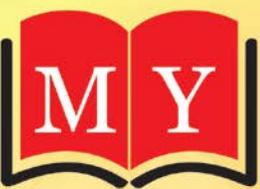
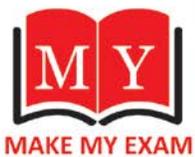


# Monthly Current Affairs

01 March – 31 March, 2018

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## National News

### **1. Cabinet approves Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill, 2018:**

- ✦ The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal of the Ministry of Finance to introduce the Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill, 2018 in the Parliament.
- ✦ The bill aims to deter economic offenders from evading the Indian laws by remaining outside the jurisdiction of Indian Courts.

### **2. “AmanGaon, AmaVikas” Program in Odisha:**

- ✦ With an aim to involve people from the rural areas in the developmental activities, the Government of Odisha has launched “AmanGaon, AmaVikas” Program.
- ✦ Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik flagged off mobile video vans that will move across the state to highlight various welfare schemes at villages in the state.

### **3. India’s first HeliTaxi service launched in Bengaluru:**

- ✦ With an aim to provide last mile connectivity, India’s first helicopter shuttle service (HeliTaxi) was launched in Bengaluru , Karnataka.
- ✦ The service has been provided by Thumbby Aviation.

### **4. Shigmotsav celebrated in Goa:**

- ✦ The cultural festival of the coastal state known as Shigmotsav or Shigmo has been celebrated in Goa.
- ✦ The parade in the festival showcased the Goa life through folk dance and music performances by the locals.

### **5. Government allocates Rs.1000 crore for research under IMPRINT-II:**

- ✦ The Ministry of Human Resource Development has given Rs 1000 crore for the second phase of Impacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT) India programme to increase research and innovation in the country.
- ✦ IMPRINT India Programme is a joint initiative of Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) for developing research in healthcare, ICT, energy, nano technology, sustainable habitat, water resources etc.

### **6. Animal Welfare Board of India headquarters shifted from Chennai to Ballabgarh:**

- ✦ With an aim to achieve better coordination with the Environment Ministry, the Government has shifted the headquarters of Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) from Chennai to Ballabgarh in Faridabad district of Haryana.
- ✦ AWBI is a statutory body that decides rules on how animals ought to be treated with humanity everywhere.

### 7. Know India Programme:

- ✦ 40 participants of Indian Origin from 9 countries attended the program.
- ✦ Madhya Pradesh was the partner state for this edition.
- ✦ KIP is an initiative of the Ministry of External Affairs for the Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) between the age group of 18 to 30 years.

### 8. Delhi airport ranked number 1 in quality:

- ✦ Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi has been ranked as number one in the world on airport service quality ranking.
- ✦ Around 63.5 million passengers flew through Delhi airport in 2017, making it the 7<sup>th</sup> busiest airport in Asia and among the 20 busiest airports across the world.

### 9. NITI Aayog launches Women Entrepreneurship Platform:

- ✦ The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog has launched Women Entrepreneurship Platform on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March.
- ✦ On this occasion, singer KailashKher has sung and released the theme song "Naari Shakti".
- ✦ The Women Entrepreneurship Platform is a platform for the women that will help them to fulfill their entrepreneurial aspirations by providing them a convenient ecosystem.

### 10. 'Vision For Future' held in New Delhi:

- ✦ With an aim to commemorate 70 years of India-Russia relations, an event "Vision for Future" was held in New Delhi.
- ✦ The event was organized by the Ministry of External Affairs.

### 11. Government launches 100% Oxo-Biodegradable Sanitary Napkin 'SUVIDHA' under JanaushadhiPariyojna:

- ✦ The Union Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers has launched 100% Oxo-Biodegradable Sanitary Napkin 'SUVIDHA' under the PradhanMantriBhartiyaJanaushadhiPariyojna (PMBJP) on the occasion of International Women's Day.

- ✦ Suvidha sanitary napkins will be available for Rs 2.50 per pad at over 3200 JanaushadhiKendras across India.

### **12. Madhya Pradesh CM announces MukhyamantriMahilaKosh Scheme:**

- ✦ Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chouhan has announced MukhyamantriMahilaKosh Scheme on the occasion of International Women's Day.
- ✦ The scheme aims to provide pension to unmarried women aged over 50 years.

### **13. Swacch Shakti 2018 in Lucknow:**

- ✦ On the occasion of International Women's Day, a women convention known as 'Swacch Shakti' has been organized by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in Lucknow.
- ✦ In this event, 8000 women Sarpanches, 3000 women Swachhagris and women champions of the country were recognized for their outstanding contribution towards Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

### **14. I-Metros:**

- ✦ During the Conference on Indian Metros, the Union Housing Ministry has launched I-Metros, an association of all Indian Metro Rail Companies for mutual sharing of ideas and experiences for achieving excellence in their operations.
- ✦ On this occasion, "The Operator's Story"- a publication by World Bank and Railway and Transport Strategy Centre (RTSC) was also released.

### **15. Gurugram's first cyber-crime police station inaugurated:**

- ✦ The Metropolitan Development Authority of Gurugram has inaugurated its first cyber-crime police station.
- ✦ The station will have 35 trained personnel and equipment for forensic and call detail analysis.

### **16. National Legislators Conference:**

- ✦ Prime Minister NarendraModi has inaugurated National Legislators Conference in New Delhi.
- ✦ The aim of the conference was to bring MPs and MLAs on a single platform so that they could exchange the ideas of development on a single platform.
- ✦ The theme for the conference was- "We For Development".

### **17. Supreme Court allows passive euthanasia:**

- ✦ A five judge Constitutional Bench of Supreme Court led by CJI DipakMisra has given a ruling that allowed passive euthanasia and right to give advance medical directives or living wills.
- ✦ The apex court has stated that an individual has the right to die with dignity as a part of fundamental right under article 21.

### **18. Rajasthan Assembly passes bill for death penalty for raping girls below 12:**

- ✦ Rajasthan Assembly has passed Criminal Laws (Rajasthan Amendment) Bill, 2018 to add provisions providing death sentence to those convicted for raping girls of 12 years of below.
- ✦ With this, Rajasthan has become second state in the country after Madhya Pradesh for making such provisions.

### **19. “Wings India 2018” inaugurated in Hyderabad:**

- ✦ Wings India 2018, a biennial event on Civil Aviation and Aerospace has been inaugurated in Telangana.
- ✦ The event was jointly organized by the Civil Aviation Ministry, Airports Authority of India and Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

### **20. India’s first Coastal Policing Academy in Gujarat:**

- ✦ India’s first of its kind National Academy of Coastal Policing (NACP) will be functional from April 2018.
- ✦ The Academy will train police forces in maritime laws, navigation, weapons handling and survival skills for effectively safeguarding country’s shoreline.

### **21. Floating Lab set up to monitor Loktak Lake:**

- ✦ The Institute of Bioresearches and Sustainable Laboratory (IBSD), Imphal has set up a floating laboratory on Loktak lake for monitoring its water quality and find out the measures for improving it.

### **22. Government proposes Common Eligibility Test in Rajyasabha:**

- ✦ With an aim to bring transparency in the various Government exams, the Union Government has proposed Common Eligibility Test (CET) in RajyaSabha.
- ✦ The Government has proposed CET for different Government exams like SSC, Banking, Railways etc from 2019 onwards.

### **23. PM addresses the inaugural session of the “End TB” Summit:**

- ✦ Focusing upon India’s predetermined target of eliminating Tuberculosis by 2025, Prime Minister NarendraModi has addressed the inaugural session of the “End TB” Summit in New Delhi.
- ✦ India has set the target for elimination of TB by 2025 against the global target of 2030.

**24. Increased Budgetary allocation for NAM:**

- ✦ The Union Government has slightly increased the budgetary allocation for the National AYUSH Mission for the year 2018-19.
- ✦ It has been raised to Rs.504.43 crore as compare to previous year allocation which was Rs.490.50 crore.

**25. Government constitutes Tribunal to solve Mahanadi water dispute Between Odisha and Chhattisgarh:**

- ✦ With an aim to resolve the years long dispute between Odisha and Chhattisgarh over sharing of Mahanadi river water, the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has constituted Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal.
- ✦ The tribunal has been constituted under section 4 of the Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956.

**26. National Election Quiz 2018:**

- ✦ The Election Commission of India (ECI) has organized the National Election Quiz 2018 (NEQ 2018) which has registered a record participation of 13,63,982 students from 38,160 schools.
- ✦ The marathon quiz competition began in November 2017 and was won by DPS Ranchi, Jharkhand.
- ✦ The NEQ 2018 is an initiative under the Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program of the ECI.
- ✦ The competition covered a wide range of subjects like Elections in India, History of Democracies and Elections, Voting Procedures, Type of Elections and Election terminologies etc.

**27. Cabinet approval for continuing urea subsidy scheme beyond 12<sup>th</sup> FYP:**

- ✦ The Cabinet Committee on economic Affairs (CCEA) has given approval to a proposal given by the Department of Fertilizers to continue urea subsidy scheme up-to 2019-20.
- ✦ Urea subsidy is a part of Central Sector Scheme of Department of Fertilizers and is completely funded by the Budgetary allocation.
- ✦ The scheme was started with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.

**28. KrishiUnnatiMela:**

- ✦ The Three-day annual KrishiUnnatiMelawill be organized between March 16 and March 18, 2018 at Pusa New Delhi.
- ✦ The event aims to create nationwide awareness about the latest agricultural technological developments and receive feedback from the agricultural community that will help in designing and shaping the future research strategy of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

**29. Government celebrates World Consumer Rights Day 2018:**

- ✦ The Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan has launched jagograhakjago.gov.in portal for consumer services on the occasion of World Consumer Rights Day on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018.
- ✦ World Consumer Rights Day 2018 was organized by the Department of Consumer Affairs in New Delhi with the theme “Making Digital Markets Fairer”.

### 30. LaQshya program announced by the Government:

- ✦ With an aim to improve the quality of care in labour room and maternity operation theatres, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has recently announced the launch of program LaQshya.
- ✦ The program aims to reduce the maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality apart from improving the quality of post-partum period.

### 31. India signs agreement with WHO Healthcare cooperation:

- ✦ With an aim to improve the health services, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- ✦ The MoU includes matters of regional, national and global public health program.

### 32. AYUSH QOL-2C:

- ✦ With an aim to improve the quality of life in cancer patients, the Central Council of Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) has developed the coded drug AYUSH QOL-2C.
- ✦ CCRAS is an autonomous body under the Ministry of AYUSH for promoting and formulating scientific research in Ayurveda.

### 33. Jackfruit- Official fruit of Kerala:

- ✦ The Kerala Government has declared Jackfruit as the official fruit of Kerala.
- ✦ Kerala produces 30-60 crore jackfruits every year earning revenue of around Rs 30,000 crore.

### 34. SATH-E Roadmaps released by NITI Aayog:

- ✦ With an aim to introduce governance transformation in schools, NITI Aayog has released the holistic roadmaps and timelines for its mega initiative Sustainable Action for Transforming Human Capital in Education (SATH-E) project.
- ✦ The project aims to provide vocational education, skill development, teacher training apart from introducing technology in the classroom programmes.
- ✦ According to the roadmap that will operate from 2018 to 2020, three states- Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Odisha will participate to become the Role Model States in school education.

### 35. Yogi's Government releases “EkSaalNayiMisaal” Scheme:

- ✦ With an aim to showcase the achievements of his Government, Yogi Adityanath has released a film named “EkSaalNayiMisaal” on the occasion of completing one year in the office.

### **36. Odisha collaborates with RIMES for Disaster Management:**

- ✦ The Government of Odisha and Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) have decided to join hands for improving and strengthening the early warning services of the state.
- ✦ The collaboration will help the state in drought monitoring and early warning in case of various type of natural disasters.

### **37. Children’s Science Congress**

- ✦ The Children’s Science Congress was recently concluded at the 105<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress at Imphal, Manipur.
- ✦ Children participated in the various competitive activities during the event.
- ✦ 7<sup>th</sup> edition of Women Science Congress was also inaugurated during the event.

### **38. CISCE reduces pass marks for class 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>:**

- ✦ The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) has decided to reduce the pass marks from 35% to 33% and from 40% to 35% for class 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> respectively.
- ✦ The new rule will be applicable from 2018 onwards.

### **39. POSHAN Abhiyan in New Delhi:**

- ✦ The Ministry of Women and Child Development has organized the first ever National workshop on POSHAN Abhiyan at PravasiBhartiya Kendra in New Delhi.
- ✦ The workshop witnessed participation from all the states and Union Territories.

### **40. Government to establish Plastic Park in Jharkhand:**

- ✦ The Union Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers has given green signal to a proposal for establishing a Plastic Park in the Deogarh district of Jharkhand.
- ✦ The aim of setting up such Plastic Park is to attract investors so that a suitable ecosystem can be provided for plastic industry and generate employment opportunities for the local residents.

### **41. Indian Science Congress 2019 to be held in Bhopal:**

- ✦ The 106<sup>th</sup> edition of the Indian Science Congress 2019 will be held in Barkatullah University of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> January.
- ✦ The theme for the event will be- “Future India: Science and Technology”.

### **42. Telugu to be mandatory in Telangana schools till class X:**

- With an aim to show respect towards the mother tongue, the Telangana Government has declared to make Telugu a mandatory subject till class X in all public and private schools.

#### **43. Cabinet approval for the largest Government funded Health Program- Ayushman Bharat National Health Protection Mission (NHPM):**

- ✦ The Union Cabinet has given approval to the centrally sponsored National Health Protection Mission (NHPM) under Ayushman Bharat.
- ✦ The universal health coverage program will protect around 50 crore people from catastrophic health care spending.
- ✦ Underprivileged families will be the biggest beneficiaries.
- ✦ The program involves an insurance of Rs 5 lakh for each family.

#### **44. Smart India Hackathon 2018:**

- ✦ Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has revealed the schedule of the much awaited Smart India Hackathon 2018 with participation from 27 Union Ministries and 17 State Governments.
- ✦ The mega event will be held on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 simultaneously at 28 nodal centres across India.
- ✦ The event aims to provide opportunities to the students for using their creative skills to solve India's daunting problems.

#### **45. Parliament passes Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill, 2018:**

- ✦ With an aim to ensure harmony amongst the private and public sector employees who are not covered under CCS Pension rules, the Parliament has passed the Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill, 2018.
- ✦ These employees will be entitled to receive higher amount of gratuity at par with their counterparts in Government sector.
- ✦ At present, the upper ceiling on gratuity amount under the act is Rs 10 Lakh.

#### **46. 5% more reservation for disabled in PG medical courses:**

- ✦ The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has increased the reserved seats for the disabled students from the existing 3% to 5% in postgraduate medical courses.
- ✦ 21 disabilities will be included under the new provisions.

#### **47. Minority status for Lingayats in Karnataka:**

- ✦ Responding on the recommendations of Nagamohan Das Committee, the Karnataka Government has declared Lingayats as the minority community.
- ✦ The State Social Welfare Department has issued a notification declaring Lingayat followers of Basava's philosophy as a religious minority.

#### **48. ArunJaitley's 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive term to RajyaSabha:**

- ✦ Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has been elected to the upper house of the Parliament for the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive term.
- ✦ He has won the seat from Uttar Pradesh.
- ✦ Earlier, he has served in Rajya Sabha from Gujarat for 3 consecutive terms.

#### **49. First National Conference on Drug Law Enforcement:**

- ✦ With an aim to prevent drug abuse among youth, First National Conference on Drug Law Enforcement was inaugurated in New Delhi.
- ✦ The 2 day conference was organized by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ✦ Conference was mainly focused on various topics such as drug trafficking in India, financial investigation and foreign & cyber investigation.

#### **50. HRD Ministry approves 'Study in India Program':**

- ✦ The Ministry of Human Resources and Development has given approval to 'Study in India Program'.
- ✦ The program aims to target foreign students by showcasing India as an attractive education platform.
- ✦ As per the existing Government framework, there is a provision of 10-15% supernumerary seats for foreign students.

#### **51. HRD Ministry nominates JS Rajput in UNESCO's Executive Board:**

- ✦ The Human Resource Development Ministry has nominated the former NCERT Director JS Rajput as India's representative to the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).
- ✦ JS Rajput is a renowned figure in the country for bringing reforms in school education and teacher's training.
- ✦ He has held several prestigious posts in the past including the Joint Educational Advisor, HRD Ministry and National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE).

#### **52. 11<sup>th</sup> Rashtriya Rifles Biennial Conference:**

- ✦ The 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the Rashtriya Rifles Conference has started from 26<sup>th</sup> March.
- ✦ The 2-day biennial event has been chaired by the Chief of the Army Staff.
- ✦ The Rashtriya Rifles is a counter-insurgency force under the Ministry of Defence in which soldiers are deputed from the different parts of the Indian Army.

#### **53. The government of India signs Host Country Agreement with ISA:**

- ✦ The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and International Solar Alliance (ISA) have signed a Host Country Agreement.
- ✦ The agreement has accorded ISA a juridical personality which means that it now has the power to contract, acquire and dispose off movable and immovable properties and to institute and defend legal proceedings.

- ✦ Under the agreement, ISA now will be provided tax concessions and immunities.

#### **54. National Conference on Down Syndrome:**

- ✦ A National Conference on Down syndrome has been organized by the National Trust under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in New Delhi.
- ✦ A book named 'Twilights Children' showcasing the lives of persons suffering from Down syndrome, was released on this occasion.
- ✦ The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has declared 21<sup>st</sup> March as the World Down Syndrome Day.
- ✦ Down syndrome is a chromosomal condition associated with intellectual and learning disabilities.

#### **55. MadhavpurMela in Gujarat:**

- ✦ Under the Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat initiative, the Union Ministry of Culture had organized MadhavpurMela in Porbandar District of Gujarat.
- ✦ The 4-day long cultural event has showcased the rich heritage and culture of the north-eastern states to bring various parts of the country close to each other especially the North-East.

#### **56. Government extends the date for linking Aadhaar with PAN till:**

- ✦ The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has extended the date for linking Aadhaar with PAN till 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018.
- ✦ Earlier the last date was 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

#### **57. Government set up National Academic Depository (NAD) for Digitalization of School Records:**

- ✦ The Union Government has established a National Academic Depository (NAD) keeping the academic awards digitally lodged by the various academic institutions or School Boards.
- ✦ The University Grant Commission has been assigned with the task to operationalize the NAD.
- ✦ The NAD framework will include various Central Universities, Central Higher Educational Institutions, State Universities, CBSE and State School Education Boards etc.

#### **58. Ministry of Power and Skill India join hands to support 'Saubhagya':**

- ✦ With an aim to further promote the mission of providing electricity to every household and employment to rural youth, the Ministry of Power has become a partner with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- ✦ PradhanMantriSahajBijliHarGharYojna (SAUBHAGYA) is a central scheme that aims to achieve universal household electrification in all parts of the country in a time-bound manner.

- ✦ The collaboration will be fruitful as a large number of trained manpower is required for implementing various schemes in the power sector and SAUBHAGYA alone needs more than 35,000 trained persons.

### 59. Smart India Hackathon-2018

- ✦ All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has organized Smart India Hackathon (SIH) under Ministry of Human Resource Development. Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation is participating in this second large scale hackathon.
- ✦ The Software edition Grand Finale of the Hackathon will be held on Mar 30 & 31, 2018 at G.V. Bhoomaraddi College of Engineering & Technology, Hubli in Karnataka.
- ✦ 27 Union Ministries and Departments and 17 State Governments will join this grand initiative.

### 60. NITI Aayog set free Baseline Ranking of Aspirational Districts

- ✦ NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant launched the baseline ranking based on published data of 49 indicators across five developmental areas of Education, Health and Nutrition, Agriculture and Water Resources, Basic Infrastructure and Financial Inclusion and Skill Development.
- ✦ NITI Aayog also announced the real-time data collection and monitoring.

### 61. New portal for the pensioners has been launched by Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)

- ✦ This portal will help users to obtain pension-related information like pension payment order number, payment order details, passbook information etc.
- ✦ The head quarter of EPFO is at New Delhi.

### 62. CCEA has approved the continuation of Credit Guarantee Fund for Education Loan Scheme

- ✦ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the continuation of Rs. 6,600 crore from 2017-18 to 2019-20. This will provide education loans to 10 lakh students during this period.
- ✦ This scheme would cover loans for pursuing professional and technical courses from NAAC and NBA authorized Institutions to promote quality education

### 63. India's first insect museum has been opened in Tamil Nadu

- ✦ India's first insect museum has been opened by Tamil Nadu CM K. Palaniswamy at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore.
- ✦ The museum will provide information about all types of insects through images, videos and models of their unique habits and habitats.
- ✦ The theme of the museum is BUGS ARE KINGS.

**64. Union Cabinet has approved amendments to National Medical Commission (NMC) bill**

- ✦ Union Cabinet has approved the official amendments to NMC bill which was earlier referred to Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee (DRPSC)
- ✦ Amendments approved are –

- Final MBBS Examination and Exit Test
- Removal of Provision of the Bridge Course for AAYUSH practitioners
- Fee Regulation
- Increase in nominees from states and UTs to 6
- Monitory penalty for medical colleges
- Rigid punishment for unauthorized medical practitioners

**65. Swachh Bharat Summer Internship (SBSI) 2018**

- ✦ The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has come up with the innovative Swachh Bharat Summer Internship.
- ✦ SBSI aimed at engaging the college youth with swacchata work in villages in coming summers.
- ✦ The instructions for the internship are being formulated in consultation with the Department of Higher Education and the candidates would be required to undertake 100 hours of activities.
- ✦ The best candidates will be recognised at college, University, State and National levels. Every candidate who will complete the SBSI will also be provided a Certificate of Internship by the Swachh Bharat Mission.

**66. Assam CM launches toll-free helpline number for women**

- ✦ Due to increasing crimes against women, Assam CM Sarbananda Sonowal launched '181-Sakhi', a toll-free helpline number for women at a programme held in Janata Bhawan.
- ✦ The service will be opened from 9 am to 5 pm. It will soon be made available for 24 hours.
- ✦ It will also help women with social welfare schemes, shelter, counseling, medical examination, filing FIR and legal aid.

**67. Madhya Pradesh has highest number of tribal habitations in India**

- ✦ Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of 55770 fully covered tribal habitations with safe drinking water in India followed by Odisha and Jharkhand.
- ✦ The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation informed that under the Scheme 'National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP)', 10% of total allowance of funds is reserved to be used for the supply of drinking water to Scheduled Tribe (ST) habitations.

**International News & Foreign Affairs****1. Marshall Islands to recognize crypto currency as legal tender:**

- ✦ Marshall Islands located in Pacific Ocean is going to become the first country in the world to recognize crypto currency as its legal tender.
- ✦ Its Parliament has passed a law to create the digital currency called “Sovereign” with the symbol SOV in order to raise hard cash to pay bills and boost economy.

**2. Iraq: India’s biggest Oil supplier:**

- ✦ Iraq overtook Saudi Arabia to become India’s top crude oil supplier by supplying 38.9 million tonnes crude oil in the current financial year.

**3. Washington becomes 1<sup>st</sup> State to approve Net-Neutrality Rules:**

- ✦ Washington has become the first state to pass its own Net-Neutrality Rules by repealing the Obama era’s provisions supporting an even playing field for internet.
- ✦ The new law requires internet providers to disclose information about their management practices, performances and commercial terms.

**4. Cabinet approval for MoU between UPSC and Public Service Commission of Mauritius:**

- ✦ The Union Cabinet has given approval for signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and Public Service Commission of Mauritius.

**5. 4<sup>th</sup> India-Europe 29 Business Forum held in New Delhi:**

- ✦ The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the India-Europe 29 Business Forum recently took place in New Delhi.
- ✦ The Ministry of External Affairs and Federation of Indian Chambers and Commerce (FICCI) created the Forum in 2014 to provide an institutionalized platform for promoting business exchanges between India and twenty nine countries of the Central Europe Region.
- ✦ This year’s theme was is “Synergizing Economic Vision for Expanded Relations”.

**6. French President on 4 day visit to India:**

- ✦ President of France, Emmanuel Macron has reached India on a four day tour for strengthening the political, economic and other strategic relations between India and France.

- ✦ The two countries are expected to sign some important agreements in different fields.

### **7. World ATM Congress in Spain:**

- ✦ World's largest International Air Traffic management conference has been held in Spain.
- ✦ The Airports Authority of India (AAI) participated in the conference.

### **8. 11 countries sign revised TPP trade pact without US:**

- ✦ 11 countries belonging to Pacific Rim have formally entered into Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CP TPP of TPP 11) in Santiago, Chile.
- ✦ US withdrew from it earlier.
- ✦ TPP 11 countries are- Austria, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.
- ✦ It will be the world's third largest trade bloc after European Union (EU) and North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

### **9. 1st Indo-French Knowledge Summit in New Delhi:**

- ✦ The first edition of the Indo-French Knowledge Summit for university, scientific and technology cooperation was recently held in New Delhi.
- ✦ The two days summit was organized by the French Embassy in India to provide common platform for increasing student mobility, enlarging R&D collaboration and link campuses to companies by focusing on employability.

### **10. Modi, Macron jointly inaugurates Solar Power Plant In UP:**

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron jointly inaugurated 101 megawatt solar power plant in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh.
- ✦ The largest solar project in the country has been set up by French company ENGIE.

### **11. India, France co-hosts International Solar Alliance Summit:**

- ✦ India and France recently co-hosted the first International Solar Alliance Summit at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Convention Centre in New Delhi.
- ✦ The summit was co-hosted by President Ram Nath Kovind and the President of France, Emmanuel Macron.
- ✦ The summit aims to provide financial assistance for promoting solar energy in member countries apart from transferring technology.

### **12. Cabinet approval for MoU on Traditional Systems of Medicine between India and Iran:**

- ✦ Taking a step ahead for improving India-Iran relations, the Union cabinet has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two countries in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine.
- ✦ The Ministry of AYUSH has the responsibility to promote, propagate and globalize the traditional system of medicine including Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy.

### **13. India secures 78<sup>th</sup> rank on Energy Transition Index:**

- ✦ India has secured 78<sup>th</sup> rank out of 114 countries on the recently released Energy Transition Index (ETI) by World Economic Forum (WEF).
- ✦ Sweden has secured the top position on the index followed by Norway and Switzerland.
- ✦ The index ranks countries on the basis of their ability to balance energy security with environmental sustainability and affordability.

### **14. International Police Conference on Cybercrime and Terrorism:**

- ✦ The 2 day Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police will be held in New Delhi.
- ✦ The theme for the event will be- "Challenges to Policing in 2020".

### **15. President inaugurates World Hindi Secretariat in Mauritius:**

- ✦ Addressing the Indian diaspora in Mauritius, the President of India Shri Ram NathKovind has inaugurated World Hindi Secretariat building.
- ✦ He also launched the World Hindi Secretariat's logo apart from unveiling the foundation stones of social housing project and an ENT hospital being built with Indian assistance.

### **16. The first ever visit of an Indian President to Madagascar:**

- ✦ President of India Ram NathKovind has reached Madagascar as a part of his two nation state visit to Africa and Indian Ocean Region.
- ✦ With this, he has become the first President of India to visit the country.
- ✦ There he has received the 'Grand Cross of the Second Class' by the President of Madagascar which is the highest honor given to a non-citizen by the country.
- ✦ Two bilateral agreements on defence and health were signed during the meeting.

### **17. First Indo-Japan Workshop on Disaster Reduction:**

- ✦ Dr Rajiv Kumar, the Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog has inaugurated the first Indo-Japan Workshop on Disaster Reduction.
- ✦ The two day workshop is being jointly organized by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Government of Japan.

### **18. Philippines withdraws from International Criminal Court:**

- ✦ Philippines has become the second country in the world after Burundi to withdraw from International Criminal Court (ICC) giving a statement that the court is internationally biased.
- ✦ Burundi has withdrawn from the court in 2017.

#### **19. International Yoga Fest to be inaugurated on 21<sup>st</sup> March:**

- ✦ International Yoga Fest, a curtain raiser event for the International Day of Yoga (IDY), 2018 will be organized at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi.
- ✦ The event will be organized by the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY).
- ✦ The fest is expected to witness participation from the delegates of 16 countries.

#### **20. African Continental Free Trade Area:**

- ✦ An agreement has been signed in Rwanda, creating one of the world's largest free trade blocs named as African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
- ✦ The agreement has been signed by 44 African countries from 55 members of the African Union (AU).
- ✦ AfCFTA will provide an opportunity to bring 1.2 billion people of African Continent together having a combined GDP of more than \$2 trillion.

#### **21. Record Global Carbon emissions in 2017: IAE**

- ✦ As per the latest report released by the International Energy Agency (IEA), the global carbon dioxide emissions have risen to a historic high of 32.5 gigatonnes in 2017.
- ✦ It was due to higher demand of energy and over 70% of global energy demands growth was met by oil, natural gas and coal.

#### **22. World's longest sandstone cave discovered in Meghalaya:**

- ✦ Krempuri, the world's longest sandstone cave has been recently discovered in the East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya.
- ✦ The Meghalaya Adventurers' Association (MAA) has measured the cave's length as 24,583 meter.

#### **23. Print Biennale India 2018:**

- ✦ The first edition of an International Exhibition of Graphic Prints "Print Biennale India 2018" was held in New Delhi.
- ✦ The event organized by Lalit Kala Akademi, displayed 200 original prints created by Indian and International artists from the USA, China, Italy, UK, Sri Lanka, Nepal Mauritius and Bangladesh etc.

#### **24. Cool EMS Service between India and Japan:**

- ✦ The Department of Posts under the Ministry of Communication has launched a one way Cool EMS service from Japan to India allowing customers in India to import Japanese food items for personal use.
- ✦ The scheme will be available in Delhi only and the food items will be carried in special boxes containing refrigerant to preserve the food items.

### **Banking**

#### **1. Separate limit of Interest Rate Futures (IRFs) for Foreign Portfolio Investors:**

- ✦ The Reserve Bank of India has eased the position limit in Interest Rate Futures (IRFs) for Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs).
- ✦ The Banking regulator has allowed a limit of Rs 5,000 crore for FPIs to go long in IRFs.

#### **2. India becomes member of European Development Bank:**

- ✦ India is going to become the 69<sup>th</sup> member of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
- ✦ The formal membership process will now get underway which include the purchase of shares by India at an estimated cost of around 1 million euros.

#### **3. RBI imposes penalty on SBI for flouting fake note forms:**

- ✦ The Reserve Bank of India has imposed a penalty of Rs 40 lakh on State Bank of India for not following its directions on detection and impounding of counterfeit notes.

#### **4. Rs 5cr fine on Airtel Payments Bank over KYC norms:**

- ✦ The Reserve Bank of India has imposed a fine of Rs 5 crore on the Airtel Payments Bank for breaching the Know Your Customer (KYC) norms.
- ✦ This happened after RBI found it guilty of opening the accounts of subscribers without their consent.

#### **5. ISA, ADB, NDB, AfDB and AIIB Financial Partnership:**

- ✦ The International Solar Alliance (ISA), Asian Development Bank (ADB), African Development Bank (AfDB), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), New Development Bank (NDB) and Green Climate Funds (GCF) have signed a Joint Financial Partnership Declaration in New Delhi.
- ✦ The objective of this joint declaration is to enhance their cooperation for supporting renewable energy.

**6. IBBI inks MoU with RBI:**

- ✦ The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for enhancing the cooperation in the effective implementation of insolvency laws.
- ✦ The aim of the MoU is to address the issue of the huge amount of Non-Performing Assets (NPA) in India.

**7. Government signs \$120 Million Loan Agreement with ADB for Railways:**

- ✦ With an aim to improve the operational efficiency of the Indian Railways, the Union Government has signed a \$120 million loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank.
- ✦ The money will be utilized for building double tracks and electrification of railway tracks along high density corridors.

**8. SEBI increases Currency Derivative Trade Limit to \$100 Million:**

- ✦ Security and Exchange Board of India has raised the exposure limit under the exchange traded currency derivatives trading for the residents and Foreign Portfolio Investors to \$100 million.
- ✦ The decision will help the entities involving in FOREX transactions to maintain their currency risks in a better manner.

**9. Axis Bank in Sharjah:**

- ✦ With an aim to expand its services, the Axis Bank has inaugurated a representative office in Sharjah.
- ✦ This is the third such office in UAE after Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

**10. Himachal Pradesh got 80 million dollar loan from Asian Development Bank**

- ✦ Himachal Pradesh got 80 million dollar loan from Asian Development Bank (ADB) to boost employability of the state's youth.
- ✦ This will help in the modernization of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions and improve the ecosystem in the state of Himachal Pradesh.
- ✦ Sameer Kumar Khare, Joint Secretary of Department of Economic Affairs, signed the loan agreement for the Government of India, and Kenichi Yokoyama, ADB Country Director in India, signed on behalf of ADB.

**New Appointments & Person in News****1. ArmenSarkisan elected as New Armenian President:**

- ✦ ArmenSarkisan has been elected as the new President of Armenia.

- ✦ He will succeed SerzhSarkisan.

## **2. Neil Basu- Indian origin UK officer appointed as new Chief of Scotland Yard's Counter-terrorism Unit:**

- ✦ Neil Basu has become the first Indian origin officer of the Scotland Yard to be appointed as the Counter-terrorism Chief.
- ✦ He will succeed Mark Rowley.

## **3. Angela Merkel becomes German Chancellor for the 4<sup>th</sup> time:**

- ✦ Angela Merkel has become the German Chancellor for the 4<sup>th</sup> term after the Social Democratic Party voted for the grand coalition with the Merkel's Christian Democratic Union.

## **4. Neiphiu Rio appointed as Nagaland CM:**

- ✦ Neiphiu Rio has been appointed as the new Chief Minister of Nagaland.
- ✦ He has replaced TR Zeilang.

## **5. Pritzker Price to Balkrishna Doshi:**

- ✦ BalkrishnaDoshi has become the first Indian to receive the prestigiousPritzker Price.
- ✦ He is one of the last living architects to have apprenticed with Franco-Swiss trailblazer Le Corbusier and well known for his contributions to the evolution of architectural discourse in India.

## **6. Vivek Wadekar appointed as new Special Director in the Enforcement Directorate:**

- ✦ Vivek R Wadekar has been appointed as the new Special Director in the Enforcement Directorate.
- ✦ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister has appointed him for a tenure of 5 years.

## **7. Virat Kohli- Brand Ambassador of Uber India:**

- ✦ Indian Captain and Ace batsman ViratKohli has become the first Brand Ambassador of the Cab service providing company Uber in India.

## **8. Krishna Kumari Kohli- First elected Hindu woman to Pakistan Senate:**

- ✦ Krishna Kumar Kohli has created history by becoming the first ever Dalit Hindu woman to get elected as Senator in the Muslim majority Pakistan.

- ✦ She has been elected from the Sindh Province seat which was reserved for women.
- ✦ She is a member of Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

### 9. Tony Iwobi- First black senator of Italy:

- ✦ Nigerian origin Tony Iwobi has been elected as the first black senator of Italy.

### 10. Xi Jinping becomes Lifetime President:

- ✦ China's Parliament has abolished the two-term limit for the President thus allowing Xi Jinping to remain as the country's Premier for life.

### 11. Sanjeev Gupta appointed as UK Skills Ambassador:

- ✦ Prince Charles of Britain has appointed Indian-origin steel businessman Sanjeev Gupta as an official ambassador for the Industrial Cadets Program designed to enhance the manufacturing skills.
- ✦ Mr. Gupta will be involved in a program that will give children and young people direct experience of the industry while still in school or college.

### 12. Prakriti to be 1<sup>st</sup> ITBP Woman Combat Officer:

- ✦ 25 years old Prakriti has become the first woman to be directly inducted as a combat officer in the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).

### 13. Suresh Prabhu appointed as Minister of Civil Aviation:

- ✦ Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu has been given the additional charge as the Minister of Civil Aviation.
- ✦ This has happened after Ashok GajapathiRaju has resigned from the Ministry.

### 14. Actor Sathyaraj to get wax statue at Madam Tussauds Museum

- ✦ Actor Sathyaraj, well known for playing the character of 'Kattappa' in Bahubali film, is set to get a wax statue at Madam Tussauds Museum.

### 15. Mauritius President resigns:

- ✦ Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, the President of Mauritius has resigned after being named in a scandal of using credit card to buy luxury personal items.

### 16. Putin re-elected as Russia's President:

- ✦ Vladimir Putin has been re-elected as the President of Russia through a commendable re-election victory.
- ✦ He has been re-elected for a term of 6 years.

**17. Pedro Pablo, President of Peru resigns:**

- ✦ The President of Peru, Pedro Pablo has announced his resignation on account of a fresh scandal on the eve of an impeachment vote.

**18. Martin Vizcarra- Peru's new President:**

- ✦ Martin Vizcarra has been appointed as the new President of Peru.
- ✦ He has succeeded Pablo Kuczynski, who has resigned from the post recently.

**19. Karnataka names Rahul Dravid as the Election Icon for the upcoming elections:**

- ✦ Renowned cricketer Rahul Dravid has been named as the election icon for the upcoming Karnataka Assembly Elections.
- ✦ This move will motivate young voters to become the part of the electoral process, according to the Chief Electoral Officer Sanjiv Kumar.

**20. Win Myint has been elected as President of Myanmar**

- ✦ Win Myint replaces Htin Kyaw as President of Myanmar.
- ✦ He secured 403 votes and defeated Myint Swe.

**21. Indu Bhushan has been appointed as CEO of Ayushman Bharat mission**

- ✦ Indu Bhushan is appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Union Government's Ayushman Bharat National Health Protection Mission (ABNHPM).
- ✦ He is currently the Director General of Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila, Philippines.

**22. Harsimrat Kaur Badal established Rajasthan's first mega food park at Ajmer**

- ✦ Union Minister for Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal established Rajasthan's first mega food park M/s Greentech Mega Food Park Private Ltd. at Roopnagar in Ajmer, Rajasthan. The food park has been set up at cost of Rs. 113.57 crore.
- ✦ This park will benefit around 25000 farmers and will provide employment to 5000 persons in Ajmer and neighbouring countries.

**23. Lt Gen Harpal Singh appointed as Director General Border Road (DGBR)**

- ✦ Lt Gen Harpal Singh, an alumni of National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla is appointed as Director General Border Road.
- ✦ Before taking charge as Director General Border Road he was Director General Military Training at Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence.
- ✦ Border Road Organisation (BRO)- The purpose of the BRO is to develop and maintain road networks in India's border areas and friendly neighbouring countries.

**24. Shekhar Kapur has been appointed as the chairman of central panel of 65<sup>th</sup> National Film Awards**

- ✦ Director Shekhar Kapur has been chosen as the chairperson
- ✦ The panel constitutes of one chairperson, 5 regional chairpersons and 10 other members.

**Science Tech & Defence****1. India-US successfully test fires M777 Howitzers in Pokharan:**

- ✦ Joint Investigation Committee (JIC) comprising US and Indian Officials has test fired M777 ultra-light howitzers (ULH) at the Pokhran Firing Range in Rajasthan.
- ✦ It was the first such induction of artillery guns since Swedish Bofors guns in the late 1980's.

**2. Saposhi: New Malware threat:**

- ✦ A new malware "Saposhi" has been detected by the Cyber security agencies that can take over electronic devices and use them for Distributed Denial of Services attacks.

**3. Multilateral Air Force exercise "Samvedna" starts:**

- ✦ Multilateral Air Force exercise "Samvedna" will be held from March 12 to 17, 2018.
- ✦ Air Forces of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, UAE and Myanmar will participate in the exercise.

**4. Russia successfully launches Kinzhal missile:**

- ✦ Russia successfully launched high precision aeroballistic Kinzhal hypersonic missile from MiG-31 supersonic interceptor jet.
- ✦ The word Kinzhal means double-edged Russian dagger.
- ✦ It can strike without entering enemy's air defence zone.

**5. Indian Science Congress in Imphal:**

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has Inaugurated the 105<sup>th</sup> edition of the Indian Science Congress in Imphal, Manipur.
- ✦ The theme for this year's edition was-"Reaching the unreachable through Science and Technology".

**6. New Interceptor Boat in ICG- 'C-437':**

- ✦ With an aim to strengthen the coastal security of the country, the Indian Coast Guard has commissioned a new interceptor boat named ICGS C-437 in Gujarat.
- ✦ The boat has been equipped with advanced navigational and communication devices.

### 7. 6<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day of BIRAC:

- ✦ The Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) has celebrated its 6<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day in New Delhi.
- ✦ Union Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan has inaugurated the event which witnessed participation from the scientific and industrial fraternities both from India and abroad.
- ✦ The theme for the event was- “Sustaining Innovation- A Market Driven Pathway”.

### 8. Indian Navy to host “Varuna” with France:

- ✦ The 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the bilateral naval exercise “Varuna” between Indian Navy and its French counterpart will be hosted by India.
- ✦ The exercise will be conducted in three seas namely the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal and South Western Indian Ocean.
- ✦ The exercise aims to build naval cooperation between the two countries.

### 9. Gulf Shield 1 Military Exercise in Saudi Arabia:

- ✦ The Defence Ministry of Saudi Arabia has organized ‘The Gulf Shield 1’ exercise which witnessed participation from 23 countries including the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.
- ✦ The 30 days long exercise has been organized to build cooperation and coordination for joint operations and saw participation of the ground, naval and air forces of the countries involved.

### 10. BrahMos successfully test fired:

- ✦ Supersonic Cruise Missile with indigenous seeker BrahMos was successfully test fired at the Pokhran range in Rajasthan.
- ✦ The precision strike weapon has been jointly developed by DRDO and BrahMos Aerospace.

### 11. India delivers 2<sup>nd</sup> OPV to Sri Lanka:

- ✦ Goa Shipyard Limited has delivered the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advanced Offshore Patrol Vessel (AOPV) to Sri Lankan Navy 25 days ahead of schedule.
- ✦ The vessel will be the largest and most advanced ship in the Sri Lankan Navy fleet.
- ✦ This is the 4<sup>th</sup> Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) delivered in the current financial year by India.

**12. Chandrayaan-2 postponed:**

- ✦ The Indian Space and Research Organisation (ISRO) has postponed the launch of its second mission to moon Chandrayaan-2.
- ✦ The lunar mission which was earlier scheduled to be launched in April 2018, will now be launched in October-November 2018 as experts have suggested more research and tests.
- ✦ Chandrayaan-2 is the second mission of India to moon and is an advanced version of the previous Chandrayaan-1 (launched in 2008).

**13. NASA, Space X collaborate to search for Exoplanets:**

- ✦ National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has joined hands with SpaceX, a private space launching company to launch Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) to search Exoplanets.
- ✦ The satellite equipped with four wide-angle telescopes and detectors will use transit method.
- ✦ It is planned to be launched in April 2018.

**14. GSLV successfully launched GSAT-6A Satellite**

- ✦ India's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle has successfully launched the GSAT-6A satellite into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO) from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
- ✦ ISRO built GSAT-6A which is a communication satellite that provide mobile communication services through multi beam coverage.

**15. A new organ 'Interstitialium' has been discovered in human body**

- ✦ Scientists have discovered a new organ 'Interstitialium' in human body that could help the scientists understand the spread of cancer within the body.
- ✦ David Carr-Locke and Petros Benias, doctors of Mount Sinai Beth Israel Medical Centre, used a special live imaging technique 'Probe-based Confocal Laser Endomicroscopy' (pCLE) to locate the interstitium in various parts of the human body such as lungs and digestive tract.
- ✦ Once confirmed as an organ, interstitium will be known as the largest organ in the human body.
- ✦ About Interstitium- The study reveals that the connective tissue, lungs and urinary system, arteries and veins are fluid-filled compartments. These compartments have been termed as 'Interstitialium'. Scientists also concluded that the interstitium can compress or expand in size, and it could serve as "shock absorber" for other parts of the body.

**16. China sends twin BeiDou-3 navigation satellites into space**

- ✦ China successfully sent a pair of BeiDou-3MEO satellites (BeiDou-30 and BeiDou-31) into space.
- ✦ They were launched on board Long March-3B carrier rocket from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in south-west China's Sichuan Province.

- ✦ It is a 269th mission for the Long March Rocket family.

### 17. Scientists discovered Earth-sized planet named K2-229b

- ✦ With the help of Kepler-2 telescope scientists have discovered hot, metallic earth-sized planet located 260 million light years away.
- ✦ The planet is approx 20 per cent larger than Earth and has a mass over two-and-a-half times greater. The temperature of this planet reaches over 2000 degrees Celsius.
- ✦ K2-229b orbits its host star every fourteen hours.

### 18. NASA to send its 1<sup>st</sup> mission to study 'Heart' of Mars

- ✦ The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is all set to send its 1<sup>st</sup> mission to explore the interiors of Mars, scheduled to launch on 5 May.
- ✦ InSight—a stationary lander—will also be the first NASA mission to place a seismometer (a device that measures quakes) on the soil of another planet.

## Important days

### 1. 3<sup>rd</sup> March- World Wildlife Day:

- ✦ The World Wildlife Day is observed every year worldwide on 3<sup>rd</sup> March to raise awareness about the importance of the world's wild fauna and flora.
- ✦ The theme for this year is- "Big Cats: Predators under Threat".

### 2. International Women's Day:

- ✦ International Women's Day has been celebrated to highlight the achievements of women in different fields.
- ✦ Global campaigns like #MeToo and #TimesUp have been organized for women.
- ✦ The theme for this year is- #PressforProgress.

### 3. 33<sup>rd</sup> Inception Day of NCRB:

- ✦ The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) has celebrated its 33<sup>rd</sup> Inception Day on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018.
- ✦ "Citizen Services" mobile application was released on this occasion.
- ✦ NCRB is a nodal agency under Union Home Ministry that provides authentic source of data on crime.

### 4. 14<sup>th</sup> March-Pie Day:

- ✦ Pi Day is observed on 14<sup>th</sup> March as an annual celebration of the mathematical constant Pi.

### 5. Ordnance Factories Day:

- ✦ 18<sup>th</sup> March is observed as Ordnance Factories Day in the entire country.
- ✦ The day marks the beginning of the oldest Ordnance Factory of India in Kolkata in 1802.

### 6. World Sparrow Day 2018:

- ✦ The World Sparrow Day is observed on 20<sup>th</sup> March every year.
- ✦ The day is observed to raise awareness about the threats faced by sparrows and other birds due to environment degradation. The theme was “I Love Sparrow”.

### 7. 21<sup>st</sup> March: International Day of Forests:

- ✦ International Day of Forests is observed globally on 21<sup>st</sup> March to raise awareness about the importance of forests for the environment and organisms on earth.
- ✦ The day was proclaimed by United Nations General Assembly on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2012.
- ✦ This year’s theme is- “Forests and Sustainable Cities”.

### 8. 22<sup>nd</sup> March- World Water Day:

- ✦ With an aim to raise awareness about the importance and conservation of water, the World Water Day is observed globally on 22<sup>nd</sup> March.
- ✦ This year’s theme is- “Nature for Water- Exploring nature-based solutions to the water challenges the world faces in the 21<sup>st</sup> century”.

### 9. 23<sup>rd</sup> March- World Meteorological Day:

- ✦ The World Meteorological Day is observed globally on 23<sup>rd</sup> March Every year.
- ✦ The theme for this year is- “Weather-Ready, Climate Smart”.

### 10. 24<sup>th</sup> March- World Tuberculosis Day:

- ✦ World Tuberculosis Day is observed globally on 24<sup>th</sup> March every year to commemorate the day Dr. Robert Koch discovered Tuberculosis bacterium in 1882.
- ✦ The theme for this year is- “Wanted: Leaders for a TB-free World”.

### 11. 24<sup>th</sup> March- Earth Hour 2018:

- ✦ With an aim to improve the environment by inspiring people, the Earth Hour was observed globally on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2018.
- ✦ Cities across the world turned off their lights for one hour from 8:30 PM to 9:30 PM local time.

- ✦ On the occasion, the World Wide Fund (WWF) made a strong call for “Give Up to Give Back”.

## 12. 25<sup>th</sup> March- International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery:

- ✦ The International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade Day is observed on 25<sup>th</sup> March worldwide every year.
- ✦ The aim is to commemorate those people who lost their lives due to slavery.
- ✦ The day was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2007.
- ✦ The theme of the day is- “Remember Slavery: Triumphs and Struggles for Freedom and Equality”.

## Sports

### 1. Azlan Shah Cup Hockey Tournament in Malaysia:

- ✦ The 27<sup>th</sup> edition of the Azlan Shah Cup Hockey Tournament has begun in Malaysia.
- ✦ Six nations- India, Malaysia, Argentina, England, Ireland and Australia are taking part in the tournament.

### 2. India wins Snooker World Cup 2018:

- ✦ India beat Pakistan by 3-2 in the best of five final.
- ✦ India has won the inaugural Snooker World Cup in Doha, Qatar.

### 3. Anjum Moudgil wins Silver in ISSF World Cup 2018:

- ✦ Indian shooter Anjum Moudgil has won silver medal in the women’s 50m shooting event at the ISSF World Cup in Mexico.
- ✦ With this, India’s total number of medals has gone up to 8 in the event.

### 4. Australia clinches Sultan Azlan Shah Cup 2018:

- ✦ Australia has won the 27<sup>th</sup> edition of the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup in Malaysia by defeating defending champion England by 2-1.
- ✦ Australia has won the tournament for the record 10<sup>th</sup> time.

### 5. India B wins Deodhar Trophy 2018:

- ✦ India B team has won the 45<sup>th</sup> edition of Deodhar Trophy 2018 by defeating Karnataka in the final match by 6 wickets.

- ✦ Deodhar Trophy is named after Prof. DB Deodhar, known as the Grand Old Man of the Indian Cricket.

#### **6. Lokesh Rahul- First Indian to be out hit-wicket in T20 Cricket:**

- ✦ Lokesh Rahul has become the first Indian batsman to be dismissed hit wicket in T-20 cricket.
- ✦ LalaAmarnath and NayanMongia were the first Indians to get out hit-wicket in Tests and ODIs respectively.

#### **7. PurvaBarve wins Under-19 Women's Singles Title at Israel Junior Tournament:**

- ✦ PurvaBarve of India has won the Women's Singles Under-19 title at the Israel Junior Badminton Tournament 2018 held in Israel.
- ✦ She has defeated AnastasiiaPustinskaia of Russia in three sets.

#### **8. ElavenilValarivan clinches gold in Air Rifle Junior ISSF World Cup:**

- ✦ Indian shooter ElavenilValarivan has won gold medal in 10 meter women's air rifle event in the junior ISSF World Cup in Sydney.
- ✦ She has also won team gold medal along with ShreyaAgrawal and ZeenaKhitta.

#### **9. PV Sindhu will be the Flag-Bearer of India in 2018 Commonwealth Games:**

- ✦ Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has chosen PV Sindhu as the flag-bearer for India during the opening ceremony of the 2018 Commonwealth Games.
- ✦ The opening ceremony will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2018.
- ✦ She has won a silver medal in badminton at the Rio Olympics.

#### **10. Lewis Hamilton wins Australian Grand Prix:**

- ✦ Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton has won the Australian Grand Prix for the record seventh time.
- ✦ He has become the champion by defeating his nearest rival KimiRaikkonen by 0.664 seconds.

### Awards

#### **1. ShatrughanSinha wins Lifetime Achievement Award in UK:**

- ✦ Actor-politician ShatrughanSinha has been honored with the lifetime achievement award for his contribution to the field of arts and politics in United Kingdom.

#### **2. Godavari Gaurav Award to Amol Palekar:**

- ✦ Veteran actor Amol Palekar has received the Godavari Gaurav Award, instituted by Kusumagraj Prathisthan.

### 3. India wins Best Exhibitor Award at ITB-Berlin:

- ✦ India has won the Best Exhibitor Award at ITB-Berlin on the last day.
- ✦ ITB-Berlin World Tourist Meet was started at Berlin, Germany from 7<sup>th</sup> March to 10<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

### 4. Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Police Investigation:

- ✦ The Government has given approval to the proposal for the Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Police Investigation.
- ✦ The Name of the recipients will be declared every year on 15<sup>th</sup> August.
- ✦ Officer from the rank of Sub-Inspector to Superintendent of Police will be eligible for this honor.
- ✦ The aim for instituting this award is to promote high standards of investigation of crimes by the Central and State Investigating Agencies.

### 5. 'Shunyata' wins International Award in US.

- ✦ Actor Jackie Shroff's 22-minute fiction short film 'Shunyata' has won an award at the Best of India Short Film Festival in Los Angeles, US.
- ✦ The film has been directed by Chintan Sarda.

### 6. GD Birla award for Dr Rajan Sankaranarayanan:

- ✦ Dr Rajan Sankaranarayanan has received the 27<sup>th</sup> GD Birla award for Scientific Research for the year 2017.
- ✦ By using X-ray crystallography, he has identified how Chiral checkpoints ensure that D-chiral amino acids are excluded from the translation machinery.

### 7. Robert Langlands wins Abel Prize:

- ✦ Canadian Mathematician Robert Langlands has won the Abel Prize for developing a program connecting representation theory to number theory.
- ✦ The Award has been established by the Norwegian Government in 2002.

### 8. Sardar Patel Airport receives the Most Improved Airport Award:

- ✦ Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport of Ahmedabad has received the award for the "Most Improved Airport" in the Asia-Pacific region.
- ✦ The award has been given by the Airports Council International.

### 9. Chhattisgarh wins 'Water Digest Award':

- ✦ Chhattisgarh has received the National 'Water Digest Award' for the conservation of water and for enhancing its irrigation capacity.

- ✦ Renowned magazine 'Water Digest' annually presents the award for honoring the water conservation efforts.

### 10. President of India confers Gallantry Awards:

- ✦ The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind has presented the Gallantry Awards and the Distinguished Service Decorations at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.
- ✦ The list of Awardees:

#### Kirti Chakra:

- Commandant Chetan Kumar Cheeta
- Major David Manlun
- Major Vijayant Bist

#### Shaurya Chakra:

- NK Chandra Singh
- Major Satish Dahiya
- Constable Manzoor Ahmad Naik
- Sergeant Khairnar Milind Kishore
- Corporal Nilesh Kumar Nayan
- Assistant Commandant Chandan Kumar

#### UttamYuddhSeva Medal:

- Lieutenant General Ajay Kumar Sharma

#### AtiVishishtSeva Medal:

- Lieutenant General Rajeev Chopra
- Lieutenant General Satinder Kumar Saini

## Books & Author

### 1. "Fulfilling Bapu's Dreams- PM Modi's tribute to Gandhiji":

- ✦ President Ram Nath Kovind has received the first copy of the book- "Fulfilling Bapu's Dreams- PM Modi's tribute to Gandhiji" from Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, who released it at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

### 2. "A Tribute to Jagu"- Sri Lankan Tribute to Jigmohan Dalmiya:

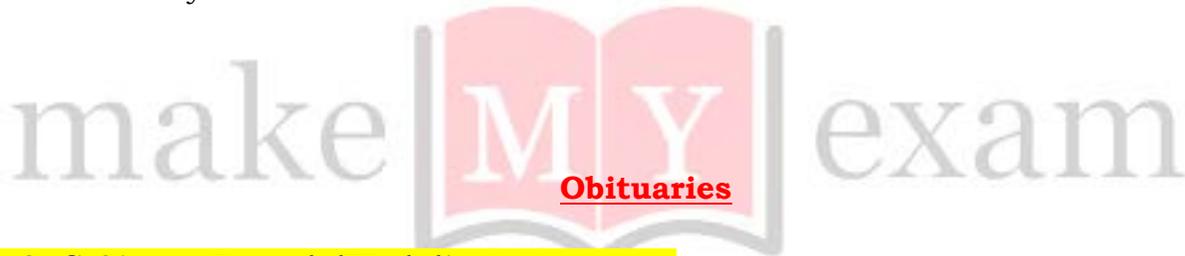
- ✦ The Cricket Association of Sri Lanka felicitated former BCCI President Jagmohan Dalmiya by releasing a book named “A Tribute to Jagu”.
- ✦ By releasing this book, the Sri Lankan Cricket acknowledged the contribution of Dalmiya to the Sri Lankan Cricket.

### 3. Indian Army releases book “ParamveerParwane”:

- ✦ Indian Army Chief General Bipin Rawat has released a book “ParamveerParwane” on the bravery of Paramveer Chakra Awardees.
- ✦ The book containing short stories, poems and songs has been written by Dr Prabhakaran Jain.

### 4. First Indian Sign Language Dictionary Launched:

- ✦ The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched the First Indian Sign Language Dictionary of 3000 words.
- ✦ The Dictionary has been developed by Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.
- ✦ As per 2011 Census, there are 5071007 deaf people and 1998535 with speech disability in India.



### 1. Sufi Singer Pyarelal Wadali passes away:

- ✦ Veteran Sufi singer Ustad Pyarelal Wadali passed away at the age of 75.
- ✦ He was one of the singers of popularly known ‘Wadali Brothers’.

### 2. John Sulston passes away:

- ✦ Genome pioneer Sir John Sulston has passed away at the age of 75.
- ✦ He got Nobel Prize in 2002 for doing innovations in cancer research.

### 3. Begum Hamida dies at 101:

- ✦ Former Rajya Sabha member and a supporter of women empowerment, Begum Hamida died at the age of 101.

**4. Scientist Stephen Hawking passes away:**

- ✦ Renowned scientist Stephen Hawking has died at the age of 76.
- ✦ He will be known forever for shaping the modern cosmology.

**5. Poet Kedarnath Passes Away:**

- ✦ Veteran Hindi Poet Kedarnath has passed away at the age of 83.
- ✦ The renowned poet has won the Jnapith Award and SahityaAkademi Award in 2013 and 1989 respectively.

**1. Veteran journalist V. Sriharsha died**

- ✦ Veteran journalist Veturi Sriharsha died due to cardiac arrest in New Delhi.
- ✦ He had worked with The Indian Express, Pioneer and Deccan Chronicle.

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