

July - 19

NATIONAL

Solar-powered DEMU

- ❖ The India Railways launched the country's first solar-powered local train with a battery bank facility that ensures sufficient power even in the absence of sunlight.
- ❖ The entire electrical need of the coaches will be met by the energy produced by solar panels fitted atop the coaches of the DEMU (Diesel Electric Multiple Unit) train.



- ❖ The 1600 horsepower train has been manufactured at the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai, its solar system and panels have been developed and fitted by the Indian Railways Organization of Alternative Fuel (IROAF).

DEMU

- ❖ DEMU is a multiple-unit train powered by on-board engines without a separate locomotive
- ❖ Normally, DEMU trains provide power for its passenger comfort system, i.e. lights and fans, from a diesel-driven generator.



INTERNATIONAL

World Customs Organisation – Asia Pacific Regional Head

- ❖ India has become the vice-chair (regional head) of the Asia Pacific region of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) for a period of two years till June 2020
- ❖ The organisation has divided its membership into six regions. Each of the regions is represented by an elected vice-chairperson to the WCO council.

WCO

- ❖ The World Customs Organization (WCO) is an intergovernmental organization headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.
- ❖ The WCO maintains the international Harmonized System (HS), goods nomenclature, and administers the technical aspects of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreements on Customs Valuation and Rules of Origin.
- ❖ WCO represents 182 customs administrations across the globe that collectively process approximately 98 per cent of world trade.

Peace Mission

- ❖ India and Pakistan will be part of a mega anti-terror drill in Russia next month.
- ❖ It is being organised by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)
- ❖ It aims to expand cooperation among the member countries to deal with terrorism and extremism.
- ❖ India has picked a contingent of about 200 soldiers of the 5th battalion of the Rajput regiment and a small complement of the Indian Air Force for the drills called “Peace Mission 2018”.
- ❖ The drill will be held at the Chebarkulsky (meaning “beautiful, colourful lake” in Turkic) training ground on the slopes of the Southern Urals in Russia.
- ❖ This would be the first time the armies of India, Pakistan and China would be involved in a friendly military exercise, along with the other members of the SCO – Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan.

India – China - Pakistan

- ❖ Indian and Pakistani forces have been operating together over the years under the flag of UN Peacekeeping forces, notably in Congo.

- ❖ The Indian and Chinese armies have a series of bilateral exercises named 'Hand-in-Hand' since 2007. 'Hand-in-Hand' is also war gamed for a counter-terrorist scenario.

UN Human Rights Council

- ❖ The U.N. General Assembly has elected Iceland to replace the United States on the U.N. Human Rights Council
- ❖ The election came following the United States decision to leave UN Human Rights Council
- ❖ Iceland has for the first time been elected to the Human Rights Council
- ❖ Iceland was nominated by the group of Western nations
- ❖ The 47-member Human Rights Council allocates a specific number of seats for each region of the globe.
- ❖ Iceland's term begins immediately and it will serve until Dec. 31, 2019.

STATES

Sulabh Jal

- ❖ Bihar will soon provide the cheapest drinking water in the world.
- ❖ The first of such a water project named Sulabh Jal was launched in Bihar's Darbhanga district
- ❖ The project was launched by Sulabh International, an organisation that introduced the concept of 'Sulabh Sauchalya' in the country.
- ❖ The 'Sulabh Jal' project converts contaminated pond and river water into safe drinking water.
- ❖ With the help of this project, the people will easily be able to get pure and clean water only in 50paise/litre.

Arsenic

- ❖ Groundwater in many districts of northern parts of Bihar bordering Nepal is severely affected by arsenic and other chemicals.
- ❖ According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), arsenic is a natural component of the earth's crust and is widely distributed throughout the environment -- in air, water, and land. It is highly toxic in its inorganic form.

- ❖ Long-term exposure to inorganic arsenic, mainly by drinking contaminated water, eating food grown or even prepared with this water, can cause skin lesions and cancer.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

Sangita Kalanidhi award - Aruna Sairam

- ❖ Carnatic vocalist Aruna Sairam has been selected for this year's Sangita Kalanidhi award of the Music Academy.
- ❖ She will preside over the 92nd annual conference to be held between December 15, 2018 and January 1, 2019. The award will be conferred to her on January 1, the day of Sadas.



Other awards

- ❖ Mridhangist Thanjavur R. Ramadoss, a student of Palghat T.S. Mani Iyer and vocalist K. Oman Kutty, will receive the Sangita Kala Acharya award.
- ❖ T.T.K. Awards will be given to veena player Kalyani Ganesan and nagaswaram player S.R.G. Rajanna.
- ❖ Dr. Premeela Gurumurthy, the Vice Chancellor, Tamil Nadu University for Fine Arts will get the musicologist award and dancer Shanta Dhananjayan will get the Nritiya Kalanidhi award, which will be conferred on her January 3.

SPORTS

Novak Djokovic – Wimbledon

- ❖ Novak Djokovic earned his fourth Wimbledon championship by beating Kevin Anderson.
- ❖ It is his first Grand Slam title in more than two years
- ❖ This win marks Djokovic's 13th grand slam title



- ❖ In the last 100 years only four other men can match or better Djokovic in the tally of Wimbledon singles titles –
 1. Roger Federer (with eight titles)
 2. Pete Sampras (seven)
 3. Bjorn Borg (five)
 4. Rod Laver (four)
- ❖ The only players ahead of Djokovic in all-time list of men's Grand Slam singles champions are,
 1. Federer (20 titles)
 2. Rafael Nadal (17)

3. Sampras (14).

Spanish Grand Prix

- ❖ Wrestler Vinesh Phogat won gold at the Spanish Grand Prix in Madrid
- ❖ She clinched the gold in women's 50kg freestyle category.
- ❖ The 23-year-old outclassed Canada's Natasha Fox 10-0 in the final.



- ❖ Previously, she had won a gold at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Youth Skills Day – July 15

- ❖ The World Youth Skills Day is observed globally on 15 July every year to raise awareness about the importance of investing in youth skills development.



- ❖ In December 2014, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring 15th July as World Youth Skills Day.

Nelson Mandela International Day – July 18

- ❖ Nelson Mandela International Day 2018 marks 100 years since the birth of Nelson Mandela (18 July 1918).



- ❖ In recognition of the former South African President's contribution to the culture of peace and freedom, UN General Assembly declared 18 July as "Nelson Mandela International Day".

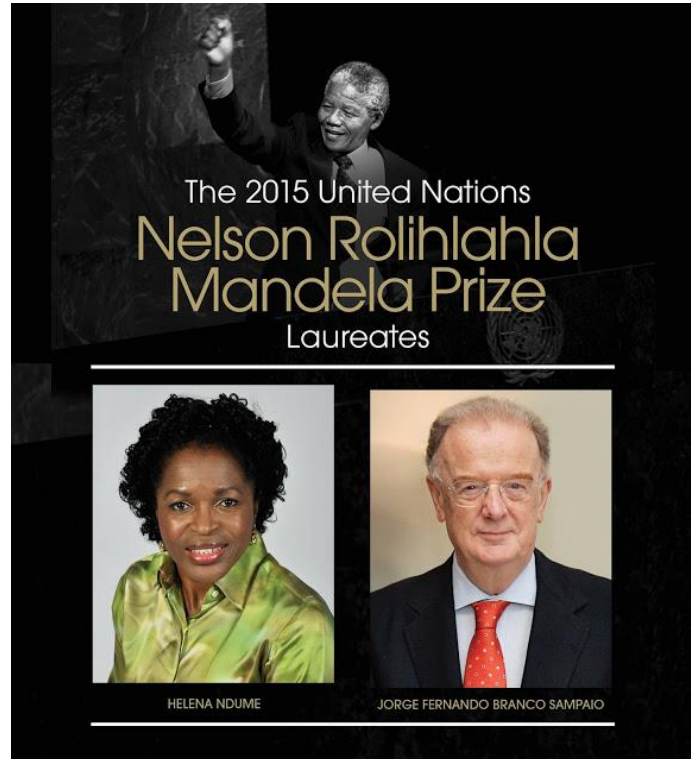
Nelson Mandela Prize

- ❖ Nelson Mandela Prize was awarded for the first time in 2015
- ❖ The Prize aims to recognize the achievements of those who dedicated their lives to the service of humanity as guided by the purposes and principles of the UN, while honouring and paying homage to Mandela's extraordinary life and legacy of reconciliation, political transition and social transformation.
- ❖ Once every 5 years, commencing in 2015, an honorary award will be presented as a tribute to the outstanding achievements and contributions of 2 laureate (one female and one male).

2015 Laureates

- ❖ Dr. Helena Ndume, Namibia

- ❖ H.E. Mr. Jorge Fernando Branco Sampaio, Portugal



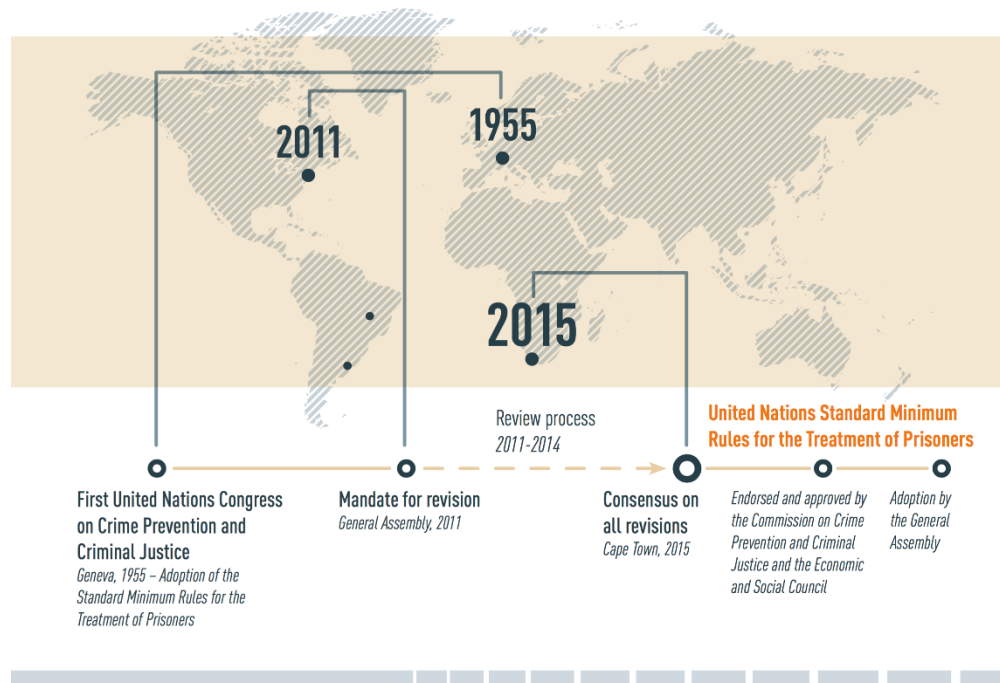
Nelson Mandela Rules

- ❖ The UN General Assembly extend the scope of Nelson Mandela International Day to be also utilized in order to,
 - Promote humane conditions of imprisonment
 - Raise awareness about prisoners being a continuous part of society
 - Value the work of prison staff as a social service of particular importance



The Nelson Mandela Rules

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners



- ❖ The General Assembly resolution envisages United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and approved that they should be known as the "Nelson Mandela Rules" in honour of the legacy of the late President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela.

MISCELLANEOUS

Customer Satisfaction Index Survey

- ❖ Raipur's Swami Vivekananda Airport has been ranked first in Customer Satisfaction among 49 airports in the country.
- ❖ Raipur's Swami Vivekananda Airport is followed by airports of Udaipur, Amritsar and Dehradun.



- ❖ Customer Satisfaction is one of the key performance objectives of AAI. The survey covers a wide range of parameters like transportation, parking, passenger facilities and cleanliness.

Raipur's Swami Vivekananda airport

- ❖ Raipur's Swami Vivekananda airport located at Mana between Raipur and Naya Raipur is the primary airport in Chhattisgarh.
 - ❖ Formerly known as Raipur Airport, the airport is the 28th busiest airport in India by passenger traffic and 31st busiest by aircraft movement.
 - ❖ On 24 January 2012, the airport was renamed after Swami Vivekananda, as a tribute to the popular saint who spent 2 years of his teenage in Raipur.
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