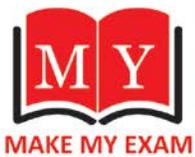


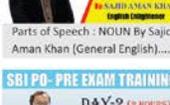
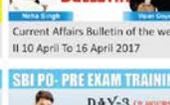
# Monthly GK Capsule

## June 2018

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## National News

### 1. Maharashtra Government unveils 'sandbox' to aid startups

- ✦ The Maharashtra Government has announced the opening up of a 'sandbox' to aid start-ups to develop financial capital into a Fintech hub.
- ✦ Maharashtra is the first state to have a dedicated fintech policy and it is also planning to have a dedicated 'Fintech Officer' in the Department of Information Technology.
- ✦ Sandbox is seen as a safe zone to test financial innovation which sees limited rollout of new products to select customers. Reserve Bank panel had recommended introducing a "regulatory sandbox" to foster financial technology innovation.

### 2. Andhra Pradesh government launches scale-out scheme for natural farming

- ✦ Andhra Pradesh government launched a Zero Based Natural Farming (ZBNF) scale-out scheme, aimed at benefitting around six million farmers by 2024. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu made this announcement.
- ✦ The state agriculture department also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in this regard with Sustainable India Finance Facility (SIFF).
- ✦ The main purpose of this agreement is to scale up the ZBNF against investment worth Rs. 16,134 crores over next six years. Andhra Pradesh government here aims to bring all farmers in the state under the scheme by 2024.

### 3. Odisha govt launches health insurance scheme for journalists

- ✦ The Odisha government launched a health insurance scheme "Gopabandhu Sambadika Swasthya Bima Yojana" for working journalists. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the scheme.
- ✦ In first stage, around 3,233 working journalists will get health insurance coverage up to Rs 2 lakh a year. At least five members of journalist's family will be covered under this scheme.
- ✦ The scribes will get their health insurance card from District Information and Public Relations Officer (DIPRO) in their respective districts.

### 4. PM Modi Unveils Plaque at Singapore's Clifford Pier Paying Tribute to Mahatma Gandhi

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Singapore's former premier Goh Chok Tong unveiled a plaque to pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi at immersion site of his ashes at waterfront Clifford pier.
- ✦ Over 250 members of Indian Diaspora led by Singapore's Emeritus Minister Goh Chok Tong joined the ceremony at the pier.
- ✦ Modi unveiled the plaque on the seafront where some of the Mahatma's ashes were immersed in 1948.

**5. Shripad Yesso Naik to inaugurate National Health Editors' Conference on Yoga**

- ✦ Shri Shripad Yesso Naik (Minister of State for AYUSH) will inaugurate 3rd National Health Editors' Conference on Yoga at Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) in New Delhi on June 05, 2018.
- ✦ The Ministry of AYUSH is organizing this Conference in collaboration with the Press Information Bureau (PIB) and Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY). More than 100 Health Editors from National and Regional media organizations will attend the conference.
- ✦ The main purpose of the conference is to aware the media persons about scientific aspects of yoga and its benefits for human health.

**6. Government launches 'KrishiKalyanAbhiyan' to improve farming techniques and help farmers raise their income**

- ✦ Union Ministry of Agriculture and farmers' welfare has launched KrishiKalyanAbhiyan under which farmers will be given assistance and advice on ways to improve farming techniques and raise their income.
- ✦ The main aim of this scheme is to help farmers in 25 villages in each district identified in consultation with Rural Development Ministry as per the direction of NitiAayog.
- ✦ 111 officers have been made in-charge of one district each for overall coordination and field level monitoring. The overall coordination and implementation in the 25 villages of a district will be done by KrishiVigyan Kendra of that district.
- ✦ An action plan comprising identified activities under various departments of ministry (Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare, Animal Husbandry Dairying & Fisheries and Department of Agricultural Research & Education) will be implemented in 25 villages in each district with these activities.

**7. Government launches 'Suvidha': Oxo-biodegradable sanitary napkin**

- ✦ Mansukh L Mandaviya (Union Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers) launched 'JanaushadhiSuvidha'- the Oxo-biodegradable sanitary napkin under PradhanMantriBhartiyaJanaushadhiPariyojana.
- ✦ 'JanaushadhiSuvidha'- the affordable sanitary napkin will now be available at over 3600 JanaushadhiKendras functional in 33 states and union territories across India.
- ✦ The average price of sanitary napkins available in the market currently is around Rs 8 per pad, whereas the Suvidha napkins will be available at Rs 2.50 per pad.
- ✦ According to the National Family Health Survey 2015-16, about 58% of women aged between 15 to 24 years use locally prepared napkins, sanitary napkins and tampons.
- ✦ Further, about 78% women in urban areas use hygienic methods of protection during menstrual period; however, only 48% women in rural areas have access to clean sanitary napkins.

**8. Ban on polythene in Uttarakhand**

- ✦ Uttarakhand Government has decided to ban the use of polythene or plastic while Tamil Nadu, Nagaland, Maharashtra and Jharkhand announced to become plastic-free states.
- ✦ This move aims at curbing rampant use of plastic which is becoming a huge environmental challenge. All the polythene vendors in Uttarakhand have been asked to finish the polythene stock before July 31.
- ✦ The state would also launch a comprehensive public awareness campaign on environmental damage caused by polythene, one week before the complete ban on polythene.

**9. MP announced outstanding Bijli Bill MafiYojana 2018 (Power Bill Waiver Scheme)**

- ✦ Government of Madhya Pradesh announced outstanding power bill waiver scheme for laborers and poor families.
- ✦ State cabinet headed by CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan approved Bijli Bill MafiYojana 2018 (Power Bill Waiver Scheme) which will benefit about 77 lakh people of state.
- ✦ The state cabinet also approved Mukhyamantri Jan Kalyan (Sambal) Yojana 2018 (a scheme to provide subsidized power) in the meeting.
- ✦ Laborers falling under the unorganized sector in Madhya Pradesh will get power supply at a subsidized rate. Under the subsidised power scheme, registered labourers of unorganised sector and Below Poverty Line (BPL) families would be provided electricity at a cost of Rs 200 per month.

**10. Maharashtra government announced financial aid for tur farmers**

- ✦ Maharashtra government will provide financial grant of 1,000 rupees per quintal to those farmers whose tur and gram could not be purchased by administration before the May 31 deadline.
- ✦ Government had set up tur procurement target of 44.6 lakh quintals and started purchasing tur from farmers by offering them guaranteed rates following bumper tur production.
- ✦ According to Devendra Fadnis (Chief Minister of Maharashtra), the government will also give a financial aid of 160 crore rupees to farmers whose crops got damaged due to unseasonal rain or hailstorm and a special subsidy for milk producers.

**11. Punjab government launched 'Business First Portal' to ease out trade in Punjab**

- ✦ Punjab Government launched a 'Business First Portal' to give a big push towards ease of doing business. Sunder Sham Arora (state's Industry Minister) unveiled this portal in Jalandhar, Punjab.
- ✦ Addressing the industrialists present at launch, Minister stated that online portal would enable the industrialists for regulatory clearances and fiscal approvals on a common platform.

- ✦ He also said that the jobs under Ghar Ghar Naukri flagship program of state government could be accomplished only if industry was developed.

### **12. India records 22% reduction in Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)**

- ✦ According to Sample Registration System (SRS) bulletin released by Office of the Registrar General, India recorded 22% reduction in Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) since 2013. According to SRS bulletin, Maternal Mortality Ratio in India declined from 167 in 2011-2013 to 130 in 2014-2016.
- ✦ MMR is defined as the proportion of maternal deaths per 1, 00,000 live births. The reduction in ratio was most significant in Empowered Action Group (EAG) states from 246 to 188.
- ✦ Amongst the states, Uttar Pradesh with 30% reduction has topped the chart in maternal deaths reduction.

### **13. President declares 'Queen Pineapple' as Tripura's State Fruit**

- ✦ President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind declared Tripura's queen variety pineapple as state fruit.
- ✦ Kovind said that state holds good potential in world trade; hence Export of pineapple to foreign countries is a major step in connecting with world trade
- ✦ He also inaugurated National Highway from Matabari to Sabroom in Udaipur, Tripura and visited the Matabari Temple complex in Udaipur.

### **14. HP Government to scrap semester system in UG courses**

- ✦ Himachal Pradesh government decided to do away with semester system in under-graduate courses and return to annual examination system.
- ✦ Suresh Bharadwaj (Education Minister) said that decision has been taken on recommendation made by an investigation committee headed by former vice chancellor to review RUSA (Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan). RUSA was introduced in the state in 2013
- ✦ Asserting that the thrust of the government was on qualitative improvement in education, a decision has also been taken to start nursery classes in 3,000 schools from this year.

### **15. Himachal bans use of thermocol plates**

- ✦ Jai Ram Thakur (Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh) announced a ban on use of thermocol plates in state as they are major cause of pollution, as well plastic water bottles less than one litre capacity.
- ✦ Making announcement at state-level function to mark World Environment Day at Sundernagar town in Mandi district, he said a steel bottle would be provided to each student in all government schools in the state to discourage use of plastic bottles.

### **16. West Bengal government to invest Rs 107 cr to check riverbank erosion**

- ✦ The Bengal Government has decided to invest Rs 107 crore to check erosion at vulnerable areas along the banks of the Ganga and the Padma. The work will be completed by March 2019.
- ✦ Hundreds of people will get relief as they would no longer have to worry about their houses getting washed away by strong currents.
- ✦ With this investment of Rs 107 crore, a stretch of 15 km will be concretized so that the soil does not get eroded any more.

### 18. Delhi- most vulnerable UT in India's disaster risk index

- ✦ National disaster risk index mapping hazards and vulnerabilities across 640 districts puts Maharashtra at top of the chart followed by West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh while Delhi is most at risk among Union territories (UTs).
- ✦ The index factors in exposure of population, agriculture and livestock and environmental risk in drawing up the rankings. This index is currently in the form of draft prepared by Union home ministry with in partnership with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- ✦ Top three states of this list (i.e. West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh) are followed by Rajasthan, Karnataka, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Bihar.

### 19. Landfill site turns into tree museum in Vadodara

- ✦ The Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) of Gujarat has converted a garbage dumping ground located at Vadsar into a museum of trees.
- ✦ Under this project, 12,663 saplings were planted on area of 50,000 square meters.
- ✦ Gardening on the site, which is worth 250 crore, began in 2016 after locals complained of the bad smell emanating from the landfill.
- ✦ Chief Minister Vijay Rupani inaugurated the project.

### 20. Piyush Goyal launches 'Rail Madad' app and 'Menu on Rails' app for travelers

- ✦ Piyush Goyal (Minister of Railways & Coal) launched two mobile apps: Rail Madad and Menu on Rails for improvement of travel experience. These apps are in line with 'Digital India' initiative of PM Narendra Modi.
- ✦ Rails Madad app is for complaint redressal as it allows passengers to lodge complaints through mobile app. The app will be available on Android and IOS platforms.
- ✦ Menu on Rails (developed by IRCTC) would allow passengers to check the list of meals and beverages served on all type of trains and their prices.

### 21. India to get its 1st police museum in Delhi

- ✦ Union Government has decided to start India's first national police museum in Lutyens' Delhi.

- ✦ The museum will depict the history of central and state police forces and it will come up as an underground facility in premises of National Police Memorial in Chanakyapuri area of national capital.
- ✦ It will be inaugurated on Police Commemoration Day on October 21 by either Prime Minister Narendra Modi or Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

## **22. 1st batch of Kailash Mansarovar Yatra flagged off**

- ✦ Vijay Kumar Singh (Union minister of state for external affairs) has flagged off the 1st batch of three month-long Kailash Mansarovar Yatra 2018 in New Delhi. The Yatra will continue till September 8, 2018.
- ✦ Singh also counseled pilgrims to remain physically fit and establish communion with nature to come out rewarded from the Yatra. The first batch comprising 60 pilgrims will reach Kailash Manasarovar via Lipulekh.
- ✦ There are two routes for Yatra-through Lipulekh pass (Uttarakhand) and through Natu La pass (Sikkim).

## **23. Punjab to install dust collectors in grain markets**

- ✦ Punjab is all set to counter dust pollution in grain markets across the state with installation of dust collectors on nearly 50,000 grain cleaning machines, providing relief to 3,00,000 directly-affected workers.
- ✦ Pollution is the main reason of respiratory and lung diseases among labourers, farmers and commission agents as well as those living in area of grain markets.
- ✦ Under this project, Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) has developed certain types of machines that collect the dust particles which pollute the air during the crops' cleaning process.
- ✦ There are 50,000 mechanical grain cleaners in Punjab and 6 workers work on a single machine making at least 300,000 workers directly affected by dust pollution. This machine's test in Asia's largest grain market in Khanna town was successful.

## **24. Chief Minister inaugurated Green Mizoram Day on June 11**

- ✦ Green Mizoram Day was observed on June 11 across Mizoram state with government employees, students and members of NGOs planting large number of trees.
- ✦ Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla inaugurated Green Mizoram Day 2018 at a function attended by his cabinet colleagues, legislators and senior government officials where they began ceremonial planting of trees along the river Chite in Aizawl.
- ✦ It is being organized every year on June 11 since 1999.

## **25. Delhi assembly accepted full statehood proposal**

- ✦ Delhi Vidhan Sabha accepted the resolution on full statehood for the national capital.
- ✦ Arvind Kejriwal (Delhi Chief Minister) asked Central Government to grant statehood before 2019 general elections.

- ✦ He also claimed that at least 100 colleges will be developed within five years if Delhi gets statehood.

### **26. NITI Aayog to release Composite Water Management Index**

- ✦ Nitin Gadkari (Union Minister for Water Resources) will release the Composite Water Management Index as a useful tool to assess and improve the performance in efficient management of water resources in New Delhi.
- ✦ NITI Aayog has come up with this Index in view of limitations on availability of water resources and rising demand for water. This index can be utilized to formulate and implement suitable strategies for better management of water resources.
- ✦ This index is an attempt to inspire states and UTs towards efficient and optimal utilization of water.

### **27. President to launch Solar Charkha Mission on 27th June**

- ✦ President Ram Nath Kovind will launch Solar Charkha Mission on 27 June in New Delhi to give subsidy of Rs 550 crore to 400 to 2000 artisans in 50 groups covered under this Mission.
- ✦ Giriraj Singh (Ministry of Micro Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME)) said that 15 new state-of-the-art technology centers are set up all over the country, of which 10 centers will become operational by March 2019.
- ✦ These centers will provide technological support to small industries.
- ✦ The Minister also informed that work being done by Ministry has promoted Ease-of-Doing-Business with these four portals: 'MSME Sambandh', MSME Samadhaan, Udyog Aadhaar and Udyam Sakhi.

### **28. KVIC created world record by distributing 2330 Bee-Boxes in Kashmir**

- ✦ Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) created a world record of distributing maximum number of bee-boxes in a single day in the Zangalee Army area of Kupwara in Kashmir.
- ✦ It had beaten its last best of 1000 bee boxes distributed in Kaziranga forest area among Mishing tribe on occasion of World Honey Bee Day (18 August).
- ✦ The KVIC comes under the administrative control of the MSME Ministry.
- ✦ The programme in Kupwara was held in association with Indian Army under its Sadbhawna programme to establish peace and harmony in the valley.

### **29. Odisha CM announced health care assistance**

- ✦ Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced that state government would launch health assurance scheme "Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana" on August 15 that will benefit around 3.5 crore people from over 70 lakh families in the state.
- ✦ Under this programme, a family would get up to Rs 5 lakh per annum to meet healthcare expenditure at all government-run hospitals and entire cost would be borne by state government.

### **30. Cabinet approved NEC (North Eastern Council) Repositioning**

- ✦ Union Cabinet (chaired by PM Narendra Modi) has approved repositioning of North Eastern Council (NEC) making Union Home Minister as ex-officio chairman of council and Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) minister
- ✦ The Cabinet has also approved that Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of DoNER would serve as Vice Chairman of the Council.
- ✦ North Eastern Council (NEC) is a statutory body with governors and chief ministers of all eight north eastern states as its member. It was set up under North Eastern Council Act, 1971 as an apex level body for securing balanced and coordinated development and facilitating coordination with states.

### 31. Cabinet approved withdrawal of Nalanda Amendment Bill, 2013

- ✦ Union Cabinet (chaired by PM Narendra Modi) has approved a proposal to withdraw the Nalanda University (Amendment) Bill, 2013 pending in the Rajya Sabha.
- ✦ Nalanda University was established on the basis of a Joint Press Statement at 4th East Asia Summit held in Thailand in October, 2009. Later, Nalanda University Act, 2010 was passed by Parliament and came into effect from November 25, 2010.
- ✦ The present proposal is for moving a motion in Rajya Sabha withdrawing Nalanda University (Amendment) Bill, 2013 introduced in Rajya Sabha on August 26, 2013 to amend certain existing provisions of Nalanda University Act, 2010 and add some new provisions.

### 32. Cabinet approved 3-year Action Plan of Agricultural Education Division & ICAR Institutes

- ✦ Union Cabinet (chaired by PM Narendra Modi) approved continuation of Three Year Action Plan (2017-2020) of scheme for Agricultural Education Division and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Institutes with investment of Rs.2225.46 crore for strengthening and developing higher agricultural education in India.
- ✦ This scheme has allotted Rs 2,050.00 crore for strengthening and development of higher agricultural education in India, Rs. 24.25 crore for ICAR- National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM) and Rs. 151.21 crore for ICAR - Central Institute of Women in Agriculture (CIWA) including All India Coordinated Research Project on Home Science.
- ✦ The main purpose of this scheme is to generate quality human resources from the institutions.

### 33. Jammu and Kashmir to get two women battalions

- ✦ Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh has approved raising of two women battalions of Jammu and Kashmir State police to enhance representation of women in State Police. One battalion each would be raised for Jammu region and Kashmir region.
- ✦ 5 battalions of Indian Reserve Police and two women's battalions of State police would be raised with 60% reservation for border residents.

- ✦ 60% of posts would be kept reserved for women of 10 border districts- Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Poonch, Rajouri, Baramulla, Bandipora, Kupwara, Kargil and Leh.

#### **34. Gujarat tops Niti Aayog's Water Management Index**

- ✦ Nitin Gadkari (Minister for Water Resources) released Niti Aayog's composite water management index (CWMI) report in New Delhi. Gujarat has topped the list while Jharkhand was adjudged as worst performer.
- ✦ Gujarat is followed by Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra on the index. In north eastern and Himalayan states Tripura has been adjudged as top state in 2016-17 followed by Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Assam.
- ✦ Niti Aayog has ranked the states through first of its kind index on composite water management comprising 9 broad sectors with 28 different indicators covering various aspects of ground water, restoration of water bodies, irrigation, farm practices, drinking water, policy and governance.

#### **35. PM Modi inaugurated multiple developmental projects in Chhattisgarh**

- ✦ PM Narendra Modi is on visit to Chhattisgarh where he inaugurated several projects for Chhattisgarh worth thousands of crores of rupees. He dedicated modernised Bhilai steel plant to nation. He also took part in programmes in Naya Raipur (upcoming capital city of Chhattisgarh).
- ✦ PM Modi inaugurated Integrated Command and Control Centre at Naya Raipur. He also inaugurated Raipur-Jagdalpur air service and laid foundation stone for new building of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bhilai.

#### **36. Conference on implementation of National Pension System by CABs held in Delhi**

- ✦ A conference on implementation of National Pension System (NPS) by Central Autonomous Bodies (CABs) was organized by Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) in New Delhi.
- ✦ The main objective is to provide a forum to all Central Government Ministries & Departments where progress in implementation of NPS with respect to subscriber coverage and services could be brought to the fore and a way forward could be provided. Senior officials from almost all the Ministries & Departments attended the conference.
- ✦ Satya Ranjan Prasad (Executive Director) emphasised the need for discipline of remitting of the subscriber contribution.

#### **37. India will host European Union Film Festival from June 18**

- ✦ India will host the 23rd European Union Film Festival (EUFF) with selection of 24 latest European films from 23 EU Member States. The festival will premiere in New Delhi at Siri Fort Auditorium

- ✦ This festival is organized by Directorate of Film Festivals under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in partnership with the delegation of the EU and embassies of EU member states.
- ✦ Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore (Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting) will inaugurate this festival. It will traverse through 11 cities in India including New Delhi, Kolkata, Jaipur, Hyderabad and Goa, besides others.

### **38. Tripura launched 24×7 Mobile Policing Service**

- ✦ Tripura government has launched GPS (Global Positioning System) and wireless-based 24×7 ‘mobile policing’ service to restrict crime especially against women.
- ✦ With launch of this service, people won’t need to go to police and police would go to the spot within a few minutes to deal with situation.
- ✦ It would save time and physical involvement.

### **39. Reliance investing in first carbon fibre unit of India**

- ✦ Reliance Industries Ltd. is investing in setting up India’s first carbon fibre manufacturing unit to fulfil aerospace and defence needs.
- ✦ It will make low-cost and high-volume composite products like modular toilets, homes and composites for windmill blades and rotor blades. Reliance has developed capabilities for 3D printing of wide-range of plastic and metals products.
- ✦ Carbon fibre is made by heating lengths of rayon to extremely high temperatures in oxygen-deprived oven.

### **40. Union Cabinet approved proposal for introduction of Dam Safety Bill 2018**

- ✦ Union Cabinet (chaired by PM Narendra Modi) approved the proposal for introduction of Dam Safety Bill, 2018 in Parliament which will help states and union territories to adopt uniform safety procedures to ensure safety of reservoirs.
- ✦ The bill seeks to constitute a national committee on dam safety which shall evolve safety policies and recommend necessary regulations.
- ✦ There are over 5,200 large dams in India and about 450 are under construction. In addition, there are thousands of medium and small dams. Lack of legal and institutional architecture for dam safety in India has been an issue of concern.

### **41. “School Chale Hum Abhiyan 2018” launched in Bhopal**

- ✦ Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister) inaugurated the ‘School Chale Hum Abhiyan 2018’ in Bhopal.
- ✦ The main purpose of this scheme is that no child should be deprived of schooling. Vijay Shah (Cabinet Minister for School Education), who was also present at the event, urged every person to send one underprivileged poor kid to school.

- ✦ The CM also rewarded students of various schools with cash prizes at a function.

#### **42. National Tribal Museum to be built at Delhi**

- ✦ National Tribal Museum along with National Level Tribal Research Institute is proposed to be set up at Delhi by Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- ✦ The Museum will showcase rich tribal culture and heritage using state-of-the-art technologies.
- ✦ The proposal to set up this Museum has already been sent to Niti Ayog. The Centre is sanctioning Rs 16 crore for the purpose.

#### **43. New Incredible India website launched by Tourism Ministry**

- ✦ Shri K.J. Alphons (Minister of State for Tourism) launched new Incredible India website to project India as a “must-visit” destination.
- ✦ The website showcases India as a holistic destination revolving around major experiences such as spirituality, heritage, adventure, culture, yoga, wellness and more. The website is aesthetically designed to enable easy dissemination of a large amount of information.
- ✦ The website has many useful features to make it more interactive and to provide a deeper engagement to the travelers visiting the website.

#### **44. Indian Government collaborates with Google for flood forecasting**

- ✦ Nitin Gadkari (Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation) has expressed that collaboration of Union government with Google will help in effective flood management in India.
- ✦ India’s apex technical organization in field of Water Resources, Central Water Commission (CWC) signed a Collaboration Agreement with Google for flood forecasting.
- ✦ The agreement involves dissemination of flood related information to people using dissemination platforms developed by Google. The information would be disseminated with a lead time of up to 3 days.

#### **45. PM Narendra Modi to chair 4th meeting of NITI Aayog**

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi is all set to chair 4th meeting of Governing Council of NITI Aayog in New Delhi to discuss various issues including measures taken to double farmers' income and progress of flagship schemes.
- ✦ The main purpose of this meeting is to double farmers’ income and progress of flagship scheme such as Ayushman Bharat, National Nutrition Mission and Mission Indradhanush and celebration of 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- ✦ It planned for a 3 year action plan to develop new agenda for “New India 2022”.

#### **46. Union Human Resource Development Minister launched National Digital Library of India**

- ✦ Shri Prakash Javadekar (Union Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister) launched 'National Digital Library of India' on occasion of National Reading Day in New Delhi.
- ✦ National Digital Library of India (NDLI) is a project of HRD Ministry under the sponsorship of National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT).
- ✦ The digital library at present hosts 17 million-plus items (books, audio books, images, etc) in 200-plus languages from more than 170 institutions. It has been built by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur.

#### **47. i-Hariyali app launched by Punjab government**

- ✦ Punjab government launched a Smartphone application named "i-Hariyali" under 'Mission Tandarust' to offer free saplings for users and to increase state's green cover.
- ✦ The users can book a sapling of their choice, a maximum of 25 per person, from a nearby government nursery.
- ✦ The main purpose of this app is to inspire people to plant more saplings to save environment from pollution. It will ensure clean, green, healthy and robust Punjab with active participation of people.

#### **48. Chhattisgarh government approved merger of shikshakarmi with state school education department**

- ✦ Chhattisgarh Government approved merger of 'shikshakarmi' (who are presently working under Panchayats and other local bodies) with state school education department. The move would come into effect from July 1.
- ✦ The decision was taken at a cabinet meeting in Raipur chaired by Chief Minister Raman Singh.
- ✦ The decision is expected to benefit around 1.50 lakh shikshakarmi. In first phase, merger of 1.03 lakh shikshakarmi who have completed 8 years of service will be carried out from July 1. The remaining 48,000 shikshakarmi will become eligible for merger into school education department.

#### **49. Health Minister JP Nadda launches National Health Resource Repository**

- ✦ JP Nadda (Union Health Minister) has launched National Health Resource Repository (NHRR) -- country's first-ever national healthcare registry of authentic, standardized and updated geo-spatial data of all public and private healthcare establishments.
- ✦ The objective of NHRR project is to strengthen evidence-based decision making and develop a platform for citizen by creating a robust, standardized and secured IT-enabled repository of India's healthcare resources.
- ✦ NHRR is the ultimate platform for comprehensive information of both private and public healthcare establishments including Railways, ESIC, Defence and Petroleum health establishments.

#### **50. Rajasthan ranked 1st in water conservation**

- ✦ Rajasthan has been ranked 1st by NITI Aayog among all states after it registered a significant rise in groundwater level due to water conservation structures built under Jal Swavlamban Abhiyan.
- ✦ The state also witnessed an increase of 81% in irrigation capacity.
- ✦ As many as 4 lakh structures were built in Rajasthan in last 3 years.

### 51. World record of Yoga session created in Kota

- ✦ Guinness world record was created by conducting the largest yoga session to mark the International Yoga Day at Kota, Rajasthan where over one lakh people together performed yogic exercises.
- ✦ Yoga guru Ramdev conducted this yoga session attended by CM Vasundhara Raje, ministers, officers and local people at RAC ground.
- ✦ Previous record was of 55,524 people performing yoga in Mysore in 2017.

### 52. Haryana government gives star ranking to panchayats

- ✦ Haryana government has become 1st state in India to give star rankings to its panchayats on the basis of seven social parameters (such as sex ratio, good education, hygiene or serenity, environment preservation, good governance and social participation) under state's 7-Star Gram Panchayat Rainbow scheme launched by Chief Minister Manohar Lal.
- ✦ Total 1,120 villages of Haryana have achieved the star rankings and will be awarded Rs.1 lakh for achieving each parameter.
- ✦ Ambala topped the star ranking with 407 stars followed by Gurugram with 199 stars & Karnal with 75 stars.

### 53. PM Narendra Modi inaugurated urban transport service

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated urban public transport bus service 'Sutra Seva' at a function held at Nehru Stadium, Indore.
- ✦ In first phase of 'Sutra Seva', 127 buses started operating in four municipal corporations of Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur, Chhindwara and Guna and Bhind municipalities.
- ✦ Besides, he launched six other schemes like drinking water, Housing for All, smart city work and public parks of more than 10 districts from the city.

### 54. Piyush Goyal inaugurates India Infrastructure Expo 2018

- ✦ Piyush Goyal (Union Minister of Railways, Coal, Finance and Corporate Affairs) inaugurated India Infrastructure Expo 2018 in Mumbai.
- ✦ Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance in partnership with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) is organized two-day expo that will run in parallel to third Annual Meeting of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).
- ✦ Chhattisgarh Government and Gujarat Government are the partner states to the exposition while Maharashtra Government is host state to the exposition.

**55. PM dedicated to nation Mohanpura irrigation project in Madhya Pradesh**

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has dedicated to the nation an irrigation project at Mohanpura in Rajgarh district of Madhya Pradesh.
- ✦ Mohanpura project has been built on Nevaj River at a cost of Rs 3,200 crore.
- ✦ This project will facilitate irrigation of agricultural land in Rajgarh district. It will also provide drinking water to villages in the area.
- ✦ Prime Minister also laid foundation stone of various drinking water schemes.

**56. 3-Day annual Sindhu Darshan Festival celebrated in Ladakh Region of Jammu and Kashmir**

- ✦ 3-day annual Sindhu Darshan Festival celebrated on bank of Indus River in Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✦ The festival organized by Sindhu Darshan Yatra Samiti and Ladakh Phandey Tsogspa, Leh, will be inaugurate by Bhaiya Ji (RSS General Secretary).
- ✦ This year mark 22nd Sindhu Darshan festival and it was started by former Deputy Prime Minister L K Advani in 1997.
- ✦ The programme is focused at national integration, communal harmony and national pride.

**57. Gujarat launches SKY (Suryashakti Kisan Yojana) scheme for farmers**

- ✦ Gujarat government has launched a solar power scheme for farmers-Suryashakti Kisan Yojana (SKY) under which farmers would be encouraged to generate electricity and sell their surplus to power distribution companies.
- ✦ Chief Minister Vijay Rupani made this announcement in presence of Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel and Energy Minister Saurabh Patel in Gandhinagar.
- ✦ According to the scheme, farmers having existing electricity connection will be given solar panels as per their load requirements. The State and Central governments will give 60% subsidy on cost of the project.

**58. Ministry of Health signs MoU with Indira Gandhi National Open University**

- ✦ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare signed MoU with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) to expand short term healthcare courses through its available robust platform. The signing ceremony was headed by J.P. Nadda (Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare).
- ✦ The main purpose of this MoU is to scale up health programs to create trained personnel in healthcare sector and to set up a dedicated cell for developing, implementing and certifying skill-based programs at IGNOU.
- ✦ Under this MoU, curriculum for 10 courses especially designed for health sector will provide more than 14 lakh trained manpower by 2025.

**59. Report on 'Women in Prisons' launched**

- ✦ Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched a report titled 'Women in Prisons'. The aim of this report is to build an understanding of various entitlements of women in prisons, various issues faced by them and possible methods for resolution of the same.
- ✦ The report contains a list of 134 recommendations for improving lives of women under incarceration, addressing wide range of issues regarding pregnancy and childbirth in prison, mental health, legal aid and their care-giving responsibilities among others.
- ✦ Various changes in National Model Prison Manual 2016 have also been suggested to bring it in line with international standards.

#### **60. Border Roads Organization opens bridge from Leh to Siachen base camp**

- ✦ Border Roads Organization (BRO) opened a 35-meter bridge in Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir that will ease vehicular movement to base camp of Siachen Glacier (world's highest battlefield).
- ✦ The 35-meter long 'Chamesahn' bridge is under Project 'Himank'. Project Himank successfully undertook challenge of constructing bridge on Khalsar-Sasoma road, an axis connecting Nubra Valley to Siachen Glacier base.
- ✦ BRO develops road networks in border areas and maintains over 32,885 km of roads and 12,200 m of bridges.

#### **61. Sushma Swaraj launches Passport Seva App for passport insurance**

- ✦ Sushma Swaraj (External Affairs Minister) launched Passport Seva app to make process for obtaining passports easier.
- ✦ With this app, one can apply for passport from any part of the country.
- ✦ There are total 260 working passport centers which will be expanded to all Lok Sabha constituencies in near future.

#### **62. Health Cover Under Odisha's Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana Increased**

- ✦ The Odisha government decided to raise the health cover from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 7 lakh under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) for women. This was announced by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik while interacting with the people of four districts during a video conferencing on Ama Gaon Ama Bikash Yojana.
- ✦ On the occasion, the chief minister also sanctioned Rs 31.54 crore for 154 panchayats in seven blocks of six districts under Ama Gaon Ama Bikash Yojana at the block level.

#### **63. Centre Releases Rs 340 Crore For Flood Relief In Assam**

- ✦ Centre has released 340 crore rupees for flood relief work in Assam. Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Jitendra Singh announced this after holding a high-level meeting in Guwahati with

the State Government to assess the current situation of flood and the relief measures undertaken so far.

- ✦ 101 crore rupees was released by the DoNER, while the remaining 239 crore rupees was given by the Home Ministry under the State Disaster Relief Fund.

#### **64. Hindi mother tongue of 44% in India, Bangla second most spoken**

- ✦ The percentage of Indian population with Hindi as their mother tongue has risen to 43.63% from 41.03% in 2001, according to data on language released on Tuesday as part of Census 2011.
- ✦ Bengali remains the second most spoken language while Marathi has replaced Telugu in third place.
- ✦ Sanskrit was the least spoken of the country's 22 scheduled languages. With just 24,821 persons listing it as their mother tongue, it was slotted below Bodo, Manipuri, Konkani and Dogri languages in terms of number of speakers.

#### **65. Government Approves Draft Act To Replace UGC With HECI-**

- ✦ The Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) proposed a draft bill to repeal the University Grants Commission (UGC) and set up the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI). This move that aims to reform higher education in India.
- ✦ The Act entitled 'Higher Education Commission of India Act, 2018 (Repeal of University Grants Commission Act)' revamps UGC Act, 1951 and its parent legislation completely. The HECI Act, 2018 is expected to be introduced in Parliament in the upcoming monsoon session.

#### **66. J P Nadda inaugurates the NIMHANS Digital Academy**

- ✦ Shri J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare inaugurated the NIMHANS (National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences) Digital Academy and addressed the first batch of professionals enrolled for undergoing courses in the fields of Psychiatry and Psychiatric Social Work.
- ✦ Shri Nadda also released the training modules and curricula for various training programmes to be undertaken at the NIMHANS Digital Academy.

#### **67. Madhya Pradesh awarded for reducing maternal mortality**

- ✦ Madhya Pradesh awarded for reducing maternal mortality under Prime Minister's Safe Motherhood Campaign.
- ✦ The Prime Minister's Safe Motherhood Campaign has been launched to ensure quality care of over 3 crore pregnant women of the country before delivery.

- ✦ Madhya Pradesh has registered an unprecedented 48-digit decline in maternal deaths as per the report of the Registrar General of India from 2014 to 2016.

### 68. Suresh Prabhu Launches Mobile App 'ReUnite'

- ✦ Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu launched a mobile application called 'ReUnite' which helps to track and trace missing and abandoned children in India.
- ✦ The app is multiuser where parents and citizens can upload pictures of children, and provide detailed description like name, birthmark, address, report to the police station, search and identify missing kids. The app is available for both Android and iOS.

## International News & Foreign Affairs

### 1. Cuba and US to resume direct postal service

- ✦ Cuba and the United States have agreed to permanently restore direct postal service between the two countries which had been suspended for decades.
- ✦ The restoration of this service allows postal delivery of mail, parcels, and express courier deliveries on direct flights between Cuba and US, and through post offices in both countries.
- ✦ The direct postal service between two neighboring nations was suspended by Havana in 1968.

### 2. Japanese passport ranked the 'most powerful' in world

- ✦ As per annual passport index, Japan has been ranked the world's most powerful passport, with access to 189 countries.
- ✦ India has ranked 76th position a list of world's most powerful passports, granting its holders visa-free access to 59 countries.
- ✦ Singapore and Germany, on the other hand, have secured second place with both having access to 188 countries.

### 3. India ranks 137th on Global Peace Index 2018

- ✦ According to a report by Australian think tank, India has moved up four places to 137th rank among 163 countries on 2018 Global Peace Index, due to reduction in level of violent crime driven by increased law enforcement.
- ✦ Iceland remains most peaceful country in the world since 2008. New Zealand, Austria, Portugal and Denmark also sit in top five most peaceful rankings.

- ✦ Syria remains least peaceful country in the world, a position it has held for the past five years. Afghanistan, South Sudan, Iraq and Somalia comprise the remaining least peaceful countries.
- ✦ India has improved by four positions in the overall ranking from 141st to 137th.

#### **4. India and Norway sign MoU to extend health cooperation**

- ✦ Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (HFW) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to extend the cooperation within health sector through the Norway India Partnership Initiative (NIPI) for a period of three years starting from 2018 to 2020.
- ✦ Smt. Preeti Sudan (Secretary of HFW) and Mr. Ragnar Kamsvåg (Ambassador of Norway) signed the MoU.
- ✦ This cooperation between India and Norway is aligned with development goals of Government of India as outlined in its National Health Policy 2017 for achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- ✦ The cooperation shall also focus on global health issues of common interest.

#### **5. India, Belgium gears up to celebrate International Yoga Day**

- ✦ India, Belgium and European Union are jointly organizing events in Belgian capital and across the country to celebrate 4th International Yoga Day.
- ✦ At European Parliament, a special yoga session will be held on 21 June 2018 from 1200-1330 hrs at Yehudi Menuhin Space.
- ✦ The event will be graced by Antonio Tajani (President of the European Parliament) and Sushma Swaraj (External Affairs Minister of India).
- ✦ The yoga and meditation session will be led by renowned Indian spiritual leader and Yoga Guru, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

#### **6. Nepal hosts Asia-pacific regional conference on Early Childhood Development**

- ✦ Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli (Prime Minister of Nepal) inaugurated the 2018 Asia-Pacific Regional Early Childhood Development (ECD) Conference and 3rd Asia-Pacific Regional Policy Forum on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).
- ✦ The event was hosted by Government of Nepal (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology) including participation from around 700 high level policy makers, government officials, development professionals as well as researchers from organizations working in early childhood development.

#### **7. India Ranks 113th on Childhood Index**

- ✦ According to the report "End of Childhood Index 2018", India ranked 113th among 175 countries with regards to where childhood is threatened as result of poor health, malnutrition, exclusion from education, child labour, and child marriage.
- ✦ India has improved its ranking in world childhood index. Child marriages in India have come down to 15.2% from 21.1% in 2017.
- ✦ India jumped three positions up from 116 last year with improvement in India's overall score by 14 points from 754 to 768 on a scale of 1000.

- ✦ Singapore and Slovenia topped the report and Niger figures at the end of the list at 175.

### **8. Andhra Pradesh signed agreement with Singapore for Amaravati development**

- ✦ Andhra Pradesh government and Singapore has signed several agreements for development of a start-up area in new capital, Amaravati, to transform it into a world-class city.
- ✦ The pact was signed by senior officials of state government and Singapore in presence of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Singapore Trade Minister S. Iswaran.
- ✦ Under the agreement, land would be handed over in three phases - 660 acres in the first phase - to Singapore companies for infrastructure development and other promotional activities.

### **9. Cabinet approved India-Denmark MoU on sustainable development**

- ✦ The Union Cabinet approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and Denmark.
- ✦ The main purpose of this MoU is to promote bilateral cooperation in field of sustainable and smart urban development on basis of mutual benefit through exchange of knowledge, institutional cooperation, research and commercial relations on related issues.
- ✦ Under this MoU, a Joint Working Group (JWG) will be set up to strategize and implement programmes on cooperation under the framework of the agreement.

### **10. Cabinet approves MoU between India and Oman on Cooperation in peaceful uses of outer space**

- ✦ Union Cabinet approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India represented by ISRO and Oman represented by the Ministry of Transport and Communications.
- ✦ MoU on Cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space was signed at Muscat.
- ✦ The MoU would enable various areas of cooperation such as space science, technology and applications including remote sensing of the earth; satellite based navigation and application of space technology.

### **11. 58 Indian companies featured in 2018 Forbes 'Global 2000' list**

- ✦ 58 Indian companies has been featured on 2018 Forbes 'Global 2000' list of world's largest public sector companies, the same number as last year.
- ✦ Banks and oil firms and gas companies dominated among Indian firms on list of the world's biggest, most powerful, best, influential and valuable publicly listed companies.
- ✦ The Mukesh Ambani-led oil-to-telecom corporation, Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) (ranked 83) is retaining its top spot as the most valued Indian company on the list.
- ✦ HDFC Bank, the country's largest financier, took second spot among Indian companies, ranking at 202 in 2018 with market capitalization of \$77.6 billion.

Overall, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China is ranked 1 for sixth consecutive year.

#### 12. 44th G7 summit 2018 held in Canada

- ✦ 44th G7 summit was in La Malbaie, Quebec, Canada. This was 6th time since 1981 that Canada has hosted this summit.
- ✦ This summit received notable attention due to significant decline of relations of members with United States.
- ✦ Due to this, the summit was dubbed "G6+1" by France and some members of the media.
- ✦ The G7 is a group consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

#### 13. India, Uzbekistan review bilateral ties

- ✦ PM Narendra Modi held a meeting with Uzbekistan President Islam Karimov during which two leaders called for more security cooperation to expand and strengthen bilateral relations.
- ✦ India and Uzbekistan are set to route their trade through the Iranian port of Chabahar.
- ✦ They also reviewed the full range of bilateral ties to boost economic and cultural links.

#### 14. Mauritius to host 11th World Hindi Conference

- ✦ 11th World Hindi Conference (WHC) is being organized from 18-20 August 2018 to increase the popularity of Hindi globally in Mauritius by Government of India in association with Government of Mauritius.
- ✦ The World Hindi Conference is a major event organized every three years by External Affairs Ministry. World Hindi Secretariat (WHS) will be the organizing authority of this year's event.
- ✦ This conference will cover both classical and modern elements of Hindi and will see participation of representatives and scholars of Hindi from all over the world. The special focus of this year's event will be on Bollywood and global reach of Hindi through movies.
- ✦ The decision to organize 11th edition of Conference in Mauritius was taken at 10th World Hindi Conference held in Bhopal, India in September 2015.

#### 15. 12,000-yr-old rock painting found in Northeast China

- ✦ Archaeologists have confirmed that a rock painting discovered in Lesser Khingan Mountains in Northeast China's Heilongjiang Province dates back 12,000 years.
- ✦ Zhao Pingchun (researcher with provincial institute of archeology) discovered that several images painted with ochre were discovered on a rock in city of Heihe. Preliminary studies showed that it is a scene of humans hunting.

- ✦ The rock paintings were made before extinction of the mammoth or at least 12,000 years ago. The paint is a mixture of ochre and animal glue, which has helped the artwork survive thousands of years.

#### **16. India and the US agree to hold talks on Trade & Economic Issues**

- ✦ India and the US have agreed to hold comprehensive talks to address trade and economic issues.
- ✦ This decision was taken during meetings of Suresh Prabhu (Commerce and Industry Minister) with Wilbur Ross (US Commerce Secretary) and Robert Lighthizer (US Trade Representative).
- ✦ In 2017-18, India had a \$21 billion trade surplus with the US.

#### **17. India ranked 177 in Global Environment Performance Index 2018**

- ✦ India is among the bottom five countries on the Global Environmental Performance Index 2018. India ranked 177 out of 180 countries and scored 5.75 out of 100 in air quality. In 2016, the country had ranked 141 out of 180 countries.
- ✦ The report was released on the sidelines of the ongoing World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.
- ✦ The top 5 countries on the list are Switzerland, France, Denmark, Malta and Sweden.

#### **18. MoU between the ICMR and INSERM, France**

- ✦ Union Cabinet (chaired by PM Narendra Modi) has been apprised of a MoU which was signed in March, 2018 between the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and INSERM (only public research organization in France entirely dedicated to human health), France.
- ✦ This MoU aims at cooperation in areas of common interest within medical, life sciences and health research fields.
- ✦ The scientific excellence on two sides will help to successfully work on health research in specified areas.

#### **19. India- 2nd highest sender of foreign students in US**

- ✦ India is the second highest sender of foreign students to the US, next only to China with 1, 86,000 Indian students studying in United States.
- ✦ Craig Hall (US consul general in Kolkata) stated that US is the top destination for foreign students worldwide and the number of Indian students in US has more than doubled in last 10 years.

#### **20. India gives Rs 99 million to Nepal to install shallow tube wells**

- ✦ India extended a financial aid of Rs 99 million to Nepal for installation of 2,700 shallow tube well irrigation systems in 12 districts of country's southern Terai region to increase agricultural productivity.

- ✦ The aid has been extended as part of final payment for Nepal-Bharat Maitri Irrigation Project which was launched to raise growth the Himalayan nation's agricultural sector.
- ✦ Manjeev Singh Puri (India's Ambassador to Nepal) handed over a cheque of 99.21 million Nepalese Rupees to Sanjay Sharma (country's Energy Secretary).

### **21. Maharashtra government and Quebec signed pact**

- ✦ Maharashtra government and Canada's Quebec province signed an agreement to raise economic cooperation especially in areas like information technology, biotechnology, artificial intelligence and welfare of tribal community.
- ✦ Devendra Fadnavis (Chief Minister of Maharashtra) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Philippe Couillard (Prime Minister of Quebec province of Canada).
- ✦ CM also met Pierre Beaudoin, chairman of Board Corporate office of Bombardier Inc, a multinational aerospace and Transportation Company.

### **22. Nepal and China to sign deal for three oil depots**

- ✦ An agreement on building oil storage depots at three locations in Nepal with Chinese assistance is expected to be signed during Nepali Prime Minister KP Oli's visit to China.
- ✦ According to the agreement, building oil storage depots would have combined capacity of 110,000 kilo litre. The building of oil storage facilities with Chinese assistance is a part of implementing agreements reached between two sides in March 2016.
- ✦ The construction of this project is expected to be completed by mid 2019.

### **23. India and Nepal To Have Four New Air Gateways**

- ✦ India has agreed to open four new air entry points to Nepal in eastern and western parts of the country facilitate movement of international traffic.
- ✦ The four routes that India agreed to make bidirectional are Kathmandu-Biratnagar-Dhaka, Kathmandu-Janakpur-Kolkata, Kathmandu-Janakpur-Patna and Kathmandu-Mahendranagar-Delhi.
- ✦ This move is aimed at facilitating plan of Buddha Air and other Nepali private carriers to connect New Delhi, India from Nepalgunj.

### **24. 7th OPEC international Seminar 2018**

- ✦ Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is going to host 7th OPEC International Seminar at Imperial Hofburg Palace in Vienna, Austria.
- ✦ The theme of this year's seminar is "Petroleum – cooperation for a sustainable future".
- ✦ The Seminar will feature presentations by officials from energy and oil ministries, executives from oil companies and financial firms and other representatives from international organizations and research institutions.

### **25. World's 1st International Centre for Humanitarian Forensics launched**

- ✦ World's 1st International Centre for Humanitarian Forensics (ICHF) has been launched at Gandhinagar-based Gujarat Forensic Sciences University (GFSU). (GFSU) will have the centre of excellence in field of humanitarian forensics for SAARC countries.
- ✦ The main purpose of Centre would be to provide service to nation and to entire world when the need arises.
- ✦ The decision was taken at 2nd South Asia Conference on Management of the Dead organized by International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) at Kathmandu, Nepal.

## **26. India and Tajikistan agreed to enhance mutual cooperation for sustainable water development**

- ✦ India and Tajikistan have agreed to enhance economic cooperation in sustainable water development.
- ✦ Nitin Gadkari (Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation) held wide-ranging talks with Sirodjiddin Muhridin (Foreign Minister of Tajikistan in Dushanbe).

## **27. Saudi Arabia issues its first driving licences to women**

- ✦ Saudi Arabia has issued its first driving licences to women for in decades just before a ban on female drivers is lifted.
- ✦ 10 women swapped their foreign licences for Saudi ones in cities across the country including US, UK, Lebanon and Canada.
- ✦ The women took a brief driving test before being issued the licences at department of traffic in Riyadh.

## **28. Suresh Prabhu chaired 15th India-Australia Joint Ministerial Commission**

- ✦ Suresh Prabhu (Minister for Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation of India) co-chaired 15th India-Australia Joint Ministerial Commission with Steven Ciobo (Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment) in Canberra.
- ✦ Both Ministers emphasized need for growth in two-way trade and investment. They also discussed about how mutual strengths could contribute to economic modernization.
- ✦ Suresh Prabhu shared experiences of India's reform journey including GST implementation, competition policy, insolvency and bankruptcy acts, and ease of doing business initiatives while Ciobo highlighted positive impact of growing people-to-people links, pointing to contribution of the Indian origin community to Australia's economy and multicultural fabric.

## **29. India to get technical security equipment from Russia**

- ✦ Russian state atomic energy corporation Rosatom has signed an agreement with Indian engineering services firm Core Energy Systems Pvt Ltd for promotion of its technical security equipment in India.

- ✦ According to Pranay Kumar (Core Chief Executive), this collaboration will explore opportunities in Indian government's Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) project.
- ✦ Rosatom are the technical consultants and equipment suppliers for Nuclear Power Corp of India- operated Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project in Tamil Nadu.

### **30. India and Cuba sign MoUs to enhance co-operation in field of Biotechnology, medicine & homoeopathy**

- ✦ India and Cuba have signed 2 MoUs in the field of biotechnology, traditional medicine and homoeopathy.
- ✦ The agreements were signed between President Ram Nath Kovind and his Cuban counterpart Miguel Mario Diaz-Canel at Revolution Palace in Havana, Cuba.
- ✦ The two countries have agreed to enhance cooperation in biotechnology, renewable energy and traditional medicine. Cuba also reiterated its support to India's candidature for a permanent seat in UN Security Council.
- ✦ The President was accompanied by a delegation including Minister of state for steel Vishnu Deo Sai and two Members of parliament.

### **31. India and Bangladesh Navies agreed to institute Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT)**

- ✦ India and Bangladesh Navies have agreed to institute a Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) as an annual exercise between the two Navies.
- ✦ The first edition of CORPAT will be inaugurated by Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba during his visit to Bangladesh. The visit is aimed at consolidating bilateral defence relations between India and Bangladesh and exploring new avenues for naval cooperation.
- ✦ Four maritime patrol aircraft, two from the Bangladesh Navy and two from the Indian navy will participate in the CORPAT.

### **32. Saudi ARAMCO and ADNOC signed MoU for Refinery Project of Maharashtra**

- ✦ Saudi Aramco and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to build an integrated refinery and petrochemicals complex at Ratnagiri in Maharashtra. The project will be implemented by Ratnagiri Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd. (RRPCL) and is estimated to be Rs. 3 lakh Crore..
- ✦ The MoU was signed by Amin H. Nasser (Saudi Aramco President and CEO) and H.E. Dr Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber (UAE Minister of State & ADNOC Group CEO).
- ✦ Earlier, Saudi Aramco had joined Ratnagiri Refinery project by signing MoU with Indian association on 11 April 2018 on sidelines of the 16th International Energy Forum Ministerial.

### **33. Recep Tayyip Erdogan wins another term as Turkish president**

- ✦ Turkey's long-standing leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan has won five-year term after securing victory in first round of presidential poll.
- ✦ Mr Erdogan got nearly 53% with almost all votes counted. His closest rival Muharrem Ince was on 31%.
- ✦ Mr Erdogan has presided over a strong economy and built up a solid support base by investing in healthcare, education and infrastructure.

#### **34. India- World's most dangerous country for women**

- ✦ According to a poll of global experts, India is the world's most dangerous country for women due to high risk of sexual violence and being forced into slave labour.
- ✦ Afghanistan and Syria ranked 2nd and 3rd in Thomson Reuters Foundation survey of about 550 experts on women's issues followed by Somalia and Saudi Arabia.
- ✦ Government data shows reported cases of crime against women rose by 83% between 2007 and 2016.

#### **35. London- most desirable city in the world for overseas workers**

- ✦ According to a survey conducted by Boston Consulting Group, London has become the most desirable city in the world for overseas workers by beating New York, Berlin and Barcelona to take the top spot.
- ✦ Meanwhile, UK has dropped three places in country rankings, falling from 2nd in 2014 to 5th.

#### **36. US Ambassador To UN Nikki Haley Visits India-**

- ✦ The US Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley is in India for the 2-day visit. During her two-day visit, Haley will meet with senior Indian government officials, NGO leaders, and the interfaith community to underscore the United States' shared values and strong alliance with the people of India.
- ✦ Haley, the daughter of Sikh immigrants from Punjab, is the first Indian-American to serve in a Cabinet-level position in any US presidential administration.

#### **37. India Ranked Fourth as Cyber Attacks on The Rise Globally: Report**

- ✦ India ranked fourth in the list of top 10 target countries for Web Application Attacks as bot-driven abuse and distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks continued to rise from November 2017 till April this year, Cloud delivery network provider Akamai Technologies said.
- ✦ Registering over 2.8 Crore attacks, India also ranked eighth globally in the list of Web Application Attack source countries.
- ✦ Russia, China and Indonesia occupied top three spots.

**38. North Korea Named 'Worst Human Trafficking Country'**

- ✦ The US State Department categorised North Korea as one of the “worst human trafficking nations” for the 16th straight year, citing the use of forced labour. According to the annual ‘2018 Trafficking in Persons Report’, North Korea has been included in the Tier 3 category, which is the lowest ranking, along with China, Russia and Iran.
- ✦ North Korea used state-sponsored forced labour to fund government functions as well as other illicit activities.
- ✦ The North Korean government continued to use forced labour in prison camps and labour training centres and even encouraged forced labours of students and exported forced labour to foreign organisations.
- ✦ The '2018 Trafficking in Persons Report' placed India in Tier 2 category for making significant effort to comply with the US standards. However, India does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.

**Banking****1. Financial Literacy Week organized by RBI**

- ✦ Financial Literacy Week to bring financial inclusion and customer empowerment has begun at RBI Gangtok office.
- ✦ Ravindra Sangval (RBI Gangtok general manager cum office-in-charge) inaugurated the week in presence of representatives from various public sector and private banks, NABARD and Citizens Cooperative banks.
- ✦ This week has been organised till June 8 with the theme of consumer protection.
- ✦ The main aim behind this initiative is to create awareness among customers of banks about financial products and services, good financial practices and digitisation.

**2. Repo Rate increased by 25 basis points Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy Statement (2018-19)**

- ✦ Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of Reserve Bank of India raised interest rate by 25 basis points to 6.25% on inflation concerns arising from surge in international oil prices.
- ✦ In second bi-monthly monetary policy for the current fiscal, central bank revised upwards retail inflation range to 4.8-4.9% in first half of 2018-19 and 4.7% in second half.
- ✦ RBI retained the gross domestic product growth for the financial year 2018-19 at 7.4%.

**3. World Bank approved funding for Atal Bhujal Yojana**

- ✦ World Bank has approved Indian government's scheme "Atal Bhujal Yojana" worth Rs 6,000 crore to recharge and maintain groundwater level in some areas which are facing a severe water crisis in coming years.
- ✦ The scheme will be implemented over a period of five years from 2018-19 to 2022-23 with cooperation from World Bank. Implementation of the scheme is expected to benefit over 8,000 villages in over 70 districts in various states.
- ✦ The main purpose of this scheme is to improve groundwater management in priority areas through community participation.

**4. HDFC Bank raises lending rate by 10 bps**

- ✦ HDFC Bank, second largest private sector lender of the country, has raised marginal cost of funds based lending rate (MCLR) by 10 basis points across various loan tenures. As a result, its one-year MCLR is now at 8.4%.
- ✦ HDFC bank will charge 8.05% for one month as well as overnight loans. For six months, the private bank will charge 8.25%.
- ✦ This move comes after all major banks including State Bank of India (SBI) and ICICI Bank raised MCLR by equal amount.

**5. State Bank of India NPAs surpass Rs 1 Lakh Crore in FY18**

- ✦ State Bank of India (SBI), nation's largest public sector lender, recorded its highest non-performing asset (NPAs) of Rs. 1.1 lakh crore in 2017-18, virtually equal to what it had registered within the decade before.
- ✦ This is available through RTI and the bank's annual report.
- ✦ The gross NPAs of the financial institution went up from Rs 1.12 lakh crore in 2016-17 to Rs 2.23 lakh crore within the final fiscal.
- ✦ There was a decline within the gross NPAs of SBI from Rs 61,605 crore in 2013-14 to Rs 56,725 crore in 2014-15, taking place by Rs four,880 crore.

**6. Mobile Banking Rank by SBIs Annual Report: Axis tops value, Paytm volumes**

- ✦ At 17.2%, Axis Bank commands largest value share of mobile banking transactions but Paytm tops volumes with 22%.
- ✦ According to State Bank of India's (SBI) annual report for 2017-18, Paytm's value share is a meagre 0.25%.
- ✦ ICICI Bank has a 17.1% share of transactions by value and 9.7% by volume. SBI's volume share has slipped by over 5 percentage points from nearly 25% at end of March 2017 to 19.5% in January 2018.

**7. Karnataka Bank unveiled 'Deposit Only Card'**

- ✦ Karnataka Bank Ltd has launched a novel card variant 'KBL-Deposit Only Card' that allow hassle-free cash deposit transactions at bank's 24X7 e-lobby services.
- ✦ This card is specially meant for the Bank's Current/Overdraft customers. By using this card customers can perform card based cash deposit transactions

even with higher deposit limit at Bank's Bunch Note Acceptor (BNA) / Cash Recycler kiosks.

- ✦ The limit for the cash deposit a day is Rs 10 lakh.

### **8. World Bank approves \$700 million to improve primary education in Bangladesh**

- ✦ World Bank has approved \$700 million to help Bangladesh attain its education for all vision by improving primary education sector. Quality Learning for All Program (QLEAP) will cover more than 18 million children studying in pre-primary level to class 5.
- ✦ It will also finance implementation of government's Fourth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP4).
- ✦ This project will build about 95,000 classrooms, teachers' rooms, and multipurpose rooms. It will also build 80,000 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) blocks and 15,000 safe water sources.
- ✦ The projects will provide recruitment to about 100,000 teachers.

### **9. Oriental Bank of Commerce awarded for Atal Pension Yojana**

- ✦ Oriental Bank of Commerce has been awarded as best public sector bank for Atal Pension Yojana for year 2017-18.
- ✦ Shiv Pratap Shukla (MoS for Finance) presented the award to Mukesh Kumar Jain (MD and CEO of OBC bank).
- ✦ Oriental Bank of Commerce is one of the banks in India that offers this Atal Pension Yojana to the people of the unorganized sector. Under this scheme, monthly benefits of fixed pension ranging between INR 1000 to INR 5000 are guaranteed.

### **10. 3rd Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank Annual Meeting 2018**

- ✦ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated 3rd annual meeting of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The meeting was hosted by Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Government of India at Mumbai, India.
- ✦ The theme for this year's meeting is "Mobilizing Finance for Infrastructure: Innovation and Collaboration".
- ✦ The main purpose of this meeting is to share ideas and experiences for creating sustainable future through sound infrastructure investment.

### **11. India becomes largest borrower from Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)**

- ✦ India has emerged as top borrower from China-sponsored Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) with total project portfolios of USD 4.4 Billion.
- ✦ Gautam Bambawale (India's Ambassador) met Jin Liqun (AIIB President) in Beijing and held in-depth talks on deepening engagements of India with the bank.

- ✦ Next to India, Indonesia has emerged as 2nd largest borrower with about USD 600 million loans.

### **12. 4th annual meeting of AIIB to be held in Luxembourg**

- ✦ The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)'s 4th annual meeting will be held in Luxembourg in July 2019. Luxembourg is founding member of AIIB as well as a leading international financial centre and facilitator of investments between Europe and Asia.
- ✦ Luxembourg has been honoured to become first non-regional member of AIIB to host bank's Annual Meeting in July.
- ✦ 1st AIIB Board of Governors meeting was held in Beijing, 2016 followed by Jeju, South Korea, 2017.
- ✦ Headquarters of AIIB is in Beijing, China.

### **13. Exim Bank Extends \$10 Mn Loan Facility To Seychelles**

- ✦ The Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) announced that it has extended \$10 million worth of line of credit (LOC) to Seychelles. This is for healthcare and procurement of goods and projects.
- ✦ It is the first tranche of the \$50 million sanctioned by the Exim Bank to the country. With this agreement for \$10 million, Exim Bank has extended two LOCs to Seychelles, taking the total value to \$28 million.

## **New Appointments & Person in News**

### **1. Giuseppe Conte sworn in as Prime Minister of Italy**

- ✦ Giuseppe Conte has sworn in as prime minister of Italy's new government.
- ✦ He will head government of ministers from anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S) and the far-right League Party.

### **2. Pedro Sanchez sworn in as new PM of Spain**

- ✦ Spanish Socialist Pedro Sanchez has been sworn in as the new prime minister of Spain by King Felipe.
- ✦ He replaced Mariano Rajoy.
- ✦ He took the oath to save constitution without a bible or crucifix - a first in Spain's modern history.

### **3. M K Jain has been appointed as RBI deputy governor**

- ✦ Mahesh Kumar Jain (MD & CEO of IDBI Bank) has been appointed as fourth deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India for a three year term.
- ✦ Jain was previously CEO at Chennai based Indian Bank between November 2015 and March 2017.
- ✦ The fourth deputy governor's post has been vacant since SS Mundra retired on July 31, 2017. In his new role, Jain is expected to be put in charge of banking supervision.

#### **4. H R Khan appointed chairman of Bandhan Bank**

- ✦ Former RBI deputy governor H R Khan has been appointed as the non-executive chairman of Bandhan Bank whereas Harun Rasid Khan is appointed as the non-executive part time chairman of the bank.
- ✦ Appointment of Khan will be for a period of three years with effect from June 5, 2018.

#### **5. Arvind Saxena appointed as acting UPSC chief**

- ✦ Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) member Arvind Saxena has been appointed as the acting chairman of commission from June 20.
- ✦ 1978-batch Indian Postal Service officer, Saxena will take over the charge from incumbent Vinay Mittal who completes his term at UPSC
- ✦ Saxena joined the UPSC in May 2015 after completing his stint in Aviation Research Centre (ARC). He has also worked in Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).

#### **6. Sharad Kumar appointed as vigilance commissioner in CVC**

- ✦ Former NIA chief Sharad Kumar has been appointed as vigilance commissioner in the probity watchdog Central Vigilance Commission (CVC).
- ✦ Mr. Kumar has been appointed vigilance commissioner in the Central Vigilance Commission for a term of four years.
- ✦ 62-year-old Mr. Kumar is a 1979-batch IPS officer of the Haryana cadre. He retired in September last year after heading the National Investigation Agency, an anti-terror probe organization, for over four years.

#### **7. Rana Kapoor re-appointed as MD & CEO of Yes Bank for 3 years**

- ✦ Private sector lender YES Bank shareholders have approved re-appointment of Rana Kapoor as chief executive officer and managing director of bank for three years.
- ✦ The decision was taken at 14th annual general meeting of shareholders of the bank.
- ✦ The AGM also approved appointment of Subhash Chander Kalia and Ajai Kumar as non-executive non-independent directors of the bank.

#### **8. Indian-American Dhivya Suryadevara to become CFO of General Motors**

- ✦ Indian-American woman, Dhivya Suryadevara (currently vice president of corporate finance) has been named Chief Finance Officer (CFO) of largest automaker of US, General Motors.
- ✦ 39-year-old Suryadevara will succeed Chuck Stevens (General Motor's present CFO) on September 1.
- ✦ She was named vice president of corporate finance in July 2017, a job that included overseeing investor relations.

### **9. Dr. Inder Jit Singh appointed as Coal Secretary**

- ✦ Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) has appointed Dr. Inder Jit Singh as coal secretary at Shastri Bhawan office, New Delhi.
- ✦ 1985-batch Kerala cadre Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Dr. Inder Jit Singh took over charge of Secretary which fell vacant after superannuation of Susheel Kumar.
- ✦ Singh's appointment comes at a time when 25 coal-based power stations have low coal stock. In the interim, Secretary Mines, Anil G Mukhim had been holding additional charge as Secretary, Coal.

### **10. Ivan Duque won election to become Colombia's President**

- ✦ Colombia has chosen Youthful right-winger Ivan Duque to be its next president after a long campaign that often centered on a controversial peace process with leftist rebels the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).
- ✦ With 98% of votes counted, Mr Duque had 54% of the vote, giving him an unassailable lead over his only rival, former leftwing Gustavo Petro, who had 41.8%.
- ✦ Duque will be Colombia's youngest ever President.

### **11. Sandeep Bakhshi appointed as COO of ICICI Bank**

- ✦ ICICI Prudential Life Insurance CEO Sandeep Bakhshi has been appointed as whole-time director and chief operating officer (COO) of ICICI bank for a period of five years.
- ✦ It is a new top position at India's second largest private bank to direct all its businesses.
- ✦ ICICI Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer Chanda Kochhar will be on leave till completion of enquiry. However, she will continue to remain CEO and MD of bank.

### **12. Anukreethy Vas crowned Miss India 2018**

- ✦ 19-year-old from Tamil Nadu, Anukreethy Vas was named Miss India at 55th Femina Miss India 2018 by Miss World 2017 Manushi Chhillar in Mumbai.
- ✦ Meenakshi Chaudhary from Haryana stood second while Shreya Rao Kamavarapu from Andhra Pradesh ranked third.
- ✦ Malaika Arora and Irfan Pathan were among the judges.

### **13. L'Oreal India appointed Amit Jain as Managing Director**

- ✦ L'Oreal India (maker of women's beauty care products under Garnier and Maybelline) has appointed Amit Jain as new India Managing Director, making him the first Indian to lead its operations in the country.
- ✦ 55-years-old Amit Jain succeeded Jean-Christophe Letellier move to a larger role in the L'Oreal group.
- ✦ Jain has 30 years of experience with companies such as Coca-Cola, Viacom and AkzoNobel.

#### **14. Arijit Basu appointed as Managing Director of State Bank of India**

- ✦ The government appointed Arijit Basu as managing director of country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI). He will fill the position that fell vacant following elevation of Rajnish Kumar as the chairman of the bank.
- ✦ Mr Basu has held several key positions in various circles of SBI including bank's office in Tokyo, Japan.
- ✦ Basu started his career with State Bank of India in 1983 as a probationary officer.

#### **15. B.V.R Subramanyam appointed as J&K Chief Secretary**

- ✦ B.V.R. Subrahmanyam (Senior IAS officer of Chhattisgarh cadre) was appointed as new chief secretary of Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✦ 55-year-old Subrahmanyam, who hails from Andhra Pradesh, has been appointed in place of incumbent B B Vyas.
- ✦ He has also served as Private Secretary of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh from 2004-2008.

#### **16. Pallavi Durua- India's first 'Tribal Queen'**

- ✦ Pallavi Durua who hails from Odisha's Koraput district, was crowned as 1st Tribal Queen at Adi Rani Kalinga Tribal Queen competition held at Utkal Mandap.
- ✦ SC and ST department, Government of Odisha and State Tourism Department organized the contest. The jury included guests from national and state-level, headed by Padma Shri Tulasi Munda who is also the ambassador of event.
- ✦ Tribal population constitutes nearly 22.5% of Odisha's population. As many as 20 contestants took part in final round of the competition.

#### **17. S Ramesh Appointed Chairman Of CBIC-**

- ✦ Senior bureaucrat S Ramesh has been appointed as chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), the apex policy-making body for indirect taxes. He succeeded Vanaja N Sarna.
- ✦ Ramesh, a 1981 batch officer of the Indian Revenue Service (Customs and Central Excise), is at present the member in the board, mandated with the responsibility of implementing the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

**18. Sonakshi joins UNESCO to promote safe cyberspace for kids**

- ✦ Sonakshi Sinha joins UNESCO to promote safe and secure online environment for children and help empower our future digital citizens.
- ✦ Stressing on the importance of education on the safe use of online spaces, the actress said it will equip boys and girls to be prepared to report any type of abuse or exploitation.

## Science Tech & Defence

**1. Indian Navy sends ship to Socotra Island in Yemen**

- ✦ Indian Navy has launched 'Operation Nistar' to evacuate 38 grounded Indians around Socotra island located close to the horn of Africa between the Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea.
- ✦ Socotra is about 1,180 nautical miles from Mumbai.
- ✦ INS Sunayna mission deployed in West Arabian Sea has been diverted to reach off Socotra to evacuate Indians.
- ✦ Indian seafarers have been stranded due to Cyclone Mekunu.

**2. 1st Cargo of Russian LNG reached in Gujarat**

- ✦ India received 1st cargo of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Russia long-term deal aimed at meeting its growing energy needs. State-owned gas utility GAIL India Ltd will bring shipload of LNG from Gazprom (a Russian supplier) at Petronet LNG Ltd's import terminal in Dahej port in the western state of Gujarat.
- ✦ Dharmendra Pradhan (Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister) received the first-ever consignment of LNG at the terminal.
- ✦ India is fourth-largest LNG importer in the world.

**3. Indian Navy Ships arrive in Guam for Malabar 2018**

- ✦ Indian Naval Ships Sahyadri, Shakti and Kamorta of Eastern Fleet arrived at Guam participate in 22nd edition of Exercise Malabar to be held off the coast of Guam in Philippine Sea from June 7 to June 16. These ships are under the command of Rear Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, Flag Officer Commanding of Eastern Fleet.
- ✦ Exercise Malabar was started as a bilateral exercise between the US Navy and the Indian Navy in 1992. This exercise has evolved over the years with participation of Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) from 2007.
- ✦ Malabar 17 was held in July last year on Eastern Sea Board of India, off Chennai and Visakhapatnam.

**4. L&T's shut 700 MW unit of Rajpura Thermal Plant**

- ✦ Larsen and Toubro Group firm Nabha Power Ltd. (NPL) shut a 700 MW unit of Rajpura thermal power station due to shortage of coal.
- ✦ NPL has been supplying power to Punjab from Rajpura plant since 2014.
- ✦ NPL has been facing coal crisis since last year, forcing it to operate plant at critical levels of coal stocks.

#### **5. 11th edition of Geo Intelligence Asia organized by India**

- ✦ 11th edition of Geo-Intelligence Asia 2018 organised by Geospatial Media and Communication with Directorate General of Information System as Knowledge Partners and Military Survey as Co-organisers was held at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi.
- ✦ The theme of seminar was -‘GeoSpatial: A Force Multiplier for Defence and Industrial Security’
- ✦ The seminar brought together the military, security officials including BSF and Police Forces, Government and industry together to examine the latest technology solutions and on the critical role of geospatial technology in military and security applications.
- ✦ The sessions during seminar covered crucial subjects including enhanced situational awareness for combat, smart cantonments and cyber security.

#### **6. India’s first indigenous Lithium-Ion Battery project signed**

- ✦ An agreement on 1st transfer of technology for lithium-ion batteries has been signed between the Central Electro Chemical Research Institute (CECRI) and RAASI Solar Power Pvt Ltd. According to Science and Technology Ministry, this MoU is the first of its kind for the country.
- ✦ A group at CSIR-CECRI (headed by Dr Gopu Kumar) has developed an indigenous technology of Lithium-ion cells in collaboration with CSIR-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL) New Delhi, CSIR- Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute (CSIR-CGCRI) Kolkata and Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (CSIR-IICT) Hyderabad.
- ✦ The indigenous technology of lithium-ion cells has been developed by a group of scientists at the Council for Scientific Industrial Research (CSIR)'s CECRI in Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu.

#### **7. Union Earth Sciences ministry to study marine litter issue**

- ✦ Union Ministry of Earth Sciences will start work on determination of marine litter and their sources along the country’s coastline.
- ✦ M Rajeevan (Secretary of Ministry of Earth Sciences) said that country had joined United Nations’ ‘Clean Seas’ programme.
- ✦ India and United States had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in 2008 to have scientific and technical cooperation in Earth observations and Earth sciences.

#### **8. Rebuilt blast furnace commissioned at Rourkela Steel Plant**

- ✦ Chaudhary Birender Singh (Union Minister of Steel) dedicated rebuilt Blast Furnace-1 'Parvati' of Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) to the Nation which will boost its annual production capacity from 0.438 million tonnes to 1.015 million tonnes. Jual Oram (Union Tribal Affairs) was present on occasion.
- ✦ The blast furnace is rebuilt at a cost of about Rs 625 crore. The blast furnace was put down on August 6, 2013 for total rebuilding.
- ✦ 'Parvati' is the 1<sup>st</sup> Blast Furnace of SAIL (Steel Authority of India Ltd) that was dedicated to nation on February 3, 1959 by first Indian President Dr Rajendra Prasad.

### 9. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated BEL's office in Vietnam

- ✦ Nirmala Sitharaman (Defence Minister) inaugurated 1st Representative Office of Navratna Defence Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) in Hanoi, Vietnam in the presence of senior Indian and Vietnamese officials. She also held bilateral talks with her Vietnamese counterpart General Ngo Xuan.
- ✦ She handed over symbolic key of Representative Office of BEL to Mr Gowtama MV (Chairman and Managing Director, BEL) during Vietnam-India Defence Industry Business Meeting.
- ✦ The main purpose is to promote BEL's exports in areas such as Weapon Systems, Radar Systems, Naval Systems, Military Communication Systems, Electronic Warfare Systems, Combat Management System and Coastal Surveillance System.

### 10. PhonePe ties up with Ola

- ✦ PhonePe (Flipkart-owned digital payments firm) has tied up with home-grown cab aggregator Ola.
- ✦ The users will be able to book a cab by using micro-app built on its payments platform.
- ✦ The company has gone live with three such micro-apps including redBus and Metro services.

### 11. 1-day Workshop on Cyber Security Framework – 2018

- ✦ A 1-day workshop on Cyber Security Framework for Department of Defence was organized by DDP, Ministry of Defence.
- ✦ Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the workshop.
- ✦ During her address, she stated that it is important to establish a strong, robust and resilient cyber security infrastructure on priority basis.

### 12. 7th India Minerals and Metals forum inaugurated

- ✦ 7th India Minerals and Metals forum has been inaugurated in New Delhi. The forum seeks to come up with solutions to leverage in sector with changing global scenario.
- ✦ The representatives took knowledge on the need to consolidate small players for strengthening of overall health of industry.
- ✦ The concerns on metal recycling were also looked upon.

**13. Gujarat government launches wind-solar hybrid power policy**

- ✦ Gujarat government has announced its wind-solar hybrid power policy - 2018 to promote setting up of wind as well as solar power projects at one location to ensure optimal use of land and transmission infrastructure. The 'Wind-Solar Hybrid Power Policy-2018' will remain in force for five years.
- ✦ The main purpose of this policy is to make optimum utilization of land and grid lines. A power project could also be set up on a land being used for wind farms.
- ✦ Under the policy, developers can set up wind energy units on the land currently in use for solar power units.
- ✦ At present, Gujarat produces approximately 7,100 MW of non-conventional energy including 5,500 MW of wind power and 1,600 MW of solar power.

**14. Indian Army observed 2018 as 'Year of Disabled Soldiers in Line of Duty'**

- ✦ Indian Army is observing the year 2018 as 'Year of Disabled Soldiers in Line of Duty' to honour soldiers who have been disabled in the line of duty while serving the nation.
- ✦ The main purpose of this observance is to ease sufferings of soldiers, who have done their duty with utmost dedication to nation and have been disabled for life.
- ✦ Union Government is considering proposal of a major grant to establish a separate fund that can be further enhanced by contributions from individuals and corporate sector thus facilitating meaningful initiatives for disabled soldiers.

**15. CEMS sets up 24 labs for skill development in maritime sector**

- ✦ Centre of Excellence in Maritime & Shipbuilding (CEMS), a well-funded start-up in skill development for maritime and shipbuilding sector, has announced setting up of 24 labs (6 in Mumbai and 18 in Vizag campus) for skill development.
- ✦ The main purpose of CEMS is to build competency in field of maritime and shipbuilding sector through skill development in latest manufacturing technologies for shipbuilding, repair and ancillary sectors.
- ✦ This is First-of-Its-Kind Infrastructure in Asia Pacific Region.

**16. Power Discom BYPL Signs MoU With Finnish Company for collaboration in energy sector**

- ✦ Power distribution company BYPL (BSES Yamuna Power Limited) has signed MoU with Business Finland (Finnish government agency) for joint activities in different areas including energy efficiency and electric vehicles.
- ✦ The agreement was signed by PR Kumar (BYPL chief executive officer) and Jukka Holappa (commercial councilor and head Business Finland' India) at Embassy of Finland.

- ✦ This three-year MoU will include joint studies, pilot projects, knowledge-sharing and consultancy, research projects for inducting future and emerging technologies at distribution utility level.

### **17. Jaitapur nuclear plant: France's EDF and GE sign deal to build 6 nuclear reactors**

- ✦ French state-run power utility EDF and American conglomerate General Electric (GE) have signed strategic cooperation agreement with State-run Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) to build for construction of 6 EPR (European Pressurized Reactors) type nuclear reactors of capacity 1,650 megawatt (MW) each at Jaitapur nuclear plant in Ratnagiri district, Maharashtra.
- ✦ This strategic cooperation agreement is for long term partnership for construction of conventional island on each of 6 reactor units of Jaitapur nuclear plant.
- ✦ GE Power will design conventional island for the plant and supply its main components. EDF will supply EPR technology and will be responsible for building and coordinating industrial partners for this project.
- ✦ It will be responsible for engineering integration covering entire project (nuclear island, conventional island and auxiliary systems) and will provide all the requisite input data.

### **18. Indian, Indonesian Navies Participate In Passage Exercise: PASSEX 2018**

- ✦ The navies of India and Indonesia participated in Passage Exercise (PASSEX).
- ✦ Indian Naval ships INS Shakti and INS Kamorta under the command of Rear Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet, undertook Passage Exercise with Indonesian Naval Ship KRI Madidihang (855) on leaving the Port of Makassar, Indonesia.
- ✦ During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Indonesia, the two countries agreed to enhance their maritime cooperation.

## **Important days**

### **1. June 3- World Bicycle Day**

- ✦ United Nations has declared June 3rd as International World Bicycle Day. It was approved on 12 April 2018 at 72nd Regular Session of UN General Assembly and was adopted by 193 member states.
- ✦ This day is recognized as an official day of awareness about multiple societal benefits of using bicycle for transport and leisure.

- ✦ Vice President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated Bicycle Rally and Smart Cycle Station for Public Bike Sharing in New Delhi.

## 2. June 5- World Environment Day

- ✦ June 5 is marked by United Nations as World Environment Day. The main purpose of this day is to encourage worldwide awareness and action for protection of environment. Each World Environment Day is organized around a theme that focuses attention on particularly pressing environmental concern.
- ✦ This year's host country is Canada. The theme for the World Environment Day 2018 is- Beat Plastic Pollution.
- ✦ This Day was first celebrated in 1974 and since then it has grown to become a global platform for public outreach.

## 3. June 8- World Ocean Day

- ✦ World Oceans Day is observed across the world on June 8 to highlight major role of oceans in everyday life.
- ✦ The action focus for World Oceans Day 2018 was 'preventing plastic pollution and encouraging solutions for a healthy ocean'. The agenda also coincided with the theme of World Environment Day 2018 –'Beat Plastic Pollution'.
- ✦ Plastic pollution is causing tremendous harm to the marine resources. Around 80% of all pollution in ocean comes from people on land. The Plastic pollution costs the lives of 1 million seabirds and 100000 marine mammals per year.

## 4. June 12- World Day against Child Labour

- ✦ The World Day against Child Labour is observed globally on June 12 to raise awareness against child labour.
- ✦ The theme of World Day against Child Labour 2018 is- Generation Safe & Healthy.
- ✦ The main purpose of this day is to shine a spotlight on global need to improve safety and health of young workers and end child labour.

## 5. June 14- World Blood Donor Day

- ✦ 14 June is globally celebrated as World Blood Donor Day. This event serves to thank voluntary, unpaid blood donors for their life-saving gifts of blood.
- ✦ The main aim of this day is to raise awareness of the need for regular blood donations to ensure quality, safety and availability of blood and blood products for patients in need.
- ✦ The theme of World Blood Donor Day 2018 is- "Be there for someone else. Give blood. Share life".

## 6. June 17- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

- ✦ The World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD) is observed every year on 17 June to promote public awareness of international efforts to combat desertification.

- ✦ The Day was declared by United Nations General Assembly in 1994. Many countries, groups and individuals celebrate and observe WDCD by organizing a variety of outreach activities and awareness raising events.
- ✦ The theme of World Day to Combat Desertification 2018 is- “Land has true value – invest in”.

### **7. June 19- International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict**

- ✦ 3rd annual International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict was observed across the world on June 19.
- ✦ The Theme of International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict 2018 is “The Plight and Rights of Children Born of War”.
- ✦ The main purpose of this day is to stimulate the solidarity with survivors who endure multiple, intersecting stigmas in wake of sexual violence including stigma of association with a terrorist group and of bearing children conceived through rape by the enemy.
- ✦ A panel discussion for third annual International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

### **8. June 20- World Refugee Day**

- ✦ United Nations' World Refugee Day is observed on June 20 each year event to honor the courage, strength and determination of women, men and children who are forced to flee their homeland under threat of persecution, conflict and violence.
- ✦ The theme for World Refugee Day 2018 is ‘Now More Than Ever, We Need to Stand with Refugees’.
- ✦ This day was established by United Nations on December 4, 2000.

### **9. June 21- International Yoga Day**

- ✦ International Yoga Day is celebrated annually across the globe on June 21 since its inception in 2015. This day was declared unanimously by United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to raise awareness about benefits of practicing yoga.
- ✦ PM Narendra Modi led thousands of people in performing yoga asanas in main event organized at Forest Research Institute in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.
- ✦ The theme for International Yoga Day 2018 is "Yoga for Harmony and Peace".

### **10. June 21- World Music Day**

- ✦ 21 June is celebrated as World Music Day.
- ✦ On this day the citizens of a city or country are urged to play music outside in their neighborhoods or in public spaces and parks.
- ✦ 1st all-day musical celebration was originated by France.

### **11. June 23- International Widows' Day**

- ✦ International Widows' Day takes place annually on 23rd June action to address poverty and injustice faced by millions of widows and their dependents in many countries.
- ✦ United Nations General Assembly decided to observe International Widows' Day on 23 June each year to give special recognition to situation of widows of all ages and across regions and cultures.
- ✦ This day was established by Loomba Foundation to raise awareness of the issue of widowhood. The first International Widows Day took place in 2005.

## 12. June 26- International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

- ✦ International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is observed on 26 June to strengthen global action and cooperation to achieve goal of an international society free of drug abuse.
- ✦ The aim of this day is to raise awareness to fight against substance abuse as well as unlawful trade of drugs. The theme for 2018 is- "Listen First - Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow healthy and safe."
- ✦ International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was first observed by the UN General Assembly in 1987.

## 13. June 27 to be celebrated as MSME Day

- ✦ Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) organized National Conclave (Udyam Sangam) on 27 June 2018 on occasion of United Nations MSME Day. The Conclave was inaugurated by President Ram Nath Kovind in Vigyan Bhawan. On this occasion the Solar Charkha Mission of the Ministry will be launched by the President.
- ✦ The main purpose of Conclave is to encourage dialogue and partnership among various stakeholders of MSME ecosystem and for promoting innovation and knowledge sharing on MSME related issues. MSME Ministry will give subsidy of Rs. 550 crores to artisans.
- ✦ UN declared 27th June as MSME Day recognizing importance of MSME in the country's economy.

## Sports

### 1. Upward revision of pension to meritorious sportspersons

- ✦ For the welfare of Sportspersons, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Rajyavardhan Rathore has approved the upward revision of pension to meritorious Sports persons.
- ✦ Under the revision, rate of pension has been doubled of existing rate of pension on winning medals in international sports events.

- ✦ The medal winners at Olympic and Para-Olympic Games will now get Rs 20000 as pension. The Gold medalist at World Cup and World Championship will be given Rs 16000 while Silver and Bronze medalist will get Rs 14000.
- ✦ According to the scheme, sports-person should retire from active sports career and attaining the age of 30 years at the time of applying pension.

## **2. Mithali Raj becomes first Indian cricketer to score 2,000 runs in T20 Internationals**

- ✦ One of India's most talented cricketers Mithali Raj became the first Indian cricketer to score 2,000 runs in T20 Internationals. The Indian ODI captain's record was made during Asia Cup match against Sri Lanka in Kuala Lumpur
- ✦ Mithali now has 2,015 runs in 75 matches. Indian men's team captain Virat Kohli with 1,983 runs is the next on the list followed by Rohit Sharma and Suresh Raina.
- ✦ She became 7th woman cricketer and the only Indian to achieve the T20I feat.

## **3. India beat Kenya to win Intercontinental Cup**

- ✦ 33-year-old Indian captain Sunil Chhetri has scored a brace to put himself on par with Lionel Messi and lead to Intercontinental Cup title triumph with 2-0 win over Kenya in summit clash.
- ✦ Playing in his 102nd international match, Chhetri struck in 8th and 29th minutes to hand a dominant India the trophy.
- ✦ Chhetri is now on par with Argentine superstar Messi with 64 strikes for the country to be the joint second highest international goal scorer among active players.

## **4. India will host first BIMSTEC war games in September**

- ✦ India will host first military exercise of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) group focusing on counter-terrorism in September.
- ✦ The main purpose of this exercise is to promote strategic alignment among member-states and to share best practices in the area of counter-terrorism.
- ✦ The exercise is scheduled to be held in Pune in second week of September.
- ✦ BIMSTEC was set up in 1997 and includes India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

## **5. Women's hockey Spain beat Indian Women's Hockey Team by 3-0 in opening game**

- ✦ Indian Women's Hockey team lost in opening match of five-match series against Spain by 0-3 at Consejo Superior de Deportes Hockey Stadium in Madrid.
- ✦ Lola Riera scored a brace to seal the game for hosts and give them 1-0 lead in series.
- ✦ The tournament is a part of Rani Rampal-led Indian team's preparations for World Cup which will be played in London from July 21.

**6. 3-day National Yoga Olympiad -2018 begins**

- ✦ Mr. Eric Falt (Director and UNESCO Representative of the New Delhi Cluster Office for India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, the Maldives and Sri Lanka) inaugurated a 3-day National Yoga Olympiad at National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in CIET in New Delhi.
- ✦ This is 3rd consecutive year of National Yoga Olympiad of NCERT and this year about 500 students from 26 States are participating in Olympiad as compared to participation of students from 25 States/UTs last year.
- ✦ Two books – Joy of Theatre and Sangeet training packages were released on this occasion.

**7. Uttarakhand high court banned all types of water sports in the state**

- ✦ Uttarakhand high court has banned all water sports, paragliding and white river rafting in the state until a policy is framed to regulate these activities..
- ✦ It also expressed concern over environmental damage remarking that state is not maintaining holiness of river Ganga.
- ✦ The court also took note of rafting deaths every year due to capsizing of boat.

**8. Kidambi Srikanth wins Sportsperson of the Year award**

- ✦ Commonwealth Games 2018 gold-medal winning Ace shuttler Kidambi Srikanth bagged Sportsman of the Year award at inaugural edition of Indian Sports Honours by the Sports Illustrated India magazine.
- ✦ Olympic silver medallist PV Sindhu was the Sportswoman of the Year award in the individual sport category,
- ✦ Indian Women's Cricket Team, which ended as runners-up in ICC Women's World Cup, were named as Team of the Year.
- ✦ Tennis player Sania Mirza was awarded Inspirational Honour.

**9. Sandeep Sejwal won gold medal in Singapore National Swimming Championships**

- ✦ 29-year-old Indian swimmer Sandeep Sejwal put up an impressive performance to win gold medal in men's 50m breaststroke event at Singapore National Swimming Championships in Singapore. Besides, Virdhawal Khade grabbed silver medal in 50m freestyle event with timing of 22.68 seconds.
- ✦ Sandeep broke Singapore meet record with a timing of 27:59 seconds to win the gold. He bettered his own time of 27.68 seconds in semi-final by 0.09 seconds.

**10. Dutee Chand Sets New National Record In Women's 100m**

- ✦ India sprinter Dutee Chand set a new national record in the women's 100-metre race when she clocked 11.29 seconds at the 58th National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships being held in Guwahati, Assam.

- ✦ The previous record of 11.30 seconds was also held by Dutee, which she achieved at the Indian Grand Prix in 2017. Dutee has qualified for the Asian Games in 100m and 200m by breaching the qualifying timings at the Inter-State Championships.

## Awards

### **1. Kendrick Lamar Gets His Pulitzer Prize for 'DAMN'**

- ✦ Kendrick Lamar received the Pulitzer Prize for Music at Columbia University for his 2017 album "DAMN".
- ✦ Lamar became the first non classical or jazz musician to win a Pulitzer for music in its nearly 75-year history.
- ✦ He had also won four Grammys including best rap album this year for "DAMN".

### **2. Tommy Koh received Padma Shri award by PM Modi**

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave the Padma Shri award to former Singaporean diplomat Tommy Koh in Singapore.
- ✦ Koh was among 10 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) recipients of the prestigious award.
- ✦ She has been served as Singapore's ambassador to United States and United Nations.
- ✦ Padma Shri is given for "distinguished service" in various fields.

### **3. Kamila Shamsie's "Home Fire" wins 2018 Women's Prize for Fiction**

- ✦ Famous British Pakistani author Kamila Shamsie's book "Home Fire" has won Women's Prize for Fiction, 2018.
- ✦ The book, also long listed for last year's Man Booker Prize, is a contemporary reimagination of Sophocles' "Antigone".

### **4. Bindeshwar Pathak honoured with Nikkei Asia Prize**

- ✦ 75-year-old Bindeshwar Pathak (Renowned Social reformer and founder of Sulabh International) has been honoured with Japan's prestigious 'Nikkei Asia Prize for Culture and Community' for his significant work in tackling poor hygiene and discrimination.
- ✦ Launched in 1996, this award honours people in Asia who have made significant contributions in regional growth, science, technology and innovation, and culture and community
- ✦ Manmohan Singh (Former Prime Minister) and Narayan Murthy (Infosys Chairman) are among the few Indians who have won this prize.

### **5. Surat to receive 'City Award' under India Smart Cities Award 2018**

- ✦ Surat has been selected for 'City Award' for showing 'great momentum' in execution of projects under 'India Smart Cities Award' 2018 in categories of urban environment, transport and mobility and sustainable integrated development, according to Housing and Urban Affairs (HUA) Ministry.
- ✦ Bhopal and Ahmedabad were selected in 'Innovative Idea' category for their "transformative approach towards sustainable integrated development". The joint winners in category include Bhopal for its Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) and Ahmedabad for its Safe and Secure Ahmedabad (SASA) Project.
- ✦ Overall, nine awards have been announced under the India Smart Cities Awards.
- ✦ The award is given to most innovative and successful projects in seven categories that have been completed by April 1, 2018.

### 6. Vasundhara Raje honoured with 'Chief Minister of the Year' award

- ✦ Rajasthan CM Vasundhara Raje was conferred 'Chief Minister of the Year' award for her remarkable work in e-governance.
- ✦ The award was given at 52nd Skoch Summit held in New Delhi. The award was received by her OSD in advisory council Dr Anuj Saxena and joint director of IT department R L Solanki on her behalf from Skoch Group chairman Sameer Kochhar.
- ✦ Union Steel Minister Chaudhary Birender Singh was the chief guest at function.

### 7. Kalki Koechlin to be conferred with French honour

- ✦ Actor Kalki Koechlin will be conferred with French distinction of 'Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters' for her contribution in strengthening Indo-French ties in cinema.
- ✦ The award will be presented by the Ambassador of France to India, Alexandre Ziegler.
- ✦ Kalki has done films such as 'Dev D', 'Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara', 'Shanghai' and 'Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani' to name a few.

## Obituaries

### 1. Renowned lyricist Narayan Prasad Singh passed away

- ✦ 86-year-old Odisha's most popular lyricist, Narayan Prasad Singh was popularly known as 'Rasaraj' passed away at his residence at VSS Nagar in Bhubaneswar.
- ✦ Born on May 28th, 1933 at Koeli village, he earned his name in Odia music.
- ✦ He was the lyricist of several popular melodious songs in Odia cinema. Some of his most popular songs include 'Udi Udi Udi Jaare Udi', 'Ratha Ja Chali Ja Chaka' and 'Sanja Sakale Tuma Chabi Khoje'.

**2. Former Union Minister and Senior Congress leader L.P. Shahi dead at 98**

- ✦ 98-year-old Congress leader and former Union Minister L.P. Shahi died at All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).
- ✦ He was first elected to Bihar Legislative Assembly in 1980 and became an MP from Muzaffarpur in Bihar in 1984.
- ✦ Mr Shahi hailed from Bihar. He was a freedom fighter and a former CWC member.

**3. Veteran journalist Adiraju Venkateswara Rao passed away**

- ✦ Senior journalist and writer Adiraju Venkateswara Rao passed away in Hyderabad.
- ✦ 79-year-old Rao has worked for several Telugu and English news agencies including Andhra Jyothi Udayam Deccan Chronicle, Indian Express, Himachal Times and Hindustan Samachar at Hyderabad and Delhi.
- ✦ He played an active role in the separate Telangana agitation in 1969 and state government honoured him during Telangana formation day celebrations.

## **Books & Authors**

**1. NABARD released book- 'Water productivity mapping of major Indian crops'**

- ✦ Nitin Gadkari (Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation) released a book named "Water Productivity Mapping of Important Agricultural Crops of India" at an event held in New Delhi.
- ✦ The book is based on a study of 10 important crops. The 10 important crops include rice, wheat, maize, pulses, oilseeds, sugarcane, cotton and potato etc.
- ✦ The book is based on the study conducted for NABARD by Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER).

**2. Vice President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu receives the Book 'Vedvigyan Alok'**

- ✦ M. Venkaiah Naidu (Vice President of India) has received the book "Vedvigyan Alok" (Maharishi Aitareya Mahidas Praneet - Aitareya Brahmina ki Vaigyanik Vyakhya) authored by Acharya Agnivarat Naishthik.
- ✦ This book is divided into four volumes. The Book Vedvigyan Alok is scriptural verse in Vedas' prose. The Brahman textbooks are placed second in order of preference of Vedic literature.
- ✦ These texts were composed only by the Brahmin community; hence their names are called "Brahmins". Their language is Vedic Sanskrit which has been considered extremely complicated. All these are written according to the Vedas that means all the four Vedas get different Brahmins.

**3. “Human Rights, Values and Cultural Ethos” book launched by Vice President**

- ✚ The Vice President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu has launched the book “Human Rights, Values and Cultural Ethos” in New Delhi.
- ✚ The book is a collection of essays and lectures written by Dr. R.P. Dhokalia.
- ✚ The thrust of book is on connection between human rights and core human values which in turn manifest in cultural ethos of a society.



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