

March – 28

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Amidst the Facebook data scandal, Chief Election Commissioner OP Rawat announced that the social networking platforms will remain their social media partner during the Karnataka Assembly elections.
- ❖ Surat has become the first district in the country to have 100% solar powered Primary Health Centers (PHC). There are a total of 52 PHCs in the district and all of them are now powered by solar system.
- ❖ Former Indian captain Rahul Dravid has been named as the election icon to motivate young voters to come and vote in the upcoming Karnataka Assembly elections. Meanwhile, film and music director Yograj Bhat will make the Karnataka Election Anthem.

TAMIL NADU

Chennai - Salem Flight service

- ❖ In a major fillip to providing regional connectivity, direct flight services from Salem to Chennai re-commenced with Tamil Nadu CM Edappadi K Palaniswami flagging off the first flight at Salem airport after a gap of 7 years.
- ❖ The flight services would be operated under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) of UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagarik).
- ❖ Trujet, Hyderabad-based Turbo Megha Airways, is introducing the 72-seater flight, and 50 % of the seats will be reserved for the passenger under UDAN.
- ❖ The Salem airport was thrown open in 1993 and the NEPC, a private airline, operated flights between Chennai and Coimbatore via Salem.
- ❖ Due to poor patronage, the airlines suspended its operation within a short period.
- ❖ The airport was revived in September 2009, when now defunct Kingfisher Airlines operated flights.
- ❖ This service too was suspended abruptly in 2011 and the airport was later closed.

NATIONAL

COMCASA

- ❖ India may finally end up signing the second defence foundational pact with the US — the Communications, Compatibility, Security Agreement (COMCASA)
- ❖ The COMCASA agreement will enable Indian military to obtain critical, secure and encrypted defence technologies from the other country.
- ❖ COMCASA was earlier referred to as the CISMOA (Communication & Information on Security Memorandum of Agreement).
- ❖ Being a 'Major Defence Partner' of the US, it is imperative for India to sign the mandatory three foundational pacts
- ❖ So far, India has signed only one of the foundational agreements, called the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA). It had signed the pact with the US in 2016 after decades of negotiation.
- ❖ The LEMOA is a modified version of the Logistics Support Agreement (LSA) focused on India that will enable access to each other's military facilities for purposes of refuelling and replenishment.
- ❖ COMCASA and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-Spatial Cooperation (BECA) are the two remaining pacts that were not signed.

COMCASA

<p>What Legal framework to allow US to transfer high-end communication security equipment to India.</p>	<p>Why</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable Indian and US forces to operate more closely, share information on secure networks Improve performance of US-sourced platforms with compatible, secure communication systems Establishes platform to share real-time operational information with US & its allies
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• The Controversy •

UPA refused because it feared getting dragged into a US military alliance	The agreement may specify US personnel to be given access to US-sourced communication equipment for periodic inspection
The coding and keying systems will be same, allowing US access to Indian tactical information	Integration with existing Russian weapon system may be a challenge

INTERNATIONAL

Floating Island

- ❖ An uninhabited and muddy Bay of Bengal island is in process to turn into home for 1,00,000 Rohingya Muslims who have fled a military crackdown in Myanmar.
- ❖ The government of Bangladesh is reportedly making “temporary arrangements” for these people to the island named Bhasan Char (meaning floating island).
- ❖ Floating Island, which emerged from the silt only about 20 years ago, is about 30 km (21 miles) from the mainland.
- ❖ Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina has cleared that putting Rohingya on the low-lying island would be a “temporary arrangement”
- ❖ It is to ease congestion at the camps in Cox’s Bazar, which houses nearly 700,000 Rohingya who have fled Myanmar since August, 2017.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

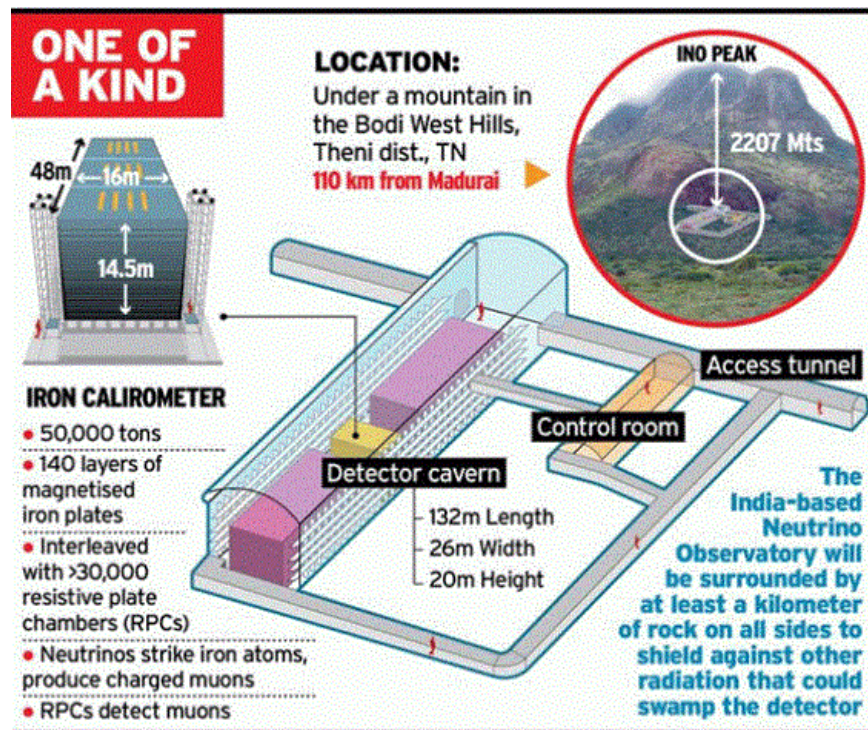
Smart India Hackathon 2018

- ❖ All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) under the aegis of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) is organizing Smart India Hackathon 2018.
- ❖ Smart India Hackathon 2018 is a non-stop digital product development competition, where problems are posed to technology students for innovative solutions.
- ❖ It will harness creativity & expertise of students and sparks institute-level hackathons.
- ❖ It builds funnel for ‘Start up India’ campaign and crowdsources solutions for improving governance and quality of life.
- ❖ It also provides opportunity to citizens to provide innovative solutions to India’s daunting problems.
- ❖ Smart India Hackathon 2018 would be the second massive scale hackathon initiative in India following Smart India Hackathon 2017.

ENVIRONMENT

Neutrino Observatory

- ❖ The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF's) has given environmental clearance to India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) project to be set up in Bodi West hills in Tamil Nadu.



- ❖ The approval was given by MoEF's Expert Appraisal Committee after taking up INO project issue as special case.
- ❖ The project will now be sent for an approval from Tamil Nadu government and National Board of Wildlife (NBWL), as Mathikettan Shola National Park in Kerala's Idukki district is about 4.9km from the proposed site.
- ❖ Neutrinos are sub-atomic particles produced by the decay of the radioactive elements and are elementary particles that lack an electric charge
- ❖ Neutrinos are key to understanding the evolution of the universe and energy production in the sun and other stars.
- ❖ It is jointly supported by Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Department of Science & Technology (DST), with DAE acting as the nodal agency.
- ❖ The project aims at building a world-class underground laboratory with a rock cover of approximately 1200 meter.

- ❖ Its mandate is to conduct basic research on elementary particle called neutrino.
- ❖ The observatory will be located underground in order to provide adequate shielding to the neutrino detector from cosmic background radiation.

STATES

Karnataka Assembly Election

- ❖ The Election Commission of India (ECI) declared that Elections to the Karnataka Assembly will be conducted on May 12 in a single phase to elect 224 legislators and the results will be declared on May 15.
- ❖ The Model Code of Conduct, which is a code of behaviour for candidates, parties and the incumbent government on campaign trail, came into immediate effect.
- ❖ It will be applicable on the state government and the Union government.
- ❖ The Gazette notification for the election will be issued on April 17.
- ❖ The last date for filing of nominations is April 24 and the last date of withdrawal of candidature is April 27. The entire election process will be completed on May 18.
- ❖ The EC wants “accessible polls” in Karnataka. To do so, VVPAT (Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail System) will be provided at all polling stations and photograph of all the candidates will also be put up on the EVMs.
- ❖ The Commission had issued orders for increasing the height of standardised voting compartments to 30 inches for ensuring secrecy of voting.
- ❖ For the first time All-women teams will manage 450 of the total 56,696 polling booths in the Karnataka Assembly polls.
- ❖ As per the revised ceilings, the maximum limit of election expenses for the Assembly constituencies is 28 lakh rupees per a candidate in the State.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

Yuri Gagarin's 50th death anniversary

- ❖ Yuri Gagarin, feted as a Soviet national hero for being the first man in space, was killed in a plane crash 50 years ago
- ❖ For the first time in Soviet history, a day of national mourning was declared for someone who was not a head of state.

- ❖ On 12 April 1961, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human to journey into space.
- ❖ Gagarin's rocket was an adapted missile, called R-7 or 'Semyorka'. The rocket carried his 'Vostok' spacecraft, which translates as 'east' in Russian.
- ❖ Since 12 April 1961, the anniversary of Gagarin's first flight has been celebrated in Russia as a holiday known as Cosmonautics Day.
- ❖ Yuri Gagarin was also a back-up commander for the ill-fated Soyuz 1 mission, which crashed on 24 April 1967. He died in a training flight (MiG-15) in the following year.

MISCELLANEOUS

45th anniversary of Chipko movement

- ❖ Google commemorated the 45th anniversary of the forest conservation initiative called the Chipko movement with a doodle.



- ❖ The goal of the Chipko Movement was to draw attention to and prevent deforestation, which had begun to occur on a mass scale to make way for dams or industry or roads.
- ❖ The word 'chipko', which means to hug, soon became the name of the eponymous movement.

- ❖ In modern India, Chipko Movement started in April 1973 in Uttar Pradesh's Mandal village in the upper Alakananda valley. Soon it spread to other Himalayan districts of the state.
- ❖ The Chipko Movement, leaded by local women, was spearheaded by Chand Chandi Prasad Bhatt and his NGO Dasholi Gram Swarajya Sangh.
- ❖ Sunderlal Bahuguna, a Gandhian activist and philosopher, also appealed to the then Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, to implement a ban on cutting down the trees.
- ❖ However, the original movement dates back to the 18th century in Rajasthan where a large group of people from the Bishnoi community resisted the cutting of trees (ordered by Jodhpur's Maharaja) by hugging them.
