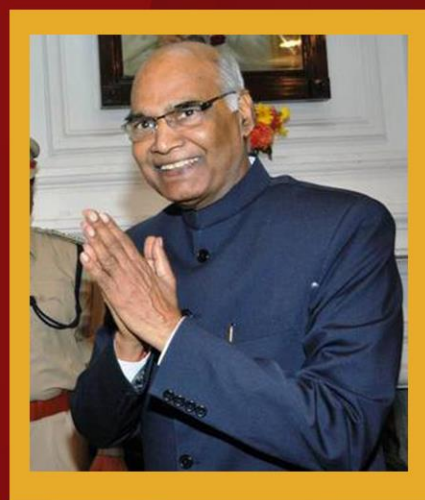


# TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY, 2017

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## TNPSC BITS

### Doklam Plateau

- Doklam, (also called Donglang) is a narrow plateau lying in the tri-junction of Bhutan, China and India.
- It is a disputed territory claimed by both Bhutan and China.
- It is situated roughly 15 kilometers from the Nathu La pass that separates India and China.



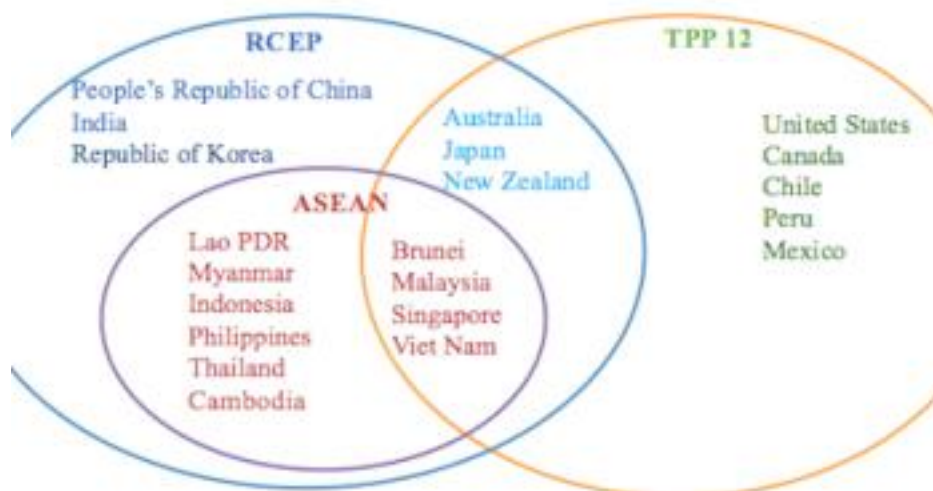
- Doklam is part of the Chumbi Valley that lies primarily in Tibet. Doka La is a pass connecting the Indian state of Sikkim with Tibet in China.
- China and Bhutan have agreed via written agreements of 1988 and 1998 that both countries will agree to maintain peace and the status quo in the region.
- In 2017, China attempted to build a road in a sector of Doklam triggering a stand-off between China and India and a demarche against China from Bhutan.

## RCEP

- RCEP is the proposed mega-regional Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between 16 Asia-Pacific countries. (ASEAN+6)
- It includes India, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and the 10-member ASEAN bloc (10 members of ASEAN countries are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, The Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam).
- The RCEP has chapters on intellectual property, investment, goods, services, telecommunications and e-commerce, and goods and services



- RCEP is viewed as an alternative to the TPP trade agreement, which includes the United States but excludes China.



- In the absence of the TPP, the RCEP will emerge as the largest regional trading bloc in the world, accounting for nearly 45 per cent of the world's population and with a combined gross domestic product of \$21.3 trillion.

### **'Despacito' declared the most streamed song**

- Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee's Despacito is now the most streamed song in the world and has beaten Justin Bieber's record.
- Puerto Rican singer Luis Fonsi's Despacito, whose reggaeton beat has swept the globe, was named the most streamed song of all time.
- The song's label, Universal Music Latin Entertainment, said Despacito in its original and remixed versions had reached 4.6 billion streams across platforms.
- Justin Bieber's 2015 hit song Sorry, which has 4.38 billion plays. Despacito, which was released in January, has been at the top of Billboard Hot 100 for weeks.

Brenda Hale: First woman president of Britain Supreme Court

### **New Secretary to the New President**

- Sanjay Kothari, IAS (Haryana, 1978) (Retd.), presently Chairman, Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) appointed as Secretary to the President approved by Appointment Committee of the Cabinet.

### Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) decides appointments to several top posts under the Government of India.
- The committee is composed of the Prime Minister of India (who is the Chairman), the Minister of Home Affairs.

## **TAMIL NADU**

### **Madurai: TN's first ever park for special children inaugurated**

- The first-ever park for special and disabled children in Tamil Nadu, established by the Madurai Corporation with contribution from the Madurai Group Living Foundation, (MGLF), was inaugurated by state minister, on 15.07.2017.
- The State's first 'Disabled Friendly Park' was opened as part of the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) to increase green cover on Alagar Kovil Road.
- The park will help children with special needs to overcome anxiety when they interact with other children.
- The park will soon have wheelchair-friendly toilets and a large fish tank. About 10-20 volunteers would ensure safety and upkeep.

### **Kamaraj Award for students**

- The Department of School Education has announced a total 1.45 crore rupees worth of prize and Kamaraj Award for 960 Tamil medium students, who secure good marks in 10th and 12th board examinations.
- In Tamilnadu, K. Kamaraj birth anniversary is observed as 'Educational Development Day'.

### **National Banana Festival in Madurai**

- The National Banana Festival 2017 is to be held at the Agricultural College and Research Institute here from July 21 to July 23.
- The festival, which is intended to encourage farmers, businessmen and exporters, and to attract investment for creating infrastructure to meet pre-harvest and post-harvest needs, will be organised by Union and State governments in collaboration with trade bodies, including Tamil Nadu Banana Producers' Federation.

### **Tamilnadu government announces Singaravelar award for writers**

- Tamilnadu Government has introduced 'Singaravelar Award', which will be awarded annually for best writers in Tamil language on behalf of Tamil Development Department.
- The award will be given to writers who write scientific concepts in Tamil, books related to Social Progress, Egalitarian Policies and Labour Forces.
- The prize includes 1 lakh cash prize and 8-gram gold medal.

### M. Singaravelu

- Malayapuram Singaravelu Chettiar (18 February 1860 – 11 February 1946), also known as M. Singaravelu and Singaravelar is a communist leader and founder of the first trade union in India.
- For his commendable works in spreading communist thoughts in tamilnadu, he was called “Sindhanai Sirppi” (Sculptor of thoughts).

### **Tamil Cultural Heritage Museum at Madurai**

- A Tamil Cultural Heritage Museum would be set up in Madurai at an estimated cost of Rs 50 crore, said TN Chief Minister.
- The Tamil Cultural Heritage Museum will come up in the World Tamil Sangam complex at Madurai, for which Rs 15 crore would be allocated in the first phase in 2017.

### **Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has raised the salary of the members of the Legislative Assembly from 55,000 INR to 1,05,000 INR**

- As per the salary hike breakup provided, the salary will be increased from Rs 8,000 to Rs 30,000.
- compensatory allowance will be increased to Rs 10,000 from Rs 7,000,
- Telephone allowance has been revised to Rs 7,500 from Rs 5,000.
- The constituency allowance goes up to Rs 25,000 from Rs 10,000 and consolidated allowance to Rs 5,000 from Rs 2,500.
- Vehicle allowance will be upwardly revised to Rs 25,000 from 20,000.
- Postal allowance will continue to be same at Rs 2,500.
- The salary and allowances of legislators had been raised from the existing Rs 55,000 to Rs 1,05,000 per month, an increase of 90.91 per cent.

### **PM Modi inaugurated Dr APJ Abdul Kalam memorial in Rameshwaram**

- PM Modi inaugurated Dr APJ Abdul Kalam memorial in Rameshwaram. The memorial is situated at Pei Karumbu near Rameswaram, where the mortal remains of Kalam were laid to rest. The task of building the 15 crore worth of memorial was taken up by India’s Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- A replica of India’s most powerful long-range missile, Agni, has also been installed at the memorial site. Satellite models, more than 700 photographs of Dr.Kalam, and 91 paintings are exhibited at the memorial site. The memorial was inaugurated on the second death anniversary of Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam.



## **NATIONAL**

### **14th Presidential Election**

- President Pranab Mukherjee's tenure will end on July 24 this year and the election for the new president has to be held before that date. The election to choose 14th President of India will be held on July 17, 2017.
- On June 7, the then Chief Election Commissioner Nasim Zaidi released the notification for presidential election.
- Ram Nath Kovind, former Governor of Bihar , is contesting on behalf of the ruling National Democratic Alliance.
- Meira Kumar, the former Lok Sabha speaker, is contesting as a common candidate for opposition parties – 18 parties including Congress
- Only these two are in the electoral race for the presidency. Presidential Election in India has not always been a direct contest between two candidates from the ruling and Opposition camps.
- MLAs and MPs across the country will vote directly and elect a new president.

### Election Method

- The electoral college for choosing the President consists of 4,896 voters. While the Lok Sabha has 543 voters and the Rajya Sabha has 233, the overwhelming majority come from state assemblies — MLAs (4,120 voters).
- Vote of each MP and MLA carries a certain value. The vote weight of a member depends on the size and population of their representative state.



### MLA's vote value

- In the case of MLAs, the vote value is calculated by dividing total population of the state by the number of elected members to the Legislative Assembly, further divided by 1000.
- Thus, Total value of votes by a state's MLA can be calculated by multiplying their vote value by number of constituencies in the state.
- The population data is taken from the 1971 Census. The total value of votes of MLAs in the election is 5,49,495.

### MP's vote value

- In the case of an MP, the vote value is decided by dividing the total value of votes of all MLAs (5,49,495) of the whole country, divided by the total number of elected MPs in Lower House (Lok Sabha) and Rajya Sabha (Upper House) (totally 776).
- At present, the vote value of each MP is fixed at 708, and total value of votes of MPs is 5,49,408.

### Value of total votes

- The total value of votes in the election is 10,98,903 — 5,49,408 for MPs and 5,49,495 for MLAs.

### Election of Vice President

- The tenure of Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India ends by this August.
- He has been Vice President of India for 10 years, since 2007. Election for new Vice President is scheduled to be held on August 5, 2017.
- Venkaiah Naidu is contesting on behalf of the ruling National Democratic Alliance.
- Mahatma Gandhi's grandson and former Governor of West Bengal, Gopala Krishna Gandhi is contesting on behalf of opposition parties including Congress.

### How is the vice president elected? What are the requirements to become the next vice president?

- For the election of the vice president, the procedures involved are fairly similar to that in the Presidential poll.
- But unlike the Presidential poll, the election for the Vice President is conducted through a secret ballot where only members of both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha get to vote.
- Members of Parliament will use special pens for marking their choice. Votes marked with any other pen are liable to be rejected.
- In the Presidential poll, elected members of all state legislative assemblies, including Delhi and Puducherry, also participate in the voting.
- A person needs to satisfy the following prerequisites to become a Vice-President.

1. Needs to be a citizen of India.
  2. Is at least 35 years old or above.
  3. Is qualified to become a member of the Rajya Sabha.
- A candidate's nomination paper needs to be subscribed by at least 20 electors as proposers and at least another 20 electors as seconders.
  - And a security deposit of Rs 15,000 will be collected from each candidate.

### Digital Evolution Index

- The world is becoming digitalized day by day. Increasingly, financial sector is becoming digitalized.
- Recently, Digital Evolution Index (DEI) was released.
- The five top scoring countries in the DEI 2017 ranking — Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Denmark, and Finland.
- India is in the 17th position.



## National Academic Depository (NAD)

- National Academic Depository (NAD) is an initiative of Ministry of Human Resources Development, Govt. of India (MHRD) to facilitate digital issuance, storage, access and verification of Academic Awards issued by Academic Institutions.
- NAD is a Unique, Innovative and Progressive initiative under “Digital India” theme towards achieving Digital enablement of the Education Records.
- NAD aspires to make the vision of Digital Academic Certificates for every Indian a reality. This touches the lives of Indian youth and empowers them with Digital, Online, Trusted, Verifiable Certificates which are accessible in a secure manner at all times.
- NAD promises to do away with difficulties / inefficiencies of collecting, maintaining, and presenting physical paper certificates.
- NDML to facilitate Academic Institutions to Digitally, Securely and Quickly issue Online Academic Awards to the Students directly in their online NAD Account.
- The student can access certificate at any time and authorize employers, banks to view and verify the certificates.
- No more need to carry originals, submit attested photocopies, wait for verification of documents, NAD makes it online now.

**Big Step towards Prime Minister's Vision of #DigitalIndia**

Union Cabinet approves establishment of National Academic Depository (NAD)

- ▶ NAD- online store house of academic awards (Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, marksheets etc).
- ▶ NAD- available 24X7 online.

**NAD shall maintain authenticity, integrity & confidentiality of its database.**

<p><b>Benefits of NAD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe Storage.</li> <li>• Easy and quick Retrieval.</li> <li>• Helps in verification of authenticity.</li> <li>• Eliminate fraudulent practices such as forging of certificates &amp; mark-sheets</li> <li>• It will provide authentic information / data.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Users of NAD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Academic Institutions</li> <li>• Boards</li> <li>• Eligibility Assessment bodies</li> <li>• Employers / Verifiers.</li> </ul>
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### **Digitization of School Records: National Academic Depository (NAD)**

- The National Academic Depository (NAD) which is a 24 X 7 online store house of academic awards digitally lodged by various academic institutions / school boards / eligibility assessment bodies has been established.
- The academic awards to be lodged on NAD shall cover degrees, diplomas, certificates, mark-sheets including awards issued for skill development.
- The University Grants Commission (UGC) has been designated as authorized body to operationalise NAD.
- NAD comprises of two interoperable digital depositories viz., NDSL Database Management Limited (NDML) and CDSL Ventures Limited (CVL).
- Maintenance of academic awards in a digital depository not only enables online access, retrieval and verification of these awards, but also helps eliminating fraudulent practices such as forgoing of certificates and mark-sheets etc.
- The Aadhaar will be used for registration and usage of the digital database.
- However, in the event of non-availability of Aadhaar, a unique NAD ID will be generated to facilitate digital services to NAD users.

### **Construction of New International Airports**

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has granted 'in principle' approval for setting up of 18 Greenfield Airports and 'site clearance' approval for setting up of 7 Greenfield Airports across the country.
- Out of these, Mopa Airport in Goa, Navi Mumbai and Shirdi Airport in Maharashtra, Kannur Airport in Kerala, Kushinagar Airport and Jewar Airport in Uttar Pradesh, Dholera Airport in Gujarat, Bhogapuram Airport in Andhra Pradesh, Machiwara Airport in Ludhiana, Alwar Airport in Rajasthan and Rajkot Airport in Gujarat are International Greenfield Airports.
- The airport project at Kannur has been completed.
- This information was given by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Jayant Sinha in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha on 18.07.17

### **KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters)**

- Government has approved a new Central Sector Scheme-KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) with an outlay of Rs. 6,000 crore for the period 2016-20 coterminous with the 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission cycle to promote food processing in the country.
- KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA is an umbrella scheme with the following components:
  - ❖ Mega Food Parks
  - ❖ Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure

- ❖ Creation / Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities
- ❖ Infrastructure for Agro-processing Clusters
- ❖ Creation of Backward and Forward Linkages
- ❖ Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure
- ❖ Human Resources and Institutions
- The schemes being implemented under the KISAN SAMAPADA YOJANA are applicable throughout the country and these are not state specific.
- The schemes are private sector driven and provide freedom to the entrepreneurs to choose the project location based on availability of raw material, techno-economic feasibility and viability of the project.
- Scheme for Agro-Marine Produce Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters (SAMPADA) for food processing sector was launched by Union ministry of Food Processing Industries.

### **Cabinet approves modified BharatNet strategy**

- The Cabinet approved modified implementation strategy of BharatNet (erstwhile National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN)) project towards realizing the vision of Digital India.
- The modified strategy aims to provide Broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) by March 2019.
- Compared with the use of only underground optic fibre cable to establish connectivity in the first phase, in the second phase a mix of underground fibre, aerial fibre, radio and satellite media would be utilised to connect the remaining gram panchayats.

### BharatNet

- BharatNet is Centre's rural internet connectivity programme which is implemented by Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL).
- It is the world's largest rural broadband connectivity programme using Optical fibre. Bharat Net seeks to connect all of India's households, particularly the rural areas, through demand, affordable broadband connectivity of 2 Mbps to 20 Mbps to realise the vision of Digital India.
- The project is being funded by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).
- The three-phase implementation under the BharatNet project is:
  - ❖ Under the first phase, one lakh gram panchayats would be provided connectivity by laying underground optic fibre cable (OFC) lines by March 2017.
  - ❖ Under the second phase, connectivity will be provided to all 2,50,500 gram panchayats in the country. It is to be completed by March 2019.
  - ❖ Under the third phase from 2018 to 2023, state-of-the-art, future-proof network, including fiber between districts and blocks would be created.

## **Government launched Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana for senior citizens**

- The Union Finance Ministry has launched Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY), a pension scheme exclusively for senior citizens aged 60 years and above.
- Under this scheme, senior citizens will get a guaranteed interest of 8% for 10 years depending upon the investment made by them.

### Features of PMVVY

- This PMVVY scheme will be available from May 4, 2017 to May 3, 2018.
- Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has been given the sole privilege to operate the scheme.
- It can be purchased offline as well as online through LIC.
- It is exempted from goods and services (GST) tax.
- It will offer senior citizens more avenues to earn steady regular income at a time of falling interest rates.
- On survival of the pensioner to the end of the policy term of 10 years, the purchase price of the scheme along with the final pension instalment will be payable.
- The scheme also offers loan up to 75% of the purchase price after 3 policy years (to meet the liquidity needs).
- Loan interest will be recovered from the pension instalments and loan will be recovered from claim proceeds.
- The scheme allows for premature exit for the treatment of any critical terminal illness of self or spouse.
- On such premature exit, 98% of the purchase price would be refunded.
- On death of the pensioner during the policy term of 10 years, the purchase price should be paid to the beneficiary.
- The ceiling of maximum pension is for a family as a whole, the family will comprise of pensioner, his/her spouse and dependants.
- The shortfall owing to the difference between the interest guaranteed and the actual interest earned and the expenses relating to administration shall be subsidized by the Government of India and reimbursed to the Corporation.

## **The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2017**

- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2017 was introduced by the Minister of Human Resource Development, Mr. Prakash Javadekar in Lok Sabha on April 2017. The Bill amends the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 by extending the deadline for teachers to acquire the prescribed minimum qualifications for appointment.

- Under the Act, if a state does not have adequate teacher training institutions or sufficient number of qualified teachers, the provision to possess minimum qualifications is relaxed for a period not exceeding five years i.e. till March 31, 2015.
- The Bill further adds to this provision by stating that those teachers who do not possess the minimum qualifications as on March 31, 2015 will acquire the minimum qualifications within a period of four years i.e. by March 31, 2019.

### About RTE Act

- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act also known as RTE', is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted on 4 August 2009, which describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. India became one of 135 countries to make education a fundamental right of every child when the act came into force on 1 April 2010.

### **Bengaluru Declaration**

- The declaration has been adopted by the recently (23/07/17) held Dr.B.R.Ambedkar International Conference 2017.
- The conference was sponsored by Karnataka government.
- The conference on the theme “Quest for Equity” was attended by scholars from across the country and abroad
- The eight-page declaration has 40 recommendations under six broad categories — safeguarding the people, strengthening democratic institutions, deepening social justice, enhancing human development, ensuring responsive governance, and promoting social security.
- The declaration calls for affirmative measures in the private sector, judiciary, educational institutions, government contracts and promotions for Dalits.
- The declaration focuses on SC/STs, Minorities and Backward Classes.
- The declaration called for:
  1. Reservation for SC/ST in appointment of judges, promotions, government contracts, in private higher educational institutions and in the private sector,
  2. Reservation of seats in the legislature for OBCs,
  3. Setting up of an income commission for farmers,
  4. Upholding rule of law through police reforms,
  5. State actions to prevent lynching
  6. Law against gender and caste discrimination in educational institutions.

### **INS Vagli**

- It is a Submarine designed by Russia and commissioned into the Indian Navy in 1974 and decommissioned in 2010.
- After its decommissioning, Tamil Nadu government has decided to set up the maritime museum near the shore temple of Mamallapuram, UNESCO world heritage site.

### **Aarambh**

- Recently, Union Ministry of Rural Development has launched Aarambh - a mobile App for Rural road maintenance.
- The App aims at use of GIS based mapping for making road inventories, condition surveys, and producing cost estimates and other relevant data for preparation and monitoring of annual road maintenance plans.
- There is also another initiative in the name of “Aarambh” launched by network of organizations in India and Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) in Britain.
- It is the country's first-ever hotline to curb sexual abuse of children through the Internet and to remove child pornographic content online.
- The hotline will be hosted on aarambhindia.org and will enable users to report child sexual abuse images and videos in a safe and anonymous environment.

### **Zonal Cultural Zones**

- The Government of India has set up seven Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCCs) to protect, preserve & promote various forms of traditional art and folk art throughout the country.
- Each zone has a zonal headquarters where a zonal cultural center has been established and several states have membership in multiple zones.
- The headquarters of 7 ZCC are Patiala, Nagpur, Udaipur, Allahabad, Kolkata, Dimapur and Thanjavur.



Zonal Centres	Head Quarters	Component States
North Central Zone Cultural Centre	Allahabad	Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal & Delhi
North Zone Cultural Centre	Patiala	Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab & Union Territory of Chandigarh
West Zone Cultural Centre	Udaipur	Goa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Union Territory of Daman, Diu and Dadra, Nagar Haveli
North East Zone Cultural Centre	Dimapur	Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland & Meghalaya
Eastern Zone Cultural Centre	Kolkata	Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Sikkim & Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands
South Zone Cultural Centre	Thanjavur	Kerala, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka & Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Pondicherry
South Central Zone Cultural Centre	Nagpur	Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka & Andhra Pradesh

- No State/UT-wise funds are provided for the promotion of traditional art and folk art.
- However, annual grant-in-aid is provided to these 7 ZCCs for carrying out various cultural activities throughout the country.

### Islands Development Agency

- It is the newly constituted agency for preparation of plans for holistic development of identified islands.
- Recently, the agency's first meeting was convened and headed by Union Home Minister.
- Ten islands from Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep have been identified by the government for improving maritime economy, preserving the eco-system and addressing security concerns.
- The islands include Smith, Ross, Aves, Long and Little Andaman in Andaman and Nicobar and Minicoy, Bangaram, Suheli, Cherium and Tinnakara in Lakshadweep.

### Ram Nath Kovind sworn in as 14th President of India

- Ram Nath Kovind (71) became the 14th President of the country. The presidential election was held on 17th of October. In the midst of the election, the ruling National Democratic Alliance candidate, Ram Nath Kovind gained majority over the opposition candidate Meira Kumar. Kovind has won with 65% vote share.
- Ram Nath Kovind took oath as the 14th President of India in the Central Hall of Parliament on July 25th. Chief Justice JS Khehar administered the oath of office to Kovind. He has served as a Rajya Sabha MP from Uttar Pradesh for two

consecutive terms from 1994 to 2006. Ramnath Kovind was the governor of Bihar from 2015 to 2017, and recently won the presidential election.

- Ramnath Kovind is the second Dalit President of the country after KR Narayanan. He is also the first BJP leader to be elected to the country's highest post.



### **Reliance Defence and Engineering Limited launches two Navy ships Shachi and Shruti**

- Reliance Defence and Engineering Limited (RDEL), launched the first two Naval Offshore Patrol Vessels (NOPVs) — Shachi and Shruti at their shipyard in Pipavav, Gujarat. These two NOPVs are the first warships to be launched by a private sector shipyard in India. These ships are part of a five-ships being constructed for the Indian Navy under the P-21 project. The cost of 5 NOPVs being built by RDEL is approximately Rs 2,500 crore.
- The NOPVs are primarily patrol ships to undertake surveillance of the country's vast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). They also undertake operational tasks such as anti-piracy patrols, maritime security of offshore assets, fleet support operations, coastal security operations, and protection of shipping lanes.

### **Government approves affordable houses on private land in Maharashtra**

- The ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs approved construction of 30,000 affordable houses for urban poor on private land in Maharashtra, under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban). Central assistance of Rs 450 crore has also been approved for this project.
- An Inter-Ministerial Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee (CSMC), Chaired by Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary (Housing & Urban Affairs)

approved this first of its kind affordable housing project on private land under PMAY(Urban).

### **Hamari Dharohar Scheme**

- It was launched by Ministry of Minority affairs for preservation of rich heritage and culture of minority communities of India.
- Funding under the scheme is project based and not State/District-wise.
- It aims to support curating iconic exhibitions, calligraphy, research and development, etc.
- A project has been initiated to translate documents belonging to medieval period on the subjects of Medicines, Mathematics, and Literature from Arabic language to English.

### **Nai Roshni Scheme**

- It is the Scheme for leadership development among Minority Women.
- The objective is to empower and instil confidence among minority women by providing knowledge, tools and techniques for interacting with Government systems, banks and other institutions at all levels.
- Recently, NITI Aayog has conducted an evaluation study on 'Nai Roshni'.
- The main objective of the study was to assess the impact of the scheme on minority women and to identify policy/ programme impediments in implementation of the scheme.
- The report indicates that the trained women are utilizing their enriched knowledge and thereby helping their families in raising their essential demands and claims from various Government authorities.

### **Jute – ICARE**

- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Textiles to double the income of jute farmers.
- Improved Cultivation and Advanced Retting Exercise for Jute (Jute – ICARE) introduced some of the better agronomic practices and microbial-assisted retting among farmers.
- Retting is a process in which jute is placed in liquid so as to promote loosening of the fibres from the woody tissue.
- It was promoted intensively in a few blocks in West Bengal and Assam on pilot basis.
- Under the project, SMSs are sent in regional languages on improved practices in jute cultivation, to registered farmers.

## **SONA**

- It is a microbial consortium developed by Central Research Institute for Research in Jute and Allied Fibres (CRIJAF).
- A microbial consortium is two or more microbial groups living symbiotically.
- The aim is to enhance the quantity of fibre yield of jute as well as its quality in terms of grade.

## **SHe-box Portal**

- It is an online platform launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- The platform is to enable women employees of the central government to file complaints related to sexual harassment at the workplace.

## **Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund**

- Recently, the government has notified that Insurance companies no longer retain the unclaimed amounts of policyholders if those accruals are more than 10 years old.
- Such amount would be transferred to Senior Citizens' Welfare fund.
- It will have funds from unclaimed deposits in small savings schemes including Post Office Savings Accounts, Public Provident Fund and Employees' Provident Fund within one year.
- The fund will be utilised for schemes for the promotion of the welfare of senior citizens in line with the National Policy on Older Persons and the National Policy on Senior Citizens.
- The nodal Ministry for the Fund shall be the Ministry of Social Justice.

## **GAIL (India) launches a Start-up initiative 'Pankh'**

- GAIL (India) has launched a Start-up initiative titled 'Pankh' to identify and promote innovative ventures.
- To promote the initiative, GAIL has created a corpus of Rs 50 crore for investing in start ups and would also provide to them in core areas of the company i.e. natural gas and its derivatives.
- A Start-up web portal has also been launched through which potential candidates can submit their proposals to GAIL.

## **Odisha formally named Wheeler Island after APJ Abdul Kalam**

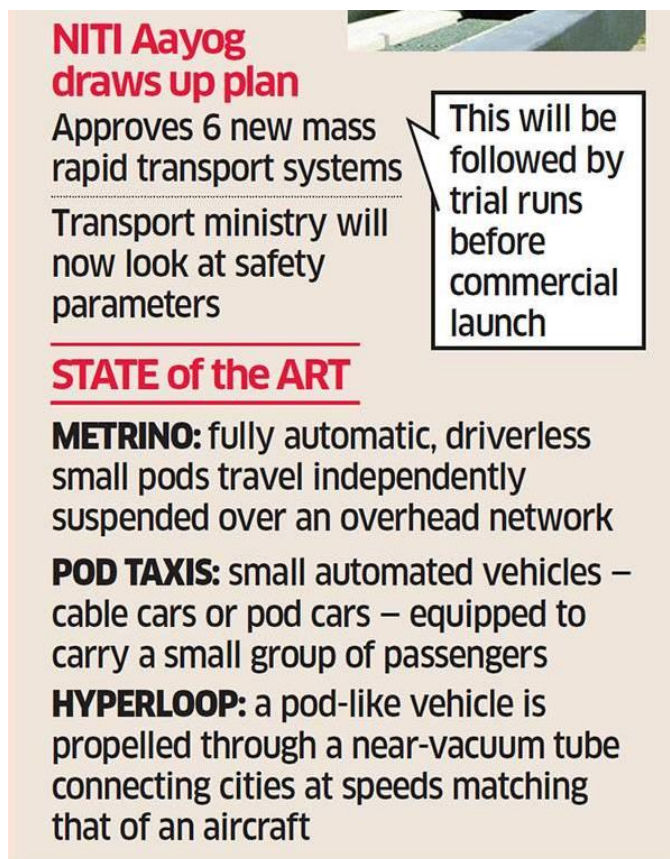
- Former President of India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's Death Anniversary: July 27  
Odisha government has formally named the Wheeler island in Bhadrak district as 'APJ Abdul Kalam Island'. The revenue and disaster management department issued a gazette notification after obtaining no objection certificate from the

Ministry of Home Affairs. Odisha government has named the island as a tribute to the former president on his second death anniversary.

- Dr.Kalam had an emotional attachment with the interim test range at Chandipur in Balasore district and Wheeler Island in Bhadrak district. He had spent most of his time in these two places as part of his efforts to develop missiles for the protection of the country.

### For high-tech public transport models: Niti Aayog clears six proposals

- Mass rapid transportation technologies such as hyperloop, metrino and pod taxis could soon be a reality in India after Niti Aayog cleared half-a-dozen proposals of the transport ministry exploring options to improve public transport.



**NITI Aayog draws up plan**  
Approves 6 new mass rapid transport systems  
Transport ministry will now look at safety parameters

This will be followed by trial runs before commercial launch

**STATE of the ART**

**METRINO:** fully automatic, driverless small pods travel independently suspended over an overhead network

**POD TAXIS:** small automated vehicles – cable cars or pod cars – equipped to carry a small group of passengers

**HYPERLOOP:** a pod-like vehicle is propelled through a near-vacuum tube connecting cities at speeds matching that of an aircraft

- The ministry of road transport and highways sought the approval of Niti Aayog to experiment and introduce six latest mass rapid transportation technologies. These technologies include metrino, stadler buses, hyperloop, pod taxis, hybrid buses and freight rail road.
- The new technologies are being explored as current public transportation is unable to resolve the increasing traffic crisis in the country. Besides, some of them are more cost effective than the existing ones.
- Once these safety parameters are tried and tested and the pilot run is successful, some of them including metrino could be up for running by next year's end.

- Following the go-ahead, the transport ministry has formed a six-member committee, headed by a former top official of Railways, to study safety parameters associated with these technologies and global practices.

### Nirbhaya Fund

- Government of India has set up a dedicated fund called Nirbhaya Fund for implementation of initiatives aimed at enhancing the safety and security of women in the country.
- Ministry of Women and Child Development is the nodal authority for appraisal of the schemes received under Nirbhaya Fund.
- Ministry of Finance has set up an Empowered Committee to assist Ministry of Women and Child development in approving the Schemes.
- The concerned Ministries take up the sanction and implementation of the schemes approved by the Ministry.

### Swadhar Greh Scheme (A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances)


- The Scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development targeting women victims.
- Women victims of difficult circumstances who are in need of institutional support for rehabilitation are being given help so that they could lead their life with dignity.

**MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT**






**Swadhar Greh Scheme**  
Helping Widows in India

**FOOD** **COUNSELLING**

**SHELTER** **TRAINING** **PROVISIONS** **CLINICAL AID** **LEGAL AID**

**289**  **ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

**14,378 BENEFICIARIES\***  
\*FOR THE YEAR 2015-2016

wcd.nic.in  /PMOIndia   /MinistryWCD  @Manekagandhibjp  /ManekaGandhiOfficial

- The Scheme envisages providing shelter, food, clothing and health as well as economic and social security for the women victims.

### Components

- Temporary residential accommodation with the provision of food, clothing, medical facilities etc.
- Vocational and skill up gradation trainings for economic rehabilitation of such women
- Counselling, awareness generation and behavioural trainings
- Legal aid and Guidance
- Counselling through telephone.

The benefit of the component could be availed by women above 18 years of age Swadhar Greh will be set up in every district with capacity of 30 women.

### **India is world's third-biggest beef exporter: FAO report**

- India is the world's third-biggest exporter of beef and is projected to hold on to that position over the next decade, according to a report by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation (OECD).
- OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2017-2026 report released recently said that India exported 1.56 million tonnes of beef last year and was expected to maintain its position as the third-largest beef exporter, accounting for 16 per cent of global exports in 2026 by exporting 1.93 tonnes that year.
- The type of beef exported was not specified, but the meat exported appeared to be mostly from buffaloes as the report specified the animal for imports by Myanmar from India.
- According to the OECD database, India imported 363,000 tonnes of beef last year and the amount was projected to stay the same over the decade.
- The Outlook report ranked Brazil as the world's top beef exporter, followed by Australia.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **US house clears over \$600 billion Bill to boost defence ties with India**

- The US House of Representatives has passed a \$ 621.5 billion defence expenditure bill that proposes to advance defence cooperation with India.
- The next fiscal year (2018) of the United States begins on October 1. An amendment of the National Defense Authorisation Act (NDAA) 2018, beginning October 1 this year, was passed by the House.

- The bill allocates 40.3 lakh crore worth of money in defence sector.
- Indian-American Congressman Ami Bera, brought the amendment bill urging to strengthen cooperation between India and US. This was adopted by a voice vote by the House.
- Following the passage of the National Defence Authorisation Act, the Secretary of Defence and Secretary of State have 180 days to develop a strategy for advancing defence cooperation between the United States and India.
- NDAA needs to be passed by the Senate before it can be sent to the White House for the US President Donald Trump to sign into law.

### **Indonesia renamed part of South China Sea**

- Indonesia has renamed the northern reaches of its exclusive economic zone in the South China Sea as the “North Natuna Sea” on July 14, 2017.



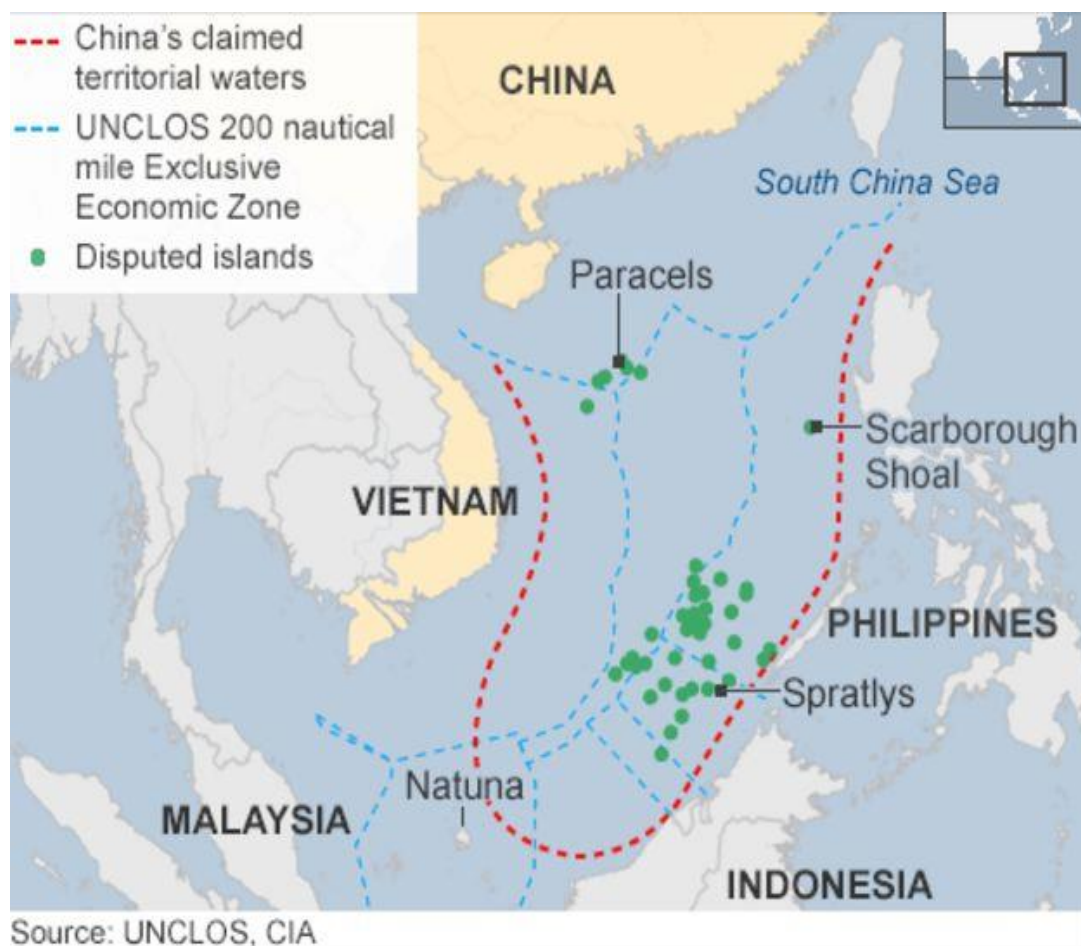
- It is the latest act of resistance by Southeast Asian nations to China's territorial ambitions in the maritime region.
- Part of the renamed area falls in China's "nine-dash line" - waters extending hundreds of miles to the south and east of China's island province Hainan.
- Indonesia is not the first country to rename part of the South China Sea.
- In 2011, the Philippines renamed the waters as the “West Philippine Sea” and two years later took the territorial dispute before an international tribunal at The Hague.
- In July 2016, the tribunal ruled in favour of the Philippines, concluding that China has no legal basis to claim historic rights to the bulk of the South China Sea.

### South China Sea Dispute

- China has been aggressively claiming the entire South China Sea as its own.



- The other countries that claim the various territories in the South China Sea are Taiwan, Indonesia, Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.
- The South China Sea is part of Pacific Ocean spreading an area of some 35 lakh square km with eight littoral countries/territories viz. China, Taiwan, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore and Vietnam.



- It is strategically located in the international shipping route that sees the passage of world's half of the merchant ships.
- The sea is rich in energy reserves including petroleum, mineral and fishing resources.
- It is made of some 200 tiny islands, coral reefs, shoals, sandbanks etc. grouped into three archipelagos of Spratlys, Paracels and Pratas.
- The Macclesfield Bank and Scarborough Shoal are also part of South China Sea.
- Several countries have made competing territorial claims over the South China Sea. Such disputes have been regarded as Asia's most potentially dangerous point of conflict.

### **Separatists in Ukraine declare creation of new 'state' Malorossiya**

- Ukraine rebels announce new 'state' in eastern part under their control.
- According to a statement issued by Alexander Zakharchenko, leader of Donetsk People's Republic, Alexander Zacherchenko, declared the establishment of a new state by joining "People's Republics" region. Subsequently, a referendum for Malorossiya will be held among its people after a transition period of three years.
- There was no immediate comment from Russia, which has been supporting the rebels.
- Malorossiya, a tsarist-era name means "Little Russia".
- Eastern part of Ukraine has majority of Russian speakers. They were not alienated during the existence of USSR.
- In recent times, they complained about differential treatment of Russian speakers by Ukraine. This issue escalated into an armed rebellion. Around ten thousand people were killed in Ukrainian Civil War.
- Last year, the insurgents took control of Donetsk and Lugansk in the eastern region of Ukraine and declared establishment of Donetsk Republic and Lugansk People Republic.
- They conducted elections and formed the government. But, Ukraine denied to acknowledge the self-declared territories.
- France, Germany, Ukraine and Russia worked out an agreement in the Belarusian capital, Minsk, in 2015 which laid out a road map for ending the conflict between government troops and separatists.
- Ukraine agreed to grant more autonomy in Russian- speaking regions. But the deal failed to materialize, east Ukraine continues to remain under the control of separatists.
- United States and European Union have imposed severe economic sanctions on Russia, accusing it of supporting separatism in eastern Ukraine and providing weapons to the rebellions.

### **Preet Kaur Gill: UK's first woman Sikh MP elected to key Parliament panel**

- Britain's first woman Sikh MP has been elected to an influential cross-party panel in the UK Parliament that examines the workings of the Home Office.
- Preet Kaur Gill, who won the Edgbaston seat for the Labour party in the June 8, 2017 snap general election, was elected to the Home Affairs Select Committee in the UK Parliament.

### **Australia to get super security Home Affairs ministry**

- Facing "serious threats" to its security, Australia on 18.07.17, created a super-ministry and announced a sweeping overhaul of the country's law enforcement, intelligence and security arrangements to combat the menace of terrorism.

- The new super-ministry, will combine the domestic spy agency, the federal police and customs and immigration departments into one office.

### India-Japan civil nuclear deal comes into force

- The India-Japan Agreement for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy entered into force on July 20.
- The pact was signed in Tokyo during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Japan on November 11, 2016.
- This Agreement is a reflection of the strategic partnership between India and Japan and will pave the way for enhanced cooperation in energy security and clean energy.


## INDO-JAPAN CIVIL NUCLEAR DEAL

India and Japan sign historic civil nuclear cooperation deal

Key Points

- ☢ Japan can now supply nuclear reactors, fuel and technology to India
- ☢ India can purchase new generation of nuclear reactors with over 1,000 MW capacity with hi-tech safety features
- ☢ India will get state-of-the-art nuclear fuel fabrication and breeder technology from Japan

- ☢ Tokyo had earlier asked for further commitments from New Delhi on nuclear non-proliferation, but later gave up on the conditions
- ☢ India persisted on its stand that it cannot go beyond what it had agreed to with the US on a similar nuclear deal and eventually convinced Japan on the terms



KBK Infographics

- It seeks to promote full cooperation between the two countries in the development and uses of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes on a stable, reliable and predictable basis.
- The deal is essential for bringing a network of nuclear energy cooperation for India, especially with the U.S. as prominent American nuclear companies are owned by the Japanese nuclear majors like Toshiba.

### **Pant-Mirza Agreement**

- It is an agreement between India and Pakistan under the 'Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines' signed in 1974.
- It facilitated visits by nationals of India and Pakistan to mutually agreed list of religious shrines in each other's country.
- Under the Protocol, it is the obligation of the concerned country to make every effort to ensure that the places of worship in the agreed list of shrines are properly maintained and their sanctity preserved.
- Shrines of Hazrat Moinuddin Chishti (Ajmer), Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya (Delhi), Hazrat Amir Khusro (Delhi), Hazrat Mujaddid Alf Sani (Sirhind Sharif) and Hazrat Khwaja Alauddin Ali Ahmed Sabir (Kalyar Sharif) in India are included under the protocol.
- Shadani Darbar (HyatPitafi), Shri Katasraj Dham (Lahore), Gurudwaras of Shri Nankana Sahib (Rawalpindi), Shri Panja Sahib (Rawalpindi) and Shri Dera Sahib (Lahore) in Pakistan are included.

### **Egypt opens military base**

- Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi has inaugurated a military base devoted to the country. Located in the Marsa Matrouh governorate west of Alexandria, Egypt says the base is the largest in the Middle East.
- The base is named after late President Mohammed Naguib, an Egyptian army officer who became the country's first president. The new military base will play a key role in the defence of the North West and the coastal towns and the defence of a number of major military bases of the country.
- Egypt's army announced earlier that it established another base, called Barrani, close to the porous western border with Libya to prevent the infiltration of militants.
- World's first wind farm being built off coast of Scotland:
- The world's first full-scale floating wind farm is being built off the north east coast of Scotland.
- The wind farm, known as Hywind, is a trial project which will bring power to 20,000 homes.



- The technology will allow wind power to be harvested in waters that are too deep for the existing bottom-standing turbines.

### **Outer Space Treaty**

- The Outer Space Treaty laid the foundation for an international space law, came into force in October 1967.
- It celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.
- 107 countries are parties to this treaty, including India.
- It was formulated to bar its signatory countries from placing weapons of mass destruction in orbit of the Earth, on the Moon or any other celestial body or the outer space.
- The treaty aimed to get the countries to use space exploration for peaceful purposes.
- However, the Treaty does not prohibit the placement of conventional weapons in orbit and thus some highly destructive attack strategies such as kinetic bombardment is still potentially allowable.

### **UK to ban sale of petrol and diesel cars by 2040**

- Britain said it will outlaw the sale of new diesel and petrol cars and vans from 2040, to control global warming. The Conservatives had a manifesto promise to ensure that by 2050 there would be no diesel or petrol vehicles on the road. To ensure the same, no new diesel or petrol vehicles will be sold from 2040.
- This restriction is proposed to reduce emission of Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) in the environment to reduce and control global warming.
- The ban on petrol and diesel cars, as well as vans follows a similar proposal by the French government, and will also include 'hybrid' vehicles that have an electric motor and a petrol or diesel engine.

### **Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**

- India recently rejected the resolutions of OIC that had expressed concern about the recent attacks on people by cow-vigilante groups.
- OIC is an international organization founded in 1969, consisting of 57 member states. India is not a member to this organisation.
- Its administrative centre is located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
- The organisation works to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony.

### **BRICS tax authorities inked landmark Taxation Cooperation Memorandum**

- Tax authorities of the five BRICS countries signed a landmark document to establish a mechanism for taxation cooperation. The BRICS Taxation Cooperation Memorandum, signed at the fifth meeting of BRICS Heads of Tax

Authorities, is the bloc's first document that elevates taxation cooperation to the institutional level.

- The authorities also agreed to cooperate on taxation information exchange, improve consultation procedures efficiency, boost taxation capacities and plan paths for coordination of taxation policies and tax collection.
- The meeting comes ahead of the 2017 BRICS Summit to be held in Fujian province's Xiamen city, China from September 3 to 5.
- The BRICS countries - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - are home to 42 per cent of the world's population. Their total share in the global economy has risen from 12 per cent to 23 per cent in the past decade, while contributing more than half of global growth.

### **BRICS Labour & Employment Ministers' Meet in China**

- Indian delegation led by Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour & Employment participated in the BRICS Labour & Employment Ministers' Meet, held on 26-27th, July, 2017 at Chongqing, China. China is the chair for the BRICS Labour & Employment Ministers' Meet for the year 2017.
- The meeting concluded with the adoption of the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministerial Declaration by the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers on 27th July 2017 in Chongqing, China. The Declaration covered a variety of areas that are of critical importance to all BRICS countries including India and called upon strengthening collaboration and cooperation on these through appropriate institutionalizations. These areas consisted of: "Governance in the Future of Work", "Skills for development in BRICS", "Universal and sustainable social security systems", "BRICS Network of Labour Research Institutions", "BRICS Social Security Cooperation Framework" and "BRICS entrepreneurship research".

### **Sri Lanka, China sign deal to develop Hambantota Port**

- An agreement with 99 year validity, to develop Hambantota Port in southern Sri Lanka has been signed between Srilanka and China.
- According to the deal, the Chinese side will hold a 70 percent stake. After 10 years, the Sri Lankan side will gradually purchase an additional 20 percent stake, resulting in the two sides owning an equal share of 50 percent each.
- The project to set up an international port in Hambantota was launched by the Rajapakse government in 2008. The construction of the first phase began with the assistance of the Chinese Government Company in 2008 and ended in 2010. China was keen on its stake in Hambantota. There were concerns that Chinese naval vessels would use the Hambantota port. Following this, the second phase of port's modification was modified.

- Now, the government of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe finalised an agreement to sell an 80% stake of the Hambantota Port's operations to China Merchant Ports Holding Company Ltd.

## **ECONOMY**

### **SBI launches 'SBI Realty' portal for home buyers**

- India's largest commercial bank State Bank of India (SBI) launched SBI Realty, a dedicated portal that will help home buyers to choose flats from its 3,000 approved projects across the country.
- SBI Realty will be a one stop integrated website for home buyers. It will help customers to choose their dream home from 3,000 SBI approved projects, which are spread across 13 states/UTs covering 30 cities.
- The SBI Realty portal has been developed by SBICAP Securities in association with PropEquity in terms of data support, project information, etc.
- At present, the website has 9.5 lakh home units available on it. Using the portal, customers can compare current and past trends of prices for properties in various localities in the city.
- It will also assist customers in calculating appropriate loan amount a customer should borrow based on income and credit profile.

### **India set to achieve 7.4% growth in 2017: ADB report**

- India's economy is set to grow at 7.4% in the current fiscal year 2017-18 against 7.1% in the previous year, on the back of pick-up in consumption demand and higher public investment. Additionally, ADB projected inflation to accelerate to 5.2% in 2017-18 and 5.4% in 2018-19 as the global economy recovers and commodity prices rebound.

### **Central Monitoring Committee to monitor the impact of GST**

- The Government of India has setup a Central Monitoring Committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary to monitor the impact of GST.

### **National Trade Facilitation Action Plan (NTFAP)**

- India's NTFAP aims to reduce cargo release time for exports and imports.
- NTFAP has been described by the World Customs Organisation (WCO) as a 'best practice' that other nations can adopt and it goes beyond the requirements of WTO's TFA.
- NTFAP is to be implemented between 2017 and 2020.
- It is part of India's efforts to improve its ease of doing business ranking in the World Bank's annual report.
- WCO is the international body supporting the uniform implementation of the TFA across the globe.

### **Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)**

- The TFA under WTO is meant to ease Customs norms for faster flow of goods across borders. India Ratified TFA in 2016.
- TFA had come into effect in February 2017.
- The full implementation of the TFA could boost global trade by up to \$1 trillion per year.
- National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) headed by the Cabinet Secretary was constituted to look after the implementation TFA

### **Monetary Policy Committee**

- It is a statutory body entrusted with the task of fixing benchmark policy rate (Repo rate) to contain inflation within the specified target level of 4% with a band of 2%.
- There are six Members of Monetary Policy Committee, three Members will be from the RBI and the other three Members of MPC will be appointed by the Central Government.
- The panel is required to meet at least four times in a year.
- The Members of the MPC appointed by the Central Government shall hold office for a period of four years or until further orders, whichever is earlier.
- Each Member of the MPC has one vote and in case the numbers are equal, the RBI Governor has the casting vote.
- All the Members need to disclose their assets and liabilities and update the information once in every year.
- It should submit a report to the central government within one month from the date which the bank has failed to meet the inflation target.
- Members shall observe a silent or blackout period for seven days before and after the committee meeting.

### **CCEA approves government stake sale of HPCL to ONGC**

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has given in-principle approval for the sale of the government's 51.11 per cent stake along with the management control of HPCL to the ONGC.
- Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) will continue as a public sector undertaking after Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd (ONGC) acquires its stake.

### **Development of Industrially Backward States**

- The primary responsibility of industrial development of backward areas rests with the State Governments.



- DIPP under Ministry of Commerce and Industry supplements the states' efforts through the implementation of various schemes with a view to promote industrialization in industrially backward areas of the Country.
- One such scheme is "Modified Industrial Infrastructure Up-gradation Scheme (MIUS)" to upgrade infrastructure in existing Industrial Parks/Estates/Areas in North Eastern and Himalayan states.
- However, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) had decided to end the implementation of MIUS in the backward states last year.
- Instead, it approved the constitution of a Committee under the Chairmanship of CEO, NITI Aayog to deliberate on future policy for North Eastern and Himalayan States.

### **Bharat Bill Payment System: NPCI gets final nod from RBI**

1. National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) , said it has received final approval from the Reserve Bank to function as the Bharat Bill Payment Central Unit (BBPCU) and operate Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS).
2. Nearly 45 crore bills, which comprise electricity, telecom, DTH, water and gas, are permitted under BBPS. This initiative will provide a major push to digital payments as it is a big step forward in formalising the bill payment system in the country.
3. Last year in August, eight BBPS operating units, which received in-principle approval from the RBI, took part in the pilot project. Almost after a year of running the pilot, NPCI has now received the final clearance from RBI.
4. The total number of Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit (BBPOU) certified by NPCI now stands at 24.
5. The certified units include three public sector banks - Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India and Indian Overseas Bank - 10 private lenders, five cooperative banks and 6 non-bank biller aggregators.
6. At present, the bulk of transactions on BBPS are towards payment of electricity bills.
7. The power sector potentially contributes to about 18 crore bills per month out of which only 10 per cent is digital.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **Russia launches 73 satellites into orbit**

- Russia launched a rocket with 73 satellites and successfully placed them in orbit.
- The Soyuz 2-1A rocket successfully lifted off with an imaging satellite and 72 micro-satellites. After 8 hours of travel, all satellites were placed in predetermined orbits.

- For the first time in the world, such a complex and large mission has been developed and implemented.
- The primary payload, the Kanopus-V-IK satellite, is to provide wide-angle images of the Earth and will be used specially to detect forest fires or to update the topography of maps.
- The 72 small satellites include those made by Japan, Germany and Canada along with 62 nanosatellites known as CubeSats, developed by the United States.

### **Tata Motors develops country's first Bio-CNG (Bio-methane) bus**

- Tata Motors has developed country's first Bio-CNG (bio-methane) bus which was unveiled recently at a bio-energy programme, 'Urja Utsav'.
- The firm, which is India's largest commercial vehicles manufacturer, said the bio-methane engines could be used in LCV, ICV and MCV buses.
- At the Urja Utsav held in Pune's Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex, Tata displayed three engines, along with the lead model — Tata LPO 1613 with 5.7 SGI NA BS-IV IOBD-II compliant bus. The event, which was organised by the Central government.
- In the past, Tata Motors has introduced technologies in CNG engines like sequential gas injection technology, skip fire, plug type coils, long life spark plugs and longer oil drain intervals.

### **Albertavenator curriei:71 million-year-old bird-like dinosaur the size of a HUMAN is found in Canada**

- Albertavenator curriei or Currie's Alberta hunter was found in a fossil collection
- The blue and beige feathered creature stalked Canada over 71 million years ago
- Its remains had been dug up over the years in what is now Red Deer River Valley



- It walked on two legs, was covered in feathers and was about the size of a person
- The study suggests that more currently unrecognised species may be out there.

### **World's 1st Laser Weapon**

- The US has launched the world's first laser weapon known as the Laser Weapons System (LaWS).
- The LaWS is currently deployed aboard the USS Ponce, an amphibious transport ship, in the Persian Gulf.
- Operationally, it works just like a laser pointer. There's a chamber inside with special materials that release photons.
- The LaWS laser beam is completely silent and invisible. It's also fast: The laser travels at the speed of light (186,000 miles per second, or about 300,000 kilometres per second), meaning it's about 50,000 times the speed of an incoming intercontinental ballistic missile.
- In addition to being able to take down threats in the air, the LaWS can hit and disable objects in the water.

### **UIDAI mAadhaar app launched**

- mAadhaar, a new app for syncing Aadhaar data with on mobile phones, has been launched by the UIDAI, which is the agency responsible for Aadhaar.
- The mAadhaar app is only available on Android, and the developer for this is listed as UIDAI on the Google Play Store. Once the user setup the mAadhaar app, your Aadhaar card profile, including your number, address and other details are stored on the app.
- The app will let users share their Aadhaar profile, data with third-party applications via NFC, QR codes, Barcodes or even email their details.

### **The Madras Medical Mission Hospital has signed a new contract on genetic research regarding cardiovascular disease**

- The collaboration for research has been made with 'Med Genome', a genomics based diagnostics and research company.
- Research and study is planned on cardiac diseases such as Coronary Artery Diseases including myocardial Infarction (heart attack), Pulmonary arterial hypertension, Cardiomyopathies and sudden cardiac deaths/arrhythmia.
- Last year MedGenome had collaborated with MMM to set up a state-of-the art genomic laboratory that will serve for all clinical and diagnostic research purposes at the hospital premises

### **LinkedIn Lite app: first being rolled out in India**

- LinkedIn, one of the world's largest professional networks with more than 42 million members in India, announced the introduction of the 'LinkedIn Lite,' an Android app which was a faster and lighter version of its flagship app.
- LinkedIn Lite app is first being rolled out for members in India. LinkedIn may roll out the mobile web version and the Android app in more than 60 plus countries shortly.

## India to host global conference on cyber space in November

- India will host Global Conference on Cyber Space (GCCS) 2017, the world's largest conference on cyber space here on November 23 - 24 and the conference will be inaugurated by Prime Minister. India will be hosting the 5th GCCS in 2017.
- The GCCS is taking place outside Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations for the first time.
- The theme for the GCCS 2017 is 'Cyber4All: An Inclusive, Sustainable, Developmental, Safe and Secure Cyberspace'.
- The GCCS is a prestigious international conference that aims at encouraging dialogue among stakeholders of cyberspace, which has been taking place since 2011.
- Incepted in 2011 in London, the GCCS witnessed a participation of 700 global delegates. It helped in setting up rules and guidelines for the editions to follow. The second conference was held in 2012 in Budapest with focus on relationship between internet rights and internet security and was attended by 700 delegates from nearly 60 countries.
- The third edition of GCCS was held in 2013 in Seoul with participation from 1600 delegates. The conference built on the themes such as economic growth and development, social and cultural benefits, a safe and secure cyberspace, cybercrime and international security.
- The cyber security will be one of the major focus areas in GCCS 2017 especially as the central government is in the process of setting up separate sector specific emergency response centres to ensure cyber security and strengthen technology infrastructure.
- The conference will be an ideal forum for the exchange of ideas with global think tanks and promote closer co-operation among the international community.

## Phobos

- Phobos is one of the smallest moons in the solar system orbiting around the Mars.



- It is the only natural satellite in the solar system that circles its planet in a time shorter than the parent planet's day.
- Red planet Mars has another natural satellite Deimos.
- Phobos is the innermost and larger of the two.
- Recently, NASA's Hubble Space Telescope has beamed back images of the moon Phobos in its orbital trek around the red planet.

### **Government targets indigenous supercomputers**

- The Central Government has planned to build supercomputers with indigenous technology, as a part of 'Make in India' initiative. The Rs 4,500-crore project was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs in last year. The government has plans to make these high-precision computing machines available for scientific researches across the country. It has been planned to produce 50 supercomputers in three phases.
- In the first phase, three supercomputers will be imported. System assemblies for the remaining three will be manufactured abroad, but assembled in India. The six supercomputers will be placed at four IITs -- Banaras Hindu University, Kanpur, Kharagpur and Hyderabad -- Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune, and Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru. Government has goal to setup the computers by end of this year.
- In the second phase, major parts will be manufactured in India. In third phase, almost entire system will be built in India.
- Currently, countries such as the US, Japan, China and the European Union (EU) make up a major share of the top supercomputing machines in the world.
- India started its own supercomputing mission in 1988 under which the first series of Param supercomputers were manufactured. The mission lasted 10 years and since 2000, there has been no major push for the project.
- There are nearly 25 supercomputers in India in different institutes. These are used for varied purposes, including to deduce complex phenomena like weather, climate change, nuclear reactions.

### **BillionAbles app will help find accessible places for disabled people**

- BillionAbles has announced the launch of a new app called BillionAbles, aimed at finding accessible places across India for people with disabilities.
- The app will serve as "India's first Access Guide for persons with special needs."



- BillionAbles app offers filter-based searches as well. People can look for places based on accessibility of ramps, lifts, elevators, step free access, braille and signage, sign language availability, gluten free food, eating aids, assistance available, large print, and more. The results are displayed as a list as well as in Map View.
- BillionAbles app comes with in-app navigation and quick calling features as well.
- Users can rate the app after using it, via rating/review feature. The app gives out reward points to users add listings and submit reviews. These points can be redeemed at selected accessible merchant outlets.
- BillionAbles is a social startup founded by Sameer Garg, who suffered disability.

### **E-Patenting**

- Recently, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has launched the system of issuing e-patent certificates after grant of patent.
- The e-patent certificate will be generated through an automated system by the controller and transmitted to the email address of the authorized applicant/patent agent.
- Thus it eliminates the delays in dispatch of patent certificates, thus ushering in greater transparency.

### **High Altitude Cloud Observatory**

- A high altitude cloud physics observatory has been established at Munnar (Kerala), in Western Ghats.
- High altitude cloud physics observatory at Munnar is used to observe cloud and rain processes over that region with state of the art observations.
- The observatory will enable understanding of rainfall distribution and better characterization of rainfall processes in the numerical models used for prediction of monsoon rainfall.
- Another high altitude cloud physics observatory is functional at Mahabaleshwar (Konkan) in Maharashtra.

### **Reliance Defence launches first two Navy ships Shachi and Shruti**

- Reliance Defence and Engineering Limited (RDEL) launched the first two Naval Offshore Patrol Vessels (NOPVs) — Shachi and Shruti at their shipyard in Pipavav, Gujarat.
- These two NOPVs are the first warships to be launched by a private sector shipyard in India.
- These ships are part of a five-ships being constructed for the Indian Navy under the P-21 project.
- RDEL, subsidiary of Reliance Infrastructure is the first private shipyard in India to obtain defence production licence and sign a contract for defence ships in 2011.
- It is also engaged in construction of one training ship and 14 Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs) for the Indian Coast Guard.
- Previously, RDEL also had built ships for varied clients including offshore support vessels for ONGC, ice bulk carriers for a Norwegian company and offshore deck cargo barges for NPCC-UAE.
- It also has repaired and retrofitted commercial and defence ships as well as mobile oil drilling platforms for international clients.

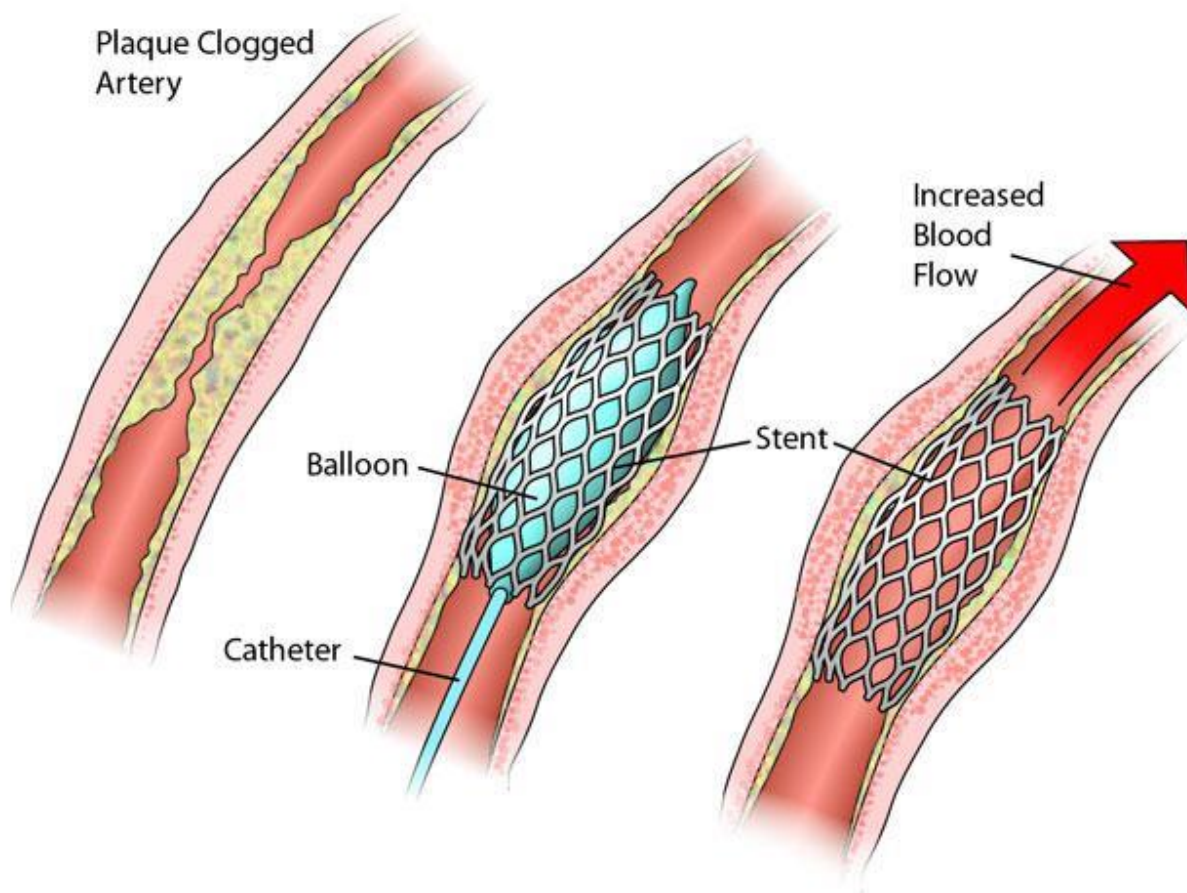
### *Naval Offshore Patrol Vessels (NOPVs)*

- The NOPVs are primarily patrol ships to undertake surveillance of the country's vast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- They also undertake operational tasks such as anti-piracy patrols, maritime security of offshore assets, fleet support operations, coastal security operations, and protection of shipping lanes.
- The five NOPVs constructed by RDEL are armed with a 76 mm Super Rapid Gun Mount (SRGM) system along with two 30 mm AK-630 guns, which provide medium range and short range offensive and defensive capabilities.
- The armaments of these vessels are remotely controlled through an electronic fire control system.

- They are also fitted with 20,000 KW diesel engine-driven propulsion systems and can deliver speeds up to 25 knots.

### **Notification on capping prices of stents: Health Ministry to hospitals**

- The Union health ministry has directed all hospitals, including private ones, not to over-price stents.
- Stents are tiny metal tubes coated with medication, which are inserted into clogged arteries to keep them flowing well. When there was no restriction on the cost of these equipment, private hospital administrations collected lakhs of money from the patients.
- In the notification dated February 13 released by the National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA) , Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, the government slashed by up to 85 percent the prices of life-saving coronary stents.
- The ceiling price of bare metal stents has been fixed at Rs 7,260 per unit and that of drug eluting variety has been fixed at Rs 29,600 per unit. The move of the government is aimed at stopping the menace of over-pricing of coronary stents in various hospitals.





### **'Made in India' Microsoft 'Kaizala' app to boost productivity**

- To enable businesses to become more productive, Microsoft India officially launched 'Kaizala -- a 'made in India' app that has been designed for large group communications and work management, even for remote locations with 2G optimization.
- 'Kaizala' would help organizations seamlessly communicate, collaborate and complete tasks and bring together desktop users and mobile-only users who may be within or outside their organisations.
- 'Kaizala' brings together the two disparate worlds of mobile only messaging apps and a digitally integrated modern workplace.

### **China produces gas from 'flammable ice' under South China Sea**

- China has successfully produced natural gas from methane hydrate, also known as "flammable ice", in an experimental project in the South China Sea.
- Flammable ice consists of methane trapped within water crystals, and has been identified as a potential new gas source for China, with the South China Sea thought to contain some of the world's most promising deposits.
- Japan reported a similar successful production test in May. India, Canada and the United States are also believed to be looking at hydrates as an alternative energy source.

### **DRDO develops India's first unmanned tank, Muntra; rolls it out of Chennai lab**

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed India's first unmanned tank, which has three variants – surveillance, mine detection and reconnaissance in areas with nuclear and bio threats. It is called Muntra (Mission Unmanned TRacked) and has been rolled out of the Chennai lab.
- The tanks have been tested and validated at Mahajan field firing range in Rajasthan. The Muntra tanks have surveillance radar, an integrated camera along with laser range finder, which can be used to spy on ground target about 15 kilometres away.
- Two of these tanks were put on display at an exhibition organised by DRDO as a tribute to former president APJ Abdul Kalam.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Eco-bridges for the movement of tigers**

- In a first of its kind, Telangana State will have eco-friendly bridges over a canal cutting across the tiger corridor linking the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) in the Chandrapur district of Maharashtra with the forests in Telangana's Kumram Bheem Asifabad district.

- The intervention requires the laying of fertile soil to grow grass and plants over the structure, so that fragmentation of the reserve forest is camouflaged.



(Images are for reference only)

- The 'eco-bridges' will be constructed at key spots along the 72 km-long, and at some places over a kilometre wide, right flank canal of the Pranahita barrage in the Bejjur and Dahegaon mandals.
- One of the locations tentatively earmarked for the eco-bridge is a spot close to Sulgupalli in the Bejjur forest range.
- Here, the canal is over a kilometre wide and the need to facilitate the movement of wild animals is quite necessary.
- The concept emerged after the large-scale destruction of pristine forest along the corridor, which would result in cutting off tiger movement between TATR and Bejjur.
- The Telangana Irrigation Department has given its consent for the construction of the eco-bridges.
- Recommendations on the size and locations of the bridges are awaited from the National Board of Wildlife
- In recent years, big cats from the TATR have moved into the mixed and bamboo forests of the Bejjur range via the Sirpur forests.
- The TATR and its buffer area, which are contiguous with the Sirpur forests, boast of a speedily multiplying tiger population, the cause of the frequent migration of tigers into Sirpur and Bejjur.

### Pranhita River

- Pranhita is the largest tributary of Godavari River covering about 34% of its drainage basin conveying the combined waters of the Penganga River, Wardha River and Wainganga River.
- By virtue of its extensive network of tributaries, the river drains all of Vidharba region as well as the southern slopes of the Satpura Ranges.
- It flows along the border of Gadchiroli district in Maharashtra and Adilabad district in Telangana.

### **Northern River Terrapin**

- A terrapin is one of several small species of turtle living in fresh or brackish water.



- The northern river terrapin (*Batagur baska*) is a species of riverine turtle native to Southeast Asia.
- It is classified “Critically Endangered” by the IUCN.
- The species is currently found in Bangladesh (in the Sundarbans), India (parts of West Bengal & Odisha), Indonesia, Cambodia and Malaysia.
- The northern river terrapin is omnivorous and prefers freshwater habitats.
- It moves to brackish river mouths or estuaries in the breeding season (December–March), returning after laying their eggs.
- A captive conservation breeding programme has been implemented in Sunderbans Tiger Reserve to protect the species against natural risks and also facilitate genetic management.

### **Gates on border to allow Indian elephants to visit Bangladesh**

- The government has decided to create 13 corridors by removing fences set up in the Indian-Bangladesh border, to facilitate migration of elephants. Officials of both nations agreed to construct gates along the border to allow ‘free and safe passage’ for wild elephant’s Trans-border migration of animals is a natural process.

- Officials have identified 12 points in Meghalaya and one in Assam along the border, which are used by wild elephants to travel to Bangladesh, where the gates will be constructed.

### **A biodiversity conservation zone in Coimbatore**

- The Singanallur lake has been declared the urban biodiversity conservation zone, the first of its kind in the state.
- The lake was declared the urban biodiversity conservation zone by exercising the city corporation's powers under the twelfth schedule of Article 243W of the Constitution.



- The lake boasts of more than 720 flora and fauna species of which 155 are bird species and 369 plant species. Butterflies, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, dragonflies and other invertebrates have also been recorded in the lake.

## **STATES**

### **Pune: Gopal Krishna Gokhale's house to become a Museum**

- A museum, dedicated to Gopal Krishna Gokhale, will come up on the campus of Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE).
- The museum has a special link to the eminent social leader — it will be located in the house where Gokhale lived in the early 1900s.
- Pune is home to several museums dedicated to national leaders and freedom fighters, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, among others

#### *Gopal Krishna Gokhale*

- Gokhale, one of the prominent names in India's freedom struggle. Along with being a member of the Indian National Congress (INC), he also taught at the Fergusson College after graduating in 1884.
- Under the guidance of his mentor Mahadev Govind Ranade, he was instrumental in establishing the Servants of India Society (SIS) in 1905.
- He was founder of the Deccan Sabha in 1896

- He was exposed to western political thought and became a great admirer of theorists such as John Stuart Mill and Edmund Burke

### **M.M. Goel as Director of RGNIYD**

- Professor Madhan Mohan Goel from Haryana is appointed as Director of Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) located at Sriperumbudur in Chennai.
- Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) is a public sector enterprise established in year 1993.
- RGNIYD is an Institute of National Importance by the Act of Parliament functioning under Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India.
- RGNIYD functions as a resource centre offering academic programmes at Post Graduate level encompassing various dimensions of youth development, engaging in seminal research in the vital areas of youth development and coordinating Training Programmes for state agencies and the officials of youth organisation.
- RGNIYD plays vital role in designing training schemes for National Service Scheme (NSS), Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and other youth organisations.
- It is a coordinator and central agency for training youth in urban, rural and tribal areas.

### **TR Zeliang sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Nagaland**

- Naga People's Front leader and ruling DAN chairman TR Zeliang was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Nagaland.
- Nagaland People's Front is the ruling party in Nagaland. Last February, Zeliang had stepped down from Chief Minister post following large-scale violence after several groups opposed holding civic polls in the state with 33 per cent reservation for women.
- Following his resignation, Shurhozelie Liezietsu of Nagaland People's Front was selected as acting Chief Minister.
- Governor has directed Zeliang to prove his majority in the assembly. Other ministers will be sworn in after Zeilong proves the majority.
- Zeilong has become Chief Minister after 5 months since he stepped down from the office in February.

### **Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the longest bridge in Odisha**

- The 2081-kilometer-long bridge connects Odisha's capital Bhubaneswar with Cuttack.
- This is the 2nd bridge connecting Bhubaneswar to Cuttack.
- The bridge is named 'Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Setu'.

- The bridge built on Kathajodi river, a tributary of Mahanadi, will not only lessen the distance between Bhubaneswar and Cuttack by 12 km, but will also help to divert traffic and ease the commute.

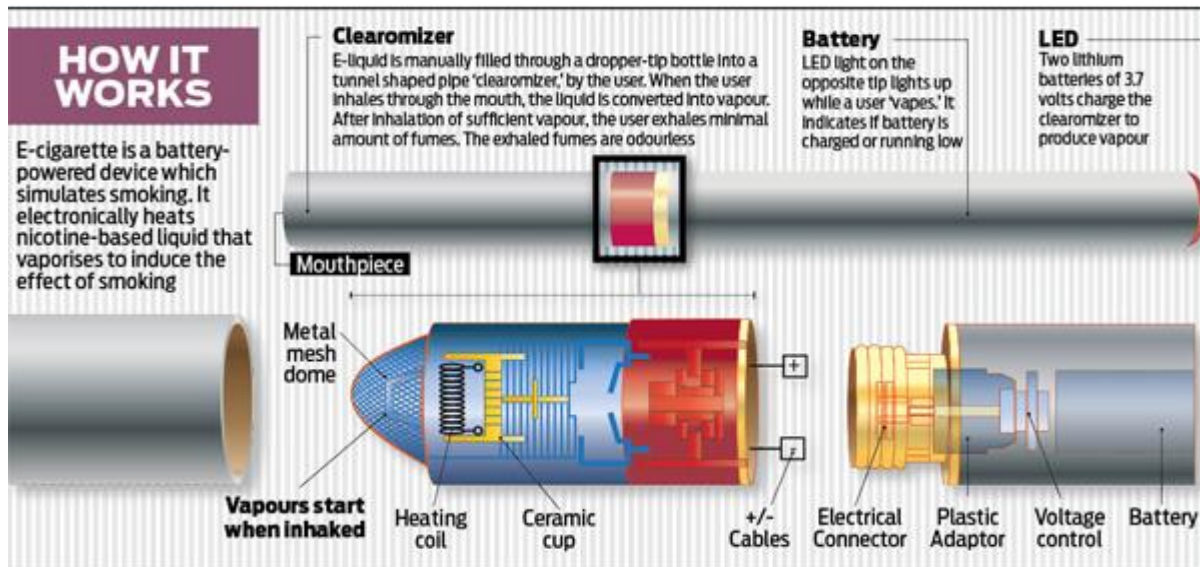
### **Behdienkhlam Festival: Jowai (HQ of West Jaintia Hills)**

(June / July, every year)

- Behdienkhlam Festival is the most celebrated Cultural festival among the Pnars.
- Behdienkhlam (chasing away the Demon of Cholera) is celebrated annually in July after the sowing period, the most important dance festival of the Jaintia tribes.
- This festival is also an invocation to God, seeking his blessings for a bumper harvest and disease free life.
- The women however do not participate in the dancing, as they have an important function of offering sacrificial food to the spirits of the forefathers.

### **J & K govt bans sale of e-cigarettes**

- The Jammu and Kashmir government (on 24/07/17) banned the sale of e-cigarettes in the State with immediate effect.



### Cost of a nicotine-fix

E-cigarettes work out to be cheaper than tobacco-based cigarettes, costing up to three times less than the latter. An e-cigarette can hold up to 2ml of liquid at a time. The process of taking in e-cigarette vapour is called 'vaping.' Users can 'vape' up to a hundred times in a 2ml refill

### Tobacco-based cigarettes

**₹150** One packet of 20 cigarettes  
**₹4,500** Monthly cost

E-cigarettes available in flavours like mint, chocolate, strawberry and tobacco

**One-time cost of a device that lasts 6 months: Rs500 to Rs3,000**

Monthly cost of flavoured liquid: Rs1,000

### # twitterbox

#### #eCigarettes

Derek Flad@Flad02 Using e-cigarettes in public buildings might be this generations socks and sandals #pureclass #getbetter

Nathan Rabin@nathanrabin Stephen Dorff is to Jack Nicholson what e-cigarettes are to Marlboro Reds.

Teri Green@TeriGreenUSA e-Cigarettes are just #cancer by another name. #ecigarette #cigarettes

ROGER BEZANIS@RogerBezanis If we talk about E-cigarettes to JUNK FOOD, we talk about added foreign ingredients that build in the system sickening it.

Xian@Nico098 E-cigs might not be safe after all. Although, it is much safer than cigarettes but it might also contain toxic compound when inhaled.

The Raymie @TheRaymie Haven't had a cigarette in nearly 2 weeks. Loving life. #vaping #ecigarettes

ROGER BEZANIS @RogerBezanis Lymphoma is now the leading cancerous result of Vaping and E-Cigarettes, lawyers are building class action suits as you read this

Steve Christie @schristieauthor Repeat after me...NICOTINE IS NOT TOBACCO, NICOTINE ON ITS OWN IS NOT DEADLY...I MUST LEARN TO DIFFERENTIATE! Feel free to share! #ecigs

Fred K @gotsteeem As long as cigarettes are legal for sale to adults, so should #ecigs and our ability to choose which we as adults care to use. I choose ecig.

### After 10 years of smoking, he switched to e-puffing

It has been two years since Akshay Chauhan, 34, (name changed), has switched to e-cigarettes. The Malad resident feels that it has been a wise decision. "Having been addicted to tobacco-based cigarettes for over 10 years, I used to consume up to 20 a day. After being afflicted by chronic cough, I worried for my health and started searching for a less harmful alternative. It is then that I switched to e-cigarettes," he told dna.

He sources e-cigarettes from the US. In a bid to advocate its use, he said, "I was apprehensive initially of using e-cigarettes as I did not know of how much harm they cause. While cigarettes have harmful tar and produce smoke, e-cigarettes only vaporise nicotine. They seem less harmful."



### What is World Health Organization's stand?

Increasing popularity of e-cigarettes, or Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), threatens to undermine years of hard work done in tobacco de-addiction. The argument for ENDS is that they don't contain the toxic byproducts found in cigarettes, such as tar, and don't produce smoke. But the fact is that there is very little research on ENDS and no convincing evidence that they are effective as a "quit-smoking device".

WHO calls for regulations to prohibit addition of flavours which may make ENDS more attractive to youths, ban the use of ENDS indoors and in public and workplaces and restrict its advertising, promotion, and sponsorship to ensure adolescents and non-smokers are not targeted.

### How can e-cigarettes harm you?

They contain cancer-causing agents, such as formaldehyde, which in some brands reach concentrations close to that of conventional cigarettes. They deliver nicotine, which contributes to cardiovascular disease.

In severe poisoning cases, people who have downed the nicotine vial can have tremors, convulsions and can later go into coma.

Death may occur due to paralysis of lungs due to intake of an oral dose of 30-60mg; in children, even 10mg of drinking nicotine can cause death.



### The big business of e-cigarettes

In 2005, there was only one manufacturer of e-cigarettes, something that has now evolved to a \$3 billion global business with 466 brands.

Brands, namely US-based Blu and China-based Joyetech, Kangar and Dekang, are major manufacturers of e-cigarettes and sell products internationally through online portals.

Running a Google search for buying e-cigarettes throws up over 20 results. Steamlite.co.in, which operates out of Mumbai Central, Ecigindia.com, a Goregaon-based company, and Slon-based Esutta.com, among other such websites, openly sell e-cigarettes. Further, mobile phone numbers of local paan shop owners, such as Chauraslya Pan Shop or Rehan Pan Shop, that stock e-cigarette brands, can be easily found.

- A complete ban has been imposed on the sale (including online sale), manufacture, distribution, trade, import and advertisement of Electronic Nicotine Delivery System (ENDS)/ e-cigarettes in the State with immediate effect.
- A circular to this effect was issued on 24/07/17 to discourage the consumption of tobacco products by the public, especially the younger generation of the state.

### **Train linking Rameswaram and Ayodhya**

- Prime Minister Modi flagged off weekly express train between Rameshwaram in Ramanathapuram district and Faizabad in Uttar Pradesh. The train connects two pilgrimage centres of Rameswaram and Ayodhya.

### **Unmanned drones to keep watch over forests**

- Tamilnadu is using unmanned drones in surveillance of tiger reserves. A total of 13 tiger reserves have been identified across the country where drones will be used for surveillance. Tamilnadu has 4 tiger reserves namely Sathyamangalam, Mudumalai Anamalai, and Kalakkad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve.
- Wildlife Institute of India will provide training for foot soldiers of forest department on use of these unmanned aerial surveillance systems.
- Since, Sathyamangalam is the largest tiger reserve in Tamilnadu drones were already used on a trial basis.
- In India, unmanned drones were used in Panna Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh for the first time to control wildlife crimes and protect forest resources.
- Unmanned aerial surveillance systems are being used to control wildlife protection and crime prevention in jungles of Sumatra, Borneo, Nepal, China, Scotland, Namibia and many other western countries.
- The unmanned aircraft would collect and transmit visual data on animal movements, poaching activities and instances of forest fire from inaccessible forest terrains on a real-time basis. It will help in checking smuggling of redwood and sandalwood, most valuable resources of Tamilnadu forests. The drones can be used for surveillance, population monitoring of wild animals, crisis management and forest mapping.

## **PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS**

### **Fields Medal Winner Mathematician Maryam Mirzakhani died**

- An Iranian-born mathematician who was the first woman to win the coveted Fields Medal, has died in U.S.
- Ms. Mirzakhani, a Professor at Stanford University in California, died after the bone marrow cancer.
- In 2014, Ms. Mirzakhani won the Fields Medal, the equivalent of the Nobel Prize for Mathematics, which is awarded by the International Congress of Mathematicians.



- The award recognised her sophisticated and highly original contributions to the fields of geometry and dynamical systems, particularly in understanding the symmetry of curved surfaces such as spheres.
- Dr. Mirzakhani was one of four Fields winners in 2014, at the International Congress of Mathematicians in South Korea. Until then, all 52 recipients had been men.
- She was also the only Iranian ever to win the award.
- She had already won the 2009 Blumenthal Award for the Advancement of Research in Pure Mathematics and the 2013 Satter Prize of the American Mathematical Society.

### Fields Medal

- The Fields Medal is a prize awarded to two, three, or four mathematicians under 40 years of age at the International Congress of the International Mathematical Union (IMU), a meeting that takes place every four years.
- The Fields Medal is sometimes viewed as the highest honour a mathematician can receive.
- The Fields Medal and the Abel Prize have often been described as the mathematician's "Nobel Prize".
- The Fields Medal differs from the Abel in view of the age restriction mentioned above, and in its frequency (awarded once every four years).
- The prize comes with a monetary award, which since 2006 has been \$15,000 CAD.
- The colloquial name is in honour of Canadian mathematician John Charles Fields.
- Fields was instrumental in establishing the award, designing the medal itself, and funding the monetary component.

### **Sangita Kalanidhi award for Chitraveena maestro Ravikiran**

- Chitraveena maestro N. Ravikiran has been selected for this year's Sangita Kalanidhi award. Being a child prodigy, he won the scholarship of the Music Academy in 1969.
- He will preside over the 91st annual conference to be held between December 15, 2017 and January 1, 2018.
- Thiruvaidaimarudhur Saharamarao, a name synonymous with the instrument and originally from Maharashtra, used the name Gottuvadhyam as he used a piece of the horn of a bison to play the instrument. He also used ebony wood.
- The Academy's Sangita Kala Acharya awards will be given to mridangist V. Kamalakar Rao and vocalist Radha Namboodhiri.
- Ghatam exponent Sukanya Ramgopal and Othubar Muthu Kandasamy Desikar will get the TTK awards.

- Musicologist award will go to T.S. Sathyavathi
- The Papa Venkatramiah award for violin will be given to Thirvallur Parthasarathy.
- Noted dancer Lakshmi Viswanathan will be conferred the Nritya Kalanidhi award for dance on the day of inauguration of dance festival on January 3.

#### Sangita Kalanidhi award/title

- Sangita Kalanidhi award/title is a prestigious award bestowed annually upon an expert of Carnatic Music by the Madras Music Academy.
- The award's name has been derived from Sanskrit which means treasure of Music and art in English.
- This honour is considered one of the highest awards in Carnatic music.

#### **Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani assumed additional charge of Ministry of I & B (18-July, 2017)**

- Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, Union Minister for Textiles assumed additional charge as Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting.

#### **Indian-origin Canadian YouTube star Lilly Singh appointed UNICEF's newest Goodwill Ambassador**

- Actress, comedian, and author Lilly Singh was appointed UNICEF's newest Goodwill Ambassador.
- Lilly, who is known by her digital alias Superwoman, was in India to meet children and young people being supported by UNICEF, the world's leading children's organisation.
- In her role as a Goodwill Ambassador, Lilly will use her unique digital presence to engage children and young people and empower them to speak out about the challenges they face.
- Lilly has gained a huge fan base of over 11 million YouTube subscribers. In 2017, she released her international and New York Times bestselling book "*How To Be A Bawse: A Guide to Conquering Life*", and was also recently cast in HBO's film adaptation of Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451.
- In June, 2017, Lilly was ranked number one on Forbes Magazine's Top Influencers List in the entertainment category.

#### **AIMA-JRD TATA Corporate Leadership Award: N. Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Sons Ltd**

- Vice President of India M. Hamid Ansari has given the AIMA – JRD Tata Corporate Leadership Award to N. Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Sons Ltd on 18.07.17

### All India Management Association (AIMA)

- The All India Management Association (AIMA) was created as an apex body of professional management with active support of the Government of India and Industry in 1957.

### **Umesh Yadav lands RBI assistant manager's job in Nagpur**

- Umesh Yadav, the fast bowler of the Indian cricket team, has been appointed as Assistant Manager of Nagpur Branch of Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- He has been allotted to the job under reservation for sports quota.

### **Indians won 2 awards at 1st global robotics competition in US**

- A group of seven Indian students has bagged two awards at the first global robotics Olympiad in Washington D.C., US where 157 countries participated.
- The students, who hail from Mumbai, won gold for Zhang Heng Engineering Design Award and bronze for Global Challenge Match at the international robotics challenge organised by FIRST Global in Washington.
- The Indian team was led by 15-year-old Rahesh, the youngest member of the group.
- The 'bot' prepared by Indian team was called 'neutrino'.
- It basically collected orange and blue balls from the ground and sorts them accordingly and also climbs up to 2.5 feet.

### **'FIRST Global' Robotics Challenge**

- FIRST Global is a not-for-profit charity that organizes a yearly international robotics challenge to ignite a passion for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) among more than two billion youths across the world.
- It provides the framework for an Olympics-style robotics challenge where one team from every nation is invited to participate in a global robotics event.
- 'FIRST Global Challenge 2017' organised in Washington D.C. was the inaugural edition of this robotics Olympiad in which 157 countries participated.
- The event will be held in different nations each year.
- Mexico City in Mexico would host the competition next year.

### **Vice President Hamid Ansari releases a book 'Isthmus of Time'**

- Vice President, Hamid Ansari on 21.07.17, released a book 'Isthmus of Time'. The book, which is a collection of poetry, has been authored by Anshuman Gaur, an Officer of the Indian Foreign Service.

## **Foreign ministry spokesperson Gopal Baglay appointed joint secretary in PMO**

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved Gopal Baglay's appointment in the PMO to the post for 3 years. He has been appointed in place of Vinay Mohan Kwatra, who has been already named as India's ambassador to France.
- Baglay is a 1992 batch Indian foreign service (IFS) officer.

### Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) decides appointments to several top posts under the Government of India.
- The committee is composed of the Prime Minister of India (who is the Chairman), the Minister of Home Affairs.

## **Raveesh Kumar: New Spokesperson of the MEA**

Raveesh Kumar set to be appointed by the Ministry of External Affairs as the new spokesperson replacing Gopal Baglay. Before his appointment as the MEA spokesperson, Raveesh Kumar was India's Consul General in Frankfurt, Germany.

### About Raveesh Kumar:

- Born in 1971, Raveesh Kumar is an alumnus of Delhi Public School, Mathura Road and had graduated with a Bachelor's Degree from Hansraj College, Delhi University.
- Kumar who was the Consul General in Frankfurt since 2013 is a fluent speaker of Indonesian official language Bahasa.
- He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1995 and started off his career at the Indian Mission in Jakarta. Following this, he was also posted in London and Thimpu.

## **Former ISRO Chairman U R Rao passes away**

- Former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman and internationally renowned space scientist Professor U R Rao passed away.
- Professor Rao, who served as ISRO Chairman for 10 years during 1984-1994, was inducted into International Aeronautical Federation (IAF) Hall of Fame last year during the closing ceremony of IAF Congress 2016 in Guadalajara, Mexico. Under the 2017 Padma Vibhushan award winning scientist, India carried out at least 20 satellites project including the country's first, Aryabhata.
- Rao was serving as the Chairman of the Governing Council of the Physical Laboratory at Ahmedabad and was the Chancellor of the Indian Institute of Science and Technology at Thiruvananthapuram, according to ISRO. He had also worked as a faculty member at MIT and held the position of Assistant Professor at University of Texas at Dallas. He was inducted into the prestigious "Satellite Hall of Fame" at Washington DC in 2013.

### More than 20 lakh Indians enrolled in quit tobacco initiative, says WHO

- The WHO has said more than 20 lakh people enrolled themselves in the first year of a quit- tobacco initiative of the Indian government. Considering the high interest in quitting among tobacco users, the government launched a bilingual country wide programme in January 2016, and a national toll-free quitline telephone number. Over a year more than 20 lakh people have registered their names.
- An evaluation by the health ministry at the end of the programme's first year, covering over 12,000 registered users, demonstrated an average quit rate of about 7% among both smokers and smokeless tobacco users.
- One way to expand access is to use mobile technology to provide personalised tobacco cessation advice through text messaging. Such method has proved to be efficient and cost-effective.

### India to host 8th Edition of Theatre Olympics in 2018

- India for the first time will host 8th International Theatre Olympics, the biggest carnival of theatre in the world in 2018.
- The Theatre Olympics, being held in India for the first time, is being organised by National School of Drama, under the aegis of Ministry of Culture.
- The country's tryst with the biggest celebration of theatre in the world will take place from February 17 till April 08, 2018 (51-day event) and will be held in 15 cities across India.
- Theme of 8<sup>th</sup> Theatre Olympics is "Flag of Friendship"

#### Theatre Olympics

The Theatre Olympics was established in 1993 in Delphi, Greece, as the first international theatre festival. With the tagline 'Crossing Millennia', this is an initiative to connect the cultural past with the present and future, bringing the richness and diversity of theatre heritage to the experiments and research of contemporary theatre.

Sl. No	Hosting country	Year
1	Greece	1995
2	Japan (Shizuoka)	1999
3	Russia	2001
4	Turkey (Istanbul)	2006
5	South Korea, (Seoul)	2010
6	China (Beijing)	2014
7	Poland (Wroclaw)	2016
8	India	2018

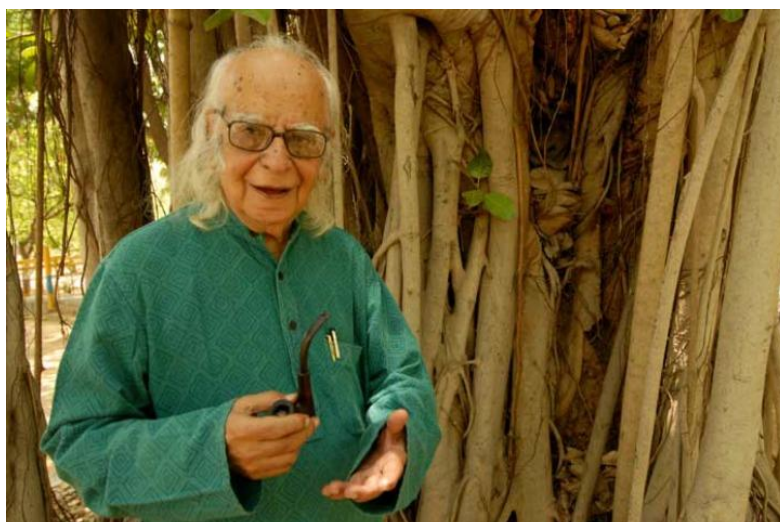
## Google CEO Sundar Pichai joins Alphabet board of directors



- Google's India-born CEO Sundar Pichai (45) has been appointed to the board of directors of 'Alphabet', the parent company of Google.
- Sundar Pichai is presiding as Google's CEO, driving strong growth, partnerships, and tremendous product innovation for Google.
- A long-time Google employee, 45-year-old Pichai, an IIT Kharagpur alumnus is born in Chennai.

## Yash Pal passes away

- Eminent Indian Scientist Professor, former University Grants Commission chairman Yash Pal passed away on July 24<sup>th</sup>.



- Yash Pal started his career at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), had been awarded India's second highest civilian honour, the Padma Vibhushan. He was noted for his contribution to the study of cosmic rays as well as for being an institution-builder.

### Ramon Magsaysay Award

- Gethsie Shanmugam is chosen for Ramon Magsaysay Awards, which is regarded as Asia's version of the Nobel Prize.
- Five other recipients, including Philippine theatre group is receiving the award for this year.
- Ms. Gethsie Shanmugam is a teacher and psychological counsellor for Sri Lanka's Tamil community in conflict zones. Ms. Gethsie Shanmugam counselled war widows, orphans and children traumatised by three decades of brutal civil war in Sri Lanka.

#### Other winners:

S.No	Name of honorees (age)	Country	Purpose
1.	Gethsie Shanmugam (82)	Srilanka	Counselled war widows and orphans to overcome their nightmares
2.	Yoshiaki Ishizawa (79)	Japan	Devoted 50 years of his life to help preserve Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple
3.	Tony Tay (70)	Singapore	Leads the cooking of 6,000 meals a day for the destitute (elderly, migrant workers and low-income families)
4.	Abdon Nababan (53)	Indonesia	Effort to return state-controlled forest land to indigenous communities
5.	Lilia de Lima (76)	Philippines	Opening of hundreds of job-generating export processing zones across the country as head of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority
6.	Philippine Educational Theatre Association	Philippines	Artistic platform for protest when dictator Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law

### Former Minister Ashwani Kumar named for Japanese honour

- Japan has named former Union Minister Ashwani Kumar for its prestigious 'Order of the Rising Sun' award for his contribution to fostering Japan-India ties.
- Kumar has been selected for the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun, which is the highest category of decoration, in recognition of distinguished accomplishments of individuals. Ratan Tata was also conferred the decoration in the past.



- Kumar served as Special Envoy of then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Japan during the visit of the Emperor and Empress of Japan to India in December 2013, and contributed significantly to the success of the visit. He was also the Accompanying Minister to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe when he visited India in 2007, and was Chairman of the Ficci India-Japan Forum of Parliamentarians established during the visit of former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to India in 2005. Kumar has also been contributing to the promotion of Japan-India relations in the field of Science and Technology, as Council member of the STS Forum.

## **SPORTS**

### **Wimbledon**

- Garbiñe Muguruza of Spain won Women's Singles title in Wimbledon defeating Venus Williams of America. This is Muguruza's second Grand Slam.
- Venus Williams missed the bid to set record as Wimbledon's oldest champion in the Open era.
- Muguruza became the second Spaniard woman to win Wimbledon, first being her present day coach Conchita Martinez. Conchita won Wimbledon in 1994 over her opponent Martina Navratilova.

### **Sundar Singh Gurjar becomes first Indian para-athlete to win gold**

- India's Sundar Singh Gurjar claimed gold medal in men's javelin throw event at the World Para Athletic Championships.
- In the World Para Athletic Championships, taking place at London, Sundar Singh achieved his personal best of 60.36m in the men's javelin throw F46. The F-46 category is reserved for athletes who have single arm amputated.



- Sundar Singh Gurjaris first Indian para-athlete to win gold at World Para Athletic Championships.

### **Wimbledon 2017: Roger Federer wins historic eighth Wimbledon title**

- Roger Federer of Switzerland won the championship for the 8th time in gentlemen's singles of the Wimbledon tennis tournament.
- The Championships, Wimbledon, commonly known simply as Wimbledon, was held in London. In gentlemen's singles final event, Roger Federer of Switzerland defeated Marin Čilić of Croatia.
- This makes him a male player with most Wimbledon trophies going past Pete Sampras and William Renshaw, who have 7 trophies.

#### Senior Wimbledon player

- At his 35 years of age, Roger Federer became the senior most player to win Wimbledon Champion in "Open Era".
- Previously, America's Arthur Ashe won Wimbledon when he was 32 years old.
- Federer had won Wimbledon without dropping a set, becoming the first player to win Wimbledon with straight sets since, since 41 years.
- In 1976, Björn Borg had won Wimbledon without ceding a set.

#### Five Years

- Federer, who won Wimbledon earlier in 2012, did not win the title after that, despite having progressed to the final round twice.
- He was defeated both the times by Novak Djokovic.
- This year, Federer was concentrating only on important tournaments.
- He won Australian Open earlier this year

#### 19th Grand Slam

- Roger Federer had won 19 Grand Slam titles - 5 Australian Open, 1 in French Open, 8 in Wimbledon, and 5 in US Open. By this, Federer also holds the record for the highest Grand Slam titles by a player in the men's singles category.

#### Wimbledon So far

- Runner-up in Wimbledon, which Roger Federer won:
  - ❖ 2003 - Mark Philippoussis (Australia)
  - ❖ 2004 - Andy Roddick (USA)
  - ❖ 2005 - Andy Roddick (USA)
  - ❖ 2006 - Rafael Nadal (Spain))
  - ❖ 2007 - Rafael Nadal (Spain)
  - ❖ 2009 - Andy Roddick (USA)
  - ❖ 2012 - Andy Murray (Great Britain)

- ❖ 2017 - Marin Čilić (Croatia)

### **Harinder Pal Sandhu clinches Victoria open squash title**

- Indian squash player Harinder Pal Sandhu won Victoria Open Squash tournament.
- The world 77th-ranked squash player from Mohali downed the Australian top seed Rex Hedrick and clinched championship title.
- Earlier this month, Harinder Pal Sandhu also won Australian Open Squash Championship held in South Australia.

### **Amit Saroha bags silver at World Para Athletics Championships**

- India's Amit Sarohawon silver medal in the men's club throw competition at World Para Athletics Championships held in London.
- Sarohawon registered a personal best of 29.55m in his first attempt and with his third, a new Asian record of 30.25m, which took him to a historic second World Para Championships silver medal.
- Dimitririjevic Zel of Serbia set a world record with a throw of 31.75m, followed by 31.99 in his second throw and won gold medal.

### **3 bronze for India in Asian Junior Judo Championship**

- India won 3 bronze medals at the recently completed Asian Junior Judo Championship in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- The three bronze medals are as follows:
  - ❖ Preeti(Uttar Pradesh) - below 44 kg weight category for the women
  - ❖ Pinkey Balhara(Delhi) – Below 52 kg weight category for women
  - ❖ Tulika Maan (Delhi) - Above 78kg weight category for women.

### **Women's World Cup Cricket**

- Women's World Cup Cricket Tournament was held in England and Wales. In the final match, England defeated India by 9 runs to win the Women's Cricket World Cup for 4<sup>th</sup> time.
- India Women's Cricket team, led by Mithali Raj, played World Cup finals for second time but missed the trophy.
- England team, the Champion in Women's World Cup Cricket was awarded cash prize of 4.25 crore rupee. Indian team, the runner-up, was awarded 2.12 crore rupee cash prize.

### **India to stage WTA event after five years**

- India to stage WTA event after five years with Mumbai Open tournament. It will be an opportunity for players to get some crucial points ahead of the Australian Open. Players ranked between 11 and 50 will compete in the event.

- Meanwhile, the Mumbai Tennis Association, has recently brought 'Chennai Open' India's only ATP to Pune. The event is renamed as 'Maharashtra Open'.

### **India to host 2018 Women's World Boxing Championship and men's edition in 2021**

- In a historic first for Indian boxing, the country will host the men's World Championship for the first time in 2021.
- India will also host the women's World Championship in 2018, confirmed the International Boxing Association (AIBA).

S.No	Event Name	Year	Place
1.	AIBA Men's World Championships	2019	Sochi (Russia)
2.	AIBA Men's World Championships	2021	New Delhi (India)
3.	AIBA Women's World Championships	2018	New Delhi (India)
4.	AIBA Women's World Championships	2019	Trabzon (Turkey)

### **Shiva Thapa and Manoj Kumar won Gold for India at International Boxing Event in Czech Republic**

- Indian boxers ruled the roost at the 48th Grand Prix Usti Nad Labem as they won five gold medals, two silver ones and a bronze.
- World Championships bronze-medalist Shiva Thapa (60kg), former Commonwealth Games gold-medallist Manoj Kumar (69kg), Amit Phangal (52kg), Gaurav Bidhuri (56kg) and Satish Kumar (+91kg) claimed gold medals
- Kavinder Bisht (52kg) and Manish Panwar (81kg), on the other hand, settled for silver medals. Earlier, Sumit Sangwan (91kg) had claimed a bronze after going down in the semi-finals

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Customer Satisfaction Index Survey: Raipur Swami Vivekananda Airport ranked first**

- Raipur's Swami Vivekananda Airport was ranked first in Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Survey among 49 airports in the country.
- It was followed by Udaipur (2nd), Amritsar (3rd) and Dehradun (4th) airports.
- This is the third consecutive time in the past two years, Raipur airport has received this recognition.

### CSI survey

- Customer Satisfaction is one of the key performance objectives of Airport Authority of India (AAI) which is evaluated through CSI survey conducted by an independent agency commissioned by AAI.
- The survey covers a wide range of parameters like transportation, passenger facilities, cleanliness and parking etc.
- The latest CSI survey was conducted for the period of January-June 2017.

### About Swami Vivekananda Airport

- Raipur's Swami Vivekananda Airport is located at Mana between Raipur and Naya Raipur. It is the primary airport in Chhattisgarh.
- It is the 28th busiest airport in India in terms of passenger traffic and 31st busiest by aircraft movement.
- The airport was renamed from Raipur Airport to present name in 2012 as tribute to Swami Vivekananda who spent 2 years of his teenage in Raipur.

### **MSDE celebrated Second Anniversary of Skill India Mission**

- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) celebrated the second anniversary of Skill India Mission on the World Youth Skills day.
- SKILL INDIA Mission is the brainchild of Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi.
- MSDE had launched the SKILL INDIA Campaign on the occasion of the first ever World Youth Skills Day on 15th July 2015.
- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) announced a national training Programme to certify GST practitioners under its flagship scheme of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY).

### Skill India

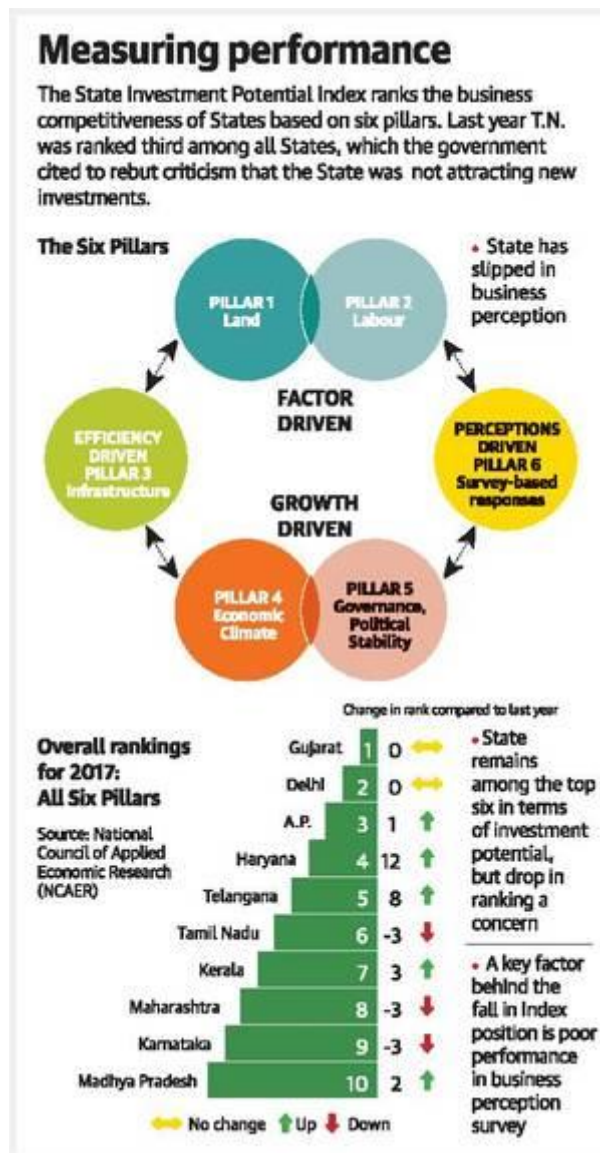
- Launch Date: 15.7.2015
- Objective: To train over 40 crore people in different skills by 2022. It includes- "National Skill Development Mission", "National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015", "Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)" and the "Skill Loan scheme.

### **World Youth Skills Day**

- In December 2014, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring 15th July as World Youth Skills Day.
- The goal is to achieve better socio-economic conditions for today's youth as a means of addressing the challenges of unemployment and under employment.
- The first edition of "India Skills Competition" is to be inaugurated on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day on 15th July, 2016.

### Tamil Nadu drops in NCAER State Investment Potential Index (N-SIPI 2017)

- Tamil Nadu slipped three ranks to the sixth position in the State Investment Potential Index this year (2017) compared to last year.
- Tamil Nadu has lost its position among the top three States in overall ranking, primarily on account of falling short on the pillar relating to perceptions, in which surveyed firms reported facing constraints on land, labour, infrastructure, economy and governance issues.
- The Index released by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) ranks the competitiveness of Indian States on six pillars: land, labour, infrastructure, economic climate, political stability and governance, and business perceptions.



- In 2016, T.N. dropped six places to 18 - the lowest among developed States — in the business reforms rankings released by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion and the World Bank. Its share of FDIs into the country declined to 2.9% in 2016 from 13.1% in 2015.

### *NCAER (National Council of Applied Economic Research)*

- NCAER is India's oldest and largest independent, non-profit, economic policy research institute. It is a New Delhi based non-profit think tank of economics.
- Nandan Nilekani is President of the Governing Body and Dr Shekhar Shah is current Director General of NCAER.
- It was established in 1956 with financial support from the Ford Foundation, Finance Ministry and Tata Sons. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru laid the foundation stone of NCAER campus on October 31, 1959.

### **Global Retirement Security Ranking 2017**

- Recently, the fifth annual Global Retirement Index ranking from Natixis Global Asset Management was released.
- The ranking creates an overall retirement security score for each country from 18 performance indicators that address finances, health care, material well-being, and quality of life.
- Norway has topped the ranking, followed by Switzerland, and Iceland.
- India ranked in 43rd place with no change from the previous year rank.
- USA and Austria saw the biggest annual declines in the year.

### **July 24 - Income Tax Day**

- Since income tax was first levied as a duty in the year 1860 and the authority to levy that duty came into force on July 24 of that year, Income Tax department celebrating July 24, as the annual Income Tax Day.
- The income tax department is one of the largest organizations of the central government with over 58,000 personnel spread across 745 offices in 540 locations throughout the country.
- It has a customer base of about 3.5 crore taxpayers and over 10 crore permanent account number (PAN) holders.

## Books and Authors

Sl. No	Books	Author
1.	India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy (revised and expanded edition of 2007)	Ramachandra Guha
2.	Indira: India's Most Powerful Prime Minister	Sagarika Ghose
3.	The Ministry of Utmost Happiness	Arundhati Roy
4.	Lone Fox Dancing: My Autobiography	Ruskin Bond
5.	How to Be a Bawse: A Guide to Conquering Life	Lilly Singh
6.	An Unsuitable Boy	Karan Johar
7.	Advice and Dissent: My Life in Public Service	Y.V. Reddy
8.	Choices: Inside the Making of Indian Foreign Policy	Shiv shankar Menon

## Kargil Vijay Diwas Day: July 26

- Kargil Vijay Diwas named after the success of Operation Vijay. On this day, 26 July 1999, India successfully took command of the high outposts which had been lost to Pakistani intruders.
- The Kargil war was fought for more than 60 days, ended on 26 July and resulted in the loss of life on both sides, India and Pakistan and with the India regain possessions of Kargil. Kargil Vijay Diwas is celebrated on 26 July every year in honour of the Kargil War's Heroes.
- This day is celebrated in the Kargil - Dras sector and the national capital New Delhi, where the Prime Minister of India, pays homage to the soldiers at Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate every year.

## World Hepatitis Day: July 28

- World Hepatitis Day (WHD) takes places every year on 28 July and brings the world together under a single theme to raise awareness of the global burden of viral hepatitis and to influence real change.
- One of just four disease-specific global awareness days officially endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO), WHD unites patient organisations, governments, medical professionals, civil society, industry and the general public to boost the global profile of viral hepatitis.
- Viral hepatitis is one of the leading causes of death globally, accounting for 1.34 million deaths per year – that's as many as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis or malaria. Together, hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C cause 80% of liver cancer cases in the world.

- 2017 Theme: Eliminate Hepatitis

### **International Tiger Day: July 29**

International Tiger Day is an annual celebration to raise awareness for tiger conservation, held annually on 29 July. It was created in 2010 at the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit. The goal of the day is to promote a global system for protecting the natural habitats of tigers and to raise public awareness and support for tiger conservation issues.

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