

# TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM CURRENT AFFAIRS – NOVEMBER, 2017

[www.tnpscthervupettagam.com](http://www.tnpscthervupettagam.com)



**SHANKAR IAS ACADEMY™**

Plot No.1742, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 18th Main Road, Anna Nagar, Chennai – 600 040.

Phone : 044-26216435, 64597222, 4353 3445, Mobile : 94441 66435

[www.shankariasacademy.com](http://www.shankariasacademy.com)



# SHANKAR IAS ACADEMY

THE BEST IAS ACADEMY IN SOUTH INDIA SINCE 2004

REFLECTION OF 37/75  
QUESTIONS IN  
TNPSC GROUP II A (2017)  
GENERAL STUDIES PAPER  
(EXCLUDING MENTAL ABILITY)  
FROM OUR TEST SERIES

REFLECTION OF 50/100  
QUESTIONS IN  
TNPSC GROUP II A (2017)  
GENERAL TAMIL PAPER  
FROM OUR TEST SERIES

## **MUCH AWAITED TNPSC GROUP I PRELIM TEST SERIES Coming SOON....**

**Both Class room and online  
programmes  
available**

**Total Tests - 36**  
13 - Foundation Tests  
23 - Core Tests  
Recorded  
Discussion Videos

**Test Centers:**  
Anna Nagar, Adyar,  
Madurai, Salem

# CONTENT

TNPSC BITS .....	4
TAMILNADU .....	6
NATIONAL .....	12
INTERNATIONAL .....	43
ECONOMY.....	52
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY .....	66
ENVIRONMENT .....	73
STATE .....	80
PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS.....	86
SPORTS .....	95
IMPORTANT DAYS.....	102
MISCELLANEOUS .....	110

## **TNPSC BITS**

- ❖ Veteran actor Sharmila Tagore was honoured with 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award by PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) for her contribution in the field of cinema.
- ❖ Neelmani N. Raju was appointed as Karnataka's first woman Director General and Inspector General of Police (DG and IGP).
- ❖ Mass attacks of ransomware called "Bad Rabbit" were observed recently in Russia. The Bad Rabbit attack had mainly affected Russia, also caused flight delays at Odessa airport in Southern Ukraine and disrupted electronic payments in Kiev Metro.
- ❖ In response to Chinese aggression of road infrastructure near LAC in Ladakh, Border Roads Organisation constructed the world's highest motorable road going through a pass at a height of over 19,300 feet, connecting Chisumle and Demchok villages.
- ❖ The International Boxing Association (AIBA) has named M.C. Mary Kom the AIBA Ambassador for the Women's Youth World Championships to be held in Guwahati from November 19 to 26.
- ❖ Tropical storm has intensified into a typhoon (cyclone) named 'Damrey' over the South China Sea, which is cyclone number 12 of the year with the equivalent strength of a Category 2 hurricane, hit the Vietnam's coast.
- ❖ 'Fake news', a term popularised by U.S. President Donald Trump, has been named the word of the year by Collins dictionary due to its widespread use around the world. The U.K based lexicographer found that the use of "fake news" registered a 365% rise in the last 12 months.
- ❖ The 2017 World Youth Forum, 5-day event was inaugurated by the President of Egypt Mr. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi held at Sharam El Shiekh in Egypt. From India, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Col Rajyavardhan Rathore had participated in the forum.
- ❖ Indian Army launched an independent and fully-integrated Joint Training Node (JTN) at Umroi cantonment in Shillong, aims at hosting foreign armies in joint military exercises. It is the first of its kind in eastern command.
- ❖ The government appointed Hasmukh Adhia, 1981 batch IAS officer, as the Finance Secretary. He is currently serving as the Revenue Secretary and is the senior-most in the Finance Ministry.
- ❖ The 23rd conference of the UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) is under way in Bonn. The India Pavilion at COP 23 was inaugurated by Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, at Bonn in Germany. India's theme for COP 23 "Conserving Now, Preserving Future".
- ❖ Twitter has increased the number of characters in tweets from 140 to 280 for the majority of users. However, users tweeting in Chinese, Japanese and Korean will still have the original limit.

- ❖ Indian short film 'The School Bag', has won the Best Short Film Award at the South Asian Film Festival of Montreal (SAFFM) in Canada.
- ❖ Recently China commemorated the 151st birth anniversary of Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of the Republic of China (ROC) following the overthrow of the Qing dynasty (the last imperial dynasty of China) during the years leading up to the Xinhai Revolution.
- ❖ Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has launched three new apps - Mycall app, MySpeed app and Do not disturb (DND).
  - MyCall app - crowdsourced voice call quality monitoring
  - MySpeed app - to obtain test-data from users in all service areas
  - 'Do not disturb (DND 2.0) app - to avoid unsolicited commercial communication/telemarketing calls/SMS, the sector regulator.
- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, headed by PM, has approved the appointment order of Scientist Vijay Prasad Dimri, as the president of the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC), issued by DoPT. IGC is a global platform for advancement of earth science, to be held in New Delhi in 2020.
- ❖ India Road Assessment Programme (IndiaRAP) was unveiled by Global Charity to rate highways' safety levels [five-star roads (safest) to one-star roads (least safe)] and to eliminate the most unsafe roads. The programme is supported by FedEx Express and will be hosted by Asian Institute of Transport Development.
- ❖ Ministry of Power launched Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana – 'Saubhagya' Web Portal (<http://saubhagya.gov.in>). The web portal aims to ensure transparency as well as accelerate household electrification in rural as well as urban areas in the country.
- ❖ Nagaland became the first among the North Eastern states to launch Point of Sale (PoS) for electricity bill payment.
- ❖ The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has been asked to frame hallmarking standards for jewellery made from 24 carat gold as the government is planning to make hallmarking (quality certification) of 24 carat gold mandatory. At present, there are BIS standards for hallmarking of jewellery made from 14, 18 and 22 carat gold.
- ❖ Recently Supreme Court has said that certificate of residency issued by the gram panchayat is not a valid document to register in National Register of Citizenship (NRC) where some refugees tried to register their names in NRC by using gram panchayat issued Residency documents. SC said that central government issued documents are only primary while others are secondary.
- ❖ Emmerson Mnangagwa is to be sworn in as Zimbabwe's President, following the Military coup and resignation of Robert Mugabe after 37 years of authoritarian rule. Mugabe is the main leader of the southern African nation

to fight against Britain for independence and which got its independence in 1980.

- ❖ India has sent a proposal to the United Nations (UN) for declaring the year 2018 as 'International Year of Millets'. The country's proposal was sent to the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres by Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh.
- ❖ Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas had organised a consultative workshop on New National Policy on Biofuels & Pradhan Mantri Ji-Van Yojana (VGF for 2nd Generation Ethanol Bio Refineries) for inviting suggestions for drafting a suitable roadmap for Biofuels in India.
- ❖ India's biggest oil refinery is proposed on the western coastline near Rajapur tehsil of the Ratnagiri district in Maharashtra.
- ❖ The world's biggest nuclear power project, the proposed 9900 MW Jaitapur Nuclear Power Project (JNPP) is on the way of construction in Rathnagiri district of Maharashtra. If built, it would be the largest nuclear power generating station in the World by net electrical power rating.
- ❖ K. M. Cherian, chairman of Frontier Lifeline Hospital and Dr. KM Cherian Heart Foundation, was honoured with the 'Best Transplant Expert Award' by Chief Minister of TN for contribution to organ transplant.
- ❖ Judge Shatrughan Pujari was sworn in as Judge of the Madras High Court. He has been transferred from the High Court of Orissa to Madras High Court.
- ❖ Karen Pierce, the Foreign Office (FCO) political director, has been appointed UK ambassador to the United Nations, the first woman to be given the most prestigious post in the British diplomatic service since the UN's formation in 1945.

## **TAMILNADU**

### **Group IV & VAO Exam to be conducted as a single exam - TNPSC**

- ❖ TNPSC announced its decision to conduct both the Group IV & VAO exam as a single exam and the desired post will be given to them through interview.
- ❖ The educational qualification prescribed for the exams, conducted through TNPSC for the various posts of Group IV & VAO is merely SSLC.
- ❖ The cost of conducting the two exams separately costs around 15 crores each. It causes additional wastage of money, man power and time.

### **Mobile app for better ambulance services launched**

- ❖ Aiming at improving the response time of 108 ambulances in the state, which is already better than the national average, the Tamilnadu government unveiled a mobile-based app, 'Avasaram 108.'
- ❖ The app will help ambulances efficiently navigate their way to the caller's exact location at the earliest.
- ❖ This has been designed in such a way that the callers would be able to inform the ambulance even without internet. An SMS is sent to the responder with the latitude and longitude.

### **Ordinance enabling single-window nod for industries promulgated**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu government launched an online portal for single window clearance facility for investors planning to invest in the state.
- ❖ Chief Minister of Tamilnadu launched the portal "www.easybusiness.tn.gov.in" at the secretariat, that would integrate 11 departments and offer 37 services online
- ❖ The portal can be used for ,
  - ✓ Submission of applications
  - ✓ Payment of fees
  - ✓ Downloading approved application
  - ✓ Renewal of clearances and for availing 37 types of services from different departments of the government.
- ❖ The government also promulgated the Business Facilitation Ordinance and notified the rules for the fresh law.
- ❖ The State government has followed the recommendations of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion in the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry in the Business Reform Action Plan on the enactment of a legislation on the timelines for getting various clearances.

#### **Nodal agency**

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Industrial Guidance and Export Promotion Bureau will be the nodal agency at the State level in respect of large industries (Investments more than ₹10 crore).
- ❖ In the case of small and medium industrial units (investment up to ₹10 crore), the office of the Regional Joint Director of Industries and Commerce will be the nodal agency for Chennai district and the district-level District Industries Centres for other districts.

### **Tamil Nadu's bird 'record' hits one-million mark**

- ❖ According to the eBird India Portal, a platform designed for birders to record their sightings, The State's bird 'record' —the observation of a particular species at a particular date, time and place, has reached one million,
- ❖ This record has made Tamil Nadu only the third State to achieve this distinction after Kerala and Karnataka.
- ❖ Coimbatore tops the list with most number of records and Kancheepuram comes second in the list.

### **DIPP inks pact with Anna University to set up 2nd tech support centre**

- ❖ The (DIPP-Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion) has signed an agreement with Anna University to set up a Technology and Innovation Support Center (TISC) under WIPO's TISC programme in Chennai.
- ❖ This will be the second centre in the country to be set up under the World Intellectual Property Organisation's (WIPO) TISC programme.
- ❖ It will be established at the Centre for Intellectual Property Rights (CIPR), Anna University in Chennai.
- ❖ WIPO's TISC programme provides access to high quality technology information and related services to entrepreneurs in developing countries helping them to exploit their innovative potential and to create, protect and manage their Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)

### **GIS based drone mapping**

- ❖ The Chennai Corporation started a project for mapping of utilities and private properties using drones based on a Geographical Information System (GIS).
- ❖ Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), commonly known as drones.
- ❖ Unlike satellite imagery, mapping via drone imaging will help the corporation identify properties from a low altitude of 60m (197 feet) resulting in high resolution images that are accurate to within 5cm.
- ❖ A more detailed digital mapping and a GIS based on the mapping would help plan the development of civic amenities.
- ❖ The 3D model will provide exact details of the nature of construction (or building). The main purpose is to increase revenue gained via property tax as often buildings are under-assessed.



### **First digital village in Tamil Nadu**

- ❖ Ammanur, a village located in the district of Kanchipuram, has become the 1st digital village of the state of Tamil Nadu with over 1000 residents availing the Wi-Fi facility in the village.
- ❖ The free Wi-Fi facility was arranged with the efforts of BSNL and using the development funds allotted for the parliament constituency.
- ❖ The farmers in the village avail the Wi-Fi facility to access various details including the prices of seeds, fertilizers, etc., electricity charges, weather conditions and forecast, and agriculture-related information, and about the latest technologies adopted in the agriculture field.

### **Mamallapuram stone sculptures get GI tag**

- ❖ The Geographical Indication (GI) Registry has presented the Geographical Indication Tag status to Mamallapuram hand crafted stone sculptures of Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The exquisite rock-sculpting techniques exhibited in Mamallapuram dates back to early 7th century CE.
- ❖ Mamallapuram was named after the king Narasimhavarma Pallava, who was also known as Mamallan (great wrestler).
- ❖ Sculptors use blue metal for stone sculptures instead of granite which has high density and very costly.

#### ***Pallava dynasty***

- ❖ The Pallava dynasty, which ruled the area between 6 and 9th centuries A.D., is responsible for the development of port town as a centre of art and architecture.
- ❖ Mahendravarman (AD 580-630), his son Narasimhavarman I or Mamalla (AD 630-668), Paramesvaravarman (A.D. 672-700) and Narasimhavarman II or Rajasimha (A.D. 700-728) had contributed the most of sculptures.

#### ***GI tags***

- ❖ Tamil Nadu is first among the states in India with regard to the number of GI tags for its products, while Uttar Pradesh comes second.
- ❖ Darjeeling Tea was the first Indian product to get a Geographical Indication.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu has submitted 50 products of which 24 have been approved by the registry and the most famous among these is the Kanchipuram silk.
- ❖ It is notable that Dindigul Lockers has not yet got its GI so far.

### **Organ donation- Tamil Nadu**

- ❖ For the third time in a row, the State had bagged the first place in organ transplantation in the country.
- ❖ The award was presented by the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO).
- ❖ In Tamilnadu under Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme, organ transplants are carrying out both in government and private hospitals.
- ❖ For this purpose, "TRANSTAN" (transplant authority of tamilnadu), a separate body was set up and it was given autonomy.
- ❖ This is the India's first organ transplantation authority.

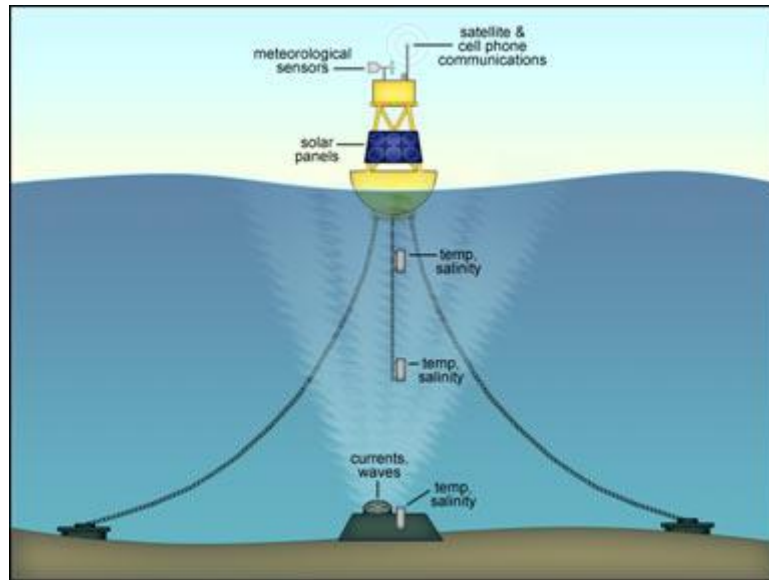
### **Chennai in UNESCO's Creative Cities list**

- ❖ Chennai, capital city of Tamil Nadu, has been included in the list of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network for its rich musical tradition.
- ❖ So far, 64 cities from 44 countries have been designated in this list for their contribution to music.
- ❖ With inclusion of these cities, total count of UNESCO Creative Cities Network has now gone up to 180 cities in 72 countries.
- ❖ Chennai is the third Indian city on the list of UNESCO Creative Cities list after Jaipur (added as City of Crafts and Folk Art) and Varanasi (added as City of Music) were added last year.
- ❖ UNESCO's Creative Cities Network was "created in 2004 to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development."
- ❖ Gastronomy, music, crafts and folk art, media arts, design, film and literature are the seven fields of creativity highlighted by the network.
- ❖ Some of the other cities included along with Chennai are Alba (Italy) for gastronomy, Almaty (Kazakhstan) for music and Auckland (New Zealand) for music.

### **India's first wave-powered navigational buoy**

- ❖ India's first wave-powered navigational buoy, developed by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), was launched in Chennai.
- ❖ The buoy, deployed at Ennore Kamarajar Port by Ministry of Earth Sciences on the eve of executive committee meeting of IEA (International Energy Agency)-OES (Ocean Energy Systems).

- ❖ A buoy is an anchored float serving as a navigation mark, to show reefs or other hazards, or for anchorage.
- ❖ This buoy for guiding ships, is powered by wave energy while conventional ones use solar power, it stores energy generated by waves in a battery.
- ❖ It will guide ships in and out of ports, navigate through a designated channel.



- ❖ The buoy would be able to record data on wind speed and direction and various other aspects, which would be relayed to port authorities.

### IEA-OES meeting

- ❖ 33rd executive committee meeting of International Energy Agency-Ocean Energy Systems Collaboration Programme (IEA-OES) held recently.
- ❖ Ocean Energy Systems Technology Collaboration Programme is an intergovernmental collaboration between countries.
- ❖ It operates under the framework established by the International Energy Agency.
- ❖ India became a member of the forum in April 2017. By this India would have access to advanced research and development teams, technologies and data in the area of ocean energy across the world.

## **NATIONAL**

### **Parliamentary standing committee on defence**

- ❖ B C Khanduri will head the recently constituted parliamentary standing committee on defence.
- ❖ The committee will examine operational preparedness of armed forces and review accidents involving strategic defence assets and also assess the procurement policy relating to defence equipments and look into quality of ration provided to forces especially in border areas.
- ❖ The main objective of the standing committees is to secure more accountability of the Executive (that is., Council of Ministers) to the Parliament, particularly financial accountability.
- ❖ Each standing committee consists of 31 members (21 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha).
- ❖ The term of office of each standing committee is one year from the date of its constitution.
- ❖ Out of the 24 standing committees, 8 work under the Rajya Sabha and 16 under the Lok Sabha. And parliamentary standing committee on defence is under Lok Sabha.

### **Life term for government officials indulging in torture**

- ❖ The Law Commission in latest 273rd report has recommended government to ratify Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and also recommended life term imprisonment for public servants convicted of torture and proposed Prevention of Torture Bill, 2017.
- ❖ The report submitted to the law ministry said the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973, and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, require amendments to accommodate provisions regarding compensation and burden of proof.

### **UNCAT- United Nations Convention Against torture**

- ❖ United Nations Convention against Torture (UNCAT) is an international human rights treaty, under the purview of UN that aims to prevent torture and other acts of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment around the world.
- ❖ The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment is also known as United Nations Convention against Torture.
- ❖ It is ratified by 161 nations including Pakistan, China and Afghanistan.
- ❖ India signed this convention in 1997 but yet to ratify it.

- ❖ India is among the only nine countries worldwide which are yet to ratify this crucial convention.

### **Rashtriya Ekta Shivir (National Integration Camp)**

- ❖ Rashtriya Ekta Shivir (National Integration Camp) was organized recently as part of Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat by Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS).
- ❖ The objective of the National Integration camp is to target and promote unity in diversity of nation.
- ❖ The most unique feature of this camp is that the students from one state of the country represent the cultural diversity of another state of the country.
- ❖ It represents the socio-economic aspects along with the art and culture of various states.

### **Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan**

- ❖ Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan (VVM) is a nationwide science talent search examination organized by Vigyan Prasar.
- ❖ It is a unique initiative to give a boost to the learning of science, technology and mathematics among the youth-especially the school students.
- ❖ Vigyan Prasar is an autonomous organisation under Department of Science and Technology and NCERT of Ministry of Human Resources and Development and Vijnana Bharati.
- ❖ Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA) is one of the largest science movements in the country led by eminent scientists.
- ❖ It aims to inculcate and generate scientific temper, foster excellence in students and nurture and mentor them for their careers in pure sciences.

### **Speed up trial of politicians-SC**

- ❖ Taking a step towards electoral reforms, the Supreme Court asked the government to frame a central scheme for setting up special courts across the country to exclusively try criminal cases involving 'political persons.'

## Tackling graft

This is the SC's "third chapter" in its fight against criminalisation of politics

**First chapter (July 2013):** In Lily Thomas verdict, it held that legislators will incur immediate disqualification on conviction. It struck down a provision protecting their membership if they filed an appeal against their conviction within 90 days

**Second chapter (March 2014):** In Public India Foundation case, SC ruled that criminal trials, especially those dealing with corruption and heinous offences, involving elected representatives should be completed in a year, thus putting a deadline on trial process



**Third chapter (Nov. 2017):** On a petition seeking a life ban on convicted lawmakers, it said the Centre should set up a mechanism for speedy trial of lawmakers

 In the past 25 to 30 years, we have seen investigative agencies take no action against such MLAs and MPs. They tend to get back to their same positions. Is it not time to do more?

— SUPREME COURT TO CENTRE RECENTLY

### Quick facts

- ❖ There are around 1581 criminal cases pending against MPs and MLAs at the time of the 2014 elections.
- ❖ In the current 16th Lok Sabha one third members have been registered with criminal cases.
- ❖ As per Representation of People Act 1951, if a elected representative is convicted of any criminal offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than 2 years shall be disqualified from the date of such conviction and shall be continue to disqualified for further period of 6 years since the representative release.
- ❖ In 2013 Lilly Thomas case verdict, Supreme Court held that legislators will incur immediate disqualification on conviction. It struck down a provision for an appeal against their conviction within 90 days.
- ❖ In 2014 Public India Foundation case, Supreme Court ruled that criminal trials, especially those dealing with corruption and heinous offences, involving elected representative should be completed in a year. Thus putting a deadline on the trial process.

### President of India inaugurates Global Clubfoot Conference

- ❖ The President of India inaugurated the Global Clubfoot Conference being organized by the CURE India in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, in New Delhi.

### Clubfoot

- ❖ Clubfoot is one of the most common orthopaedic birth defects where one or both feet are rotated inwards and downwards.
- ❖ It can cause permanent disability if not treated early.

- ❖ The cause of clubfoot is unknown, but it may be a combination of genetics and environment.

### **Exercise Blue Flag**

- ❖ Blue Flag is a bi-annual multilateral exercise which aims to strengthen military cooperation amongst the participating nations.
- ❖ This year Indian Air Force will be a part of this exercise which is going to be conducted in Israel.
- ❖ This is the first time the Indian Air Force is operating with Israeli Air Force in a multilateral exercise setting.
- ❖ The exercise would provide a platform for sharing of knowledge, combat experience and in improving operational capability of the participating nations.

### **Cabinet approves MoU between India and Armenia**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has given its approval for signing and ratifying an Agreement between India and Armenia on cooperation and mutual assistance in customs matters.
- ❖ The agreement will provide legal framework for sharing of information and intelligence between Customs authorities of the two countries.

### **21st World Congress of Mental Health**

- ❖ The President of India inaugurated the 21st World Congress of Mental Health being organised by the World Federation for Mental Health in partnership with Caring Foundation and other institutions in New Delhi.
- ❖ The World Congress of Mental Health is taking place in India for the first time following our National Mental Health Survey 2016 found that close to 14 per cent of India's population required active mental health interventions.
- ❖ The World Congress will have sessions on yoga, meditation and traditional approaches to mental health.

### **Indo – Kazakhstan Joint Exercise “Prabal Dostyk 2017”**

- ❖ The bilateral military exercise “Prabal Dostyk – 2017” between India and Kazakhstan began at Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ ‘Prabal Dostyk’ meaning ‘Robust Friendship’ is the second edition of the joint military training exercise. It was held in Karaganda region of Kazakhstan in September 2016.

- ❖ It is a 14-day joint training exercise and it aims to build and promote bilateral army-to-army relations and exchange skills and experiences between Kazakhstan and the Indian Army.
- ❖ The training contingents comprise of platoon strength from the 11th Gorkha Rifles of the Indian Army and a similar strength of the Kazakhstan Army.

### **Maximum age of joining NPS**

- ❖ The Ministry of Finance increased the maximum age of joining the National Pension System (NPS) from the existing 60 years to 65 years under NPS - Private Sector (i.e. corporate employees and self-employed).
- ❖ The move by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) will enable people aged between 60 and 65 years to join NPS and make contributions to it until they turn 70.
- ❖ Until now, individuals between 18 and 60 years of age could join NPS.
- ❖ NPS was introduced in 2004 for government employees and opened to every citizen in 2009.

### **Lieutenant Governor is the head of administrative power in Delhi-SC**

- ❖ A five-judge bench, led by CJI Dipak Misra said the Constitution prima facie gave the Delhi lieutenant governor primacy in administrative matters of the capital
- ❖ Article 239AA identifies land, law and order and police as the Centre's domain to be administered through the LG, while leaving other matters to the city government.

### **India offers to share real-time maritime data**

- ❖ India has made an offer to share intelligence of maritime movements in the Indian Ocean in real-time with 10 Indian Ocean littoral States.
- ❖ This news announced by Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba at the Goa Maritime Conclave (GMC), comes at a time when India gears up to counter China's increased presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- ❖ The Goa Maritime Conclave (GMC) was inaugurated at the Tarang Auditorium of INS Mandovi, Goa.
- ❖ The conclave was aimed at "Addressing Regional Maritime Challenges" wherein the deliberations were focused on
  - Emerging maritime threats and force structuring,
  - Maritime domain awareness,



- Maritime security architecture,
- Maritime security challenges in the Indian ocean region(IOR).
- ❖ The information to be shared includes movement of commercial traffic as well as intelligence.
- ❖ The information sharing is not so much for conventional military purposes but to deal with non-traditional threats arising at sea.

### **World Food India Congress 2017-WFI**

- ❖ The Prime Minister inaugurated the three-day World Food India 2017, at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi.
- ❖ The mega event was organized by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries.
- ❖ To mark the historic World Food Convention hosted for the first time by India, PM launched - Nivesh Bandhu the unique portal or "investor's friend".
- ❖ The theme of WFI 2017 is 'Transforming the Food Economy'.
- ❖ Germany, Japan and Denmark are Partner Countries to World Food India.
- ❖ The portal will help bring together information on central and state government policies, and incentives provided for the food-processing sector.
- ❖ The purpose of WFI 2017 is to transform food economy and realize vision of doubling of farmers' income by establishing India as a preferred investment destination and sourcing hub for the global food processing industry.

### **Deen Dayal SPARSH Yojana**

- ❖ The ministry of communications has launched a Pan India scholarship program for school children called Deen Dayal SPARSH Yojana to increase the reach of Philately.
- ❖ SPARSH -Scholarship for Promotion of Aptitude & Research in Stamps as a Hobby
- ❖ Under the scheme of SPARSH, annual scholarships will be awarded to children of Standard VI to IX having good academic record and also pursuing Philately as a hobby through a competitive selection process in all postal circles.
- ❖ To avail this scholarship, a child must be a student of a recognized school within India and the concerned school should have a Philately Club and the candidate should be a member of the Club.

### **Indian Army launches IQMP Software Application**

- ❖ Indian Army has formally launched Integrated Quarter Master Package (IQMP) software application for automating various logistics related functions of an Army Unit.
- ❖ IQMP is web based software developed by Army Software Development Centre in association with TCS Ltd.
- ❖ The application automates various logistics related functions of an Army Unit. The applications will replace numerous legacy applications such as 'Vastra' and 'Quarter Master Package'.
- ❖ The application can be dynamically configured to meet the specific requirements various types of Army units and is capable of sharing information and data with other software applications in the domain of logistics management.

### **U.S. aircraft launch system in INS Vishal**

- ❖ India Navy is going to launch second indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC-II) - INS Vishal, using US based advanced catapult-based aircraft launch mechanisms.
- ❖ It will have to choose between catapult-based aircraft launch mechanism (CATOBAR) and electro-magnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS).
- ❖ CATOBAR is powered by a steam catapult and EMALS uses an electric motor-driven catapult instead.
- ❖ The use of electro-magnetic energy allows the launch of much heavier aircraft and also reduces the stress on the aircraft.
- ❖ INS Vishal, nuclear-powered vessel is a follow up of INS Vikrant class of aircraft carriers.
- ❖ India's first domestic carrier, Vikrant, weighing 40,000 tonnes, is scheduled to be launched by 2018-end.
- ❖ It works on a Short Take-Off But Arrested Recovery (STOBAR) mechanism similar to that in the present carrier INS Vikramaditya.

### **Govt. reconstitutes a Multi-Agency Group to investigate Paradise Papers**

- ❖ Recently, ICIJ has released a document named Paradise papers which is mainly gathered from Apleby, an offshore law firm .
- ❖ The Paradise Papers are set of 13.4 million documents pertaining to tax evasion and offshore investment activities of some of the world's most powerful people and companies from 180 countries.

- ❖ The government reconstituted a Multi-Agency Group led by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) chairman to investigate cases relating to the 'Paradise Papers' data disclosure.
- ❖ Earlier this Multi Agency Group was formed to investigate cases related to Panama leaks.
- ❖ The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), and its Indian partner The Indian Express has released this document.
- ❖ Among 180 countries represented in the data, India ranks 19th in terms of the number of names that feature in the papers.

#### *International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ)*

- ❖ The ICIJ is a global network of more than 200 investigative journalists in 70 countries who collaborate on in-depth in investigative stories, founded in 1997 by respected American journalist Chuck Lewis.
- ❖ Its headquarters is in Washington DC, US.
- ❖ Earlier in 2016, it had released Panama Papers.

### **HRD Ministries Initiatives**

#### *'Chintan Shivir'*

- ❖ Union HRD Minister inaugurated a two-day National Workshop 'Chintan Shivir' organized by Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development in New Delhi.
- ❖ The main objective of the workshop is to provide holistic education relevant for 21st century India.
- ❖ It aims to bring together key stakeholders from various NGOs, private sector and individuals to deliberate on key themes in the education sector.

#### *'Shaala Sarathi'*

- ❖ Ministry of Human Resource Development also launched a State-NGO-CSR Portal – 'Shaala Sarathi'
- ❖ It is a State-NGO-CSR Portal to aid the collaboration among the stakeholders in sharing innovative practices in various schools.
- ❖ Shaala Siddhi - A comprehensive school evaluation system focused on well-defined quality based parameters.
- ❖ It facilitates Schools to make professional judgments for improvement.

### **World's highest bridge on Chenab**

- ❖ The Indian Railways has launched the main arch of the world's highest bridge on the River Chenab in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district.

**Details of the Chenab Bridge project (Highest rail arch bridge in the world):**

- It is 1,315 metres long and 359 metres above the river bed.
- Designed to run trains at a top speed of 100 Kmph, having a design life of 120 years.
- Designed to cope with a wind velocity of 266 Kmph at deck level.
- Designed by Ms WSP (Finland), Ms Leonhart Andra and Partners (Germany) and IIS Bangalore.

**Status of the Udhampur Srinagar Baramulla Rail Line (USBRL) project:**

- **Total length:** 326 Km.
- **Total cost:** Rs. 19,564 crore (Expenditure until May 2016: Rs.13, 546 crore).
- **Katra-Banihal (111 Km):** Work in progress; target for completion in 2019. This section will have 27 tunnels, 37 bridges including 97 kilometres of tunnels and seven kilometres of bridges.
- **Udhampur-Katra (25 Km):** Work completed and commissioned in July 2014.
- **Quazikund-Baramulla (118 Km):** Work completed and commissioned in phases until October 2009.
- **Banihal-Quazikund (18 Km):** Work completed and commissioned in June 2013.

- ❖ The bridge will provide direct connectivity to the Kashmir Valley.
- ❖ The iconic bridge is being constructed on River Chenab on the Katra-Banihal section as part of the flagship Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) Project
- ❖ Chenab Bridge will approximately be five times higher than Delhi's Qutub Minar and 35 metres higher than the Eiffel tower.
- ❖ Chenab river's rail bridge is the highest rail arch bridge in the world.
- ❖ It is 1315 meters long and 395 meters above the bridge.
- ❖ Designed to run trains at a top speed of 100 Kmph, having a design life of 120 years.

**SHe-box Portal**

- ❖ The Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) launched comprehensive SHe-Box (sexual harassment e-box) online complaint Management System for women to lodge complaints of sexual harassment at workplace.
- ❖ The platform enables the women employees to file complaints related to sexual harassment at the workplace.
- ❖ Earlier the portal was launched in July 2017 for women working in central government offices
- ❖ Now it can be accessed by all women who are part of workforce in organised sector across the country.
- ❖ It ensures the effective implementation of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

- ❖ Under the act, it is compulsory for any organisation with 10 or more employees to set up an internal complaints committee (ICC) for addressing complaints of sexual harassment.
- ❖ The complaints filed in the portal will be forwarded to ICC and also paves way for monitoring the progress of the complaint.

### **CIL launches 'Grahak Sadak Koyla Vitaran App'**

- ❖ Coal India Limited (CIL), a public sector undertaking, has launched the 'Grahak Sadak Koyla Vitaran App' for smooth delivery of coal through road for benefiting customers.
- ❖ The app aims to bring transparency in the system of loading programme and despatch of coal through road.
- ❖ The app will allow users to monitor, whether the despatches are made on the fair principle of 'First in First Out' (FIFO).

### **Kolkata-Khulna Train service flagged off**

- ❖ Prime Minister of India, Prime Minister of Bangladesh & the Chief Minister of West Bengal, flagged off Cross Border Train between India & Bangladesh, the Kolkata-Khulna Bandhan Express through video conference from Kolkata station.
- ❖ This is the second Indo-Bangla train service after Maitree Express which runs between Dhaka and Kolkata.
- ❖ They also inaugurated
  - The second Bhairab and Titas railway bridges on Dhaka-Chittagong route over the Meghna and Titas rivers respectively in Bangladesh
  - The railway passenger terminus with end-to-end immigration and customs clearance facilities at the Kolkata station.

### **Second meeting of Island Development Agency**

- ❖ The second meeting of Island Development Agency (IDA), chaired by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh, was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Island Development Agency was setup this year to bring holistic development in 9 islands.
- ❖ It includes four in A&N Islands i.e. Smith, Ross, Long, Avis and five in Lakshadweep i.e. Minicoy, Bangaram, Thinnakara, Cheriyam, Suheli.
- ❖ It aims at promoting and implementing development based on sustainable approach to building a thriving maritime economy of the project islands.

- ❖ It was decided to develop PPP package for the development of Airport in Minicoy Island and promoting of Tuna Fishing Industry for improving livelihoods in Lakshadweep.
- ❖ The agency is headed by Union Home Minister and the projects are being directed by NITI Aayog.
- ❖ Members of IDA include cabinet secretary, home secretary, secretary (environment, forests and climate change), secretary (tourism) and secretary (tribal welfare).

### **IEA Ministerial Meeting 2017**

- ❖ The 2017 IEA (International Energy Agency) Ministerial Meeting was recently held in Paris and the focus of the meeting was on global energy challenges and how they can be overcome.
- ❖ At the Conference, India signed joint work programmes with IEA and other key members of the IEA Family i.e. Brazil, Chile, India, Indonesia and Thailand.
- ❖ IEA is a Paris-based autonomous intergovernmental organization established in the framework of the OECD in 1974 in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis.
- ❖ It acts as a policy adviser to its member states, but also works with non-member countries, especially China, India, and Russia.
- ❖ India recently declared its “Association” status with the International Energy Agency (IEA).

### **DTAA with Hong Kong**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved an agreement between India and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of China for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income.
- ❖ It will also prevent double taxation and provide for exchange of information between them.
- ❖ It will also improve transparency in tax matters and will help curb tax evasion.

### **2nd National Judicial Pay Commission**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved appointment of Second National Judicial Pay Commission (SNJPC) for Subordinate Judiciary in the country.

- ❖ The Commission is to be headed by Justice (Retd) J P.Venkatrama Reddi, former Judge of Supreme Court of India. Shri R. Basant, a former Judge of the Kerala High Court is the Member of the Commission.
- ❖ It will examine the present structure of emoluments and conditions of service of Judicial Officers in the States and UTs.
- ❖ The Commission aims to evolve the principles which would govern pay structure and other emoluments of Judicial Officers belonging to the Subordinate Judiciary of the country.

### **Joint Interpretative Declaration between India and Colombia**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has given its approval for signing the Joint Interpretative Declaration (JID) between India and Colombia.
- ❖ The agreement was signed between them in November 2009 for the promotion and protection of investments between India and Colombia
- ❖ The JID will help to impart clarity on interpretation of existing agreement as it includes interpretative notes to be jointly adopted for many clauses.
- ❖ Generally JIDs play an important supplementary role in strengthening investment treaty regime. Issuance of such statements will have strong persuasive value before arbitration tribunals.

### **Agriculture Hackathon**

- ❖ Vishakhapatnam will host the first-ever agriculture hackathon.
- ❖ It is being organized here by the State government (Andhra Pradesh) in association with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- ❖ The three-day conclave will begin from November 15 where farmers, agriculture experts, and several stakeholders will participate in the deliberations.
- ❖ It will be major international hackathon with delegates from all over the world participating to showcase the latest agriculture technologies and products of companies.
- ❖ Microsoft Corporation co-founder Bill Gates will attend the concluding session of the international summit.

### **National Testing Agency**

- ❖ Union Cabinet has recently approved creation of National Testing Agency (NTA) to conduct entrance examinations for higher educational institutions.
- ❖ It will be registered as a society under the Indian Societies Registration Act.

- ❖ It will act an autonomous and self-sustained premier testing organization chaired by eminent educationist appointed by Ministry of HRD.
- ❖ The setting up of NTA was announced in the union budget of 2017-18.
- ❖ It would initially conduct those entrance examinations which are currently being conducted by the CBSE (NEET, JEE etc).
- ❖ The entrance examinations will be conducted in online mode at least twice a year, giving adequate opportunity to candidates.
- ❖ It will be given a one-time grant of Rs.25 crore from the Government to start its operation in the first year. Thereafter, it will be financially self-sustainable.
- ❖ It will relieve CBSE, AICTE and other agencies from responsibility of conducting the entrance examinations.

### **Frist power plant under PM Ladakh Scheme**

- ❖ The Union New and Renewable Energy Ministry has commissioned 1.5 MW Small Hydro Power (SHP) Plant in Biaras Drass, Kargil area of Jammu & Kashmir.
- ❖ It is the first project to be commissioned under Prime Minister's Ladakh Renewable Energy Initiative.
- ❖ The Biaras SHP project was developed by Kargil Renewable Energy Development Agency (KREDA) under Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC).
- ❖ Ladakh Renewable Energy Initiative aims to minimize dependence on diesel in Ladakh region to meet power requirement by diverting to local renewable sources.

### **Cabinet approves continuation and Restructuring of NRDWP**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved continuation and restructuring of National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP).
- ❖ The purpose of continuation and restructuring is make it outcome-based, competitive and better monitored with increased focus on sustainability (functionality) of schemes to ensure good quality service delivery to the rural population.
- ❖ The programme will cover all the rural Population across the country.
- ❖ NRDWP will be continued co-terminus with 14th Finance Commission cycle till March 2020.
- ❖ It will enable the country to reach the goal of increasing coverage of sustainable Piped Water Supply.



### **Agreement on Agriculture (AoA)**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime approved an MoU between India and the Philippines in agriculture and related fields.
- ❖ The MoU provides for cooperation in fields of
  - Rice production and processing,
  - Bio-organic farming,
  - Solid and water conservation and management,
  - Soil fertility, agro forestry, sericulture, livestock improvement etc.
- ❖ It will improve bilateral cooperation in field of agriculture and will be mutually beneficial to both countries.

### **Child Rights Week - Hausala 2017**

- ❖ It is being celebrated every year by the Ministry of Women and Child Development from 14th to 20th November, 2017.
- ❖ Hausla 2017 is Child Rights Week.
- ❖ It is the period between Children's Day (14th November) and the International Child Rights Day (20th November)
- ❖ It will host an Inter CCI Festival for the children who reside in Child Care Institutions (CCIs) to showcase their talents.
- ❖ UNICEF will be supporting the event.

### **Project Saksham**

- ❖ The Indian Railways will launch the country's largest time-bound "upskilling" exercise named Project Saksham.
- ❖ It aims to upgrade the skillsets of its 13 lakh-strong workforce with a single drive spanning nine months (January 2018 -September 2018).
- ❖ Employees from the rank of a peon to the Railway Board Members and everyone in between will undergo the training.
- ❖ The Railways also sends its officers empanelled in the additional secretary grade for a short course in the Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

### **UGC forbids usage of term "University"**

- ❖ University Grants Commission (UGC) has asked 123 Deemed-to-be-Universities to drop the word 'University' from their names.

- ❖ The move is based on Supreme Court's order that said that the use of word 'University' by Deemed-to-be universities is in violation of the Section 23 of the UGC Act.
- ❖ Institutions that fail to adhere to the order will face necessary action in accordance with the UGC (institutions deemed-to-be-universities) Regulations, 2016.
- ❖ Tamilnadu has 28 Deemed universities.
- ❖ The deemed-to-be Universities have been asked to recommend a replacement word for the word "university" in their institutional name within 15 days of time to the UGC.

### **National Achievement Survey (NAS)**

- ❖ The National Achievement Survey (NAS) was conducted successfully throughout the country to analyse disaggregated and detailed learning levels and also to understand the efficiency of the education system.
- ❖ NAS results will help guide education policy, planning and implementation at national, state, district and classroom levels for improving learning levels of children and bringing about qualitative improvements.
- ❖ The National Achievement Survey (NAS) is the largest ever national assessment survey in the country and is amongst the largest in the world.
- ❖ NAS is a transparent and credible exercise done under third party verification.

### **India Youth Development Index and Report 2017**

- ❖ The Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, an Institute of National Importance has come out with Youth Development Index and Report 2017.
- ❖ The report was released by Ministry for Youth Affairs and Sports
- ❖ The objective of constructing the India Youth Development Index (YDI) 2017 is to track the trends in Youth Development across the States.
- ❖ Education, health and well-being, employment and opportunity, political participation, civic participation for young people and social inclusion are the multi-dimensional indicators used in calculating the India Youth Development Index and Report.
- ❖ Constructing Youth Development Index for the year 2017 was done using the latest definition of youth as used in Indian and World Youth Development Report of Commonwealth as well as using the Commonwealth Indicators in order to facilitate Global comparison.

- ❖ As per National Youth Policy – 2014 and World Youth Development Report of Commonwealth Youth are defined as those aged 15 to 29 in the national youth policy (2014).
- ❖ This age-group constitutes 27.5% of India's population.
- ❖ The Youth Development Index (YDI), developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat, measures the status of young people in 183 countries around the world.
- ❖ India has been ranked 133rd out of 183 countries in the 2016 Global Youth Development Index (YDI).

### **Aadi Mahotsav**

- ❖ Ministry of Tribal Affairs along with Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation Ltd (TRIFED), is organizing "AADI MAHOTSAV" a celebration of the spirit of Tribal Culture, Cuisine and Commerce.
- ❖ The Theme of the festival: A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Cuisine and Commerce
- ❖ Over 480 tribal artisans from over 25 States will be participating in this AADI MAHOTSAV from 16th to 30th November 2017
- ❖ The festival will feature exhibition-cum-sale of tribal handicrafts, art, paintings, jewellery through more stalls.
- ❖ For the first time the tribal merchandise stalls will be accepting payment through major credit / debit cards.

### **37th India International Trade Fair-2017**

- ❖ The President of India, inaugurated the 37th India International Trade Fair (IITF) -2017 on November 14, 2017 in New Delhi. It is organized by India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO).

### **Fourth Hunar Haat**

- ❖ The fourth Hunar Haat exhibition is being organised by the Ministry of Minority Affairs at India International Trade Fair (IITF) at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi from 14th to 27th November, 2017.
- ❖ Hunar Haats are organised by Ministry of Minority Affairs under (Upgrading the Skills & Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development) scheme.
- ❖ The USTTAD scheme aims at preserving & promoting the rich heritage of the traditional arts & crafts of the Minority communities.
- ❖ This Hunar Haat exhibition is unique from earlier exhibitions as for the first time products made by inmates of Delhi's Tihar Jail are also being showcased and sold.

### **Joint Training Doctrine Indian Armed Forces – 2017'**

- ❖ Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee & Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Sunil Lanba released 'Joint Training Doctrine Indian Armed Forces – 2017'
- ❖ The document has been prepared in a 'collegiate manner' involving all the three Service Headquarters.
- ❖ The aim of the Doctrine is to promote 'Synergy' and 'Integration' amongst the three Services and other stake-holders leading to an enhanced efficiency and optimum utilisation of resources.

### **Training to IT officers for dealing with cyber security challenges**

- ❖ In view of the rising cases of cyber-attacks and cyber frauds in the country, about 1,200 IT officers of ministries, banks and public sector units will be trained in partnership with top IT players to address cyber security challenges.
- ❖ The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) last week approved the 'Cyber Surakshit Bharat Programme', under which chief information security officers and IT officers of government departments and PSUs will be trained over a period of one year.
- ❖ The training will have many components, including cyber security management, cyber health index exercise, workshop on end-to-end security across identity, data and application and other aspects of network security.

### **India's 1st Tribal Entrepreneurship Summit**

- ❖ India's first Global Tribal Entrepreneurship Summit organised at Dantewada district in the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh
- ❖ The event has been organized by NITI Aayog in partnership with the government of United States of America. The event is a part of 8th Global Entrepreneurship Summit being held in India.
- ❖ The summit has been organised mainly with the motive to inspire, nurture and promote the spirit of entrepreneurship in tribal youth. This is a step towards tribal-centric sustainable and inclusive development.

### **Sagar Kavach**

- ❖ The governments of Odisha and West Bengal organised a joint security exercise named as 'Sagar Kavach'.

- ❖ It is conducted to further tighten the existing coastal security mechanism along the 630 km long coastline.
- ❖ Sagar Kavach security exercise is a realistic drill to check the efficacy of the security parameters and preparedness of various security forces.
- ❖ In the exercise, they had organised simulated terror attack named 'red force' at random place along Odisha or West Bengal coast to check effectiveness of marine policing.

### **National Power Portal**

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Power launched National Power Portal (NPP), a Centralized Platform for Collation and Dissemination of Indian power sector inform.
- ❖ NPP is a centralised system for Indian Power Sector and it will be available 24x7 and will ensure effective and timely collection of data.
- ❖ The Nodal agency for implementation of NPP and its operational control is Central Electricity Authority (CEA).
- ❖ The system has been conceptualized, designed and developed by National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- ❖ The portal can be accessed at <http://npp.gov.in> and it act as the single point interface for all Power Sector Apps launched previously by the Ministry, like TARANG, UJALA, VIDYUT PRAVAH, GARV, URJA, MERIT.
- ❖ It has been designed and developed to disseminate analyzed information about the sector through GIS enabled navigation and visualization chart windows.

### **Anti-Profiteering Authority-NAA**

- ❖ Union Cabinet has recently given its approval for the creation of Anti-Profiteering Authority under GST.
- ❖ It is mandated to ensure that the benefits of the reduction in GST rates on goods or services are passed on to the ultimate consumers by way of a reduction in prices.
- ❖ It will be headed by a senior officer of the level of secretary to the Government of India with four technical members from the centre and/or the states.
- ❖ The "anti-profiteering" measures enshrined in the GST law provide an institutional mechanism which comprises the NAA, a Standing Committee, Screening Committees in every State and the Directorate General of Safeguards in the Central Board of Excise & Customs.

## **ICDS-Approval**

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by the PM has approved four sub-schemes under Umbrella Scheme Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS).
- ❖ The approved Schemes include,
  - ✓ Anganwadi Services
  - ✓ Scheme for Adolescent Girls (also known as sabla)
  - ✓ Child Protection Services
  - ✓ National Crèche Scheme
- ❖ The decision also provides for conversion of National Crèche Scheme from Central Sector to Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- ❖ National Creche Scheme aims at providing safe place for mothers to leave their children while they are at work.
- ❖ ICDS Scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme implemented by states/UTs. It was launched on 2nd October 1975.

## **MoU between India and Poland**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by the PM has given its approval for signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Poland for the Promotion of Civil Aviation Cooperation.
- ❖ The MoU will be for a term of five years and it will provide support in the civil aviation market by reviewing any legal and procedural issues which may adversely affect cooperation between India and Poland.

## **India and Belarus MoU on S&T Cooperation**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by the PM has approved the agreement between the India and Belarus on Scientific and Technological Cooperation for mutual benefit in the areas of science, technology, agriculture, etc.
- ❖ The agreement was signed between Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NASB).
- ❖ The Agreement is aimed at identifying, assessing, developing and commercializing globally competitive technologies from India and Belarus.
- ❖ It will support institutions in both countries by way of research, technology transfers, exchange of visits and joint workshops leading to scientific and economic benefit.

### **Tornadoes - New World Record**

- ❖ A motorcycle displays team (Tornadoes) of the Indian Army Service Corps (ASC) created a new world record as part of a display at the Air Force Station of Yelahanka.
- ❖ 58 men mounted a single 500 cc Royal Enfield motorcycle and rode it for a distance of 1200 meters.
- ❖ The 'Tornadoes' broke the previous record of 56 men set in 2010 by the Army Signal Corps (Daredevils) from the Indian Army.
- ❖ The team was led by Major Bunny Sharma and the motorcycle was steered by Subedar Rampal Yadav.
- ❖ The team presently holds a total of 19 world and national records and was formed in 1982 under the aegis of Colonel C N Rao and Captain J P Verma.

### **'India's first' e-vehicle charging unit**

- ❖ State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has set up 'India's first e-vehicle charging unit' in Nagpur.
- ❖ IOC, in collaboration with Ola, unveiled the electric charging station at one of its petrol-diesel stations in Nagpur
- ❖ Nagpur is the first city to introduce Electric Public Transportation Model in India.
- ❖ It is considered a major step in spreading the use of green energy.

### **Quami Ekta Week (National Integration Week)**

- ❖ The Quami Ekta Week (National Integration Week) will be observed all over the country from 19th to 25th November, 2017.
- ❖ The week long programmes under it with a view to foster and reinforce the spirit of Communal Harmony, National Integration and pride in vibrant, composite culture and nationhood.
  - ✓ November 19- National Integration Day
  - ✓ November 20- Welfare of Minorities Day
  - ✓ November 21- Linguistic Harmony Day
  - ✓ November 22 -Weaker Sections Day
  - ✓ November 23 -Cultural Unity Day
  - ✓ November 24 -Women's Day
  - ✓ November 25 - Conservation Day
- ❖ The National Foundation for Communal Harmony (NFCH), an autonomous organisation with the Ministry of Home Affairs, organises Communal

Harmony Campaign coinciding with the Qaumi Ekta Week and observes the Communal Harmony Flag Day on 25th November.

### **Solar Parks Project**

- ❖ India and the World Bank has signed a \$100-million loan and grant agreement for "Shared Infrastructure for Solar Parks Project" to help the country increase its solar power generation capacity.
- ❖ The objective of the Shared Infrastructure for Solar Parks Project is to increase solar generation capacity through establishment of large-scale parks in the country.
- ❖ According to a World Bank statement the first two solar parks are in the Rewa and Mandsaour districts of Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ Other states where potential solar parks could be supported under this project are in Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Haryana.

### **42nd International Congress of Military Medicine**

- ❖ The 42nd World Congress of the International Committee of Military Medicine (ICMM) was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The congress was organised by the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) under the aegis of the Ministry of Defence (MoD).
- ❖ The theme of 42nd World Congress is 'Military Medicine in Transition: Looking Ahead'.
- ❖ The World Congress is a platform to provide an excellent opportunity for all participating nations to exchange ideas and experiences, thereby enhancing the collective intellectual assets of Military medicine, which would ultimately facilitate the Member States to face the challenges of a rapidly changing global security environment.
- ❖ The five-day event is being organised for the first time in India, and is the largest medical conference ever organised by the Armed Forces Medical Services.
- ❖ Top Indian scientific institutions, Union Ministry of Health, the United Nations and the International Committee of Red Cross are also represented at the Congress.

#### **ICMM**

- ❖ The ICMM is an international inter-governmental organisation created in 1921 with its secretariat at Brussels in Belgium and currently has 112 nations as members.



## **1st World Conference on Access to Medical Products and International Laws for Trade and Health**

- ❖ The '1st World Conference on Access to Medical Products and International Laws for Trade and Health in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' was inaugurated in Delhi on 21 November 2017.
- ❖ The Conference is being organized by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare with the support of WHO Country Office for India and in partnership with Indian Society of International Law.
- ❖ The objective of the Conference is to exchange knowledge and expand understanding on contemporary issues in international trade laws and research and innovation for access to medical products to achieve SDG 2030 agenda.

## **Vasectomy Fortnight**

- ❖ The government will observe 'Vasectomy Fortnight' starting on November 21 to raise awareness about male sterilization and to promote the participation of men in family planning.
- ❖ All states and Union territories would observe Vasectomy Fortnight from November 21 to December 4 whereby quality male sterilization services would be provided at public health facilities.
- ❖ A national workshop promoting men's participation in family planning was organised by the Health Ministry. The workshop highlighted concrete strategies to understand and incorporate the male perspective and their needs
- ❖ The workshop also saw the launch of the Family Planning Logistics Management Information System (FP-LMIS) manual which was developed to facilitate the distribution of contraceptives and strengthen supply chain management.

## **BrahMos cruise missile successfully test-fired from Sukhoi jet**

- ❖ The world's fastest supersonic cruise missile BrahMos was successfully test fired from Indian Air Force's (IAF) Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jet.
- ❖ It marks a history as IAF is the first air force in the world to have successfully fired an air launched 2.8 Mach surface attack missile.
- ❖ With this, BrahMos is going to get inducted in IAF which lead India to completed its Supersonic Cruise Missile Triad.
- ❖ Already BrahMos has been already inducted in Army and Navy.

## BrahMos

- ❖ It is the supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from land, sea, sub-sea and air based platforms.
- ❖ It is developed by a joint venture between DRDO of India and NPOM of Russia.
- ❖ The missile operates on the 'fire-and-forget' principle and its destructive power is one of the best due to the production of large kinetic energy on impact.
- ❖ Cruise missiles are designed to fly at low-altitudes, almost hugging the terrain, to evade enemy radars and missile defence systems.

**Conquering air, land and sea**  
India successfully test-fired the air variant of BrahMos missile from a Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jet. With this test the country has completed tests of the cruise missile triad for land, sea and air variants

**IAF Su-30MKI** was chosen for its airframe made of titanium and high-strength aluminium alloys

The BrahMos is a **2.5 tonne supersonic** air-to-surface cruise missile with range of more than **400 kms** and can reach **2.8 times** the speed of sound

- IAF is the first Air Force in the world to have successfully fired an air launched **2.8 Mach** surface attack missile in this category
- Complex algorithms for separation of missile from aircraft was indigenously developed by DRDO's Research Centre Imarat

**MISSILE RANGE**

- Original range **290 km**
- Enhanced range **450 km**
- Future range **600 km**

**MILESTONES**

<p><b>Inducted into the Navy</b> June 28, 2006</p> <p>Former PM Manmohan Singh announces that BrahMos has been inducted into the Navy. Image shows a target on fire after being hit by the missile fired from a navy ship in Bay of Bengal off Odisha coast during one of many tests in 2004</p>	<p><b>Army acquires missile</b> June 21, 2007</p> <p>A.P.J Abdul Kalam had sowed the seeds of BrahMos by signing an agreement with Russia in 1998. Here he is seen handing over a replica to the then Chief of the Army Staff, symbolising the commencement of the delivery of the missile's land version</p>	<p><b>Submarine variant</b> March 20, 2013</p> <p>The maiden flight of the submarine variant of BrahMos was successfully test-fired from a pontoon off Visakhapatnam in the Bay of Bengal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It marked a global first in the vertical launch of a supersonic cruise missile from an underwater platform</li> </ul>
--	---	--

- ❖ BrahMos, the name is an amalgamation of India's Brahmaputra and Russia's Moskva river.
- ❖ It is a two-stage missile with a solid propellant booster engine in its first stage and the liquid ramjet engine in the second stage.

- ❖ The missile has flight range of up to 290 km with supersonic speed all through the flight, making it the first supersonic cruise missile.
- ❖ It can carry a conventional warhead weighing 200 to 300kgs.
- ❖ It is also the world's fastest anti-ship cruise missile in operation.
- ❖ Recently, BrahMos Extended Range (ER) Missile was successfully test fired.
- ❖ BrahMos ER missile is capable of hitting the enemy targets at much higher range than the current range of 290 km with the supersonic speed of 2.8 Mach.
- ❖ This technology upgrade comes after India's full membership to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), which removed caps on range of BrahMos cruise missile.

### **Revised salaries for Judges**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved the revision in the salaries, gratuity, allowances, pension etc. of the Judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts and retired Judges of Supreme Court and High Courts.
- ❖ It follows the implementation of recommendations of the 7th Central Pay Commission.
- ❖ Salaries, gratuity, pension, allowances of Judges of Supreme Court are governed by the Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1958.
- ❖ For Judges of High Courts, it is governed by High Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1954.
- ❖ An amendment in the Acts is required whenever there is any proposal for revision of salaries/pension gratuity, allowances.

### **5th global conference on cyber space**

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 5th Global Conference on 'Cyber Space', a two-day event, in New Delhi.
- ❖ The event is being organised for the first time in India and is one of world's largest conferences on cyber space.
- ❖ The theme of the conference is Cyber 4 All: A Secure and Inclusive Cyberspace for Sustainable Development.
- ❖ The conference is being organised to promote the importance of inclusiveness and human rights in global cyber policy.

### **Ordinance to amend Forest Act**

- ❖ President has signed an ordinance amending amending the Indian Forest Act in a bid to increase bamboo cultivation in the country.
- ❖ This would ensure that farmers cultivating bamboo in non-forest areas do not require permits to fell or transport the plant.
- ❖ The amendment to Section 2(7) of Indian Forest Act, 1927 will encourage bamboo plantation by farmers, which will contribute to doubling farmers income.
- ❖ Technically, bamboo is a type of grass. However, it is mentioned as a tree under the Indian Forest Act, 1927.
- ❖ India has largest area under bamboo cultivation and is second richest in terms of bamboo genetic resources after China.
- ❖ India has 19% share of world's area under bamboo cultivation, its market share in sector is only 6%.
- ❖ The amendment will unleash the potential of bamboo in terms of rural and national economy apart from ecological benefits.
- ❖ Bamboo grown in the forest areas will continue to be governed by the provisions of Indian Forest Act, 1927.

### **Defence of Andaman & Nicobar Islands Exercise (DANX-17)**

- ❖ The Defence of Andaman and Nicobar Islands Exercise (DANX) was conducted under the aegis of Andaman & Nicobar Command.
- ❖ The main objective of the exercise was to practice & validate procedures and drills of all the Command forces aimed at defending Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- ❖ Accretional forces from the main land including fighters, Special Forces, Naval ships and heavy lift transport aircraft participated in the exercise.
- ❖ The purpose of the exercise was for adopting planning and precise execution of Command plans by forces in synergistic manner.

### **Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra**

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the PM has approved a new scheme called 'Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra'.
- ❖ The scheme is aimed at empowering rural women through community participation to create an environment in which they realize their full potential.

- ❖ It will be implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development under umbrella mission for “Protection and Empowerment for Women” for the duration of 2017-18 to 2019-20.
- ❖ The scheme is envisaged to work at national, state and block level.
- ❖ Improving the child sex ratio, survival of new born girl child, girl education and empower them through several initiatives are the main motives.
- ❖ Under the scheme, community engagement through student volunteers is envisioned in the backward districts at block level.

### **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao-Expansion**

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the expansion of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme for Pan India reach covering all the 640 districts (as per census 2011) of the Country.
- ❖ The expansion under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme came following the successful implementation of the scheme in 161 districts of the country.

#### **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**

- ❖ The scheme was launched in 2015 to address the issue of decline in Child Sex Ratio (CSR) in gender critical districts issues related to empowerment of women.
- ❖ The objectives of the Scheme are
  - ✓ Prevent gender biased sex selective elimination
  - ✓ Ensure survival & protection of the girl child
  - ✓ Ensure education of the girl child
- ❖ It is currently implemented in 161 districts which has adverse CSR.
- ❖ At present, BBBP scheme is being implemented by three tri-ministries effort.
  - Ministry of Women and Child Development
  - Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and
  - Ministry of Human Resource Development
- ❖ The scheme has also been ensuring effective enforcement of Pre-Conception & Pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PC&PNDT) Act.
- ❖ The CSR, defined as number of girls per 1000 boys in the age group of 0-6 years, declined sharply from 976 in 1961 to 918 in Census 2011.

### **12th meeting of Standing Committee of Inter-State Council**

- ❖ The 12th meeting of Standing Committee of Inter-State Council chaired by Union Home Minister held in New Delhi.

- ❖ The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the recommendations of the Punchhi Commission on Centre-state relations.
- ❖ The Punchhi Commission was set up by the Government under the chairmanship of Justice Madan Mohan Punchhi, former Chief Justice of Supreme Court of India in 2005.
- ❖ The Punchhi Commission submitted its report in 2010.
- ❖ The Central government constituted the Punchhi Commission to look into the new issues of Centre-state relations keeping in view of the changes that have taken place in the polity and economy.

#### **Inter State council**

- ❖ Inter State council is a constitutional body under Article 263 of the constitution and its purpose is to facilitate coordination between states and the centre.
- ❖ Inter State council consist of
  - ✓ Prime minister who is the chairman.
  - ✓ Chief ministers of all states who are members.
  - ✓ Chief ministers of union territories and administrators of UTs as members.
  - ✓ Six union ministers of cabinet rank in the union council of ministers nominated by the prime minister are also members.
- ❖ Standing Committee consist of
  - ✓ Home minister (Chairman).
  - ✓ 5 members of Cabinet rank
  - ✓ 9 members - Chief Ministers of state.

#### **International Gita Mahotsav 2017**

- ❖ President inaugurated the International Gita Mahotsav 2017 in Kurukshetra, Haryana. The objective behind Mahotsav is to spread the message of Gita to world.
- ❖ The second edition of the event was organised by Haryana Government. Mauritius was partner country and Uttar Pradesh was partner state of the event.

#### **NPPA caps prices of 51 essential medicines**

- ❖ The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority has capped the prices of 51 essential formulations, including those used for the treatment of cancer, pain, heart conditions and skin problems.

- ❖ The prices have been slashed in the range of 6 to 53 per cent.
- ❖ In respect of medicines that are not under the price control, manufacturers are allowed to increase the maximum retail price by 10 per cent annually.
- ❖ NPPA is an independent body under Department of Pharmaceuticals under Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
- ❖ Set up in 1997, NPPA has been entrusted with the task of fixation/revision of prices of pharma products, enforcement of provisions of Department of Pharmaceuticals and monitoring of prices of controlled and decontrolled drugs.

### **Transformation of 115 backward districts - 2022**

- ❖ In line with PM's vision to create a "New India" over the next five years, the government has selected 115 backward districts for rapid transformation by 2022.
- ❖ These 115 backward districts include
  - 35 districts affected by Left Wing Extremists (LWE) violence,
  - 55 districts affected by Left Wing Extremism WE and
  - 15 districts in Jammu and Kashmir and northeast affected by terrorism.
- ❖ Senior level government officials, at the rank of Additional Secretary and Joint Secretary, have been nominated as 'Prabhari' officers for each district.
- ❖ The First meeting of the Prabhari Officers was recently held in New Delhi under the chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary. It was attended by Secretaries of important central ministries.
- ❖ Transformation of these backward districts was urgently required for dramatic improvement in human development index and security environment of the country.

### **Open sky agreement**

- ❖ India and Greece signed an air services agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of new and renewable energy.
- ❖ Air Services Agreement is signed between countries to decide on number of flights that airlines can fly into each other's countries.
- ❖ The ASA between India and Greece will allow airlines from Greece to operate unlimited flights to six Indian metropolitan airports and Indian carriers can fly to Greece without any such restriction.
- ❖ It makes Greece first country with which India has open sky arrangement under our new civil aviation policy.

### **Intensive training programme**

- ❖ The Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) launched an intensive training program for Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Master Trainers in New Delhi.
- ❖ This capacity building program is being organized by National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) of the WCD Ministry to empower women to participate effectively in the governance processes.
- ❖ It aims to train approximately twenty thousand EWRs covering nearly 50 EWRs from each district by March 2018.
- ❖ It is for the first time, an initiative of this scale has been taken up to train EWRs.
- ❖ The training of two lakh women sarpanches across the country will help to create model villages and help prepare women as political leaders of the future.

### **15th Finance Commission constituted**

- ❖ The Union Government has constituted Fifteenth Finance Commission under the chairmanship of former bureaucrat NK Singh.
- ❖ The Commission will make recommendations for five years commencing on 1 April 2020.

#### **Membership**

- ✓ It consists of a Chairman and four other members.
- ✓ They hold office for such period as specified by the President in his order.
- ✓ They are eligible for reappointment.

#### **The 15th Finance Commission's members**

- ✓ Shaktikanta Das, former Secretary to Union Government
- ✓ Anoop Singh, Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University.
- ✓ Chairman of Bandhan Bank Ashok Lahiri and Member of NITI Aayog Ramesh Chand will be the Part time members of the Commission.
- ✓ Arvind Mehta will be the Secretary to the Commission.

### **Russia to help India to set up National Crisis Response Centre**

- ❖ Russia has agreed to set up a National Crisis Management Centre in India to handle disaster and other emergency situations.



- ❖ They also agreed on a programme of training of specialists and sharing of each other's experiences as well as best practices in the field of Disaster Management.
- ❖ Both sides agreed that EMERCOM of Russia would cooperate with India in the establishment of the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC).

### **India, Russia ink anti-terror pact**

- ❖ India and Russia have signed comprehensive anti-terror pact agreement for enhancing bilateral cooperation in tackling all forms of terrorism and countering threat posed by narcotics.
- ❖ The new agreement between India's MHA and Russia's interior ministry will replace the October 1993 agreement between both the countries.

### **First Woman Lok Sabha Secretary General**

- ❖ Snehlata Shrivastava IAS has been appointed as the new Secretary General of the Lok Sabha.
- ❖ She will be the first woman secretary general of the Lok Sabha and she will take over a day after current incumbent Anup Mishra relinquishes charge.
- ❖ she is currently working as a Secretary in the Law Ministry of law and Justice.
- ❖ The Secretary General of the two Houses enjoy the rank of the Cabinet Secretary.
- ❖ B.S Rama devi was a first women secretary general to Rajya Shaba in the past.

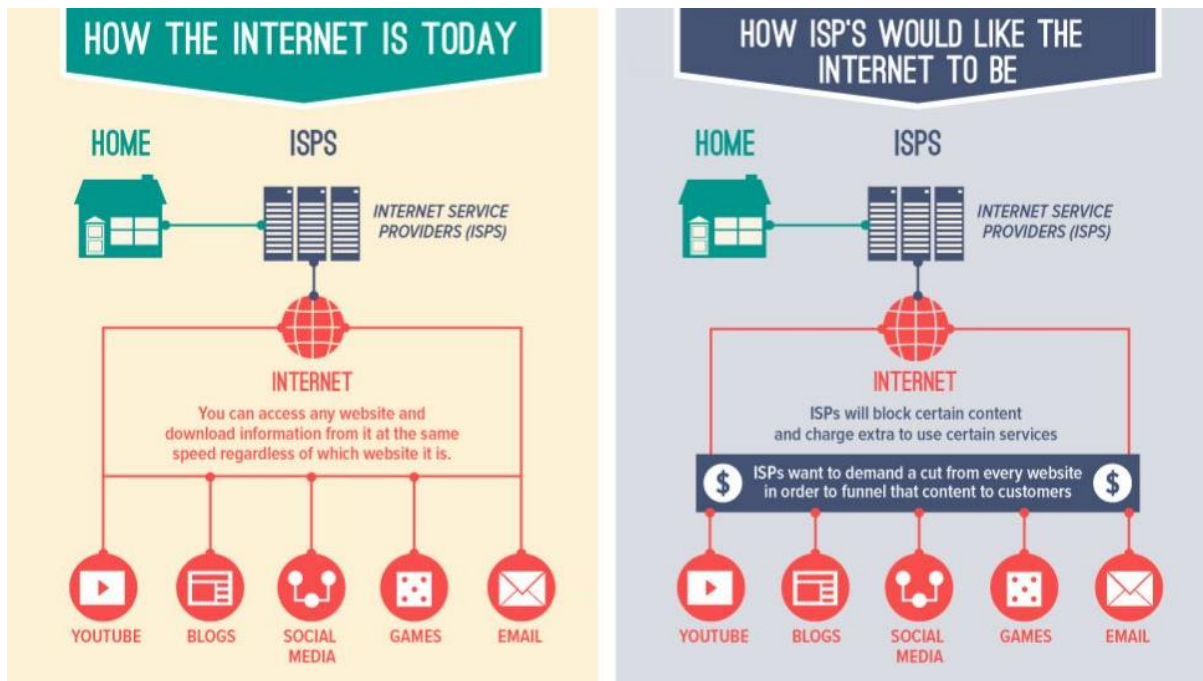
### **Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman - IDSA President**

- ❖ Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has been elected President of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA).
- ❖ IDSA was set up in 1965 by the Ministry of Defence as an autonomous think tank, and it is customary to have the Defence Minister as its President.
- ❖ The Minister chairs the Executive Council which governs the Institute.
- ❖ Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar, Defence Secretary Sanjay Mitra, Director General Jayant Prasad and Deputy Director General Maj. Gen. Alok Deb are ex-officio members.
- ❖ The staff representative in the Council is Ashok K. Behuria.
- ❖ IDSA is funded by the Ministry of Defence and its faculty conducts research in military, foreign and strategic affairs.

- ❖ Significantly, the Government has sought its views before taking major policy initiatives, like conducting nuclear tests, as in 1974 and 1998.
- ❖ IDSA also executes specific assignments from the Ministry of External Affairs.

### Telecom Regulatory Authority of India upholds net neutrality

- ❖ The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) upheld the basic principles of Net neutrality, disallowing telecom operators from discrimination on basis of content by prioritising, throttling or blocking content on their networks.
- ❖ Net neutrality means that telecom service providers should allow access to all content without favouring any particular product or website.
- ❖ It excludes specialised services and content delivery networks (CDNs) from scope of any rules on net neutrality.
- ❖ It also calls for keeping Internet of Things (IoT) within purview of non-discriminatory restriction with the exception of critical services.
- ❖ TRAI's proposal to adhere net neutrality comes days after US Federal Communication Commission (FCC) had announced repealing of 2015 laws that aimed at upholding this broad principle of net neutrality.



## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **First ever India-US Ocean Dialogue**

- ❖ The first-ever India-US Ocean Dialogue has started in Goa on November 1, 2017.
- ❖ It is being hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs at the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Institute of Oceanography (CSIR-NIO).
- ❖ The purpose of the Ocean dialogue is to promote sustainable development of the Blue Economy.
- ❖ According to the World Bank, the Blue Economy is sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health.

### **Trump nominates Jerome Powell as next Federal Reserve chief**

- ❖ US President Donald Trump nominated Jerome Powell to run the Federal Reserve once current Chair Janet Yellen's term expires, in a move widely expected and one unlikely to disturb the roaring stock market.
- ❖ Powell, 64, will replace Janet Yellen, who was nominated by Trump's predecessor Barack Obama in 2013. Her term as the US central bank's first female leader expires in February.

### **Global Gender Gap Index 2017**

- ❖ India was ranked low at 108th position out of 144 countries in the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Gender Gap index for the year 2017.
- ❖ India slipped by 21 places, behind neighbours China and Bangladesh, compared to 87th rank last year due to less participation of women in the economy and low wages.
- ❖ India's low ranking was mainly due to low scores in two indicators. They are
  1. Health and Survival: India ranked 141 at bottom four
  2. Economic Participation and Opportunities for Women: India ranked 139, down from 136 last year.
- ❖ The index measures gender gap as progress towards parity between men and women in four indicators
  1. Educational attainment
  2. Health and survival
  3. Economic opportunity and
  4. Political empowerment



## Global Outlook

Top 10 of the Global Gender Gap Index

rank	AVG	score
1. Iceland		0.878
2. Norway		0.830
3. Finland		0.823
4. Rwanda		0.822
5. Sweden		0.816
6. Nicaragua		0.814
7. Slovenia		0.805
8. Ireland		0.794
9. New Zealand		0.791
10. Philippines		0.790

Source: Global Gender Gap Report 2017, World Economic Forum

Note: \*2017 rank out of 144 countries

### Magic Island Maker

- ❖ China has unveiled a massive ship described as a "Magic Island Maker" that is Asia's largest dredging vessel.
- ❖ It was launched at a port in eastern Jiangsu province.
- ❖ The boat named Tian Kun Hao is a larger version of China used to dredge sand, mud and coral for transforming reefs and islets in the South China Sea into artificial islands capable of hosting military installations.

### China launches 2 navigation satellites

- ❖ China successfully launched two BeiDou-3 satellites named BeiDou-3 M1 and BeiDou-3 M2 into space through a single carrier rocket Long March-3B from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwestern province of Sichuan.
- ❖ The two newly-launched satellites represent the third phase of the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System.
- ❖ This system will provide services for countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative, and form a complete global satellite navigation system by 2020, by which China plans to have more than 30 satellites.
- ❖ It will make China third country in world after the US and Russia to operate its own navigation system.

## **Sampriti**

- ❖ The seventh edition of Indo-Bangladesh joint military training exercise 'SAMPRITI 2017' has begun in Meghalaya.
- ❖ The main Objective of this exercise is to enhance interoperability between army personnel of India and Bangladesh while carrying out joint counter-insurgency or counter-terrorism operations.
- ❖ The previous edition of the exercise was held at Tangail in Dhaka last year, while in 2015 India hosted this exercise at Binnaguri in West Bengal.

## **IAF participates in Israel's military drill for the 1st time**

- ❖ In a first, a 45-member Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent is participating in the two-week-long Blue Flag military drill with the air forces of Israel and eight other nations, at Uvda Air Force Base in Israel.
- ❖ It is going to be the largest joint-combat drill in Israel's history.
- ❖ The Blue Flag drill is a biannual exercise designed to strengthen Israel's military cooperation internationally. This is the first time India is participating in the drill, along with the US, France, Germany, Italy, Greece and Poland.
- ❖ The drill is aimed at exchanging intelligence on interoperability and counter-terrorist operations, an Air Force official said.
- ❖ The Indian contingent led by Group Captian Maluk Singh VSM will be training with Israeli Air force's Airborne Rescue and Evacuation Unit.

## **India re-elected member of UNESCO's executive board**

- ❖ India was re-elected as the member of the UNESCO's executive board
- ❖ The election was held at the 39th session of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation in Paris
- ❖ Executive board is UNESCO's top decision-making body.
- ❖ UNESCO's General Conference consists of representatives of States Members of organisation. It meets every two years.
- ❖ It is attended by Member States and Associate Members, together with observers for non-Member States, intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

## **Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) 2017**

- ❖ Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) 2017 summit was recently held in the city of Danang, Vietnam.
- ❖ At the summit, Ministers from 11 Asia-Pacific countries have decided to go ahead with the trade deal “Trans-pacific partnership” without the United States.
- ❖ APEC is a forum for 21 Pacific Rim member economies that promotes free trade throughout the Asia Pacific region.
- ❖ It is headquartered at Singapore and India is not in the grouping.
- ❖ It was established due to growing inter dependence among Asia Pacific regions, increasing regional trade blocs, to diffuse growing power of Japan.
- ❖ The criterion for membership is that the member is a separate economy, rather than a state and the result of it is the inclusion of Taiwan.
- ❖ APEC also includes three official observers: ASEAN, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council.

## **New Rice field laboratory Philippines**

- ❖ Prime Minister inaugurated rice field laboratory named after him International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Los Banos in Philippines.
- ❖ India is setting up regional centre of IRRI in Varanasi to develop high-yielding rice varieties to increase farmers’ income.
- ❖ The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) is an international agricultural research and training organization known for its work in developing rice varieties that contributed to the Green Revolution in the 1960s.
- ❖ It aims to reduce poverty and hunger, improve the health of rice farmers and consumers, and ensure environmental sustainability of rice farming.
- ❖ IRRI is one of 15 agricultural research centres in the world that form the CGIAR (Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research) Consortium of International Agricultural Research centres, a global partnership of organizations engaged in research on food security. It is also the largest non-profit agricultural research centres in Asia.

## **EU Signs Historic Defense Pact PESCO**

- ❖ Twenty-three member states of the European Union have signed a historic defence deal PESCO to cooperate more closely on defense.
- ❖ The pact, known as Permanent Structured Cooperation or PESCO, legally binds its signatories into joint defense projects.

- ❖ The PESCO pact aims to increase European security cooperation below the level of collective defense, which is covered by Article 5 of NATO.
- ❖ The pact includes all EU governments except Britain, Denmark, Ireland, Portugal and Malta.

13 November 2017



## DEEPER EU DEFENCE COOPERATION: PESCO

- Permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) allows EU members to engage in **greater and more systematic security and defence cooperation**.
- **PESCO includes** increasing defence expenditures, making units available to EU operations, creating joint military capabilities, strengthening the defence industry and simplifying European military transport.
- **23 EU member states signed** the joint notification. Next is an official vote to initiate PESCO, possibly in December.



### World's first fully electric cargo ship

- ❖ China launched the World's first fully electric cargo ship in Guangzhou, the capital of Guangdong province.
- ❖ This 2000-metric-ton ship is the first in the World to use lithium battery.
- ❖ The ship will be mainly used to run in the inland section of the Pearl River for carrying coal for the generation of electric power.
- ❖ The ship was manufactured by the Guangzhou Shipyard International Company Ltd.
- ❖ The ship can run 80 kilometers after being charged for two hours. The ship is 70.5 meters long and has battery energy of about 2400 kilowatt hours which is the same energy of 40 new energy cars.
- ❖ Its highest speed is 12.8 kilometers per hour, and there is zero emission of waste gas pollutants.
- ❖ The main cost of this ship depends on how much lithium battery it is equipped with.

### UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial

- ❖ UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial (UNPKDM) was held at Vancouver, Canada.
- ❖ The last meeting was held in London in September 2016.

- ❖ The UNPKDM is the largest gathering of the defence ministers to review contributions of UN member-states, and secure specific pledges to meet the current and future needs of UN peacekeeping operations.
- ❖ The conference had taken up issues on Women, Peace and Security, Pre and Post Deployment, tackling Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and improving Peacekeeping & Rapid Deployment.
- ❖ Delegates from more than 70 countries and international organizations, African Union, the European Union, NATO has participated.

### **Canada opens its first highway to the Arctic**

- ❖ Canada has officially opened its first permanent year-round highway to the Arctic Ocean.
- ❖ The highway will connect Tuktoyaktuk, a Canadian hamlet on the Arctic Ocean which was previously accessible only by air or winter ice road, to the southern parts of the country.
- ❖ The connection means Canada will be linked by land all year to its three coasts - Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic.
- ❖ The new 138km (85 miles) all-weather road extends the Dempster Highway from the Yukon to the northern coast.

### **Moscow declaration**

- ❖ Health ministers, NGOs, and private sector representatives from 120 countries adopted the Moscow Declaration at the recently held first WHO Global Ministerial Conference.
- ❖ Moscow Declaration calls for eliminating additional deaths from HIV co-infection by 2020 and achieving synergy in coordinated action against TB and non-communicable diseases.
- ❖ India is among the signatories to the declaration
- ❖ Moscow declaration emphasis need for fixing multisectoral responsibility towards ending TB by 2035, the global target and multi-drug resistant TB would be tackled as a national public health crisis.

### **India's nominee Dalveer Bhandari re-elected to ICJ**

- ❖ India's nominee to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Dalveer Bhandari was re-elected to the fifth and the last seat of the world court which totally consist 15 seats but where election only held for 5 seats.



- ❖ Elections were held simultaneously and separately in UNGA and UNSC at the UN headquarters in New York.
- ❖ As per ICJ Rules a candidate can be selected only when they get an absolute majority in both the General Assembly (97 votes) and Security Council (8 votes).
- ❖ By this way India's Talveer Bhandari secured 183 votes out of 193 which is more than absolute majority. But in UNSC his rival Britain's Christopher Greenwood secured 9 votes. So there is a huge competition between them for that place.
- ❖ But at last minute, Bandari was re-elected which is the second time for him after his neck-and-neck opposite English candidate Christopher Greenwood withdrew by Britain in that election.
- ❖ So, UK will not have a judge on the bench of the ICJ for the first time in the ICJ's 71-year history.
- ❖ It is notable that he is a recipient of Padma Bhusan Award in 2014.

#### ***International Court of Justice (ICJ)***

- ❖ It is the primary judicial branch of the United Nations (UN), seated in the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands.
- ❖ The court settles legal disputes submitted to it by states and provides advisory opinions on legal questions submitted to it by duly authorized international branches, agencies, and the UN General Assembly.
- ❖ The ICJ is composed of fifteen judges elected to nine-year terms by the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council from a list of people nominated by the national groups in the Permanent Court of Arbitration.
- ❖ Five judges are elected every three years to ensure continuity within the court.
- ❖ No two judges may be nationals of the same country.
- ❖ The P5 members of the UNSC (France, Russia, China, the United Kingdom, and the United States) always have a judge on the Court.
- ❖ The exception was China, which did not have a judge on the Court from 1967 to 1985 because it did not put forward a candidate.
- ❖ Judges may deliver joint judgments or give their own separate opinions.
- ❖ Decisions and Advisory Opinions are by majority, and, in the event of an equal division, the President's vote becomes decisive.

#### **Indian and Myanmar Army joint military exercise**

- ❖ The first India-Myanmar bilateral military exercise 2017(IMBAX – 2017) will be held from November 20 to 25 in Joint Warfare Centre at Umroi near Shillong.

- ❖ The joint exercise is the first of its kind military training exercise on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO) between India and Myanmar.
- ❖ The six-day training exercise also aims to train the officers of Myanmar Army in various United Nations Peacekeeping roles and tasks.

### **India's Membership for EBRD**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by PM has approved India's Membership for European Bank for Reconstruction & Development (EBRD)
- ❖ Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance will take necessary steps to acquire the membership of the EBRD
- ❖ Membership of EBRD would enhance India's international profile and promote its economic interests.
- ❖ India's investment opportunities would get a boost and it would also enable Indian nationals to get the employment opportunity in the Bank.
- ❖ India is member of World Bank, Asian Development Bank and African Development Bank.
- ❖ It has also joined Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and New Development Bank (NDB).

### **EBRD**

- ❖ EBRD is an international financial institution founded in 1991 and headquartered in London.
- ❖ It is owned by 65 countries and two EU institutions, and US is the biggest shareholder.
- ❖ Besides Europe, member countries of the EBRD are also from other continents
  - North America - Canada and US
  - Africa - Morocco
  - Asia - Japan, China, South Korea
  - Australia.
- ❖ EBRD's core operations pertain to private sector development in their countries of operation.
- ❖ The minimum initial investment towards the membership of EBRD will be approximately one million Euros.
- ❖ The EBRD is not to be confused with the European Investment Bank (EIB) which is owned by EU member states and used to support EU policy.

## **IMMSAREX 2017 - Bangladesh**

- ❖ The International Multilateral Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise 2017 (IMMSAREX 2017) was held in Cox Bazar, Bangladesh.
- ❖ The exercise was inaugurated by Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina and it will be held under the aegis of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).
- ❖ Indian Naval Ships (INS) Ranvir, Sahyadri, Gharial and Sukanya along with one Maritime Patrol Aircraft P-8I will be participating in the exercise.
- ❖ Indian Navy Admiral Sunil Lanba, represented India in the exercise.

### **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)**

- ❖ It is a voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime co-operation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion of regionally relevant maritime issues.
- ❖ Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) was started as an initiative by Indian Navy in 2008 and it has now grown into a formidable organisation with 23 'Member' nations and 'Nine' observer countries.
- ❖ Bangladesh is the current chair of IONS and is conducting the first ever operational exercise called 'IMMSAREX' under the IONS Charter.

## **WHO releases guidelines on child sex abuse for the first time**

- ❖ In a first, the World Health Organisation has formulated clinical guidelines on responding to children and adolescents who have been sexually abused.
- ❖ Based on the UN convention on the rights of the child and other human rights conventions, WHO's guidelines have to be followed when providing care to children and adolescent who have or may have been sexually abused.
- ❖ The guidelines put forward recommendations for the frontline health care providers — general practitioners, gynaecologists, paediatricians, nurses and others — who may directly receive a victim of sexual abuse or may identify sexual abuse during the course of diagnosis and treatment.
- ❖ The new guidelines address an important gap in providing quality and trauma-informed care to survivors by placing emphasis on the safety, wishes, autonomy of children and adolescents.

### **WHO**

- ❖ The WHO is specialized agency of United Nations that acts as coordinating authority on international public health.
- ❖ Established in 1946.
- ❖ Headquarter's located at Geneva.

## **Inter-Governmental Meeting of Asia and Pacific Decade for Persons with Disabilities**

- ❖ The High Level Inter-Governmental Mid-Point review meeting of Asia and Pacific Decade for Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022 was held in Beijing, China.
- ❖ A number of countries in the Asia-Pacific region are participating and will finalise a Declaration which will address the gaps and challenges in empowerment and inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- ❖ The main objective of the meeting is to
  - Review the progress made by the member States during the Decade at the mid-point in 2017 with regard to Incheon Strategy 'to make the right real' for persons with disabilities in Asia and Pacific.
  - Discuss the future policy action for building disabilities-inclusive societies in the region, bearing in mind the synergies between the Incheon Strategy and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- ❖ The meeting was organised by United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) in cooperation with China Disabled Persons Federation (CDPF).
- ❖ The Incheon Strategy provides Asian and Pacific region and world with first set of regionally agreed disability-inclusive development goals.
- ❖ The Incheon Strategy enables Asian and Pacific region to track progress towards improving quality of life, and fulfilment of rights of region's 650 million persons with disabilities, most of whom live in poverty.
- ❖ The UNESCAP secretariat is mandated to report progress in implementation of Incheon Strategy every three years until the end of Decade in 2022.

## **ECONOMY**

### **Government launches MSME Delayed Payment Portal**

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) has launched MSME Delayed Payment Portal – MSME Samadhaan.
- ❖ Its aims at empowering micro and small entrepreneurs across the country to directly register their cases relating to delayed payments by central Ministries, departments, CPSEs, State Governments.

- ❖ The portal will give information about the pending payment of MSMEs with individual CPSEs (Central Public Sector Enterprises), Central Ministries, state Governments, etc.
- ❖ The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development (MSMED) Act, 2006 contains provisions to deal with cases of delayed payments to Micro and Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

### **GOI and WB Loan Agreement for Assam**

- ❖ The Government of India and World Bank have signed \$ 200 million Loan Agreement for Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project.
- ❖ The project will be implemented in over 16 Districts of Assam and specific focus will be given to women-led enterprises and their participation in decision-making process of farmer producer organizations.
- ❖ The project will support the Government of Assam to facilitate agri-business investments
- ❖ It will increase agriculture productivity and market access
- ❖ And it will enable small farm holders produce crops that are resilient to recurrent floods or droughts in the state.
- ❖ It will fulfil the state's vision of an agriculture-based rural transformation.

### **IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development)**

- ❖ The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) is an international financial institution that offers loans to middle-income developing countries.
- ❖ The IBRD is the first of five member institutions that compose the World Bank Group.
- ❖ It was established in 1944 with the mission of financing the reconstruction of European nations devastated by World War II.

### **World Bank's Ease of doing Business Report- 2018**

- ❖ India ranks 100 among 190 countries in the World Bank's recently released Ease of Doing Business (DB) Report, 2018.



'Year' mentioned in this graphic is the same as the release year of the report and measures corresponding June-May period. For e.g. Year 2017 is report released in 2017 and measures period of June 2016-May 2017. However, World Bank nomenclature would call this Doing Business 2018 report & likewise for previous years.

Source: PMO India

- ❖ India has leapt 30 ranks over its rank of 130 in the Doing Business Report 2017.
- ❖ The EDB Report is an assessment of 190 economies and covers 10 indicators which span the lifecycle of a business.
- ❖ India is the only country in South Asia and BRICS economies to feature among most improved economies of the DB Report this year.

### **RBI mandates unique code for all large corporate borrowers**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has directed corporate borrowers having exposure of Rs. 5 crores and above to mandatorily obtain 20-digit Legal Entity Identifier (LEI).
- ❖ The move is aimed at improving risk management in the wake of the huge stressed assets in the banking system.
- ❖ LEI is a 20-digit unique code to identify parties to financial transactions worldwide. The code is conceived as a key measure to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems for better risk management post the global financial crisis.
- ❖ Legal Entity Identifier India Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Clearing Corporation of India, acts as a Local Operating Unit (LOU) for issuing globally compatible legal entity identifiers (LEIs) in India.
- ❖ The LEI system was developed by G20 in response to inability of financial institutions to identify organisations uniquely, so that their financial transactions in different national jurisdictions can be fully tracked.
- ❖ The first LEIs were issued in December 2012.

## **Government extends period of Coastal Berth Scheme**

- ❖ The Ministry of Shipping has extended the period of the Coastal Berth scheme of the flagship Sagarmala Programme for three years.
- ❖ The projects under the Scheme are distributed over eight states with the highest number of projects in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh & Goa.

### **Coastal Berth Scheme**

- ❖ The Coastal Berth Scheme aims to provide financial support to ports or state governments for creation of infrastructure for movement of cargo and passenger by sea or national waterways.
- ❖ The admissible financial assistance from Central Government is 50% of the total cost of the project.
- ❖ The balance expenditure has to be incurred by the respective ports, concerned State Governments from their own resources.
- ❖ The scheme aims to promote coastal shipping and increase its share in domestic cargo movement in India.

### **Sagarmala**

- ❖ The Sagarmala project seeks to develop a string of ports around India's coast.
- ❖ The objective of this initiative is to promote "Port-led development" along India's 7500 km long coastline.
- ❖ Three key components of Sagarmala project are port modernization, efficient evacuation Systems and Coastal economic development.
- ❖ The Ministry of Shipping is nodal ministry for this initiative.

## **Initial Coin Offerings under SEBI lens**

- ❖ The capital market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is planning to bring Initial Coin Offerings (ICO) under its existing legal framework.
- ❖ The popularity of crypto currencies is rising and the number of entities looking at raising funds through Initial Coin Offerings (ICO) has also been increasing.
- ❖ The central bank is of the view that these instruments are securities and so SEBI should be the regulating body.
- ❖ But the Bitcoins are neither 'commodities derivatives' nor 'securities' under Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956

### **Initial Coin Offerings**

- ❖ An ICO, like an equity initial public offer (IPO), is an issuance of digital tokens that can be converted into crypto currencies and are mostly used to

raise funds by start-up firms dealing in block chain technology and virtual currencies like bitcoins and ethereum.

- ❖ Unlike an IPO, which is governed by SEBI regulations, there is no regulatory body for ICOs in India.

### **Crypto Currencies**

- ❖ Crypto Currencies or Virtual Currencies are type of unregulated digital money.
- ❖ They are mainly peer-to-peer system, and transacted between users directly, without an intermediary.
- ❖ These transactions are verified by network nodes and recorded in public distributed ledger called block chain.
- ❖ Bitcoin is a worldwide crypto currency and digital payment system called the first decentralized digital currency, as the system works without a central repository or single administrator.

### **ISA, EBRD ink pact on solar energy**

- ❖ The International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) have signed a Joint Financial Partnership Declaration for the promotion of solar energy.
- ❖ The collaboration between the ISA and the EBRD would also help funding of solar projects both in African and other countries.
- ❖ The EBRD invests in 38 emerging economies across three continents, according to a set of criteria that aim to make its countries more competitive, better governed, greener, more inclusive, more resilient and more integrated.

### **India slips to 7th position in business optimism ranking**

- ❖ India has slipped in 'business optimism' index to the 7th position in the September quarter, from the 2nd slot in the previous three months.
- ❖ The fall in the rank clearly shows clear signs of lag in the economy.
- ❖ Indonesia is at the top, followed by Finland (2nd), the Netherlands (3rd), Philippines (4th), Austria (5th) and Nigeria (6th), as per Grant Thornton's International Business Report (IBR).
- ❖ The IBR provides insight into the views and expectations of more than 10,000 businesses per year across 36 economies.



## **RBI has eased FEMA norms to spur investment from overseas**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has simplified the Foreign Exchange Management (Transfer or Issue of Security by a Person Resident outside India) Regulations, making it easier for foreign investors to invest in the country.
- ❖ It is done by putting all the 93 amendments under one notification
- ❖ The new notification combines two regulations on foreign investments — one which is popularly called
  - FEMA 20, Investment in an Indian company or a partnership, or in a limited liability partnership, and
  - FEMA 24, which is investment in a partnership firm.
- ❖ Another significant change is the introduction of a late submission fee that could allow an investor to regularise any contravention due to non-reporting, by paying the fee.
- ❖ The Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), introduced in 1999, was amended 93 times.

## **Protocol amending DTAA between India and Kyrgyzstan**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved protocol amending Agreement between India and Kyrgyz for avoidance of double taxation and prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income.
- ❖ The new paragraphs 4 and 5 have been inserted into Article 26 to make mandatory for States to provide information which is requested.

## **2nd Meeting of EAC-PM**

- ❖ The 2nd Meeting of Economic Advisory Council to the PM (EAC-PM) has spelt out 'clear road map' for government to step up job creation and infrastructure financing avenues while investing more resources in health, education and skill development.
- ❖ The meeting was chaired by Dr. Bibek Debroy, Member NITI Aayog.
- ❖ It formulated far reaching recommendations to guide evolving framework for 15th Finance Commission and also evolving the design of a new Economy Tracking Monitor, linking economic growth indicators with social indicators for last mile connectivity.

### **10th South Asia Economic Summit held in Nepal**

- ❖ The 10th South Asia Economic Summit (SAES-2017) was held in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- ❖ The theme of 3-day summit is "Deepening Economic Integration for Inclusive and Sustainable Development in South Asia".
- ❖ It was started in 2008.
- ❖ It is a regional platform for discussing and analyzing economic and development issues and challenges faced by South Asian countries and advancing the cause of regional integration and cooperation.

### **Urjit Patel - BIS advisory board**

- ❖ RBI Governor Urjit Patel was appointed to the Financial Stability Institute Advisory Board of the Bank of International Settlement (BIS)
- ❖ The Bank of International Settlement is a global financial organisation owned by major central banks from across the world and its headquarter is in Basel, Switzerland.
- ❖ Jaime Caruana, General Manager of the BIS, will be Chairman of the new FSI Advisory Board
- ❖ The Financial Stability Institute (FSI) of the BIS assists financial sector authorities worldwide in strengthening their financial systems.
- ❖ The FSI was jointly created in 1998 by the BIS and the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision and it seeks to promote cross- sectoral and cross-border supervisory contacts and cooperation.
- ❖ The members of the board will include Urjit Patel along with William Dudley, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, central bank governors in Brazil, South Africa, Japan and other top bankers from across the world.

### **India's first mega Coastal Economic Zone**

- ❖ The Union Government has given go-ahead for setting up India's first mega coastal economic zone (CEZ) at Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) in Maharashtra.
- ❖ The first of its kind mega CEZ will stretch along north Konkan region spread across Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Nashik and Raigarh.
- ❖ CEZs are spatial economic regions comprising group of coastal districts or districts with strong linkage to ports in region to tap into synergies with planned industrial corridor projects.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet in 2016 had approved setting up of 14 mega CEZs under National Perspective Plan of Sagarmala Programme.

## Steering Committee of SARTTAC - New Delhi

- ❖ Interim Meeting of the Steering Committee of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Center (SARTTAC) took place in New Delhi.
- ❖ Officials from all Six (6) Member countries along with the Development Partner representatives and IMF staff attended the meeting.
- ❖ The Committee appreciated the range of training delivered to Member countries, including in-country training and the inclusion of subnational officials from India.
- ❖ The Committee endorsed FY 2018 work plan and also approved new work area in Government Finance and Public Debt Statistics.

## SARTTAC

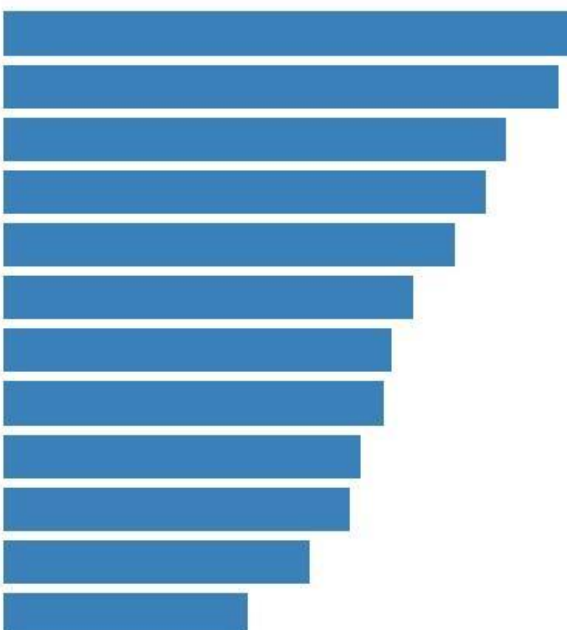
- ❖ SARTTAC was inaugurated in February 2017 and it is located in New Delhi, India.
- ❖ It is the first IMF Regional Capacity Development Centre to fully integrate training and technical assistance activities.
- ❖ It works with Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.
- ❖ Member countries finance two-thirds of the Center's Budget, with additional funding from the European Union, Korea, the United Kingdom, and Australia.
- ❖ It will help Governments to modernize their economic policies and institutions that promote growth and reduce poverty.

## World Economic Outlook Report

- ❖ The report "World Economic Outlook" is being published biannually by International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- ❖ It ranks over 200 countries in terms of per capita GDP based on Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) which is released biannually.
- ❖ According to this 2017 Report, India has moved up one position to 126th in terms of per capita GDP of countries, as per IMF data but still ranked lower than all its BRICS peers.
- ❖ Qatar remains the world's richest as per the IMF data.
- ❖ PPP is the rate at which the currency of one country needs to be converted into that of a second country.
- ❖ It is used worldwide to compare the income levels in different countries.
- ❖ It is to ensure that the expenditure on a similar commodity must be same in both currencies when accounted for exchange rate.

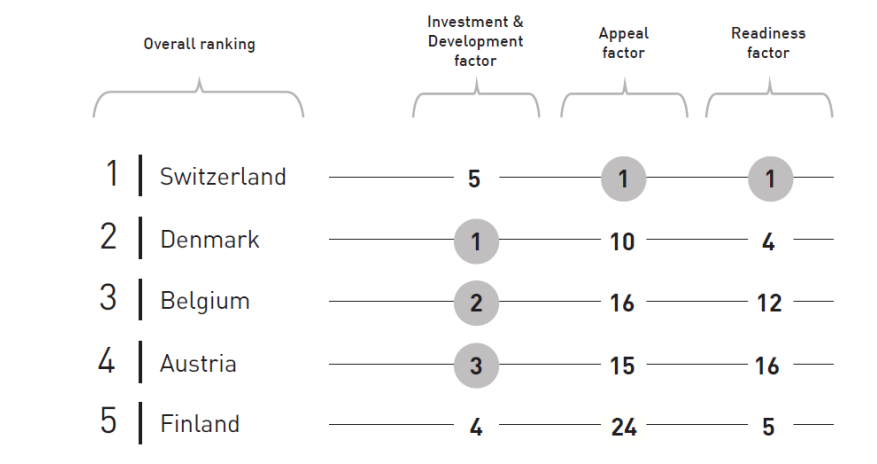
## World Talent Ranking 2017

- ❖ Switzerland-based Institute for Management Development (IMD) released World Talent Ranking 2017
- ❖ India ranked 51st among 63 countries on the IMD Talent Rankings.
- ❖ The IMD World Talent Ranking is based on countries' performance in three main categories
  - Investment and Development
  - Appeal
  - Readiness
- ❖ The three categories assess how countries perform in a wide range of areas. These include education, apprenticeships, workplace training, language skills, cost of living, quality of life, remuneration and tax rates.
- ❖ Hong Kong pipped Singapore in a tight race for the best of Asia's talent.

Hong Kong	77.9	
Singapore	75.6	
Taiwan	68.5	
Malaysia	65.5	
Japan	61.5	
South Korea	55.8	
China	53.0	
Thailand	52.2	
Philippines	48.7	
Indonesia	47.3	
<b>INDIA</b>	<b>42.2</b>	
Mongolia	33.6	

- ❖ Europe continues to dominate the 2017 list, with 11 out of the 15 most talent competitive economies based on the continent.
- ❖ Switzerland, Denmark and Belgium remain the most competitive countries in the 2017 IMD World Talent Ranking.

Talent Ranking Leaderboard



### 15th Finance Commission

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved setting up of 15th Finance Commission (FC) which will assess the tax resources of the nation and suggest a formula for their devolution among states.
- ❖ This time it will have to take into account the impact of the Goods and Services Tax, on the resources of the central as well state governments.
- ❖ Article 280 of the Constitution requires setting up of a finance commission within two years from the commencement of this Constitution and thereafter at the expiration of every fifth year.
- ❖ The setting up of the finance commission for every 5 years is a Constitutional obligation under Article 280 (1) of the Constitution.
- ❖ The Finance Commission (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act of 1951 additionally defines the terms of qualification, appointment and disqualification, the term, eligibility and powers of the Finance Commission.
- ❖ FC is a constitutional as well as quasi-judicial body and is constituted by the President of India every fifth year. The recommendations made by FC are only advisory in nature and hence, are not binding on the government.
- ❖ The Finance Commission is set up every five years to suggest rules that govern the distribution of tax proceeds among the Centre, states and local administrative bodies.
- ❖ The Fourteenth Finance Commission was headed by former Reserve Bank of India governor Y V Reddy.
- ❖ The 1971 Census was used till the 14th FC, though it recommended distribution of grant to states for local bodies using the 2011 Census.
- ❖ The recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission are valid from 2015 to 2020.

- ❖ The recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission will be implemented in the period 2020 to 2025.

### **Logistics sector gets infrastructure status**

- ❖ The union Finance Ministry has granted infrastructure status to the logistics sector.
- ❖ Logistics infrastructure includes
  - multi-modal logistics park comprising an inland container depot
  - cold chain facility
  - warehousing facility
- ❖ The implications of getting infrastructure status include
  - It will get longer maturity loans compared to typical manufacturing sector
  - It will be eligible for slightly higher equity ratios while applying for loans
  - It will have certain advantages and flexibility while applying external commercial borrowing
  - It will allow doing refinancing with specialized lenders like IDFC, IIFCL etc
- ❖ It is expected that it will improve efficiency and reduce the cost of capital in transportation and warehousing, thereby reducing the cost of logistics.
- ❖ Development of logistics would give a boost to both domestic and external demand thereby encouraging manufacturing and 'job creation' which in turn be instrumental in improving country's GDP.
- ❖ In 2017, India's logistics performance improved from 54 to 35 under World Bank Logistics Performance Index (LPI).
- ❖ It was recommended by the Commerce Ministry and subsequently approved by Finance Ministry.

### **Government sets up a panel to draft new direct tax law**

- ❖ The Union Finance Ministry has constituted task force to review Income Tax (IT) Act 1961 and draft new direct tax law in consonance with current economic needs.
- ❖ CBDT member Arbind Modi will be convener of the six-member task force.
- ❖ Chief Economic Adviser Dr. Arvind Subramanian will be its permanent Special Invitee.
- ❖ The task force will submit its report to the government within 6 months.

- ❖ The panel has been tasked to draft a direct tax legislation keeping in view the tax system prevalent in various countries, the international best practices, individual's income details and economic needs of the country.

### **Institute of Corporate Affairs Scheme**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister has approved the continuation of the scheme on Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) for another three financial years from 2017-18 to 2019-20.
- ❖ It will lead IICA to become an Institute of National importance.
- ❖ IICA is an agency under the aegis and jurisdiction of Ministry of Corporate Affairs and was established in 2008 at Manesar, Gurgaon (Haryana).
- ❖ It is first institution in India to be formally set up as 'think-tank' for major Ministry of Government.
- ❖ It offers services to stakeholders in the field of corporate laws, corporate governance, CSR, accounting standards, investor education, etc.
- ❖ National Foundation for Corporate Social Responsibility (NFCSR) at IICA is responsible for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

### **Ordinance to amend IBC**

- ❖ President has given his assent to the ordinance after the Union Cabinet has approved the proposal to promulgate an ordinance under Article 123 of Constitution to make certain amendments in the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).
- ❖ Ministry of Finance says that the ordinance amends sections 2, 5, 25, 30, 35 and 240 of the Code, and inserts new sections 29A and 235A. The ordinance will be presented during the Winter Session of Parliament.
- ❖ The newly included Section 29A of the ordinance makes certain persons, including wilful defaulters and those who have their accounts classified as non-performing assets for one year or more, ineligible to participate in a IBC resolution's auction process.
- ❖ The Code, which became operational in December last year, provides for a market-determined and time-bound insolvency resolution process.
  - ❖ It is implemented by the Ministry of corporate affairs.
- ❖ The Ministry of corporate affairs has already set up a 14- member committee to identify and suggest ways to address issues faced in implementation of the law.
- ❖ The Insolvency Law Committee, chaired by Corporate Affairs secretary Injeti Srinivas, will take stock of the implementation of the Code.

## **FSDC panel reviews financial events**

- ❖ The Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) reviewed the major global and domestic developments which could impinge on the country's financial stability.
- ❖ The panel was headed by Reserve Bank of India Governor Urjit Patel.
- ❖ Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) is an apex-level body constituted by the government of India.
- ❖ The Union Finance Minister is chairman of FSDC.
- ❖ Its members are
  - Heads of the financial sector regulatory authorities (i.e., RBI, SEBI, IRDA, PFRDA),
  - Finance Secretary or Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs
  - Secretary, Department of Financial Services, and
  - Chief Economic Adviser
- ❖ The new body envisages to strengthen and institutionalise the mechanism of maintaining financial stability, financial sector development, inter-regulatory coordination along with monitoring macro-prudential regulation of economy.

## **UDAY scheme**

- ❖ On the 2nd Anniversary of Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY), The Union Govt. signed four Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the Scheme with the State of Nagaland and with Union Territories (UTs) of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli & Daman & Diu for operational improvements.
- ❖ Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) is an initiative of the union Ministry of Power.
- ❖ It aims to provide financial and operational turnaround of power distribution companies.
- ❖ It has the target of making all DISCOMs profitable by 2018-19 through four initiatives.
- ❖ It includes improving operational efficiencies of Discoms, Reduction of cost of power, Reduction in interest cost of Discoms, Enforcing financial discipline on DISCOMs through alignment with state finances.
- ❖ Under this programme, states shall take over DISCOM debt.



### **Incentives rate for garments**

- ❖ Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry has doubled rates for incentives under Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) from 2% to 4% of value of exports.
- ❖ The rates for incentives under this scheme for two subsectors of textiles industry - readymade garments and made-ups.
- ❖ The measure will incentivise the exports of labour intensive sectors of readymade garments and made-ups and contribute to employment generation.
- ❖ MEIS was launched under Foreign Trade Policy of India (FTP) 2015-20 and its objective is to offset infrastructural inefficiencies and associated costs involved in export of goods and products, which are produced and manufactured in India.
- ❖ Under this scheme, Ministry of Commerce gives duty benefits at 2%, 3% and 5% depending upon the products.

### **Shaktikanta Das appointed as India's G 20 Sherpa**

- ❖ Shri Shaktikanta Das, Former Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, has been appointed as India's G 20 Sherpa till December 31, 2018 for the Development Track of the G20.
- ❖ There are two tracks in G 20- Finance Track and Development Track.
- ❖ Finance Track is managed by the Secretary (Economic Affairs) as India's Deputy to G-20 and the Development Track is coordinated by the Sherpa.
- ❖ The Department of Economic Affairs will provide necessary support to the Sherpa.
- ❖ Sherpa is personal representative of leader of member country at international summit meeting such as G8, G20 or Nuclear Security Summit.
- ❖ Panagariya was India's Sherpa for G20 talks in September 2015.
- ❖ As per earlier norms, deputy chairman of erstwhile Planning Commission used to be Sherpa for G20 talks.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **Indigenous Glide Bomb**

- ❖ India successfully tested a new generation Glide Bomb from a fighter aircraft of Indian Airforce at Chandipur in Odisha.
- ❖ The bomb -- SAAW (Smart Anti Airfield Weapon) -- was dropped from an Indian Air Force aircraft at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur-on-sea in Balasore district.
- ❖ SAAW have winglets along with on-board navigation and guidance systems enabling those to hit the target with high accuracy despite of their varied dropping heights.
- ❖ The SAAW weighs around 125-150 kg and has a strike distance of 80-100 kms. It is a long-range, precision guided air-to-surface weapon and can be launched from India's all front line fighter aircraft including Jaguar and Sukhoi-30 MKI.
- ❖ The guided bomb has been developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI) along with other laboratories of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Air Force.

### **FASTag mandatory**

- ❖ Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, in an attempt to speed up traffic, particularly around toll booths, has notified all manufacturers and dealers to equip new cars rolled out on or after December 1 with FASTags.
- ❖ An amendment has been made recently to Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 to make FASTags compulsory on vehicles sold on or after December 1, 2017.
- ❖ FASTag is a device that employs Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for making toll payments directly from the prepaid account linked to it.
- ❖ It is affixed on the windscreen of the vehicle and enables to drive through toll plazas.
- ❖ MyFASTag is a consumer app where one can purchase or recharge FASTags, FASTag Partner is a merchant app.

### **IIT Guwahati uses superhydrophobic cotton to remove oil-spill**

- ❖ Team of researchers from IIT Guwahati has developed a Super hydrophobic cotton i.e., extremely water repelling medical cotton.
- ❖ It removed up to 95% of oil-spill of different densities

- ❖ The efficiency of absorption is very high i.e., one gram of the super hydrophobic cotton absorbs 20 grams of either heavy or light oils.
- ❖ The absorbed oil can be recovered through physical compression.

### **Most ancient spiral galaxy discovered**

- ❖ Scientists have discovered the most ancient spiral galaxy in the universe known as “A1689B11” that existed almost 11 billion years ago.
- ❖ It existed just 2.6 billion years after the Big Bang (13 billion years ago), when the universe was only one-fifth of its present age.
- ❖ It is a spiral galaxy, which could provide insights into the early cosmos.
- ❖ Scientists used a powerful technique on the Gemini North telescope in Hawaii to verify the spiral nature of the galaxy.
- ❖ Spiral galaxies are exceptionally rare in the early universe and has a very cool and thin disc, rotating calmly with surprisingly little turbulence.

### **NIRBHAY-Test**

- ❖ DRDO has successfully tested Nirbhay Cruise Missile recently from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, Odisha.
- ❖ Nirbhay is an all-weather low-cost long-range cruise missile with stealth and high accuracy and capable to engage several targets in a single flight.
- ❖ Nirbhay cruise missile is the India’s first long range sub-sonic cruise missile.
- ❖ It was the fifth launch of the missile in the last five years along with GPS system.
- ❖ It has blended missile and aeronautical technologies which allows it to take off vertically like missile and cruise horizontally like an aircraft.
- ❖ The missile has a range of more than 1000 km.
- ❖ It is capable of carrying warheads of up to 300kg at a speed of 0.6 to 0.7 Mach (sub-sonic).
- ❖ It is guided by a highly advanced indigenously developed inertial navigation system.
- ❖ The Nirbhay cruise missile is an Indian version of the American Tomahawk.
- ❖ The missile is capable of being launched from multiple platforms on land, sea and air.

### **Facts**

- ❖ Sub-sonic – Any speed lower than the speed of sound.
- ❖ Mach number greater than 1 is called as super-sonic.

- ❖ Cruise Missile – It is a guided missile that flies major portion of its flight within atmosphere at approximately constant speed.
- ❖ Ballistic Missile – It is a missile that follows a ballistic trajectory and guided only relatively during brief periods and spends most of their flight out of the atmosphere.

### **Proxima Centauri may host planetary system**

- ❖ Scientists have detected dust belts around Proxima Centauri, the closest star to Sun.
- ❖ These observations were made from Atacama Large Millimetre Array (ALMA) observatory in Chile.
- ❖ This finding indicates the presence of an elaborate planetary system hosted by Proxima Centauri.
- ❖ It is a faint red dwarf lying four light years away in the southern constellation of Centaurus.
- ❖ It is orbited by the Earth-sized Proxima b which is the closest exoplanet to the solar system.

### **Fossils of oldest mammal ancestor discovered in U.K.**

- ❖ Scientists have discovered the remains of humankind's oldest mammal ancestor, a tiny rat-like creature that lived 145 million years ago.
- ❖ Palaeontologists from the University of Portsmouth in the U.K. have discovered the fossils of the nocturnal mammal on the jurassic coast of Dorset.
- ❖ The mammal is the earliest in the line that evolved into humans, and branched off into creatures as diverse as blue whales and pigmy shrews.
- ❖ The new species has been named *Durlstotherium newmani* — after an amateur Palaeontologist and pub owner Charlie Newman.

### **Facebook launches Disaster Maps in India**

- ❖ Facebook has partnered with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and a non-profit body, SEEDS in India, to offer tools to these agencies to help them respond more effectively to natural disasters.
- ❖ The new product was launched at the company's first Disaster Response Summit in India along with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to improve disaster response and disaster management in India.
- ❖ According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) data, India is

the third-worst affected country by natural disasters

- ❖ Disaster Maps was introduced globally in June and uses aggregated location information that users have chosen to share with Facebook and these tools have been deployed in Peru and the US.
- ❖ Facebook is also supporting the pilot of the Aapda Samachar Karyakarta-Disaster Information Volunteers (ASK-DIV) scheme
- ❖ The programme, which is being executed by SEEDS, will establish a network of volunteers to provide real-time, first-hand information on disasters in their local communities
- ❖ The programme will be piloted in two disaster-prone States — Assam and Uttarakhand.

### **15th Asia Pacific Computer Emergency Response Team Conference**

- ❖ The 15th Asia Pacific Computer Emergency Response Team (APCERT) Conference was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ It is first ever conference to be held in India and South Asia and the theme of conference was “Building Trust in the Digital Economy”.
- ❖ It was organised by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) under the aegis of Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology.
- ❖ CERT’s from 22 digital Asia Pacific economies participated along with experts participation from USA, Europe, Industry, Academia.
- ❖ India was selected to be part of the steering committee of APCERT along with 6 (Australia, China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Taiwan) other countries to shape the agenda for the next 2 years across the region.
- ❖ This conference covered contemporary topics around strategies of CERTs, Technology and Instruments for building trust in digitally evolving economies and best practices for handling cyber security in mobile and social media.
- ❖ It aims to help create a safe, clean and reliable cyber space in the Asia Pacific Region through global collaboration.

### **Joint Polar Satellite System-1**

- ❖ The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) launched a next-generation satellite called the Joint Polar Satellite System-1 (JPSS-1).
- ❖ It was launched into orbit by United Launch Alliance-built Delta II rocket from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.
- ❖ JPSS-1 will be renamed NOAA-20 when it reaches its final orbit.

- ❖ JPSS-1 the first in a series of four highly advanced polar-orbiting satellites, equipped with next-generation technology and designed to improve the accuracy of U.S. weather forecasts.
- ❖ JPSS-1 data will improve recognition of climate patterns that influence the weather, such as El Nino and La Nina.

### **Improved Samba Masuri**

- ❖ Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in association with the Indian Institute of Rice Research (IIRR) has come out with an Improved Samba Masuri (ISM)
- ❖ The rice is resistant to bacteria blight and has a low Glycemic Index (GI) considered suitable for those with diabetes.
- ❖ ISM also has desirable attributes like better yield and fine grain type enhancing market potential and profit for farmers
- ❖ ISM has low GI of 50.99 which is among the lowest value for several rice varieties tested and usually in the range of 53 to 69
- ❖ Consumption of food with low GI results in slow release of glucose into the bloodstream reducing the ill-effects of diabetes.

### **Glycemic Index**

- ❖ The Glycemic Index (GI) is a relative ranking of carbohydrate in foods according to how they affect blood glucose levels. Carbohydrates with a low GI value (55 or less) are more slowly digested, absorbed and metabolised and cause a lower and slower rise in blood glucose and, therefore insulin levels.

### **Supersonic Parachute - Mars 2020 mission**

- ❖ The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) successfully tested supersonic landing parachute that will be deployed in its Mars rover mission set to launch in 2020.
- ❖ The mission will rely on a special parachute to slow spacecraft down as it enters Martian atmosphere at over 5.4 kilometers per second.
- ❖ It was the first test of its Mars 2020 mission's parachute-testing series, under the Advanced Supersonic Parachute Inflation Research Experiment (ASPIRE).
- ❖ The Mars 2020 rover mission is part of NASA's Mars Exploration Program, a long-term effort of robotic exploration of the Red Planet.

- ❖ The mission is timed for a launch opportunity in July/August 2020 when Earth and Mars are in good positions relative to each other for landing on Mars.

### **UMANG app for government services**

- ❖ Prime Minister has launched a new mobile app - UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) which will allow citizens to access government services on a single platform.
- ❖ UMANG integrates with the core government services of Aadhaar, DigiLocker, Rapid Assessment System, and Bharat Bill Payment System
- ❖ Using the app, citizens will be able to access Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) services, apply for a new permanent account number (PAN), and can register themselves under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana.
- ❖ The app has been developed by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) along with the National e-Governance Division (NeGD).
- ❖ UMANG app is currently available in 13 languages including Tamil.

### **SBI to launch YONO**

- ❖ SBI will soon launch the country's first integrated lifestyle and banking digital service platform YONO (You only need one).
- ❖ Yono, the first digital banking platform, allows customers to meet their lifestyle needs across 14 categories including booking and renting cabs, entertainment, dining experience, travel and stay etc.
- ❖ This will also be the first to offer online purchase and view of insurance policies within the portal.
- ❖ SBI has partnered with 60 e-commerce players to provide the customised offers and discounts.

### **Remote Sensing Satellites- China**

- ❖ China successfully launched remote sensing satellites designed to conduct electromagnetic probes and other experiments.
- ❖ The satellites, whose number is not specified yet, were launched on a Long March-2C rocket from Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in southwestern Sichuan province.
- ❖ The satellites were carried by a Long March-6 rocket, a new generation of liquid-fuelled carrier rocket developed by China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation.

- ❖ The launch was the 256th mission of the Long March rocket family.

### **World's first AI politician**

- ❖ Scientists from New Zealand have developed world's first artificial intelligence politician named SAM.
- ❖ SAM, created by the New Zealand entrepreneur Nick Gerritsen, can answer a person's queries regarding local issues such as policies around housing, education and immigration.
- ❖ The AI politician is constantly learning to respond to people through Facebook Messenger.

### **Aditya Mission**

- ❖ ISRO is planning to launch Aditya-L1, India's maiden mission to the Sun, in 2019.

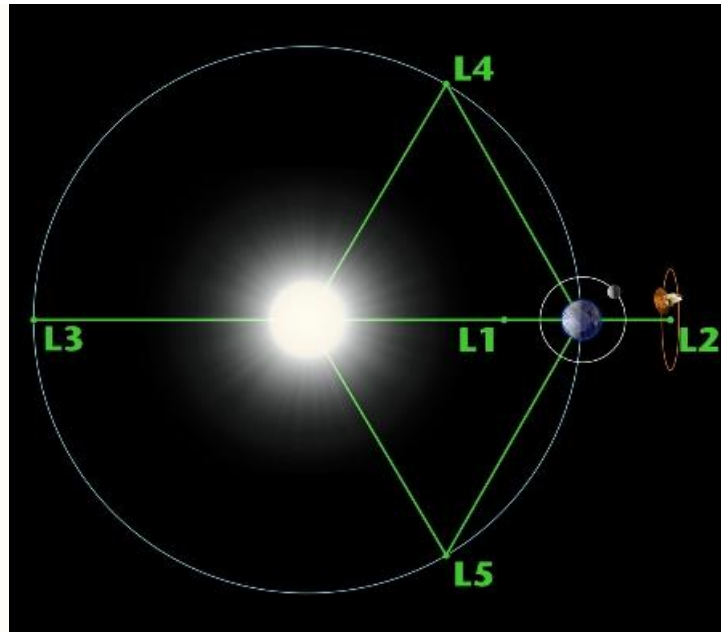
#### **Aditya-L1 Mission**

- ❖ It is the first Indian mission to study the Sun.
- ❖ It is expected to be launched in 2019 by the launch vehicle PSLV-XL with six payloads from Sriharikota.
- ❖ The main aim of the solar mission is to do coronal and near UV studies.
- ❖ It will be launched into the halo orbit around the Lagrangian point 1 (L1) of the Sun-Earth system.
- ❖ This orbit has the advantage of allowing continuous monitoring of the sun.

#### **Lagrange Points**

- ❖ A Lagrange point is a location in space where the combined gravitational forces of two large bodies, such as Earth and the sun or Earth and the moon, equal the centrifugal force felt by a much smaller third body.
- ❖ The interaction of the forces creates a point of equilibrium where a spacecraft may be "parked" to make observations.
- ❖ The first point, L1, lies between Earth and the sun and gets an uninterrupted view of the sun and free from the occurrence of eclipses.
- ❖ L2 with the Earth, moon and sun behind it, a spacecraft can get a clear view of deep space and it has a protection for radiation field from sun.
- ❖ The James Webb Space Telescope will move into L2 point in 2018.
- ❖ The third Lagrange point, L3, lies behind the sun, opposite Earth's orbit. For now, science has not found a use for this spot.





## Lagrange Points

- ❖ Points L4 and L5 are stable and lie along Earth's orbit at 60 degrees ahead of and behind Earth and dust and asteroids tend to accumulate in these regions due to its stability.
- ❖ Asteroids that surround the L4 and L5 points are called Trojans and Earth's only known Trojan asteroid, 2010 TK7 is found in the region
- ❖ Earlier, the NASA-ESA mission SOHO was launched in 1995, and while it made many discoveries, its coronagraph, meant to image the sun, broke down shortly after the mission commenced.

## ENVIRONMENT

### India's first Blackbuck conservation reserve

- ❖ The State cabinet of Uttar Pradesh has approved a Blackbuck Conservation Reserve in the Meja forest division in the trans-Yamuna region of Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ A herd of around 350 blackbucks is estimated to be inhabiting the region and there are only a few national parks and sanctuaries inhabited by blackbuck in the country, like
  1. The Velavadar Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat and
  2. The Ranibennur Blackbuck Sanctuary in Karnataka.

- ❖ The U.P. government evoked Section 36 A (1) and (2) of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, to declare the conservation reserve, which first of its kind conservation reserves in India exclusively dedicated to blackbuck.

### **Blackbuck**

- ❖ Indian Blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*) is an antelope and is the only living species of the genus Antelope.
- ❖ It is considered to be the fastest animal in the world next to Cheetah. The horns of the blackbuck are ringed with one to four spiral turns and the female is usually hornless.
- ❖ Hunting of blackbuck is prohibited under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972. It has been categorised least concerned in IUCN Red Data Book.
- ❖ The Bishnoi community of Rajasthan is known worldwide for their conservation efforts to blackbuck and Chinkara.

### **Hotspots of rattan found in Western Ghats**

- ❖ Scientists have discovered that non-protected areas near the Agastyamalai Biosphere Reserve, Silent Valley-Mukurthi National Parks and Coorg-Wayanad in the Western Ghats are hotspots of rattan or cane species.
- ❖ Rattan is the name for roughly 600 species of old world climbing palms belonging to subfamily Calamoideae.
- ❖ Generally, raw rattan is processed into several products to be used as materials in furniture making.
- ❖ Urgent conservation attention in the face of threats including habitat loss and excessive harvesting would be critical here.
- ❖ Using location records from field studies and literature, scientists at Bengaluru's Asoka Trust for Ecology and Environment (ATREE) and Pune's Indian Institute for Science Education and Research (IISER) first mapped the distribution of all 21 endemic rattan species across the Western Ghats.
- ❖ The Western Ghats in Kerala and Tamil Nadu have the highest number of species.

### **New species of Orangutan identified**

- ❖ A new species of orangutan named *Pongo tapanuliensis* was identified in the Batang Toru forest in the Tapanuli districts of North Sumatra.
- ❖ It's the first great ape species to be described by scientists in nearly 90 years.
- ❖ It is the most endangered great ape in world, with just 800 individuals are left.

- ❖ Its skull, teeth and genes are different from the two other orangutan species.
- ❖ Tapanuli orangutans (*Pongo tapanuliensis*) were first reported in the 1930s as an isolated population, but it wasn't until 2013 that scientists were able to confirm that the apes were in fact a different species from the other two extant orangutan species, the Bornean (*Pongo pygmaeus*) and Sumatran (*Pongo abelii*) orangutans.

### **New ant species discovered in the Western Ghats**

- ❖ Researchers have discovered new species of ant in the Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala in Western Ghats.
- ❖ It has been named *Tyrannomyrmex alii* (T. alii), after eminent myrmecologist Musthak Ali, who is regarded as the India's 'ant man'.
- ❖ It belongs to *Tyrannomyrmex*, a rare tropical genus of ants
- ❖ *Tyrannomyrmex* is a rare myrmicine (subfamily of ants) ant genus that is distributed in the Indomalayan bio-region that extends from southern India and Sri Lanka to southeast Asia.
- ❖ T. alii has thus become the fourth species of the rare genus and the second one from India.

### **New species of wild banana**

- ❖ Botanists have discovered new species of wild banana named *Musa paramjitiana* in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- ❖ The species was found in North Andaman's Krishnapuri forest.
- ❖ The plant grows to a height of nine metres and bears an edible, sweet-and-sour tasting fruit that is boat-shaped and has numerous bulb-shaped seeds.
- ❖ Its conservation status has been declared as 'Critically Endangered' based on IUCN Red List .
- ❖ It has so far been spotted in only two locations in the islands.
- ❖ Wild banana was named *Musa paramjitiana*, in honour of Paramjit Singh, the Current director of the Botanical Survey of India (BSI).

### **19th Organic World Congress**

- ❖ For the first time in 40 years, the Organic World Congress (OWC) is coming to India, and is being organized in Greater Noida, UP.

- ❖ The Organic World Congress (OWC) is organized once in every three years in a different country by the International Federation of Organic Farming Movements (IFOAM).
- ❖ The last edition of the Organic World Congress took place in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2014.
- ❖ It will see the participation of 1,400 representatives from 110 countries, and 2000 delegates from India.
- ❖ In the event, 55 seeds group from 15 Indian states will showcase 4,000 varieties of seeds.

### **Mass Nesting of Olive Ridley Begins in Odisha**

- ❖ Olive Ridley turtles have started arriving in large at Gahirmatha beach in Odisha's Kendrapara district for breeding season.
- ❖ Gahirmatha beach in Odisha's Kendrapara district is known as world's largest rookery of olive ridley species.
- ❖ Olive Ridley is the smallest of the sea turtles and omnivorous in diet.
- ❖ They are found only in warmer waters, including the southern Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.
- ❖ They are known for their behaviour of synchronized nesting in mass numbers, termed arribadas and they nest twice-thrice in a year.
- ❖ Its nesting season ranges worldwide from June to December, with the peak period in September and October.
- ❖ They are listed as Vulnerable in IUCN Red List and in Appendix I of CITES.
- ❖ Nasi II Island is part of Gahirmatha Scantuary in Odisha, one of the world's largest nesting grounds of olive ridley turtles.

### **Air pollution-related deaths see 17 per cent rise in India: Study**

- ❖ Based on recently released report "India: Health of the Nation's States - India State Level Disease Burden", there has been a 17 per cent rise in deaths and disabilities due to diseases caused by air pollution across the country.
- ❖ This report has been released in a "Lancet" medical journal.
- ❖ The study highlights that Haryana, Delhi, Punjab, Bihar, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh reported most cases of mortalities and morbidities due to high levels of pollution in 2016, while Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha were the lowest in terms of ambient air pollution.
- ❖ According to the report, life expectancy at birth in the country improved significantly during 1990 to 2016 — from 59.7 years and 58.3 years for females and males respectively in 1990 to 70.3 years for females and 66.9 years for males in 2016.

- ❖ As per the lancet, Kerala is the healthiest state in India. In Kerala life expectancy at birth for Men is 73.8 years and for Women is 78.7 years.
- ❖ This is 8 years higher life expectancy than the national average.
- ❖ The Indian national life expectancy average is 70.3 years
- ❖ The India State-level Disease Burden Initiative is a joint initiative between,
  - i. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)
  - ii. Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI)
  - iii. Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
  - iv. Government of India along with experts and stakeholders associated with over 100 Indian institutions.

### **Scientists discover new parasitic plant in Nagaland**

- ❖ Scientists have discovered a new species of parasitic flowering plant that has no chlorophyll, and survives by extracting nutrition from the host plant with the help of a haustorium.
- ❖ A haustorium is a specialised structure with which plant parasites attach themselves to the tissue of host plants and derive nutrition.
- ❖ The species, named *Gleadovia konyakianorum*, in honour of the Konyak tribe of Nagas.
- ❖ It is a holoparasite [complete parasite] that derives its entire nutritional requirement from the host plant.
- ❖ The plant was found in the semi-evergreen forest at an altitude of 1,500-1,600 metres.
- ❖ *Gleadovia konyakianorum* is only the fourth species from the genus *Gleadovia* to be found in the world and is a root parasite that grows up to 10 cm in height, and bears white, tubular flowers.

### **M-STRiPES**

- ❖ M-STRiPES (Monitoring System For Tigers-Intensive Protection and Ecological Status) is an app developed by Wildlife Institute of India.
- ❖ The app will be used for the first time in All India Tiger estimation.
- ❖ It is already in place in some national parks but it has been made mandatory only now, for the fourth All-India Tiger estimation.
- ❖ It is expected that the app would ensure more robust estimate by eliminating human errors in the survey.

### **Bonn UN Climate Change Conference**

- ❖ The UNFCCC Climate Change Conference (COP23) was held in Bonn, Germany and was presided over by Government of Fiji.
- ❖ It concluded with countries putting in place a roadmap for ‘Talanoa Dialogue’, a year-long process to assess countries’ progress on climate actions.
- ❖ The Conference also made progress on framing rules for implementing 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change and brought rich nations on board on their pre-2020 commitments.
- ❖ Talanoa is a traditional approach used in Fiji and other Pacific islands to engage in an inclusive, participatory and transparent dialogue to resolve differences without putting any blame on any one.

### **Alkali flies thrive in salty waters**

- ❖ A small fly that thrives at an inhospitable California lake east of Yosemite National Park. The diving flies (Ephydra hians) plunge without getting wet in a lake that is three times as salty as the ocean, containing water that feels almost oily because of its very high pH and levels of sodium carbonate and borax.
- ❖ The strange fly crawls into the severely salty and alkaline water, then emerges dry out of the water.
- ❖ These quarter-inch-long (6-mm) alkali flies are covered in a large quantity of fine hairs coated with special waxes that let them encapsulate themselves in a body-hugging bubble that protects them from water.

### **Migratory birds start arriving in Chilika**

- ❖ After a long flight of thousands of miles, lakhs of migratory birds have made their way to the Chilika Lake
- ❖ Major bird congregations have been spotted in the wetlands of the Nalabana Bird Sanctuary inside Chilika and Mangalajodi, a major village on the banks of the lake.
- ❖ Northern pintail, gadwall and shovellers, plovers, sandpipers and migratory ducks are among the migratory species.

#### **Chilika lake**

- ❖ Chilika lake is Asia’s largest brackish water lagoon; second largest lagoon in the World after New Caledonian barrier reef in New Caledonia, US.
- ❖ It is located in Odisha state on east coast of India, at mouth of Daya River, flowing into Bay of Bengal.

- ❖ It is the largest wintering ground for migratory birds on the Indian sub-continent.
- ❖ It is one of the hotspot of biodiversity in country and some rare, vulnerable and endangered species listed in IUCN Red List of threatened Animals inhabit in lagoon.
- ❖ In 1981, Chilika Lake was designated the first Indian wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.

### **New species of gecko**

- ❖ A new species of gecko (lizards) belonging to the genus Hemidactylus was recently discovered from Mahendragiri hills in Andhra-Odisha border.
- ❖ The species was identified from few areas in northern Mahendragiri range and scattered coastal hills in northern Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ This is the second gecko endemic to this hilly range and the third vertebrate found in India.
- ❖ The first one “House Lizard” was discovered from Kanger Ghati National Park in Chhattisgarh.
- ❖ The new species has been named Hemidactylus sushilduttai or Dutta’s Mahendragiri gecko, after eminent herpetologist Sushil Kumar Dutta from Odisha.
- ❖ The lizard is the 32nd species of Hemidactylus gecko found in India.
- ❖ Herpetology is the branch of zoology concerned with the study of amphibians and reptiles.

### **Neelakurinji reserve**

- ❖ The government has decided to redraw the boundaries of the Neelakurinji reserve located in Munnar in Idukki district of Kerala.
- ❖ It has the reserve area of 3200 hectares.
- ❖ It blooms once in 12 years and it is expected to bloom in July, 2018.
- ❖ Neelakurinji is a shrub that is found in the shola forests of the Western Ghats and Shevroys in the Eastern Ghats of South India.
- ❖ It belongs to the genus Strobilanthes which has around 250 species.
- ❖ Blooming periods of different species of Kurinji differ from each other.

## STATE

### Artificial Intelligence for digital agriculture

- ❖ Karnataka government inks MoU with Microsoft to use AI for digital agriculture.
- ❖ Karnataka government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Microsoft for empowering farmers with technology-oriented solution like Cloud, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and advanced analytics.
- ❖ The MoU is also aimed at using digital tools that have the potential to deliver cutting edge innovations and artificial intelligence to help farmers get higher crop yields in the state.
- ❖ Microsoft in collaboration with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) has deployed a Sowing Advisory Service in the kharif season on a limited pilot, under the “Bhoochetana” project.

#### *Bhoochetana project*

- ❖ It's a novel mission mode project with the mission goal of increasing average productivity of selected rain fed crops by 20%.

### Goa to hold Nobel Prize Series-India 2018

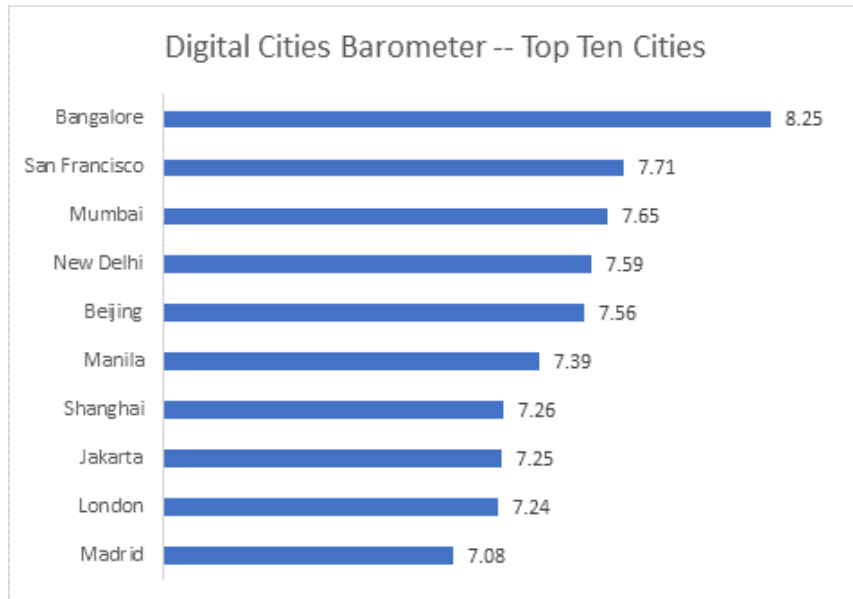
- ❖ The Goa government has signed a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Bio-Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology and Nobel Media, Sweden to hold the ‘Nobel Prize Series — India 2018
- ❖ The event will be held along with month-long exhibition brought from Nobel Museum, Sweden.
- ❖ The event will be jointly organized by Department of Bio-Technology, Union Ministry of Science and Technology in collaboration with Department of Science and Technology and Nobel Media, Sweden.
- ❖ It is being held with objective of driving people towards pure science rather than technology and Earlier Nobel series were organised in Gujarat.

### Bengaluru most conducive for digital transformation: Report

- ❖ According to a report by the Economist Intelligence Unit, Bengaluru has topped the list of cities across the world beating global business hubs such as San Francisco, London, Singapore and Beijing, with the most conducive environment for digital transformation Overall environment, innovation and entrepreneurship, financial environment, people and skills, development of new technology and information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure were the factors considered for the ranking.



- ❖ Mumbai and New Delhi have also been ranked at 3rd and 4th places following San Francisco, the home to famous Silicon Valley.



	Overall environment	Innovation and entrepreneurship	Financial environment		People and skills	Development of new technology	ICT Infrastructure
Bengaluru	8.25	8.2	7.9	Bengaluru	7.9	7.75	7.65
San Francisco	7.71	7.32	7.48	San Francisco	7.57	7.59	7.1
London	7.24	7.53	7.3	London	7.53	7.24	7.47
New Delhi	7.59	7.43	7.55	New Delhi	7.55	7.43	7.15
Singapore	6.89	6.74	6.85	Singapore	6.81	7.04	6.89

*Ratings were given on the scale of ten*

### **Urdu becomes Telangana's second official language**

- ❖ Telangana CM K. Chandrashekar Rao has declared that Urdu will become the second official language of the state.
- ❖ Every office in the state will now have an Urdu speaking officer.

### **Haryana - first state to treat Hepatitis-C patients with oral medicine**

- ❖ Haryana has become the first state in the country to treat Hepatitis-C patients of all categories through oral medicine.
- ❖ For the first time, the state government has included oral medicine in government hospitals for hepatitis-C.

- ❖ This medicine would be provided free of cost to permanent residents of all categories at district level.
- ❖ Hepatitis is a medical condition in which there occurs inflammation of liver cells and its complications vary with type of infection.
- ❖ There are 5 types of hepatitis viz. A, B, C, D and E. Each type is caused by a different hepatitis virus and It is mostly caused by a group of viruses called hepatitis viruses.

### **Kakatiya era temple Excavated**

- ❖ Department of Archaeology and Museums (DAM) has excavated the parts of the Sri Kasi Visweswara Temple that remained buried.
- ❖ During the Excavations period
  - Pradakshina pada (circumambulatory path)
  - Adisthana (base of the temple)
  - Kosamattam and Chandramattam- This is the final portion of the roof were discovered.
- ❖ The 800-year-old Sri Kasi Visweswara Temple, belongs to the kakatiya period, is located in Medak district in Telangana.
- ❖ The capital of kakatiya dynasty is Warangal.
- ❖ Eastern Chalukyas preceded kakatiyas and Bahmani sultanate succeeded it which was subsequently conquered by Vijayanagar Empire and Delhi Sultanate in the later period.
- ❖ Rudrama Devi of this dynasty reigned around 1262–1289 CE.

### **West Bengal granted GI tag for Rosogolla**

- ❖ The Union ministry of commerce and industry has recognised Banglar Rosogolla, the iconic sweet, by giving geographical indication (GI) to the West Bengal.
- ❖ Under the GI Act, West Bengal got the GI Tag over the Rosogulla, so because of this, the competing claims about origin of Rosogolla between the neighbouring state Odisha came to a conclusion.
- ❖ Nobin Chandra Das, is known to be the inventor of rosogolla. Nobin Chandra Das was a notable Bengali confectioner, entrepreneur.
- ❖ Earlier this year, two exotic varieties of rice got GI recognition as unique products of West Bengal. Namely,
  1. Tulaipanji.
  2. Govindabhog.

### **Jharkhand celebrates 17th statehood day- 15 November**

- ❖ Jharkhand celebrated its 17th Statehood day (foundation day) on the occasion of the birth anniversary of tribal leader Birsa Munda.
- ❖ The state was carved out of Southern Bihar in 2000, after several years of agitation by the tribal people of the region.
- ❖ Birsa Munda is a tribal leader in chotanagpur region who fought against the land acquisition by British.
- ❖ He started the faith of “Birsait” to challenge the British conversion activities through Christian missionaries.
- ❖ He is popularly known as 'Dharti Abba' or the Earth Father, a folk hero inspiring other Adivasis in their struggle for forest rights in modern times.
- ❖ He started a movement called 'Ulgulan', or 'The Great Tumult, organising the Adivasis against the land settlement system imposed by the British.

### **Madhya Pradesh - Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat**

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh (MP) has partnered with Nagaland and Manipur under Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat Yojana to strengthen cultural relations between them.
- ❖ MP will participate in Sangai Mahotsav which is being organized in Manipur. Likewise, teams from Nagaland and Manipur will take part in Lok Rang and Bal Rang programmes of MP to present their cultural programmes
- ❖ Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat Yojana was launched by PM in Ekta Diwas on the occasion of birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel.
- ❖ Its objective is to strengthen cultural relations of various parts of country and to embolden mutual connection between people dwelling in different states.

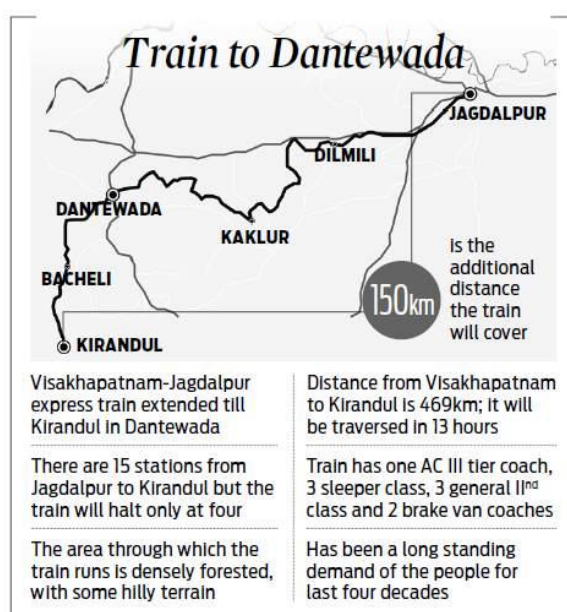
### **Namami Barak festival**

- ❖ The first ever Namami Barak festival was inaugurated by Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal held at Silchar in Assam.
- ❖ The 3-day river festival was organised at 3 locations (Hailakandi, Karimganj, Silchar) in Barak Valley
- ❖ The festival was aimed to pay tribute to River Barak and to showcase of Barak's potential & possibilities to emerge as hub of trade and commerce.
- ❖ Barak River is one of major rivers of South Assam and the river is part of Surma-Meghna River System.

- ❖ It rises in Manipur, flows through Mizoram and Assam and then enters Bangladesh where it forks into Surma and Kushiya rivers.

### First express train into Maoist bastion Dantewada

- ❖ Indian Railways has extended the existing special train between Visakhapatnam-Jagdalpur upto Kirandul in Dantewada District of Chhattisgarh State with effect from 20th November, 2017.
- ❖ Visakhapatnam-Jagdalpur express train chugged into Chhattisgarh's Maoist-hit Dantewada district for the first time. This is the first 'Express' category train for Kirandul which is a left wing extremist affected area.



### Manipur Sangai Festival 2017

- ❖ The President of India inaugurated Manipur Sangai Festival, 2017.
- ❖ Named after Manipur's state animal, the brow-antlered Sangai deer, the festival is Celebrated for 10 days every November since 2010. It is the perfect showcase for the cultural diversity and richness of Manipur.
- ❖ The 2017 edition of the Manipur Sangai Festival will be organized at different locations in Imphal and Bishnupur District.
- ❖ For the first time, Keibul Lamjao, a unique 'floating' reserve situated in Manipur in India's Northeast, which is home to the brow-antlered deer, will also play host to the festival.
- ❖ The state government will also look to finalise deals with investors during the 1st North East Development Summit, to be held in Imphal as part of the Sangai Festival.

- ❖ The summit, scheduled for November 21 and 22, is being jointly organised by the government of Manipur, Ministry of Commerce and Industries and India Foundation. It will be attended by about 175 delegates including a representative of the United Nations.

### **First North East Development Summit**

- ❖ President of India Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the first ever North East Development Summit (NEDS) 2017 was held in Imphal, Manipur.
- ❖ It was organised by Delhi-based think tank India Foundation in collaboration with Union Government and Manipur government.
- ❖ The main objective of this summit was to showcase the economic potential and to attract investments in food processing, bamboo industry, real estate and other businesses within the North East Indian states.
- ❖ It also aimed at building confidence and altering perception among visiting delegates and investors.

### **INSPIRE 2017 kicked off in Jaipur**

- ❖ The first edition of the International Symposium to Promote Innovation & Research in Energy Efficiency (INSPIRE 2017) was kicked off in Jaipur.
- ❖ The five-day symposium is being organized by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) in partnership with the World Bank and Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE).
- ❖ It provides a platform for various stakeholders to discuss energy efficiency policies, market transformation strategies, emerging technologies, delivery and business-model driven transformations and to showcase best practices in Energy Efficiency sector.

### **48th International Film Festival of India**

- ❖ The 48th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) inaugurated by bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan was held in Panaji in Goa.
- ❖ The festival is conducted jointly by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Directorate of Film Festivals and the Government of Goa.
- ❖ Indian Film Personality of the Year Award - Amitabh Bachchan
- ❖ Lifetime Achievement Award – Atom Egoyan
- ❖ Special Jury Award - Take-off (Malayalam Film-India).
- ❖ Best film - 120 Beats Per Minute (French movie) directed by Robin Campullo
- ❖ Best Actor (Male) award - Nahuel Perez Biscayart , Argentine actor.

- ❖ Best Actor (Female) award – Parvathy, an Indian actress.

### **SAUBHAGYA Scheme launched in Manipur**

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Power launched Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA) in Manipur.
- ❖ A total of approximately 1.75 lakh households (1.62 lakh rural households and 0.13 lakh urban households) of Manipur are proposed to be included under the scheme.
- ❖ The Government of India would provide the required financial assistance for strengthening and improvement of infrastructure in the power sector in Manipur.
- ❖ Rural Electrification Corporation Limited (REC), a Navaratna CPSE under the Ministry of Power has been appointed as the nodal agency for coordinating the implementation of the scheme.
- ❖ The prospective beneficiary households for free electricity connections under the scheme will be identified using Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC), 2011 data

## **PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS**

### **India's next high commissioner to Pakistan**

- ❖ Ajay Bisaria takes over as India's high commissioner to Pakistan from Gautam Bambawale, who was appointed India's ambassador to China.
- ❖ An IFS officer of the 1987 batch, Bisaria was before appointment as a India's ambassador to Poland.

### **UNESCO award for Srirangam Temple**

- ❖ The massive renovation and restoration effort at the Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple in Srirangam, executed through the public-private partnership model, has won the UNESCO Asia Pacific Award of Merit 2017 for cultural heritage conservation.
- ❖ It has become the first temple in Tamil Nadu to be given the prestigious award from the UN body.

- ❖ The temple bagged one of the four Awards of Merit from a jury comprising nine international conservation experts, which considered conservation projects from 10 countries in the Asia Pacific region.
- ❖ The honours and awards by the UNESCO for cultural heritage conservation were graded under four different categories.
- ❖ The famous Christ Church in Mumbai and Royal Bombay Opera House are the other historic Indian monuments that received the Award of Merit this year, in addition to the temple.

#### **UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation**

- ❖ The UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation recognize excellent achievement in successfully conserving or restoring heritage buildings and properties in the region by the private sector or by public- private initiatives.
- ❖ Its office located at Bangkok, Thailand.


#### **Etikoppaka toys from Andhra Pradesh get GI tag**

- ❖ The Geographical Indication Registry has given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag to the traditional Etikoppaka toys (Etikoppaka Bommalu) from Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ These traditional toys are made by artisans in Etikoppaka village located on the banks of river Varaha in Visakhapatnam district.
- ❖ The Etikoppaka toys now join the elite products from Andhra Pradesh such as Kondapalli toys, Bobbili Veena, Tirupati laddu, Srikalahasthi Kalamkari, Uppada Jamdani sarees and Shadow puppets to have coveted GI tag.
- ❖ The wood used is from 'Ankudi Karra' (Wrightia tinctoria) tree that is soft in nature and the art which is more than 400 years old, is also known as turned wood Lacquer craft.
- ❖ Geographical indicators registered in 2016-17 are,
  1. Durgi stone carving - Andhra Pradesh
  2. Tulaipanji rice - West Bengal
  3. Kangra painting - Himachal Pradesh
  4. Gobindo Bhog rice - West Bengal
  5. Kashmir Pashmina shawl
  6. Nagpur orange
  7. Banganappalli mango- Andhra Pradesh
  8. Tiruppathi laddu- Andhra Pradesh
  9. Darjiling tea- West Bengal
  10. Chakhesang shawl - Nagaland


11. Pochampalli Ikat saree – Telangana

## Geographical Indications


granted by **Indian Patent Office** in 2017-18




**Banaganapalle Mangoes**  
of Andhra Pradesh




**Tulapanji Rice**  
of West Bengal



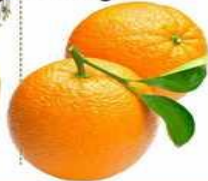
**Tirupathi Laddu**




**Darjeeling Tea**



**Kashmir Pashmina**




**Nagpur Orange**



**Kangra Paintings**

**Other 5 products that received this tag this year**

- Pochampally Ikat of Telangana
- Gobindobhog Rice of West Bengal
- Durgi Stone Carvings
- Etikoppaka Toys of Andhra Pradesh
- Chakshesang Shawl of Nagaland



A Geographical Indication (GI) is primarily an agricultural, natural or a manufactured product (handicrafts/industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory

2016-17: 33 items got GI registration

**Geographical Indication (GI)**

- ❖ The Geographical Indication (GI) is name or sign used on certain products which correspond to specific geographical location or origin.
- ❖ It is used for agricultural, natural and manufactured goods having special quality and established reputation.
- ❖ The registration of a GI is valid for 10 years after which it needs to be renewed.
- ❖ GI is covered as element of intellectual property rights (IPRs) under Paris Convention for Protection of Industrial Property.
- ❖ At international level, GI is governed by WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
- ❖ In India, Geographical Indications are given under geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 by Indian Patent Office.



## **Jnanpith Award 2017**

- ❖ Renowned Hindi Litterateur Krishna Sobti (92) has been chosen for 53rd Jnanpith Award for the year 2017 for her path-breaking contribution to Indian literature.
- ❖ She will be overall eight women to win this prestigious award.
- ❖ Born in 1925 in Gujarat in Pakistan's Punjab Province, Sobti (92) is known for experimenting with new writing styles and creating "bold" and "daring" characters in her stories who were ready to accept all challenges.
- ❖ Her language was highly influenced by the intermingling of Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi cultures.
- ❖ She has been the recipient of many coveted awards in the past, including Hindi Akademi Awards, Shiroman Awards, Maithli Sharan Gupt Samman, Sahitya Akademi Fellowship and Padma Bhushan.

### ***Jnanpith Award***

- ❖ Jnanpith Award is India's highest literary honour. Its name has been taken from Sanskrit words Jnana and Pitha which means knowledge-seat.
- ❖ It was instituted in 1961 by Bharatiya Jnanpith trust founded by the Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain family that owns the Times of India newspaper group.
- ❖ The award carries cash prize of 11 lakh rupees, a citation plaque and a bronze replica of Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and wisdom.

## **Novel on Hitler's rise wins France's top book award**

- ❖ The Prix Goncourt was awarded to Eric Vuillard's book "L'Ordre du jour" (in English "Agenda") by the 10 members of the Academy Goncourt in Paris for his story on how German industry and finance backed Adolf Hitler.
- ❖ The Prix Renaudot award, which is often seen as a consolation prize for those not shortlisted for the Goncourt, went to "The Disappearance of Josef Mengele" by Author Olivier Guez, which describes about the secret post-Holocaust life of the Nazi war criminal.
- ❖ The academy was founded by the 19th-century French literary figure Edmond de Goncourt to encourage new talent in French literature.
- ❖ The Prix Goncourt has been awarded every year since 1903, in honour of Edmond's brother Jules Alfred Huot de Goncourt, considered as the most prestigious in the French-speaking world.

## **Israel honors Natalie Portman with 'Jewish Nobel Prize'**

- ❖ Oscar-winning actress Natalie Portman has been awarded Israel's 2018 Genesis Prize.

- ❖ It has been awarded in recognition of her commitment to social causes (gender equality, combatting poverty, microfinance and animal rights) and deep connection to her Jewish and Israeli roots.
- ❖ Genesis Prize which is also known as Jewish Nobel prize
- ❖ Ms. Portman is the fifth winner and first woman to receive the prize
- ❖ The Genesis Prize was inaugurated in 2014 and is run in a partnership between the Israeli prime minister's office, the private Genesis Prize Foundation and the chairman's office of the Jewish Agency.

### **UNHCR to get Mother Teresa Award 2017 for social justice**

- ❖ The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been named as the recipient of the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice, 2017 as an acknowledgement of its exceptional work worldwide.
- ❖ Harmony Foundation's 2017 theme is 'Compassion Beyond Borders' and UNHCR efforts aptly fit into this theme.
- ❖ The Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice was instituted by Harmony Foundation in 2005 in memory of Mother Teresa, who attained sainthood in September 2016.
- ❖ The UNHCR also known as the UN Refugee Agency, provides humanitarian aid to innumerable people internally displaced by conflicts and helping stateless people all over the world.
- ❖ Its headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland.
- ❖ It is a member of the United Nations Development Group.

### **Kevin Lilliana-Miss International 2017**

- ❖ Indonesia's Kevin Lilliana was crowned Miss International 2017 at an event held at the Tokyo Dome City Hall.
- ❖ This is the first Miss International title for Indonesia and she was crowned by the 2016 Miss International Kylie Verzosa of Philippines.
- ❖ Miss International is a Tokyo-based international beauty pageant organized by the International Culture Association.
- ❖ The pageant was first held in 1960 and the ultimate goal of the Miss International beauty pageant is to promote world peace, goodwill, and understanding.

## **Indira Gandhi Peace Prize**

- ❖ Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will be conferred the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2017.
- ❖ Prize is awarded to him for his leadership of the country and his achievements during the momentous 10 years from 2004 to 2014, for his contributions to the cause of economic and social development, security and others.
- ❖ The international award named after former prime minister Indira Gandhi was instituted in 1986 by Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust. The award has been announced on the eve of Gandhi's birth anniversary.
- ❖ It is awarded to individuals or organizations in recognition of their creative efforts towards promoting international peace, development.
- ❖ It is also bestowed upon them for creating new international economic order and ensuring that scientific discoveries are used for the larger good of humanity and enlarging the scope of freedom.
- ❖ The last two recipients have been the Indian Space Research Organisation and the UN High Commission for Refugees.

## **Manushi Chhillar - Miss World 2017**

- ❖ India's Manushi Chhillar from Haryana was crowned the coveted Miss World crown for the year 2017.
- ❖ Puerto Rico's Stephanie Del Valle, the 2016 title winner, passed on her crown to Ms Chhillar at a grand event held in Sanya in China.
- ❖ The win comes 17 years after Priyanka Chopra brought home the prestigious title in the year 2000.
- ❖ Ms Chhillar is sixth Indian woman to win the coveted title of Miss World.
- ❖ Around 108 women from across world participated in 2017 beauty pageant.
  - ✓ Miss England Stephanie Hill - first runner up
  - ✓ Miss Mexico Andrea Meza - second runner up
- ❖ The List of 5 Indians who were crowned Miss World previously,
  - Reita Faria-1966
  - Aishwarya Rai-1994
  - Diana Hayden-1997
  - Yukta Mookhey-1999
  - Priyanka Chopra-2000

## First Indian woman physician gets Google Doodle

- ❖ Rukhmabai Raut was the first Indian woman to practice medicine in colonial India.
- ❖ Google India paid homage to Rukhmabai on her 153rd birth anniversary of Rukhmabai Raut with a doodle.



### *Rukhmabai impact on Women's Age of Consent*

- ❖ At the young age of 11, she was married off to a 19-year-old Dadaji Bhikaji. The couple never lived together, and Rukhmabai chose to finish her education.
- ❖ Rukhmabai contested that she did not consider their marriage legitimate, and continued to live with her stepfather while simultaneously furthering her education – arguing that the marriage had taken place when she was not in the age or position to consent to it.
- ❖ Dadaji moved to court seeking it to order his wife to live with him. The verdict went in favour of Dadaji. The court ordered Rukhmabai to live with her husband or face six months imprisonment. A brave Rukhmabai said she was willing to opt the latter.
- ❖ The verdict was subsequently overruled by Queen Victoria. This prompted the government to bring the Age of Consent Act, 1891, despite opposition from conservative Indians.

## First female pilot - Indian Navy

- ❖ Bareilly's Shubhangi Swaroop became the first-ever female pilot to be inducted into the Indian Navy.
- ❖ Swaroop, who has been appointed in the Naval Armament Inspection (NAI) branch.

## India to host 36th International Geological Congress in 2020

- ❖ India is going to host 36th International Geological Congress (IGC) in 2020 in NCR New Delhi.
- ❖ Nearly after 6 decades India is going to host this Congress.
- ❖ The event is being jointly funded by the Ministry of Mines and Ministry of Earth Sciences with the active support of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA), and the Science Academies of the other neighbouring co-host countries, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

### IGC

- ❖ IGC is described as the Olympics of Geosciences, held quadrennially under the aegis of the IUGS through a process of global bidding.
- ❖ The IGC is prestigious conclave of geoscientists across the World.
- ❖ The 35th IGC held at Cape Town, South Africa in 2016.

### IUGS

- ❖ The International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) is an international non-governmental organization devoted to international cooperation in the field of geology.
- ❖ Founded in Paris.
- ❖ Secretariat in Beijing, China.
- ❖ IUGS has partnered with UNESCO for UNESCO's Earth science programme.

## 3rd ICCR Distinguished Indologist award

- ❖ The President of India, conferred the 3rd Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Distinguished Indologist Award to Professor Hiroshi Marui of Japan at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.
- ❖ It is awarded to him for his exemplary contribution to Indology and as President of the Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies, he has made a significant contribution to Indology in Japan.
- ❖ Indology is academic study of history, cultures, languages and literature of India and is a subset of Asian studies.
- ❖ ICCR Distinguished Indologist Award is an annual award instituted by ICCR. It carries prize amount of US\$ 20000.
- ❖ The first award was given to Prof. Heinrich Freiherr Von Stietencron of Germany in 2015. Prof. Yu Long Yu of China was awarded in 2016.

### **Tata Literature Live Lifetime Achievement Award 2017**

- ❖ Actor-playwright Girish Karnad (79) was conferred with 2017 Tata Literature Live Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding contribution in field of theatre at the eighth edition of the Tata Literature festival held in Mumbai.
- ❖ He is famously known for writing plays and his screen debut in Kannada movie “Samskara” had won first President’s Golden Lotus Award for Kannada cinema.
- ❖ He is recipient of Jnanpith Award, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri awards.
- ❖ Bengal’s Nabaneeta Dev Sen was conferred Big Little Book Awards
- ❖ ‘Age of Anger: A History of the Present’ by Pankaj Mishra won the book of the year, non-fiction.
- ❖ Book of the year for fiction was given to Nagaland’s Easterine Kire’s ‘Son of the Thundercloud.

### **Miss Universe 2017**

- ❖ South Africa’s Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters was crowned Miss Universe at the pageant held in Las Vegas, USA.
- ❖ She became the second woman from South Africa to win the title after 39 years and Margaret Gardiner had won the title for South Africa for the first time in 1978.
- ❖ Laura González from Colombia was named the first runner-up while Miss Jamaica Davina Bennett stood third at the pageant.
- ❖ Miss Universe is an annual international beauty pageant that is run by the Miss Universe Organization.

Along with Miss World and Miss Earth, and Miss International, the group is known as Big Four international beauty pageants.

### **Badri Narain Sharma appointed as head of GST anti-profiteering body**

- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has appointed senior bureaucrat Badri Narain Sharma as Chairman of National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA) under Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime.
- ❖ The post is equal in the rank and pay of secretary to the government of India.
- ❖ Sharma, a 1985 batch IAS officer of Rajasthan cadre, is at present additional secretary in the department of revenue.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet had earlier approved setting up of the five-member authority, mandated to ensure that the benefits of GST rate reductions are passed on to consumers.

- ❖ As per the structure of the anti-profiteering mechanism in the GST regime, complaints of
  - local nature will be first sent to the state-level screening committee,
  - national level will be marked for the standing committee.
- ❖ The authority will have the power to cancel registration of any entity or business if it fails to pass on to consumers the benefit of lower taxes under the GST regime.

## **SPORTS**

### **Commonwealth Shooting Championships**

- ❖ Heena Sidhu won 10-metre air pistol gold medal at Commonwealth Shooting Championships in Brisbane.
- ❖ This was Sidhu's second successive international gold after she along with Jitu Rai, had won 10-metre air pistol mixed team event in ISSF World Cup Finals in Delhi held in October 2017.
- ❖ Among other Indians, Deepak Kumar won a bronze medal in the 10-metre air rifle event.

### **Commonwealth shooting championship**

- ❖ Olympic bronze-medallist Gagan Narang won a silver medal in the men's 50m rifle prone event of the Commonwealth Shooting Championships in Brisbane
- ❖ Swapnil Suresh Kusale bagged the bronze in the men's 50m rifle prone event.
- ❖ In women's 25m pistol final, India's Anuraj Singh won the bronze.

### **Belgium Open 2017**

- ❖ India's Achanta Sharath Kamal and G Sathiyam won a bronze medal each at the prestigious 2017 Challenge Belgium Open Table Tennis tournament in De Haan, Belgium.

### **Commonwealth shooting championship 2017**

- ❖ Anjum Moudgil won the women's rifle prone bronze in the Commonwealth shooting championship at Brisbane.

### **Women's Asia Cup Hockey**

- ❖ The Indian women's hockey team beat China in the finals to win the women's Asia Cup hockey title at kakamigahara in Japan.
- ❖ With this win, the Indian women's hockey team qualified for the world cup after 15 years.
- ❖ This is India's second Asia Cup title win after they had beaten Japan in 2004 in New Delhi.

### **Commonwealth Shooting Championships 2017**

- ❖ India ended the Commonwealth Shooting Championships with 20 medals after Satyendra Singh won a gold and Sanjeev Rajput a silver in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions event.
- ❖ The Indian squad won a total of six gold, seven silvers and seven bronze medals during the competition held at Brisbon, Australia.

### **Asian Women's Boxing Championships 2017**

- ❖ Five time world champion and Olympic bronze-medallist Mary Kom clinched her fifth gold medal in Asian Women's Boxing Championships in Light Flyweight (48 kg) category, held at Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam.
- ❖ World Championship silver-medallist Sonia settled for silver for the second time at this event after losing to China's Yin Junhua.
- ❖ India signed off with a gold, a silver and five bronze medals at the continental showpiece.
- ❖ This was Mary Kom's first international gold medal since the 2014 Asian Games
- ❖ For Mary Kom's outstanding contribution to sport of boxing, she has been awarded Padma Bhushan (2013), Padma Shree (2010) and Arjuna Award for Boxing (2003).



## **82nd Senior National Badminton Championship 2017**

- ❖ Former World No-1 Saina Nehwal beat Olympic silver medallist PV Sindhu to clinch the women's singles title for the third time in the 82nd Senior National Badminton Championship in Nagpur.
- ❖ Saina has played the nationals three times and has clinched the title every time.
- ❖ H S Prannoy, beat the World No. 2 Kidambi Srikanth to win the men's single's title in the 82nd edition of the tournament.

## **World Billiards Championship 2017**

- ❖ Pankaj Advani clinched his 17th world title after he thrashed his arch-rival Mike Russell of England in the IBSF World Billiards Championship in Doha.
- ❖ He is the only player in the world to win world titles in all formats of both, Billiards and Snooker.
- ❖ He is the first cueist in the world to win the Grand double three times in 2005 and 2008, 2014 respectively.

## **Italy fail to qualify for 2018 FIFA World Cup**

- ❖ Italy failed to qualify for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Which is going to held in Russia after being held to a 0-0 draw on play-off by a defiant Sweden.
- ❖ Italy have failed to qualify for the World Cup for the first time in the last 60 years.
- ❖ Last time the Gli Azzurri missed the World Cup Qualification for the 1958 Swedan FIFA World Cup.
- ❖ Along with this, so far, the Four-times world FIFA champion Italy had failed 3 times to get qualified for the world cup respectively 1930,1958,2018.
- ❖ On the other side Sweden got its First entry ticket to FIFA World Cup After 2006.
- ❖ The national football team of Italy is known as Gli Azzurri from the traditional colour of Italian national teams and athletes representing Italy.

## Italy suffer World Cup heartbreak

Four-time champions Italy have failed to qualify for the World Cup for the first time since 1958, after a goalless draw with Sweden ended hopes of qualifying for the 2018 tournament in Russia

Italy captain  
Gianluigi  
Buffon



### ITALY: RECORD AT FIFA WORLD CUP

1934		<b>Champions</b>	bt Czechoslovakia
1938		<b>Champions</b>	bt Hungary
1950		Group stage	
1954		Group stage	
1958		<b>Did not qualify</b>	
1962		Group stage	
1966		Group stage	
1970		Finalist	lost to Brazil
1974		Group stage	
1978		Fourth-place	
1982		<b>Champions</b>	bt West Germany
1986		Last 16	
1990		Third-place	
1994		Finalist	lost to Brazil
1998		Quarter-final	
2002		Last 16	
2006		<b>Champions</b>	bt France
2010		Group stage	
2014		Group stage	

Source: FIFA Picture: Getty © GRAPHIC NEWS

## First Indian to qualify for LPGA Tour Championships

- ❖ Aditi Ashok has qualified for the season-ending CME Group Tour Championship on the LPGA, becoming the first from India to play in the prestigious meet.
- ❖ The 19-year-old prodigy is one of eight rookies to make it to the Tour Championships in what is one of the strongest fields in women's golf.

## Peru Qualifies for the world cup after 36 years

- ❖ Peru beat New Zealand 2-0 in the World Cup qualifiers second stage playoffs.
- ❖ With this Peru has qualified for the World cup series after 36 years.
- ❖ The team last played in the 1982 World Cup Series.

## 61st National shotgun championship

- ❖ Olympian Shagun Chowdhary 1 clinched the women's trap gold in the 61st National shotgun championship final at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi.

### **National wrestling championship 2017**

- ❖ Two-time Olympic-medallist Sushil Kumar won the gold medal in the men's 74kg freestyle competition in the National Wrestling championship at the Abhay Prashal Indoor Stadium, Indore.

### **Dimitrov defeats Goffin to win ATP Finals**

- ❖ Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov defeated the Belgian David Goffin at the Nitto ATP Finals.
- ❖ Dimitrov became the first debutant to win the season finale since 1998.
- ❖ This final was the first time in the tournament's history that two players who qualified for the first time faced off in the title decider.
- ❖ The last player to win the trophy in their first year as a qualifier was Alex Corretja in 1998.

### **61st National shotgun championship**

- ❖ Commonwealth Championship silver medallist Shreyasi Singh won gold in the double trap 61st National shotgun championship at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, New Delhi.

### **Afghanistan wins maiden Under-19 Asia Cup**

- ❖ Afghanistan thrashed Pakistan in the final of the Under-19 Asia cricket Cup to register a historic triumph and lift their maiden title at Kuala Lumpur
- ❖ Afgans Ikram Ali khil was the man of the match in the final against Pakistan.
- ❖ Mujeeb Zadran was the man of series for his 20 wickets in the tournament.

### **Asian Marathon Championship**

- ❖ Gopi Thonakal from Wayanad district of Kerala became the first Indian man to win Asian Marathon Championship.
- ❖ He achieved the feat in the 16th edition of the prestigious event held at Dongguan in China.
- ❖ Uzbekistan's Andrey Petrov won silver medal and Byambalev Tsevenravdan of Mongolia won bronze medal.
- ❖ It is a biennial international competition in marathon road running for Asian athletes organised by the Asian Athletics Association.

### **Senior U-23 World Wrestling Championship**

- ❖ Indian wrestler Ritu Phogat (48kg) clinched the silver medal in the U-23 Senior World Wrestling Championship at Poland.
- ❖ She lost against Turkish Wrestler Demirhan in the gold medal bout to settle for a silver.
- ❖ Previously,
  - Ritu Phogat won gold medal at the Commonwealth Wrestling in Singapore in the 48 kg category,
  - Bronze medal at the Asian Championships.
  - She also won National championship, which was held at Indore.
- ❖ Under-23 Senior World Wrestling is the one of the event in Wrestling organised by United World Wrestling.

### **Asian Kabaddi Championship 2017**

- ❖ The Indian men's kabaddi team defeated Pakistan in the finals of the Asian Kabaddi Championship 2017 in Gorgan, Iran to win the gold medals.
- ❖ The Indian men's team remained undefeated in the tournament.
- ❖ The Indian women's team beat South Korea in the finals of the Asian Kabaddi Championship 2017 in Gorgan, Iran to win the gold medals.

### **AIBA World Women's Youth Championships 2017**

- ❖ Indian boxers won five gold medals at the AIBA [International Boxing Association (amateur)] Women's Youth World Boxing Championships in Guwahati.
- ❖ Nitu, Jyoti, Sakshi and Shashi Chopra from Haryana and Assam's Ankushita Boro won golds in their respective weight categories.
- ❖ Anupama and Neha Yadav won bronze medals in their respective categories.
- ❖ This was India's best performance in the tournament's history so far.

### **Davis Cup 2017**

- ❖ France defeated Belgium 3-2 to win Davis Cup, dubbed the World Cup of Tennis, for the first time in 16 years and 10th time overall at The Pierre Mauroy Stadium in France.

- ❖ France joined Britain in third place on the list for the most Davis Cup titles, behind the United States (32) and Australia (28).

### **IBSF World snooker championship**

- ❖ Pankaj Advani defeated Iran's Amir Sarkhosh in the final and claim the IBSF (International Billiards & Snooker Federation) World snooker championship at the Al Arabi Sports Club in Doha.
- ❖ It was the Indian star's 18th world title.

### **Para-Badminton World Championships**

- ❖ India clinched 10 medals, including two golds, at the BWF (Badminton World Federation) Para-Badminton World Championships in Ulsan, south Korea.
- ❖ India's Parul Parmar defeated Thailand's player in the final of the women's singles Standing Lower (SL-3) to clinch the gold medal.
- ❖ Parmar also combined with Japan's Akiko Sugino to win the gold in the women's doubles after beating Chinese pair in the summit clash.
- ❖ Tarun Dhillon and Manoj Sarkar won the silver in the men's singles (SL 4) and (SL 3) respectively.

### **IOA recognition for BFI**

- ❖ Indian Olympic Association (IOA) finally granted recognition to Boxing Federation of India (BFI) as a national body.
- ❖ Earlier Indian sports ministry has banned Indian Amateur Boxing Federation as its affiliate to work as national body for wrestling.
- ❖ The BFI, already recognised by the International Boxing Association (AIBA) and the Sports Ministry, so finally got the IOA's nod to work as a national body.

### **World Weightlifting Championship**

- ❖ Saikhom Mirabai Chanu became the first Indian after twenty two years to win a gold medal at the World Weightlifting Championship in Anaheim, USA.
- ❖ This was after she lifted a new world record of 194 kg in women's 48kg category.
- ❖ Overall she became only the second Indian after Karnam Malleswari to win the gold medal at the World Weightlifting Championships.

- ❖ In 1994 and 1995 Karnam Malleswari won the gold medal at world weightlifting championship.

## **IMPORTANT DAYS**

### **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas-October 31**

- ❖ Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day) is being celebrated on 31st October, marking the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhai Patel.
- ❖ He is credited for the integration of over 550 independent princely states into India from 1947-49.
- ❖ He was posthumously conferred with Bharat Ratna, India's highest Civilian honour, in 1991.
- ❖ To mark this occasion 'Run for Unity' was organised in New Delhi from the National Stadium.
- ❖ Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was the Independent India's first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister.

### **World Vegan Day 2017**

- ❖ World Vegan Day is celebrated every year on November 1 and it raises awareness about animal rights and advocates the widespread adoption of a vegan lifestyle.
- ❖ The day was created in 1994 by British animal rights activist, Louise Wallis, as a way to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of The Vegan Society in the UK.
- ❖ Veganism is practised both as a diet (to abstain from all food items using animal products) as well as a philosophy (which rejects the commodity status of animals). One who practises either of the two is said to be a vegan.

### **International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists: November 2**

- ❖ The United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution at its 68th session in 2013 which proclaimed 2 November as the 'International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists' (IDEI).
- ❖ The Resolution urged Member States to implement definite measures countering the present culture of impunity.

- ❖ The date was chosen in commemoration of the assassination of two French journalists in Mali on 2 November 2013.

### **World Tsunami Awareness Day 2017**

- ❖ The World Tsunami Awareness Day was observed across the world on 5th November to spread awareness among people across the world about Tsunami.
- ❖ The theme of the World Tsunami Awareness Day 2017 is 'Reduce the number of affected People'.
- ❖ November 5 was designated as World Tsunami Awareness Day by UNGA to coincide with the annual anniversary of the 1854 Inamura-no-hi (Fire of Inamura) event.

### **International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict**

- ❖ The International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict is observed annually on November 6.
- ❖ The day was established on November 5, 2001 by the United Nations General Assembly
- ❖ It aims to educate people about the damaging effects of war and armed conflict on the environment.

### **World Usability Day - November 9**

- ❖ World Usability Day is held annually on the second Thursday of November, Established in 2005 by the Usability Professionals Association, (now the User Experience Professionals Association).
- ❖ It occurs annually to promote the values of usability, usability engineering, user-centered design, universal usability, and every user's responsibility to ask for things that work better.

### **World Quality Day - November 9**

- ❖ World Quality Day is celebrated on November 9, every year around the world.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2017 is 'Everyday Leadership'.
- ❖ World Quality Day was introduced by the United Nations in 1990 to increase worldwide awareness of the important contribution that quality ensures a nation's and an organisation's growth and prosperity.

### **Legal Services Day - November 9**

- ❖ The Legal Services Day is celebrated on 9th November every year in India. It was on this day in 1995, the Legal Services Authorities Act was enforced.
- ❖ It was first started by Supreme court of India in the year 1995 to provide help and support to poor and weaker sections of the society.

### **World Immunization Day**

- ❖ World Immunization Day is celebrated every year by World Health Organisation on November 10.
- ❖ It is celebrated to make people aware about the importance of getting timely vaccinations against vaccine preventable diseases.
- ❖ India has one of the largest Universal Immunization Programs (UIP) in the world in terms of the quantities of vaccines used, number of beneficiaries covered, geographical spread and human resources involved.
- ❖ Government of India is providing vaccination free of cost against vaccine preventable diseases under Mission Indradhanush.
- ❖ It includes Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Measles, severe form of Childhood Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B and Meningitis & Pneumonia (across the country), Inactivated polio vaccine (IPV), Japanese Encephalitis in endemic districts and Rotavirus diarrhoea in selected states.
- ❖ Measles-Rubella vaccine, Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) are being introduced in phased manner.

### **National Education Day –November 11**

- ❖ National Education Day is celebrated on 11 November every year in India to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first education minister of independent India.
- ❖ The objective of celebrating National Education Day should be to strengthen our educational institutions and to raise the quality of education to greater heights.

### **World Pneumonia Day - 12 November**

- ❖ The World Pneumonia Day is observed globally every year on November 12 to generate awareness about the 'pneumonia' disease.
- ❖ The observance of day aims to



- Raise awareness about pneumonia, the world's leading killer of children under age of five.
- prevent and treat pneumonia and Generate action to combat pneumonia.
- ❖ Pneumonia is a form of acute respiratory infection that affects the lungs. It is caused by inflammation of the airspaces in the lungs.
- ❖ It is caused by number of infectious agents, including viruses, bacteria and fungi.

### **World Kindness Day – November 13**

- ❖ World Kindness Day is annually celebrated worldwide on 13 November.
- ❖ It was introduced in 1998 by the World Kindness Movement a coalition of nations kindness NGOs in world wide.
- ❖ Singapore observed the day for the first time in 2009.
- ❖ The objective of the day is to promote kindness in all its forms.

### **World Diabetes Day**

- ❖ The World Diabetes Day was observed every year across the world on 14 November to raise awareness about diabetes
- ❖ The theme for year 2017 is “Women and diabetes – Our right to a healthy future’.
- ❖ The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) recognised World Diabetes Day in 2007.
- ❖ World Diabetes Day was launched in 1991 by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in response to the rapid rise of diabetes around the world.

### **National Press Day - 16 November**

- ❖ National Press Day is celebrated across the country on 16 November. The day is symbolic of a free and responsible press in India.
- ❖ It is the day on which the Press Council of India started functioning as a moral watchdog.
- ❖ It ensures whether the press maintains the high standards and also that it was not fettered by the influence or threats of any extraneous factors.
- ❖ The Press Council of India was first constituted on 4 July 1966 as an autonomous, statutory, quasi-judicial body established under press council Act 1978.

- ❖ It started functioning from 16 November 1966 with Justice J R Mudholkar, then a Judge of the Supreme Court, as Chairman.

### **World Philosophy Day**

- ❖ World Philosophy Day was annually observed on the third Thursday of November, introduced in 2002 by UNESCO
- ❖ The Day underlines the enduring value of philosophy for the development of human thought, for each culture and for each individual.
- ❖ It is a day for people to share thoughts, openly explore and discuss new ideas and inspire public debate or discussion on society's challenges.

### **International Day for Tolerance - 16 November**

- ❖ The United Nations' (UN) International Day for Tolerance is annually observed on November 16 to educate people about the need for tolerance in society and to help them understand the negative effects of intolerance.
- ❖ In 1995 to mark the 50th anniversary of UNESCO which was established in 1945, UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution to observe the International Day for Tolerance. From 1996 the International Day for Tolerance was started to observe on November 16.
- ❖ In 1995, to mark the United Nations Year for Tolerance and the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, UNESCO created a prize for the promotion of tolerance and non-violence.
- ❖ The UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence is awarded every two years on the International Day for Tolerance, 16 November.
- ❖ The Prize may be awarded to institutions, organizations or persons, who have contributed in a particularly meritorious and effective manner to tolerance and non-violence.

### **International day of Students – November 17**

- ❖ International Students' Day is an international observance of student activism, held annually on November 17.
- ❖ The date commemorates the anniversary of the 1939 Nazi storming of the Charles University of Prague after demonstrations against the killing of Jan Opletal and the occupation of Czechoslovakia, and then the Nazi's executed the nine student leaders, over 1200 students sent to concentration camps, and the closing of all Czech universities and colleges.

- ❖ The day was first marked in 1941, by the International Students Council in London.

### **National Epilepsy Day – November 17**

- ❖ In India, November 17 is observed every year as National Epilepsy Day to create awareness about epilepsy.
- ❖ Epilepsy is a chronic disorder of brain characterized by recurrent ‘seizures’ or ‘fits’. The seizures are caused as a result of sudden, excessive electrical discharges in the neurons (brain cells).
- ❖ According to World Health Organization (WHO), about 50 million people have epilepsy across the world, out of which 80 percent people are living in developing countries.
- ❖ In India, about 10 million people suffer from seizures associated with epilepsy.

### **World Fisheries Day**

- ❖ World Fisheries Day is being celebrated every year on November 21st to commemorate the establishment of World Fisheries Forum (WFF) in 1997.
- ❖ WFF advocates for a global mandate of sustainable fishing practices and policies.
- ❖ In India, it is celebrated fourth consecutive year by the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries.
- ❖ It is notably that UN has not yet recognised this day even though it is being celebrated since 20 years.

#### **Quick Facts**

- ❖ 11th Indian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum with the theme 'Fostering Innovations in Fisheries and Aquaculture', in Kochi, Kerala on the Occasion of World Fisheries day.
- ❖ India is the 3rd largest fish producer and 2nd largest aquaculture producer in the world.
- ❖ India has the coastal line length of 7516 Km.
- ❖ Tamilnadu has the coastalline length of 1076 Km.

### **World Toilet Day**

- ❖ World Toilet Day is an official United Nations international observance day celebrated on 19th November to raise awareness of the global sanitation crisis.

- ❖ The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), launched in 2015, include a target to ensure everyone has access to a safely-managed household toilet by 2030. This makes sanitation central to eradicating extreme poverty.
- ❖ World Toilet Day is coordinated by UN-Water in collaboration with governments and partners.
- ❖ The theme of World Toilet Day is “Wastewater”

#### **India- Sanitation**

- ❖ According to UNICEF's recent survey, India is the country with most number of people deprived of access to toilet and sanitation facilities, while China is second in the list.
- ❖ According to World Bank report, 60 Crore Indians defecate in open space due to lack of toilet facilities.
- ❖ According to UNICEF report, 1000 children die every day because of lack of toilet facilities. And 1 in 6 girl child discontinue their school education due to absence of toilet facilities at schools.

#### **World Toilet Organization**

- ❖ The World Toilet Organization was established on November 19, 2001 to address toilet and sanitation issues.
- ❖ World Toilet Organization has its headquarters in Singapore. The organisation was founded by Jack Sim On 19 November 2001.
- ❖ The organisation is aimed at creating awareness about toilets and providing plans to construct modern toilets in various countries.
- ❖ This year the World Toilet Summit will commence a day after the path breaking UN World Toilet Day on 19th of November in Melbourne, Australia.

#### **World Antibiotic Awareness Week 13-19 November**

- ❖ World Antibiotic Awareness Week is observed from 13 to 19 November, which raises awareness about global antibiotic resistance and encourages best medical practices among the people.
- ❖ This year's World Health Organization (WHO) theme is seek advice from a qualified health care professional before taking antibiotics.
- ❖ Inappropriate use of antibiotics contributes to antibiotic resistance which stops an antibiotic from working effectively against bacteria.

#### **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women – 25 November**

- ❖ The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (IDEVAW) is observed every year across the world on 25th November.

- ❖ The day seeks to raise awareness about violence against the women and girls, end violence against women and also seeks to show that prevention is possible against violence of women.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2017 is 'Leave no one behind: end violence against women and girls'.
- ❖ This day is commemorated in memory of three Mirabal sisters, political activists from Dominican Republic who were brutally assassinated during the Rafael Trujillo dictatorship in 1960.

### **National Milk day-NMD**

- ❖ November 26 was observed as National Milk day across the country Day to mark the birth anniversary of Father of the White Revolution Dr. Verghese Kurien.
- ❖ The idea of observing National Milk Day was first mooted by Indian Dairy Association in 2014 on the lines of World Milk Day observed on June 1 under the aegis of UN Food and Agriculture Organization.
- ❖ The first NMD was observed on 26 November 2014 by all Indian dairy sector majors including National Dairy Development Board, Indian Dairy Association along with state level milk federations to make .
- ❖ India ranks first in milk production, accounting for 18.5 % of world production.

### **National Constitution Day–November 26**

- ❖ The 'National Constitution Day' is celebrated on November 26 to commemorate the day on which Indian Constitution was adopted .
- ❖ The 'Constitution Day' of India (Samvidhan divas) is being observed on 26th November to spread awareness of importance of the Indian constitution.
- ❖ Indian Constitution came into force on January 26, 1950 which is marked as a Republic day of India.
- ❖ The National constitutional day was established in 2015.
- ❖ The National law day also celebrated on November 26 to mark this same event.

### **International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People-29 November**

- ❖ The United Nations' (UN) International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is annually observed on November 29.

- ❖ The occasion marks the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 181 (II) on 29 November 1947 partitioning the British mandate of Palestine into two States.
- ❖ This year's observance marks 50 years since the start of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.
- ❖ The resolution recommended the creation of independent Arab and Jewish States and a Special International Regime for the city of Jerusalem.
- ❖ Mandatory Palestine was a geopolitical entity under British administration, carved out of Ottoman Southern Syria after World War I.
- ❖ British civil administration in Palestine operated from 1920 until 1948.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Gender Vulnerability Index

- ❖ Goa ranked top and Bihar featured at the lowest in Gender Vulnerability Index (GVI) released by Child development NGO Plan India.
- ❖ The index has been developed within research for the NGO's Plan for Every Child campaign which is aimed at comprehensively understanding the dimensions of various problems affecting children, particularly girls, in difficult circumstances.
- ❖ The index, which provides a state wise ranking, has been calculated by analyzing four issues pertinent to the situation of girls — child safety/protection, poverty, health and education.
- ❖ In the ranking, Goa is followed by Kerala, Mizoram and Sikkim.
- ❖ Bihar ranked the lowest at 30, with Delhi faring only slightly better at 29 and Uttar Pradesh at 28.
- ❖ The highest ranking north Indian state is Himachal Pradesh which is at the sixth position.

### Tamil scholar and Periyarist Ma. Nannan passes away

- ❖ Tamil scholar, Periyarist and former director of Tamil Development Department Ma. Nannan passed away.
- ❖ Ma. Nannan was famous for his classes in Doordarshan program 'Tamil Karpom'

- ❖ Nannan was a professor of Tamil at the Presidency college in Chennai and the author of over 70 books and was the recipient of Tamil Nadu's Periyar, Thiru Vika and Anna awards.
- ❖ He also served as Director of Tamil Development and Vice-Chairman of Adult Education Board.
- ❖ Nannan was a freedom fighter and he participated in the Quit India Movement and he also involved himself in the anti-Hindi agitation.

### **Debjani Ghosh set to be first woman President of Nasscom**

- ❖ The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) has named Debjani Ghosh its president-designate succeeding R Chandrashekhar after completion of his tenure in March next year.
- ❖ Ghosh, former managing director of Intel South Asia, will be the first woman President of Nasscom.
- ❖ NASSCOM is global non-profit trade association (organisation) of Indian Information Technology (IT) and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry.
- ❖ It is registered under the Indian Societies Act, 1860. Its headquarters is in New Delhi. NASSCOM was established in 1988.

### **Google honours India's first woman advocate with doodle**

- ❖ Search engine giant Google paid tribute to Cornelia Sorabji, the first Indian woman student in Britain and India's first woman lawyer, on her 151st birth anniversary with a special doodle.
- ❖ Sorabji, born in Maharashtra's Nashik in 1866, is also recognised as the first woman graduate of Bombay University as early as 1892 and first Indian national to attend Oxford University.
- ❖ Sorabji, who was the first woman advocate to join the Allahabad High Court bar, fought tirelessly for the rights of 'purdahnashins' - veiled women forbidden by social custom from communicating with men outside their families.
- ❖ The doodle was designed by illustrator Jasjyot Singh Hans.

### **Swachh Iconic Places**

- ❖ A two-day National Consultation of Swachh Iconic Places (SIP), an initiative of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation under Swachh Bharat Mission held recently at New Delhi.

- ❖ It is a special clean-up initiative focused on select iconic heritage, spiritual and cultural places in the country.
- ❖ The initiative is being coordinated by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in association with the Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and the concerned State governments.
- ❖ 10 New Iconic sites identified under Phase II are: 1. Gangotri, 2. Yamunotri, 3. Mahakaleshwar Temple, 4. Charminar, 5. Church and Convent of St. Francis of Assisi, 6. Kalady, 7. Gomateshwar, 8. Baijnath Dham, 9. Gaya Tirth and 10. Somnath temple.

### **Multi State Mega Mock Tsunami Exercise 2017**

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs through National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) has conducted a multi-state mega mock exercise on tsunami preparedness.
- ❖ The exercise was simultaneously conducted in 31 coastal districts across four States – West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu and Puducherry (UT) along entire East Coast.
- ❖ It was for first time entire eastern coast will participate simultaneously in mock exercise.
- ❖ The exercise is one of the various activities planned on the occasion of the 2nd World Tsunami Awareness Day, observed on November 5.

-----





# SHANKAR IAS ACADEMY

THE BEST IAS ACADEMY IN SOUTH INDIA SINCE 2004

REFLECTION OF 37/75  
QUESTIONS IN  
TNPSC GROUP II A (2017)  
GENERAL STUDIES PAPER  
(EXCLUDING MENTAL ABILITY)  
FROM OUR TEST SERIES

REFLECTION OF 50/100  
QUESTIONS IN  
TNPSC GROUP II A (2017)  
GENERAL TAMIL PAPER  
FROM OUR TEST SERIES

## **MUCH AWAITED TNPSC GROUP I PRELIM TEST SERIES Coming SOON....**

**Both Class room and online  
programmes  
available**

**Total Tests - 36**  
13 - Foundation Tests  
23 - Core Tests  
Recorded  
Discussion Videos

**Test Centers:**  
Anna Nagar, Adyar,  
Madurai, Salem