



Important Current Affairs January 2018 Capsule with PDF

Awards & Honors

- · Asha Bhosle To Get Yash Chopra Award
 - Bollywood playback singer Asha Bhosle will be given the 'Yash Chopra Memorial Award'.
 - She will be the fifth winner of the award. The name of Asha Bhosle is in the Guinness World Records for recording over 11,000 songs in 20 different languages.
 - The award has been instituted by the TSR Foundation of T. Subbarami Reddy in memory of producer-director Yash Chopra, who died in 2012.
- Ind-Origin in US Inventors Hall Of Fame
 - 2 Indian-American innovation pioneers Arogyaswami Paulraj for his MIMO wireless technology and Sumita Mitra for her nanocomposite dental materials, have been inducted into National Inventors Hall of Fame.
 - Arogyaswami and Sumita along with 13 other innovation pioneers would be formally felicitated.
 - Paulraj's wireless technology has revolutionised broadband wireless
 Internet access.
- Grammy Awards winners
 - Bruno Mars, Kendrick Lamar steal the show in early Grammys. Mars won all of the awards for which he was nominated.
 - Here is a list of winners in key categories:
 - o Album of the Year: Bruno Mars, 24K Magic.











- Record of the Year: Bruno Mars, 24K Magic.
- Song of the Year (for songwriting): Bruno Mars.
- The 60th Annual Grammy Awards ceremony was held on January 28,
 2018.

Oxford dictionary's Hindi word of 2017

- o Oxford Dictionaries has chosen 'Aadhaar' as the Hindi word of 2017. It also becomes the first Oxford Dictionaries Hindi Word of the Year.
- Widespread discussions & debates around 'Aadhaar' was the reason it was selected as the word of the year.
- o The Hindi Word of the Year was chosen by the Oxford Dictionaries team in India with the help of an advisory panel of language experts.

• Padma Awards 2018 - 1

- The President has approved the awards for 85 individuals, which includes
 3 Padma Vibhushan, 9 Padma Bhushan and 73 Padma Shri.
- o Fourteen of the awardees are women and 3 persons have been awarded posthumously.
- o The awards are announced on the eve of the Republic Day every year.

• Padma Awards 2018 - 2

- The 2017 World Weightlifting Champion Saikhom Mirabai Chanu and former Asian Games gold medallist tennis player Somdev Devvarman have been conferred with the Padma Shri.
- o Ilayaraja, Ghulam Mustafa Khan (Art) and Parameswaran Parameswaran (Literature & Education) were awarded with Padma Vibhushan.
- Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Pankaj Advani are among others awarded with Padma Bhushan.

CM Edappady receives Unesco award

o CM Edappady received the Unesco Award of Merit awarded to the iconic Ranganathaswamy temple in Srirangam.









- The Award of Merit, 2017, was given by Unesco Asia Pacific region for the cultural heritage conservation activities taken up at the temple without altering its original splendour.
- The ancient Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu who is seen in reclining form.
- Aishwarya felicitated by the President
 - o The honorable President of India, Ram Nath Kovind felicitated 112 woman achievers and titled them as "First Ladies" of the country.
 - Those included Miss World 1994 Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Miss Earth
 2010 Nicole Faria.
 - The felicitation event was held at Rashtrapati Bhawan and the award ceremony was hosted by Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, who felicitated and congratulated the women achievers.
- Sheikh Salim to get second highest award
 - A bus driver from Gujarat who drove through a hail of bullets and saved the lives of more than 50 Amarnath Yatra pilgrims last year has been selected for the Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak.
 - o It is the second highest honour given to civilians for gallantry after the Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak.
 - o Sheikh Salim Gafur displayed rare grit and bravery.

• 'Sachin: A Billion Dreams' won 2 awards

- "Sachin: A Billion Dreams", a biopic on cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar has won two awards at the recently concluded 11th Tehran International FICTS Festival 2018.
- Helmer James Erskine won the trophy for the Best Director of a Long Documentary and an honorary diploma.
- Producer Ravi Bhagchandka received the Special Award for the Best Film in the Long Documentary section.











- Shah Rukh Khan Honoured at WEF
 - Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan was honoured with the 24th Crystal Award at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.
 - According to the WEF, Shah Rukh Khan received Award for "his leadership in championing children's and women's rights in India".
 - Shahrukh received the award alongside Elton John and Hollywood actress
 Cate Blanchett.

• 'The Shape of Water' won Guild Award

- o The monster romance "The Shape of Water" took the top prize at the Producers Guild Awards.
- o It is an honor that often predicts the best picture winner at the Oscars.
- o The movie was directed by Guillermo del Toro.
- Morgan Freeman receives Award
 - Morgan Freeman has been honoured with a Life Achievement Award at the 2018 Screen Actor Guild awards.
 - The 80-year-old actor became the 54th recipient of the SAG's Life
 Achievement Award for career achievement and humanitarian
 accomplishment.
 - o Morgan won an Oscar in 2005 for his role in Million Dollar Baby (2004).
- Innovation in Governance Award 2018
 - o Andhra Pradesh Information Technology Minister Nara Lokesh was felicitated with Dr. Kalam Innovation in Governance Award 2018.
 - The award was conferred on him by Rajya Sabha Secretary General Desh
 Deepak Verma for exemplary work in improving governance.
 - o The foundation was set up in the memory of former President A J Abdul Kalam. It works in various areas for development of the society.
- President felicitates women achievers.









- o President Kovind felicitated exceptional women achievers who are the first to set a milestone in their respective fields at Rashtrapati Bhawan.
- Over 100 women were selected after an extensive research process by Women & Child Development Ministry.
- o The women who have been felicitated are those who have been the first in any field like first woman judge, first woman porter, first Olympian etc.
- Mangalajodi Eco Trust won UNWTO Award
 - Mangalajodi Ecotourism Trust of Odisha was awarded the "Innovation in Tourism Enterprise" award, at the 14th UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organisation) Awards ceremony in Madrid, Spain.
 - Mangalajodi Ecotourism Trust is promoted by RBS Foundation India and Indian Grameen Services.
 - o It is a community owned and run entity. It is located on the banks of Chilika Lake in Odisha.
- Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards
 - President Kovind presented the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowships & Awards for 2016 to an eminent group of musicians, dancers & theatre artists.
 - 4 eminent artists & scholars were conferred fellowships of Akademi,
 namely Arvind Parikh, R Vedavalli, Ram Bajaj & Sunil Kothari.
 - Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowships & awards are national honours bestowed by the govt in the field of performing arts.
- Sudhir gets Janakavi Sawlaram award
 - Sudhir Dalvi was presented the Janakavi P Sawlaram award at a function in Thane, Maharashtra.
 - Sudhir Dalvi was handed over the Janakavi P Sawlaram award along with a citation by Meenakshi Shinde, Thane Mayor.









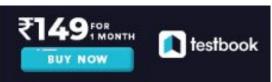


- The Janakavi P Sawlaram award is instituted by Thane Municipal Corporation in association with the Janakavi P Savlaram Kala
 Samiti. Dancer Jaishree T was awarded the Ganga Jamuna award.
- Soumitra to receive award
 - The French government will confer, actor Soumitra Chatterjee with the "Legion of Honour" which is the highest order of merit in France.
 - The award will be given to him at the 42nd Kolkata Book Fair on January 30.
 - The Legion of Honour is the highest French order of merit for military and civil merits, established in 1802 by Napoléon Bonaparte.
- Nitish Kumar to get Mufti M Sayeed Award
 - Bihar CM Nitish Kumar has been selected for the 1st Mufti Mohammad
 Sayeed Award for Probity in Public Life.
 - o He will be conferred the award at an official function of Jammu & Kashmir government to be held at Jammu on Monday.
 - The award was constituted recently by the Jammu and Kashmir government to commemorate the death anniversary of PDP founder and two-time J&K Chief Minister Sayeed.

Days & Events

- Nation pays tribute on Martyr's Day
 - o The nation today remembers Mahatma Gandhi, as it observes the 70th death anniversary of the father of the nation.
 - o Gandhi was shot dead 69 years ago on January 30, 1948, by Nathuram Godse.
 - o This day is also observed as 'Martyrs Day' by the nation.
- Business leaders to attend Assam summit









- Business leaders like Ratan Tata, Dilip Sanghvi will be part of over 4,800 delegates from across the world in 1st ever global investors summit in Assam.
- Advantage Assam will be the largest ever investment promotion & facilitation initiative by the state govt.
- o It will showcase opportunities offered by the state in terms of exportoriented manufacturing & services to ASEAN & other countries.
- International Holocaust Remembrance Day
 - Every year January 27 is observed as the International Holocaust Remembrance Day.
 - This day is observed to serve as a date for official commemoration of the victims of the Nazi regime and to promote Holocaust education throughout the world.
 - The theme of this year's International Holocaust Remembrance Day
 is "Holocaust Remembrance and Education: Our Shared Responsibility"
- India to host informal WTO Ministerial
 - o India has announced that it will host an informal WTO Ministerial gathering in March this year.
 - o The meeting would be held in New Delhi on March 19-20 to discuss the way forward for the global trade organisation.
 - World Trade Organization is an intergovernmental organization that regulates international trade. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland
- Nation Celebrates 69th Republic Day
 - o The Country celebrates its 69th Republic Day on 26th January.
 - The family members of Corporal Jyoti Prakash Nirala (Posthumous) of the Indian Air Force (IAF), who died fighting militants in Kashmir valley, received India's highest peacetime gallantry award, Ashok Chakra.
 - o This is the third Ashok Chakra for the IAF and its first for ground combat.











- **8th National Voters' Day** 25th January
 - o The Election Commission of India celebrated the 8th National Voters' Day across the country on 25th January for enhanced participation of citizens in the electoral process.
 - The National level function was held in New Delhi.
 - President Kovind gave away awards for best electoral practices to District Collectors, Superintendents of Police and other functionaries involved in election management.
- Modi to lead largest-ever delegation
 - Prime Minister Modi will lead the largest-ever Indian delegation to the 48th annual meeting of World Economic Forum when he leaves for Davos, Switzerland.
 - Delegation will comprise of Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, Commerce & Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu among others.
 - o The annual meet of the World Economic Forum takes place every year in Jan with an aim to improve the state of the world.
- Bharat Ke Veer anthem launched by HM
 - o Home Minister Rajnath Singh has launched Bharat Ke Veer anthem and a short film on India's bravehearts.
 - o The anthem is sung and composed by singer Kailash Kher.
 - The 'Bharat ke Veer' initiative was launched by the HM in April 2017 and seeks to help families of paramilitary personnel killed in combat operations.
 - o Akshay Kumar is the brand ambassador of the 'Bharat ke Veer' initiative.
- Ramayana festival with ASEAN nations
 - The five day Ramayana festival with the ASEAN nations will kick off in Delhi.









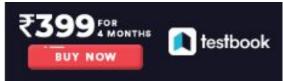
- The festival seeks to underline the common cultural heritage and India's friendship with ASEAN nations.
- It will see the participation of 10 countries which will stage various episodes of Rama story, through a harvest of sights and sounds, nuanced interpretations & revelations.
- NDRF Celebrated its 13th Raising Day
 - The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) celebrated its 13th Raising Day in New Delhi.
 - The Director Intelligence Bureau, Rajiv Jain was the chief guest on this occasion.
 - o The meeting highlighted the disaster threat of country and important changes taken place in Disaster Management in India and across the world.
- India International Garment Fair
 - 60th edition of India International Garment Fair was inaugurated by MoS for Textiles, Ajay Tamta at New Delhi.
 - o IIGF is a platform which brings together overseas garment buyers & exporters with almost half of Indian states participating in the fair
 - Total of 294 exporters from 11 states participated in the event while
 International buyers from 95 countries registered to participate in the fair
- Workshop on Disaster Resilient Infra
 - Home Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated a 2 day International Workshop on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure in New Delhi.
 - The workshop has been organized by National Disaster Management Authority.
 - Good practices in making infrastructure disaster resilient and identifying critical gaps in current practices that need to be addressed in the coming years were the main objectives of the workshop.





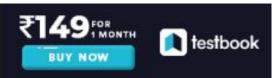






- 70th Army Day celebrated
 - o Indian army is celebrating the 70th Army Day, with parades & shows at major locations across the country.
 - o The day marks the taking over of Indian Army by the first Indian Commander-in-Chief, Field Marshal KM Cariappa, on 15th January 1948.
 - The day is celebrated to pay homage and salute to the courageous & brave Indian soldiers who have been sacrificing their lives for protecting the country.
- Youth Day 12 January
 - o The National Youth Day has been celebrated every year on 12 January.
 - o This is the day when Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest social reformers, thinkers, and philosophers of India, was born.
 - o The Indian government had declared back in 1984 that Swamiji's birthday would be celebrated as the National Youth Day.
 - The International Youth Day has been celebrated every year on 12 August.
- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas
 - Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is a celebratory day observed annually on 9
 January by India to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community towards the development of India.
 - The day commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai on 9 January 1915.
 - o It was established in 2003 and is sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs and FICCI, CII and DoNER.
- ICGS C-161 commissioned in Porbandar
 - Indian Coast Guard Ship C-161 was commissioned at Porbandar in Gujarat.
 - The induction is a part of ongoing efforts by the Coast Guard to strengthen coastal security.









 It will strengthen the security umbrella of the west coast and also help augment patrolling to prevent illicit activities such as infiltration, smuggling, and illegal fishing.

International Affairs

- India Ranks 6th In Wealthiest Countries
 - India has been ranked sixth in the list of wealthiest countries with the total wealth of 8,230 billion US dollars.
 - The list was topped by the United States of America. It is according to New World Wealth report.
 - o India was the best-performing wealth market globally in 2017 as it registered a 25% growth.
- Shantanu Narayen To Lead USISPF Board
 - Indian-American Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen has been elected as the Vice Chairman of the US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum.
 - It is a new organisation set up to enhance business relations between India and the US.
 - o The new representative body USISPF was set up to promote bilateral trade and work on creating meaningful opportunities that have the power to change the lives of citizens.
- Celebrities with white roses at Grammys
 - Celebrities including Rihanna, Miley Cyrus, Lady Gaga, Pink and Zayn
 Malik were seen with white roses at Grammys 2018.
 - They did it to show support for the Time's Up movement, which aims to fight harassment and gender inequality.











- o While some celebrities like Miley and Rihanna were seen holding the roses, others like Zayn, Pink and Anna Kendrick had pinned it to their outfits.
- "Biggest protest in history": London
 - London will hold the "biggest protest in British history" against US
 President Donald Trump's visit to the country, Labour MP David Lammy has claimed.
 - This comes after Trump said he will make his first state visit to Britain in October this year.
 - Several MPs have requested PM Theresa May to withdraw the invitation for a state visit extended to Trump.
- Cartoon Network ship to be launched
 - Cartoon Network has announced the launch of a new colourful cruise ship liner named Cartoon Network Wave, which will sail from Singapore in late 2018.
 - The newly announced ship will draw inspiration from shows like The Powerpuff Girls and Ben 10.
 - o The 2,000-capacity ship will feature 800 cabins and suites, a Johnny Bravo-themed burger bar and a rope adventure park.
- Saudi prince Alwaleed released
 - o The Saudi prince Alwaleed bin Talal has been released after nearly three months in detention as a part of an anti-corruption sweep.
 - Prince AI-Waleed was the most high-profile detainee among 350 suspects rounded up since November 4th, including business tycoons and ministers.
 - The Prince net worth has been estimated by Forbes magazine at 17 billion US dollars.
- Miloš Zeman wins another term









- Czech President Miloš Zeman has won a second 5 year term as head of state after beating his opponent Jirí Drahoš with a thin margin.
- o Zeman, in 2013, became the first president of the country, which was formed only 2 decades ago, to be elected by the voters & not politicians.
- Overall, he is the third president of the country, which was formed following the division of Czechoslovakia in 1993.
- China To Establish International Courts
 - China has decided to set up three international courts to deal with disputes related to its multi-billion dollar Belt and Road Initiative.
 - The courts will weigh litigation, arbitration and mediation; providing legal support and solving initiative disputes.
 - The Chinese Supreme People's Court will set up international courts in Beijing, Xi'an, and Shenzhen.
- Doomsday Clock set at 2 mins to midnight
 - o The Doomsday Clock which symbolises the current threat of global annihilation was moved closer to midnight.
 - It comes following a year of growing tensions b/w North Korea & Donald Trump.
 - o The clock is now set at 2 mins to midnight, the closest since 1953.
 - o The countdown was established in 1947 by a group of experts who were working on Manhattan Project, to design & build the first atomic bomb.
- Rachel chosen for Cinematography Oscar
 - Rachel Morrison, became the first woman to receive an Oscar nomination for cinematography.
 - o She was nominated for her work on Dee Rees' Mudbound for Netflix.
 - o This year, she's nominated for the Academy Award in a competitive field that also includes Roger Deakins for Blade Runner 2049, Bruno Delbonnel







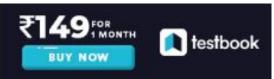




for Darkest Hour, Hoyte Van Hoytema for Dunkirk and Dan Laustsen for The Shape of Water.

- India ranks 177 out of 180 in EPI
 - India is among the bottom five countries on the Environmental Performance Index 2018.
 - Its overall low ranking 177 among 180 countries was linked to poor performance in the environment health policy and deaths due to air pollution categories.
 - The report was released on the sidelines of the ongoing World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.
- Global Talent Competitiveness Index
 - o India has moved up on a global index of talent competitiveness to the 81st position.
 - It is according to the Yale and Columbia Universities along with the World Economic Forum (WEF).
 - Switzerland has topped the list. Among BRICS countries, China has topped with 54th position. Among the countries, Switzerland is followed by Singapore and the US.
- India-ASEAN Business & Investment Conf.
 - o Silver jubilee of India-ASEAN partnership will be celebrated in New Delhi on the 25th January with an unprecedented summit meet.
 - The focus is on boosting trade through connectivity using the land route.
 - Speaking on the occasion, ASEAN representatives also stressed on closer ties with India.
 - Programme has been organised for the last 10 years by the External Affairs
 Ministry along with CII.
- India Ranks 62nd on Development Index









- o India was ranked at the 62nd place among emerging economies on an Inclusive Development Index of World Economic Forum.
- Norway remains the world's most inclusive advanced economy, while Lithuania again tops the list of emerging economies, according to the report.
- o India was ranked 60th among 79 developing economies in 2017.
- o Norway is followed by Ireland, Luxembourg, and Switzerland.
- 5th Attractive Market for Invest: India
 - o India has emerged as the fifth most attractive market for investments, as per the survey of CEOs by global consultancy PwC.
 - The US remains the top spot for global investment. Around 46% of global CEOs consider the US as one of the three most important countries for growth.
 - o India (9%) bumps Japan (8%) as the fifth most attractive market in 2018.
- US govt officially shutdowns
 - o US govt has officially shutdown for the 1st time in 5 yrs after lawmakers failed to agree on a spending deal.
 - Despite last-minute bipartisan meetings, bill to fund govt until 16 Feb did not receive the required 60 votes in Senate.
 - Many govt offices will close unless a compromise is found before midnight deadline.
 - Last US shutdown happened in 2013 over health care policy lasted for 16 days.
- UN special envoy visits Rohingya camp
 - o UN special rapporteur for human rights in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee visited Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh's coastal town of Cox's Bazar.
 - Lee was also supposed to visit her native Myanmar, but govt there unexpectedly banned her from visiting the country.











o Rohingyas are a Muslim minority ethnic group in Myanmar. They have been regarded as illegal migrants from Bangladesh.

· World's largest underwater cave found

- Divers of Great Maya Aquifer Project have discovered world's largest underwater cave in Mexico.
- It is located near the beach resort of Tulum on the Yucatan Peninsula.
- o It is made of two massive underwater caverns. The combined length of Sac Actun-Dos Ojos system stands at nearly 215 miles.
- This is much larger than Ox Bel Ha cave system, Mexico, which stretches
 168 miles long.
- Public register against money laundering
 - Britain has announced the world's first public register that requires overseas companies that own or buy property in the country to provide details of their ultimate owners.
 - o The government is set to publish relevant draft laws and the register will go live by early 2021.
 - The register is the government's move to crack down on criminals who launder money through the British property market.
- Pak-Iran to resume rail services
 - o Pakistan & Iran will be resuming train services b/w 2 countries by Sept as the security situation has improved.
 - o The train will operate between Quetta & Mashhad or Qom.
 - Both countries also considering to revise 1959 railways agreement inked between both countries.
 - o To cater to the business community, Pak's railway ministry has decided to start running 15 freight trains b/w Quetta & Zahedan.
- Turkey extends state of emergency









- Turkish parliament has ratified a motion extending the ongoing state of emergency in Turkey for 3 months.
- o This is the sixth time the state of emergency has been extended since a failed coup in summer 2016.
- Emergency powers have allowed the govt to rule through decrees, often by-passing parliament & to launch a crackdown against people suspected of links to coup-plotters.
- US slaps anti-dumping duty
 - Trump Administration has slapped anti-dumping duties on stainless steel flangs & finer denier polyester staple fiber from China & India.
 - o In 2016, imports of stainless steel flanges from China and India were valued at an estimated \$16.3 million and \$32.1 million, respectively.
 - Exporters from China and India received countervailing subsidies of 41.73
 to 47.55% and 9.50 to 25.28%, respectively
- Britain appoints Minister for Loneliness
 - United Kingdom Prime Minister Theresa May has appointed a "minister for loneliness" in a bid to tackle social isolation.
 - o This comes after a report revealed that nine million people in the country suffered from loneliness.
 - Tracey Crouch, whose official title is Minister for Sport and Civil Society, will take on the additional role, created in memory of Labour MP Jo Cox.
- Koreas to march under single united flag
 - North & South Korea have agreed to march together under a single
 "unified Korea" flag at next month's Winter Olympics in South Korea.
 - The 2 countries have marched under the flag before, in rare shows of unity, first at the 1991 World Table Tennis Championships, and at a number of sporting events since.



FASTEST WAY TO PREPARE CURRENT AFFAIRS







- o The nations have also agreed to form a joint North & South Korean women's ice hockey team.
- Romanian PM Mihai Tudose Resigns
 - o Romania's left-wing Prime Minister Mihai Tudose resigned after losing the backing of his party.
 - He handed his resignation after senior members of the ruling Social
 Democrats (PSD) voted to withdraw their support at a leadership meeting.
 - o PSD head Dragnea pushed out Tudose's predecessor Sorin Grindeanu as prime minister in a no-confidence vote in June 2017.
- Brazil bans buying cryptocurrencies
 - Brazil's securities regulator prohibited local investment funds from buying cryptocurrencies.
 - o Brazil regulator bans funds from buying cryptocurrencies.
 - o The prohibition has been imposed, citing the reason that Cryptocurrencies cannot be considered financial assets.
 - Owing to this decision, Brazilian funds cannot directly invest in cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin.
- Assange given Ecuadorian citizenship
 - Ecuador's Foreign Minister Maria announced that the country has granted citizenship to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.
 - In 2012, Assange, an Australian-Ecuadoran, had sought refuge at Ecuadorian Embassy in London to avoid extradition to Sweden, where he faced an investigation over rape allegations.
 - He was granted asylum, and has been staying at Ecuadorian Embassy in London since then.
- Indian peacekeepers rebuild Akoka bridge
 - o Indian peacekeepers in UN Mission in South Sudan have re-built a key bridge in record time in strife-torn South Sudan's Akoka village.









- o In June 2017, heavy rains washed away a 300-metre-long road segment across a river in Akoka village.
- o This bridge will enable people to cross the river and reach a town to access basic services.
- WEF Ranks India 30th on GMI
 - The World Economic Forum (WEF) has ranked India at 30th position on a global manufacturing index.
 - o India is below China's 5th place but above other BRICS peers, Brazil, Russia and South Africa.
 - Japan has been found to have the best structure of production in the Geneva-based WEF's first 'Readiness for the future of production report' and is followed by South Korea, Germany.
- Nepal ends India's internet monopoly
 - Nepal has joined hands with China to offer internet services to its citizens,
 ending India's decades-long monopoly of the Himalayan nation's cyber
 connectivity network.
 - For years, Nepal depended on Indian companies, such as Airtel and Tata
 Communications for access to the worldwide web.
 - o China Telecom Global, has teamed up with Nepal Telecom to provide alternative cyber connectivity to Nepal.
- Sri Lanka reimposes ban on alcohol sale
 - Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena has reimposed a 4 decade-long ban on women buying alcohol, just days after his finance minister had lifted the restriction.
 - Ban on women buying liquor was originally imposed in 1979 to appease conservative Buddhist hierarchy.
 - o The 1979 law prohibiting the sale of any type of alcohol to women was overturned in an effort to restore gender neutrality.

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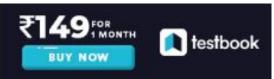






- China commissions new missile frigate
 - o China's Navy has commissioned a new missile frigate, named 'Rizhao', in a naval port in China's Dalian located in the Liaoning Province.
 - o Rizhao is China's indigenous missile frigate.
 - o It is 140-meter-long and 16-meter-wide with the capability to displace more than 4,000 tonnes.
 - o It has the capability to attack enemy ships and submarines alone or along with other naval forces.
- Saudi allows women at football game
 - Saudi Arabia has for the first time allowed women to spectate a football match.
 - o The move is a part of easing strict rules on gender separation by the ultraconservative Muslim country.
 - o It follows a series of reforms intended to modernise the country.
 - Ahead of the football game, country's first car showroom dedicated to female customers was opened.
- North & South Korea agree to hold talks
 - o North and South Korea agreed to hold military talks.
 - o North Korea also decided to send a high-ranking delegation and a cheering squad to the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics in South Korea next month.
 - o This dialogue will be the first in more than two years.
- Sunny Verghese Appointed WBCSD Chairman
 - Singapore-based Indian-origin businessman Sunny Verghese has been appointed as the Chairman of the Geneva-based World Business Council for Sustainable Development.
 - He succeeded Paul Polman.
 - Verghese, Co-Founder and the CEO of Singapore's agri-business group
 Olam International Limited, is the first WBCSD Chair from the agri-sector.









- He succeeded Paul Polman, the CEO of Unilever.
- Mr Sunak Inducted Into Theresa's Team
 - British Prime Minister Theresa May has inducted Indian-origin lawmaker
 Rishi Sunak into her government.
 - o Mr Sunak is the son-in-law of Infosys co-founder NR Narayana Murthy.
 - The 36-year-old has been appointed as an under secretary of state in Britain's Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- ALLB plans to issue first USD bonds
 - o China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, in which India is a second largest shareholder, plans to issue its first US dollar-denominated bond with the minimum worth of a USD billion by June this year.
 - With 84 members so far, the AIIB was officially established in December
 2015.
 - The Beijing-based AIIB is a multilateral development bank with authorised capital of USD 100 billion.

World's largest ice festival in China

- o 34th Harbin International Ice and Snow Festival, world's largest ice festival started on January 5, 2018 in Harbin (north-east China).
- o The festival will continue through late February.
- Some of this year's work centres around Chinese President Xi Jinping's major foreign policy is also captured in art at this festival.
- Nick Kyrgios takes Brisbane crown
 - Nick Kyrgios defeated American Ryan Harrison to claim the Brisbane International in straight sets.
 - o The 6-4, 6-2 win was the third-seeded Australian's fourth title on the ATP tour and his first on home soil.
 - o Kyrgios is a polarising figure in Australian sport.
- Julia Goerges wins Auckland Classic

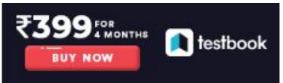


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FASTEST WAY TO PREPARE CURRENT AFFAIRS







- Julia Goerges claimed a third-straight WTA title with victory over Caroline Wozniacki in the Auckland Classic final.
- o In the final, Goerges was dominant against the top-seeded Dane by 6-4 7-6 (7-4).
- The German World No.14 broke in the first game of both sets to place early pressure on Wozniacki.
- Philippe Coutinho Joins Barcelona
 - Team Liverpool sold Brazilian football player Philippe Coutinho to Team Barcelona for 160 million Euros (\$192 million).
 - With this, transfer of Philippe Coutinho has become the 2nd Most Expensive transfer in World Soccer History.
 - World's most expensive transfer is Brazilian football player Neymar's transfer from Barcelona to Paris Saint Germain team in 200 million pounds in 2017.
- Golden Globe Awards 2018
 - The 75th Golden Globe Awards ceremony was held in Los Angeles, the USA. Following are the winners.
 - o Best motion picture, drama: Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri.
 - Best performance by an actress in a motion picture, drama: Frances McDormand.
 - o Best performance by an actor in a motion picture, drama: Gary Oldman.
- Switzerland won Hopman Cup Title
 - Switzerland won their third Hopman Cup as Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic beat Germany's Alexander Zverev and Angelique Kerber.
 - It was Federer's second Hopman Cup triumph after victory in 2001 alongside then world number one Martina Hingis.
 - The final was held at the Perth Arena.
- East Jerusalem for Palestinian capital









- Arab states will push for the international community to recognize East
 Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state.
- o This announcement comes a month after US President Donald Trump recognized the city as Israel's capital.
- Many Arabs consider the eastern part of Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state.

Pakistan blacklists Hafiz Saeed's JuD

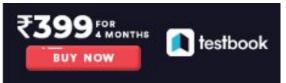
- Pakistan interior ministry has blacklisted 26/11 Mumbai terror attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed's organization Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD)
- o The move comes a day after the US suspended about \$2 billion in security aid to Pakistan for failing to clamp down on the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani Network.
- Pakistan's financial regulatory body has also banned Saeed's organizations from collecting donations.
- China to build another base in Pakistan
 - After Djibouti, China is planning to build its second foreign naval base in Pakistan.
 - o The base is most likely to come up near Gwadar.
 - A consensus was reached in one of the meetings between Chinese and Pakistani military officers that a military base would come up on the Jiwani peninsula near Gwadar.
 - o The base will be very close to the Iranian border.
- Venezuela to issue \$5.9b cryptocurrency
 - Venezuela would issue 100 million units of its new oil-backed cryptocurrency in coming days.
 - o The announcement was made by Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.
 - Each unit of the currency would be pegged to Venezuela's oil basket, which this week averaged \$59.07 per barrel.











- Venezuela has the world's largest oil reserves and makes 95% of its export revenue from oil.
- Pak Successfully Test-Fires 'Harba'
 - o The Pakistan Navy said it successfully test-fired the indigenously developed 'Harba' naval cruise missile.
 - o It was launched from a newly commissioned fast attack vessel off Karachi in the North Arabian Sea.
 - o The missile is capable of hitting its target from surface to surface and ground assault," the Pakistan Navy said in a statement.
- Himalayan Hydro Expo 2018 in Kathmandu
 - The Himalayan Hydro Expo 2018 kicked off at Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal.
 - o President of Nepal Bidya Devi Bhandari inaugurated the exhibition.
 - Delegates from various countries including India, China, Austria, Czech
 Republic and Norway are participating in the expo.
 - The basic objective of Expo is to unleash massive hydropower potential of Nepal and bring all stakeholders under one roof.
- Iceland to Legalise Equal Pay
 - o Iceland has become the first country in the world to legalise equal pay between men and women.
 - o In Iceland now it will be illegal to pay men more than women for the work.
 - Under the new rules, companies and government agencies employing at least 25 people will have to obtain government certification of their equalpay policies.
- US puts Pakistan on watch list
 - The US State Department has placed Pakistan on a Special Watch List for what it claims are "severe violations of religious freedom".







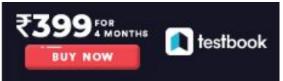


- The State Department said it has also re-designated 10 countries as "countries of particular concern".
- o It is done under country's International Religious Freedom Act.
- Six countries enter UN Security Council
 - Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kuwait, Peru, Poland and the Netherlands formally joined the ranks of the non-permanent members of the UNSC.
 - o The UN Security Council has 15 members, including five permanent ones
 - Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.
 - The six countries who left the UN Security Council on December 31 are Egypt, Italy, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay.
- Venezuela raises minimum wage by 40%
 - Venezuela is to raise its minimum wage by 40 percent.
 - o President Nicolas Maduro said the new pay level would protect workers against what he called Washington's "economic war" on socialism.
 - o The new minimum wage will come into force in January.
 - The move is intended to counter quickening inflation coupled with a depreciating bolivar.
- Pakistan to use Chinese Currency Yuan
 - o The central bank of Pakistan gave its green signal to using the Chinese currency, Yuan for bilateral trade with China.
 - The decision to cozy up to Beijing comes just a day after US President Donald Trump vowed to stop all aid to Islamabad.
 - Adoption of the Yuan would mean that Pakistan & China would be able to replace the US dollar for transactions in China Pakistan Economic Corridor projects.
- China developed surveillance network









- China has developed a new underwater surveillance network to help its submarines get a stronger lock on targets while protecting the nation's interests along the maritime Silk Road.
- o The system, which has already been launched, works by gathering information about the underwater environment and detect threats.
- o The project is led by the South China Sea Institute of Oceanology.
- Trump threatens to withhold aid to Pak
 - Donald Trump has opened the new year by threatening to withhold aid to Pakistan, a longtime US ally.
 - He said that "Islamabad is giving us nothing but lies and deceit" and "thinking of our leaders as fools".
 - He further accused Pakistan of giving safe haven to the terrorists.
- Saudi Arabia, UAE Introduces VAT
 - Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates introduced value-added tax from Monday.
 - This is first in the Gulf which has long prided itself on its tax-free, cradle-to-grave welfare system.
 - The five percent sales tax applies to most goods and services and analysts project that the two governments could raise as much as \$21 billion in 2018, equivalent to 2 percent of GDP.
- California's new law on cannabis use
 - o California has become the largest state in the US to legalise recreational cannabis use.
 - o As of 1 January 2018, adults aged over 21 can possess up to an ounce (28 grams) of the drug and can grow up to six marijuana plants at home.
 - Sacramento is California's capital. Democrat Hillary Clinton is the president of California.
- China Shuts Down Its Legal Ivory Trade









- Two years after a joint pledge with the United States to ban the domestic trade in ivory, all of China's government-licensed carving factories and ivory retailers are about to close.
- o China is one of the world's biggest consumers of ivory products.
- By the end of 2017, it has imposed a near-complete ban on buying and selling ivory.

National Affairs

- Bill to hike judges salary gets approval
 - o President Ram Nath Kovind gave his approval to a Bill that will more than double the salaries of Supreme Court and High Court judges.
 - o In the Winter Session of Parliament, the Bill to increase salaries of judges was passed.
 - Now after the President's approval, the Chief Justice of India will draw a monthly salary of ₹2.80 lakh, up from the current ₹1 lakh.
- EPFO goes paperless
 - Taking another step towards going paperless, retirement fund body EPFO said it has launched facilities for employers to pay dues and update ownership details online.
 - Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has provided facility of online submission of Form 5A (Return of Ownership), it said in a statement.
 - EPFO added it has discontinued the physical submission of the form.
- International Kolkata Book Fair 2018
 - The 42nd edition of the International Kolkata Book Fair 2018 is being held in Kolkata.









- The fair, touted to be world's largest attended book fair, will be open for public from January 31 and will continue till February 11.
- The focal theme of International Kolkata Book Fair will be France. This will be France's third appearance as partner country at the International Kolkata Book Fair.
- International Bird Festival To Be Held
 - A three-day international bird festival will be held at the Dudhwa National Park, Lakhimpur Kheri, Uttar Pradesh in February 2018.
 - o Nearly 200 leading ornithologists expected to attend.
 - The purpose of the international bird festival is to promote eco-tourism in Dudhwa and to give it a distinct international identity besides highlighting its traditional Tharu arts, culture and heritage.
- Idukki dam to screen laser show
 - o Officials are planning to screen a laser show depicting Kerala's history on the Idukki dam, which is Asia's oldest arch dam.
 - o "The laser show is planned to be screened on the dam wall surface, which is 500 feet high and 600 feet wide," an official said.
 - o The Idukki Dam is a double curvature arch dam constructed across the Periyar River between two granite hills Kuravan and Kuravathi in Kerala.
- Sunny Deol's 'tarikh par tarikh' in ES
 - o The Economic Survey 2017-18 has quoted Sunny Deol's dialogue 'tarikh' par tarikh' to highlight frequent delays in the judicial process.
 - The survey, tabled in Parliament called for coordinated action between government and the judiciary to address the delays and boost economic activity.
 - o It also featured a line from a Bollywood song, "Mere desh ki dharti sona ugle, ugle heerey moti.
- First ever 'Khadi Haat' in Delhi









- Marking the 69th Republic Day celebrations, Khadi and Village Industries
 Commission and New Delhi Municipal Council have launched the first ever 'Khadi Haat' in the country.
- The Khadi Haat was inaugurated on January 25 by Minister of State
 Giriraj Singh in Connaught Place.
- o In this Khadi Haat, entrepreneurs under PMEGP will get an opportunity to display and sell their exquisite products.
- 50% increase in indirect taxpayers
 - o There has been a 50% increase in the number of indirect taxpayers.
 - o There has also been a large increase in voluntary registrations, especially by small enterprises that buy from large enterprises wanting to avail themselves of input tax credit.
 - o There were 9.8 million unique GST registrants, an increase by 3.4 million compared to the previous tax regime is seen.
- 'Maitreyi Yatra' concludes
 - o The closing ceremony of the Jammu and Kashmir student exchange programme, titled 'Maitreyi yatra', was held at National Bal Bhawan.
 - o The programme was organised by the Ministry of Human Resource development.
 - It will provide a good opportunity to the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to be acquainted with culture, language and development story of different parts of the country.
- Satellite image shows build-up in Doklam
 - o India and China are pursuing a "wide-ranging strategic build-up" in airbases close to the Doklam Plateau.
 - It is according to the latest analysis of satellite imagery acquired by Stratfor.











- o Doklam is an area spread over less than a 100 sq km comprising a plateau and a valley at the trijunction between India, Bhutan and China, surrounded by the Chumbi Valley.
- · Acid attack victims to get quota
 - People with autism, mental illnesses, intellectual disability & victims of acid attacks will now get quota in central govt jobs.
 - In case of direct recruitment, 4% of total number of vacancies in groups A,
 B & C shall be reserved for people with benchmark disabilities.
 - This comes after the passage of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act,
 2016 & notification of relevant rules in this regard
- Govt to set up social media hubs
 - o Information & Broadcasting Ministry has planned to set up a Social Media Communication Hub that would help it keep a tab on trending news in districts.
 - o Under the project, media persons would be employed in each district to be the eyes & ears of govt & provide real-time updates from the ground.
 - o They would also take people's feedback on govt's policies & follow the news trending in their areas
- Govt launches polio programme for 2018
 - President Ram Nath Kovind launched the Pulse Polio programme for 2018
 by administering polio drops to children below five years at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.
 - The president administered the drops on the eve of National Immunisation Day, which is observed on 28th January.
 - Over 17 cr children, below 5 years, across the country, will be given polio drops as part of the Government of India's drive.
- 1st touch-screen inquiry systems







- Indian Railways has launched a one-of-its-kind touch-screen kiosk as a single-point inquiry station at New Delhi railway station.
- o It comprises of touch-screen kiosks with a 40-inch display of 3D-digitized railway station map & helps the passenger at the touch of the screen.
- o It will answer all queries of passengers including navigation for accessing various facilities available at the station
- 'Shakti' app for women's safety
 - o Himachal CM Jai Ram Thakur launched the women's safety app 'Shakti'.
 - The app was developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) of the Himachal Pradesh government.
 - o Once triggered, the app would automatically send a message to the nearest police control room and start recording audio and video after 20 seconds.

Second IIIT in Karnataka

- The Centre today sanctioned the setting up of a second Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) in Karnataka at Raichur.
- It will be the second such institute in Karnataka, after the one in Dharwad.
- The state has been asked to provide alternative infrastructure to commence the 2018-19 academic year till it identifies the land for the construction of the proposed IIIT.

Conf. on 'Inclusion of PWD in Election'

- Election Commission of India hosted a one-day International Conference on the subject 'Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the Election Process' in New Delhi.
- Delegates at the Conference included Chairpersons of five EMBs viz.
 Australia, Bhutan, Guinea, Moldova & Zambia.
- ECI is committed to the objective that the Persons with Disabilities have the right to full electoral participation.
- ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit



FASTEST WAY TO PREPARE CURRENT AFFAIRS







- Leaders of the ten ASEAN countries, comprising Thailand, Vietnam,
 Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Myanmar, Cambodia,
 Laos and Brunei, are in India for the ASEAN-India Commemorative
 Summit.
- o The two-day summit, which began yesterday, will be followed by the grand Republic Day parade and celebrations where the ten visiting heads of states will be present as the chief guests.
- Goa deploys aerial surveillance system
 - o The Goa Police announced deployment of the advanced aerial surveillance system whose main objective is to monitor suspicious activities or gatherings.
 - The system can offer a detailed view of activities on the ground from certain height.
 - o The primary objective is to monitor any unusual gatherings, fights and/or suspicious activities.
- Rapid Reporting System For SAG Launched
 - Secretary, MWCD, Mr Rakesh Srivastava launched the Phase -1 i.e. the beneficiary module of the RSS for the Scheme for Adolescent Girls on the occasion of National Girl Child Day (24th January).
 - It is a web-based online monitoring for the Scheme for Adolescent Girls in New Delhi.
 - o The URL for the portal is 'sag-rrs.nic.in.'
- India to host 16th Int Energy Forum meet
 - The 16th International Energy Forum (IEF) Ministerial meeting will be held in New Delhi on April 10 to 12.
 - o It will be hosted by Government of India in New Delhi and co-hosted by the Government of China and South Korea.
 - o Representatives from 92 countries will participate in the conference.









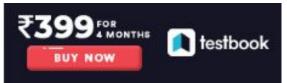
- Int. Dam Safety conference held
 - o India will host the International Dam Safety Conference 2018 at Thiruvananthapuram on January 23-24, which will be inaugurated by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.
 - o The conference will be presided by Arjun Ram Meghwal.
 - Dam safety conferences were organised as an annual event under the Dam Safety Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP) project.
- Andhra-Zurich Sign Sister State Agrmnt.
 - The Andhra Pradesh Government and the Canton of Zurich signed a letter of intent, to promote mutual prosperity and development.
 - The agreement was signed in the presence of Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh N Chandrababu Naidu.
 - o This will bring the State of Andhra Pradesh and Canton of Zurich closer and ensure that a framework is created, which supports the exchange between both the parties.
- Homeopathy Research Institute in Jaipur
 - Minister of State, for AYUSH, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik laid the foundation stone for Central Research Institute in Jaipur.
 - o This will be the 3rd CRI under the aegis of Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy.
 - o In his address during the stone laying ceremony, Sh. Naik stated that Ministry of AYUSH is determined towards a focused infrastructural push to Homoeopathy and other systems of AYUSH.
- ixigo launches AR feature on its app
 - o 'ixigo' recently launched augmented reality feature on its train's app which helps its iOS users to accurately locate their coach positions.
 - o The Coach Position feature categorizes and labels coaches, thereby identifying how far away the passengers are from their intended coach.





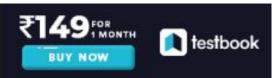






- These features will provide users with live updates and instructions to improve their train travel experience.
- WW II Memorial Museum in Changlang
 - Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu inaugurated the World War II Memorial Museum here in the state's Changlang district bordering Myanmar.
 - It is expected to boost international and domestic tourist inflow especially from Southeast Asian countries.
 - It also showcases traditional items from indigenous Tangsa community.
- 7th Asia Steel International Conference
 - o The 7th Asia Steel International Conference will be held in Bhubaneswar from February 6 to 9.
 - o The last Asia Steel conference was held in 2015 at Yokohama, Japan.
 - o This major conference is held every three years and provides a platform for exchange of knowledge on various aspects of the global steel industry.
- RIL crossed ₹6-lakh crore market cap
 - o Reliance Industries became the first Indian company to cross the ₹6-lakh crore mark in market capitalisation as its shares touched a 52-week high of ₹974.5.
 - o RIL shares rose 4.5% to ₹971.2 valuing the company at ₹6,15,150 crore.
 - o RIL is owned 40% by its chairman Mukesh Ambani, making him the richest Indian with personal wealth of \$40.7 billion.
- O.P Singh to Take Over As UP DGP
 - The Centre relieved CISF chief O P Singh for his cadre Uttar Pradesh, where he is expected to take over as the new Director General of Police (DGP).
 - o Singh (59) is expected to take over as the Uttar Pradesh DGP.









- The post has been lying vacant for over a fortnight after Sulkhan Singh retired on December 31.
- Tiger census begins in Maharashtra
 - The six-day, four-yearly national wildlife census, generally called tiger census, began in Maharashtra.
 - The ground staff belonging to one of the trade unions, demanding upgradation of their pay scales, had threatened to skip gadgets necessary for use in the census.
 - They argued that they should get payscale applicable to technical category employees of the government.

• India's automated ocean pollution system

- o India is all set to have its own automated ocean pollution observation system this year which will help keep a tab on ocean pollution level.
- According to S S C Shenoi, director, Indian National Centre for Ocean
 Information Services, the system will become functional by April this year.
- INCOIS is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

• ∣∩dia's richest 1% have 73% of wealth

- o The richest 1% in India cornered 73% of the wealth generated in the country last year, a new survey showed.
- Besides, 67 crore Indians comprising the population's poorest half saw their wealth rise by just 1%.
- o It is according to the international rights group Oxfam.
- The annual Oxfam survey is keenly watched and is discussed in detail at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting.

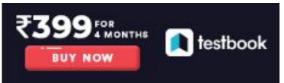
Kachra Mahotsav in Chhattisgarh

 Rajesh Munat, successfully organised a free five-day health camp, where more than 60,000 people, from a four-month-old infant to a 90-year-old senior citizen, availed of check-ups, diagnosis and treatment.









- The event secured a place in the Golden Book of World Records.
- o The aim of Kachra Mahotsav is to promote recycling and upcycling of waste generated in the Chhattisgarh.
- Pact signed for research incubator
 - o The Odisha government has signed an agreement to set up an incubator for promoting research with Software Technology Park of India.
 - VARCoE will be set up at the campus of IIT, Bhubaneswar and it will become a landmark initiative for promoting research, technology incubation and product development in the country.
 - Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik, was present during the signing of the agreement.
- Odisha launches e-Hospital system
 - On Jan 19, Odisha State Government launched Odisha e-Hospital Management Information System.
 - o It is an online platform which hosts all clinical parameters of patients and reporting of performance criteria of hospitals.
 - o Through OeHIMS, patients can be registered online. Besides, individual electronic health records can be viewed and downloaded online through web portal or mobile application.
- 25th GST Council Meet Held In New Delhi
 - 25th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council was held in New Delhi on January 18, 2018.
 - o The meeting was chaired by Union Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley.
 - During this meeting, the GST Council recommended many relief measures regarding GST rates on goods and services.
- 63rd Filmfare Awards 2018
 - o Bollywood celebrated 63rd Jio Filmfare Awards 2018, held in Mumbai.







- o 'Hindi Medium' bagged honours in the categories of Best Film and Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male) for Irrfan Khan's impeccable performance.
- Vidya Balan won her career's sixth Filmfare award for her passionate portrayal of a middle-aged homemaker who turns into a radio jockey in 'Tumhari Sulu'.

• Puducherry's 1st POPSK at Karaikal

- The first Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) of Puducherry was inaugurated by Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister for External Affairs at Karaikal.
- The POPSK at Karaikal is the 60th POPSK to have become functional since the launch of the scheme in January 2017.
- o It is the first POPSK to become operational in the UT of Puducherry.
- National CSR & Corporate Data Portal
 - Arun Jaitley, Union Finance & Corporate Affairs minister, launched the National CSR Data Portal & Corporate Data Portal in Delhi.
 - The initiative is a significant step towards driving accountability & transparency for corporate India.
 - By making the portals accessible to general public, it will ensure high level of compliance and also in institutionalizing and consolidating the CSR activities.
- IIITM-K to set up blockchain academy
 - Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management-Kerala (IIITM-K) and Blockchain Education Network have planned to jointly set up Kerala Blockchain Academy at Technopark campus, in Thiruvananthapuram.
 - o It will be first of its kind in India.
 - o The aim to utilise blockchain technology for the welfare of public, promote innovations and entrepreneurship with blockchain technology.





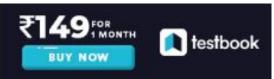






- Third Raisina Dialogue held in New Delhi
 - o 3rd edition of the Raisina Dialogue was held on January 16. It was inaugurated by PM of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu.
 - Theme "Managing Disruptive Transitions: Ideas, Institutions and Idioms".
 - o First held in 2016, it is a multilateral conference held annually in Delhi.
 - o It is Indian Government's flagship conference on geopolitics and geoeconomics, hosted by 'Observer Research Foundation'.
- Maharashtra Unveils Public Cloud Policy
 - Maharashtra has become the first state in the country that has come out with a public cloud policy, virtually mandating its departments to shift their data storage onto the cloud.
 - o This move has created a USD 2- billion opportunity for the industry.
 - o The policy will result in additional private sector investments as the government is one of the biggest creators and consumers of data.
- AP govt, NITI Aayog sign MoU
 - Andhra Pradesh Govt & NITI Aayog have signed a MoU to develop an online dashboard for 115 most backward districts in India.
 - Districts were identified on the basis of objective criteria such as education, health, nutrition, basic infrastructure like access to potable water & individual toilets & others.
 - Most of the listed backward districts are in Jharkhand, followed by Bihar
 & Chhattisgarh.
- Government to set up \$350 million fund
 - o Central govt will set up a \$350 million fund to finance solar projects.
 - It is a part of India's efforts to achieve its ambitious target of adding 175
 GW in renewable energy by 2022.









- India, which receives twice as much sunshine as European nations, expects renewable energy to make up 40% of installed power capacity by 2030.
- o India's installed renewable power capacity is currently about 60 GW.
- GPS, panic buttons mandatory on vehicles
 - The government has made it mandatory to have Global Positioning System (GPS) devices in passenger transport vehicles from April 1.
 - o All taxis, buses and public transport vehicles, except three-wheelers and erickshaws, will have to install GPS and an alert button.
 - o The road transport ministry has reiterated the deadline amid reports that most of the states had not done much to meet the target.
- India attends its first SCO meeting
 - o India, for the first time, took part in a meeting of the international military cooperation departments of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation since joining the bloc last year.
 - An Indian delegation led by Major General Ajay Seth participated in the meeting.
 - The two-day meeting concluded on Tuesday.
- Centre, Jammu & Kashmir sign MoU
 - Jammu and Kashmir government signed a MoU to create normalcy in Jammu & Kashmir by means of education reforms.
 - The MoU is named, 'School Education Transformation Roadmap'. It was signed by Jammu & Kashmir's Department of School Education and Union MHRD Prakash Javadekar.
 - o This MoU will facilitate nearly 9,000 Jammu & Kashmir students to take part in an exchange programme.
- Haryana government to set up SAT









- The Haryana government paved the way for setting up of a State Administrative Tribunal.
- o The state Cabinet, under the Chairmanship of CM Manohar Lal Khattar, approved the Haryana State Administrative Tribunal Rules, 2017.
- o The establishment of the SAT will prove advantageous and essential in view of the increasing number of court cases.

Haj subsidy scrapped

- o Thousands of Muslims who go on Haj pilgrimage each year will no longer get subsidised or cheaper air tickets.
- o The big move would help empower Muslims with dignity, said union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi.
- The subsidy will be used for educating girls. Saudi Arabia has agreed to allow people to go on the Haj by ship, which is cheaper than flying.

• Bengal Global Business Summit

- JSW Group will make fresh investments of Rs 10,000 crore in Bengal,
 Sajjan Jindal chairman of the steel, cement and power conglomerate announced.
- o The 4th Bengal Global Business Summit was held from 16-17 January.
- o The State Govt. is committed towards inclusive and sustainable development, providing increasing employment opportunities.

• Inauguration of oil refinery in Barmer

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Rajasthan's Barmer where he will inaugurate the commencement of work of an oil refinery at Pachpadra.
- Meanwhile, Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural
 Gas Dharmendra Pradhan tweeted out saying the Barmer Refinery and
 Petrochemicals Project of HRRL will bring an unprecedented surge in infrastructure development.









- Lifeline for Jewish cemetery likely
 - Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu is likely to promise help to develop a 143year-old Jewish cemetery in Vadodara into a memorial and tourist attraction.
 - They will also be visiting the Centre of Excellence for Vegetables in Vadrad in Sabarkantha district in the State since Israel specialises in farming in dry areas.
 - In 1875, the 50,000-sq.ft plot was given by Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad to Jews.
- Eco. Democracy Conclave in Maharashtra
 - President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, inaugurated the 'Economic Democracy Conclave' at Thane, Maharashtra.
 - o This conclave has been organised by Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini, a charitable organisation.
 - o The objective of the conclave is to serve as a platform for young entrepreneurs and self-employed individuals and provide them motivation, mentoring and networking opportunities.
- Aadhaar Mandatory for Bail: Chhattisgarh
 - o Chhattisgarh High Court has issued a directive to all trial courts in the state to mandatorily obtain Aadhaar Cards of accused persons.
 - o The order is an attempt to curb the rampant practice of obtaining bail on the basis of forged revenue papers or by impersonating the real surety.
 - High Court has also instructed that trial courts should verify the genuineness of Aadhaar card & revenue papers.
- Johnson & Johnson Partners with Maha.
 - Maharashtra's mine workers who face an increased risk of tuberculosis
 will be part of awareness programmes on the illness.











- o It is a part of a partnership that the Maharashtra Government recently formalized with Johnson & Johnson.
- o Other interventions under the ambit of the agreement include hospital acquired infections and maternal and infant mortality.

• UIDAI to enable face authentication

- UIDAI has decided to enable face authentication in fusion mode on registered devices by 1st July 2018.
- It will help in inclusive authentication of those who are not able to biometrically authenticate due to their worn out fingerprints, old age or working conditions.
- o It will be allowed only in fusion mode along with 1 more authentication factor combined with either fingerprint or iris or OTP.

Properties worth Rs 1 trillion auctioned

- Over 9,400 'enemy' properties, worth more than Rs 1 trillion, are set to be auctioned by the home ministry starting the process of identifying all such estates.
- o The properties were left behind by people who took citizenship of Pakistan and China.
- o The move came after the amendment of the 49-year-old Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Act.

• India's first IT trade union in Pune

- o The Pune chapter of the Forum for IT Employees (FITE) has become the first officially registered trade union for the IT sector in India.
- FITE was formed in Bengaluru a few years ago to fight the layoffs in IT sector.
- The FITE also helped affected employees file cases under the Industrial Disputes Act before the offices of the Labour Commissioner and the labour court.







- Migrant Workers to Have Orange Passports
 - New passports for citizens who have Emigration Check Required (ECR)
 status will have orange cover jackets, instead of the traditional dark blue.
 - o Indian passports have a blue cover, diplomatic and official passports have white and red jackets, respectively.
 - Applicants who haven't cleared 10th standard are given a passport with ECR category.
- Delhi, Punjab richest states in India
 - o On the basis of data from fourth round of the National Family and Health Survey (NFHS-4), people in Delhi and Punjab are the richest, with more than 60% of their households in the top wealth quintile.
 - The survey was conducted among more than 6 lakh households in 2015 16.
 - The index has been prepared on the basis of scores on ownership of consumer goods and household characteristics.
- Mahavitaran to buy 1000 MW solar power
 - o Mahavitaran, the power transmission company of the state government, is planning to purchase 1000 MW solar power in 2018.
 - At present, the solar power generation in Maharashtra is only 1,000 MW out of which 300 MW is produced by MahaGenco.
 - o Under the Chief Minister's Solar Agri Feeder programme, solar power pumps with the capacity of 7000 MW will be set up for the agriculture purpose.
- Decline in U5MR in 2016.
 - o Under-five mortality rate (U5MR) in India has shown an impressive decline of 9 per cent, from 43 per 1,000 in 2015 to 39 per 1,000 in 2016.
 - o The data comes from the recently-released 2016 sample registration system (SRS) bulletin.











- The number of under-five deaths in the country have come down to below 1 million with nearly 1,20,000 fewer under-five deaths in 2016 as compared to 2015.
- 49% teenage girls married in Jharkhand
 - Among all the states, Jharkhand has the highest proportion of girls aged
 15-19 years currently married at 49%.
 - o The proportion of married girls aged 15-19 years ranged from 13% to 49% across four states—Jharkhand, Odisha, Bihar and Rajasthan.
 - o The data comes from the 2017 report *More than Brides Alliance: A Baseline* prepared by non-profits Population Council, Save The Children and Oxfam.
- Four SC judges air differences with CJI
 - o In an unprecedented act, four senior judges of the Supreme Court held a press conference on January 11, 2018.
 - They charged Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra of selectively assigning cases to judges of his choice without any rational basis.
 - By doing this, Justices Chelameswar, Gogoi, Lokur and Joseph transcended judicial protocol stating that sitting judges should not talk to the media.
- Maha to host Economic Democracy Conclave
 - President Ram Nath Kovind is set to visit Maharashtra to inaugurate the Economic Democracy Conclave at Thane on January 13.
 - The conclave is being organised by Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini with an aim to create a platform for young entrepreneurs and self-employed individuals.
 - o It also aims to provide them motivation, networking and mentoring.
- Institutional births doubled in 10 years







- The percentage of institutional births in India has doubled from 38.7% to 78.9% in the decade, according to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4).
- o As many as 40% women who did not deliver in a health facility in the age group of 15-49 years did not consider it "necessary".
- o 16.8% urban women and 18.2% rural women were not allowed to give birth in a health facility.
- Passport not a valid address proof
 - o Passports may not serve as a valid proof of address anymore.
 - o Govt. has decided not to print the last page of the document with the address of the holder.
 - Currently, last page of the passport includes the father or legal guardian's
 name, the names of the holder's mother, spouse and their address.
 - The Indian Security Press (ISP), Nasik, would be designing the new passports in due course.
- India Tops Domestic Air Traffic Demand
 - o India's domestic air passenger traffic grew by 16.4 percent in November 2017, topping the growth chart worldwide, according to the global aviation body, the International Air Transport Association (IATA).
 - o Globally, the total revenue passenger kilometers (RPK) increased 8 percent compared to November 2016.
 - o The available seat kilometers (ASKs) or capacity grew by 6.3 percent.
- Government Restricts Use Of plastic Flag
 - The central government urged everyone not to use a national flag made of plastic.
 - It also asked the states and union territories to ensure strict compliance of the Flag Code in view of the Republic Day celebration ahead.











- o The national flag represents the hopes and aspirations of the people of the country and hence should occupy a position of honour.
- Price Waterhouse firms banned for 2 yrs
 - The Securities and Exchange Board of India's order banned all the firms in the Price Waterhouse network from auditing listed companies for two years.
 - Sebi found the audit firm guilty in the nine-year-old Rs7,136 crore Satyam
 Computer Services Ltd scam.
 - The order has been passed under the Prevention of Fraudulent and Unfair Trade Practices (PFUTP) regulations and Section 11 of Sebi Act.
- Gujarat to count elusive tigers
 - o Gujarat, which houses a rich population of lions, will now see an exercise to find out if tigers also inhabit the State.
 - o The last time a tiger was spotted in Gujarat was way back in 1985.
 - The proposal was approved by the NTCA, a statutory body under the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, Gujarat's Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife), G.K. Sinha, said.
- Chhattisgarh gets new chief secretary
 - Senior IAS officer Ajay Singh, of 1983 batch, has been appointed Chief
 Secretary of Chhattisgarh on Thursday, replacing Vivek Dhand.
 - Mr. Dhand, of 1981 batch, was Chief Secretary for four years and was to retire in March.
 - He was named the chairman of the state's Real Estate Regulatory
 Authority but opted for voluntary retirement.
- BSF's Women Bikers To Make History
 - In another first for women this Republic Day, a newly-raised all-woman bikers contingent of the Border Security Force will make its debut on Rajpath on January 26.









- The 27-member BSF women 'daredevils' will showcase their stunts & acrobatics on their 350cc Royal Enfield Bullet motorcycles.
- o In 2015, women contingents of the Army, Navy and Air Force had made their debut in the national parade.

• Panel on Mullaiperiyar dam

- Supreme Court directed the Union government to set up a special committee to exclusively prepare disaster management plans for 122 years old Mullaiperiyar dam.
- A three-judge Bench led by CJI Dipak Misra also directed Tamil Nadu, which owns the dam, and Kerala, where it is situated, to set up similar committees.
- The Mullaperiyar Dam is a masonry gravity dam on the Periyar River in Kerala.

• PIOs make a 'mini-world Parliament'

- India reached out to lawmakers of Indian origin spread across the world seeking support for its emerging status as a global power.
- The PIO Parliamentarian forum was planned last year during a conversation with PM Modi to connect the lawmakers of Indian origin with their ancestral land.
- A total of 141 lawmakers confirmed their attendance and 134 leaders made to this event in Delhi.

• India's 1st All-Women Railway Station

- The first all-women station in India, Matunga on Central Railway (CR),
 manned by a staff of 41 women, has entered the Limca Book of Records.
- The unique initiative was taken by CR General Manager D.K. Sharma in July 2017 with the aim of empowering women, said CR spokesperson Sunil Udasi.
- o Matunga station is situated in Mumbai, Maharashtra.



FASTEST WAY TO PREPARE CURRENT AFFAIRS



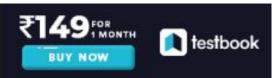
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- Karnataka Tops the investment list
 - Karnataka topped all states with investment intentions of Rs. 1.49 lakh crore till October 2017.
 - o It is according to R V Deshpande, Karnataka Minister for Large, Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development.
 - The investment was 43% of the country's total investment intentions.
 Karnataka has topped in FDI inflows and has performed well in exports.
- 4th Int. Dharma Dhamma Conference
 - President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated a three-day International Dharma-Dhamma conference at Rajgir in Bihar.
 - The conference was jointly organised by India Foundation, Nalanda University, Ministry of External Affairs, ASEAN-India and Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha.
 - The conference was attended by Sri Lanka's foreign Minister Tilak
 Marapana.
- Mankidia denied habitat in Simlipal
 - Mankidia, one of the 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in Odisha,
 were denied habitat rights inside the Similipal Tiger Reserve.
 - They are denied their right under the historic Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006.
 - State Forest Department has objected on grounds that tribals could be attacked by wild animals, especially tigers.
- Govt bans electronic cigarettes in Bihar
 - o Bihar has banned even e-cigarette. E-cigarette is smoked through electronics nicotine delivery system for nicotine intake.
 - o Its manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, display and advertisement also stand banned.









- o The state has already banned the manufacture, distribution, trade, sale, purchase, display and advertisement of all tobacco products.
- Battalion of ex-Armymen to clean Ganga
 - o The central government has sanctioned the raising of a Territorial Army battalion comprising ex-servicemen of the Army.
 - This battalion will be raised in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh next month as a Composite Ecological Task Force battalion of TA for National Mission for Clean Ganga.
 - The government has allocated Rs 167 crore for the battalion under NMCG,
 the nodal agency for cleaning the Ganga.
- Govt to divest 1.5% in NMDC
 - o The government will begin the sale of 1.5% stake in NMDC at a floor price of Rs153.50 apiece.
 - The two-day offer for sale (OFS) will open for institutional investors on and for retail investors on Wednesday.
 - Sale of 1.5% would fetch Rs750 crore to the exchequer, a person familiar with the matter said.
 - o The NMDC Limited is a state-controlled mineral producer of the Government of India.
- Gujarat Tops Logistics Performance Index
 - Gujarat has topped the logistics index chart, according to a Report released by Union Minister for Commerce & Industry Suresh Prabhu in Delhi.
 - The chart is an indicator of the efficiency of logistical services necessary for promoting exports in particular and economic growth in general.
 - Among 22 states, Gujarat is followed by Punjab, Andhra Pradesh,
 Karnataka and Maharashtra on the index.
- Direct Tax for 2017 shows 18.2% growth







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- o The provisional figures of Direct Tax collections up to December 2017 show that net collections are at Rs. 6.56 lakh crore which is 18.2% higher than the net collections for the corresponding period of last year.
- The net Direct Tax collections represent 67% of the total Budget Estimates of Direct Taxes.
- o An amount of Rs. 3.18 lakh crore has been received as Advance Tax up to December 2017.

NPCI names Asbe as CEO

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on Monday appointed
 Dilip Asbe as its MD & CEO with immediate effect.
- Mr. Asbe, who was the Chief Operating Officer of NPCI, was also the acting
 CEO of NPCI since August after A.P. Hota retired.
- o NPCI was set up by the Reserve Bank of India in 2009 as the central infrastructure for various retail payment systems in India.

• National Anthem not mandatory in cinemas

- The Supreme Court said playing the National Anthem before screening movies in cinema halls is not mandatory.
- o The bench was headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra.
- o In November 2016, the Supreme Court had ordered all cinemas to play the anthem before screening a film 'for the love of the motherland'.

Saksham Yadav killed in Road Accident

- o Five men, including powerlifting world champion Saksham Yadav, died and one other person was injured after their car met with an accident.
- Saksham Yadav, who was admitted in an 'extremely critical' condition at the AIIMS Trauma Centre in Delhi, succumbed to his injuries in the evening.
- Yadav had won a gold medal for the country in the 2017 Powerlifting Championship in Moscow.









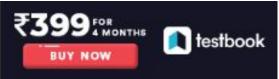
- Railways to deploy drones
 - Drones would now monitor railway projects, aid crowd management and oversee maintenance works across its zones.
 - o The West Central Railways, headquartered at Jabalpur (MP), is the first zonal railway to procure the drone cameras.
 - o The cameras (UAV/NETRA) would be used for these activities.
 - o The DRDO Netra is an Indian, light-weight, autonomous UAV for surveillance and reconnaissance operations.
- Akshay to promote the Swachh Survekshan
 - After Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) urged Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar to partner it to promote the Swachh Survekshan 2018 campaign, the actor promptly agreed.
 - He will be an integral part of the team to promote its cleanliness campaign in Mumbai.
 - The Swachh Survekshan 2018 will be carried out between January 4 to March 10, 2018, by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- Common card for bus, metro rides: Delhi
 - o Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched a common card for rides on public buses and the metro.
 - Delhi is the first city in the country to have a common mobility card, which can at present be used on 200 DTC and 50 cluster buses plying on different routes, apart from metro trains.
 - o It will be operational in all DTC and cluster buses from April 1, 2018.
- BSES launches rooftop solar initiative
 - o In an initiative to promote clean energy, BSES launched the country's first solar rooftop consumer aggregation programme for residential buildings in New Delhi.









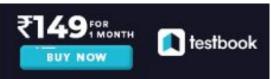


- o In the first phase of the programme, around 150 residential societies will be targeted in the Dwarka area.
- o It would help BRPL in meeting its renewable purchase obligation, as well as minimising overloading issues in congested areas.
- 1st PIO Parliamentary Conference
 - PM Narendra Modi inaugurates the first Persons of Indian Origin (PIO)
 Parliamentary Conference in Delhi.
 - o In the Conference, the biggest delegation was from Guyana with 20 members of parliament and three mayors.
 - The event is scheduled to commence at 10 am with Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj's speech and Prime Minister Modi will be the keynote speaker.

• Arunachal to have India's 2nd FTII

- Arunachal Pradesh would get its first Film and Television Institute, being set up by the Union Government as part of tapping the potential of the Northeastern region.
- o This would be the second such institute in the country.
- The first Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) was set up in Pune, an autonomous institute operating under the Information and Broadcasting Ministry.
- NP for differently abled people
 - Telangana State Government inaugurated **India's first** National Park for differently abled people in Hyderabad.
 - o The park will have speech therapist, physiotherapist, vocational training instructors for the differently-abled children.
 - o An IT park on similar lines is coming up in the state.
- TIHCL Gets RBI Nod to Operate as NBFC









- Telangana Industrial Health Clinic Ltd (TIHCL), a State government initiative, has got RBI clearance to register and function as a non-banking finance company (NBFC).
- o It will be the first State promoted and co-financing NBFC.
- o It had won the SKOCH Platinum Award in September 2017 under the smart governance category in the MSME segment.
- WB Unveils Official Emblem of Government
 - o West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee unveiled the official emblem of the state government, which was recently approved by the centre.
 - The logo highlights the Ashoka emblem on the top with the theme of "Biswa Bangla" at the centre.
 - Ms Banerjee has also contributed to the design of the emblem. This new logo will be used in all government documents, including government letterheads.
- States ranked on logistics performance
 - The commerce ministry will come out with a Logistics Performance Index (LPI) on January 8, ranking states in terms of the logistical support they provide to promote trade.
 - o The index will act as a dynamic tool for the ministry to identify bottlenecks in this area.
 - o The ranking is based on about eight parameters such as transportation facilities available in states and documentation procedures.
- Modi To Address Conference in MP
 - o Prime Minister will attend a top-level police conference on January 7-8 at the Border Security Force (BSF) Academy at Tekanpur in Gwalior.
 - He had earlier addressed the conference in the National Police Academy in Hyderabad in 2016.











- Annual Conference of DGPs and IGPs of states is an event where top police officers share and discuss security related issues.
- Chandigarh records highest GER for girls
 - o Chandigarh has recorded the highest Gross Enrolment Ratio or GER for females in all categories of higher education at 68.8 per cent.
 - Across India, according to the report, of the total number of colleges, only
 9.3 per cent are exclusively for girls and 15 universities for women.
 - o The overall GER of the country has increased from 24.5 per cent in 2015-16 to 25.2 per cent in 2016-17.
- Android Trojan targets Indian bank apps
 - An Android Banking Trojan/Malware that targets around 200 apps, including those offered by Indian banks, has been detected.
 - The malware is designed for stealing login credentials, hijacking SMS messages, uploading contact lists and SMS messages to malicious servers.
 - The malware has targeted banking apps of Axis Bank, HDFC, ICICI, IDBI and Union Bank
- Telangana to have Minority Commission
 - Telangana government formed Minorities Commission with Mohammed Qamaruddin as its Chairman.
 - Rajarapu Pratap was made vice chairman of Telangana Minorities
 Commission.
 - The members of this commission are Mohammed Arshad Ali Khan, Vidya Sravanti, Gusty Noria, Bommala Kattaiah and Surender Singh.
- Fund for National Waterway-1 project
 - Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister
 Narendra Modi gave its approval for implementation of the Jal Marg Vikas
 Project at a cost of Rs 5369 crore.







- This project is geared towards capacity augmentation of navigation on the Haldia-Varanasi stretch of National Waterway-1 (NW-1).
- The project is spread across four states viz. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar,
 Jharkhand, West Bengal.
- World Book Fair Begins in Delhi
 - o The World Book Fair started in New Delhi. Environment issues like climate change, global warming, and water pollution will be the main theme for this year's Fair.
 - The annual book fair will see around 800 publishers from across the country in different languages.
 - Apart from the EU nations, more than 40 countries are participating in the book fair.
- Organic food company to have certificate
 - The Food Safety and Standards Authority has issued regulations that required food companies selling organic produce to get certified with one of the two authorities National Prog. for Organic Production or the Participatory Guarantee System for India.
 - o Companies could also get a voluntary logo from the FSSAI.
 - FSSAI is an autonomous body established under the Mi. of Health & Family Welfare.
- Tamil Nadu tops in with 46.9% GER
 - Tamil Nadu which has the highest Gross Enrollment Ratio in higher education in the country has registered an increase of 2.6% to take GER to 46.9% in 2016-17.
 - It is according to the results of All India Survey on Higher
 Education released by the ministry of human resource development.
 - o Half of the students in the age group of 18-23 years in the state are enrolling themselves into colleges.









- Goa to Host Science Film Festival
 - Goa will be hosting the third edition of the Science Film Festival of India in January 2018.
 - The festival, titled SCI-FFI Goa, is being organised by the state-based Vigyan Parishad, Goa Department of Science and Technology.
 - o The competition aims to boost the culture of science films, all the films submitted should be related to science and technology.

• India's GER in Higher Edu. up by 0.7%

- o The country's Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education has registered an increase from 24.5% in 2015-16 to 25.2% in 2016-17.
- It is according to the latest edition of the All India Higher Education
 Survey launched by HRD Minister Javadekar.
- GER is a statistical measure for determining the number of students enrolled in undergraduate, postgraduate and research level studies within the country

Goa to ban plastic

- Goa will ban PVC-based plastic from May 30, and no plastic packaging will be allowed in the State from December 19.
- o Speaking at a public function in the city, he also said that littering would be made a punishable offence soon.
- Manohar Parrikar is Chief Minister of Goa.
- Largest refinery off-gas cracker complex
 - Reliance Industries has commissioned the world's largest Refinery Off-Gas
 Cracker complex of 1.5 mtpa capacity.
 - o The complex is a core component of RIL's J3 project at its integrated refinery-petrochemicals complex at Jamnagar.







- ROGC is the latest addition to RIL's existing cracker portfolio consisting of cracker facilities at Nagothane in Maharashtra and Hazira, Dahej & Vadodara in Gujarat.
- Cabinet approves Zojila tunnel project
 - The government approved the Rs 6,809-crore strategic Zojila pass tunnel project in Jammu and Kashmir.
 - The Zojila pass tunnel project in Jammu and Kashmir will provide allweather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil and Leh.
 - Zojila pass is situated at an altitude of 11,578 feet on Srinagar-Kargil-Leh National Highway.
- New AIIMS in Bilaspur
 - o The Union Cabinet gave its approval for the establishment of new AIIMS in Bilaspur (Himachal Pradesh).
 - o It will be set up at cost of Rs.1351 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).
 - Under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY), AIIMS on the pattern of AIIMS, New Delhi have been established in Bhubaneshwar, Bhopal, Raipur, Jodhpur, Rishikesh, and Patna.
- Tourist-friendly police in Puducherry
 - Puducherry government has launched a special police force, with distinct blue-coloured head gears, to ensure the safety of visitors.
 - o The personnel of the newly-launched 'Tourist Police' wing would wear blue badges bearing the police emblem.
 - The change in colour was aimed at easy identification of the personnel by tourists thronging the Union Territory.
- Nagaland declared as 'disturbed area'
 - o The entire Nagaland has been declared as "disturbed area" for six more months, till June- end, under the AFSPA.











- AFSPA empowers security forces to conduct operations anywhere and arrest anyone without any prior notice.
- o Under Section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (No. 28 of 1958), the central government declared the whole of the said State to be a 'disturbed area'.
- Karnataka International Travel Expo
 - o The Karnataka government announced that 'Karnataka International Travel Expo' will be held here from February 28.
 - o The three-day event will see close to 400 delegates from 25 countries take part.
 - The aim is to project Karnataka globally and attract tourist footfall, with emphasis on promoting the state's wild life, adventure destinations, historical monuments and UNESCO world heritage sites.
- Odisha releases Braille calendar
 - o The visually impaired in Odisha will get this year's Odia calendar and almanac in the Braille format.
 - o It is printed and published by Computerised Braille Press in Berhampur.
 - Printing of the calendar, Braille Dinapanjhika 2018, has been sponsored by the Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Department of Odisha government.
- 2018 declared as Telugu promotion year
 - Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu declared 2018 as Telugu promotion year.
 - He made this announcement at 29th edition of Annual Book Exhibition of Vijayawada.
 - Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu and the Chief Minister inaugurated the fest, which will remain open till January 11 at Swaraj Maidan.
- Arunanchal Declared Open Defecation Free









- Arunachal Pradesh welcomed 2018 by keeping its promise of making the state Open Defecation Free.
- It has become the second state in North-East after Sikkim to achieve ODF status.
- Upper Subansiri, Siang and Changlang were declared Open Defecation
 Free (ODF) officially.
- Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Haryana
 were declared open defecation free states in October 2017.
- Nat. Register of Citizens's first draft
 - The citizen of Assam witnessed the release of the first draft of National Register of Citizens.
 - It contains the first batch of 19 million names of genuine Indian citizens in compliance with the Supreme Court 's orders.
 - o Registrar General of India Sailesh released the document.
 - The first draft has listed 19 m people out of the 32.9 m applicants from within the state as legal Indian citizens.

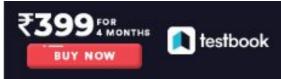
Assamese Version of Modi's Website

- o The Assamese and Manipuri language versions of Prime Minister's Official website- www.pmindia.gov.in were launched.
- Now the PM INDIA website is available in 11 regional languages namely Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu in addition to English and Hindi.
- Cargo Movement On Brahmaputra starts
 - In a major boost to the inland waterway transport system in the northeast, Union Shipping Minister Nitin Gadkari flagged off cargo movement on the Pandu-Dhubri route of the Brahmaputra river.
 - o It is on the National Waterway 2.









- Transportation of cargo from Pandu in Guwahati to Dhubri along the Assam-Bengal border would reduce logistics cost and save 300-km road travel.
- Kolkata bans public display of weapons
 - o The Kolkata Police has come out with a notification banning public display of weapons in the city for the whole of 2018.
 - o The order is effective from January 2. The notification specifies certain exemptions, but religious processions are curiously not among them.
 - The order will not extend to persons like the President of India, governors
 of state and It-governors or commissioners.
- Om Prakash appointed as UP's new DGP
 - Om Prakash Singh will be the new Director General of Police of Uttar Pradesh.
 - o Om Prakash Singh will succeed incumbent Sulkhan Singh.
 - o Till the new appointee takes charge, Anand Kumar, additional director general (Law and Order) will look after the day-to-day affairs.
- Jewar airport construction to start
 - The construction work on Jewar airport in Greater Noida will commence in December next year.
 - It will start earlier than the Uttar Pradesh government's scheduled plan and well ahead of 2019 Lok Sabha elections.
 - The Jewar airport is billed to become the biggest airport in India in terms
 of area.
- Odisha police to go digital from Jan 1
 - The Odisha police is all set to go digital from January 1, 2018 with computerisation of police station work under the Criminal Tracking and Networking System.







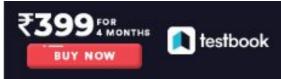
- o The project is being implemented under the national e-governance initiative at a cost of Rs 61 crore.
- o Now all the records will be maintained online to avoid duplicity of works.
- Assam gets fund for water transport
 - o Union minister Nitin Gadkari announced that Rs 1,250 crore has been sanctioned for overall development of inland water transport of Assam.
 - o Of this amount, Rs 32 crore will be utilised for constructing 56 terminals and Rs 60 crore for Ro-Ro service, an official release said.
 - o Ro-ro is 'roll-on, roll-off' ferry service in which people and goods including vehicles would be ferried.
- India Hosting 10 Asean Leaders on 26 Jan
 - Leaders of 10 ASEAN countries will be the chief guests on 26th January
 2018. It would be the first time in history.
 - ASEAN is a regional intergovernmental organisation comprising ten Southeast Asian states.
 - Since its formation on 8 August 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, its membership has expanded to include Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.
- Vikas Samiksha Yatra
 - Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has laid foundation stones for more than 100 projects worth Rs 700 crore in Nalanda district as part of his state-wide "Vikas Samiksha Yatra".
 - At Chamera village in Ekangarsarai block, Mr. Kumar dedicated to the public 132 projects worth Rs 97.63 crore.
 - o Satya Pal Malik is the governor of Bihar.

Defence









- Indian, Vietnamese to hold VINBAX
 - o Armies of India and Vietnam have begun a six-day-long military exercise in Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh.
 - The exercise named 'VINBAX' is the first military exercise between the two countries.
 - Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc was in New Delhi to participate in the India-ASEAN Commemorative summit and attend the Republic Day celebrations.
- China's new military training manual
 - o China's People's Liberation Army, the world's largest army, has published an officially approved outline for military training.
 - o It focuses on the PLA's combat capability, highlighting military training under combat conditions & joint training.
 - o The new training outline makes it a mission of the PLA that by 2035, the modernization of the China's national defence should be completed.
- Seychelles allows India military infra
 - o India & Seychelles have signed a revised agreement that will allow India to build military infrastructure on Assumption Island.
 - Agreement was signed by Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar & Seychelles
 President Danny Faure.
 - It will provide a framework for assistance to Seychelles by Govt of India to enhance military capabilities in control, maritime surveillance & protection of Seychelles EEZ.
- Upgraded version of Saras comes
 - The new upgraded version of SARAS, the indigenous transport aircraft developed by National Aeronautics Laboratory, "successfully" made its maiden flight in Bengaluru.









- SARAS PT1N, a 14-seater passenger aircraft, is an upgraded version of the plan.
- It is designed and developed by CSIR-NAL, a frontline aerospace research laboratory.

OPV Vijaya launched

- The second offshore patrol vessel (OPV) built by the Larsen and Toubro
 Shipyard for the Indian Coast Guard was launched.
- The indigenously built vessel 'Vijaya', equipped with state-of art radar, navigational and communication system, will be utilised for day and night patrol and surveillance.
- o The first OPV, to be built in a private shipyard, was launched in October 2017.

TN to host first ever Defence Expo

- According to defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Tamil Nadu will host its first-ever bi-annual defence exhibition in April.
- The exhibition will take place from April 11 to 14 and nearly 80 countries are expected to take part in it.
- o Arrangements will be made for the Navy, Army and Air Force to display their equipment in the exhibition.

• Vikramaditya affiliated to Bihar Reg.

- Indian Naval Ship Vikramaditya, the Indian Navy's largest ship and its sole aircraft carrier was formally affiliated to the Indian Army's highlydecorated and battle-hardened Bihar Regiment and the Indian Air Force's No 6 Squadron.
- o It is tasked with maritime strike operations with its Jaguar fighter aircraft.
- A ceremony was held onboard INS Vikramaditya at the Karwar Naval Base, Karnataka.
- Attack helicopter Rudra in R-Day parade



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- o Indigenously-developed weapon system integrated helicopter Rudra will make its maiden appearance in the Republic Day parade.
- Flypast by IAF on R-Day parade will involve 38 aircraft. The 2nd block will start with Rudra formation comprising Advanced Light Helicopter MK-IV WSI.
- Rudra is equipped with Forward Looking Infrared, a 20 mm turret gun, 70 mm rocket pods & anti-tank guided missiles.
- India test-fires ICBM Agni-V
 - India has test-fired its Agni-V intercontinental ballistic missile in its final operational configuration from Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast.
 - Nuclear-capable Agni-V missile can reach northern-most parts of China with its strike range of over 5,000-km
 - o Once Agni-V is inducted, India will join the super-exclusive club of countries with ICBMs alongside US, Russia, China, France & UK.
- Nirmala Sitharaman flies in Sukhoi 30
 - Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman undertook a sortie in IAF s
 frontline combat jet Sukhoi-30 MKI in the western sector of Rajasthan.
 - She is the first woman defence minister of India to fly a sortie in an IAF Sukhoi-30 MKI fighter aircraft.
 - Sukhoi-30 MKI is a nuclear-capable aircraft which can penetrate deep into enemy territory and is the most potent component of our nation's air power.
- India, Japan hold joint naval exercise
 - Ships & aircraft of Indian Coast Guard & its Japanese counterpart conducted a joint naval drill in Chennai.
 - As many as 9 ships & 8 aircraft of Indian Coast Guard along with Japanese Coast Guard Ship 'Tsugaru' with helo participated in the biennial Search & Rescue Exercise 2018.









- Observers from 17 countries and members of National Maritime Search & Rescue Board also witnessed the drill.
- AB Singh takes over as Chief of SWNC
 - Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh took over as Chief of Staff, Western Naval Command from Vice Admiral Ravneet Singh.
 - Vice Admiral AB Singh was the Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Strategic Forces Command prior to his current appointment.
 - He is a specialist in Navigation and Aircraft Direction.
 - An alumnus of NDA, Vice Admiral AB Singh was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 01 July 1983.
- DAC clears procurement of carbines
 - A proposal worth Rs 3,547 crore to procure assault rifles and carbines was cleared by the Defence Acquisition Council.
 - Under the proposal, 72,000 assault rifles and 93,895 carbines will be procured on the "fast track basis".
 - o The procurement is to "enable the defence forces to meet their immediate requirement for the troops deployed on the borders".
- Government to raise 15 new battalions
 - o The government is planning to raise 15 new battalions in the country's two important border guarding forces the BSF and the ITBP.
 - o It is being done to fortify defence along the strategic frontiers with Pakistan, Bangladesh and China.
 - While the BSF is the country's largest border guarding force with a strength of about 2.5 lakh, the ITBP is about 90,000-personnel strong.
- South Korea, GCCI Sign MoU
 - An official delegation from South Korea and the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed a MoU.











- o MoU is for co-operation between industries in Gujarat and the East Asian countries, with a focus on automobile, defence and textile sectors.
- o The South Korean delegation was led by the country's Consul General in Mumbai, Kim Soungeun.
- Defence Innovation Centre in Coimbatore
 - o Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced the release of ₹20 crore to the Coimbatore District Small Industries Association for setting up a defence innovation centre here.
 - o The centre will help the MSME and start-ups engaged in the manufacture of components for the defence sector to conduct tests and trials.
 - o India is the third biggest armaments procurement country in the world.
- INS Arihant left crippled after accident
 - o Indigenous nuclear submarine INS Arihant suffered major damage due to 'human error' and has not sailed now for more than 10 months.
 - Arihant is the most important platform within India's nuclear triad covering land-air-sea modes.
 - Arihant, the country's only operational Ship Submersible Ballistic Nuclear asset, can stay undetected deep underwater for long periods, range far and wide.

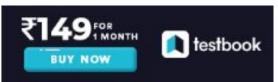
• Def Min approves projects worth ₹2420 cr

- The Defence Ministry gave final approval for the procurement of simulated training solutions for the Navy's P-81 long-range maritime patrol aircraft.
- Electronic warfare systems for the Army will be procured at a combined cost of ₹2419.32 crore.
- o The deal was cleared in the past by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC).

India & World

• Sushma Swaraj to visit Nepal









- o In a bid to revive ties with Nepal, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj will visit Kathmandu from February 1 to 2.
- o The visit comes weeks after Nepal elected a Leftist coalition, which won the first historic poll under the new Constitution of the country.
- o The visit by Ms. Swaraj will be the first big diplomatic engagement with the newly elected Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli.
- India, Vietnam Released Comm. Stamps
 - India and Vietnam released first ever set of commemorative postage stamps to mark the long term friendly bilateral relationships between the two countries.
 - These stamps on the theme of ancient architecture are a symbol of strong friendship between the two countries.
 - The two set of stamps released carry picture of Sanchi Stupa and Thien Mu
 Pagoda.
- PM Modi to visit Palestine, UAE and Oman
 - PM Modi will be on a state visit to Palestine, UAE and Oman from February 9-12.
 - o This will be the first-ever visit by an Indian prime minister to Palestine.
 - Modi would be addressing the 6th World Government Summit being held in Dubai.
 - o Modi's visit to Palestine assumes huge significance in the sense that India was one of the first countries to recognise the state of Palestine in 1988.
- Modi to address World Government Summit
 - o PM Modi will address the 6th World Government Summit, at which India is 'Guest of Honour', at Dubai.
 - o This will be PM Modi's second visit to United Arab Emirate.
 - World Govt Summit is an annual event held in Dubai that brings together
 leaders in govt for a global dialogue about governmental process & policies



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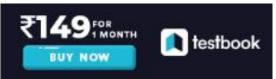




with a focus on issues of futurism, technology & innovation, as well as other topics.

- India, Cambodia ink 4 pacts
 - India & Cambodia have signed 4 agreements to enhance cooperation on security, connectivity and development assistance.
 - o The two countries signed pacts for a MoU on prevention of human trafficking & also agreed to enhance bilateral defence ties.
 - o Cambodia, which is very close to China, endorsed the importance of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in a joint statement with India.
- AAI, Lao PDR sign aviation agreement
 - Airports Authority of India has signed an agreement with Lao Air Traffic Management, Department of Civil Aviation for providing "SkyRev360".
 - SkyRev360 is a comprehensive e-data gathering, invoicing and collection system.
 - SkyRev360 has been developed in collaboration with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) under the Government of India's Make in India initiative.
- UN, Ind to boost tribal farming incomes
 - o UN International Fund for Agricultural Development & Indian govt has signed \$168mn pact to raise incomes & food security for tribal farming households in northeast India.
 - o Target population is smallholder farmers who depend on rain-fed agriculture & shifting cultivation system Jhum for their livelihoods.
 - It will help rural farming households in tribal villages located in Mizoram
 & Nagaland.
- India, ASEAN to boost maritime ties









- The leaders of India and ASEAN agreed to boost their maritime ties at a summit in New Delhi.
- o It comes in the wake of growing concerns over China's rising military posturing in the South China Sea.
- ASEAN and India will promote regional cooperation in terms of capacity building, information sharing and exchanges that could curb and fight maritime crimes.

• Bharat-ASEAN Maitri Park In Delhi

- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated the Bharat-ASEAN Maitri Park in the national capital.
- o ASEAN Secretary General Le Luong Minh also attended the event, held at the Tughlag Crescent, in the heart of Lutyens' Delhi.
- o The two-day summit is expected to give boost to India-ASEAN cooperation in key areas of counter-terrorism, security and connectivity.
- India, Vietnam sign two agreements
 - India and Vietnam signed a MoU to enhance cooperation in the field of information and broadcasting.
 - It is based on principles of equality and reciprocity pursuant to their national laws and regulations.
 - Another implementation arrangement between ISRO and National Remote Sensing Department of Vietnam was also concluded on the occasion.
- Japan commits loan to Bengaluru
 - Japan has committed JICA Official Development Assistance loan for an amount of 45 billion yen (about Rs 2,587 crore) for Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Project (Phase 3).









- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provides various forms of aid for promoting economic and social development in developing countries.
- o **Shinzō Abe is Prime Minister of Japan, with its** capital as Tokyo.
- NSIC Inks Pact With Malaysia
 - National Small Industries Corporation signed an MoU with SME
 Corporation Malaysia for exchange of information and cooperation.
 - MoU was signed in areas such as policies to aid development of small and medium businesses in the two countries.
 - Besides, three other agreements were also signed between Indian and Malaysian entities.
 - o Bilateral trade was registered at \$12.02 billion in 2015.
- World Eco. Forum Meeting concludes 2
 - Mr Modi outlined climate change, terrorism and protectionism as three global threats.
 - He also met his Canadian counterpart, Justin Trudeau.
 - o The Prime Minister also held a meeting with Queen Maxima of the Netherlands and discussed steps to deepen the bilateral relationship.
 - At the end, Mr Modi interacted with top global CEOs at the International Business Council event.
- World Eco. Forum Meeting concludes 1
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi returned home after concluding his visit to Davos, Switzerland.
 - o During the visit, the Prime Minister delivered a keynote address at the plenary session of the 48th annual meeting of World Economic Forum.
 - o He became the first Indian prime minister in two decades to join the world's top business leaders in the Swiss resort town of Davos.
- DP World, NIIF to set up invst. platform









- The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund and Dubai-based ports operator DP World Pvt. Ltd, announced the creation of an investment platform.
- This is the first investment platform from NIIF and will see investment up to \$3 billion of equity to acquire assets and develop projects in these sectors.
- o The platform will also look at opportunities beyond sea ports.
- World Bank signs US\$300m loan
 - o The World Bank approved a US\$300 million loan for Nepal as the impoverished nation struggles to raise money to rebuild almost three years after an earthquake killed thousands and flattened homes.
 - Nearly 9,000 people died when a 7.8-magnitude quake struck in April
 2015, destroying more than half a million homes.
- India to Grow at 7.4% in 2018: IMF
 - According to the IMF, India is projected to grow at 7.4% in 2018, making it the fastest growing country among the emerging economies.
 - o India's economy slowed down a little bit to 6.7% in 2016.
 - In its latest World Economic Outlook update released in Davos,
 Switzerland on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum, the IMF has projected a 7.8% growth rate for India in 2019.
- 17 Indian fishermen arrested in Pakistan
 - Seventeen Indian fishermen have been arrested for allegedly fishing in Pakistani waters and a court here remanded them into custody.
 - Most of the fishermen belonged to Gujarat. The 17 Indian fishermen were arrested for fishing in Pakistan's territorial waters, according to the Maritime Security Force.
 - The arrests come after the release of 145 Indian fishermen on December
 28.











• Israel PM Netanyahu's visit - Part 2

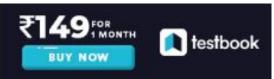
India and Israel signed the following MoUs.

- o Israel will invest \$68.6m to boost cooperation with India in areas like technology, tourism, agriculture and innovation in 4 years.
- India and Israel inked 9 pacts in cyber security medicine and oil & gas sectors.
- o Both announced joint research and development projects under the India-Israel Industrial R&D and Technological Innovation Fund (I4F).

• Israel PM Netanyahu's visit - Part 1

- o Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was on a six-day official visit to India starting from January 14, 2018.
- o Mr. Netanyahu is the second Israeli Prime Minister after Ariel Sharon to visit India in the last 25 years of India-Israel diplomatic relationship.
- PM Modi, Netanyahu renamed Teen Murti Chowk in Central Delhi as Teen Murti Haifa Chowk.
- India joins Aus export control regime
 - o India has joined the Australia Group export control regime, an informal forum which seeks to ensure that exports do not contribute to development of chemical or biological weapons.
 - o The inclusion is expected to raise India's stature in field of nonproliferation & help in acquiring critical technologies.
 - o India is now a member of MTCR, Wassenaar Arrangement as well as Australia Group.
- 2nd passenger bus to Kolkata via Dhaka
 - A second passenger bus to Kolkata via Dhaka was started from Agartala,
 Tripura, to give a boost to the trans-border relationship between India and Bangladesh.









- The second bus service has been named Maitre-2.
- o The bus service is expected to improve the relationship between India and Bangladesh through people-to-people connectivity.
- o The first Maitre bus service was launched in the year 2015.
- Modi, Netanyahu inaugurate i Create centre
 - o PM Modi & his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu inaugurated the iCreate centre in Ahmedabad's Deo Dholera Village.
 - iCreate paves way for the two nations to jointly script new stories of success through innovation, which the two leaders have been strongly advocating.
 - iCreate centre aims to provide technology & assistance to innovative & imaginative minds in their entrepreneurial journey.
- Movement of vehicles in BBIN
 - Bangladesh, India and Nepal have given nod to operating procedures for movement of passenger vehicles in the sub-region under BBIN motor vehicles agreement.
 - The agreement was signed by the transport ministers of the BBIN countries in Thimphu, Bhutan on 15 June 2015.
 - The delegations also agreed to continue to conduct a trial movement of cargo vehicles from April 2018 onwards.
- Exports rise more than 12%
 - The Country's exports grew by 12.36% in December 2017 to 27.03 billion US dollars.
 - According to Ministry of Commerce and Industry, exports have been on a positive trajectory since August 2016 to December 2017 with a dip of 1.1 percent in the month of October last year.
 - o Exports of engineering goods, as well as petroleum products, showed an increase of over 25 percent in December.





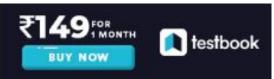






- India and Israel ink nine pacts
 - India & Israel have inked 9 pacts to boost cooperation in key areas, including cybersecurity and energy.
 - The agreements were signed after extensive talks between PM Narendra Modi & his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu for bolstering bilateral ties in strategic areas.
 - Agreements include cooperation in oil & gas sector, amendments to air transport, film co-production, space science etc.
- India, Sri Lanka sign four agreements
 - India & Sri Lanka signed 4 agreements for collaboration in ICT sector, setting up of e-office system & connecting of National Knowledge network for collaboration among universities & academics.
 - Sri Lanka has become the 1st country to be connected to NKN through a Gigabyte optical fibre network.
 - Agreement is part of Modi's vision of extending benefits of Digital connectivity to its neighbours
- India contributes USD 50,000
 - o India has contributed USD 50,000 to UN's youth mission which works to raise awareness & attention to youth issues globally.
 - The cheque was handed over by Paulomi Tripathi, a First Secretary in India's UN mission to UN Youth Envoy Jayathma Wickramanayake.
 - o It is a voluntary contribution and is in addition to regular payments which India makes to UN's general & peacekeeping budgets.
- WB To recalculate EODB rankings
 - World Bank has announced that it will recalculate the national rankings of business competitiveness going back to at least four years.
 - o The announcement was after a complaint by Chile, the ranking of which has come down from 34th in 2014 to 57th in 2017.









- The last major changes in the methodology and parameter of the EODB rankings were done under the watch of Romer's predecessor Kaushik Basu.
- India 30th on global manufacturing index
 - The World Economic Forum (WEF) has ranked India at 30th position on a global manufacturing index.
 - Japan has been found to have the best structure of production in the
 Geneva-based WEF's first 'Readiness for the future of production report'.
 - o It is followed by South Korea, Germany, Switzerland, China, Czech Republic, the US, Sweden, Austria and Ireland in the top 10.
- Israeli PM Netanyahu set to visit India
 - o Israeli PM is set to visit India where a series of events that will showcase the growing friendship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Israeli prime minister.
 - o PM Modi will break protocol to receive Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife Sara, at the airport.
 - o The visit comes after 15 years since Ariel Sharon came here in 2003.
- 3rd edition of annual Raisina Dialogue
 - The third edition of the annual Raisina Dialogue will be inaugurated by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on January 16, 2018.
 - The event will see a series of high-powered panel discussions on geopolitical issues.
 - Agriculture and water are the major strategic cooperation areas between the two nations.
 - o The bilateral trades between the two countries is 5 billion US dollar.
- India gives \$45 mn aid to Sri Lanka
 - o India has extended a fresh financial assistance of \$45.27 million for upgrading Kankesanthurai (KKS) Harbour in northern Sri Lanka.





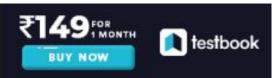






- This is to develop it into a commercial port and strengthening the country's efforts to become a regional maritime hub.
- o It would also assist in reconstruction efforts in northern Sri Lanka.
- o The KKS port was affected after the LTTE attack during the civil war.
- India, Indonesia hold 1st sec. dialogue
 - o India and Indonesia held their first security dialogue during which they agreed on operational cooperation in security and counter-terrorism.
 - The dialogue was led by National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs H Wiranto.
 - Jakarta is Indonesia's capital.
- Narendra Modi to attend WEF in 20 years
 - US President Donald Trump will attend the World Economic Forum in Davos later this month.
 - o This would be for the first time in 18 years that a US president would be attending an annual gathering of global economic leaders.
 - Modi will travel to Switzerland on January 22 on a two- day visit. This
 would be the first time since 1997 that an Indian prime minister will
 attend the Davos summit.
- India, UK to ink MoU on illegal migrants
 - o India will sign a pact with the United Kingdom for a return of illegal Indian migrants within a month of their being detected by authorities.
 - The memorandum of understanding comes ahead of Prime Minister
 Narendra Modi's proposed visit in March.
 - Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju will lead a delegation to the U.K. this week.
- India & Saudi signs Haj agreement









- According to the Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Saudi Arabia has given the green signal for India's decision to revive the option of sending Haj pilgrims through sea route.
- The practice of ferrying Haj pilgrims between Mumbai and Jeddah by waterways was stopped from 1995.
- For the first time, Muslim women from India will go to Haj without "Mehram" (male companion).
- Tirumurti appointed eco. relations secy
 - o India's High Commissioner to Kuala Lumpur T S Tirumurti was appointed the Secretary (Economic Relations) in the External Affairs Ministry.
 - o The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved his appointment to the post, in place of Vijay Keshav Gokhale, who was recently named as the Foreign Secretary.
 - o Tirumurti is a 1985-batch of officers of Indian Foreign Service (IFS).
- India-Indonesia Joint Commission Meeting
 - External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj co-chaired the fifth meeting of the India-Indonesia Joint Commission with her Indonesian counterpart Retno Marsudi.
 - o Both the countries agreed to work together for a balanced and sustainable trade by providing greater market access, both in goods and services.
 - She is on the visit of Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore from January 4 to8.
- India Excludes Pak from SAARC Initiative
 - India has excluded Pakistan from the list of SAARC member countries with which it will be connecting its state-of-theart National Knowledge Network.
 - Through NKN scientific databases will be shared and remote access to advanced research facilities will be provided.











- o SAARC is the regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union of nations in South Asia.
- MoU between India and Belgium
 - Cabinet approves MoU between India and Belgium on Cooperation in the field of ICT&F.
 - This MoU was signed on November 7, 2017 during the State Visit of King Philippe of the Belgium to India.
 - The MoU envisages cooperation between India and Belgium in sharing of best practices in the areas of Information Communication Technology, e-Governance, e-Public Service Delivery etc.
- MoU between India and Israel
 - o Cabinet has approved the signing of MoU between India and Israel on cooperation in the Oil and Gas Sector.
 - o The co-operation will facilitate promotion of investments in each other's countries, technology transfer, R&D, ETC.
 - The MoU is expected to provide an impetus to India Israel ties in the energy sector.
- India & UK sign MoU for public transport
 - The government approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)
 between India and London's transportation authority to improve public transport in the country.
 - The MoU is aimed at improving the overall public transport system, improve passenger services and promote the use of high capacity buses in India.
 - o MoU is signed by Ministry of Road Transport.
- India-Myanmar signs Agreement
 - o The Union Cabinet approved an agreement between India and Myanmar on the land border crossing.









- It would enhance economic interaction between people of the two countries.
- There are free movement rights already for people ordinarily residing in the border areas of both countries.
- o The agreement will also facilitate movement of people on the basis of valid passports.
- Swaraj visits 3 Southeast Asian Nations
 - External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj will embark on a five-day visit to Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore.
 - o Her visit is to boost India's ties with the three key Southeast Asian nations in the strategic domain as well as in the areas of trade and investment.
 - o In Singapore, the External Affairs Minister will inaugurate the Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas of ASEAN countries.
- Pak's list of nuclear installations.
 - o India and Pakistan exchanged, the list of nuclear installations and facilities under a three-decade old bilateral pact.
 - The two sides exchanged the list under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations between India and Pakistan.
 - o The agreement, which was signed on December 31, 1988, and entered into force on January 27, 1991.

Person in News

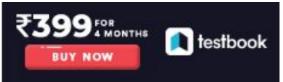
- Prakash won Lifetime Achievement Award
 - Vice President Venkaiah Naidu conferred Badminton Association of India Lifetime Achievement Award to 1983 World Championship medallist Prakash Padukone.











- o Naidu termed Padukone a "grand legend of a great game", who inspired the nation through his "sheer passion, grit and determination".
- The Mysuru-born had won gold medals at the 1978 Commonwealth Games
 & the All England Championships in 1980.
- Jazz musician Coco Schumann dead
 - o German Jewish guitarist Coco Schumann, died at the age of 93.
 - He was also a member of "Ghetto Swingers band", and was forced to perform concerts at the camp.
 - He had a seven-decade-long career in swing and jazz music and survived
 Nazi concentration camps.
- Dharmasena Pathiraja died
 - o Renowned Sri Lankan filmmaker Dharmasena Pathiraja, passed away.
 - Hailing from Kandy in Sri Lanka's Central Province, the filmmaker is credited with making a critical intervention in Sinhala cinema, with themes that served as social commentaries on the prevailing socioeconomic and political realities.
 - o He also taught film studies in various Sri Lankan universities.
- Ingvar Kamprad died
 - o Ingvar Kamprad, the Founder of Swedish furniture giant Ikea, died at the age of 91 at his home.
 - Kamprad was the world's eighth-richest person with a net worth of \$58.7 billion.
 - He had founded Ikea at the age of 17, building it into the world's largest furniture retailer.
- Vijay takes charge as Foreign Secretary
 - Vijay Keshav Gokhale assumed charge as the new foreign secretary for a two-year term.









- He succeeded former foreign secretary S Jaishankar who completed his term of three-years, including one extended year, this month.
- Gokhale, who joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1981, played a major role in resolving the 73-day-long Doklam standoff between India and China last year.

• 'Beetle Bailey' cartoonist Walker died

- o Comic strip artist Mort Walker who tickled millions of newspaper readers with the antics of the lazy private "Beetle Bailey," died.
- Walker began publishing cartoons at age 11.
- But he found his greatest success drawing slacker Beetle, his hot-tempered sergeant and the rest of the gang at fictional Camp Swampy for nearly 70 years.
- Mazumdar-Shaw, Rajiv Lall joins USIBC
 - Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, chairman and managing director of Biocon Ltd,
 IDFC Bank founder Rajiv Lall have been appointed to the board of US
 India Business Council for 2018.
 - o The board is comprised of industry leaders from the US and India.
 - The US India Business Council will work to advance the US-India strategic and economic relationship by advocating for policy changes
- Actor Supriya Choudhury passes away
 - Eminent actor of Bengali film and television, Supriya Choudhury passed away after prolonged illness. She was 83.
 - Ms. Choudhury was one of the most prolific actors of her time and was active till recently.
 - She is often remembered for her performance in foremost Bengali film maker Ritwik Ghatak's Meghe Dhaka Tara, on the impact of Partition on lower income Bengali household.
- Rachel chosen for Cinematography Oscar



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- Rachel Morrison, became the first woman to receive an Oscar nomination for cinematography.
- o She was nominated for her work on Dee Rees' Mudbound for Netflix.
- This year, she's nominated for the Academy Award in a competitive field that also includes Roger Deakins for Blade Runner 2049, Bruno Delbonnel for Darkest Hour, Hoyte Van Hoytema for Dunkirk and Dan Laustsen for The Shape of Water.
- Priyanka to be ambassador of Harman Int.
 - Harman International, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Samsung Electronics
 Co., announced that actor Priyanka Chopra will be its global brand ambassador.
 - The company, said that the actor will be the face of the company for JBL and Harman Kardon audio brands.
 - Harman International deals with connected technologies for automotive, consumer and enterprise markets.
- Rajesh will be next Ambassador to Niger
 - Shri Rajesh Agarwal, presently Counsellor, High Commission of India,
 Port Moresby has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Niger.
 - He is expected to take up his assignment shortly.
 - Niger is a landlocked country in Western Africa named after the Niger River. The capital city is Niamey.
 - o President Mahamadou Issoufou, Prime Minister Brigi Rafini.
- Chief Guests of 69th Republic Day
 - o Heads of ten ASEAN countries are chief guests.
 - Hassanal Bolkiah-Sultan of Brunei, Hun Sen- PM of Cambodia, Rodrigo-Pres. of Philippines, Joko Widodo- Pres. of Indonesia, Najib Razak- PM of Malaysia, Nguyen Xuan- PM of Vietnam, Halima Yacob- Pres. of









Singapore, Htin Kyaw- Pres. of Myanmar, Suu Kyi- state counsellor of Myanmar, Prayuth Chan- PM of Thailand & Thongloun Sisoulith- PM of Laos.

- Narayanan takes over as LPSC Director
 - Senior ISRO scientist Dr V Narayanan has assumed charge as Director of the space agency's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), at nearby Valiamala.
 - He succeeds S Somanath who has been appointed Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre.
 - Narayanan, who is a rocket propulsion expert, joined ISRO in 1984 and functioned in various capacities, a press release said.
- Trade unionist Yashwant Chavan dead
 - o Veteran Communist leader and noted trade unionist Yashwant Chavan died at a private hospital in Pune on Tuesday following a brief illness.
 - o Born in 1920, Chavan was one of the last Marxist luminaries to be active in the Indian Communist Party in its heyday in late 1930s and 40s.
 - Firebrands leaders such as S.K. Limaye and Shripad Amrut Dange served as his ideological mentors.
- Actor Krishna Kumari passes away
 - Actor Krishna Kumari (84), who has acted in over 200 Telugu, Tamil and Kannada films and dominated the south Indian film industry for more than two decades, died at her Bengaluru residence.
 - Her Kannada films included Jaladurga, Asha Sundari, Bhakta Kanakadasa, Dashavatara, Shrishaila Mahatme.
 - Born in 1933, Krishna Kumari made her debut through Navvithe Navaratnalu, a Telugu movie.
- Menon to be next Ambassador of Angola









- o Shri Srikumar Menon, presently Ambassador of India to South Sudan has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Angola.
- He is expected to take up his assignment shortly.
- Angola officially the Republic of Angola is a country in Southern Africa.
 It's capital is Luanda.
- CPI(M) plans impeachment against CJI
 - CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said that the party was trying to build a consensus on moving an impeachment motion against CJI Dipak Misra.
 - On January 12, four senior-most Supreme Court judges held a press conference raising questions on "selective" allocation of cases to certain Benches.
 - o In A.124(4), the guidelines for the Impeachment of Judges are given.
- Hugh Masekela, Passes Away
 - o Trumpeter, composer and singer Hugh Masekela, affectionately known as the 'father of South African jazz', has died after a long battle with prostate cancer. He was 78.
 - o In a career spanning more than five decades, Masekela gained international recognition with his distinctive Afro-Jazz sound.
 - He opened the 2010 FIFA World Cup Kick-Off Concert and performed at the event's opening ceremony.
- FICCI Appoints Dilip Chenoy as DG
 - Industry Chamber Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce &
 Industry (FICCI) has appointed Dilip Chenoy as its Director General.
 - o Prior to this, he was Chairman of Sant Longowal Institute of Engineering and Technology and Member, Board of Advisors, IILM.
 - He was awarded the Game Changer Award in 2015 and the Rashtriya
 Media Ratan Award in 2013.









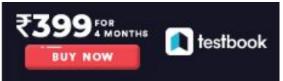
- Sarabhai Space Centre's new director
 - o ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) director S Somnath has taken charge as the new director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre.
 - He says the focus is on two upcoming launches next month.
 - Somnath told that his priorities will be on technology upgradation of launch vehicle design and to focus on immediate launches including GSLV-Mark (MK) II and PSLV-C41 in Feb.
- Journalist Anindya Sengupta passes away
 - Journalist Anindya Sengupta died at a private hospital in Kolkata. He was
 52.
 - Sengupta started his career with Bengali newspaper 'Bartaman', and then worked with English dailies 'The Statesman' and 'The Telegraph'.
 - He had served as the secretary of Kolkata Press Club for six terms, and was
 presently the secretary of the Indian Journalists Association (IJA).
- CPI (M) veteran Khagen Das passes away
 - Khagen Das, CPI(M) veteran and chairman of the Left Front Committee of Tripura, died in Kolkata on Sunday.
 - o Mr. Das, 81, died within minutes of his admission to a hospital for chest pain.
 - He was in Kolkata to attend the party's central committee meeting.
 - Mr. Das served as a Minister and member of the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha.
- Om Prakash Rawat Appointed New CEC
 - Election Commissioner Om Prakash Rawat was appointed as the next chief election commissioner (CEC) of India. Mr Rawat is the 22nd CEC of India.
 - He succeeded Achal Kumar Joti. The government also appointed former finance secretary Ashok Lawasa as an Election Commissioner.



FASTEST WAY TO PREPARE CURRENT AFFAIRS

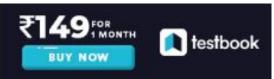






- o Mr Rawat will take over the office from 23rd January 2018 onwards. Sunil Arora is the other Election Commissioner.
- Anandiben to be next Governor of MP
 - Former Gujarat chief minister Anandiben Patel has been named the next Madhya Pradesh Governor.
 - She replaces Om Prakash Kohli, who has additional charge of the office of MP Governor along with the office of Gujarat Governor.
 - o In 2016, she resigned as CM on the ground that she was completing 75 years so decided to step down in keeping with the party's tradition of age criterion.
- S Selvakumar Appointed CMD Of SPMCIL
 - The government appointed senior IAS officer S Selvakumar as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd (SPMCIL).
 - o Selvakumar has replaced Anurag Agarwal.
 - The state-owned SPMCIL produces banknotes, coins, postage stamps, non-judicial stamps and other official documents.
- Goldberg to be in WWE Hall of Fame
 - WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment) announced that Goldberg will be inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame class at a ceremony in 6th April 2018, in New Orleans
 - o Goldberg retired from in-ring competition in 2017. He is the first to be listed in the WWE's 2018 Hall of Fame class. He is 51 years old.
 - He made his debut in WWE in 2003. Earlier, he was associated with the World Championship Wrestling.
- Veteran journalist NK Trikha passes away
 - Veteran journalist NK Trikha passed away this afternoon at All India Institute of Medical Sciences here after a prolonged illness.









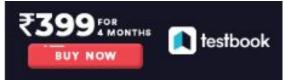
- Trikha had worked at the Times of India Group's Hindi newspaper
 'Navbharat Times' for a long time and was also the editor of its Lucknow edition.
- He also served as a member of the PCIe and he was twice president of the National Union of Journalists.
- BJP leader Pharande passes away
 - Senior Bharatiya Janata Party leader and former chairman of the state legislative council N S Pharande passed away. He was 78.
 - o Pharande suffered intracranial haemorrhage, a bleeding in the skull, which caused paralysis on January 4.
 - o Pharande was a patient of hypertension.
- Pandit Buddhadev Dasgupta passes away
 - o On 15th January 2018, Sarod maestro Pandit Buddhadev Dasgupta passed away following a cardiac arrest at his home in south Kolkata.
 - Pandit Buddhadev Dasgupta was 84 years old. He had been suffering from respiratory problems for a brief period of time.
 - He is a recipient of Padma Bhushan award. He was also awarded Sangeet Mahasamman and Bangabibhusan awards.
- Actress Charu Rohatgi Passes Away
 - TV actress Charu Rohatgi, known for her roles in serials like 'Iss Pyaar Ko Kya Naam Doon?' and 'Uttaran', passed away.
 - o She reportedly passed away after a cardiac arrest.
 - While Charu had played Parineeti Chopra's mother in the film 'Ishaqzaade', she had also starred in films like '1920: London'.
- HP woman featured in WHO's 2018 calendar
 - A health worker from Mandi district in Himachal Pradesh, Verma has featured in the World Health Organization (WHO) calendar for the year 2018.











- Verma has found mention in the WHO calender for her efforts to ensure hundred per cent coverage of her area of operation under the measles and rubella programme.
- Verma works to immunise the children of shepherds and the Gujjars community in the area.
- Twitter of Indian envoy to UN hacked
 - Twitter account of India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Syed Akbaruddin was hacked recently by a group of Pakistani hackers.
 - o Two photographs of Pakistan's flag and the neighbour country's President Mamnoon Hussain were posted from the twitter account.
 - o The account was later restored along with the blue tick and the questionable tweets were also removed.
- Tribute to Mahasweta Devi with a Doodle
 - o Google celebrated the 92nd birthday of eminent Bengali littérateur and social activist Mahasweta Devi with a doodle on 14th January, 2018.
 - Hailing from a family of prolific playwrights and writers, Mahasweta Devi wielded the power of the pen to bring to light the plight of "suffering spectators".
 - o Her first book, Jhansir Rani was a biography of the Rani of Jhansi.
- Harjinder Singh to be 'Chef de Mission'
 - The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) appointed Harjinder Singh as the Chef De Mission for the 23rd Winter Olympic Games.
 - o Games will be held in Pyeongchang, South Korea in February 2018.
 - Harjinder Singh is at present the General Secretary in the Ice Hockey Association of India.
- Dhingra to head new SIT on 1984 riots







- Supreme Court appointed the former Delhi High Court judge, Justice S.N. Dhingra, as chairman of its Special Investigation Team (SIT), to further investigate 186 cases in connection with the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.
- The court decided to independently investigate these cases.
- o The three-member SIT would also have Abhishek Dular, a 2006 IPS batch officer, and Rajdeep Singh, a retired IPS officer.
- Wrestler Sukhchain dies in road accident
 - o Renowned wrestler and coach Sukhchain Singh Cheema, a Dronacharya awardee, died in a road accident at Patiala bypass.
 - Sukhchain Singh Cheema was son of Rustum-e-Hind Olympian Wrestler Kesar Singh Cheema and father of Rustum-e-Hind Olympian Palwinder Singh Cheema, also an Arjuna Awardee.
 - Sukhchain Singh Cheema won Bronze medal in 1974 Tehran Asian Games.
- BCCI bans all-rounder Yusuf Pathan
 - o Indian all-rounder Yusuf Pathan handed a five-month retrospective suspension for failing a dope test.
 - The 35-year-old Pathan had provided a urine sample as part of the BCCI's anti-doping testing program during a domestic T20 match between his team Baroda and Tamil Nadu on March 16 last year.
 - o His sample was subsequently tested and found to contain Terbutaline.
- SP Mardi new Himachal DGP
 - BJP government appointed S P Mardi, a 1986-batch IPS as New Director General of police in Himachal Pradesh.
 - Incumbent DGP Somesh Goyal, who is a 1984-batch IPS officer and was holding additional charge of the Prisons and Correctional services, will retain his charge of Prisons.
 - o He earlier had held the posts of Additional DGP (CID).
- Jeff Bezos Becomes Richest Person









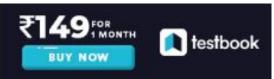


- Jeff Bezos, founder and CEO of Amazon has become the richest man in the history, overtaking Bill Gates, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
- o The Index showed that Bezos' net worth had hit USD 105.1 billion.
- o Index mentions Mukesh Ambani as the richest Indian and the 20th richest person in the world.
- Dr Sivan K Appointed New ISRO Chairman
 - The government appointed renowned scientist Sivan K as the Chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation.
 - Sivan, at present Director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, will succeed Kumar, who was appointed on January 12, 2015.
 - He was graduated from Madras Institute of Technology in Aeronautical Engineering in 1980.
 - ISRO was established in 1969.
- Peter Sutherland passes away
 - o Peter Sutherland, first WTO Director-General, passes away in Dublin.
 - He was 71. Mr. Sutherland took the helm of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1993 at a time when the outcome of the broad and complex Uruguay Round of global trade talks was very much in question.
 - o He left the WTO in 1995.

• Rahman becomes Sikkim's Brand Ambassador

- Music maestro AR Rahman was named the official Brand Ambassador of Sikkim.
- Mr. Chamling felicitated the legendary music composer during the inauguration of the 11-day Sikkim Red Panda Winter Carnival at Palzor Stadium in Gangtok.
- o Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling made the announcement.









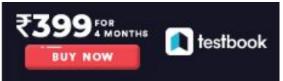
- Aanchal Thakur bags Bronze in Skiing
 - Aanchal Thakur made history as she won India's first ever international medal in skiing.
 - The 21-year-old Manali resident clinched bronze in the coveted Alpine Ejder 3200 Cup.
 - o The Championship was organised by the Federation Internationale de Ski (skiing's international governing body) in Erzurum, Turkey.
 - o She won the medal in the slalom race category.
- Saksham Yadav killed in Road Accident
 - o Five men, including powerlifting world champion Saksham Yadav, died and one other person was injured after their car met with an accident.
 - Saksham Yadav, who was admitted in an 'extremely critical' condition at the AIIMS Trauma Centre in Delhi, succumbed to his injuries in the evening.
 - Yadav had won a gold medal for the country in the 2017 Powerlifting Championship in Moscow.
- Shrivallabh Vyas passes away
 - o Shrivallabh Vyas, known for his work in films like Lagaan and Sarfarosh, passed away on January 7 in Jaipur.
 - Shrivallabh Vyas had appeared in over 60 Hindi films, with occasional stints in regional cinema, television and theatre.
 - Some of Shrivallabh's popular films are Sarfarosh, Abhay, Aan: Men at Work, Shool, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: The Forgotten Hero and Sankat City.
- Akshay to promote the Swachh Survekshan
 - After Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) urged Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar to partner it to promote the Swachh Survekshan 2018 campaign, the actor promptly agreed.



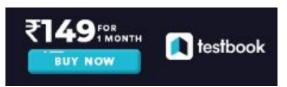








- He will be an integral part of the team to promote its cleanliness campaign in Mumbai.
- o The Swachh Survekshan 2018 will be carried out between January 4 to March 10, 2018, by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- Actor and comedian Jerry Van Dyke dies
 - o Actor and comedian Jerry Van Dyke, who won four Emmy nominations for his role in the US sitcom Coach, has died at 86.
 - Van Dyke was the younger brother of actor Dick Van Dyke, known for the musical films Mary Poppins and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.
 - He appeared in The Judy Garland Show.
- John Young, Astronaut dies at 87`
 - John Young, a legendary US astronaut who went into space six times, orbited the moon and then walked on its craggy surface, has died, NASA has announced.
 - Young was a man of many firsts: the only astronaut to fly in the Gemini
 Apollo and space shuttle programmes.
 - While in the navy, Young set world records for the fastest ascension from a standing start in an F-4 Phantom II jet.
- Radha Vishwanathan passes away
 - Carnatic vocalist Radha Vishwanathan, daughter of legendary classical singer M S Subbulakshmi, passed away.
 - Vishwanathan, 83, developed breathing-related complications following which she was admitted to the Fortis Hospital yesterday morning.
 - o She had accompanied her mother Subbulakshmi, a Bharat Ratna award winner, during her concerts, including overseas events, for decades.
- Menon Named Best Central Bank Governor







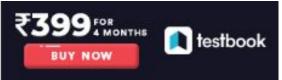
- The managing director of the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS),
 Ravi Menon, has been named the best central bank governor in Asia Pacific for 2018 by UK-based magazine, The Banker.
- Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat was also given this award in 2011 when he was then MAS's managing director.
- Over the last three years, the award went to the central bankers of Vietnam, India and Bangladesh.
- AB Mathur appointed as interlocutor
 - o The Centre announced the appointment of AB Mathur as the interlocutor on their behalf to hold talks with the United Liberation Front of Assam.
 - A 1975-batch IPS officer, Mathur served as the former special secretary of the Research and Analysis Wing.
 - ULFA is a separatist outfit operating in Assam for the indigenous
 Assamese and seeks to establish a sovereign Assam.
- Salman appointed as ambassador of Emami
 - Emami Group said it has roped in Bollywood star Salman Khan as the brand ambassador for its edible oil business, which is a part of Emami Agrotech Ltd.
 - Emami brands are endorsed by celebrities like Amitabh Bachchan, Shah
 Rukh Khan, Hrithik Roshan, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Kangana Ranaut,
 Shahid Kapoor and Sania Mirza, among others.
 - o Emami Group's Director is Manish Goenka.
- Bellucci to come back from 5-month ban
 - Brazilian tennis player Thomaz Bellucci was given a five-month suspension for doping.
 - The 30-year-old Bellucci was tested positive for the diuretic hydrochlorothiazide.











- Bellucci said the positive test was the result of a contaminated vitamin supplement.
- A. Sivanandan passes away
 - Sri Lanka-born British writer Ambalavaner Sivanandan, theorist of state racism and Black liberation politics and founding editor of Race & Class journal, passed away in London. He was 94.
 - o He is best known for his political essays and his novel When Memory Dies.
 - Mr. Sivanandan was a writer who focussed on 'racism that kills' as opposed to 'racism that discriminates'.
- Rajinder Appointed Deputy NSA
 - Rajinder Khanna was appointed the deputy National Security Adviser (NSA).
 - He was the former chief of the country's external intelligence agency,
 Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).
 - He headed the RAW for a fixed two-year period. Mr. Khanna is at present an officer on special duty (Neighbourhood Studies) in the National Security Council Secretariat.
- Poet Anwar Jalalpuri passes away aged 71
 - o Famous Urdu poet Anwar Jalalpuri died. He was 71.
 - He is best known for translating Bhagwad Geeta into Urdu in Shayari format.
 - Anwar Jalalpuri was a Yash Bharti Award recipient. He was born in Jabalpur.
- India's Highest-Ranked Player: G Sathiyan
 - o **G Sathiyan has become India's highest** ranked player in the latest International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) rankings.
 - He surpasses his compatriot the legendary Sharath Kamal.







- As for the women, Manika Batra is topping the world chart among Indians at 62, while Mouma Das is ranked 74th and Madhurika Patkar is ranked 81th.
- Vijay Gokhale Appointed Foreign Sec.
 - Former ambassador to China and current secretary (economic relations),
 Vijay Keshav Gokhale, has been named as India's next foreign secretary.
 - He will succeed S Jaishankar whose extended tenure will end on January
 28.
 - He is at present secretary (economic relations) in the Ministry of External Affairs.
- Pankaj Jain becomes IIFCL MD
 - Pankaj Jain, Joint Secretary in the Department of Financial Services (DFS), has assumed charge as the Managing Director of India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL).
 - He will be holding additional charge of IIFCL along with his present position as Joint Secretary at DFS.
 - IIFCL is a state-owned company focused on infrastructure financing and development.
- M.V. Pylee passes away
 - o Professor M. V. Pylee, educationist, passed away in Kochi. He was 95.
 - o Pylee, a brilliant academic, was Vice Chancellor of the Cochin university from 1977 to 1981 and was honoured with Padma Bhushan in 2006.
 - The emeritus Professor was a well-known authority on the Constitution of India, a pioneer in management education, a distinguished academician, and an eminent administrator.

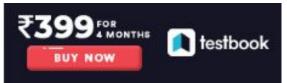
Environment











- 550m living with unsafe PM10 levels
 - About 550 million people, are living in cities that recorded annual particulate matter levels above the national standards in 2016, a report by Greenpeace India said.
 - o The report, titled 'Airpocalypse-II', said that 180 million people were living in areas where the PM10 levels were more than twice the annual limit of $60 \,\mu\text{g/m}^3$.
 - o Delhi is the most polluted with annual PM10 level of 290 μg/m³.
- Moss that can remove lead from water
 - Scientists have identified a type of moss that can efficiently absorb a large amount of lead, providing a green alternative for decontaminating polluted water and soil.
 - Lead-contaminated water is a serious environmental concern.
 - Researchers from RIKEN Center for Sustainable Resource Science (CSRS)
 in Japan conducted the research.
- India restricts use of imported petcoke
 - The environment ministry has placed restrictions on the use of imported petroleum coke in Delhi & its surrounding region to curb rising air pollution.
 - Only consented & registered industrial units of NCR States shall be permitted to directly import pet coke.
 - o India is the world's largest consumer of petcoke & imports over half its annual petcoke consumption of about 27mn tonnes mainly from US.
- Last 3 years hottest on record
 - o UN's weather agency, World Meteorological Organization has said the last three years were the hottest on record.
 - 2016 remains the hottest year ever measured, due to the warming effect of El Nino, while 2017 was the warmest non-El Nino year.









- The 21st century has so far been a period of the hottest weather, accounting for 17 of the 18 warmest years on record.
- Joint estimation of tigers in Sunderbans
 - o The first joint estimation of tigers in the Sunderbans, spread across India and Bangladesh, began on Monday, with a training workshop.
 - Eminent tiger biologist Qamar Qureshi said the Sunderbans houses the fifth largest tiger population in the world.
 - The region hosts 75% of all big cats in the world.

• 'Elcysma Ziroensis' discovered in AP

- A new moth species named 'Elcysma Ziroensis' has been discovered in the
 Talle Wildlife Sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh.
- o This discovery has been published in the Journal of Threatened Taxa.
- This new species has been scientifically named Elcysma Ziroensis.
- o It would be commonly called Apatani Glory. This has been named after a local tribe called Apatani.
- Clean air campaign from February 10
 - Government will launch a clean air campaign from 10th of next month for clean air in Delhi.
 - o The two weeks campaign will be held in collaboration with Delhi Government, NDMC, CPCB and other municipal agencies.
 - o The campaign seeks to sensitise ground-level functionaries and general public to enforce the habit of environmental protection.
- Mankidia denied habitat in Simlipal
 - Mankidia, one of the 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in Odisha,
 were denied habitat rights inside the Similipal Tiger Reserve.
 - They are denied their right under the historic Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006.



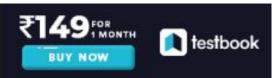






- State Forest Department has objected on grounds that tribals could be attacked by wild animals, especially tigers.
- New night frog species found
 - Scientists have just discovered the "mewasinghi" Night frog, belonging to a genus endemic to the Western Ghats, from Kozhikode's Malabar Wildlife Sanctuary.
 - o It is according to a scientific paper published on December 26 in The Journal of Threatened Taxa.
 - The new night frog "Nyctibatrachus mewasinghi" is light brown in colour with an off-white underside.
- 2 Ginger species found in the northeast
 - o Scientists have discovered two new species of Ginger in easternmost districts, Ukhrul in Manipur and Tuensang in Nagaland.
 - Hedychium chingmeianum, the species discovered in Tuensang district, is an epiphytic plant and grows on tall trees, while Caulokaempferia dinabandhuensis was found growing in rock crevices.
 - o Two BSI scientists, Nripemo Odyou and Dilip Kumar Roy, found the plant.
- Ban on entry in Bhitarkanika NP
 - The Bhitarkanika National Park in Odisha's Kendrapara district will be closed for tourists for a week so that the annual census of estuarine crocodiles can be done.
 - o The forest department has imposed a seven-day ban, starting January 3, to prevent noise pollution during the headcount operation of the reptiles.
 - It was designated as national park in 1998 and as a Ramsar site on 19
 August 2002.
- New endemic ants from the Andamans
 - Scientists have discovered 2 new ant species of the genus Tetramorium in the evergreen forests of the Andamans.









- Scientists of the NCBS, Bengaluru and the Okinawa Inst. of Sci. & Tech, Japan discovered the new species Tetramorium krishnani & Tetramorium jarawa in Havelock Island.
- o They are named in honour of late scientist K.S. Krishnan & after the Jarawas, an indigenous people of the islands.

Government Policies & Schemes

- SBI to launch credit card for farmers
 - The State Bank of India, through its subsidiary SBI Cards & Payments
 Services Pvt Ltd, will offer credit cards to farmers.
 - o The project has been initiated on a pilot basis in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, and depending on the success of the pilot run, it will be launched nationally.
 - The new credit cards for the farmers will have a credit limit with a credit period of 45 days
- Scheme for Power supply
 - Himachal Pradesh CM Jai Ram Thakur launched integrated power development scheme at Nagrota Bagwan to provide 24x7 power supply in 54 towns of the state.
 - This will include strengthening of power distribution system, setting up new transformers.
 - The scheme envisages to strengthen the basic infrastructure and upgradation of power supply and sub stations.
- Punjab launches benefits under MGSVY
 - Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh launched the release of benefits under 'Mahatma Gandhi Sarbat Vikas Yojana'.
 - o It is aimed at the inclusive growth of the distressed sections of the society.





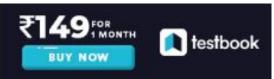






- He appealed to the state's debt-ridden farmers not to commit suicide.
- MIS portal for Anganwadi Training Prog.
 - Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Shri Rakesh
 Srivastava launched the Management Information System (MIS) portal for
 Anganwadi Services Training Programme in New Delhi.
 - o Ministry of Women and Child Development with NIC, has developed MIS.
 - The first phase of the portal will enable NGOs to submit proposal to the respective States/UTs. The URL is http://icds-trg.nic.in.
- 'one district, one product' scheme in UP
 - o The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet has approved 'one district, one product' scheme to promote products indigenous to every district.
 - o Implementation of the One District, One Product will boost economic development of the state, and also help in generation of five lakh new jobs annually.
 - o Under this, one product indigenous to every district would be showcased at the three-day UP Diwas event.
- 4 schemes to promote young scientists-1
 - The government announced four new schemes to promote young scientists and researchers.
 - Teacher Associateship for Research Excellence Scheme will connect the educators to leading public funded institutions like IIT, IISc to pursue research.
 - The 2nd scheme Overseas Visiting Doctoral Fellowship offers support to 100 PhD scholars for training in universities/laboratories abroad up to 12 months.
- UDAN Phase-II
 - o Around 40%, or 129, of the 325 air routes awarded under the second phase of the regional connectivity scheme were for Northeastern and hill states.









- These include strategic airports such as Kargil in Jammu & Kashmir,
 Pakyong in Sikkim where civilian air connectivity will be provided for the first time.
- o UDAN was launched on 27 April 2017.
- Nutrition scheme for HIV +tve children
 - Himachal Pradesh launched nutrition scheme for children affected by HIV under which they would be provided nutritional supplement.
 - o The initiative would go a long way providing nutritional supplement & it would boost immunity of around 400 youth up to 18 years of age, who had been tested positive for HIV.
 - In addition, awareness campaign should be intensified in schools and colleges.
- Ganga Gram Project launched
 - o The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation launched 'Ganga Gram' a project for sanitation based integrated development of all 4470 villages along the River Ganga.
 - The Ganga Gram Swachhta Sammelan was attended by more than 1400 delegates including 500 village sarpanches.
 - Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation is the nodal agency for implementation of the Ganga Gram Project.
- Manipur launches health assurance scheme
 - Manipur CM N Biren Singh launched the Chief Minister-gi Hakshelgi
 Tengbang (CMHT), a pioneering health assurance scheme for the poor and disabled people.
 - 10 advanced life support ambulances will be given as gift of Statehood Day to Manipur.
 - o The CMHT will provide cashless treatment to the poor at government hospitals, health centres and other empanelled selected private hospitals.

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- Star ratings for garbage free cities
 - o Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri launched the 'Protocol for Star Rating of Garbage-Free Cities'.
 - o The star-rating initiative, will rate cities on a seven-star rating system based on multiple cleanliness indicators for solid waste management.
 - o Cities can be rated as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 star based on their compliance with the protocol conditions.
- Kejriwal launches Girl Child Week
 - o Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal launched Girl Child Week programme to celebrate the girl child and spread awareness on gender equality.
 - o The Girl Child Week is held from 18 January to 24 January 2018.
 - o 24 January is celebrated as National Girl Child Day.
 - The Girl Child Week is organised by NGO Alliance Defending Freedom India and PC&PNDT Cell of Directorate of Family Welfare of Delhi government.
- Odisha plans to complete EWDS by 2018
 - The Odisha government has planned to commission Early Warning
 Dissemination System (EWDS) in coastal areas of 6 districts by March
 2018.
 - This is a part of World Bank-supported National Cyclone Risk Mitigation
 Project. Total cost of the project is Rs 75 crore.
 - o This system will send disaster warning messages to all mobile phone subscribers in the area that is to be affected by a disaster.
- PMSMA crosses 1 crore mark
 - J P Nadda, Minister of Health and Family Welfare has stated that antenatal check-ups under Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) has crossed 1cr mark.









- o PMSMA was launched in 2016 with an objective to ensure comprehensive and quality antenatal checkups to pregnant women.
- o Under this, quality antenatal checkups are provided to pregnant women on the 9th of every month at PMSAM sites.
- Govt. announces List of 9 Smart Cities
 - Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri announced the list of nine new Smart Cities, which have emerged winners in Round 4.
 - These cities are, Silvassa in Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Erode in TN, Diu in Daman & Diu, Bihar Sharif in Bihar, Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh, Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh, Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh, Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh and Kavaratti in Lakshadweep.
- Odisha launches MMKSJ
 - On January 15, 2018, Odisha State Government announced 'Mukahyamantri Kalakar Sahayata Jojana' (MMKSJ), under which artists from across the state will get a monthly assistance of Rs 1200.
 - o This scheme of giving Rs 1200 per month as artist assistance was announced by Odisha Chief Minister, Naveen Patnaik.
 - Around 50000 artists across Odisha will be benefited from this scheme.
- Kerala opted out of aspirational scheme
 - West Bengal, Kerala and Odisha have opted out of the Central Government's Transformation of Aspirational Districts scheme.
 - Aspirational districts refer to selected 115 backward districts that are lagging on specific development parameters.
 - Central Government has undertaken a major policy initiative for rapid transformation of these districts.
- 'I4Fund call for proposal' website

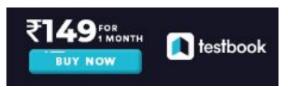








- o The 'I4Fund Call for Proposal' was announced with the joint launch of the website and the unveiling of the brochure by the two PMs.
- The "India-Israel Industrial R&D and Technological Innovation Fund (I4F)" was announced in July, 2017.
- Under this, the Department of Science and Technology, India and the National Innovation Authority of Israel have established a 40 million US dollar Fund.
- Punjab inks MoU with IOC
 - Punjab State Government signed a MoU with the Indian Oil
 Corporation to set up bio-gas and bio-CNG plants in the state.
 - The MoU with IOC was signed by Punjab Bureau of Industrial
 Promotion and Punjab Energy Development Agency in presence of Punjab
 CM Amarinder Singh.
 - o This agreement is in line with Punjab State Government's efforts to find sustainable solutions to paddy straw burning
- Rs 68,270 crore invested in development
 - According to data from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Rs
 68,270 crore were released under various schemes across the country from
 2014-15 till November 2017.
 - Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat emerged as the biggest beneficiaries of the government funding.
 - Swachh Bharat Mission, PMAY, AMRUT are some of the missions which have been funded.
- Rajasthan to digitise historical records
 - With an aim to protect old and fragile documents, the Rajasthan government is digitising 10,000 pages daily to preserve administrative and historical records of Rajputana's princely states.







- The move will further boost the state government's effort to use technology to improve the lives of people.
- o The online records will help research scholars, administrative departments of state government.
- Free treatment for Hepatitis C
 - o The health ministry is set to roll out a National Programme for Control of Viral Hepatitis from the 2018-19 financial year.
 - With the focus on Hepatitis C, an anti-viral treatment that costs \$63,000-94,000 for the full course in the US and Europe will be provided free at all government health set-ups.
 - Hepatitis C is caused by a blood-borne virus which affects the liver.
- Cabinet approves continuation of MPLADS
 - o The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval to the continuation of Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme till the term of the 14th Finance Commission i.e. 31.03.2020.
 - The Scheme would entail an annual allocation of Rs. 3,950 crore and a total outlay of Rs. 11,850 crores.
 - MPLADS is a scheme formulated by Government of India on 23 December 1993.
- FDI Policies Further Liberalized
 - Cabinet has given its approval to a number of amendments to the FDI Policy. These are as follows:
 - 100% FDI under automatic route for Single Brand Retail Trading & Construction Development.
 - Foreign airlines allowed to invest up to 49% under approval route in Air India.
 - FIIs/FPIs allowed investing in Power Exchanges through primary market. Govt. approval no longer required for FDI in SBRT.

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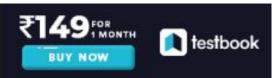


- Fixed term for Members of the Nat. Trust
 - The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal to amend Section 4(1) and Section 5(1) of the National Trust for the Welfare of Person with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.
 - o It will fix the term of the Chairperson & Members of the Board of National Trust for 3 years.
 - National Trust is a statutory body of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

• UIDAI Introduces 'Virtual ID'

- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has introduced a concept of 'Virtual ID' to further strengthen privacy and security of Aadhaar number holders.
- o The Aadhaar number holder can use 'Virtual ID' in place of an Aadhaar number whenever authentication or KYC services are performed.
- o Aadhaar card holder can generate the Virtual ID from UIDAI website.
- BharatNet covers 1 lakh Panchayats
 - o The government said it had laid optical fiber in more than 1 lakh gram panchayats, completing the first phase of the BharatNet project.
 - o It forms the backbone of the Digital India initiative.
 - The project aims to bring high-speed broadband to all 2.5 lakh Gram
 Panchayats (GPs) through the optical fiber. The project was earlier called
 the National Optical Fibre Network.
- New Online Vendor Reg System by Railways
 - Research Designs & Standards Organisation (RDSO), the research arm of Ministry of Railways, has launched 'New Online Vendor Registration System'.
 - o This new system provides major improvements and big changes in the registration system over the earlier system.









- This system was evolved by Minister of Railways & Coal, Shri Piyush Goyal.
- Haryana launches HRP portal
 - Haryana has become the first state in the country to launch high risk pregnancy (HRP) portal.
 - o This portal not only helps in early identification of high-risk pregnancy cases but also ensures their timely referral to the civil hospitals for further management and delivery by specialists.
 - The initiative had been lauded by the Niti Ayog and the Union ministry of health and family welfare.
- Assam inaugurates skill dev. centres
 - With an aim to promote skill development in northeast India, the centre
 and the states have been rolling out various projects.
 - Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated various skill development centres across the state.
 - Sonowal recently inaugurated around 249 skill centres in the state to impart vocational training to the native youth and help them become financially independent.
- Railways to equip stations with Wi-Fi
 - o All railway stations nearly 8,500 across the country, will be equipped with Wi-Fi facilities at an estimated cost of Rs 700 crore.
 - As part of the government's ambitious Digital India initiative, it has currently commissioned Wi-Fi services at 216 major stations.
 - Digital India is a campaign launched by the GoI to ensure that
 Government services are made available to citizens electronically.
- HP govt to set up Gudiya helpline
 - o Himachal Pradesh's Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said the government would set up 'Gudiya helpline' for reporting crime against women.

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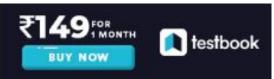






- They have adopted the policy of zero tolerance.
- Special women cells would be created in the state to deal with crime against women.
- o 'Gudiya' is a nickname given to the 16-year-old victim of rape and murder in Kotkhai town. The incident took place in 2017.
- APY subscriber base touches 80 lakh-mark
 - PFRDA-run Atal Pension Yojana (APY) has reached a subscriber base of 80 lakh.
 - Uttar Pradesh is the highest contributing state at 11.41 lakh APY subscribers, followed by Bihar and Tamil Nadu at 8.87 lakh and 6.60 lakh respectively.
 - Atal Pension Yojana is a government-backed pension scheme in India targeted at the unorganised sector. It was launched in the year 2015.
- 10 Rs note to have Sun Temple
 - The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) presented the new Rs 10 banknote under the Mahatma Gandhi (New) series.
 - o The back of the note features motif of Sun Temple in Konark, 'depicting the country's cultural heritage'.
 - o Dimensions of the note are 63mmx123mm, as opposed to the older notes 63mmx137mm.
 - o It also has Swachh Bharat logo with the slogan.
- Centre introduces 7.75% savings bonds
 - The Centre has announced the introduction of 7.75% savings bonds designed to help citizens invest in a taxable instrument, without any monetary ceiling.
 - o The bonds are open to investment by individuals, including joint holdings and HUFs.









- o The bonds will be issued at par, that is, at ₹100 and would be issued for a minimum amount of and in multiples of ₹1,000.
- Over 2.55 crore children vaccinated
 - o The four phases of Mission Indradhanush has reached 2.55 crore children and around 68.7 lakh pregnant women in 528 districts across the country.
 - MI is a vaccination programme to ensure that children under the age of 2 and pregnant women are immunised against seven life-threatening diseases.
 - The word represents 7 vaccines that are currently included in the Universal Immunisation Programme.
- Government launches MyGov platform
 - The government has launched MyGov platform where interested people can give their considered view on the subject.
 - The platform invites citizens, members of civil society, journalists etc to give their suggestions.
 - The platform with people asking for different sorts of changes they would like to see in the coming days.
- Ministries join hands for Railways proj.
 - o Three Union ministries have signed a memorandum of understanding to facilitate the co-financing of 'Technology Mission for Indian Railways', says Ashwani Lohani, chairman, Railway Board.
 - MoU will facilitate co-financing of TMIR by investment sharing for railway projects.
 - o The mission will take up R&D projects in the areas of heavy haul, safety, energy, environment and urban railways.
- Namami Gange projects approved by NMCG
 - National Mission for Clean Ganga has approved five projects of worth Rs.
 295.01 crore.



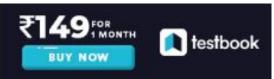






- Three projects pertain to sewage management in West Bengal at an estimated cost of Rs 278.6 crore, one relates to sewage management in Uttarakhand and one project is related to ghat improvement works in Varanasi.
- o NMCG is the implementation wing of National Ganga Council which was set up in October 2016.
- 1st digital Online Oncology Tutorial
 - o The Health Ministry launched the country's first digital online oncology tutorial series designed in collaboration with the Tata Memorial Centre.
 - o The series is aimed at educating doctors in early detection, prevention, palliation, rehabilitation and treatment of various forms of cancers.
 - Oncology is a branch of medicine that deals with the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer.
- 'Swachh Sarvekshan 2018'
 - The world's biggest cleanliness survey 'Swachh Sarvekshan Survey 2018'
 was launched in India.
 - o It will be conducted from the 4th of January to 10th of March.
 - o The cleanliness survey was launched in 2016 as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission. The main objective of Swachh Survekshan is to encourage large-scale citizen participation and create awareness.
- Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar Mela 2017-18
 - Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched 'Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar Mela 2017-18' at a function held at Sarbananda Singha auditorium in Tinsukia, Assam.
 - During the launch, Sarbananda Sonowal distributed cheques to beneficiaries.









- Under this scheme, people belonging to tea community who opened bank accounts during demonetisation will be credited Rs 2500 in their accounts.
- Solar plants mandatory in new buildings
 - The Haryana government has mandated installation of Solar Photovoltaic
 Power plant in new buildings as per specified norms.
 - o This has been done in a move to conserve electricity and use it efficiently.
 - o The government says the move aims to efficient use of electricity and its conservation in the state.
- Solar-based irrigation schemes: Haryana
 - Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar directed the state irrigation department to implement the integrated solar-based micro irrigation scheme in all districts of Haryana.
 - Mr. Khattar has constituted a committee headed by Haryana Renewable Energy Development Agency chairman to form a strategy to execute this scheme.
 - o This scheme will save electricity and water.

'Electoral Bonds' Scheme

- o The Centre unveiled the 'Electoral Bonds' scheme, which seeks to ensure the flow of clean money to political parties, without revealing the donors' names.
- o The electoral bonds will be a bearer instrument in the nature of a Promissory Note and an interest-free banking instrument.
- The bonds can be purchased for any value in multiples of Rs1,000; Rs10,000; Rs1 lakh; Rs10 lakh; and Rs1 crore.
- Assam launches free CT Scan service



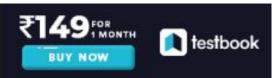






- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched a free CT Scan service under at Shri Shri Pitambar Dev Goswami Civil Hospital in Majuli island.
- o It is launched under 'Chief Minister Free Diagnostic Services'.
- Majuli is world's largest river island. It is also the home constituency of Sonowal.
- Allied and Healthcare database portal
 - o Ms. Preeti Sudan, Secretary, Health and Family Welfare launched the Allied and Healthcare Professionals' database portal.
 - o It is a part of Ministry's commitment to ensure better systems for the healthcare workforce in the country.
 - o This portal is a measure to track and reach out to all the allied and healthcare professionals in the country. The link to the website portal is a2hp.mohfw.gov.in.
- Karnataka to obtain electric vehicles
 - Karnataka would obtain electric vehicles under the Centre's FAME-India scheme.
 - o Karnataka is set to procure and ply 40 electric buses, 100 four wheelers and 500 three wheelers along with setting up of charging infrastructure.
 - Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric vehicles is a part of the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan, for promoting ecofriendly vehicles.
- Saubhagya Yojana launched by Jharkhand
 - o Jharkhand CM Raghubar Das launched "Saubhagya Yojana".
 - o It is a programme that would provide electricity to all the 29,376 villages in the state.
 - o Das said people would get electricity 24x7, which would not only change the life of the people in the villages but also there would be a change in









their thought, economic condition, education of their children and lift irrigation for the farmers.

- WCD Ministry Inaugurated Portal NARI
 - o Women and Child Development Minister Maneka Gandhi inaugurated an online portal NARI in New Delhi for the empowerment of women.
 - o The portal will provide women with easy access to information on government schemes and initiatives for women.
 - The portal summarises over 350 government schemes and other important information.
- MoU to lay optical fiber network
 - o Chhattisgarh signed a MoU with the Centre for the second phase of the Bharat Net project under which 5987 village panchayats will be connected through optical fiber network.
 - The MoU will pave the way for laying 32,466 kms of optical fiber cable in
 5987 Gram Panchayats of the state.
 - National Optical Fiber Network was created for providing Broadband connectivity to Panchayats.
- Bhavantar Bharpai scheme in Haryana
 - To counter farm distress, Haryana government has launched Bhavantar Bharpai scheme (or the price deficit compensation scheme for vegetables).
 - o It is set on the lines of Minimum Support Price-type (MSP) formula for four vegetable crops, namely, potato, onion, cauliflower and tomato.
 - o The launch of the scheme is aimed at ensuring income of up to Rs 48,000 to 56,000 per acre to farmers.

Art & Culture

• Artiste passes away during performance





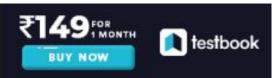






- Ottanthullal artiste Kalamandalam Geethanandan on Sunday passed away during a performance at a temple in Kerala's Irinjalakuda.
- A video of his last thullal performance, a combination of dance and recital, showing him collapse with folded hands went viral.
- o The 58-year-old artiste, who has performed on over 5,000 stages, was rushed to the hospital but was declared dead on arrival.
- Sur Fest to be named as Sur Girija Fest
 - An annual classical music festival in the city will now be christened as 'Sur Girija Devi Festival' in tribute to the late Thumri queen.
 - o The festival, to be held on February 4 is organised by Debapriya Adhikary and Samanwaya Sarkar, disciples of Girija Devi.
 - o In the past three editions, it was called 'Sur Festival, from now on, it will be 'Sur Girija Devi Festival'.
- International Camel festival
 - The two-day long, 25th International Camel festival has kick-started in Rajasthan's Bikaner district.
 - Organised by Department of Tourism, Art & Culture, Bikaner Camel
 Festival is a yearly event in Jan that the city celebrates in honour of ship of the desert, Camel.
 - Scores of beautifully decorated camels from various regions were witnessed on the first day of the festival.
- 7th Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav begins
 - o The seventh edition of the Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav, under the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat matrix, is set to begin in Karnataka.
 - o The state paired with Karnataka is Uttarakhand.
 - o The event will cover a profusion of art forms from classical and folk, music and dance, theatre to literature and visual arts.
- Int. kite festival begins in Gujarat









- The international kite festival which attracts kite flyers from across the country and the world began on Sunday in Ahmedabad.
- The international kite festival was inaugurated by Gujarat Chief Minister
 Vijay Rupani at Sabarmati Riverfront.
- The state government-sponsored festival will culminate on January 14,
 which is celebrated as Uttarayan (Makar Sankranti).
- World Book Fair Begins in Delhi
 - o The World Book Fair started in New Delhi. Environment issues like climate change, global warming, and water pollution will be the main theme for this year's Fair.
 - o The annual book fair will see around 800 publishers from across the country in different languages.
 - Apart from the EU nations, more than 40 countries are participating in the book fair.
- India gets a Kashmiri film
 - o For the first time in 45 years, a Kashmiri feature film, shot and produced entirely in the Valley, will hit cinema halls outside Kashmir.
 - Kashmir Daily explores the themes of drug addiction and unemployment in Kashmir.
 - o Ironically, the film will not see a theatrical release in Kashmir as there are no functioning cinema halls in the Valley.
- 171st Araadhanai Music Festival Begins
 - The 171st Araadhanai Music Festival of one of the Trinities of Carnatic music Saint Thyagaraja begins in Thiruvaiyaru, Tamil Nadu.
 - o The main function of the festival the choral singing of Thyagaraja's five kritis in Ghana ragas will be held on his Samadhi day.
 - Saint Tyagaraja, was one of the greatest composers of Carnatic music, a form of Indian classical music.











- Turkey's Bird Language in UNESCO's List
 - The unusual and very efficient whistle language used as a means of communication by villagers in remote northern Turkey entered the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.
 - UNESCO has accepted the "bird language" of Black Sea villagers as an endangered part of world heritage in need of urgent protection.
 - The UNESCO is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris.
- Odisha releases Braille calendar
 - o The visually impaired in Odisha will get this year's Odia calendar and almanac in the Braille format.
 - o It is printed and published by Computerised Braille Press in Berhampur.
 - Printing of the calendar, Braille Dinapanjhika 2018, has been sponsored by the Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Department of Odisha government.
- 2018 declared as Telugu promotion year
 - Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu declared 2018 as Telugu promotion year.
 - He made this announcement at 29th edition of Annual Book Exhibition of Vijayawada.
 - o Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu and the Chief Minister inaugurated the fest, which will remain open till January 11 at Swaraj Maidan.
- UP theme state for Surajkund crafts mela
 - The Haryana tourism department disclosed that Uttar Pradesh would be the theme state for the 32nd Surajkund International Crafts Mela.
 - o It would be organized at Surajkund, Faridabad from February 2 to 15.
 - Apart from all other states, about 24 countries would also participate in it.









 The fair provides a world-class platform for handicrafts from around the world to showcase their skills.

Science & Technology

- HPC facility launched in Noida
 - Union Minister for Earth Science, Environment, Forest & Climate Change,
 Dr. Harsh Vardhan dedicated the High Performance Computer (HPC)
 System named 'Mihir'.
 - o Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that with this facility, India's capacity in weather forecasting will improve.
 - o The Minister said that the HPC facility will be India's largest HPC facility in terms of peak capacity and performance.
- Fossil of dinosaur dug up in Egypt
 - Scientists have unearthed in a Sahara Desert oasis in Egypt fossils of a long-necked, four-legged, school bus-sized dinosaur that lived roughly 80 million years ago.
 - Researchers said the plant-eating Cretaceous Period dinosaur, named
 Mansourasaurus shahinae, was nearly 33 feet (10 metres) long.
 - He was a member of a group called titanosaurs that included Earth's largest-ever land animals.
- Ind-Origin in US Inventors Hall Of Fame
 - 2 Indian-American innovation pioneers Arogyaswami Paulraj for his MIMO wireless technology and Sumita Mitra for her nanocomposite dental materials, have been inducted into National Inventors Hall of Fame.
 - Arogyaswami and Sumita along with 13 other innovation pioneers would be formally felicitated.



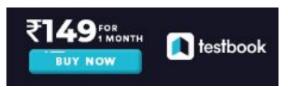








- Paulraj's wireless technology has revolutionised broadband wireless
 Internet access.
- 10,000-year-old 'crayon' discovered
 - Archaeologists have discovered one of the earliest examples of a 'crayon', possibly used by our ancestors 10,000 years ago.
 - o The ochre crayon was discovered near an ancient lake, now blanketed in peat, near Scarborough in England.
 - The study was published in the Journal of Archaeological Science. The
 pebble and crayon could have been used for colouring animal skins or for
 decorative artwork.
- Govt to set up apex cyber crime centre
 - To deal with cyber crimes such as financial frauds, circulation of communal & pornographic contents, the Union Home Ministry is planning to set up an apex coordination centre.
 - The apex centre Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (14C) would be set up in Delhi.
 - o It would coordinate with state govts & UTs & closely monitor cyberspace & social media with due emphasis on vernacular content.
- India-designed vaccine passes WHO test
 - For the first time, a vaccine conceived and developed from scratch in India has been "pre-qualified" by the World Health Organisation.
 - o The Rotavac vaccine, developed by the Bharat Biotech Limited last year, was included in India's national immunisation programme.
 - Rotavac vaccine protects against childhood diarrhoea caused by rotavirus
 & was built on strain of the virus isolated at AIIMS.
- Global Centre for Cybersecurity







- In a bid to safeguard the world from hackers and growing data breaches,
 the World Economic Forum announced a new Global Centre for
 Cybersecurity.
- Headquartered in Geneva, the centre will become operational from March.
- WEF will reach out to key industry players and G-20 countries to make this platform a success for dialogue and real-time action on cyber threats.
- An app to report roadkill
 - Be it tigers or toads, roads that cut through their habitats can be deathtraps for wild animals.
 - Now, a mobile-based application, 'Roadkills', launched on Jan. 21 by the Wildlife Conservation Trust, will help citizens to report such wildlife deaths by uploading geo-tagged photographs to a public forum.
 - o This can be used to identify crucial roadkill that urgently require mitigation measures.
- Tokyo held missile evacuation drill
 - Tokyo held its first missile evacuation drill with volunteers taking cover in subway stations and other underground spaces.
 - The choreographed evacuations at a fair ground and park ringing the Tokyo Dome baseball stadium involved around 300 volunteers.
 - North Korea conducted its most recent and biggest nuclear bomb test in September and has tested dozens of ballistic missiles.
- Dinosaur eggs found in Mahisagar
 - Balasinor in Mahisagar district is already home to one of the world's largest dinosaur hatcheries in Raiyoli.
 - Now, locals have discovered another possible egg of a dinosaur in Muwada village, about 10 kms away.
 - o The egg was found on Saturday evening during a digging exercise at a local site in the village and caused much excitement among the locals.









- Initiative to make 100 sites accessible
 - o In an initiative to empower Persons with Disabilities, 100 websites of various State Govts/UTs under Accessible India Campaign were launched.
 - Accessible Websites are those websites into which Persons with
 Disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with the Web.
 - ERNET India (MEITY) is executing the project which is funded by DEPwD under Accessibility India Campaign.
- MEITY launches Cyber Surakshit Bharat
 - In order to strengthen cyber security ecosystem in India, Ministry of Electronics & IT has announced Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative in association with NeGD & industry partners.
 - It will be operated on the three principles of Awareness, Education and Enablement.
 - o It is the first public-private partnership of its kind & will leverage the expertise of the IT industry in cyber security.
- WhatsApp Unveils Business App
 - Facebook-owned instant messaging platform WhatsApp has rolled out a feature that connects small businesses with customers.
 - Currently, only Android users can access the feature and they can avail of it through the latest update of the app.
 - The new feature will be available first in Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, UK and the US before being launched globally in the coming weeks.
- Japan launches new observation satellite
 - Japan's Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) has successfully launched a new Earth observation satellite, equipped with X-band radar.
 - ASNARO-2, developed by Japanese tech firm NEC, will perform Earthobservation tasks for five years from its orbit at an altitude of about 500 km.









- This was the first launch of a JAXA Epsilon rocket ordered by a private company.
- First image taken by Cartosat-2
 - The first-day image captured by India's recently launched weather observation Cartosat-2 series satellite shows a part of Indore city in Madhya Pradesh.
 - The image was acquired on January 15, three days after the launch of the satellite.
 - Cartosat-2 Series satellite was successfully launched onboard the PSLV-C40 rocket on January 12 by ISRO from its spaceport at Sriharikota, 110 km from here.

NASA discovers "SPT0615-JD"

- o NASA scientists have spotted the farthest known galaxy in the universe.
- o "SPT0615-JD" galaxy is a cluster of 500 million year-old stars.
- o The image of SPT0615-JD was captured by **NASA's Hubble and Spitzer** space telescopes.
- The images were captured through gravitational lensing. SPT0615-JD was found in Hubble's Reionization Lensing Cluster Survey and companion S-RELICS Spitzer programme.
- Brazilian becomes 5th to get rabies cure
 - A teenager from Brazil has become the fifth person ever in the world to be completely cured of rabies.
 - o Rabies is a rare but very serious infection of the brain and nerves and is almost always fatal once symptoms appear.
 - o The treatment involves administering antiviral drugs while putting the patient into a chemically induced coma to protect the brain from damage.
- Moon Landing tests for Chandrayaan-2









- o In a bid to land on the moon, ISRO is going to conduct landing simulation tests for Chandrayaan-2 spacecraft at Mahendragiri.
- Chandrayaan-2 mission comprises an orbiter, lander and six-wheeled rover which would move around the landing site and would send back data to study the lunar surface.
- o ISRO is chaired by A.S. Kiran Kumar.
- ISRO launches its 100th Satellite
 - The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle lifted off from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
 - o It carries 31 satellites in total from countries including India and six other countries.
 - Cartosat 2, a surveillance satellite that was part of India's 100th satellite was placed into sun-synchronous orbit according to ISRO.
 - o The satellites are to be launched in two orbits which makes the mission a unique one.
- ISRO mulls launching 65 satellites
 - o The Indian Space Research Organisation has set itself an ambitious to-do list for making and launching around 65 satellites for a slew of uses.
 - They are planned to be released over the period from 2017 to 2021, according to a top official.
 - o The headquarters of ISRO is in Bengaluru.
- India unveils its fastest supercomputer
 - o India unveiled Pratyush, an array of computers that can deliver a peak power of 6.8 petaflops.
 - A petaflop is a measure of a computer's processing speed and can be expressed as a thousand trillion floating point operations per second.







- Pratyush is the fourth fastest supercomputer in the world dedicated to weather and climate research and follows machines in Japan, USA and UK.
- India to have LIGO observatory
 - o India to set up LIGO observatory in Aundh (Hingoli dist.), Maharashtra which is expected to start functioning by 2025.
 - o India's role in studying gravitational waves touted as one of the most important discoveries of the recent past will increase once the proposed gravitational wave observatory is set up in the country.
 - o Already, several physicists from ICTS are an active part of LIGO project.
- Chemical ban closes up ozone layer hole
 - With the declining levels of ozone-destroying chlorine, scientists have for the first time observed less ozone depletion.
 - The findings showed that an international ban on chlorine has resulted in about 20% less ozone depletion during the Antarctic winter from 2005 to 2016.
 - o CFCs are long-lived chemical compounds that eventually rise into the stratosphere, where they destroy ozone molecules.
- NASA unveils 60th anniversary logo
 - NASA has released its logo for use in observing the 60th anniversary of its establishment.
 - o It has said that the logo represents its quest for knowledge.
 - A crescent moon, a ringed planet and a field of stars amid a nebula of light blue represent the agency's scientific underpinnings.
- NASA to Scan Border of Earth and Space
 - o A new NASA mission, GOLD, will examine Earth's upper atmosphere to see how the boundary between Earth and space changes over time.











- GOLD stands for Global-scale Observations of the Limb and Disk, and the mission will focus on the temperature and makeup of Earth's highest atmospheric layers.
- o Another spacecraft, ICON (Ionospheric Connection Explorer) will also be launched later in 2018.
- Endangered plant species discovered
 - Scientists have discovered a new endangered species of flowering plants in China.
 - It was discovered in southwest Chinas Yunnan Province during a field survey.
 - o The species, Primula Zhui, known in Chinese as Zhu Hua Baochun, was named after Zhu Hua, a researcher from the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).
- Typhoid vaccine gets WHO qualification
 - Bharat Biotech, a vaccine company, has received Pre-Qualification tag
 from the World Health Organisation (WHO) for Typbar TCV or Typhoid
 Conjugate Vaccine.
 - The WHO tag would allow the firm to access global public vaccination programmes.
 - WHO has recommended usage of typhoid conjugate vaccines on infants between 6 and 23 months of age and for children between 2 and 15 years of age.

• NASA's Parker Solar Probe

- NASA's Parker Solar Probe is scheduled for launch in 2018 to explore the Sun's outer atmosphere.
- o The probe will use Venus' gravity during 7 flybys over nearly 7 years to gradually bring its orbit closer to the Sun.







- The primary goal of the mission is to trace how energy and heat move through the solar corona and to explore what accelerates the solar wind as well as solar energetic particles.
- India's 2nd largest rooftop solar plant
 - State-owned gas utility GAIL India Ltd said it has commissioned the country's second-largest rooftop solar power plant.
 - o The firm has installed a 5.76 MWp (Mega Watt peak) solar plant at its petrochemical complex at Pata in Uttar Pradesh.
 - The plant over the roofs of warehouses covers a total area of 65,000 square meters.
- NASA to explore Saturn's moon
 - NASA's flying observatory is preparing it's 2018 observing campaign, which will include observations of celestial magnetic fields, comets and Saturn's giant moon Titan.
 - o It is a joint project of NASA and the German Aerospace Center, DLR.
 - o These investigations will help them understand how magnetic fields affect the rate at which interstellar clouds condense to form new stars.

Polity

- Rajasthan gave 1% quota to MBC
 - Rajasthan has issued orders for granting 1% reservation to the Most Backward Classes, within the 50% ceiling mandated by the Supreme Court.
 - The overall reservation in the State stood at 49% before the decision.
 - Along with Gujjars, nomadic communities Banjara, Gadia-Lohar, Raika and Gadariya were included among the Other Backward Classes for quota in the govt jobs & educational institutions.



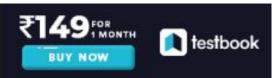






- 5 MPs Chosen For Parliamentarian Award
 - The Indian Parliamentary Group announced that five MPs are selected for the Outstanding Parliamentarian Awards.
 - This includes, Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad (2015), Trinamool
 Congress' Dinesh Trivedi (2016), Manipur's governor Najma A Heptulla
 (2013), BJP's Lok Sabha member Hukumdev Narayan Yadav (2014) and
 five-time Rajya Sabha member Bhartruhari Mahatab of the Lok Biju
 Janata Dal (2017).
- GDP growth pegged at 7-7.75%
 - The Economic Survey 2017-18, tabled by the Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley projected a GDP growth of 7 to 7.5% in the financial year 2018-19.
 - o "A series of major reforms undertaken over the past year will allow real GDP growth to reach 6.75 percent this fiscal and will rise to 7.0 to 7.5 percent in 2018-19," said the Economic Survey 2017-18.
- NGT orders survey of rivers in U.P.
 - o **NGT has ordered an "intensive survey" of the K**ali, Krishna and the Hindon rivers in western Uttar Pradesh.
 - o The order comes after a plea filed by an NGO alleged that 50 villagers have died of cancer in western U.P.
 - A Bench headed by acting chairperson Justice U.D. Salvi constituted a committee to jointly inspect and carry out survey of the rivers and groundwater in six districts of the State.
- Haryana government to set up SAT
 - o The Haryana government paved the way for setting up of a State Administrative Tribunal.
 - o The state Cabinet, under the Chairmanship of CM Manohar Lal Khattar, approved the Haryana State Administrative Tribunal Rules, 2017.









- o The establishment of the SAT will prove advantageous and essential in view of the increasing number of court cases.
- Adults have right to marry anyone: SC
 - o The Supreme Court said "any adult" has the "right to marry anyone", and nobody, including parents, khap panchayats or society, can question their choice of spouse.
 - o The decision was given by a Bench headed by CJI Dipak Misra.
 - The Bench was hearing a petition filed by NGO Shakthi Vahini, which asked the court to direct the central and state governments to take action to prevent honour crimes.
- Larger Bench to decide on Sec. 377
 - The SC referred to a larger Bench a writ petition filed by five gay and lesbian members of the LGBT community to strike down the colonial Section 377 in the IPC.
 - Section 377 of the IPC criminalises homosexuality.
 - A three-judge Bench, led by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra, decided to revisit a December 2013 verdict of the Supreme Court in the Suresh Kumar Kaushal versus Naz Foundation.
- Lalu jailed for 3.5 years in fodder scam
 - o RJD chief Lalu Prasad was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in jail and fined Rs 1 million by a special CBI court in a fodder scam case relating to fraudulent withdrawal of Rs 89.27 lakh.
 - o This is the second time that he has been jailed in the fodder scam.
 - Prasad faces another three scam cases for illegal withdrawal from three other treasuries.
- Lok Sabha clears judges pay hike
 - Lok Sabha passed a bill aimed at increasing over twofold the salaries of Supreme Court and high court judges.





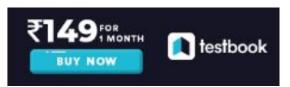




- The salary hike, based on the recommendations of the 7th Pay
 Commission for officers of all-India services, will take effect from January
 1, 2016.
- o The High Court and Supreme Court Judges Amendment Bill also proposes a revision of the rates of house rent allowance from July 1, 2017.
- Telangana constituted Fin. Commission
 - o The Telangana government constituted State Finance Commission with former minister G Rajesham Goud as its chairman.
 - Retired Zilla Parishad CEO M Chennaiah Kuruma from Ranga Reddy district has been appointed as a member.
 - State Finance Commission is the Constitutional body of experts on public finance and public administration under the article 2431 of the Constitution.

Places in News

- Sensors to monitor earthquake: Andamans
 - o The Indian Tsunami Early Warning System is in the process of setting up an elaborate system of sensors on the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
 - Strong Motion Sensors with GPS have been installed at 28 locations on the islands.
 - The ITEWS comprises a real-time network of seismic stations, tsunami buoys and tide gauges to detect tsunamigenic earthquakes and to monitor tsunamis.
- India's first floating market
 - o India's first floating market is now open in Kolkata's Patuli area in West Bengal.







- Set up by Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority, the market functions solely on boats at the lake in Patuli, where shopkeepers sell fruits, vegetables, fish among other produce.
- o The floating market is 500 meters long and 60 meters wide, around Rs 10 crore has been spent to develop the water body.

Bharat-ASEAN Maitri Park In Delhi

- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated the Bharat-ASEAN
 Maitri Park in the national capital.
- o ASEAN Secretary General Le Luong Minh also attended the event, held at the Tughlaq Crescent, in the heart of Lutyens' Delhi.
- The two-day summit is expected to give boost to India-ASEAN cooperation in key areas of counter-terrorism, security and connectivity.

• WEF to set up C4IR in Mumbai

- o The World Economic Forum (WEF) in partnership with RIL has agreed to set up a new Centre for Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR) in Mumbai.
- o It will promote Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Digital India and Startup India programmes to promote young entrepreneurs.
- o This would be first (C41R) opened outside Silicon Valley at San Francisco.

4th India International Science Festival

- The fourth edition of the India International Science Festival was held in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
- o The 1st IISF was held at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) New Delhi.
- o India had also set a Guinness Book of World Records when 2000 school students performed two experiments at the Festival.

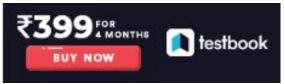
• Puducherry's 1st POPSK at Karaikal

The first Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) of Puducherry was inaugurated by Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister for External Affairs at Karaikal.









- The POPSK at Karaikal is the 60th POPSK to have become functional since the launch of the scheme in January 2017.
- It is the first POPSK to become operational in the UT of Puducherry.

• Teen Murti renamed 'Teen Murti Haifa'

- As a symbolic gesture of friendship with Israel, India will rename the iconic Teen Murti Chowk, a war memorial.
- o The new name of the memorial which was the official residence of the first Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru will be, Teen Murti Haifa Chowk.
- The formal ceremony to rename the landmark will take place after Prime Minister Netanyahu lands in Delhi.

• Int. kite festival begins in Gujarat

- o The international kite festival which attracts kite flyers from across the country and the world began on Sunday in Ahmedabad.
- o The international kite festival was inaugurated by Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani at Sabarmati Riverfront.
- The state government-sponsored festival will culminate on January 14,
 which is celebrated as Uttarayan (Makar Sankranti).

Arunachal to have India's 2nd FTII

- Arunachal Pradesh would get its first Film and Television Institute, being set up by the Union Government as part of tapping the potential of the Northeastern region.
- o This would be the second such institute in the country.
- The first Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) was set up in Pune, an autonomous institute operating under the Information and Broadcasting Ministry.
- Hyderabad declared open defecation free
 - Greater Hyderabad was declared an open defecation free ODF city by the Centre.









- The Swachh Bharat Mission Directorate of the Ministry of Urban Development has also declared six other ULBs — GWMC, Miryalguda, Jangoan, Bellampally, Mancherial and Sadashivpet, as ODF.
- The Centre issues Swachh certificates to the cities based on recommendations by a third party — Quality Council of India.
- Meghalaya to hold 39th National Games
 - Meghalaya signed the Host City Contract with the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) for hosting the 39th National Games in 2022.
 - The tripartite contract was signed between the IOA, the Meghalaya State
 Olympic Association and the state government.
 - Meghalaya had made the bid to host the 39th National Games after successfully co-hosting the South Asian Games in 2017.

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