predictability and transparency in budget execution and efficiency in tax administration in Assam.

## **World Bank-AIIB Sign Loan Agreement for Power Project**

World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) have together signed a \$380 million loan agreement with the Government of Andhra Pradesh to help the state in providing reliable, quality, and affordable 24x7 power supply to its citizens.

The World Bank and AIIB will provide loans in a 60 to 40 ratio for all components of the project.

The energy demand in Andhra Pradesh is expected to grow to 78,900 GWh (Gigawatt-hour) by FY 2019 from 56,313 GWh in FY 2015, which signifies an annual energy requirement of more than 8.5 per cent.

## **US approves sale of 22 Guardian drones to India**

The US has cleared the sale of 22 unmanned Guardian drones to India, a deal being termed as a "game changer" ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington for his maiden meeting with President Donald Trump.

The deal, estimated to be worth \$2 to 3 billion, has been approved by the State Department.

The Indian Navy had made the request for this intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) platform last year.

## **Now mobile banking complaints under ombudsman: RBI**

Reserve Bank of India has widened the scope of its banking ombudsman platform for addressing mis-sell of third party products, and customer grievances on and mobile banking and electronic banking issues, recognising customers' plight in dealing with such troubles.

The new rule will be effective from July 1, and the banking ombudsmen will enjoy more power in their pecuniary jurisdiction.

Banking ombudsman is a quasi-judicial authority, created to resolve customer complaints against banks relating to certain services provided by them.

The pecuniary jurisdiction of the banking ombudsman to pass an award has been increased from existing Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh.

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## World Bank clears \$250-mn loan to train India's job seekers

The World Bank has cleared a USD 250-million loan for making Indian youth more employable through reskilling, in a move that is seen to aid the Skill India mission.

The multi-lateral lender is keen to support the Indian government in its efforts to better equip the young workforce with employable skills.

It said the support will help the youth contribute to India's economic growth and prosperity.

## Google fined record 2.42 billion euros by European Commission

The European Union has slapped a record 2.42 billion euro fine on Google for breaching the anti-trust rules with its online shopping service.

It gave the Mountain View, California, company 90 days to stop or face fines of up to 5 per cent of the average daily worldwide turnover of parent company Alphabet.

## UP govt signs pact with ADB for strengthening of roads

Uttar Pradesh Government has signed an agreement with Asian Development Bank ADB for a loan of 1950 crore rupees for strengthening of roads in different district.

The agreement was signed at Lucknow in the presence of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and ADB President Takehiko Nakao.

As per agreement, ADB will provide the loan amount for Uttar Pradesh Main District Roads Development Project of 2782 crore rupees cost.

State government will spend 832 crore rupees from its own resources on the project.

Project is scheduled to be completed by 2024 and ADB will provide the loan for the period of 25 years on the interest rate of 2 percent.



## UN General Assembly elects Slovakia's Miroslav Lajcak as next president

The UN General Assembly today elected Slovak foreign minister Miroslav Lajcak to be the next president of the 193-member powerful body.

Lajcak, 54, was elected by acclamation as president of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly.



Lajcak will succeed Fijian diplomat Peter Thomson.

## Former PM Aleksandar Vucic sworn in as Serbia president

Aleksandar Vucic has been sworn in as Serbia's new president, promising to work for peace and stability in the war-weary Balkans while strengthening the country's armed forces.

Vucic formally stepped down from his prime minister's post and took over his new role after his win in April's election.

## Shashi Shekar Vempati appointed CEO of Prasar Bharati

Shashi Shekar Vempati has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Prasar Bharati on the recommendation of the three member committee.

Vempati is currently serving as a Member (part time) of the Prasar Bharati Board since Feb 2016.

As Part Time member of the Prasar Bharati Board, Shri Vempati has served as Chairman of Audit Committee, Member of Finance & Accounts Committee, Technology Committee, Sports Rights Committee and HR Committee.

## RBI appoints S. Ganesh Kumar as new Executive Director

The Reserve Bank has appointed Ganesh Kumar as Executive Director (ED) after the voluntary retirement of Chandan Sinha.

As Executive Director, Kumar will look after the departments of Information Technology, Payment and Settlement Systems and External Investments and Operations.

## Sanjiv Singh takes over as Indian Oil Corporation's Chairman

Sanjiv Singh has taken over as the Chairman of country's biggest company Indian Oil Corporation (IOC).

He replaces B Ashok who superannuated recently.

Prior to his elevation, Singh was Director (Refineries) on the IOC Board since July 2014.

## Leo Varadkar become Ireland's youngest PM

Leo Varadkar, an Indian-origin and Ireland's first openly gay Minister, won the leadership race for the ruling party to become the country's youngest-ever and first homosexual Prime Minister.

He will replace Enda Kenny.

Mr. Varadkar, 38, will officially take over as Taoiseach, as the Irish prime ministerial title is known in Ireland, in Parliament later this month after he was declared the winner in the leadership race for the Fine Gael party.

## Uday Kotak to head new Sebi corporate governance panel

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The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said it has set up a committee under the chairmanship of Uday Kotak, executive vice chairman and managing director of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd, to advise it on issues relating to corporate governance in Indian firms.



The 21-member panel includes representatives from other companies, stock exchanges, professional bodies, investor groups, law firms, academicians, research professionals and Sebi officials.

## **Param Jit Mann appointed as Ambassador to Slovenia**

Mr. Param Jit Mann, presently Ambassador of India to the Slovak Republic, has been appointed as the country's next Ambassador to Slovenia.

A press release from the Ministry of External Affairs said Mr. Mann, an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer of the 1987 batch, is expected to take up his assignment shortly.

## **Sharad Jain new DG NWDA**

Dr. Sharad Kumar Jain has assumed the additional charge of Director General, National Water Development Agency (NWDA) under Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.

Shri Jain is presently working as Scientist G with National Institute of Hydrology (NIH), Roorkee.

Shri Jain succeeds Shri S. Masood Husain who has moved over as Member (WP&P), Central Water Commission.

## **Sher Bahadur Deuba elected new Nepal PM**

Nepal's parliament elected unopposed three-time former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba to the top post once again.

This is the tenth time in just over a decade the leadership has changed hands in the Himalayan nation.

Former PM Prachanda had stepped down following a previous agreement.

This will be Deuba's fourth stint as PM of the Himalayan country.

## **Tendulkar joins UN campaign on fathers**

Cricketer Sachin Tendulkar joins a roster of global celebrities, including David Beckham and Novak Djokovic, for a special UNICEF campaign that highlights the critical role played by fathers in children's early development.

The UNICEF initiative 'Super Dads celebrates fatherhood and highlights the importance of love, play, protection and

good nutrition for the healthy development of young children's brains.

The campaign features stars from the world of entertainment and sports including Academy Award winning American actor Mahershala Ali, British Formula One racer Lewis Hamilton and Australian actor Hugh Jackman.

## **Hoshiar Singh appointed chief of copyrights office**

Senior bureaucrat Hoshiar Singh has been appointed as Registrar of Copyrights.

The Office of Copyrights, under the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, is mandated to protect the music and film industry besides addressing its concerns, among others.

The Copyright Office is under the immediate control of a Registrar of Copyrights, who acts under the superintendence and directions of the Central Government, according to norms.

## **G Karmakar, Gauri Shankar appointed directors of IPPB**

K G Karmakar and Gauri Shankar were appointed as Independent Directors of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB).

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved their appointment to the post on the board of directors of the bank for a period of three years.

The IPPB has been incorporated as a public sector bank under the Department of Posts with 100 per cent equity of the government of India.

## **LVB appoints BK Manjunath as part-time chairman**

Private sector lender Lakshmi Vilas Bank has appointed B K Manjunath as a part-time chairman for three years.

Subsequent to Reserve Bank of India approval, the Bank board "co-opted" Manjunath as additional director in the category of non-executive and independent director.

A practising chartered accountant for the last 25 years, Manjunath's expertise is in project financing, business administration and management.

## **Ruchira Kamboj appointed next HC of India to Republic of South Africa**

Ruchira Kamboj (IFS: 1987) has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of South Africa.

She is expected to take up her assignment shortly.

She is presently working as Ambassador to Permanent Delegation of India to UNESCO, Paris.

## **SEBI clears Limaye as NSE chief**

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Capital market regulator SEBI has given conditional approval for the appointment of Vikram Limaye as the MD and CEO of the NSE.



In February, Limaye, MD and CEO of infrastructure financing company IDFC, was selected to head NSE after its incumbent chief Chitra Ramakrishna put in her papers in December. SEBI had delayed clearing his appointment as he was also part of the four-member Supreme Court-appointed panel managing the affairs of the Board of Control for Cricket in India. His term with the BCCI ends in August. SEBI has approved the appointment of Vikram Limaye as MD and CEO of the National Stock Exchange of India, subject to his being relieved from his BCCI assignment.

## **TCS executive Ramanathan Ramanan to head Atal Mission under NITI Aayog**

The government has appointed a senior executive of Tata Consultancy Services to head Atal Innovation Mission, its initiative to promote entrepreneurship in the country, in perhaps the first initiative to bring in best of private minds to drive innovation in governance.

Ramanathan Ramanan, senior vice president at TCS, has been appointed as mission director of Atal Innovation Mission, under the government's premier think tank NITI Aayog, in the rank of additional secretary.

## **India appoints envoys to Italy, Denmark, Belgium and EU**

The government has appointed ambassadors to three European countries, Italy, Denmark and Belgium.

Gaitri Issar Kumar, a 1986-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, has been appointed as India's next ambassador to Belgium. She will also be accredited as India's ambassador to the European Union (EU).

While Reenat Sandhu, a 1989-batch IFS officer, will head India's diplomatic mission in Italy, Ajit Vinayak Gupte from the 1991 batch, who is presently joint secretary in the ministry, has been appointed as ambassador to Denmark.

## **Neeru Chadha is first Indian woman to be judge at ITLOS**

Indian lawyer Dr Neeru Chadha will be the first Indian woman to be a judge at the International Tribunal Law of the Sea (ITLOS) following her election to the international body.

She will have a nine-year term at ITLOS from 2017 to 2026.

ITLOS is the top UN body which adjudicates international cases related to the law of the seas.

Currently, former judge P Chandrasekhara Rao is representing India at the tribunal whose term expires in September 2017. He was elected member of the tribunal in 1996.

## **Ana Brnabic to become Serbia's first female and openly gay prime minister**

Serbia's president Aleksandar Vucic has named an openly gay woman as the next prime minister, a milestone move for the deeply conservative country and the wider Balkan region.

Ana Brnabic, 41, will take the premiership less than a year after she entered politics, becoming public administration minister in August 2016.

Brnabic becomes Serbia's first female prime minister and the first openly gay premier in the Balkans, where homophobia remains widespread.

## **Govt ropes in Amitabh Bachchan to promote GST**

The government has roped in Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan to promote Goods and Services Tax (GST), ahead of the sweeping tax reform's implementation scheduled from July 1.

The Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) will be making the 74-year-old Bachchan brand ambassador for GST.

Ace badminton star PV Sindhu was previously the GST ambassador.

## **Saudi Arabia's Mohammed bin Salman appointed Crown Prince**

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef has been relieved of his post and replaced by Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, in a promotion for King Salman's 31-year-old son that confirms him as next ruler of the kingdom.

Prince Mohammed bin Salman becomes deputy prime minister and retains his defence and other portfolios.

Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, for years the kingdom's counter-terrorism chief who put down an al Qaeda campaign of bombings in 2003-06, is relieved of all positions.

## **Rajiv Gauba to be next Union Home Secretary**

Rajiv Gauba, currently Union Urban Development Secretary, will be the next Home Secretary, an official statement said.

The 1982-cadre IAS officer will succeed Rajiv Mehrishi, whose tenure ends on August 30.

Gauba, who was originally of the Bihar cadre but transferred to Jharkhand after the state's division, is also posted on special duty in the Home Ministry.

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## India re-nominates Justice Dalveer Bhandari for another term as ICJ judge

Justice Dalveer Bhandari has been nominated by India as its candidate for another nine year term as judge of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the UN.

Bhandari, 69, was elected in April 2012 during simultaneous balloting in both the General Assembly and the Security Council to a seat on the International Court of Justice, which is also known as the World Court and is based in The Hague in the Netherlands.

His current term runs through February 2018.

The ICJ elections will be held in November and if elected, he will serve a term of nine years.

## Unicef names 19-year-old Syrian refugee as youngest goodwill ambassador

The UN children's agency announced the appointment of its youngest goodwill ambassador — 19-year-old Syrian refugee and education activist Muzoon Almellehan.

Unicef deputy executive director Justin Forsyth said that Muzoon is the first goodwill envoy with official refugee status.

## Kenneth Juster to be new US ambassador to India

Kenneth I Juster, a top aide of US President Donald Trump, is set to be America's new ambassador to India, the White House said.

Juster, 62, who is the deputy assistant to the US president for International Economic Affairs and deputy director of his National Economic Council, would replace Richard Verma if nominated and confirmed by the Senate.



## Russian diplomat Vladimir Voronkov to be first UN counter-terrorism chief

The United Nations has announced the appointment of its first counter-terrorism chief, Russian diplomat Vladimir Voronkov.

The new high-level position has been created by United Nations secretary-general Antonio Guterres to strengthen counter-terrorism efforts that had been dispersed among several United Nations agencies and departments.

Voronkov will hold the title of under-secretary-general.

## Imran Khawaja appointed as ICC deputy chairman

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has appointed Chairman of Associates Imran Khawaja as its deputy chairman.

Khawaja, a veteran administrator from Singapore, was unanimously elected for the post created following the constitutional change approved at the ICC Full Council.

Khawaja will deputise in ICC meetings in case the chairman is absent.

## DFC Bank elevates Sunil Kakar as MD and CEO for 3 years

Private sector lender IDFC Bank announced the elevation of its CFO Sunil Kakar as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the company with effect from July 17 for three years.

Besides, the bank announced that the Board has approved the resignation of veteran banker Vikram Limaye from the post of MD and CEO who is set to join leading stock exchange NSE as its new Managing Director and CEO.

## Priyanka Chopra to endorse Skill India campaign

Actress Priyanka Chopra will soon be seen endorsing government's flagship Skill India campaign, with the National Skill Development Corporation roping in the Bollywood celebrity as an ambassador for the initiative.

Priyanka will use her celebrity status to motivate youngsters to hone their abilities through a media campaign.

Earlier, Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli, batting legend Sachin Tendulkar, Bollywood actors Sidharth Malhotra and Shabana Azmi and singer Mohit Chauhan had also become goodwill envoys for Skill India.

## K Kasturirangan heads panel on National Education Policy

The committee for preparation of final draft of National Education Policy has been constituted under the Chairmanship of eminent Scientist Padma Vibhushan Dr K. Kasturirangan.



The council will start its work from immediate effect.

In an exhaustive democratic exercise carried for last 30 months the HRD ministry has received thousands of suggestions from, educationists, teachers, experts, students and other stakeholders from across the country.

## J-K Governor N N Vohra appointed as president of IIC

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Jammu and Kashmir Governor N N Vohra has been appointed the president of the India International Centre (IIC) - one of the premier cultural institutions in the country.

The appointment was made after eminent jurist Soli Sorabjee quit the presidential post.

## **Mihai Tudose designated Romania's new prime minister**

Mihai Tudose, the outgoing economy minister of Romania, has been appointed as prime minister, days after the ruling Social Democrat Party (PSD) removed its own government.

He will replace Sorin Grindeanu.

The 50-year-old Tudose now has 10 days to gain the vote of confidence in his government and his programme.

## **Kaushik Basu takes over as IEA president**

Former chief economic advisor Kaushik Basu has taken over as president of the International Economic Association (IEA).

Basu's three-year term started from June 23.

Basu has also served as senior vice-president and chief economist at the World Bank from 2012 to 2016 and as the chief economic adviser to the Government of India from 2009 to 2012.

## **Vidya Balan to be the ambassador of Indian Film Festival of Melbourne**

Vidya Balan will be the ambassador of Indian Film Festival of Melbourne to be held from August 10 to 22.



The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) is one of the largest Indian film festivals being hosted outside India.

The Victorian Government supports the festival and last year they awarded the festival with the very prestigious 'Melbourne Award'.

The core theme of IFFM will be diversity and it will showcase over 60 films this year.

## **Union Government appoints NIFT Chairperson**

The Union Government (M/o Textiles) has appointed Shri Rajesh V. Shah as Chairperson on the Board of Governors of the National Institute of Fashion Technology up to 31.03.2019 as per the provisions of the National Institute of Fashion Technology Act, 2006.

He will replace Shri Chetan Chauhan.

## **Shamma Jain appointed Indian envoy to Greece**

Senior diplomat Shamma Jain was appointed as India's ambassador to Greece.



A 1983-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, Jain is currently serving as Indian envoy to Panama.

Jain succeeds M Manimekalai as Indian envoy in Greece. She had earlier served as ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire.



## **Author Jhumpa Lahiri Wins 2017 PEN/Malamud Award**

Indian American author Jhumpa Lahiri has been announced as the recipient of the 2017 PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in the Short Story.



The PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in Short Fiction was established by Bernard Malamud's family to honor excellence in the art of short fiction.

## **APQN Quality Award to NAAC for International Co-operation in Quality Assurance**

National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) of India has received prestigious International Award of Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN) titled "APQN Quality Award 2017 for International Co-operation in Quality Assurance."

In a special Award ceremony held in Moscow, Russia, Dr. Jagannath Patil, Adviser, NAAC received the award on behalf of Prof. D.P. Singh, Director, NAAC.

APQN Quality Award are among the most prestigious International Awards in quality assurance of higher education.

## **EML bags Raksha Mantri's award**

Defence public sector BEML Ltd has bagged the Raksha Mantri's Award for Excellence for design and development of 180-tonne electric hydraulic excavator BE1800E.

Deepak Kumar Hota, CMD, BEML received the award from Defence Minister Arun Jaitley while Minister of State for Defence Subhash Bhamre presented the certificate of excellence to BR Viswanatha, Director-Mining & Construction, BEML.

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## Authors Neelakantan, Satpathy to be honoured with Kalinga Awards

Popular writer Anand Neelakantan, Odia poet Haraprasad Das and author Paramita Satpathy were announced winners of the Kalinga Literary Awards.

The Kalinga International Literary Award, Kalinga Literary Youth Award and Kalinga Karubaki Award will be conferred upon Neelakantan, Das and Satpathy respectively.

## Jeje Lalpekhluva wins AIFF Player of the Year award

India and Mohun Bagan striker Jeje Lalpekhluva received the All India Football Federation's inaugural player of the year 2016 award.

Sasmita Malik was adjudged the 2016 AIFF Women's player of the year.

Sunil Chettri, India's most prolific goal scorer ever with 53 goals from 93 matches, received a Special Award for surpassing the milestone during the last year.

## Soumitra Chatterjee to get France's Legion of Honour

Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee will be awarded France's highest civilian award, the Legion of Honour.

Soumitra Chatterjee also won the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award for cinema, in 2012.

He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2004.

## Indian girl bags Little Miss Universe Internet 2017 crown

12 year old Padmalaya Nanda from Odisha has created history by becoming the youngest girl to bag the "Little Miss Universe Internet 2017" and "Little Miss Actress" crowns at the Little Miss Universe 2017 at port city of Batumi in Georgia.

She will now participate in the "Little Miss World 2017" competition that will be held at Greece from Sept 25 to Oct 1, 2017.

The silver crown was won by Thailand.

## Nalanda model of water conservation chosen for National Award

model of water conservation adopted successfully by the authorities in Nalanda district of south central Bihar, has been selected for the national award for excellence in the Mahatma Gandhi national rural employment guarantee programme (MGNREGP), by the ministry of rural development.

The award for excellence will be conferred on 'Project Jal Sanchay', the water conservation model developed in chief minister Nitish Kumar's native district.

## NASA Honors Comet Science Pioneer Michael A'Hearn

NASA has posthumously awarded the Exceptional Public Service Medal to Michael A'Hearn, one of the world's leading comet scientists. A'Hearn died May 29 at the age of 76.

The NASA Medal is for "fundamental work on comets and small bodies of the solar system, leadership in space missions, and ensuring public access to data from NASA missions and related projects."

## Israeli author David Grossman wins Man Booker International prize

David Grossman has become the first Israeli author to win the Man Booker International Prize.

He split the £50,000 cash award for his winning book, 'A Horse Walks into a Bar', with translator Jessica Cohen.

The prize was previously a career honor, but changed last year to recognize a single book.

In 2016, the prize was awarded to 'The Vegetarian' by South Korea's Han Kang.

## eshe Dorjee Thongshi conferred Bhupen Hazarika Award

The Fifth Bhupen Hazarika National Award, 2017 has been conferred to an eminent writer from Arunachal Pradesh Yeshe Dorjee Thongshi.

- The prestigious Award, instituted by Sarhad, a Maharashtra-based organization, is honoring a person every year since 2012, who has rendered an outstanding literary work at national and international level.
- His most important novel is Mauna Onth Mukhar Hriday (Silent lips, murmuring hearts) which won the Sahitya Akademi award in 2005.

## Kannada playwright Shivaprakash honoured with Kusumagraja

Noted Kannada poet and playwright H S Shivaprakash was presented the prestigious Kusumagraja Rashtriya Puraskar of this year for his outstanding contribution to social and educational fields.

The award, constituted by the Nashik-based Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open Universitys (YCMOU's) Kusumagraja adhyasan (Chair), carries a cash prize of Rs one lakh, a memento and a citation.

Kusumagraj, after whom the award is named, was a pen name of noted Marathi litterateur late V V Shirwadkar, a Jnanpith awardee.

## Ramamani Iyengar Institute wins first yoga award

The Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute here has been selected as the first recipient of the Prime Minister's Award for

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outstanding contribution for promotion and development of yoga.

The decision has been taken by the screening committee and evaluation committee for the awards that were constituted in 2016.

The selection was done from among 85 nominations received and 15 more recommended by the screening committee.

## **2017 Orwell Prize awarded to John Bew**

The 2017 Orwell Prize, Britain's most prestigious prize for political writing, was announced on June 15, in London.

The £3,000 2017 Orwell Prize for books was bestowed upon John Bew for his "extraordinary biography" *Citizen Clem*, which is about Clement Attlee, the founder of the NHS.

## **Air Asia named world's best budget airline at Skytrax awards**

Air Asia, and Air Asia X won four awards at the Skytrax Awards at the Paris airshow, including that for world's best low-cost airline.

At the awards, dubbed as the "Oscars of the Aviation Industry", AirAsia X scooped up the World's Best Low-Cost Airline Premium Cabin and World's Best Low-Cost Airline Premium Seat awards for the fifth straight year.

Air Asia won awards for being the Best Low-Cost Airline in Asia and also as World's Best Low-Cost Airline Premium Cabin 2017 at the 2017 Skytrax World Airline Awards.

## **Agri. Microbiologist Dr Shrihari Chandraghatgi gets Japan Award**

Indian Agricultural Microbiologist Dr Shrihari Chandraghatgi, President & CEO, EcoCycle Corporation, has been conferred with Ministry of Environment Award in Japan for developing cutting edge technologies to address environmental problems.

Dr Shrihari is the first foreigner to win this award in environmental sector in Japan.

This award is the highest honour given every year jointly by the Ministry of Environment, Japan, and National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES), Japan and The Nikkan Kogyo Shinbun (a media group).

## **Qatar Airways voted best airline in the world**

Qatar Airways has been named Best Airline in the World for 2017 by leading consumer aviation website Skytrax.

The Gulf-based carrier was presented with the honor at World Airline Awards at the 2017 Paris Air Show.

This is Qatar Airways' fourth win in the last 10 years after securing the top spot in 2011, 2012, and 2015.



## **Bengal's Kanyashree initiative wins United Nations Public Service Award**

Kanyashree Prakalpa, the scheme launched by Mamata Banerjee in October 2013, two years after she became West Bengal chief minister, won the United Nations Public Service Award at The Hague.

India was named first in the Asia-Pacific group for the category: 'Reaching the Poorest and Most Vulnerable through Inclusive Services and Participation'.

Kanyashree aims to improve status of adolescent girls from disadvantaged families through small cash transfers.

## **Sultan Wins Best Action Movie Award At Shanghai International Film Festival**

Salman Khan's Sultan, which released during Eid last year, has won the Best Action Movie award at the Shanghai International Film Festival and is the first Indian film to win this honour.

Sultan is all set to release in China later this year.

Sultan narrates the story of a fictional wrestling champion, Sultan Ali Khan (Salman), whose successful career creates a rift in his personal life.

## **Intellicap CEO Nisha Dutt gets social entrepreneur of year award**

Nisha Dutt, Chief Executive Officer of Hyderabad-based Intellicap has been honoured with the "Social Entrepreneur of the Year" award at The 7th Asian Awards in London.

She is the first Indian woman leader to have been conferred with this recognition.

This award has been presented to her for leading Intellicap to become a globally known enterprise that focuses on social capital and impacts the underserved communities.

## **Vijaya Bank bags nine Skoch Awards**

Vijaya Bank has bagged nine Skoch Awards.

The bank received awards in the following categories -- Best Bank in Public Sector; Best Bank for NPA Management – Organization Category; Retail Lending; Inclusive Wallet – VPAYQWIK; Digital Inclusion; IT Security; e-Surveillance of ATMs and branches; and 100 Digital Villages – Financial Inclusion.

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The bank's Executive Director B. S. Rama Rao received the NPA Management Award (individual category) from Sameer Kochhar, Chairman, Skoch Group at Mumbai.

## **Haryana girl Manushi Chhillar is Femina Miss India World 2017**

The 54th Femina Miss India World 2017 winner is Manushi Chhillar from Haryana, while the first runner-up is Sana Dua from Jammu and Kashmir and the second runner-up is Priyanka Kumari from Bihar.

The event was held at Yash Raj Studios in Mumbai.

Besides, Vinali Bhatnagar won the Miss Active crown whereas Vamika Nidhi won the special award of 'Body Beautiful'.

## **PV Sindhu, Indian junior hockey team win SJFI annual awards**

The Sports Journalists Federation of India, at its annual general meeting, decided to confer the best Sports person of the Year Award on the ace shuttler and Rio Olympics silver medallist P V Sindhu.

The Best Team of the Year award was bagged by the Indian junior hockey squad which won the World Cup in Lucknow last December.

## **Bhumika Sharma wins Miss World Bodybuilding Title**

Dehradun girl Bhumika Sharma has won the World Bodybuilding Championship in Venice.

She made India proud after acing all the important rounds. She gained the maximum number of points in body posing, individual posing and fall category.

She bagged the Miss World Bodybuilding title and the gold medal at the world championship which was held in Venice last week.

## **Dhanraj Pillay to be awarded with Bharat Gaurav**

Former India hockey captain Dhanraj Pillay will be awarded with East Bengal football club's highest honour – Bharat Gaurav on their foundation day.



The ceremony will be held on August 1.

Pillay has played a huge role in reviving the Indian team and performed brilliantly during his 15-year career, representing the country in four Olympics, World Cups, Champions Trophy and Asian Games.

He played total 339 matches for India, scoring 170 goals.

## **U'khand gets award of excellence at international meet**

Uttarakhand was conferred with the award of excellence at the 2nd Global Skill Development Summit held in Paris recently for innovations and extensive use of IT for skilling the state's youth.

Project Director of Uttarakhand Skill Development Committee Pankaj Kumar Pandey received the honour on behalf of the state.

## **Hyderabad-based TS Vineeth Bhatt conferred with the 'best astrologer of world' award**

Astrologer and numerologist TS Vineeth Bhatt has been conferred with the 'Best astrologer of the world' award at the 'Russian-Indian economic dialogue' round-table meet held in Moscow.

Bhatt, 37, is from Kerala and lives in Bowenpally. Three generations of his family have been practising astrology.

He is a personal astrologer to ministers, ambassadors, senators across the globe.



## **Virat Kohli, MS Dhoni, Yuvraj Singh, Suresh Raina in list of top 100 athletes**

India captain Virat Kohli, former skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni and stylish left-handed batsmen, Yuvraj Singh and Suresh



Raina, have found places in this year's ESPN World Fame 100 list that made its debut last year.

While Kohli is placed in the 13th spot and Dhoni in the 15th, Yuvraj and Raina have been ranked 90th and 95th respectively.

Heading the list is top Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo while NBA great LeBron James, another soccer star Lionel Messi and tennis ace Roger Federer are the top four athletes.

## **Ramachandra Guha steps down as BCCI administrator**

Historian Ramachandra Guha, appointed by the Supreme Court as one of the four administrators of BCCI, informed the court that he had resigned from the post due to personal reasons.

He had tendered his resignation on May 28 to Vinod Rai, Chairman of the Committee of Administrators of the Board of Control for Cricket in India.

Vikram Limaye, Managing Director of Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC), and former

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Indian women cricket captain Diana Edulji were the other administrators appointed by the Supreme Court.

## **B Sai Praneeth wins Thailand Open**

Indian shuttler B Sai Praneeth lifted his maiden Grand Prix gold title by defeating Indonesian Jonatan Christie in the men's singles final of the Thailand Open.

The third seeded Indian prevailed 17-21 21-18 21-19 over the fourth seeded Indonesian in a contest that lasted an hour and 11 minutes.

This is Praneeth's second consecutive title win, following the Singapore Open victory.

## **Real Madrid wins UEFA Champions League title**

Real Madrid clinched UEFA title, beating Juventus 4-1 in a scintillating final in Cardiff, Wales.

Cristiano Ronaldo scored a pair of goals for Real – his 11th and 12th of the competition, 104th and 105th in Europe all time to extend his own record and the 599th and 600th of his club and international careers.

This is the second consecutive UEFA title for Real Madrid and it is the first team to do so.

## **Bopanna-Dabrowski clinch French Open mixed-doubles title**

Rohan Bopanna lifted his maiden Grand Slam title by winning the French Open mixed doubles trophy with Canadian partner Gabriela Dabrowski, becoming only the fourth Indian ever to clinch a Grand Slam.

Playing only his second Grand Slam final, Bopanna and Dabrowski eked out a memorable 2-6, 6-2, 12-10 win over Germany's Anna-Lena Groenefeld and Colombia's Robert Farah.

## **Ramkumar Ramanathan lifts ITF men's Futures tennis title**

India's Ramkumar Ramanathan lifted the ITF men's Futures tennis title after outplaying Raymond Sarmiento of the USA in straight sets in Singapore.

The top seeded Indian beat the second seeded player 6-2, 6-2 in the final. It was the first title of the season for Ramkumar.

A regular in India's Davis Cup team, Ramkumar had recently competed in the qualifying event of the French Open but failed to make it to the main round of the Grand Slam tournament.

## **Murali first Sri Lankan to be inducted into ICC Hall of Fame**

Muttiah Muralitharan, the most successful bowler in Tests cricket, was inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame.

Muralitharan was awarded the honour along with Arthur Morris, George Lohmann and Karen Rolton by fellow ICC Cricket Hall of Famers and members of the media.

He became the first player from Sri Lanka and the 83rd overall to be inducted into the Hall of Fame when ICC CEO Dave Richardson presented him with a commemorative framed cap.

## **Unseeded Jelena Ostapenko wins French Open women's crown**

Unseeded Jelena Ostapenko of Latvia beat Simona Halep 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 at Roland Garros to win the 2017 French Open Women's Singles crown and her first ever Grand Slam title.

Ostapenko, 20, is the first unseeded woman to win the French Open since Britain's Margaret Scriven in 1933.

Ostapenko is also the first player of Latvian origin to win a Grand Slam event.

## **Rafael Nadal Wins His 10th French Open Title**

Spain's Rafael Nadal made history by winning a record 10th French Open title with victory over Stan Wawrinka in the Paris final.

Nadal, 31, came through 6-2 6-3 6-1 against the Swiss third seed to claim his 15th major title.

He becomes the first man or woman in the Open era to have won a Grand Slam tournament 10 times.

## **Michael Venus-Ryan Harrison clinches French Open men's doubles title**

Michael Venus became New Zealand's first Grand Slam champion since 1974 when he partnered American Ryan Harrison to the French Open men's doubles title.

Venus and Harrison defeated Santiago Gonzalez of Mexico and American Donald Young 7-6 (7/5), 6-7 (4/7), 6-3 in the final at Roland Garros.

In women's doubles, American Bethanie Mattek-Sands and the Czech Republic's Lucie Safarova claimed their third consecutive grand slam doubles title with a convincing 6-2 6-1 victory over Australian duo Ashleigh Barty and Casey Dellacqua.

## **Lewis Hamilton wins in Canadian GP**

Lewis Hamilton dominated the Canadian Grand Prix as dramatic action behind allowed him to cut Sebastian Vettel's title lead to 12 points.

Vettel, meanwhile, could finish only fourth in the Ferrari.

# COMPETITION GURUKUL

It was a sixth win in 10 races in Canada for Hamilton, who equaled Ayrton Senna's mark of 65 pole positions.

## **Jitu Rai, Heena Sidhu win gold at ISSF Shooting World Cup**

Indian shooting pair of Jitu Rai and Heena Sidhu outclassed their Russian counterparts by 7-6 in the mixed team air pistol final event to win a gold medal at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup in Azerbaijan.

Russia was given the consolidating silver medal, while France bagged bronze after beating Iran by 7-6 in the third-place match.

## **Kutwal wins gold at world chess championship for differently-abled**

Shashikant Kutwal, a railway employee with Pune Division, has won the gold medal at the 17th World Individual Chess Championship for differently-abled, held in Slovakia from May 27 to June 6, 2017.

Kutwal (37), who works as office superintendent, has now attained the title of International Master.

In the World Championship, held by Physically Disabled Chess Association (PDCA), Kutwal won the gold medal after scoring 7.5 points from a possible 9.

## **Indian wrestlers bag 5 medals at Junior Asian Championships**

Indian wrestlers produced a superb show to bag five medals at the Junior Asian Championships.

- Among the women, Pooja Gehlot won gold in the 51kg category while Sonu clinched a silver medal in the 44kg event. Manju Kumari got a bronze in the women's 59kg division.
- The boys bagged two medals in the Greco-Roman categories on the second day of the competition with S. Satish clinching silver in the 120kg division while Manish got a bronze in the 50kg category.

## **IOA preparing bid for 2032 Olympic Games**

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) is preparing a bid to host the 2032 Olympic Games after receiving the green signal from the government.

- India was also considering a bid for the 2024 Olympics. However, IOC president Thomas Bach dismissed it as mere 'speculation' and said it was 'too early for India to successfully host the Games.'
- Paris and Los Angeles are set to be awarded the 2024 and 2028 Games, which means the earliest edition for which India can bid is 2032.

## **Champions Trophy: Pakistan clinched title beating India by 180 runs**

Pakistan produced an incredible display to thrash fierce rivals India and win the Champions Trophy at The Oval.

Fakhar Zaman hit a spectacular century to propel Pakistan to 338.

India eventually limped to 158, Pakistan winning by 180 runs to take their first global 50-over title since 1992.

Fakhar Zaman was declared Man of the Match.

Hassan Ali was declared Man of the Tournament.

## **Srikanth beats Sakai to win Indonesia Open Super Series Premier title**

Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth clinched his third Super Series title, lifting the Indonesia Open men's singles trophy with a straight-game victory over Japanese qualifier Kazumasa Sakai in the final.

World No.22 Srikanth outclassed Sakai, ranked 47th, 21-11 21-19 in just 37 minutes to take home a title.

## **Anil Kumble quits as India coach**

Anil Kumble has stepped down as head coach of India's men's team ahead of the forthcoming limited-overs series against West Indies.

It is learnt that Kumble, whose one-year contract expired on June 18 at the end of the Champions Trophy, opted against a contract extension despite having been given that option.

Kumble, 46, was appointed head coach of the side in June 2016 by the former BCCI administration.



## **Ireland & Afghanistan awarded Test status by ICC**

Ireland and Afghanistan have been granted Test status by the International Cricket Council.

It increases the number of countries competing at the top level of international cricket to 12.

They are the first admissions since Bangladesh gained Test status in 2000.

The changes were passed unanimously at the ICC full council meeting at The Oval.

International Cricket Council is headquartered in Dubai.

## **Kavita Devi first Indian woman ever to appear in WWE**

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Former Indian powerlifter and South Asian Games gold medal winner, Kavita Devi will be making history as she becomes the first Indian woman to appear in WWE.

Kavita has been selected to compete in the Mae Young Classic which is the first-ever WWE tournament for women.

She was selected after taking part in the WWE Dubai tryout earlier this year in April wherein she caught the attention of talent scouts.

## **idambi Srikanth wins Australian Open**

Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth beat Olympic champion Chen Long 22-20, 21-16 in straight sets to win the Australian Open Superseries badminton tournament.

Chen enjoyed a 5-0 advantage against Srikanth in the head to head record, but the Indian dominated his rival and clinched the title.

With this, Srikanth has to his credit playing three consecutive finals. He finished runner-up at the Singapore Open before winning the Indonesia Open title last week.

## **rinivas becomes 1st Indian to finish Race Across America**

Srinivas Gokulnath created history by becoming the first Indian to complete what is considered to be the toughest cycle race in the world -- the 4,900-km Race Across America (RAAM) in solo category.

Another Maharashtrian, Dr Amit Samarth of Nagpur, followed him at the finish line.

Among the nine men who finished, Gokulnath stood 7th while Samarth was right on his heels at number 8. The race was won by Christoph Strasser.

## **Rajeev Shukla to head BCCI Special Committee**

Rajeev Shukla, a former vice-president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), will head a newly-formed seven-member Special Committee, to suggest a way forward for implementing the administrative overhaul prescribed in the Supreme Court order on July 18 last year.

Besides Shukla and BCCI acting secretary Amitabh Choudhary, the committee will include former India captain Sourav Ganguly (Bengal), T.C. Mathew (Kerala), Naba Bhattacharjee (Meghalaya), Jay Shah (Gujarat) and BCCI treasurer Anirudh Chaudhry.

## **India finish second in Junior Shooting World Championship**

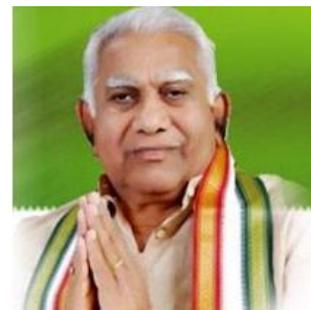
The Indian shooting squad finished a creditable second at the ISSF Junior World Championship with three gold, two silver and three bronze medals in Suhl, Germany.

China topped the tally in the rifle/pistol tournament with 19 medals, including eight gold.



## **Rajya Sabha member Palvai Govardhan Reddy passes away**

Veteran Cong (I) leader and Rajya Sabha member from Telangana, Palvai Govardhan Reddy, died of cardiac arrest in Kulu, Himachal Pradesh.



Palvai was first elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1967 from Munugodu constituency in Nalgonda district in the United Andhra Pradesh.

He went on to represent it five times, then served two terms as a Council member. He became a member of the Upper House of Parliament in April 2012.

## **Adam West, TV's Batman dies at 88**

Adam West, the US actor best known as the star of the 1960s hit TV series Batman, has died aged 88.

Five years ago, in 2012, West was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

## **Veteran Telugu poet, writer C Narayana Reddy passes away**

Legendary Telugu poet and writer C Narayana Reddy, a recipient of the prestigious Jnanpith award, passed away in Hyderabad.

The 85-year-old doyen of Telugu language had to his credit more than 80 publications, which include poems, songs, lyrical dramas, ballets, essays, travelogues and ghazals.

## **Former German chancellor Helmut Kohl dies aged 87**

Former chancellor Helmut Kohl, who presided over Germany's reunification at the end of the Cold War, has died at the age of 87.

- Together with Russia's Mikhail Gorbachev and other world leaders, he successfully brought an end to the Cold War, the end of Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, and the reunification of West Germany with the former Moscow-dominated East Germany.

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## Justice PN Bhagwati, former CJI and pioneer of judicial activism, passes away

Former Chief Justice of India P N Bhagwati, considered a pioneer of judicial activism in the country for introducing the concept of PILs, died in New Delhi.

- As a Supreme Court judge, Bhagwati introduced the concepts of public interest litigation (PIL) and absolute liability to the Indian judicial system.
- As a champion of PILs, he had ruled there was no need for a person to have any locus standi (the right or capacity to bring an action or to appear in a court) to knock the doors of a court on the issue of fundamental rights.

## Harry Potter Actor Sam Beazley Passes Away

Actor Sam Beazley, who starred in Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, has died at the age of 101.

Beazley played Professor Everard in the hit film franchise. Before his death, Beazley was the oldest-living actor from the franchise.



## redhiman Krishan Kaw, father of India's nuclear fusion, dies

The father of India's nuclear fusion reactor research programme, Padma Shri Prof Predhiman Krishan Kaw, died.

He was the founder director of Institute for Plasma Research (IPR), Gandhinagar, an institute that catapulted India to being one among the seven member entities that is building the world's largest fusion experiment — the US \$ 14 billion International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER).

Kaw was the first chairman of the ITER Council Science and Technology Advisory Committee and led the committee's deliberations from 2007 to 2009.

## Vanuatu president Baldwin Lonsdale dies after heart attack

The president of Vanuatu, Baldwin Lonsdale, has died after a heart attack at the age of 67.

Mr Lonsdale, an Anglican priest, had been leader of the Pacific archipelago since September 2014.

While president, Mr Lonsdale oversaw the vast rebuilding of parts of Vanuatu after Cyclone Pam left an estimated 75,000 people homeless in March 2015.

## Malayalam Film Director K R Mohanan Passes Away

Noted Malayalam film director K R Mohanan died following a brief illness.

69-year old Mohanan, a former chairman of Kerala State Chalachitra Academy, breathed his last at a private hospital.

Mohanan was in the forefront of the Malayalam parallel cinema movement.

His popular films are 'Ashwathama' in 1978, 'Purushartham' in 1987 and 'Swaroopam' in 1992.

## Singer Sabita Chowdhury passes away

Eminent singer Sabita Chowdhury died after a five-month battle with cancer. She was 72.

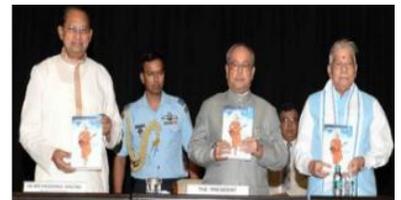
Many of her Bengali songs have retained their charm among the public through the decades.

She also did playback for a number of Bengali and Hindi films.



## President receives first copies of book 'Lalan Shah Fakir Ke Geet'

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee received the first copies of book 'Lalan Shah Fakir Ke Geet' written by Prof. Muchkund Dubey and DVD of selected songs of Lalan Shah Fakir at Rashtrapati Bhavan.



The President congratulated Prof. Muchkund Dubey who had served as High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh for his pioneering work and for giving an opportunity to recognize and pay tribute to Lalan Shah Fakir, a great saint, poet and social reformer.

## 'Ministry of Utmost Happiness' authored by Arundhati Roy launched

Arundhati Roy's eagerly-awaited second novel 'Ministry of Utmost Happiness' goes on sale worldwide, two decades after her prize-winning debut The God of Small Things.

Roy became the first Indian woman to win the prestigious Booker Prize with her 1997 work, which sold around 8m copies and turned the young author into a star of the literary world.

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## **Jairam Ramesh's book on the naturist in Indira Gandhi launched**

The book "Indira Gandhi – A life in Nature" was launched by Congress president Sonia Gandhi at the Indira Gandhi Memorial.

Former Union minister Jairam Ramesh, who has authored the book published by Simon & Schuster, presented the first copy of the book to the Congress President.

The book would be made available in a number of languages including Hindi, Malayali, Kannada and some others.

## **Ex-Uttarakhand CM Pokhriyal authors book on Vajpayee**

Former Uttarakhand chief minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, who credited Vajpayee for his debut in politics, said the 450-page book titled 'Yug Purush, Bharat Ratna, Atal ji' will be officially unveiled soon.

However the first copy of the book on the social and political life of Vajpayee was presented to President Mukherjee.

## **Lone Fox Dancing: Ruskin Bond's autobiography**

The prolific writer Ruskin Bond recently launched his autobiography 'Lone Fox Dancing', a book that revolves around the writer's life in India.

Bond was born to Edith Clarke and Aubrey Bond during the Colonial rule and spent most of his childhood in Jamnagar and Shimla.

He wrote his first short story at the age of 16 and wrote his very first book, Room on the Roof, at the age of 17.

## **Naidu launches book 'The Emergency-Indian Democracy's Darkest Hour'**

Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting Venkaiah Naidu launched a book titled 'The Emergency-Indian Democracy's Darkest Hour' written by A. Surya Prakash, chairman Prasar Bharati Board.

The book launch was organised as part of the day-long convention organized to mark the anniversary of the Emergency by Megh Nirghosh Media today in Ahmedabad.

Mr.Naidu further said that freedom of speech and expression ensured in our Constitution comes with responsibility. He said the real essence of democracy lies in people's participation.