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Important Current Affairs 20th August 2017 with PDF

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Important Current Affairs 20th August 2017

- **Indians top H-1B visa seekers**
 - With 2.47 lakh applications, Indians continued to be largest group of H-1B visa aspirants during first nine months of the current US financial year.
 - Indians were top H-1B visa seekers followed by Chinese and Philippines.
 - The technology sector continues to dominate H-1B visa applications.
 - No. of Indians applying for H-1B has increased by 80.6% since 2006-07 to stand at 3 lakh in 2015-16.
- **More teeth to T-90 battle tanks**
 - The Indian Army is working on a project to add more teeth to its T-90 main battle tanks by arming them with a third generation missile system.
 - Currently, the T-90 tanks are equipped with a laser-guided INVAR missile system. The Army has decided to replace them with a third generation gun-launched missile.





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- The Russian-origin T-90 tanks are mainstays of the Indian Army's offensive formations.
- **World's smallest surgical robot**
 - British scientists have developed worlds smallest surgical robot which could transform daily operations for tens of thousands of patients.
 - The robot, called Versius, mimics human arm & can be used to carry out a wide range of laparoscopic procedures including hernia repairs, colorectal operations.
 - The robot is controlled by a surgeon at a console guided by a 3D screen in the operating theatre.
- **Rahul Doshi crowned 'Child Genius'**
 - Indian-origin boy has been crowned as the UK's Child Genius in a popular television quiz competition.
 - Rahul Doshi won the show 'Child Genius' by beating his opponent 10-4 in the finale.
 - He clinched the title by answering a question on 19th Century artists William Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais.
 - Rahul is a member of Mensa club & is believed to have a higher IQ than Albert Einstein.
- **Delegation of Powers to BRO**
 - Defence Ministry has approved delegation of administrative & financial powers to Border Roads Organisation.
 - Functioning under control of Ministry of Defence, BRO is engaged in road construction to provide connectivity to difficult & inaccessible regions in the border areas.
 - This has been done to bring transformational changes in organization in order to improve the pace of execution of works
- **First Shipment of American crude**
 - 1st shipment of American crude oil worth \$100mn will reach India next month.
 - Shipment of crude oil to India comes nearly 2 years after the then US President Barack Obama lifted the 40-year- old ban on its export.





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- With this India joins Asian countries like South Korea, Japan & China to buy American crude after production cuts by OPEC.
- IOC & BPCL have placed orders for over 4 million barrels.
- **First regional center of NDB**
 - The 1st regional centre of New Development Bank was officially opened in Johannesburg, South Africa.
 - NDB formerly referred to as BRICS Development Bank, is a multilateral development bank established by BRICS states with an initial authorized capital of \$100 bn.
 - It will help in promoting sustainable development through integration, industrialisation & infrastructure development on the continent.
- **Orient Craft Textile inaugurated**
 - To celebrate 2nd phase of 'Momentum Jharkhand', Smriti Irani was made the chief guest of the event.
 - Union Minister for Textile and I&B, Smriti Irani inaugurated Jharkhand's 1st textiles manufacturing & export unit 'Orient Craft Ltd' in Ranchi.
 - Currently, Jharkhand produces 1,200 metric tonnes of Tasar silk alone every year & shares 62% share in the total market production of the entire country.
- **PPP model for handling e-waste**
 - Govt is exploring the possibility of setting up an eco-park under public-private partnership mode to make R&D in e-waste recycling commercially viable.
 - It could provide a system for channelisation of e-waste for environmentally sound recycling in organized sector by bringing together formal & informal sector.
 - R&D in tech pertaining to the management of e-waste falls within the domain of DeitY.
- **Dick Gregory dies**
 - Dick Gregory, the legendary comedian and civil rights activist passed away.
 - From the 1960s Gregory mocked racism in his stand-up routines. He was among the first US black comedian to perform regularly in front of white audiences.





- Gregory was also involved in a number of civil rights activities in the 1960s. He campaigned against the Vietnam War and his protests often involved hunger strikes.
- **Rajiv Gandhi's 73rd birth anniversary**
 - The nation is remembering former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 73rd birth anniversary today.
 - Rajiv Gandhi, who heralded the information and communication technology revolution in the country, was born on August 20, 1944 and served as Prime Minister from 1984 to 1989.
 - He was assassinated by LTTE in a suicide bombing at Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu on May 21, 1991 during election campaign.
- **Google to launch Android O**
 - Google will be unveiling latest Android operating system, Android O through a live streaming event from New York City.
 - Google hasn't officially disclosed what the "O" in "Android O" stands for, while many believe it could be Oreo.
 - Android O will be Google's Android version 8.0 after Android Nougat.
 - Android O is currently on its fourth developer preview, having originally launched in March.
- **FICCI's Healthcare Personality award**
 - Dr. Nanda Kumar Jairam, CEO, Chairman & Group Medical Director, Columbia Asia Hospitals, India, has been awarded 'Healthcare Personality of the Year' award.
 - He was given the award at 9th Healthcare Excellence Awards instituted by FICCI.
 - The Healthcare Excellence Awards by FICCI is an attempt to recognise the contributions of those who have set benchmarks of excellence in the healthcare space.
- **Govt plans monthly fellowship**
 - Centre will provide Rs. 70,000 as monthly fellowship to those researchers doing their PhDs in Indian Institutes of Technology or Indian Institute of Science.



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- Centre will provide 2,000 such monthly fellowships across IIT system & IISc Bengaluru.
- This will also enable meritorious researchers, keen to further their research but forced to opt for corporate jobs for higher pay, to pursue their goal
- **Malala Yousafzai to study at Oxford**
 - Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai has gained a place in the University of Oxford.
 - She will study philosophy, politics and economics at the prestigious university.
 - She is a Pakistani activist for female education & the youngest-ever Nobel Prize laureate.
 - She won international renown in 2012 after she was shot by a Taliban gunman in Pakistan for speaking out for the right of girls to go to school.
- **US & South Korea to begin military drill**
 - US & South Korea would begin a 10-day-long annual military exercise amid continued provocative behavior from North Korea
 - Ulchi Freedom Guardian drill is a computer-simulated defensive exercise designed to enhance readiness, protect region & maintain stability on Korean peninsula
 - In addition to South Korea & US forces, UN Command forces from 7 sending states will participate in this exercise
- **Japan launches satellite to improve GPS**
 - Japan has launched a rocket & put the 3rd of its new quasi-zenith satellites into orbit to help improve the precision of the global positioning system.
 - H-2A rocket launched by JAXA carried Michibiki No 3 which is part of a 4 satellite constellation.
 - New satellite system will be officially put into use next year & complement a network of US satellites that Japan previously used for its GPS needs.
- **Investigation of China's IP Practices**
 - The US has formally launched an investigation into China's policies regarding intellectual property.





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- US will investigate China's policies & practices related to technology transfer, IP & innovation to determine if the behavior is unreasonable or restricts US commerce.
- Annual cost to US economy from counterfeit goods, pirated software & theft of trade secrets has been estimated at \$600bn.
- **Saudi Arabia to open border**
 - Saudi Arabia's King Salman has ordered reopening of border with Qatar to facilitate annual Haj pilgrimage amidst a feud that has triggered tensions b/w 2 nations since June
 - .Qatari pilgrims can pass through crossing without permits usually needed to be obtained in advance for haj.
 - Qatar had accused Saudi of politicizing pilgrimage & complained to UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion.
- **BRICS think tanks to enhance exchanges**
 - 5 think tanks from BRICS countries has signed a memorandum to begin exchanges & conduct joint research
 - Memorandum was signed on sidelines of seminar on BRICS governance in Fujian province prior to 9th BRICS Summit to be held in China
 - According to the deal, the 5 will share research information, arrange exchanges b/w researchers & hold joint research every year on mutually- interested topics

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