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APRIL 2018

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Awards & Honours

Budgam Shortlisted for Modi's Excellence Award

- Jammu and Kashmir's Budgam district has been shortlisted for PM Modi's excellence award for promoting Digital Payments and Cashless Economy.
- Digital payments facility has been installed at 670 places across the district so far.
- In order to ensure successful implementation of the digital payments, the district administration has trained hundreds of local residents at Common Services Centers.

Saraswati Samman for Sitanshu

- Eminent Gujarati poet 'Sitanshu Yashaschandra's' poetry collection "*Vakhar*" has been chosen for the Saraswati Samman for 2017.
- The selection for the award is made by a high level '*Chayan Parishad*' (selection committee), presided over by former secretary general of Lok Sabha, Subhash C Kashyap.
- The Saraswati Samman is awarded annually by K K Birla Foundation.

CSIR Bags Intellectual Property Award

- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has been awarded the National Intellectual Property Award, 2018 for being the top research and development organisation for patents and commercialisation.
- The award was handed over by Union Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu to mark the World Intellectual Property Day.
- The CSIR was established in 1942.

Egyptian Journalist Gets Press Freedom Prize

- Egyptian photojournalist Mahmoud Abu Zeid won the 2018 Press Freedom Prize awarded by the United Nations cultural agency UNESCO on 23rd April.
- The Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Prize was awarded on May 2 to mark World Press Freedom Day.
- The \$25,000 World Press Freedom Prize was established in 1997 to honor Guillermo Cano Isaza who was a Journalist.

Ambani in World's Greatest Leaders' List

- Richest Indian Mukesh Ambani has been named by Fortune magazine as the World's Greatest Leaders of 2018.
- Ambani was ranked No. 24 behind likes of South Korean President Mon Jae-in, Chinese Vice Premier Liu He and French President Emmanuel Macron.
- Ambani's 'Jio-fication' in less than two years has brought mobile data to the masses and has completely upended the country's Telecom Market.

Madhya Pradesh: Most Film Friendly State

- Madhya Pradesh has been announced as the Most Film Friendly State for its efforts towards easing filming in the state.
- MP has offered excellent on-ground support, filmic infrastructure, an informative website and incentives for filmmaking.
- The Jury for selecting the Most Film Friendly State Award 2017 was chaired by acclaimed filmmaker Ramesh Sippy.

BCCI Recommends Shikhar & Smriti for Arjuna

- BCCI recommended Indian cricketers Smriti Mandhana and Shikhar Dhawan for the Arjuna Award.
- Smriti Mandhana plays for the Indian women's national team, while Shikhar Dhawan currently opens for IPL team Sunrisers Hyderabad.
- Last year, BCCI had recommended Cheteshwar Pujara and Harmanpreet Kaur for the award given by the Government of India's Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

First Rapper to Win Pulitzer Prize for Music

- Kendrick Lamar has become the first rapper to win the Pulitzer Prize for music.
- Lamar won the Pulitzer for his 2017 album "DAMN" & was also the first music winner in the history of the Pulitzers to come from outside of the world of Classical or Jazz.
- Lamar's fusion of Jazz, Poetry and Blues with social themes and love songs has made him one of the most innovative rappers of his generation.

K-Pop Group BTS Won TIME 100 Reader Poll

- South Korean pop group BTS has won the Online Reader's Poll for TIME 'Person of the Year 2018'.
- South Korean President Moon Jae-in finished second with 5% votes, followed by former US President Barack Obama with 3% votes.
- The group won the Top Social Artist title at last year's Billboard Music Awards and earned a spot on TIME's list of the Most Influential People on the Internet in 2017.

Aditi Hydari to Receive Dadasaheb Phalke Award

- Aditi Rao Hydari received the Dadasaheb Phalke excellence award 2018 for the Best Leading Lady (Critics Award) for her memorable performance in 'Bhoomi'.
- The film, Bhoomi also starred Sanjay Dutt and was about the protective father who saved his daughter from all the evils that surrounded her.
- The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is India's highest award in cinema.

New York Times, New Yorker won Pulitzer

- The New York Times and The New Yorker won the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service on April 16.

- The Washington Post won the Pulitzer in the investigative category for relentless reporting that influenced the outcome of the 2017 Senate race in Alabama.
- The New York Times and The Washington Post shared the Pulitzer in national reporting for coverage of Russian interference in 2016 elections.

Lifetime Achievement Award for Dharmendra

- Veteran actor Dharmendra and filmmaker Rajkumar Hirani was conferred with the prestigious Raj Kapoor Lifetime Achievement and Raj Kapoor Special Contribution Awards.
- Veteran Marathi actor Vijay Chavhan was receiving the V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement award.
- Actor-director Mrinal Kulkarni has been named for V Shantaram Special Contribution Awards.

65th National Film Awards List Out

- The 65th National Film Awards were announced in Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.
- Best Hindi Film - Newton
- Best Actor - Riddhi Sen for 'Nagar Kirtan'.
- Best Actress - Sridevi for 'Mom'.
- Best Director - Jayaraj for 'Bhayanakam'.
- Best Film - Village Rockstars (Assamese).
- Best Action Direction - 'Baahubali 2: The Conclusion'.

Vinod Khanna Awarded Dadasaheb Phalke Award

- Veteran Hindi film actor Shri Vinod Khanna was awarded the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for his contribution to Indian Cinema.
- This was announced during the 65th National Film Awards.
- The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is India's highest award in cinema.

Dadasaheb Excellence Award for Anushka

- Anushka Sharma was awarded the Dadasaheb Phalke Excellence Award 2018 for being a path-breaking producer.
- The 29-year-old actress has been appreciated for breaking new grounds as a film producer, along with her brother Karnesh Sharma.
- Three movies produced by Anushka, NH 10, Phillauri and Pari belonged to three different genres, thriller, romance and horror.

Sridevi Won Best Actress Award

- Sridevi has posthumously conferred with the Best Actress Award for her last film Mom at the 65 National Awards.
- Sridevi passed away on February 24 this year in Dubai.
- The actress, whose work spanned across 50 years, had roles in over 300 films in Tamil, Telugu and Hindi.

Siddharth Won Shorenstein Journalism Award

- Siddharth Varadarajan, the founding editor of The Wire, has won the Shorenstein Journalism Award.
- The award, given annually by Stanford University's Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center.
- The award honours Journalists who have "produced outstanding reporting on Asia and contributed significantly to Western understanding of the region".

Highest Civilian Honour to Indian President

- President Ram Nath Kovind was conferred with the "Condecoracion", the highest honour accorded to a non-citizen by the government of Equatorial Guinea.
- President Kovind was bestowed with the medal of the 'Gran Colar de la Independencia' by the President of Equatorial Guinea.
- The Award was given for his contribution to the cause of development, security and world peace.

Mithali Raj adjudged Sportsperson of the Year

- Indian women's cricket team captain Mithali Raj was adjudged 'Sportsperson of the Year' at the Telangana Sports Journalists Association annual awards for 2017.
- She is the highest run-scorer in women's international cricket and the only female cricketer to surpass the 6,000-run mark in ODIs.
- In December 2017, she was named as one of the players in the ICC Women's ODI Team of the Year.

Days & Events

Ayushman Bharat Diwas on 30th April

- As part of *Gram Swaraj Abhiyan*, Ayushman Bharat Diwas was celebrated across the country on 30th April.
- During the event, information regarding Ayushman Bharat Scheme was provided to people at health camps organised in rural areas.
- The Ayushman Bharat programme seeks to provide easily available and affordable medical facilities in the remote parts of the country.

World Day for Safety and Health at Work

- The World Day for Safety and Health at Work is an annual International Campaign to promote safe, healthy and decent work.
- It is held on 28 April and has been observed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) since 2003.
- The theme for World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2018 was: Occupational safety health (OSH) vulnerability of young workers.

Intellectual Property Day Observed on 26 April

- World Intellectual Property Day is observed annually on 26 April.
- The event was established by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 2000 to 'raise

awareness of how patents, copyright, trademarks and designs impact on daily life’.

- The theme for this year was ‘Powering Change: Women in Innovation and Creativity’.

World Malaria Day Observed on 25th April

- World Malaria Day is observed on April 25 every year to recognise the global efforts to control malaria and to spread awareness.
- The theme for this year’s Malaria Day was ‘Ready to beat Malaria’.
- It was in May 2007 that the 60th session of the World Health Assembly decided to establish the World Malaria Day.

English Language Day Observed on 23rd April

- English Language Day is the result of a 2010 initiative by the Department of Public Information, establishing language days for each of the six United Nations’ official languages.
- The purpose of the UN’s language days is to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all six official languages at the UN.

Manipur Observes Khongjom Day

- Manipur on April 23 observed ‘Khongjom Day’ in commemoration of the Anglo-Manipur War of 1891.
- The 1891-armed conflict was the last battle fought between the Kingdom of Manipur and the British Empire, wherein Manipur lost its sovereignty.
- In commemoration of the historic battle, the Manipur government has been observing April 23 as ‘Khongjom Day’ every year.

Road Safety Week 2018 - 23rd to 30th April

- With the objective to sensitise people about road safety, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways organized the 29th edition of Road Safety Week from 23rd to 30th April.
- During the week, creating awareness about various causes of road accidents & measures to prevent them will be highlighted through various activities.
- 1.5 lakh people in India are killed in road crashes every year.

World Book and Copyright Day 2018

- World Book and Copyright Day is a yearly event on April 23rd, organized by UNESCO, to promote reading, publishing and copyright.
- The World Book Capital for World Book and Copyright Day 2018 will be the city of Athens, Greece.
- The 2018 edition is entitled “READING, it’s my right!”, and it will be an opportunity to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

National Civil Service Day Celebrated

- Civil Services Day is organized on April 21 every year, when civil servants re-dedicate themselves to the cause of the citizens.
- It was on this date in 1947 that the 1st Home Minister of Independent India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed probationers of Administrative Services Officers.
- This year observance of the day focussed on Evolving Strategies for Transforming Aspirational Districts.

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World Earth Day 2018 on 22nd April

- World Earth Day is celebrated every year across the world on 22nd of April to increase awareness among people about the environment safety.
- The day was proposed at the UNESCO conference in 1969 and the first Earth Day celebrations took place in 1970.
- The campaign theme for this year is End Plastic Pollution.
- Earth Day is regarded as the largest secular observance in the world.

First Ever International SME Convention

- First Ever International SME Convention took place in New Delhi from 22nd to 24th April.
- The convention has specific focus on inclusion of MSMEs in Make in India program & empowering women entrepreneurs.
- India is home to more than 60 million MSMEs, majority of who are in low-tech areas. MSMEs constitute a single largest employer after Agriculture sector in India.

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

- The two-day 25th Commonwealth heads of Govt. meeting began in London.
- The Summit focuses on peace, prosperity, security, trade and investment. There were discussions on strengthening cooperation in the fight against global terrorism & cyber-crime.
- It is after 20 years that the UK is hosting the Commonwealth Heads of Govt. Meeting.
- PM Narendra Modi attended the summit for the first time.

Delhi Hosted 3rd Annual 5G India Congress

- The 3rd edition of the Annual 5G India Congress 2018 took place on April 20 in New Delhi.
- 5G Indian Congress 2018 focussed more on understanding and analysing current Network infrastructure and its developments, 5G market condition and requirements.
- The Indian Government has plans to roll out 5G by 2020.
- 5G will enable individuals, govts & companies to remain in sync in real time.

World Liver Day Observed on 19th April

- World Liver Day is commemorated on 19th April every year to build awareness and understanding how important the liver is for our body.
- This year, the theme of World Liver Day 2018 is 'Riding New Waves in Liver Diagnosis, Staging & Treatment'.
- According to WHO, liver diseases are the 10th most common cause of death in India.

India to Host GITC

- India will host the Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities this year, which is expected to be attended by people from 24 Asia-Pacific countries.
- India is hosting the event along with Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt of Korea.
- Event will be held in New Delhi from Nov 8 to 11.
- GITC is an annual event & has been held in Asia-Pacific countries like Korea & China in the past.

World Heritage Day Celebrated on 18th April

- World Heritage Day is an annual event celebrated on 18 April of each year.
- The day aims to spread awareness of the importance of protecting & preserving various sites that have achieved the world heritage status.
- This year's theme is Heritage for Generations emphasizing on intergenerational transfer of knowledge.
- There are 36 sites in India which have been declared as World Heritage.

World Haemophilia Day Observed on April 17

- World Haemophilia Day is recognized worldwide on 17th April every year to increase awareness of haemophilia and other inherited bleeding disorders.
- It was started by the World Federation of Haemophilia.
- It also helps to raise funds for patients who cannot afford haemophilia treatment.
- The theme for World Haemophilia Day 2018 is 'sharing knowledge'.

India Celebrated Ambedkar Jayanti

- India celebrated 14th April as Ambedkar Jayanti. This was Ambedkar's 127th birth anniversary.

- BR Ambedkar is known as 'The Father of the Constitution of India'.
- He was an Indian jurist, economist, politician and social reformer who inspired the Dalit Buddhist Movement.

India to Celebrate World Homoeopathy Day

- A two-day scientific convention is being organised in New Delhi by Ministry of AYUSH on the occasion of World Homoeopathy Day, on 10-11th April 2018.
- World Homoeopathy Day is observed to commemorate the birth anniversary of the founder of Homoeopathy, Dr. Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann.
- The theme of this convention is 'Innovate: Evolve; Progress: Exploring Science for 40 years'.

World Health Day Observed on 7th April

- The World Health Day is a global health awareness day celebrated every year on 7 April to mark the anniversary of the founding of World Health Organization.
- This year marks the 70th anniversary of World Health Day.
- The theme for this year is 'Universal health coverage: everyone, everywhere' and the slogan is 'Health for All'.

National Maritime Day of India Observed

- The National Maritime Day in India is observed on April 5 every year.
- The National Maritime Day is observed annually to commemorate the maiden voyage of the first Indian owned ship "SS Loyalty" which sailed from Bombay to London in 1919.
- In 2018, the theme of the National Maritime Day is 'Indian Shipping - An Ocean of opportunity'.

International Mines Awareness Day - 4th April

- International Day for Mines Awareness is observed to spread awareness about the threats caused by landmines to the safety, health and lives of civilian population.
- The theme for 2018 is 'Advancing Protection, Peace and Development'.
- On 8 December 2005, the UN declared that 4 April of each year shall be observed as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.

MoDWS Launched 'Satyagraha Se Swachhagraha'

- The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MoDWS) launched 'Satyagraha Se Swachhagraha' campaign in New Delhi.
- It is a nationwide campaign and will culminate on 10th of this month marking the 100th year of *Champaran Satyagraha*.

- The campaign commemorates *Champaran Satyagraha* to spread the message of *Swachhata* across the country.

Autism Awareness Day Observed on April 2

- World Autism Awareness Day is celebrated internationally on 2nd April every year.
- It is designated by United Nations to raise awareness about people with autism throughout the world.
- The 2018 World Autism Awareness Day observance will focus on the importance of 'empowering women and girls with autism'.
- Autism is a lifelong neurological condition that manifests during early childhood.

Kerala Hosted Asia's Largest Startup Conclave

- Asia's largest startup ecosystem congregation, 'Huddle Kerala', took place in Kovalam on April 6 & 7.
- The initiative was envisaged to provide a platform for start-ups to pitch their products & interact with a wide array of technology & industry leaders from around the world.
- It's primarily focus was on emerging sectors like blockchain, cryptocurrency, IoT and VR among other latest technologies.

International Affairs

ISA to Create Ecosystems for Startups

- International Solar Alliance (ISA) will create ecosystems for startups in solar innovations by enabling incubation, partnerships, access to finance and standards.
- The task force is being chaired by SoftBank Group Corp. Chairman & CEO Masayoshi Son.
- This is a private sector-led task force under ISA to promote innovation in the areas such as solar finance, technologies and applications.

North Korea to Rejoin South's Time Zone

- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un moved country's clocks 30 mins forward to unify with South's time zone.
- The 2 countries on divided peninsula had different time zones since 2015 when North changed its standard time to 30 mins behind the South.
- North moved to the time zone used before Japan's 1910-45 colonial rule of peninsula to mark the 70th anniversary of its liberation from Tokyo.

A Historic Event: North-South Korea Meet

- In a historic turn of events, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on April 27, 2018 stepped into South Korean border for a day of talks with the Southern President Moon Jae-in.
- Kim and Moon signed "Panmunjom Declaration," named after the truce village in the Demilitarized Zone between the two Koreas.

- Both leaders also agreed to work jointly for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Christine Appointed as Envoy on Myanmar by UN

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed Christine Schraner Burgener of Switzerland as his new special envoy on Myanmar.
- Burgener was the Ambassador of Switzerland to Germany since 2015.
- From 2009 to 2015, she served as the Ambassador to Thailand and led efforts to mediate between the two sides in the violence that erupted in Thailand in 2010.

IMF Unveils New Corruption Policy

- The International Monetary Fund will systematically address corruption and its impact on economic growth with all its member countries under new guidelines.
- The new policy also tackles how rich countries contribute to corruption in the developing world by failing to prevent bribery and money laundering.
- The IMF will not investigate specific instances of corruption.

Six Countries Suspend Membership in UNASUR

- Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay and Peru announced that they would indefinitely suspend their participation in the meetings of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).
- UNASUR was officially founded in 2008 in Brasilia between 12 governments in South America.
- The remaining active UNASUR members are Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Uruguay, Guyana and Suriname.

World's First Female Foreign Ministers Meeting

- Canada and the European Union will host the world's first female foreign ministers' meeting in September.
- Female foreign ministers from about 30 countries will be invited to the gathering, which is aimed at deepening global discussion on women's empowerment.
- The meeting will be held for 2 days starting on September 21st in Canada.

France Approved Controversial Immigration Bill

- French National Assembly has passed a new immigration law that tightens the rules around asylum.
- Bill shortens asylum application deadlines, doubles time for which illegal migrants can be detained & 1-year prison sentence for entering France illegally.
- France received a record 100,000 asylum application last year.

Iraq Resumes Payments of Gulf War Reparations

- Iraq has resumed paying Kuwait compensation for the destruction of Kuwaiti oil fields and facilities

during the 1990-91 Gulf War with the disbursement of \$90 million.

- The payment had been suspended since October 2014 because of security and budgetary problems that the Iraqi government faced in its fight against Islamic State.
- Iraq still must pay a remaining amount of nearly \$4.5 billion.

North Korea Halts Nuclear, Missile Tests

- North Korea has agreed to end its tests of nuclear weapons & intercontinental ballistic missiles & shut down its nuclear test site
- The surprise announcement comes as North Korea prepares for talks with South Korea & US.
- Kim Jong-un has said his country no longer needed any nuclear or intercontinental ballistic missile tests because it has completed its goal of developing nuclear weapons.

Romania to Move Israeli Embassy to Jerusalem

- The Romanian government has approved a memorandum to move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv.
- If approved by President Klaus Iohannis, Romania will become the third nation after the US and Guatemala to open an embassy in Jerusalem.
- Israel has reportedly offered preferential treatment to the first 10 countries to make the move.

Commonwealth to Act on Cybersecurity

- The Commonwealth countries have unanimously agreed to take action on cybersecurity by 2020.
- The declaration has been termed as the world's largest & most geographically diverse inter-governmental commitment on cybersecurity cooperation.
- It followed an announcement by UK government pledging up to 15 million pounds to help the Commonwealth nations strengthen their cybersecurity capabilities.

SA Opened 1st movie Theater in 35 yrs

- Saudi Arabia has opened its first movie theater in 35 yrs, with 'Black Panther' the first movie shown publicly in the kingdom in decades.
- The Movie was shown at a new cinema theater built by AMC Entertainment in King Abdullah Financial District in Riyadh.
- The kingdom banned cinemas in early 1980s under pressure from Islamists as Saudi society turned towards a particularly severe form of religion.

US to Restrict Movement of Pakistani Diplomats

- US has notified Pak that the diplomats at their embassy in Washington & consulates in other cities would not be able to travel beyond 40 kms of their offices without permission from May 1.

- Diplomats would need to apply for permission at least 5 days ahead of an intended travel outside the imposed 40 kms radii.
- Pak had already imposed similar restrictions on American diplomats in the country.

WB Approves \$55 mn for Bangladesh Project

- The World Bank has approved \$55mn to expand the use of clean renewable energy in rural areas of Bangladesh where grid electricity cannot reach easily.
- Project will install 1,000 solar irrigation pumps, 30 solar mini-grids and about 4mn improved cooking stoves in rural areas.
- The project will enable about 10mn people living in villages and islands to access electricity.

US, UK, France Launch Air Strikes in Syria

- The US has launched airstrikes in Syria along with the UK and France, in response to the chemical attack that killed dozens of people.
- Explosions were reported in Syria's capital Damascus, moments after US President Donald Trump announced the military action.
- The US intends to 'sustain [the strikes] until Syrian regime stops its use of chemical weapons'.

World's First Long-Distance Electric Bus Line

- The world's first long-distance electric bus line was inaugurated in Paris on 12th April.
- The bus covers the 160 kilometers between Paris and Amiens in northern France in just over 2 hours.
- The bus can travel as far as 250 kilometers on one 5-hour battery charge. It emits no pollutants at all and creates less noise than conventional buses.

UN Launches Road Safety Trust Fund

- The United Nations took a major step to address the tragedy of road accidents by launching the UN Road Safety Trust Fund.
- The trust fund supports efforts along with the five pillars of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety.
- The UN General Assembly – the UN body with universal membership of all 193 Member States – adopted a resolution on road safety on 13th April.

UAE Approves Issuance of Law on Equal Wages

- To narrow the gender gap in the United Arab Emirates, the Cabinet has approved the issuance of the Law on Equal Wages and Salaries for Men and Women.
- The new law will provide women with equal opportunities as partners in the UAE's development.
- In 2015, the UAE Council for Gender Balance was established and in September, the UAE launched the world's first Gender Balance Guide.

China Launched Remote Sensing Satellites

- China has launched the first group of China's Yaogan-31 remote sensing satellites into space on 10th April.
- The satellites were carried by a Long March-4C rocket.
- The mission also sent a micro nanotechnology experiment satellite into orbit.
- The satellites will be used for electromagnetic environment surveys and other technology tests.

Lionel Messi Named UN Ambassador

- The UN World Tourism Organization has appointed FC Barcelona's Argentine star Lionel Messi as an ambassador to promote responsible tourism.
- The UN body defines 'responsible tourism' as tourism that 'helps maximise the sector's benefits'.
- Responsible tourism minimises the negative impact of tourism on the environment, cultural heritage and societies across the globe.

UAE, Malaysia Conclude Military Exercise

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Malaysia concluded 'Desert Tiger 5' joint military exercise aimed at sharing expertise and enhancing joint military actions.
- The Desert Tiger series is an annual joint exercise between the two countries.
- The exercise also trains ground forces on the use of modern weapons for all types of combat operations.

UK's 1st Permanent Middle East Military Base

- U.K. has opened its first permanent military base in the Middle East in more than 4 decades in the Persian Gulf country of Bahrain.
- The £40m UK Naval Support facility 'Jufair' at Mina Salman will be staffed by up to 500 soldiers, sailors and airmen.
- Both the countries hope that this base will increase military cooperation between the Royal Navy and its Bahraini counterpart.

Japan Activated its 1st Marine Unit Since WW2

- Japan has activated its 1st marine unit since 2nd World War to counter invaders from occupying Japanese islands.
- The Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade is the latest component of a growing marine force that includes amphibious ships & assault vehicles.
- After WW2, a clause was written into Japan's constitution which stated that armed forces with potential to wage war would not be maintained.

Sugar Tax in UK to Fight Obesity & Tooth Decay

- Britain rolled out a sugar tax on soft drinks to tackle obesity and tooth decay in children.
- All revenues raised through the tax will directly fund new sports facilities in schools as well as healthy breakfast clubs.

- The other countries which have introduced such similar taxes are Mexico, France and Norway.

China's Tiangong-1 Space Station Burns Up

- China's Tiangong-1 space station re-entered the Earth's atmosphere and burnt up over the middle of the South Pacific.
- The craft re-entered the atmosphere and the "vast majority" of it had burnt up upon re-entry.
- Tiangong-1 was launched in 2011 to carry out docking and orbit experiments as part of China's ambitious space programme, which aims to place a permanent station in orbit by 2023.

Bahrain Discovers Largest Oilfield

- Bahrain had discovered the country's largest oilfield in decades, located off the west coast of the kingdom.
- The new light shale oil and gas resources are expected to contain many times the amount of oil produced by Bahrain's only existing oilfield, as well as large amounts of gas.
- Bahrain relies on the Abu Safa oilfield for most of its oil and shares the field with Saudi Arabia.

Trekking Trail for differently-abled, Elderly

- Nepal has launched its first 'accessible' trekking trail in Pokhara city for the differently-abled and the elderly.
- The trail was inaugurated as a part of 3-day international conference on 'Accessible Tourism' held for the first time in the Himalayan nation.
- Accessible tourism is an emerging concept to ensure that tourist destinations, products and services are accessible to all people.

National Affairs

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in Varanasi

- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held in the holy city of Varanasi from 21st January to 23rd January 2019.
- The theme of the 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is - 'Role of Indian Diaspora in Building a New India'.
- The Ministry of External Affairs also organized four Know India Programmes and online 'Bharat Ko Jaaniye Quiz'.

Skill-Competition Launched in Odisha

- Odisha Government inaugurated 'Odisha Skills 2018', the state-level chapter of India Skill competition organised by National Skill Development Corporation.
- The competition gave platform to the students of Odisha to show their talents.
- A skill-cum-common facility centre for filigree craftsman of the city was also inaugurated.

HDFC Bank Launched Humanoid IRA 2.0

- HDFC Bank announced the launch of IRA 2.0, its interactive humanoid in Bengaluru.
- IRA will interact with customers, answer bank-related queries, frequently asked questions and guide them inside the branch with voice-based navigation.
- HDFC Bank also launched its Virtual Assistant 'EVA' on Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant.
- The 1st version of IRA is currently stationed in Kochi.

Tramadol brought under Narcotics Law

- Tramadol, a Painkiller Pharma Drug, has been declared as a 'Psychotropic Substance' by the Union Government & its sale in the country will now be strictly monitored.
- The Union Finance Ministry has brought the drug under the control of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.
- A Gazetted Notification to this effect was issued on April 26.

PHDCCI, Indian Yoga Association sign MoU

- The PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) and the Indian Yoga Association (IYA) signed a MoU.
- The MoU facilitates interaction and cooperation between the two organisations to promote wellness, spiritual and cultural tourism in the Krishna Circuit.
- Note - Places associated with Lord Krishna constitute the Krishna Circuit in Uttar Pradesh.

Every Village now has Access to Electricity

- According to the government data, all of India's 597,464 census villages now have access to electricity.
- The last village to be brought on the national power grid was Leisang village in the Senapati district of Manipur.
- Prime Minister Modi in his Independence Day speech on 15th August 2015 promised to electrify all un-electrified villages within 1000 days.

NITI & ITC to Transform Agriculture Sector

- NITI Aayog and ITC will collaborate in the area of agriculture and allied sectors in order to strengthen farming systems.
- The partnership is for a period of 4 years till April 2022.
- The prime objective is to increase net returns from farming through reduction in costs of production and increasing productivity of major crops in each of the identified district.

35.3 Lakh New Jobs Generated in 6 Months

- Government think-tank Niti Aayog said 35.3 Lakh new jobs were generated between September 2017 & February this year.

- This was based on the additions made in payrolls from Employees' Provision Fund Organisation, Pension Fund Regulatory Development Authority.
- The NITI Aayog said that the payroll data from these organisations would now be released every month.

India to get Database on Disasters by 2020

- India will get a National Database on Disasters, which includes information on deaths, people affected & economic losses, by 2020.
- As India is a signatory to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, it has become imperative for the country to have a database ready by 2020.
- A baseline, using data from 2005-15, will be developed in order to track improvements in disaster management.

BARC offers First Indigenous Bulletproof Vest

- The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has developed a next-generation bulletproof jacket for the Indian Armed Forces, which is not only cheaper but also much lighter.
- The bullet jacket, named Bhabha Kavach, will reduce the weight of jacket by nearly 50%.
- Bhabha Kavach is made of Boron Carbide and Carbon Nanotube Polymer Composite.

23rd Meeting of Western Zonal Council

- Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh chaired the 23rd meeting of Western Zonal Council at Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- During the last 3 years or so, 2 Council meetings and 3 Standing Committee meetings of the Western Zonal Council were held.
- Zonal Councils were set up under the State's Reorganization Act, 1956 to foster Inter-State co-operation and co-ordination among the States.

BIS grants 1st License for Liquid Chlorine

- Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) granted First Licence to M/s Gujarat Alkalies & Chemicals Ltd for Liquid Chlorine on All India basis.
- This is the First Licence granted on All India basis. The license has been made operative with effect from 12th April 2018 for a period of 1 year.
- This product is in liquid form and stored in metal containers and used in paper, pulp, textile bleaching.

1st Solar Microgrid Commissioned in Gujarat

- Swedish-Swiss multinational giant ABB announced it has commissioned India's first Industrial Solar Microgrid at its Vadodara manufacturing facility in Gujarat.
- Microgrids with Integrated Battery energy storage allow cutting down of planned & unplanned power outages.
- A key benefit is a reduction in overall operational costs and reduced electricity bills.

AIIMS sets up India's first VBN System

- In a first in the country, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences set up Virtual Bronchoscopy Navigation (VBN) system.
- VBN is a facility for Diagnosis and Treatment of patients with small tumour-like spots in lungs.
- Very few countries like China, Singapore besides the US and Europe have this facility.

Maharashtra signed MoU with British Council

- The Maharashtra government signed an MoU with the British Council to strengthen Educational and Cultural cooperation.
- With this MoU, the British Council hopes to expand its existing work in the state.
- The areas of potential collaboration include developing further initiatives to improve English teaching and enhance employability skills in schools and training institutes.

Ola to set up Safety Council

- Ride-sharing app Ola has set up a first-of-its-kind Safety Council to create a safe, inclusive & sustainable mobility ecosystem.
- The Safety Council will act as a catalyst towards supporting the Government's agenda to halve the road deaths and injuries by 2020.
- Note - According to the Brasillia declaration, every year, 1.5 lakh people are killed and 5 lakhs injured on Indian roads.

Maharashtra government to hold Startup Week

- The Maharashtra government announced the launch of 'Startup Week 2018' in June this year, with a view to encourage and enable the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- The startup week will provide the new companies a platform to showcase their innovative products and services to the state government.
- Top 100 ventures will be selected to present their solutions to a selected panel.

Dalmia Bharat Adopts Red Fort, Delhi

- Dalmia Bharat Limited has signed a MoU with Ministry of Tourism for adoption of Red Fort monument under the "Adopt a Heritage" Project.
- The adoption will enable to construct, landscape, illuminate and maintain activities related to provision and development of tourist amenities.
- The 'Adopt a Heritage' scheme was launched by President Ram Nath Kovind on World Tourism Day on 27th September 2017.

Ramsar Tag likely for Sunderbans

- The Sunderban Reserve Forest, spread of 4,260 sq. km. with over 2,000 sq. km. of mangrove forests and creeks, is likely to be declared a Ramsar Site soon.

- The Indian Sunderbans, with mangrove forests, comprise almost 43% of the mangrove cover in India.
- There are currently 26 sites in India recognised as Ramsar Wetland Sites of international importance.

Secure India Conclave underway in New Delhi

- The two-day Secure India Conclave got underway in New Delhi on 24th April 2018.
- The conclave is being organised by Global Counter Terrorism keeping in view Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of New India : Secure India 2018.
- The event presents a unique encapsulation of prevalent issues in India's Internal Security.

National E-comm Policy Conference

- Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, chaired the first meeting of the think tank on the Framework for National Policy on E-commerce on April 24th, 2018.
- The think tank has been established by the Department of Commerce.
- Issues related to the e-commerce sector such as regulatory regime, taxation policy, data flows, FDI etc will be discussed.

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Adilabad Dokra & Warangal Durries get GI tag

- Adilabad Dokra, an ancient bell metal craft popular in the tribal regions of Adilabad district in Telangana, and Warangal Durries have been issued the

Geographical Indication (GI) Registration Certificate by the GI Registry, Chennai.

- GI tag can be used as a marketing tool to promote the products in India and abroad.
- The Dokra craftsmen belong to the Woj community, called Wojaris.

Panchayati Raj Day Observed on 24th April

- National Panchayati Raj Day (National Local Self-Government day) is celebrated by Ministry of Panchayati Raj on 24 April annually.
- Then Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh inaugurated the 1st National Panchayati Raj Day in 2010.
- The PM will launch Rashtriya Gramin Swaraj Abhiyan and address Panchayati Raj representatives across the country, from Mandla, Madhya Pradesh.

Foreigners can travel to North-East states

- Foreign tourists, except those from Pakistan, China and Afghanistan, would now be allowed to visit some of the most pristine locations of the country.
- Till now, some places were out of bounds for them without a special permit.
- The Home Ministry has decided to relax the Protected Area Permit regime from Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur from April 1.

Diu Smart City runs 100% on Renewable Energy

- The Diu Smart City has become the first city in India that runs on 100 percent renewable energy during the daytime.
- The city has developed a 9-MW solar park, besides installing solar panels on the rooftops on 79 government buildings, generating 1.3 MW annually.
- Diu also offers its residents a subsidy of Rs 10,000 - Rs. 50,000 for installing 1-5-KW rooftop solar panels.

Cyber Security Operations Centre in AP

- Tech Mahindra has set up the country's first 'Cyber Security Operations Centre' (APCSOC) in Vijayawada, in collaboration with the Andhra Pradesh government.
- The APCSOC will leverage Tech Mahindra's Global Expertise in cyber security and Risk Management.
- The Cyber Security Operations Centre is equipped with Traditional SOC and Predictive Threat Analytics Capabilities.

AFSPA Removed from Meghalaya

- The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, AFSPA has been removed completely from Meghalaya.
- The AFSPA Act, empowers security forces to conduct operations and arrest anyone anywhere without prior notice.
- In Arunachal Pradesh, the AFSPA has been reduced from 16 police stations areas bordering Assam to eight police stations.

Naidu Rejects Impeachment Notice against CJI

- Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu rejected the notice given by opposition parties for impeachment of CJI Dipak Misra citing lack of substantial merit in it.
- This is the first time ever that an impeachment notice had been filed against a sitting CJI.
- The rejection of the notice came a day after he held the consultations with such experts to determine the maintainability of the motion

Madras HC introduces e-court fee payment

- The Madras High Court became the 1st court in South India & eighth in the country to introduce e-court fee payment facility.
- People would now be able to pay the court fees from anywhere, including from home using this application through the Internet
- The facility introduced at the Madras High Court would be extended to all the district courts too in a phased manner.

Forest Cover in India grew by over 6,700 sq. km.

- According to the Forest Survey of India, Forest cover has increased by 6,778 sq km in the country during the last two years.
- States like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka & Kerala have made a significant contribution.
- The total forest and tree cover in India, according to the current assessment is 8,02,088 sq km, which is 24.39% of the country's geographical area.

States to allow Private Licence for Taxis

- Centre has asked states to allow drivers to use private licence for driving taxis and light vehicles for commercial purposes.
- However, commercial driving licences would be required for trucks, buses, heavy commercial vehicles and other medium.
- Exemption from obtaining the endorsement for commercial vehicles would apply to motorcycles and light motor vehicles like taxis, e-rickshaw/e-cart.

Meeting of Council under POSHAN Abhiyaan

- The 1st meeting of National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges under POSHAN Abhiyaan was held in New Delhi.
- POSHAN Abhiyaan which was launched by PM Modi in Rajasthan aims to ensure holistic development & adequate nutrition for pregnant women, mothers & children.
- The programme also targets to reduce the level of stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia and low birth rate.

HRD Ministry to launch 'Study In India' portal

- HRD Ministry will launch 'Study in India' portal that aims to target foreign students to be admitted in Indian institutes

- It will enable students from 30 countries to apply for different courses from 150 Indian institutions.
- 'Study in India' programme's objective is to target foreign students by branding India as an attractive education destination.

Bengaluru is Highest Paying City for Talent

- With an average annual CTC for talent across all levels and functions standing at about Rs 11 lakh, Bengaluru topped the list of salary trends this year.
- Pune stands 2nd at around Rs. 10 lakh, followed by NCR & Mumbai with an average annual CTC of a little under Rs. 10 lakh and around Rs. 9 lakh, respectively.
- The report has been published by Randstad India.

Kochi to Host India Skills Kerala 2018

- Kerala will host the India Skills Kerala 2018 – in Kochi from 28th to 30th April 2018, as part of the World Skills India 2018.
- The event is aimed at identifying and training talents to get medals at the 'World Skills Competition Kazan 2019'.
- The proposed 'India Skills Kerala 2018' is an avenue provided to the youngsters in the State to showcase their vocational skills.

7th Edition of Home Expo India 2018 Began

- The 7th edition of Home Expo India 2018 began on 16th April at India Expo Centre and Mart in Greater Noida.
- The Expo is one of leading business-to-business shows where a wide range of tableware, home textiles, kitchenware, houseware and bathroom accessories are displayed.
- Home Expo India 2018 is being organized by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts.

Government Tied up with IIT-Delhi

- The Ministry of Electronics and IT in partnership with IIT-Delhi is working on a switch-based device in cars and buses to aid safety of women.
- The proposed panic switch system when invoked will generate a loud alarm in the vehicle which will attract public attention.
- The system will include features such as authenticating the driver of the vehicles and a camera interface.

Odisha's second longest river bridge opened

- The bridge has been built over the Ib river, which is a tributary of Mahanadi river, in Sambalpur district.
- The 2.5-km-long bridge, which is the State's second longest bridge, has been built in three years.
- The bridge has helped in establishing direct road connectivity between Sambalpur and Brajarajnagar and the distance has now been reduced by 50 km.

National Anti-Profitteering Authority Goes Online

- To ensure timely grievance redressal for consumers, the National Anti-Profitteering Authority (NAA) launched the Anti Profitteering online community.
- It was launched in association with a citizen-engagement platform, LocalCircles.
- The Authority has done away with the requirement of a Harmonised System of Nomenclature (HSN) code for the same.

Himachal Marks 71st Foundation Day

- Himachal Pradesh on 15th April celebrated its 71st Foundation Day.
- On the occasion, Personnel of State Police, Home Guards, Services Selection Board (SSB) and National Cadet Corps cadets took out a parade.
- The CM awarded the best performers in the field of administration, sports, health and social work.

Indian Mobile Congress to open on October 25

- India is going to host its second India Mobile Congress between 25th to 27th October at Delhi.
- The India Mobile Congress 2018 will be hosted by the Department of Telecommunications and the Cellular Operators Association of India.
- The 1st Edition of IMC held in September 2017, was attended by around 2,000 delegates, 32,000 visitors, 152 speakers, 100 exhibitors and 100 start-ups.

Bihar has Highest Rate of Crime Against SC/ST

- Bihar reports the highest rate of crimes against SC/ST population, while West Bengal reports the lowest, according to latest data released by National Crime Records Bureau.
- For crimes against SCs specifically, Madhya Pradesh is highest at 43.4%, and WB is lowest at 6%.
- For crimes against the ST population specifically, Rajasthan is the highest at 12.9%, with WB being the lowest at 1.6%.

NGT Panel to Inspect Lakes in Bengaluru

- Following orders from the National Green Tribunal, a committee constituted by the tribunal is set to carry out an inspection, of the Bellandur, Agara & Varthur lakes in Bengaluru.
- The bench is headed by NGT Acting Chairperson Jawad Rahim.
- Committee shall inform the tribunal of the extent of hydrophytes in the lakes, along with the incidents of fire that have taken place till April 10, 2018.

Modi Inaugurated Ambedkar Memorial

- PM Narendra Modi took the metro during rush hour on his way to inaugurate Dr Ambedkar National Memorial on the eve of the Dalit Icon's Birth Anniversary.
- The memorial, which is in the shape of a book, has a museum dedicated to Dr Ambedkar's life.

- It also has a meditation hall, a Bodhi Tree, and a musical fountain.

5,000MW Solar Park to come up in Dholera

- Gujarat Government approved setting up a 5000 MW capacity solar park at the Dholera Special Investment Region (SIR), which would be the largest such entity in the world after its completion.
- The solar power generation project would be set up in 11,000 hectares of land.
- The project will contribute significantly in achieving the target of producing 175 Gigawatt of electricity by 2022.

Jayant Sinha to Head Task Force for UAV Tech

- The Government has formed a task force under the Chairmanship of MoS Civil Aviation Jayant Sinha for fast-tracking the roll-out of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle technology.
- The Task Force will focus on R&D, acquisition and commercialisation, regulatory framework and preference for Make in India.
- The task force will submit its report within 6 months of its constitution.

NPCIL & NSDC signed a MoU

- The National Skill Development Corporation signed a MoU with the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited to provide skill training to 500 youth and women at Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu.
- The skill development project will be executed by NSDC.
- The skill development project aims to provide gainful employment to nearly 70% of the trained candidates post-training.

India's First Electric Locomotive

- Prime Minister flagged off the country's first high-powered electric locomotive assembled in Madhepura in Bihar.
- This first locomotive is part of a joint venture of the railways with Alstom, signed in 2015 and the first major FDI project in the rail sector.
- India will join countries like Russia, China, Germany and Sweden that have 12,000 horsepower & above capacity electric locomotives.

Assam's Spring Festival began

- The 2-day Assam Spring Festival began at the Manas National Park on 7th April, where visitors will get to experience the state's local food, music, handloom and handicrafts.
- The aim of the event is to promote the local food and culture of the fringe villagers.
- The National Park which is also a tiger and rhino reserve covers five districts of Assam.

Patna Topped in 4G Connectivity

- Patna topped in 4G connectivity among 20 of India's largest cities.
- It has emerged ahead of the cities like Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi, said a report from OpenSignal, a wireless coverage mapping company.
- Cities from India's central and eastern regions - Patna, Kanpur, Allahabad, Kolkata, Bhopal & Lucknow - made it to the top 10 while Bengaluru is at 10, followed by Hyderabad, Mumbai and Delhi.

Kerala to issue Brain Death Certificate

- Kerala has become the 1st state to adopt a standard operating procedure (SOP) for determining brain death cases.
- According to the SOP, a medical board comprising four doctors-at least one should be from the government service-will be authorised to declare a patient brain dead.
- To check any misuse, the SOP defines brain dead and state of coma in detail.

Jammu gets its First Tulip Garden

- Jammu got its first tulip garden at Sanasar in Ramban district of Jammu region.
- This is the first tulip garden of Jammu region and second after the tulip garden of Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir.
- The garden has been set up on half an acre area of land adjacent to the Sanasar lake.

Chhattisgarh awarded 'State of the Year'

- Chhattisgarh bagged the 'State of the Year' Award under the 'business leader' category as part of the India Business Leadership for the increase in business and services activities.
- Union Information Technology and Electronics Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad gave the award at India Business Leader Awards.
- Chhattisgarh has been ranked 4th in World Bank's list of 'Ease of Doing Business'.

Two new Languages Discovered

- A professor of the University of Hyderabad has discovered two new languages - 'Walmiki and Malhar'.
- These languages are spoken in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.
- Walmiki is spoken in Koraput of Odisha and on the bordering districts of Andhra Pradesh.
- The second language Malhar is spoken in a remote and isolated hamlet about 165 km away from Bhubaneswar.

Shimla got its 1st Grid-Connected Solar Plant

- Himachal Pradesh (HP) Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur inaugurated the first grid-connected Solar Power Plant in Shimla having a capacity of 35 KW,

installed on the rooftop of the Department of Environment, Science and Technology.

- The power generated by the solar plant would be consumed by the Department building.
- The remaining power would be sold to the HP State Electricity Board Limited.

Delhi Tops in the List of Hospitality Index

- Global hospitality chain Airbnb announced that New Delhi and Maharashtra have been recognised as the most hospitable city and state respectively, according to its Hospitality Index.
- As per the index, the most hospitable states were Maharashtra, Goa, Delhi, Karnataka and Kerala.
- New Delhi led the charts as the most hospitable city in the country, followed closely by Jaipur, Cochin and Mumbai

Govt forms committee to Regulate Online Media

- The I&B Ministry has constituted a committee to frame rules to regulate news portals and media websites.
- The committee includes secretaries of Ministries of I&B, Electronics and IT, Home, Legal Affairs and Department of Industrial policy and promotion.
- The committee will also have representatives of the Press Council of India, News Broadcasters Association and Indian Broadcasters Federation.

BHEL Commissions Hydro-Electric Project

- The Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) successfully commissioned the 330 MW Kishanganga Hydro-Electric Project in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).
- The project is located on the river Kishanganga, a tributary of the river Jhelum, in Bandipora district of J&K.
- In the state of J&K, BHEL commissioned 33 hydro sets with a capacity of 1,477 MW.
- 1st and 2nd units of HEP were commissioned in March.

Delhi-Pathankot Flight under UDAN Scheme

- Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the 1st flight from Delhi to Pathankot at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi.
- Pathankot airport was opened by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) to improve regional connectivity as per the UDAN Scheme.
- Under UDAN, air connectivity is provided to unserved and underserved airports at a subsidized fare.

EC to set up Pink Polling Booths

- The Election Commission (EC) will set up Sakhi/Pink polling booths for the first time in the Karnataka assembly elections.

- These pink polling booths will have completely female staff including presiding officers, polling officers, micro observers and security personnel.
- The pink booths are aimed at empowering women and increasing their participation in the poll process.

3rd Annual Meeting of AIIB

- 2nd lead-up Conference to 3rd Annual Meeting of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank on 'Enhancing Port and Coastal Infrastructure' was held in Visakhapatnam.
- The Conference was organized by the Ministry of Finance, AIIB, CII and Research and Infrastructure System for Developing Countries.
- The need for international funding for developing and maintaining inland waterways was discussed.

AAI ties up with CIDC for Skill Development

- The Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Construction Industry Development Council (CIDC) have signed a memorandum of agreement.
- The aim of the agreement is to provide job-oriented skill development and training to the marginalized and economically weaker sections of the society.
- It is the CSR initiative of AAI.

IISc Bengaluru, JNU among Top 10 Universities

- The Indian Institute of Science is India's top university followed by Jawaharlal Nehru University and Banaras Hindu University, declared the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).
- The NIRF which works under the Ministry of Human Resource Development released the list of top 10 universities in the country.
- All the top three universities retained their previous year rank.

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Mizoram Govt signs Peace Pact with HPC-D

- A landmark peace accord was signed between Mizoram Government and Manipur-based Hmar People's Convention (Democratic) in Aizawl.
- The peace pact aims to end nearly three decades of insurgency in Hmar inhabited areas of Mizoram.
- The peace pact agreed for setting up of Sinlung Hills Council consisting of 14 members to accelerate speedy development in North and North-Eastern parts of Mizoram.

Manipur's Senapati District got ODF Tag

- Senapati district of Manipur has been declared as the first Open Defecation Free (ODF) district of the state.
- Manipur has become the third state in the North East, after Sikkim & Arunachal Pradesh, to get the ODF tag.
- Till 27th March, Manipur was among the only three states not to have a single ODF district, the other two being Bihar and Goa.

NMHEP Project's Foundation Stone Laid

- Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, Government of India, laid the foundation stone of the 60 MW Naitwar Mori Hydro Electric Project (NMHEP) in Uttarkashi.
- NMHEP is located on the river Tons - a tributary of the Yamuna, in Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand.
- The project was allocated to SJVN Ltd by the Government of Uttarakhand.

Hyderabad Tops in Global City Momentum Index

- Hyderabad has been ranked the top city in the short-term Momentum Ranking of JLL's annual 'Global City Momentum Index'.
- The report identifies urban economies and real estate markets which are currently undergoing the most rapid growth.
- The report ranked Bengaluru, Pune, Kolkata and Delhi in Top 10 cities.

MP to Raise Retirement Age for Govt Employees

- Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh has announced raising the retirement age of state govt employees to 62 years from current 60 years.
- The CM cited promotion of general category employees as a reason to raise the age limit of these employees.
- There are about five lakh regular government employees in the state.
- The state already has bigger retirement age limit in case of teachers and doctors.

India & World

India, Pakistan to take part in War Games

- In a first, India & Pakistan will be part of a multi-nation counter-terror exercise in Russia in September.
- The Military Exercise will take place under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.
- The military drill would be held in the Ural Mountains of Russia, and almost all SCO member countries will be part of it.

Wuhan Summit: India-China to collaborate

- India and China have decided to launch together a launch Joint Economic Project in war-torn Afghanistan.
- This would be the 1st ever Sino-Indian joint initiative in a third country.
- The two sides also decided to give to momentum to economic partnership and joint global projects in health and disaster management

World Bank Loan for Biopharma Mission

- The government has secured a loan of about Rs. 1,600 crores from the World Bank to develop new vaccines, medical devices and medicines.
- The money will be disbursed over five years and is part of the Department of Biotechnology-led National Biopharma Mission.
- The goal is to have 6 to 10 new products in the next five years and it will create a slew of jobs.

Govt approves Pacts for Supply of Iron

- The Cabinet approved a long-term agreement for export of Iron to Japan and South Korea through state-owned trading firm MMTC.
- The range of quantity of Iron ore to be exported would be 3.8 million tonnes per annum to 5.5 million tonnes per annum.
- MMTC will be supplying iron ore of grade 64 Fe, or high-grade content, to Japanese and Korean steel mills from Bailadila mines in Chhattisgarh.

India-Nepal IGC Meeting began in Kathmandu

- India-Nepal Inter-Governmental Committee (IGC) meeting on Trade, Transit and Cooperation to control unauthorised trade in Kathmandu started on 26th April.
- The meeting provides a regular platform to review the implementation of past trade and transit agreements.
- IGC also deliberate upon day-to-day problems in regulation of Nepalese traffic-in-transit and issue of Indian investments in Nepal.

Cabinet nod to BRICS Pact on Medical Products

- The government approved the pact with medicine regulatory agencies of BRICS nations on cooperation in the field of regulation of medical products.
- The MoU would facilitate better understanding about the regulatory aspects between the parties and could help in increasing India's export of medical products to BRICS.
- The approval was given by the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister.

MoU between India, Sao Tome and Principe

- The government gave approval for an agreement signed between India and an African island nation, Sao Tome and Principe, to increase cooperation in the field of Medicinal Plants.

- The MoU assumes significance as there is a global increase in traditional and alternative healthcare systems.
- Medicinal Plants are a major resource base for the traditional medicine and herbal industry.

India's Ranking in Press Freedom Falls to 138

- India's ranking in the Press Freedom Index has fallen two places to 138.
- Norway topped the list of having the World's Freest Press for the second year in a row.
- North Korea remained the Most Repressive Country followed by Eritrea, Turkmenistan, Syria and then China.
- The report is published annually by Reporters Without Borders, the Index measures the level of media freedom in 180 countries.

Government makes Agreement with World Bank

- The government has entered into a legal agreement with the World Bank for financing the research towards early development for Bio-Pharmaceuticals.
- The aim is to make India a hub for design and development of novel, affordable and effective bio-pharmaceutical products.
- This mission will mark the beginning of a new partnership between the Department of Biotechnology & the World Bank.

EAM to attend India-Mongolia Joint Committee

- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj will co-chair the 6th round of India-Mongolia Joint Consultative Committee meeting with her Mongolian counterpart in Ulaanbaatar.
- The meeting will discuss trade, economic, cultural and scientific cooperation.
- Mrs Swaraj became the first Indian External Affairs Minister to visit the Mongolia in 42 years.

Bangladesh, Nepal launched Trial Bus Service

- Bangladesh and Nepal have launched a trial bus service between their capitals through India.
- The proposed commercial bus service comes under the purview of BBIN (Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal) Motor Vehicles Agreement.
- Currently, passengers use the Lalmonirhat-Burimari-Changrabandha-Siliguri route to go to Kathmandu.

India signed Pact with World Bank for MP Roads

- India has signed a USD 210 million loan agreement with the World Bank to improve rural connectivity in Madhya Pradesh.
- The project will cover 10,510 km stretch of rural roads in Madhya Pradesh that fall under the Chief Minister's Gram Sadak Yojana (CMGSY) programme.
- The project is expected to improve the durability, resilience and safety of the gravel surfaced rural roads.

India, UAE to Engage on Skill Harmonisation

- India and the UAE have agreed to work together for harmonisation of skills that aims to match India's programmes for upskilling workers with the requirements of job market in the Gulf nation.
- This will help meet the skill demands of the UAE's employers.
- The two governments announced a partnership to strengthen the certification and joint recognition of skills.

India to Join countries having Sex Offender DB

- India will join a club of 8 countries with a sexual offender database to monitor and track those convicted of such crimes.
- National Crime Records Bureau will maintain a national database and profile of sexual offenders.
- This data will be regularly shared with states and Union Territories for tracking, monitoring and investigation, including verification of antecedents by police.

India, Afghan held Bilateral meet on Drugs

- India & Afghanistan held a dialogue in New Delhi to discuss issues related to illicit drug trafficking & narcotics abuse.
- The meeting focused on sharing best practices & furthering areas of cooperation in drug crime domain.
- India is located b/w 2 major narcotics regions - Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle and is vulnerable to transit, trafficking and consumption of opium derivatives.

New Partnership announced between India-UK

- The British government announced a new trade partnership between India-UK.
- India would be investing more than 1 billion pounds in UK which will aid in creating 5,750 British jobs.
- The new partnership was announced after Prime Minister Narendra Modi had talks with the British Prime Minister Theresa May.

India, Sweden to cooperate in Smart Cities

- India & Sweden have agreed to deepen their cooperation in Smart Cities initiative, transport & energy sectors.
- The 2 countries will exchange knowledge & explore cooperation on smart cities, including transit-oriented urban development, air pollution control & waste management.
- Both sides will also exchange know-how & explore cooperation in areas of electro-mobility as well as renewable fuels

India Ranked 10th in Innovation Index

- India was ranked 10th on a new Commonwealth Innovation Index which was topped by UK, Singapore & Canada.
- The index has been created in partnership with United Nations World Intellectual Property Organisation & its annual Global Innovation Index.
- It is aimed at providing a tool that allows member states, organisations & citizens to benchmark themselves against 53 countries of Commonwealth.

UK joins International Solar Alliance

- The United Kingdom joined the India-led International Solar Alliance (ISA) ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 4-day visit to Britain.
- The UK's Partnership will involve providing expertise and advice to the alliance, but no monetary contributions.
- The UK became 62nd country to join ISA, which includes countries like France, Australia, Bangladesh, Tuvalu, Benin, UAE, Brazil.

India Won Elections to Key UN Subsidiary

- India has won an election to a crucial Non-Governmental Organisation committee in the UN.
- The UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) held elections to a number of its subsidiary bodies.
- The ECOSOC focuses on advancing the three dimensions of sustainable development economic, social and environmental.
- India topped the election to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

US places India under Watch List

- The US Treasury Department placed India under a watch list that monitors countries' currency practices.
- The department in its report observed that the foreign exchange policies of 6 countries were needed to be monitored.
- Earlier, the department had five countries - China, Germany, Japan, Korea, and Switzerland - under this list. India is now the sixth country.

WB to Fund Community-led Landscapes Management

- A Loan Agreement worth USD 48 million for the 'Meghalaya Community - Led Landscapes Management Project (MCLLMP)' was signed between India and the World Bank.
- The objective of the project is to strengthen community-led landscapes management in selected landscapes in Meghalaya.
- The project will help manage the depleting resources, by strengthening the communities and traditional institutions.

India to host India-Wiesbaden Conference

- Ministry of External Affairs in cooperation with Germany and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs will host the India-Wiesbaden Conference 2018 in Delhi on April 16-17.
- The conference provides an opportunity to participants to share experiences on their export control systems.
- India has established a legally backed robust export control system to implement 'UNSC 1540'.

India, Russia Sign 7 MoU at DefExpo 2018

- India and Russia signed 7 MoUs at Defence Expo at Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- These MoUs were signed for manufacture, development of spares, subassemblies and assemblies of identified Russian origin platforms.
- The MoUs were signed during third India-Russia Military-Industrial Conference held on the sidelines of DefExpo 2018.

India, U.K. in Talks over Education

- India and the United Kingdom are holding talks to seal an agreement on mutual recognition of educational qualifications.
- It is likely to feature in official discussions during the upcoming London visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- India last month signed an agreement on mutual recognition of educational degrees with France, during the visit of President Emmanuel Macron to Delhi.

AIIB decides to Invest in India

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has approved a \$140 million loan for enhancing rural connectivity in Madhya Pradesh.
- The project, co-financed with the World Bank, aims to improve the rural road connectivity and management for residents of about 5,640 villages.
- The project will benefit around 1.5 million rural residents through improved livelihood, education and mobility.

India pips Germany to be No. 4 Car Market

- India has become the fourth-largest passenger vehicle (PV) market globally for the first time ever, unseating Germany, in January and February 2018.
- With sales of 5,60,806 units in the first two months of calendar 2018, India overtook Germany's tally of 5,31,100 units.
- India is behind China, US and Japan.
- Germany in the 5th position, followed by Brazil and France

India Ranks 130 in Index of Economic Freedom

- India has jumped 13 places in the last one year to 130th spot in the latest annual Index of Economic

Freedom released by the Heritage Foundation, a top American think-tank.

- As per the latest Index of Economic Freedom, China has jumped one spot and Pakistan is now at 131st position.
- In 2017, India with a score of 52.6 points was ranked at 143 among 180 countries.

NHAI inks pact for Maiden Global Project

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) inked a pact for its maiden international project, part of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway.
- NHAI has signed an agreement for upgradation of Yagyi - Kalewa section in Myanmar to Two-Lane with Earthen Shoulder.
- The project has been funded by Ministry of External Affairs.

First India-Nordic Summit in Stockholm

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi met leaders of Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark & Iceland for the first India-Nordic Summit in Stockholm on April 17.
- Narendra Modi became the first Indian PM to visit Stockholm since 1988.
- The six leaders exchanged views on regional and global issues such as environment and climate, trade and investment and discussed areas of future cooperation.

MoU between India, the UK and North Ireland

- The Cabinet approved the MoU between India, the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland on the return of Illegal Migrants.
- The MoU will facilitate the visa-free agreement for holders of diplomatic passports as well as liberalisation of UK visa regime for those who are travelling to the UK legally
- It will ensure the return of persons who have no lawful basis to be in the territory.

India signs MoU with Republic of Korea

- India signed a MoU with Korea on Mutual Recognition of Certificates of Competency of Seafarers.
- This paves the way for the two governments to mutually recognize the certificates of maritime education and training, competency, endorsements and medical fitness of seafarers issued by each other.
- The agreement will open up employment opportunities for Indian seafarers on Korean ships.

India Signs MoU With World EXPO 2020

- India and World Expo 2020 signed participants contract for India's pavilion in the prestigious World Expo 2020 held once in 5 years.
- The contract provides for the setting up of India pavilion at Expo 2020 on an extra-large plot (about one acre) in the 'Opportunity' segment.

- The focus will be given to India's advances in Space, Pharma, IT, Renewable Energy, Telecom sectors.

India-Nepal agree to Develop Inland Waterways

- India and Nepal recognised the untapped potential of inland waterways, in order to contribute towards the overall economic development of the region.
- Prime Minister of India and Nepal took the landmark decision to develop the inland waterways for the movement of cargo.
- The new initiative would enable cost-effective and efficient movement of cargo.

India, Bangladesh signed 6 MoUs

- India and Bangladesh signed 6 pacts including one for the construction of a 129.5 km-long oil pipeline between Siliguri and Parbatipur.
- The MoU on the oil pipeline is aimed at transporting diesel from India to Bangladesh.
- An agreement between Department of Atomic Energy, India and Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, was signed.
- The other MoU was between Prasar Bharati and Bangladesh Betar.

India, Swaziland signed 2 agreements

- India and Swaziland have signed two agreements in the field of Health and Medicine and Visa department on 9th April.
- One agreement deals with granting of the visa waiver for the diplomats and officials holding relevant passports.
- The other agreement is to ensure cooperation in the field of health and medicine.
- The agreements were signed in the presence of Indian President Ram Nath Kovind.

India-Nepal Petroleum Products Pipeline

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli launched the Rs 3.24 billion India-Nepal petroleum products pipeline from Motihari, Bihar to Amlekhgunj, Nepal on 7th April.
- This is the first international cross-country pipeline project in India.
- The Motihari-Amlekhgunj Pipeline project was approved by Indian Oil in September 2015.

SBI to invest in Hydropower Project

- SBI will be investing a total of Rs 80 billion in the 'Arun III' hydropower project of Nepal, which will produce 900 megawatts of electricity.
- The SJVN, which has been awarded with the construction of the mega power project of Nepal, has made an informal agreement with the SBI to acquire the investment as a loan.
- The mega project is targeted to be completed by 2022's September.

India, Equatorial Guinea inked 3 MoUs

- Three Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed between India and Equatorial Guinea.
- The MoUs were signed towards affirming cooperation in the fields of medicinal plants, traditional systems of medicine, and health and medicine sector.
- An action plan was also devised on cooperation in the field of Information and Communicational Technology.

Foreign Secretary to visit Bangladesh

- Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale is expected to meet his Bangladeshi counterpart Mohammad Shahidul Haque in Dhaka and discuss ways to deepen bilateral ties.
- Mr Gokhale is also likely to meet Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali.
- This is Mr Gokhale's first visit to Bangladesh after taking over as the Foreign Secretary.

India Unwilling to Participate in SAARC

- Citing continuing support to cross-border terrorism from Pakistan, India said on Saturday it was difficult to proceed with the SAARC initiative under current circumstances.
- SAARC Summits are usually held biennially hosted by a member state in alphabetical order.
- The last SAARC Summit in 2014 was held in Kathmandu.

India, Nepal for Strong Relations

- India and Nepal have agreed to further strengthen bilateral relations in key areas of border security, connectivity, trade and agriculture.
- The two countries have agreed for a rail line that will connect the border city of Raxaul in India to Kathmandu in Nepal.
- The agreements were reached during talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and visiting Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli.

PM to inaugurate International Energy Forum

- India hosted the 16th International Energy Forum (IEF) Ministerial Meeting from 10th - 12th April 2018 in New Delhi.
- The biennial IEF Ministerial Meetings are the world's largest gathering of Energy Ministers who engage in a dialogue on global energy issues.
- The IEF is an inter-governmental arrangement set up in 1991, based in Riyadh.
- There are 72-member countries of IEF, including India.

India, Azerbaijan ink two documents

- India and Azerbaijan have inked two documents for the visa waiver for diplomatic, official and service passports holders and cooperation between diplomatic training institutes.

- The agreements were signed during the ongoing visit of External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj to that country.
- Mrs Swaraj is there to be part of 18th NAM Ministerial Conference in Baku.

Agreement between India and Afghanistan

- Cabinet approved the agreement between Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation & Livestock (MAIL), Afghanistan for cooperation in the field of food safety.
- FSSAI and MAIL would establish a mechanism of information exchange and communication.
- Areas of cooperation also include facilitating technical exchange on identified topics of interest.

India ranked 3rd in Facing Most Cyber Threats

- India ranked third in the list of countries where the highest number of cyber threats were detected, and second in terms of targeted attacks in 2017, according to security software firm Symantec.
- India was ranked second globally when it comes to spam and phishing (misleading emails, weblink etc).
- Symantec detected 133 targeted attacks in India which are the work of organised groups.

NRDC to Develop ASEAN Technology Data Bank

- The National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) will establish a technology data bank for ASEAN region as part of ASEAN-India Innovation Platform.
- The corporation has been entrusted by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) to manage the platform for a period of four years.
- The proposed data bank will link existing data banks of available technologies in the ASEAN region.

Trial run of India-Bangladesh Container Train

- The trial run of the first container train to run between Kolkata and Dhaka was flagged off on 3rd April.
- While passenger and goods trains run between the two countries, it is for the first time that container trains will be going to Bangladesh from India.
- The container train will take around eight hours to reach Bangladesh and can carry 60 containers.

India-Japan-US trilateral talks in New Delhi

- New Delhi hosted the strategically important trilateral dialogue between India, Japan and the US on 4th April.
- The India-Japan-US trilateral was launched in December 2011.
- It was elevated to ministerial level in September 2015.
- The last ministerial dialogue was held in New York in September 2017.

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CMFRI Scientist gets Global Recognition

- Shyam S Salim, Principal Scientist at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), has been elected as an executive member of the 'International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade' (IIFET) based in the USA.

- Shyam is an expert in fisheries economics at CMFRI.
- IIFET is the forum for the exchange of research, information, and ideas on the economics of fisheries management.

India is the World's No 1 Almond Importer

- India has now become the Largest Importer of Almonds in the world.
- India has already imported 154 million pounds till February this crop year (August 2017 to July 2018), overtaking Spain and China.
- Spain was the biggest almond importer in 2016-17 with 210 million pounds, while China had 150-million-pound import.

First International Justice Conference

- Union Minister of State for Corporate Affairs and Law and Justice embarked on a visit to Marrakech, Morocco, for the first International Justice Conference.
- The conference is being organised by Morocco in celebration of the judicial reforms undertaken by it in 2017.
- India is expected to sign MoUs with China, Russia, Qatar and Turkey in connection with judicial reforms.

India, Pak to Resolve Harassment of Diplomats

- Ind & Pak have agreed to resolve the matter in line with provisions of a 1992 pact on treatment of officials posted at diplomatic missions.
- Code states that 2 sides will not resort to intrusive & aggressive surveillance & actions such as verbal & physical harassment
- Both sides have accused each other of harassing & ill-treating diplomats, taking bilateral ties to a fresh low.

Personalities in News

Kavinder Gupta is New Deputy CM of J&K

- Former Jammu and Kashmir speaker Kavinder Gupta took oath as a minister in the Mehbooba Mufti government.
- Gupta took oath as the Deputy Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, replacing BJP's Nirmal Singh, who will now become the assembly speaker.
- Kavinder Gupta is a Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Gandhinagar constituency in Jammu district.

Saudi Aramco appoints First Woman to the Board

- Saudi Arabia's Aramco, the world's top oil company has appointed its 1st Female Board Member among 5 new members to its board of directors.
- Lynn Laverty Elsenhans, the Former Chairwoman, President and CEO of U.S. Oil Refiner Sunoco is the 1st Female Board Member of Aramco.

- Elsenhans was named by Forbes as one of the 'World's Most Powerful Women' in 2008.

India's Longest Serving Chief Minister

- Pawan Chamling has created history by surpassing the record of former Communist Ruler of West Bengal, Jyoti Basu, as the longest serving chief minister in the country.
- Chamling became the Chief Minister of Sikkim on December 12, 1994 and has ruled the tiny Himalayan state ever since.
- Chamling joined politics in 1973 and was elected to the Sikkim assembly for the first time in 1985.

Alfie Dies after Court Rejects Appeal

- Alfie Evans, the 23-month-old British Toddler whose grave illness drew international attention, has died.
- Alfie had been in a Semi-Vegetative state for more than a year.
- A British court rejected an appeal by the parents on Wednesday to take their son to Italy.
- The case has provoked strong feelings over whether judges, doctors or parents have the right to decide on a child's life.

Indu Malhotra sworn in as SC Judge

- Senior lawyer Indu Malhotra was sworn in on 27th April as Supreme Court Judge.
- Justice Malhotra is the 7th woman Judge of the top court. Justice M. Fatima Beevi was the first woman judge of the SC. She was followed by Justice Sujata V. Manohar, Justice Ruma Pal, Justice Misra, Justice Desai and Justice Banumathi.
- She is the 1st woman lawyer from the Supreme Court bar to be directly elevated.

Yechury gets 2nd term as CPM general secretary

- The Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M) has re-elected senior party leader Sitaram Yechury for his second term as general secretary.
- Yechury had taken over as general secretary of the CPI(M) from Prakash Karat in the 21st party congress.
- The CPI-M's constitution allows an individual to be elected for a maximum of three terms, each consisting of three years.

Indian Airports got its 1st Woman Firefighter

- Airports Authority of India (AAI) has appointed its first woman firefighter, Taniya Sanyal.
- Taniya is currently undergoing training in Delhi and will be appointed for AAI's eastern region airports.
- Considered a profession only for men, AAI till recently did not have recruitment norms for women firefighters.
- AAI is facing a shortage of firefighters due to expansion & new airports coming up.

World's Oldest Person Nabi Tajima Died

- The world's oldest person Nabi Tajima has died in Japan at the age of 117.
- Tajima was born on August 4, 1900, and had more than 160 descendants, including great-great-great grandchildren.
- She became the world's oldest person in September, after the death of Violet Brown in Jamaica.

Prince Charles Head Next Commonwealth

- Prince Charles will be the next head of the Commonwealth, succeeding, his mother Queen Elizabeth.
- The Queen has been head of the Commonwealth since coming to the throne in 1952, but the position is not automatically held by the British monarch.
- As the Queen no longer goes abroad, the current summit in London likely will be her last.

Swedish DJ, Musician Avicii Found Dead

- Swedish DJ & record producer Avicii, one of the biggest stars of electronic dance music was found dead in Oman.
- Avicii, known for International hits like Wake Me Up & Hey Brother, announced in 2016 that he was retiring from touring
- Avicii won a number of American & Billboard music awards for his EDM work.
- He was nominated for 2 Grammy Awards for Best Dance Recording in 2012 & 2013.

Kyrgyzstan's Parliament Names New PM

- Kyrgyzstan's Parliament has named Mukhammedkaliy Abylgazyev as the new Prime Minister.
- Abylgazyev, previously Chief of Staff in President Sooronbai Jeenbekov's office, replaced Sapar Isakov whose cabinet lost a no-confidence vote.
- The Govt reshuffle completes a series of moves taken by Jeenbekov since he came to power to remove the appointees of his predecessor, Almazbek Atambayev.

Jim Bridenstine to be the New NASA Chief

- US Senate has confirmed President Donald Trump-nominated Representative Jim Bridenstine to serve as NASA's 13th administrator.
- His confirmation following a vote in the Senate ends the longest span of time that NASA has operated without a permanent leader.
- Bridenstine, a pilot in US Navy Reserve currently serves on the House Armed Services Committee & Science, Space & Technology Committee.

Syria Returned Prestigious Legion d'honneur

- Syria has returned to France the Prestigious Legion d'honneur presented to President Bashar al-Assad.

- President Assad was decorated with the Highest Class of the award, the Grand Croix, in 2001 after he took power following the Death of his Father.
- France recently joined the US and Britain in bombing Syrian targets over an alleged chemical weapons attack.

Tata Sons appoints new Group Chief HR Officer

- Tata Sons has appointed long-time group employee Nupur Mallick as its new Group Chief Human Resource Officer.
- Currently, Mallick is director, Human Resources for Tata Consultancy Services in the UK and Ireland.
- She will take over from S. Padmanabhan who will continue to be executive chairman of Tata Business Excellence Group and head, Sustainability Group.

Cuba gets its First Non-Castro President

- Cuba has selected First Vice President Miguel Mario Diaz-Canel Bermudez as the sole candidate to succeed Raul Castro as president of Cuba.
- Miguel is the first leader outside the Castro dynasty to lead the country since the 1959 revolution.
- Raul Castro will remain head of the Communist party, designated by the constitution as "the superior guiding force of society and the state".

Spielberg Becomes 1st Director to Gross \$10b

- Three-time Oscar winning filmmaker Steven Spielberg has become the first director to gross more than \$10 billion at the box office.
- Spielberg's latest film 'Ready Player One' has helped him achieve this milestone.
- Spielberg is unlikely to lose the top spot any time soon as his closest rivals - Peter Jackson, Michael Bay and James Cameron all are currently around the \$6 billion figure.

Indian Animation Expert Bhimsain Passed Away

- Indian animation pioneer and multiple National Award winner Bhimsain Khurana has passed away.
- It was his pioneering work in animation and films like Doorriyan (1979) and Gharaonda (1977) that came to define him.
- He is credited for the first Indian computer-generated animation series Lok Gatha (1992) that alone won him three national awards.

Karan Johar to get a Statue at Madame Tussauds

- Karan Johar has become the first Indian filmmaker to have his wax statue at the Madame Tussauds museum in London.
- His wax figure will not just be launched in one city but will simultaneously head out on tour across Asia.
- Since his debut as a director in 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai', Karan has managed a career that goes well beyond just filmmaking.

Noted Journalist S Nihal Singh Passed Away

- Noted journalist and former Chief Editor of The Statesman and The Indian Express, Surendra Nihal Singh passed away on 16th April.
- He was the founding editor of The Indian Post in 1987.
- He was awarded the prestigious International Editor of the Year Award in New York for opposing the Emergency imposed by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Swimmer Shelar Created World Record

- Pune-based 17-year-old swimmer Sampanna Ramesh Shelar became the first person in the world to double cross Bangla Channel.
- Shelar became the first person to swim to and from Saint Martin's Island Jetty to Teknaf in Bangladesh also known as the Bangla Channel.
- Sampanna started swimming at about 5 am on 13th April and completed the journey of 32.2 kilometers in 9 hours and 10 minutes.

Bhanu appointed Banks Board Bureau Chairman

- The government appointed Bhanu Pratap Sharma as the new Chairman of Banks Board Bureau, which primarily recommends senior executive appointments in state-run banks.
- Sharma will replace former Comptroller and Auditor General Vinod Rai, whose term ended on March 31.
- Notably, Sharma is the former Secretary of Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

Rakesh Bharti Mittal new CII President

- Bharti Enterprises Vice-Chairman Rakesh Bharti Mittal assumed the office of the President of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for 2018-19.
- Uday Kotak, Founder and CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank took over as President-Designate of CII for 2018-19.
- Vikram Kirloskar is the new Vice-President of CII for the current fiscal.

Rishad Premji appointed NASSCOM Chairman

- IT industry body NASSCOM had appointed Wipro Chief Strategy Officer and board member Rishad Premji as its Chairman for 2018-19.
- NASSCOM has appointed WNS Group CEO Keshav Murugesh as the Vice Chairman.
- Rishad Premji has been a member of Nasscom's executive council and was the vice chairman for 2017-18.
- NASSCOM is a trade association of Indian IT and Business Process Outsourcing industry.

Google marks Birth Anniversary of KL Saigal

- Google is marking the 114th birth anniversary of actor - singer Kundan Lal Saigal with a doodle of the late maestro.

- Saigal was Bollywood's first legitimate 'superstar', and appeared in 36 films made in three languages, and sang 185 songs in his 15 - plus - year career.
- Saigal got his big break in 1932 when he was cast in three films by a film studio called New Theatres.

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Rajesh Ranjan appointed DG CISF

- Rajesh Ranjan, a 1984 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, has been appointed as the Director General (DG) of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).
- He is at present Special Director General of the Border Security Force (BSF).
- The CISF provides security to various government installations including the airports of the country.

Sanjeev Nautiyal is the MD & CEO of SBI Life

- SBI Life Insurance Company Limited appointed Sanjeev Nautiyal as its new MD and CEO.
- Sanjeev Nautiyal started his career with State Bank of India in 1985 as a probationary officer in bank's Lucknow circle.
- In the immediately preceding assignment, he was the Chief General Manager of the bank's Ahmedabad circle.
- He is a Certified Associate of the Indian Institute of Bankers (C.A.I.I.B).

Himanta Sarma Elected as President of BAI

- Himanta Biswa Sarma has been elected as the President of the Badminton Association of India (BAI) for the next 4 years.
- He is a Cabinet ranked Minister and convener of the North East Democratic Alliance.
- He had taken over as the interim President of BAI last year after the demise of former president Akhilesh Das Gupta.

NatGeo Award for Physical Therapy App

- Dr. Asha, a neuro physical therapist from Andhra Pradesh has won the 'National Geographic Chasing Genius Challenge' in the U.S. for designing Therax, a web/mobile application.
- 'Therax' helps patients with home exercise programmes in their native language.
- The NatGeo challenge is part of a marketing strategy to popularise a television series.

Protem Chairman of LKA appointed

- On the recommendation of the Minister of Culture, the President has appointed M L Srivastava, Joint Secretary (Akademies), Ministry of Culture as Protem Chairman of the Lalit Kala Akademi (LKA).
- He will continue to hold the office till a regular chairman is appointed.
- He will replace CS Krishna Setty whose term has come to an end.

Debjani Ghosh is the new Nasscom President

- Debjani Ghosh, former managing director of Intel South Asia, is the new president of Nasscom.
- She replaced R.Chandrashekar whose term has completed.
- Ms.Ghosh was the first woman to lead Intel India and Manufacturers' Association for Information Technology.
- NASSCOM is a trade association of Indian Information Technology and Business Process Outsourcing industry.

Ex-Manipur CM R K Dorendra Singh Passed Away

- Former Manipur Chief Minister R K Dorendra Singh passed away in Imphal.
- Dorendra Singh had been Chief Minister of the state four times between 1974 to 1993.
- Before becoming the Chief Minister, he was the Speaker of Manipur Assembly.

Veteran Director CV Rajendran Passed Away

- Veteran director CV Rajendran passed away in Chennai after a prolonged illness.
- Rajendran had worked with some of the big names in the industry that included Sivaji Ganesan, Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan.
- He has also made films in other languages like Dulhan (Hindi), Thrimurthy (Kannada), and Chiranjeevi (Telugu).

- He brought together Sivaji Ganesan and Jayalalitha and introduced Prabhu.

MoS VK Singh to Leave for Iraq

- Minister of State for External Affairs VK Singh will leave for Iraq to bring back mortal remains of the 39 Indians killed by Islamic State terrorists in the war-torn country.
- As many as 40 Indians were abducted by terror group from Mosul in Iraq in June 2014, but one of them escaped posing as a Muslim from Bangladesh.
- The remaining 39 Indians were taken to Badoosh and killed.

New Head of BCCI's Anti-Corruption Unit

- BCCI has appointed former Rajasthan Director General of Police Ajit Singh as the head of its Anti-Corruption Unit.
- He replaces former Delhi Police Commissioner Neeraj Kumar.
- He has served Indian Police Service for 36 years & has headed the anti-corruption bureau of Rajasthan for 4 years.

Environment

World's Oldest Spider Discovered in Australia

- Scientists have discovered what may be the world's oldest recorded spider - a 43-year-old arachnid in Australia.
- The Giaus Villosus trapdoor matriarch, had outlived the previous world record holder, a 28-year old tarantula found in Mexico.
- The spider has recently died during a long-term population study.

All Protected Areas Declared Plastic Free Zone

- The environment ministry has banned plastics in all protected areas around the country, thus declaring them 'plastic free zones'.
- The environment ministry has directed states and Union territories to organise awareness campaigns to sensitise people about the issue.
- This comes ahead of the World Environment Day which is being hosted by India this year.

UNCCD Workshop on Land Degradation

- A 4-day Asia Pacific Regional Workshop of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was held in New Delhi.
- The workshop was jointly held jointly hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and UNCCD Secretariat.
- Its objective was to discuss on how to build the capacity of the Asia-Pacific Region to monitor and report on land degradation.

New Frog Species Takes Historical Name of Goa

- In the highland plateaus of the Western Ghats parts of Goa, scientists have identified a new species of frog called 'Fejervarya Goemchi'.
- The new species is named after the historical name of the state of Goa where the species is discovered.
- The new species is found in the high elevation areas of laterite plateaus, temporary water bodies and paddy fields of Goa.

Giant Mosquito Found In China

- Scientists have discovered a giant mosquito from the 'Holorusia Mikado' species with a wingspan of 11.15 cm in China.
- First found in Japan, the Holorusia mikado species normally has a wingspan of about 8 cm.
- These mosquitoes do not feed on blood & the adults have a lifespan of only a few days and mainly feed on nectar.

Western Ghats Reveal Smallest Land Fern

- Indian researchers have discovered the world's smallest land fern hiding in the Ahwa forests of the Western Ghats in Gujarat's Dang district.
- The fingernail-sized fern belongs to a group known as the adder's-tongue ferns.
- The size of the new Malvi's adder's-tongue fern 'Ophioglossum Malviae' is just one centimetre.

New System to Measure Air Quality

- India is tying up with the United States and Finland to develop a pollution-forecast system.
- The system will help anticipate particulate matter (PM) levels at least two days in advance and at a greater resolution than what is possible now.
- The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) will be coordinating this exercise and the plan is to have a system in place by winter.

Haryana Signed Pact with IOC

- The Haryana government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Indian Oil Corporation for setting up a biomethanation plant in Faridabad.
- The plant will produce cooking gas and compost from organic waste.
- The plant will also produce about four tonnes of compost per day from five tonnes of organic waste.
- This compost will be supplied to HSVP for parks.

New Draft Coast Regulation Rules

- Environment Ministry has framed new rules governing country's coastline in which it has proposed expanding land area for development activities & tourism infrastructure.
- Draft proposes a No Development Zone of 20m to be stipulated for all islands close to mainland coast.
- It also proposes temporary tourism facilities such as shacks, toilet blocks, change rooms and others at beaches.

Environment Ministry Releases Draft of NCAP

- Environment Ministry has come out with a draft national action plan proposing multiple strategy to reduce air pollution.
- Ministry in the draft said the objective of NCAP is to augment & evolve an effective & a proficient ambient air quality monitoring network across the country.
- Ministry hopes to bring down air pollution in 100 non-attainment cities by 50% in next 5 years under the NCAP.

New Antibiotic to Fight Drug Resistance

- A new class of antibiotics, from an unconventional source which has a distinct way of killing bacteria, has been discovered.
- It may help combat drug-resistant or hard-to-treat bacterial infections.
- The antibiotic called 'odilorhabdins', or ODLs, is produced by symbiotic bacteria.
- The bacteria helps in killing the insect and secretes the antibiotic to keep competing bacteria away.

New Plant Species Found in Western Ghats

- Researchers have discovered a new plant species from the Western Ghats biodiversity hotspot.
- Classified as a sedge, the grass-like plant has been named '*Fimbristylis agasthyamalaensis*' after the locality from which it was found.
- The new species belongs to the Cyperaceae family.
- In India, the genus is represented by 122 species, of which 87 are reported from the Western Ghats.

First City to Roll-Out Euro VI fuel

- With an aim to combat the rising levels of air pollution in Delhi-NCR region, petrol pumps in the capital have started supplying ultra-clean Bharat Stage VI grade fuel.
- This move makes New Delhi the first city in the country to switch from BS-IV grade fuels to BS-VI.
- The major difference in standards between the existing BS-IV and the new BS-VI auto fuel norms is the presence of sulphur.

Government Policies & Schemes

Gujarat to Launch Water Conservation Project

- The Gujarat Government will start a month-long initiative from May 1 to increase its water conservation capacity.
- Tasks like deepening ponds, desilting water reservoirs and check dams & repairing Narmada canal networks will be undertaken during the 31-day statewide "Sujalam Sufalam Water Conservation Initiative".
- The government aims to increase rain water conservation capacity in the state.

Delhi Govt to set up 'Rogi Kalyan Samiti'

- Delhi government has decided to set up 'Rogi Kalyan Samitis' in each constituency and 'Jan Swasthaya Samitis' in dispensaries and clinics.
- These Assembly Rogi Kalyan Samitis will play advisory role and will assist health facilities, develop and customise strategies.
- 'Assembly Rogi Kalyan Samiti' and 'Jan Swasthaya Samiti' will be provided Rs 3 lakh per annum as grand-in aid.

Agri Minister Launched Portal to Export Seeds

- Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh launched a portal to facilitate export-import of seeds and planting material.
- A seed import-export portal has been developed for making the trade process easy.
- With the launch of this portal, all organisations importing-exporting seeds will not be required to submit their applications in 20 copies.

Cabinet Approves MSP for Raw Jute

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister has given its approval for the increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Raw Jute.
- The increased MSP is based on recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices.
- The Jute Corporation of India will be the Central Nodal Agency to undertake price support operations at MSP in the Jute growing states.

Cabinet Approves Schedules Areas in Rajasthan

- Cabinet approved inclusion of some areas in Rajasthan under the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution so that the tribals living there can avail benefit of protective measures under its provisions.
- The Cabinet revoked the Constitution order (CO) dated February 12, 1981 and promulgated a new CO.
- No additional funds are required as to be expended on account of the declaration of Scheduled Areas.

National Bamboo Mission Restructured

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Bamboo Mission under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture.
- The mission is to ensure holistic development of the bamboo sector.
- The Mission will focus on the development of bamboo in limited states where it has social, commercial and economical advantage, particularly in the North Eastern region.

HRD Ministry Launches Unnat Bharat Abhiyan-2

- Human Resource Development Ministry launched the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan-2 in New Delhi.

- Under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, students from 750 higher educational institutions from across the country will adopt villages and visit them.
- Under the scheme, the institutions have been selected on a Challenge Mode and has been extended to 750 reputed Higher Educational Institutes.

M-Awas for Allotment of Govt. Homes

- Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs (I/C) launched a Mobile App (m-Awas) for allotment of Government accommodations in General Pool Residential Accommodation (GPRA).
- The application has been developed by NIC.
- The dedicated application of online allotment i.e. e-Awas will support this App.
- The app is user friendly and can be made operative from an android mobile phone.

Kerala CM Launched Pravasi Pension Scheme

- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan launched Pravasi pension scheme.
- The scheme gives those hailing from Kerala but living outside the state or country, a pension of 2,000 a month.
- People over the age of 60 years are eligible for the pension.
- The scheme is not applicable for state and central government employees.

Govt to Relax Restricted Area Permit Regime

- The Restricted Area Permit regime in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep will be relaxed for tourism promotion.
- This was decided during the third meeting of Island Development Agency chaired by Home Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi.
- The Island Development Agency reviewed the progress made towards preparation of Development Plans for identified Islands.

Government Approved Death Penalty For Rapists

- Centre has approved an ordinance to amend the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act to provide for death penalty for rape of children below the age of 12.
- The move comes in the wake of public outrage over the Kathua rape & murder case where the victim was a minor.
- Cabinet also decided to raise the minimum jail term for rapists to 10 years if the victims are over 16 yrs old.

2% Quota for Sports Persons in Govt Jobs

- Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has announced 2% reservation in state government jobs for sportspersons.
- Rao extended this sporting gesture while felicitating a group of 18 members, who participated in the recently concluded Commonwealth Games at Gold Coast.
- Currently 2% seats in educational institutions were reserved for sportspersons.

Central Project Monitoring Unit for e-Vidhan

- Union Minister Vijay Goel inaugurated the new office of Central Project Monitoring Unit for the e-Vidhan project of the Govt at the Parliament House Annexe.
- It was done as a part of Swachhata Pakhwada being observed by Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs from 16th to 30th April 2018.
- e-Vidhan is a mission mode project to digitize & make functioning of State Legislatures in India paperless.

Deposits in Jan Dhan Account Cross Rs 80,000cr

- Total deposits in Jan Dhan accounts has crossed Rs 80,000 crore mark with more people joining the flagship financial inclusion programme.
- The deposits, which have been steadily rising since March 2017, were at Rs 80,545.70 crore on April 11, 2018.
- Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana accounts had come into focus during the demonetisation period when the deposits witnessed a meteoric rise.

Cabinet approved Restructured Scheme

- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved a restructured Rashtriya Gram Swaraj

Abhiyan aimed at building infrastructure & stepping up initiatives for e-governance.

- The scheme will extend to all states & UTs & will include institutions of rural local govt in non-Part IX areas, where panchayats do not exist.
- PM Modi will launch the scheme on National Panchayati Raj Day on April 24.

Fugitive Economic Offenders Ordinance 2018

- Cabinet has approved promulgation of an ordinance that will empower govt to attach properties both within the country & overseas of fugitive economic offenders.
- It seeks to confiscate properties of economic offenders like Nirav Modi who have left the country to avoid facing criminal prosecution.
- Only those cases where amount involved is more than Rs.100cr will be covered under this ordinance

Initiative for Control of Viral Hepatitis

- The Health Ministry has decided to roll out an initiative for prevention and control of viral hepatitis.
- Under the initiative, the ministry intends to scale up to 100 treatment and 665 testing centres over a period of next three years in all states.
- Viral hepatitis is recognised as a public health problem worldwide. India is committed to ending viral hepatitis by 2030.

Chhattisgarh to Distribute Free Smartphones

- Chhattisgarh govt. will start distributing smartphones to over 50 lakh people for free from May under the Sanchar Kranti Yojana.
- Under the scheme, 40 lakh phones will be given to women heads of households in villages having population of more than 1,000.
- Smartphones will help to apprise people with the government's welfare schemes and about the processes to avail benefits.

DARPAN-PLI App Launched by Manoj Sinha

- MoS for Communication, Manoj Sinha launched DARPAN-Postal Life Insurance App in New Delhi.
- The App will help in collection of premium for Postal & Rural postal life insurance policies at Branch Post offices anywhere in India, with online updation of policies.
- It will help Department of Posts in providing better after-sales service to customers, particularly those living in rural areas.

Pilgrimage Train Flagged off from Sambalpur

- A special pilgrimage train for senior citizens, under the 'Baristha Nagarika Tirtha Yatra Yojana', has been flagged off from Sambalpur station by Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.
- The train will take senior citizens to Shirdi, Nasik and Trimbakeshwar during the seven-day tour.

- The Odisha government has signed an MoU with the IRCTC for the pilgrimage plan.

PMGSY Target Revised from 2022 to 2019

- The Government has said that the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) is well on its way to achieve the target by March 2019.
- The scheme, since its inception in 2000, has been able to provide connectivity to more than One lakh fifty thousand habitations.
- This centrally sponsored programme is implemented in partnership with the respective state governments.

LED bulbs under UJALA Scheme to be Star Rated

- All new LED bulbs distributed under the UJALA scheme after July 1 will have to be BEE Star Rated.
- This move is being implemented in a bid to weed out poor quality bulbs that have pilfered into the government's LED distribution programme run by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL).
- The BEE Star Rating will add another layer of quality check for the bulbs being distributed.

GNFC's Neem Project in UP

- Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers & Chemicals Limited (GNFC) started its socio-economic Neem Project in Amethi District, Uttar Pradesh.
- GNFC intends to collect 8,000 to 10,000 MT Neem seeds from the State.
- Using Neem as a key ingredient, GNFC has started producing Neem oil-based products such as Neem soap, handwash, shampoo, etc.

East Godavari with complete LED Street Light

- East Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh is all set to become the country's first 'LED street light district'.
- The rural LED street lighting programme in the district entailing the installation of around 3.1 lakh LED street lights has been completed.
- The Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL) is supporting the LED project which has been completed in five months.

PM Ujjwala Yojana Launched in Telangana

- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana was launched in the state of Telangana on the birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.
- The initiative is in line with Government's aim to eradicate energy poverty, thereby promoting economic empowerment.
- On 20th April 2018, 'Ujjwala Diwas' will be celebrated by way of PM Ujjwala Panchayats in which large number of LPG connections will be distributed.

Modi Inaugurated 1st Health Centre

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first health centre under Ayushman Bharat Scheme in Bijapur.

- He also inaugurated the first phase of the Bastar Internet scheme under which a 40,000-km-long network of fibre optics cable would be spread across the seven districts of the tribal region.
- The districts are Bijapur, Narayanpur, Bastar, Kanker, Kondagaon, Sukma and Dantewada.

Rajnath Singh launched e-FRRO for Foreigners

- Home Minister Rajnath Singh launched the web-based application e-FRRO (e-Foreigners Regional Registration Office) scheme.
- Under which foreigners can avail, various visa and immigration-related services online.
- This scheme is aimed at building a centralised, transparent online platform for foreigners to avail of visa-related services.

Tribal Development centre in Maharashtra

- The Maharashtra government has set up an institution known as Quality Evaluation for Sustainable Transformation centre (QUEST).
- The QUEST will evaluate and quantify special development budget allocations and their impact on tribal development.
- The state has taken the initiative to bring greater accountability in spending and management of dedicated funds allocated for tribal welfare.

6th Edition of Heat Action Plan Launched

- Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation in partnership with civil society groups launched 6th edition of Heat Action Plan to protect city dwellers from scorching temperatures.
- The plan has an early warning system used during heat waves and a robust public education campaign about how to avoid harm from excessive heat.
- Ahmedabad was the first city to prepare and implement heat action plan.

Dedicated Defence, Aerospace SME Fund

- Department of Defence Production announced the creation of a dedicated defence and aerospace small and medium enterprises (SME) fund.
- This fund would help channelise investments into the two defence corridors announced by the Government in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.
- The fund is registered with the Securities and Exchange Board of India where a minority stake could be taken by investors.

Oil, Finance Ministers Can award Oil Blocks

- The Cabinet allowed Ministers of Finance and Petroleum to award oil and gas blocks to winners in the ongoing auction.
- Till now, only the Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister had the powers to approve the award of a block or area for the exploration and production of oil and gas.

- The two Ministers will approve the award based on the recommendations of the Empowered Committee of Secretaries.

Government to Install Water ATMs in Haryana

- The Haryana government has prepared Water ATM Policy to provide clean drinking water to people at public places in cities.
- Under this policy, public places such as bus-stands, railway stations, parks, bus stops, parking areas and markets would be identified.
- There would be a distance of 400 meters between two water ATMs which could be adjusted according to the convenience of people.

FSSAI Launches 'Project Dhoop'

- Food safety regulator FSSAI launched an initiative Project Dhoop to encourage schools to shift their morning assembly to around noon-time to ensure maximum absorption of Vitamin D in students through natural sunlight.
- The move comes in the backdrop of rising incidence of Vitamin D deficiency in the country.
- The initiative urges schools to conduct their morning assembly between 11 am & 1 pm

New Website & App of NCSK Launched

- The new Website and Mobile App of the 'National Commission for Safai Karamcharis' (NCSK) was launched by Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment.
- The new website and Mobile App will help the Commission in addressing the grievances/complaints of petitioners in an efficient manner.
- The new website is as per the Government of India Guidelines for official websites.

Goa Govt to Launch App-based Taxi Service

- The Goa government has decided to launch its own app-based taxi service to some key tourist destinations in the coastal state.
- The state-run Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC) invited the taxi operators to register with the new mobile application-based transport service.
- Currently, the tourist taxi operators run their businesses individually in Goa.

Fast-track Court to Try Drug Cases in Manipur

- Manipur Chief Minister Biren Singh inaugurated a special court at Cheirap Court Complex in Imphal to try drug-related cases.
- The fast-track court will facilitate the speedy trial of offences relating to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.
- Similar court to try Crime Against Women was also inaugurated by the Chief Minister on June 27 last year.

Andhra Pradesh to get Happiness Department

- The Andhra Pradesh government will soon constitute a Happiness Commission that will take up a series of programmes to promote “happiness” in the state.
- The commission, which will work under the department of planning, will be headed by Chief Minister.
- AP became the second state in the country to introduce an exclusive ministry for happiness in April 2017. Madhya Pradesh is the first state.

UIDAI puts Digitally Signed QR Code

- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has brought in secure digitally-signed QR code on eAadhaar that will contain the photograph of the Aadhaar holder to facilitate better offline verification of an individual.
- A QR code is a form of a barcode which contains machine-readable information.
- eAadhaar is the electronic version of Aadhaar that can be downloaded from UIDAI website.

First Meeting of the NE NITI Forum

- The first meeting of Newly constituted NITI Forum for North East will be held in Agartala, Tripura on 10 April 2018.
- The forum will be co-chaired by the Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog and Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (DoNER).
- The ‘NITI Forum for North East’ was constituted in February 2018 with an aim to ensure sustainable economic growth of the North Eastern Region of India.

Haryana Govt. to Support TB Patients

- Haryana government has decided to provide special benefits, including nutritional support, to tuberculosis patients in an effort to eliminate the infectious disease by 2025.
- The government would provide nutritional support of Rs 500 per month during treatment to notified TB patients.
- Free services would be provided to TB patients in government hospitals of Haryana, including X-Ray.

Free Chemotherapy in 10 Maharashtra Districts

- The Maharashtra state government will introduce free chemotherapy facility in 10 districts from June.
- This facility will be made available at district hospitals of Nagpur, Gadchiroli, Pune, Amravati, Jalgaon, Nashik, Wardha, Satara, Bhandara and Akola in the first phase.
- The initiative would help patients save in lodging and travelling expenses.

PM Ujjwala Yojana Inaugurated in Delhi

- Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) scheme in

Delhi on 7th April and distributed new LPG connections and cylinders to beneficiaries here.

- During the event, about 400 LPG connections were handed over to families belonging to below poverty line category.
- The PMUY was launched at Yamuna Sports Complex in the national capital.

Uttarakhand's 2nd Mega Food Park Inaugurated

- Union Minister for Food Processing Industries inaugurated the second mega food park in Uttarakhand at Mahuakhera Ganj village, Kashipur in Udham Singh Nagar district.
- The first Mega Food Park in the state located at Haridwar has already become operational.
- The mega food park would have a central processing centre as well as well as three Primary Processing Centres.

Tripura Launches State Version of PMKVY

- Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb has launched the state component of Pradhanmantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY) in Agartala.
- He has assured that the target to give training to more than 1 lakh 16,000 youths by 2020 will be achieved.
- Tripura is the first state in the country to implement pilot project for accreditation for skilled candidates.

Mudra Yojana Completes 3 years

- PM expressed delight over the completion of three years of Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)
- The scheme was introduced to cater to entrepreneurs who are either in their early stage or require lesser funds in order to get their business running.
- The PMMY was launched on April 8, 2015 with an aim to provide loans upto Rs 10 lakh to non-corporate, non-farm small or micro enterprises.

Gobar-dhan Yojana to be Launched

- ‘Gobar-dhan Yojana’, the central scheme for managing and converting cattle dung into manure and biogas, is about to be launched.
- The scheme will be launched at national level from Karnal in Haryana on April 30.
- Under this scheme, one village in every district of the country would be selected for its implementation.

TN Govt Launches ‘Uzhavan’ App for Farmers

- Tamil Nadu government has launched the bilingual ‘Uzhavan’ (farmer) app that will allow ryots to have access to nine types of services.
- The app can be used by farmers to get information on farm subsidies, book farm equipment and details about crop insurance.

- The app is available in Tamil and English language & includes information on the availability of seeds and fertilisers at stores.

Tobacco Products to Show Helpline Number

- All tobacco products will have a national toll-free number printed on them from September to assist users to quit the addiction.
- The toll-free number will help in creating awareness among tobacco users and give them access to counselling services to effect behaviour change.
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has notified new sets of health warnings for all tobacco product packs.

Ganga Hariteema Yojana Launched in UP

- In Uttar Pradesh, 'Ganga Hariteema Yojana' (Ganga Greenery Scheme) has been launched in 27 districts of the state located on the bank of river Ganga.
- The objectives of the schemes include enhancing green cover in the catchment areas of the river Ganga and to control the land erosion.
- Plantation will be carried out in one-kilometre areas from the banks of the river under the scheme.

Mahila Shakti Kendra to Empower Rural Women

- The government of India has approved a new scheme namely Mahila Shakti Kendra for 2017-18 up to 2019-20 to empower rural women through community participation.
- The scheme is envisaged to work at various levels, and at the National level and State level.
- Under the Scheme, State Resource Centre for Women is provided for all States/UTs & District Level Centre for Women to 640 districts.

'Gram Swaraj Abhiyan' on Ambedkar Jayanti

- The Prime Minister has announced that on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti a 'Gram Swaraj Abhiyan' would be organised starting from 14th April to 5th May 2018.
- This Abhiyan will reach out to poor households, spreading awareness about government welfare schemes and other initiatives.
- Universal coverage under 7 welfare programmes in 21058 villages has been contemplated under this Abhiyan.

Khadi Store Locator App Launched

- The Minister of State for MSME, Giriraj Singh launched a mobile phone application for locating 4,000 Khadi stores in the country.
- There are more than 8,000 Khadi stores in India, the rest of stores will also be available on the store locator by the end of April.
- The Khadi and Village Industries products are manufactured by about 7 lakh privately owned household units.

Maharashtra Govt & Centre Signs MoU with WB

- The Government of India, Government of Maharashtra and the World Bank signed a US\$ 420 million project to help Small and Marginal farmers in the Marathwada and Vidarbha regions of Maharashtra.
- The project will help in increasing climate resilient practices in agriculture.
- The project will help the farmers in reducing risks of climate-related crop failure and increase their income.

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TRAI Suggests Access Points for Wi-Fi

- TRAI has proposed the concept of Public Data Office Providers, aimed at enhancing Wi-Fi connectivity and cutting internet costs by up to 90%.
- TRAI recommended an ambitious model of a public Wi-Fi grid that also aims to push broadband proliferation in the country.
- The grid or the mesh conceptualised by TRAI entails multiple providers coming together on one platform.

'Van Dhan Vikas Kendra' at Bijapur Launched

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has approved establishment of the first multipurpose 'Van Dhan Vikas Kendra' on the pilot basis for establishment in Bijapur District of Chhattisgarh.

- The Kendra will provide skill and capacity building training and setting up of primary processing facility.
- The Kendra will have processing facility for Tamarind brick making & Mahua flower storage facility.

Ministry of Coal Launched UTTAM APP

- Ministry of Coal launched 'UTTAM App' for Coal Quality Monitoring.
- UTTAM stands for – Unlocking Transparency by Third Party Assessment of Mined Coal (uttam.coalindia.in).
- The Ministry of Coal and Coal India Limited (CIL) developed UTTAM, aims to provide an App for all citizens and coal consumers to monitor the process of Third Party Sampling of coal across CIL subsidiaries.

Cabinet Approved Human Rights Bill, 2018

- The Union Cabinet approved the Protection of Human Rights (Amendments) Bill, 2018 for better protection and promotion of human rights in the country.
- The Amendment will strengthen the Human Rights Institutions of India for the effective discharge of their mandates, roles and responsibilities.
- It proposes to add a woman member in the composition of the human rights commission.

Mechanism to Address Taxpayers Grievances

- The government will put in place an IT-Grievance Redressal Mechanism to address the difficulties faced by a section of taxpayers owing to technical glitches on the GST portal.
- The IT Grievance Redressal committee will examine and approve the solutions for an identified issue.
- If a taxpayer faces problem due to failure of power supply, this mechanism shall not be available.

DG Safeguards to Come Under Commerce Ministry

- The Directorate General of Safeguards (DGS) will soon be shifted to the commerce ministry.
- It is a part of government's plan to create a single authority for imposing trade remedies to protect domestic industry.
- As per the plan, the government would merge DGS with the Directorate General of Antidumping and Allied Duties (DGAD), the investigating arm of the commerce ministry.

Sikkim will give Pension to Organic Farmers

- Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling announced monthly pension of 1000 rupees for farmers engaged in organic farming in the state.
- Sikkim government has banned sale and consumption of non-organic agricultural and horticultural products.
- Organic farming doesn't involve the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers.

- Sikkim is the first fully organic state in the country.

Initiatives for Ease of Exports Launched

- Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu launched digital initiatives for ease of exports.
- Under the digital initiatives, the Minister launched three portals, namely Safe Food Export Traceability Portal, One Laboratory One Assessment Portal and Monitoring Export Alerts Portal.
- The portals will bring together all regulators, accreditation bodies and other stakeholders at one place.

States allowed to Set Up Crop insurance Firms

- The Centre has allowed states to set up their own insurance companies for implementing Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).
- Launched in April 2016, PMFBY provides comprehensive crop insurance from pre-sowing to post-harvest against non-preventable natural risks.
- Presently, five public sector insurers and 13 private insurance companies are empanelled for implementation of the scheme.

'Rupashree' scheme launched in West Bengal

- The West Bengal government has rolled out Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's dream project 'Rupashree' which provides one-time financial support to the marriages of poor women.
- 'Rupashree' scheme follows the chief minister's ambitious 'Kanyashree' project which has drawn global applause.
- Under the scheme, an amount of Rs 25,000 will be credited to her bank account before her marriage.

Art & Culture

International Buddhist Meet Held in Lumbini

- The International Buddhist Conference was held in Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha.
- The Conference aimed to disseminate teachings of Buddha and spread the messages of nonviolence, brotherhood, coexistence, love and peace to the international community.
- Representatives from 16 countries including U.S., Japan, India, China, Indonesia and Sri Lanka attended the conference.

Manipur's Shirui Lily Festival Held

- Manipur's five-day Shirui Lily State Festival commenced on 24th April in the Ukhrul district headquarters.
- The festival, organized by the State Tourism Department, aimed to spread awareness and conserve the endangered state flower 'Shirui Lily', while also promote the hill district as a potential tourist destination.

- The campaign was organized by The Giving Tree and Hill Wild.

Bisket Jatra Being Celebrated in Nepal

- In Nepal, the famous Bisket Jatra is being celebrated in Bhaktapur and other parts of Kathmandu valley.
- The 9 day annual festival marks beginning of Nepali new year.
- The Jatra begins 4 days before the start of new year.
- The main attraction of Bisket Jatra is chariot procession of Lord Bhairavanath.

Manipur-Based Black Pottery Gains Prominence

- The Manipur-based indigenous 'Longpi Hampai pottery' has started gaining prominence in the International Markets owing to its intricate designs and technology used to produce them.
- The ancient art has originated from two Longpi villages in Manipur namely Longpi Khullen and Longpi Kaiju near Ukhrul district.
- It is practised by Tangkhul community residing in the hill district of Manipur.

Science & Technology

CSIR and DoT Enter into MoU

- CSIR entered into a MoU with DoT for synchronising the telecom network with Indian Standard Time (IST).
- The purpose of synchronising the telecom network with the IST is to enable the security agencies in analysing and correlating the cyber events.
- The Project will also improve the network efficiency by reducing packet loss due to reduced slips in better synchronised digital network.

Mechanism of Deadly Fungal Infection Found

- Scientists have discovered a unique mechanism that drives the spread of a rare and deadly fungal infection that affects the lungs and brain.
- Cryptococcosis is a fungal infection that usually only occurs in people with impaired immunity, according to researchers at the University of Birmingham.
- The infection affects the lungs first, because it is acquired by inhaling fungal spores.

Isro to Launch Slew of Military Satellites

- Indian Space Research Organisation is gearing up to launch a slew of important satellites in the coming months.
- Some of these satellites are significant as they will help military keep an eye on our neighbours & safeguard our land & sea borders.
- ISRO will launch a dedicated satellite, Gsat-7A, for Indian Air Force & an advanced remote sensing satellite, Risat-2A, for surveillance purpose.

Scientists in Spain Create a New Record

- Researchers based out in Spain cramp down light to lesser than a nanometer, that is, a space of 1 atom.
- The team did so by squeezing plasmons into a gap between graphene and metal.
- This is the smallest confinement done till date.
- This work was performed in collaboration with MIT (USA) and University of Minho (Portugal).

SpaceX Launched NASA's Planet-Hunting TESS

- NASA has blasted off its newest planet-hunting spacecraft 'TESS' that aims to scan 85% of the skies for cosmic bodies where life may exist.
- TESS is expected to reveal 20,000 planets beyond our solar system, including more than 50 Earth-sized planets & up to 500 planets less than twice the size of Earth.
- TESS will survey more cosmic terrain than its predecessor, Nasa's Kepler Space Telescope.

Key Accord Against Cyber Attacks

- Top 34 global technology & securities firms, led by Microsoft, have signed a "Cybersecurity Tech Accord" to defend people from malicious attacks by cybercriminals & nation-states.
- The accord is a public commitment among 34 global companies to improve the security, stability and resilience of cyberspace.
- The economic losses due to cyber attacks are expected to reach \$8 trillion by 2022.

Asteroid 2018 GE3 Makes Surprise Fly-By Earth

- A giant asteroid gave Earth a surprise close shave this week, flying by at a distance of 1,92,000 kilometres, just a day after astronomers discovered the object.
- Designated 2018 GE3, made its closest approach to Earth at around 0641 GMT on April 15.
- NASA estimated that the asteroid measures 48 to 110 meters wide.

Scientists Developed Device that Mimics Brain

- A team of scientists at Northwestern University, USA, led by an Indian, has developed an electronic device that can mimic the human brain.
- This device named "memtransistor" combines the functions of a memristor and a "transistor".
- The memtransistor has tremendous potential in Artificial Intelligence (AI), which requires unprecedented analytical and computational capabilities.

China Develops 3D Conic Device

- Chinese scientists have developed a new device of 3D hollow-cone structure that can greatly increase the solar-thermal conversion efficiency.
- The name of the device is 'Artificial Transpiration'.
- It has a special 1D water path within it, which can reduce the energy loss in conduction.

- The cone structure, based on a graphene film, can collect more sunlight throughout the day.

NASA to Study Effect of Phytoplankton

- NASA is conducting a study of the world's largest phytoplankton bloom in the North Atlantic to see how the tiny sea creatures influence the climate in every season.
- The name of the mission is The North Atlantic Aerosols and Marine Ecosystems Study (NAAMES).
- NAAMES will study how phytoplanktons give rise to small organic particles that leave the ocean and end up in the atmosphere.

2nd Magnetic Field Created by Earth Found

- The European Space Agency has created the most detailed map ever of the elusive oceanic magnetism generated by Earth's lithosphere.
- While Earth's magnetic field is majorly generated within the outer core, a small fraction comes from magnetised rocks in the crust and the upper mantle.
- This lithospheric magnetic field is 20,000 times weaker than global magnetic field at satellite altitude.

IIT-Delhi Installs India's First 5G Lab

- IIT-Delhi has set up a radio lab with an array of antennas for "standardisation, research and manufacturing" of 5G equipment.
- A Massive MIMO radio laboratory has been set up at IIT Delhi. This will be the first such lab in India.
- In Massive MIMO, several antennas are deployed at the base station as compared to only a few antennas in 3G/4G.

ISRO to Launch Navigation Satellite

- ISRO on 12th April will launch a navigation satellite IRNSS-1I, the 8th such satellite to be a part of NAVIC navigation satellite constellation, from Sriharikota.
- India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, in its forty-third flight (PSLV-C41) in XL configuration, will launch IRNSS-1I Satellite.
- IRNSS-1I is expected to replace IRNSS-1A, the first of the seven navigation satellites.

First Flight to Sun to Launch in July

- NASA's Parker Solar Probe — humanity's first mission to the Sun — is undergoing final preparations.
- The mission is scheduled for launch on July 31, 2018.
- Parker Solar will orbit directly through the solar atmosphere - the corona - closer to the surface than any human-made object has ever gone.

RH300 Sounding Rocket Launched

- The RH300 sounding rocket, developed by Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre as part of a study to enrich available atmospheric data, was launched on 6th

April from the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station in Kerala.

- This was the 21st launch of RH300 sounding rocket.
- The RH-300 MKII sounding rocket is utilised to study the Equatorial and lower ionosphere regions of the atmosphere.

NASA Set to Build Quiet Supersonic Planes

- NASA is set to develop an 'X-plane' designed to fly faster than the speed of sound without producing the noise typical of supersonic flights.
- The X-plane's mission is to provide crucial data that could enable commercial supersonic passenger air travel over land.
- The X-plane makes a quiet sonic boom due to its unique shape and design.

Icarus, the Farthest Star Ever Seen

- Scientists have detected the most distant star, Icarus, ever viewed, located more than halfway across the universe.
- The star was formally named MACS J1149+2223 Lensed Star-1.
- Scientists used NASA's Hubble Space Telescope to spot the star.
- The star is 9.3 billion lights years away from Earth and it is about twice as hot as our sun.

NASA Test Launches Mars Landing Parachute

- A supersonic parachute that will help NASA missions to land on Mars, was successfully launched into the sky.
- The Advanced Supersonic Parachute Inflation Research Experiment (ASPIRE) was launched on March 31 from NASA's Wallops Flight Facility in the US.
- The test was meant to mimic the conditions that a spacecraft would experience during a red planet entry, descent and landing.

India Loses Contact with GSAT-6A Satellite

- ISRO has lost contact with the GSAT-6A, India's most powerful communication satellite, in less than 48 hours after it was launched.
- The GSAT-6A, the 2nd in the series of GSAT-6 satellites to provide high speed broadband on mobile phones was designed for a life of 10 years.
- This is the second mission failure for Isro in six months, with the previous one being the PSLV-C39.

China's Tiangong-1 Space Lab set to Hit Earth

- China's Tiangong-1 or Heavenly Palace space station is set to re-enter Earth's atmosphere b/w March 31 & April 1.
- Scientists have underlined that the danger of Tiangong-1 being hit by falling debris is tiny, as the structure is likely to burn up in the atmosphere during its re-entry

- In 2011, China launched Tiangong-1 as a prototype for Beijing's goal of establishing a permanent space station

Books & Authors

Manmohan Singh Launches Economist Rao's Book

- Former PM Manmohan Singh recently released a book by Economist C H. Hanumantha Rao.
- The book is titled 'My Journey from Marxism-Leninism to Nehruvian Socialism'.
- C H Hanumantha Rao was the former Planning Commission and Finance Commission member.

Books on Mahatma Gandhi's Champaran Movement

- Bihar CM Nitish Kumar released 3 books based on Mahatma Gandhi's Champaran movement of 1917.
- He released the books titled - 'Mister M K Gandhi Ki Champaran Diary', 'Champaran Andolan 1917' and 'Pir Muhammad Munis: Kalam Ka Satyagrahi'.
- Champaran movement is acknowledged as the first Satyagraha movement inspired by Mahatma Gandhi.

Committees & Recommendations

Expert panel to Probe Film Archive Issues

- The I&B ministry has constituted a 5 member Expert Committee to look into the condition of films as well as the storage vaults at the National Film Archive of India (NFAI).
- The committee will also suggest ways and means to preserve the films in a better manner.
- The committee comprises filmmakers Shaji N Karun, Ketan Mehta, Piyush Shah and former NFAI director K S Sasidharan.

Committee for Higher Defence Management

- To improve higher defence management, govt has constituted a committee headed by NSA Ajit Doval.
- Committee will prepare a draft national security strategy, work on defence diplomacy issues & improving defence manufacturing in India.
- It will have Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee, 3 service chiefs, secretaries of ministries of defence, expenditure & foreign affairs as its members.

Business & Economy

RBI Raised Foreign Participation in G-Secs

- The Reserve Bank of India announced measures to raise exposure of Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPI) in government securities, a move that will help in softening yields.
- The cap on FPI investments in any Central Government security has been revised to 30 percent of the outstanding stock of that security.

- FPIs were required to invest in corporate bonds with a residual maturity of 3 years.

India to Grow at 7.5% in 2018-19

- According to a Deutsche Bank report, the Indian economy is likely to clock a GDP growth of 7.5% this financial year.
- The report noted that higher global oil prices, risk of an earlier than anticipated rate hike cycle from RBI are some of the factors that pose downside risk to its baseline GDP estimate.
- According to the report, a \$10 increase in oil prices can shave off growth by about 10 bps

Paytm Introduced 'Tap Card'

- Paytm has announced the launch of its offline payments solution - the Paytm Tap Card.
- The card uses Near Field Communication (NFC) technology to enable safe and convenient digital payments, completely offline at Paytm-issued, NFC PoS terminals.
- Tap Card has been launched to provide seamless payments solutions for non-internet customers.

RBI Liberalised ECB Norms

- RBI has further liberalised norms for external commercial borrowing that will allow Indian companies to access cheaper funds from overseas markets.
- According to new norms, RBI has stipulated a uniform all in cost ceiling of 450 bps over benchmark rate.
- RBI also decided to increase the ECB Liability to Equity Ratio for ECB raised from direct foreign equity holder under automatic route to 7:1.

Fitch Retains India Rating at 'BBB-'

- Global credit rating agency Fitch has affirmed India's sovereign rating at 'BBB-' with 'stable' outlook.
- 'BBB-' rating indicates lowest investment grade.
- The rating was assigned to the country 11 years ago. Fitch had last upgraded the rating from 'BB+' to 'BBB-' with stable outlook on August 1, 2006.
- Fitch has projected India's growth at 7.3 per cent in current the fiscal.

Axis Bank Posts First Loss Since 1998

- Axis Bank has reported a net loss of Rs 21.88 billion for the quarter ended March 2018.
- This is the first time the bank has posted quarterly loss since its listing in 1998.
- The loss has been attributed to higher provisioning for bad loans.
- The lender substantially raised its provisioning to cover for bad loans and contingencies during the quarter to Rs 71.79 billion.

NITI Aayog VC: India to Grow at 7.5%

- Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar expects India's economy to grow by at least 7.5 per cent in 2018-19.
- Attributing this growth to improvement in investment cycle and capacity utilisation, he has also prescribed for more action by govt.
- He has said that the government should now concentrate on consolidating the reform initiatives undertaken in the last 47 months.

Govt. to Acquire RBI's Stake in NHB

- The government is all set to acquire the stake of Reserve Bank of India in housing finance regulator National Housing Bank (NHB),
- RBI currently holds 100 per cent stake in the NHB.
- The Finance Bill 2018 has amended the National Housing Bank Act, 1987, for transferring RBI's stake in the NHB to the government.

Govt. Collects Rs 7.41 trillion from GST

- Govt. has collected Rs 7.41 trillion in taxes in the first year of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) between August 2017 and March 2018
- The revenues for four months have not being accounted for because of the mid-year rollout and an accounting lag.
- Under GST, the tax levied on consumption of goods or rendering of service is split 50:50 between the Centre and the states.

RBI Eases Rules for Foreign Investors

- RBI has removed the restriction that limited foreign investors to only investing in government and corporate bonds with tenures of 3 years or more.
- This decision can bolster the domestic bond market.
- The move comes after weak investor interest in two recent auctions that led to a spike in sovereign debt yields.

NSE Launched e-Gsec Platform

- The National Stock Exchange announced the launch of its e-Gsec platform.
- The platform will allow retail investors to invest in government securities and hold them in existing demat accounts.
- The government issues securities to borrow money from the market.
- The Union budget 2016-17 had announced that RBI will facilitate retail participation in the primary markets through Stock Exchanges.

SAIL ties-up with AAI under UDAN

- SAIL and AAI have signed an MoU on utilisation of airstrips under the Regional Connectivity Scheme - UDAN.
- SAIL have airstrips at its Rourkela (Odisha), Bokaro (Jharkhand) and Burnpur (West Bengal) steel plants.

- AAI will operate and manage airport operations for Burnpur, Rourkela and Bokaro airport on behalf for SAIL.
- The UDAN scheme has been launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

E-way Bill Roll Out in 4 more States

- The Centre stated that the e-way bill system for intra-state movement of goods will be rolled out in four more states and one Union Territory on 25th April.
- The e-way bill system is being introduced in Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, and Sikkim, and in Puducherry.
- The new system was implemented from April 15 in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Kerala, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh.

ADB to give Rs 1,700 Crore Aid to U'khand

- The Asian Development Bank has agreed to give an aid of Rs 1,700 crore to Uttarakhand.
- The Aid will be given for the creation of infrastructural facilities, sewer treatment plants and water supply facilities in urban areas of Uttarakhand.
- This was conveyed to Chief Minister of Uttarakhand by the country director of ADB's India Regiment Mission.

Bol Inks Pact with NeSL

- Bank of India has entered into an agreement with National E-Governance Services (NeSL) for Information Utility arrangement under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code.
- As per the agreement, Bol will avail NeSL service to expedite corporate insolvency resolution process.
- In September 2017, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India registered NeSL as the first Information Utility.

India Topped the Remittances Chart for 2017

- According to World Bank, India has retained its position as the top remittances receiving country with its diaspora sending about USD 69 billion back home in 2017.
- Remittances to India picked up sharply by 9.9% to USD 69 billion in 2017, reversing the previous year's dip.
- Remittance inflows improved in all regions and top remittance recipients were India was followed by China & Philippines.

Paytm Payments Bank Registers 100M KYC Wallets

- Paytm Payments Bank claims that it now has over 100 million KYC - registered wallets which includes both complete & minimum KYC.
- This development comes even as there have been indications in digital payments industry of a sharp fall

in mobile-wallet users as customer authentication did not take off.

- Paytm Payments Bank is owned 51% by Paytm founder Vijay Sharma & 49% by One97 Communications.

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Axis Bank Picks Egon Zehnder to find new CEO

- Axis Bank has appointed global recruitment firm Egon Zehnder to find a successor for MD and CEO Shikha Sharma.
- In December 2017, the bank's board had approved the reappointment of Ms. Sharma for 3 years, but early this month she said that she would step down in December 2018.
- Axis Bank is the third largest private-sector banks in India.

India, Finland Settle Nokia Tax Row

- India and Finland have reached an accord on the tax dispute with Nokia under the Mutual Agreement Procedure.
- The resolution covering the disputes pertaining to Nokia India as well as Nokia Corp brings to an end one of the biggest tax disputes involving Multinational Companies.
- This paves the way for sale of Nokia's Chennai plant, which has been shuttered since November 2014.

World Bank Approved \$13bn Increase in Capital

- World Bank Group has endorsed a package of measures that include a \$13 billion increase in paid-in capital.
- The package approved by Development Committee of Board of Governors consists of \$7.5bn paid-in capital for IBRD & \$5.5bn paid-in capital for IFC.
- World Bank Group will now be able to support drivers of long-term sustainable growth, including investments in human capital & resilience.

ICICI Bank Launched Digital Form

- ICICI Bank has introduced a 'digital form' which will help open current accounts in a few hours in comparison to an industry average of a few days.
- Bank officials would now be able to capture information about customer & business digitally & verify KYC documents in real-time.

- Digital forms are expected to help bank secure more clients & help increase bank's market share.

PNB Impounds Passports of Wilful Defaulters

- Punjab National Bank has impounded passports of 150 wilful loan defaulters who are not repaying loans.
- This is the first such revelation made by any bank, following govt's instructions to banks on seeking passport copies of all those who have borrowed more than Rs 50 crore.
- PNB has already declared 1,084 wilful defaulters & has published photos of 260 such defaulters in newspapers.

RBI Makes Aadhaar Key to KYC Compliance

- Reserve Bank of India has amended its 'Know Your Customer' guidelines, making Aadhaar compulsory by banks & finance companies.
- RBI has also done away with sections relating to use of other 'officially valid documents' by lenders for address and identity proof.
- The norms have been revised because the government had amended laws on prevention of money laundering.

1st Indian Company with \$100bn Market Cap

- Tata Consultancy Services has moved closer to the \$100 billion mark in market capitalisation as its share price surged nearly 7%, adding about \$6.2 billion to its valuation.
- The IT major is set to be the first listed Indian company to achieve this milestone.
- TCS is leading the chart as the most valued firm followed by Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, ITC and HUL.

1st meet of BRICS FMs & Central Bank Governors

- First meeting of BRICS Finance Ministers & Central Bank Governors was held on the sidelines of IMF/World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington D.C.
- Main issues that were discussed were related to enhancing project pipelines of NDB evenly across member countries & expansion of NDB's membership.
- Issues related to BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement as well as BRICS Bond Fund were also discussed.

IOB Inked Information Utility Pact With NeSL

- Indian Overseas Bank has entered into an agreement for information utility services with the National E-Governance Services Limited.
- With this agreement, the IOB branches will be able to provide high-quality, authenticated information about debts and defaults.

- The NeSL became India's first information utility for bankruptcy cases under the 'Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code 2016' in October 2017.

Yes Bank got RBI's Nod to Open Offices

- Yes Bank has received the Reserve Bank of India's approval to open two representative offices in London and Singapore.
- The opening of these new offices will help in further diversification and expansion of financial services to the NRI diaspora.
- Yes Bank opened its first representative office in Abu Dhabi in April 2015.

SBI Allows Cash Withdrawal at PoS Terminals

- To beat the cash crunch, SBI is allowing debit cardholders withdraw money from its Point of Sale terminals without any charges.
- According to RBI, a customer can withdraw Rs 1,000 in tier 1 & 2 cities, whereas Rs 2,000 can be withdrawn in tier 3 to tier 6 cities per day per card.
- SBI has over 6 lakh PoS machines of which nearly 5 lakh machines are enabled to dispense cash to its customers.

India: World's 2nd Largest Unbanked Population

- According to World Bank, India has 19 crore adults without a bank account, making it the world's 2nd largest unbanked population.
- India's adult population with a bank account has more than doubled to 80% since 2011.
- Jan-Dhan Yojana has brought an additional 310 million Indians into formal banking system by March 2018.
- China has world's largest unbanked population, followed by India & Pak.

India is World's Sixth largest Economy: IMF

- According to the database of the IMF's World Economic Outlook for April 2018, India's GDP clocked in at \$2.6 trillion for 2017.
- India is now the world's sixth largest economy, displacing France.
- The 5 economies ahead of India are the United States, China, Japan, Germany and United Kingdom.
- IMF expects India to grow at 7.4% in 2018 and 7.8% in 2019.

Taiwan to Open Trade Office in India

- A new office of Taiwan External Trade Development Council in India will be inaugurated in New Delhi next month.
- As Taiwan & India do not have diplomatic relationship, the trade office is expected to provide services to Indian & Taiwanese firms to expand business.

- The New Delhi office is TAITRA's 4th such office in India, following establishment of 3 other offices in Mumbai, Chennai & Kolkata.

Amazon Launched 'Internet'

- Amazon has launched an Android Web browser app called 'Internet' for emerging markets.
- The browser doesn't occupy much storage space on a user's device & does not collect private data like other browsers.
- The App is only available to users in India for the time being & is supported on devices running Android 5.0 or higher.

RBI Imposed Restrictions on City Co-operative

- RBI has placed restrictions on business activities of City Co-operative Bank till such time as its financial position improves.
- Customers of the bank will not be allowed to withdraw more than Rs 1000 of the total balance held in their accounts.
- Bank will have to take prior approval from RBI before it can disburse loan, make any investment, borrow funds or accept new deposit.

Facebook Introduces New Privacy Choices

- Facebook would begin rolling out changes to how it handles private data this week to comply with forthcoming EU rules.
- Under the new policy, FB users will be asked to review & make choices about ads they receive, including whether they want Facebook to use data from third parties.
- FB has recently been rocked by disclosures about hijacking of personal data on tens of millions of its users.

Amazon Launches International Shopping from US

- Amazon has launched an international shopping feature that will enable customers across the world to shop more than 45 million items that can be shipped to their country from U.S.
- It will allow customers to shop in 25 currencies, with more languages and currencies to be added in 2018.
- The International shopping feature will display pricing, shipping costs and import duty estimates.

Digital Platform for MSME Exporters Launched

- Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu launched FIEO GlobalLinker- A digital platform for MSME exporters to digitise their businesses & join a global community of growing businesses.
- It will help in expanding India's multi-focused export strategy & also aid in connecting art & artisans to market.
- FIEO GlobalLinker is setup with a view to make business growth of SMEs simpler, profitable & enjoyable.

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India Pools into USD 5mn Small States Fund

- India is among 4 countries to pool into an innovative \$5 million fund for small states to obtain easier access to International Trade Finance.
- India joins Sri Lanka, Mauritius & Malta to inject capital into the new scheme, which has Standard Chartered & BoB as its the facility managers.
- This new scheme is an example of innovative & collaborative approaches that are pioneered by Commonwealth.

India to Grow at 7.4% in 2018

- IMF in the latest World Economic Outlook has projected India to grow at 7.4% in 2018 & 7.8% in 2019.
- India in 2018 & 2019 would re-emerge as one of the fastest growing major economies.
- IMF said the implementation of GST will help reduce internal barriers to trade, increase efficiency & improve tax compliance.

CII Projects FY19 GDP Growth at 7.3-7.7%

- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) projected India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to grow at 7.3-7.7% during the 2018-19 financial year.
- This is based on strengthening demand in the rural economy, including agriculture and non-farm activities, as well as better global growth climate.

- The CII projected 2.5-3.5% growth for the agriculture sector, 7.2-7.5% for the industrial sector.

Ola to Introduce 10,000 EVs

- App-based cab aggregator Ola plans to introduce 10,000 e-rickshaws and electric auto rickshaws in India in the next 12 months.
- The ride-hailing company is in talks with state governments, OEM partners and electronic vehicle innovators to speed up the introduction of EVs in India.
- Ola aims to bring one million electric vehicles on the road by 2021.

Kotak Mahindra Became 2nd Most Valuable Bank

- Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd beat India's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) for the first time to become the second most valued bank in the country.
- HDFC Bank Ltd remained country's most valuable bank with a market capitalization of Rs5.04 trillion.
- Kotak Mahindra Bank has a market capitalization of Rs 2,22970.40 crore.

World Bank Forecasted 7.3% Growth for India

- The World Bank forecasted a growth rate of 7.3% for India in 2018 and 7.5% for 2019 and 2020.
- Growth is expected to accelerate from 6.7 in 2017 to 7.3% in 2018, the World Bank said in its twice-a-year South Asia Economic Focus.
- In its report the World Bank said, India should strive to accelerate investments and exports to take advantage of the recovery in global growth.

India to Launch Gas Trading Hub

- The government plans to launch a natural gas trading hub by October, creating an Indian gas benchmark which will spark a surge in consumption of the cleaner-burning fuel.
- The establishment of a Gas Trading Hub/Exchange will further boost the consumption of natural gas in the country.
- The world's biggest natural gas hub is the Henry Hub in the US state of Louisiana.

WPI Inflation Eases to 2.47% in March

- Inflation based on wholesale prices eased marginally to 2.47% in March on cheaper food articles, especially pulses and vegetables.
- On the basis of Wholesale Price Index (WPI), inflation was 2.48% in February and 5.11% in March last year.
- Retail inflation, as per data released last week, slipped to a five-month low of 4.28% in March on account of decline in food prices.

RBI Tightens Liberalised Remittance Scheme

- The Reserve Bank tightened reporting norms for the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) under which an

individual can transfer up to USD 2,50,000 abroad in a year.

- The LRS transactions are currently permitted by banks based on the declaration made by the remitter.
- The Scheme was introduced on February 4, 2004, with a limit of USD 25,000.

MoU Between Indian Army & Axis Bank

- A Memorandum of Undertaking (MoU) was signed between the Indian Army and the Axis Bank on the Defence Salary Package.
- The first MoU between Axis Bank and the Indian Army was signed in 2011 and was renewed on March 24, 2015.
- Recently, the Indian Army has also signed a MoU with the HDFC bank as well.

SIDBI Ties Up With CSC To Promote MSEs

- Small Industries and Development Bank of India (SIDBI) announced a plan to promote micro-enterprises in 115 aspirational districts across the country.
- It has tied up with Common Service Centre (CSC).
- The 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts' program, which was launched by the Prime Minister in January, aims to bring about socio-developmental changes in these backward districts.

Indian Economy to grow 7.3%: ADB

- India's economic growth will rise to 7.3% this fiscal and further to 7.6% in the next financial year, retaining the fastest-growing Asian economy tag, on back of GST and banking reforms.
- In its Asian Development Outlook, 2018, Manila-based ADB said, "risks to trade are high".
- Indian Economy grew 6.6% in the last fiscal as it battled the lingering effects of demonetisation in 2016.

India's Industrial Output Slowed to 7.1%

- India's factory output remained strong in February, suggesting a rosier outlook for the economy.
- The Index of industrial production rose 7.1% in February over the year, compared with a revised 7.4% growth in the previous month, according to data from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- A Bloomberg poll of economists had projected a 6.8 percent rise.

NBCC Ties up With Skill Development Institute

- NBCC (India) Ltd under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs signed MoU with the Skill Development Institute Bhubaneswar, for the construction of the institute.

- This will facilitate empowering the youth in Odisha with relevant skill sets and train them in various disciplines.
- NBCC has pledged to impart training to 40,000 workers (including both onsite and offsite) in the next 5 years.

Startups with up to ₹10 cr to Get Concession

- The government has allowed startups to avail tax concession if total investment including funding from angel investors does not exceed ₹10 crore.
- Several startups and investors had raised concerns over the 'angel tax' saying it could discourage investments.
- The Tax was levied on capital raised by startups in excess of the fair market value of their shares.

Retail Inflation falls to 5-month Low

- India's retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) eased to a 5-month low of 4.28% in March, government data showed.
- Further, the food inflation for the month stood at 2.81%, compared to 3.26% in February.
- Notably, this is the third straight month where inflation softened after hitting a 17-month high in December.

SBI Sets up 60 'sbiINTOUCH' Digital Branches

- SBI has set up 60 digital branches, called 'sbiINTOUCH', across the country.
- SBI has set up these branches in partnership with Dimension Data, a global technology integrator and managed services provider.
- The digital branches aim to help SBI expand its reach with increasing profitability.
- It will offer services like Instant loan approvals, assistance in choosing investment portfolios.

RBI Imposes Rs 3 Crore fine on IDBI Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a Rs 3 crore penalty on IDBI Bank for not following the central bank's rules on classification of loans.
- IDBI Bank did not adhere to RBI's norms on Income Recognition and Asset Classification.
- RBI said that this action is based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance.

New Norms for Global Projects

- The Central Vigilance Commission has drawn up a new set of guidelines for projects funded by international agencies such as the World Bank, IMF and Asian Development Bank.
- The new guidelines will put an end to existing practice of government departments and agencies adhering to the guidelines of foreign donors.
- The new guidelines also draw a distinction between grants-in-aid and loans.

SBI Launches UK Subsidiary

- The SBI has announced the launch of its UK subsidiary, SBI (UK) Limited, with an initial capital commitment of 225 million pounds from its parent entity.
- SBI became the first foreign bank in the UK to ring fence its retail division from its wholesale business.
- SBI operates seven branches in London.

E-way Bill to be Rolled out in 5 States

- E-way Bill system for the intra-state movement of goods was implemented from April 15 in five states.
- The new system is being implemented from the aforementioned date in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Kerala, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh.
- E-way Bill system for all inter-state movement of goods was rolled out from April 1.

Maritime Trade to go Electronic

- The government has made the use of e-Invoices, e-Payments and e-Delivery orders mandatory across the maritime trade as it seeks to push digitisation of trade processes.
- The government has also directed stakeholders to use the Port Community System (PCS).
- PCS is a centralised web-based message exchange platform for the Indian Maritime Community to exchange the documents.

Nabard Frames Self-Healing Norms for RRBs

- NABARD has come out with a 'Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) Framework' for Regional Rural Banks (RRBs).
- The framework is aimed at enabling RRBs that fail to meet prudential requirements like capital adequacy to take self-corrective action.
- The PCA will be invoked if RRBs fail to meet the 'capital to risk-weighted assets ratio', assets (NPAs), and profitability (Return on assets).

Anti-Dumping Duty on Phosphorus Pentoxide

- Based on the recommendation of the Directorate General of Anti-Dumping and Allied Duties, the revenue department has imposed an anti-dumping duty on import of Phosphorus Pentoxide from China.
- The duty has been imposed for 5 years.
- Phosphorus Pentoxide is used as a powerful desiccant and dehydrating agent and is a useful building block and reagent in the Chemical Industry.

Govt Approved Linking of Savings A/c & IPPB

- The Government of India has approved the linking of Post Office savings accounts with that of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB).
- This will enable Post Office account holders to transfer money from their savings account to any bank accounts.

- IPPB is governed by Reserve Bank of India and banking service of post offices comes under the Ministry of Finance.

Trouble in Flipkart-Amazon Merger

- The possible coming together of online retailers Amazon and Flipkart is likely to face close scrutiny on competition issues.
- Engaged in intense competition, home-grown Flipkart and Amazon India are leading players in the Indian online retail market place.
- The combined market share of the two parties, which is around 80 percent is most likely to pose challenges to the deal.

India's Forex Reserves at all Time High

- The country's foreign exchange reserves hit a life-time high of 424.361 billion US dollar.
- Previously, the reserves had touched a record high of 421.914 billion dollar on February 9, 2018.
- Gold reserves remained unchanged at 21.614 billion US dollar.

ICICI Bank Gets Swift's New Payment Service

- ICICI Bank has become first Indian Bank to go live on SWIFT's Global Payment Innovation, an improved cross-border payments service.
- The service enables real-time payments tracking across correspondent banks & has a facility to track payments instructions across correspondent banks globally.
- The announcement of the service comes weeks after the discovery Rs 12,900-crore Nirav Modi scam at PNB

IndusInd-Samsung tie up for 'Tap and Pay'

- IndusInd Bank announced a collaboration with Samsung Electronics to enable its MasterCard and Visa credit card customers to use 'Samsung Pay'.
- The Samsung Pay allows customers to simply tap and 'pay on the go' using their registered IndusInd Bank credit cards.
- The platform works with patented Magnetic Secure Transmission (MST) technology as well as Near Field Communication (NFC).

RBI Deferred Ind-AS adoption by 1 year

- The Reserve Bank of India has deferred the adoption of 'Indian Accounting Standards' (Ind AS) by banks, for a year, due to the unpreparedness of banks to migrate to the new accounting system.
- The earlier deadline for banks to switch to the Ind AS was from 1 April 2018.
- Ind AS is a global accounting practice that lenders are mandated to adopt that may lead to initial credit losses.

CBDT Facilitates Seamless Tax Payment

- The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) released a one-page simplified Income Tax Returns Form-1 'Sahaj' for the assessment year 2018-19.
- It can be filed by an individual having income up to Rs.50 lakh and who is receiving income from salary, one house property/other income such as interest.
- This initiative benefited around 3 crore taxpayers, who filed their return in this simplified Form.

RBI Bars Banks from Crypto Services

- RBI directed all regulated entities including banks not to provide services to businesses dealing in virtual currencies like bitcoins, so as to protect consumers and check money laundering.
- The RBI asked entities, which are already into such services to stop providing this kind of services within three months.
- The RBI has directed all payment system operators to store all data within India.

RBI Switches back to GDP Model

- The RBI switched back to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)-based measure to offer its growth estimates from the Gross Value Added (GVA) methodology.
- The Government had started analysing growth estimates using GVA methodology from January 2015 and had also changed the base year to 2018 from January.
- The GDP model gives the picture from the consumers' side or demand perspective.

RBI Keeps Interest Rates Unchanged

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 5th April kept the repo rate and reverse repo rate unchanged at 6 percent and 5.75 percent respectively.
- The real Gross Domestic Product growth in FY19 is seen at 7.4 percent as against 6.6 percent in FY18.
- The RBI revised CPI inflation projection for 2018-19 to 4.7-5.1% in the first half of the financial year and 4.4% in the second half.

RBI Decides to set up Data Sciences Lab

- Reserve Bank of India has decided to set up Data Sciences Lab to improve its forecasting, surveillance and early warning detection abilities which will aid policy formulation.
- RBI said the lab will comprise experts and budding analysts, who are trained in Computer Science, Data Analytics, Statistics, Economics, Econometrics and Finance.
- The unit will become operational by December 2018.

Flipkart Signed a Pact with MakeMyTrip

- Flipkart and MakeMyTrip (MMT) have struck a partnership wherein the online retailer will start to sell travel services on its platform.

- MakeMyTrip's multiple brands, including MMT, Goibibo and redBus, will leverage the large customer base of Flipkart platform to drive online bookings in travel services.
- The new partnership will start with domestic flight, hotels, bus and holidays bookings.

SEBI Eases Trade Rules in Commodity Exchanges

- To relax algorithm trading norms at commodity derivatives exchanges, SEBI raised the limit to process up to 100 orders per second by a user for such trade from the existing limit of 20 orders per second.
- Algorithmic trading or 'algo' in market parlance refers to orders generated at a super-fast speed by use of advanced mathematical models.
- 'Algo' is used by large institutional investors.

ICICI Facilitates Money Transfer for NRIs

- ICICI Bank launched a service which enables Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to send money to a beneficiary in India using social media platforms like WhatsApp and email.
- This first-of-its-kind service known as 'Social Pay' is available on Money2India (M2I), the bank's app for remittances.
- 'Social Pay' embraces the medium as a way to simplify money transfers, adding to customer convenience.

IndusInd Bank Got RBI Nod to Acquire IL&FS

- Private Sector lender IndusInd Bank has received RBI's approval to buy the securities services arm of IL&FS.
- In March 2017, the bank entered an agreement with Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) to acquire 100% stake in ISSL.
- Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) is the promoter shareholder of IL&FS Securities Services Ltd (ISSL).

India Became Second Largest Crude Steel-Maker

- India has overtaken Japan to become the world's second-largest producer of crude steel in February, according to the Steel Users Federation of India.
- At present, China is the largest producer of crude steel in the world.
- India overtook the US in 2015 to become the third largest producer of crude steel.
- India produced 8.4 million tonnes of crude steel in February 2018.

India's First Blockchain Implemented

- The platforms—RXIL, A.TReDS and M1xchange—approved by the RBI had been set up to bring together buyers, sellers and financiers for discounting the MSME invoices and provide them with timely funding.

- This is billed as India's first live blockchain implementation in the enterprise financial segment.
- US-based MonetaGo has designed and implemented the production solution.

\$930 Million Solar Venture in India

- A Chinese energy conglomerate and SoftBank Group Corp. signed a \$930 million agreement to produce and sell solar equipments in India.
- Golden Concord Group Ltd. will invest in a 40% stake in the joint venture, with Japan's SoftBank taking the rest.
- The project will have a capacity of 4 GW and be involved in producing and selling solar ingots, silicon wafers, batteries and components.

Jio Payments Bank Began Operations

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said that Jio Payments Bank has commenced its banking services.
- Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) was one of the 11 applicants which were issued the in-principle approval for setting up a payments bank in August 2015.
- Telecom major Bharti Airtel was the first to begin payment bank services in November 2016.

MoU Between Indian Army and HDFC Bank

- A Memorandum of Undertaking (MoU) was signed between the Indian Army and HDFC Bank on the Defence Salary Package.
- The first MoU between HDFC Bank and the Indian Army was signed in 2011 and was renewed on 13 Mar 2015.
- Indian Army has MoUs on Defence Salary Package with 11 public and private sector banks.

IndusInd to Use WhatsApp for Basic Services

- Private lender IndusInd Bank announced a pilot program with WhatsApp enterprise solution in India to communicate with its customers.
- The Integration with WhatsApp will allow IndusInd Bank to start appearing as a verified account when it communicates with its customers.
- The initial test phase will allow the bank to communicate important transaction alerts to the customers on WhatsApp.

RBI lets Banks Spread Bond Losses

- The Reserve Bank of India allowed banks to spread out the provisioning to cover losses on their government bond portfolio across four quarters.
- This dispensation to spread the so-called mark-to-market provisioning is available for the quarters ending December 2017 and March 2018.
- Banks using such option will have to make the disclosure in their notes to accounts of the quarterly results.

Ola acquires Transportation App Ridlr

- Cab aggregator Ola announced the acquisition of end-to-end public transport ticketing and commuting app, Ridlr.
- Ridlr enables users to search and book public transport options on their mobile phones.
- Combining Ridlr's innovations in mass transit with Ola's mobility products will enable true multi-modal mobility solutions for users.

Arbitrage Rate Index Launched by BSE

- Asia Index, a joint venture between S&P Dow Jones Indices and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), has launched arbitrage rate index.
- It will provide market participants with a transparent benchmark to compare the performance of similar arbitrage strategies.
- The Index will be rebalanced every month, effective after the close of business a day prior to the expiration of the futures contract.

Microsoft Enabled Digital Payments Support

- Microsoft enabled digital payments services on its enterprise social network app 'Kaizala' in India.
- Microsoft has integrated payment services of YES BANK and MobiKwik.
- Payment integration with Microsoft Kaizala will enable users to quickly send or receive money without having to leave the Kaizala application.

Direct Tax Collections Grow 17% in 2017-18

- Direct Tax collections in 2017-18 at Rs 9.95 lakh crore, exceeded the revised budgetary target of Rs 9.8 lakh crore.
- Also, 6.84 crore income tax returns filed in the year against 5.43 crore in the previous year signalling a rise of 26%.
- The collections from corporate tax went up 17.1% while that from personal income tax rose 18.9%.
- A net of 99.5 lakh new assesses were added to the tax net.

Manufacturing PMI at 5-month Low in March

- Manufacturing activity remained in the positive for the 8th consecutive month in March but fell to a 5-month low.
- The Nikkei India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell from 52.1 in February to a five-month low of 51.0 in March.
- A reading above 50 on the index shows growth, while one less than that denotes contraction.

Axis Bank Removed from Bullion Importers List

- The Reserve Bank of India dropped Axis Bank from a list of banks it has cleared to Import Gold and Silver in the current financial year that began April 1.
- Bank of Baroda, HDFC Bank and Bank of Nova Scotia were among the 16 banks allowed to import bullion.

- Two other small banks Karur Vysya and South Indian Bank were also dropped from the RBI list.

Core Sector Growth up 5.3% in February

- Eight infrastructure sectors grew by 5.3% in February, mainly helped by a robust performance of refinery products, fertiliser and cement segments.
- The 8 infrastructure sectors, coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and electricity had grown by just 0.6% in February last year.
- The core sectors expanded by 6.1% in January.

SEBI Doubles Investment Limit of Angel Funds

- Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) decided to double the investment limit by angel funds in venture capital undertakings to ₹10 crore.
- The SEBI board has approved amendments to Alternative Investment Funds (AIF) regulations with respect to 'Angel Funds.'
- The regulator would raise the maximum period of accepting funds from an angel investor to five years, from three years.

SIDBI Celebrates its Foundation Day

- SIDBI celebrated its foundation day as the day of Sampark (connect), Samwad (interaction), Suraksha (security) and Sampreshan (disseminate) on 2nd April.
- On this occasion, SIDBI launched a series of initiatives.
- SIDBI launched 'Samridhhi-the virtual assistant' on banks revamped universal loan portal 'www.udyamimitra.in'. It will answer standard queries of aspirants 24*7.

RBI Changes Methodology for Bond Valuation

- To prevent the possibility of manipulation in the prices of securities, especially government securities, the RBI has changed the methodology used by debt market players for their valuation.
- Security/bond valuation will be based on the weighted average price of the last half-an-hour of trading.
- The Methodology as to how the bonds are valued is crucial for mark-to-market purposes.

Allahabad Bank Cuts Lending Rates

- Allahabad Bank has reduced the Base Rate and Benchmark Prime Lending Rate (BPLR) by 45 basis points each.
- The Bank has slashed base rate to 9.15% from 9.60%. BPLR has been brought down to 13.40% from 13.85%.
- The reduction in the rates will lower EMIs for its borrowers.
- Allahabad Bank is a nationalised bank with its headquarters in Kolkata, India.

World's Second Largest Mobile Phone Producer

- As per the information shared by Indian Cellular Association, India is now the second largest mobile phone producer in the world after China.
- Annual production of mobile phones in India increased from 3 million units in 2014 to 11 million units in 2017.
- India replaced Vietnam to become the second largest producer of mobile phones in 2017.

E-way Bill System Comes into Force

- The Uniform System of e-way Bill for inter-State movement of goods has come into force from April 1, 2018.
- Under the new system, every transporter will have to carry a system-generated bill to move goods from one place to another.
- The e-way bill will be mandatory for inter-state transportation of goods with a value of 50 thousand rupees and above.

First bank to Roll Out AI-run Voicebot

- Kotak Mahindra Bank has launched the country's first artificial intelligence-powered voice-bot 'Keya' in the banking sector.
- Keya uses automatic speech recognition, natural language understanding and text-to-speech technology.
- The voice-bot uses natural language understanding to navigate the customer directly to the destination where he can get his issue resolved.

Sports

Pankaj Roy, Gaekwad to get Lifetime Award

- Former India batsman and two-time national coach Anshuman Gaekwad and former opener, late Pankaj Roy, were recommended for the prestigious Col. CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement award by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
- The cash prize for the award is ₹25 lakh each.
- The BCCI Annual Awards will be held before the historic Test between India and Afghanistan in Bengaluru.

Prajnesh won Maiden Singles Title

- Prajnesh Gunneswaran has clinched his first ever singles tennis title on the ATP Challenger circuit.
- The 28-year-old from Chennai, ranked 260, pocketed \$21,600 and earned 125 points.
- It was second final at the Challenger level for left-handed Prajnesh, who had lost the Pune summit clash to Sadio Doumbia in October 2016.

Rafael Nadal won Barcelona Open Tennis Title

- World number one Rafael Nadal lifted his 11th Barcelona Open tennis title with a win over Greek Teenager Stefanos Tsitsipas.

- Nadal, who won his 400th match on clay in the semifinal, needed the victory in Barcelona to secure his No. 1 ranking.
- It was the 77th title overall for Nadal tying him with John McEnroe for fourth best in the Open Era.

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Indian Juniors won Youth Olympic Qualifiers

- India's Junior Men's Team held their nerves to beat Malaysia 2-1 in the shootout to win the Youth Olympic Games Qualifiers.
- The victory will give India a chance to participate in the Youth Olympic Games to be held in Buenos Aires in August. The tournament was played in new Hockey 5's format.
- In the women's final, India lost to China & then ended their campaign as runners-up.

Indian Fencer won Silver Medal at Reykjavik

- India's CA Bhavani Devi won a silver medal in the sabre event of the Tournoi World Cup Satellite Fencing Championship in Reykjavik, Iceland.
- Bhavani Devi had won a gold medal at the Reykjavik tournament last year to become the first Indian to do so in an international fencing event.

Lewis Hamilton won Azerbaijan Grand Prix

- Lewis Hamilton took his first victory of the season at a dramatic and chaotic Azerbaijan Grand Prix in Baku.

- Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas was forced to retire with just three laps to go.
- It was the first victory of the season for champions Mercedes.

N Sikki Reddy Recommended for Arjuna Award

- Women's doubles shuttler N Sikki Reddy has been recommended for Arjuna Award by the Badminton Association of India.
- G Sudhakar Reddy, who coached Kidambi Srikanth in his early days, has been recommended for Dronacharya Award.
- The 24-year-old Sikki had won the mixed team gold medal and the women's doubles bronze at the recent Commonwealth Games 2018 in Gold Coast.

Sumit, Nikhat Strike Gold at Belgrade Boxing

- Sumit Sangwan and Nikhat Zareen were among the three gold-medallists in India's stupendous campaign at the 56th Belgrade International Boxing Tournament in Serbia.
- Also claiming a gold was Himanshu Sharma, who defeated Algeria's Mohammed Touareg 5-0 in his final bout.
- India ended the tournament with three gold, five silver and five bronze medals in all.

India won South Asian U-12 Tennis Championship

- India has won the South Asian Under-12 Qualifying Tennis Tournament, defeating host Nepal in the finals.
- Indian girls and boys team defeated their Nepali opponents in the final by 2-0.
- Now both the Indian teams will participate in ITF Asian 12 and Under Team Championship to be played in Kazakhstan later this year.

ICC scrapped 50-over Champions Trophy

- International Cricket Council has decided to convert the 2021 Champions Trophy, scheduled in India, into a World T20 event.
- Champions Trophy was the second-biggest 50-overs tournament after the World Cup. The number of teams competing varied over the years.
- This means that there would now be two ICC World T20 events in 2 years — the 2020 edition in Australia and the 2021 edition in India.

Tennis: Ankita Raina included in TOPS

- Tennis player Ankita Raina has been included in the government's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).
- She has displayed good form this season both in the Fed Cup and the professional circuit.
- Ankita recently broke into the top-200, reaching a career-best 197 in the WTA rankings, becoming the third Indian to do so.

- Before Ankita, Sania and Nirupama Vaidyanathan have made it to the top-200.

Archery World Cup: India shines

- India has won bronze in the compound mixed team event at the Archery World Cup.
- Abhishek Verma and Jyothi Surekha Vennam combined to beat the Turkish team of Yesim Bostan and Demir Elmaagacli by a score of 154-148.
- This win is Verma's seventh overall World Cup medal and India's second bronze in compound archery at the World Cups since the start of 2017.

Jeremy won 2 medals at Weightlifting C'ship

- India's Jeremy Lalrinnunga (56 kg) broke two national records to win the silver in Youth section and bronze medal in Junior section at the Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championship at Urgench, Uzbekistan.
- Jeremy created national records in youth boys and junior men during his lift of 250 kg.
- Sidhant Gogoi finished with bronze medal with a lift of 243 kg in Youth Boys section.

India to host Asian Weightlifting C'ships

- Indian will host the prestigious Asian Weightlifting Championship in 2019.
- The Championship was awarded to India at the Executive Board Meeting and Congress of the Asian Weightlifting Federation held on April 22 at Urgench, Uzbekistan.
- The last edition of the Asian Championship was held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, from April 23-29.

Rizvi gets silver at ISSF World Cup

- Shahzar Rizvi on 24th April clinched India's first medal at the ISSF World Cup, winning a silver in the 10m air pistol event.
- Rizvi had won the gold medal in the ISSF World Cup in Guadalajara, Mexico in March.
- Russia clinched the gold medal while the bronze went to Bulgaria.

India won 10 Gold Medals

- India has won 10 gold medals at 8th South Asian Judo Championship in Lalitpur, Nepal.
- Indian women grabbed all 7 gold while men won 3 out of total 7 gold medals in the individual category.
- Besides host Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka had participated in the 3-day championship.

Rafael Nadal won the Monte Carlo Masters Title

- World Number 1 Rafael Nadal defeated Japan's Kei Nishikori by 6-3, 6-2 in the Monte Carlo Masters final to win his 31st Masters title.
- Nadal also became the first man in the Open era to win the same title 11 times.

- It gave him a 76th title overall and ensured the Spaniard keeps his top ranking ahead of Roger Federer.
- World No. 36 Nishikori was chasing his first ever Masters title.

Barcelona won Fourth Copa del Rey in a Row

- Barcelona became the first team in 85 years to win four straight Copa del Rey titles after defeating Sevilla 5-0 in the final.
- Luis Suarez scored twice, and Lionel Messi, Andres Iniesta, and Philippe Coutinho also made the scoresheet for Barcelona's record-extending 30th Copa triumph.
- No other team had won four Copa titles in a row since Athletic Bilbao from 1930-33.

Mumbai to Host Intercontinental Cup

- Mumbai Football Arena, the new hub of Indian football, will play host to the inaugural edition of the 4 nation Intercontinental Cup.
- The tournament will see Indian national team competing with South Africa, New Zealand & Chinese Taipei.
- Intercontinental Cup comes on back of Tri-nation series in Sept 2017 which was also held at the same venue with India eventually emerging champions.

TTFI Recommended Manika Batra for Arjuna Award

- Table Tennis Federation of India has recommended Manika Batra, country's only quadruple medallist at 21st Commonwealth Games, for the prestigious Arjuna Award.
- Batra created history in Gold Coast, single-handedly taking India to a maiden team gold before winning a singles gold, another first.
- She also secured a women's doubles silver alongside Mouma Das & mixed doubles bronze with G Sathiyar

Bengaluru FC won Super Cup Football tournament

- Bengaluru FC have won the inaugural edition of Super Cup Football tournament.
- In the final at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, they defeated Kolkata football giants East Bengal by a convincing margin of 4-1.
- Bengaluru thus maintained their record of winning a trophy in each of the five seasons they have been in existence.

India to bid for 2026 Youth Olympics

- Indian Olympic Association has decided to bid for 2026 Youth Olympics as well as the 2032 Summer Olympics.
- The bidding process for 2026 Youth Olympics is likely to start in early part of 2020.
- Besides India, Thailand has also expressed interest to host the 2026 Youth Olympics.

- IOC chief Thomas Bach, who is on a 2-day visit to India, said India has the capability to host big Olympic events.

Bihar, NE states recommended for Ranji Trophy

- Sourav Ganguly-led technical committee of BCCI has unanimously recommended reinstatement of Bihar & inclusion of northeastern states in the 2018-19 Ranji Trophy.
- The northeastern states played BCCI U-19 tournaments last season as the Board wanted to gradually integrate them into the system.
- Ranji Trophy 2018-19 season is proposed to have 4 Groups with the introduction of pre-quarterfinals.

Yuki Bhambri back in Top-100

- Tennis star Yuki Bhambri broke back into the top-100 for the first time since February 2016.
- As per the latest rankings, he jumped 22 places to a career-best rank of 83.
- This follows his title-winning performance at the Taipei Challenger. This is the best rank an Indian has achieved in ATP singles chart since Somdev Devvarman touched a career-high 62 in July 2011.

Satwik, Chirag bag Silver Medal in Badminton

- Shuttler duo Satwik Rankireddy and Chirag Chandrashekar Shetty settled for silver medal in men's doubles badminton finals in the 21st Commonwealth Games at Gold Coast.
- India has now won a total of 66 medals, 26 gold, 20 silver and 20 bronze medals.
- Host Australia and England occupy the top two spots in the medal tally with 198 and 136 medals respectively.

Sumit claimed Men's 125 kg Gold

- Indian wrestler Sumit Malik claimed gold in the men's freestyle 125 kg after his opponent Nigeria's Sinivie Boltic was ruled out of the final bout due to injury at CWG 2018.
- The 25-year-old claimed silver at Asian and Commonwealth Championships last year.
- He defeated Pakistan's Tayab Raza by 10-4 and Canada's Jarvis Korey by 6-4 in his last two bouts.

Kaushik won Silver at CWG 2018

- Manish Kaushik became the first Indian boxer to win silver medal in the men's lightweight category (60 kg) at the Commonwealth Games.
- The 22-year-old boxer from Haryana settled for silver after losing to Australia's Harry Garside at Gold Coast.
- India has won two gold, two silver and three bronze medals in boxing at the CWG 2018 so far.

Vinesh Phogat won her 2nd straight CWG Gold

- Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat claimed the top position in the women's freestyle 50 kg Nordic System event to win her second successive gold at the Commonwealth Games.
- The gold is India's fifth in wrestling and 23rd overall at the CWG 2018.
- Earlier, Vinesh's cousin Babita Kumari had claimed silver in the women's freestyle 53 kg event.

Sakshi Malik won Bronze at CWG 2018

- Rio Olympics bronze medalist Sakshi Malik won a bronze at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, beating New Zealand's Tayla Ford in the women's freestyle 62 kg event in Gold Coast.
- This is Sakshi's second medal at the CWG, after winning a silver in the 2014 Games.
- India has won 11 medals in wrestling, including five golds.

Saina Nehwal won Second CWG Gold

- Shuttler Saina Nehwal defeated world number three PV Sindhu by 21-18, 23-21 in the first-ever all-Indian women's singles final at the Commonwealth Games.
- With this, Nehwal claimed her second Commonwealth Games singles gold medal after having won it at the 2010 Delhi Games.
- Nehwal is the only Indian female badminton player to win singles gold in Commonwealth Games history.

India won CWG Men's TT Doubles Silver

- Sharath Kamal and Sathiyam Gnanasekaran won India its second successive Commonwealth Games silver medal in the men's table tennis doubles event after losing to England's Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford at Gold Coast.
- India's Harmeet Desai and Sanil Shankar Shetty won bronze in the same event.
- India has won six medals in TT at CWG 2018 so far.
 - **Somveer won Bronze Medal at CWG 2018**
- Indian wrestler Somveer won a bronze medal at the Commonwealth Games after defeating Canada's Alexander Moore in the men's freestyle 86 kg event.
- This is India's 12th medal in wrestling at the 2018 Games which includes five golds.
- Meanwhile, Pakistan's Muhammad Inam won the gold medal.

India won CWG Squash Mixed Doubles Silver

- India clinched the silver in the squash Mixed Doubles event for the first time in the history of Commonwealth Games.
- Dipika Pallikal Karthik and Saurav Ghosal lost to Australia's Cameron Pilley and Donna Urquhart 0-2 in the final at Gold Coast.
- This was the 5th time Australia won the event at the Commonwealth Games.

Boxer Satish Kumar bags Silver at CWG

- Boxer Satish Kumar clinched silver after losing to England's Frazer Clarke in the Men's Super-Heavyweight category (+91 kg) to take India's medal tally to 59 at CWG 2018.
- The 28-year-old became the 1st Indian to win Silver in the Men's Super-Heavyweight category at CWG.
- Paramjeet Samota had won Gold in the category in the 2010 Games.

Rajput clinches Gold in Shooting at CWG 2018

- Shooter Sanjeev Rajput won the men's 50m Rifle 3 Positions with a Games record to take India's gold tally in shooting at the 2018 Commonwealth Games to seven.
- The gold was Rajput's third successive medal at the CWG, after having bagged silver and bronze in the 2014 and 2010 editions respectively.
- India's Chain Singh stood fifth in the same event.

Vikas Krishan won Gold in Boxing

- Vikas Krishan won Gold by defeating Cameroon's Dieudonne Ntsengue in Men's 75 kg final.
- The Asian Games 2010 Gold Medallist joined Mary Kom (women's 45-48 kg) and Gaurav Solanki (men's 52 kg) to win Boxing Gold at Gold Coast.
- This was the first CWG Gold for India in Middleweight Boxing Category.

Manika Batra won CWG TT Singles Gold

- Manika Batra became the first-ever Indian woman to bag gold in the women's table tennis singles' event in Commonwealth Games history.
- The 22-year-old paddler from Delhi defeated Singapore's Mengyu Yu in the final to bag her third medal at CWG 2018.
- Manika had earlier won the women's team gold and women's doubles' silver at the Games.

1st ever all-Indian Badminton CWG Final

- PV Sindhu and Saina Nehwal won their respective semi-finals on Saturday to set up the first-ever all-Indian women's badminton singles' final at the Commonwealth Games.
- CWG 2010 gold medalist Saina defeated Scotland's Kirsty Gilmour 21-14, 18-21, 21-17 while CWG 2014 bronze medalist Sindhu beat Canada's Michelle Li in straight sets.
- The women's singles final will take place on Sunday.

Neeraj Chopra won Javelin Throw Gold at CWG

- Neeraj Chopra became the first-ever Indian to win gold in javelin throw at the Commonwealth Games.
- The 20-year-old junior world record holder hurled the javelin to a distance of 86.47m to bag India's 21st gold at the Commonwealth Games 2018.
- The medal was India's first gold and overall third in athletics at CWG 2018.

Boxer Gaurav Solanki won CWG flyweight Gold

- Gaurav Solanki has become the second Indian male boxer after Suranjay Singh (2010) to win gold in the flyweight category (52kg) at the Commonwealth Games.
- Solanki achieved the feat after defeating Northern Ireland's Brendan Irvine in the final at Gold Coast.
- The gold was India's 2nd in boxing and 20th overall at CWG 2018.

Wrestler Mausam won Silver Medal at CWG 2018

- Mausam Khatri bagged silver after losing to South Africa's Martin Erasmus in the men's freestyle 97 kg final to give India its 39th medal at the Commonwealth Games 2018.
- Mausam, a two-time Commonwealth Championship winner, was featuring in his maiden CWG.
- India has now bagged three gold, three silver and two bronze medals in wrestling at CWG 2018.

Manika Batra-Mouma Das settle for Silver

- India registered their best-ever finish in the women's table tennis doubles event at Commonwealth Games by clinching silver in Gold Coast.
- Manika Batra and Mouma Das lost to Singapore's Tianwei Feng and Mengyu Yu 0-3 as Singapore won their fifth successive CWG gold in the event.
- India's previous best performance was a bronze-medal finish in the 2010 edition.

Amit Panghal won Silver Medal in Boxing

- Boxer Amit Panghal clinched silver in the men's 46-49 kg event to take India's medal tally in boxing at the CWG 2018 to five.
- The 22-year-old, making his debut at the CWG, is among six Indian boxers who made it to the final in their respective categories.
- Earlier, Mary Kom clinched India's first boxing gold at CWG 2018.

Pooja Dhanda won Silver at CWG 2018

- Wrestler Pooja Dhanda won silver in the women's freestyle 57 kg event in the Commonwealth Games on Friday, giving India its sixth medal.
- India had earlier won two golds and a silver in shooting, another gold in wrestling and a bronze in boxing.
- India is third in the overall standings with 37 medals, which includes 17 gold medals.

Naman won India's 1st Boxing Medal at CWG

- Nineteen-year-old Naman Tanwar won India its first boxing medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, winning a bronze in the men's 91 kg category.
- Naman lost out to Australia's Jason Whateley in the semifinal of the event to secure the bronze.
- India has won a total of 35 medals, including 16 golds, 8 silver and 11 bronze medals.

Mary Kom won Boxing Gold at CWG

- Five-time world champion and Olympic bronze medallist MC Mary Kom has become the first Indian woman boxer to win a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games.
- Mary Kom achieved the feat after defeating Northern Ireland's Kristina O'Hara in the 45-48kg category final at Gold Coast.
- The 35-year-old boxer from Manipur is participating in her maiden Commonwealth Games.

Bajrang won his 1st CWG Gold

- Wrestler Bajrang Punia won his first Commonwealth Games gold medal, defeating Wales' Kane Charig by technical superiority in the men's freestyle 65 kg final in Gold Coast.
- This is India's fifth medal in wrestling in this edition, with Rahul Aware and Sushil Kumar registering gold wins earlier.
- Bajrang had won a silver medal at the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

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Discus thrower Seema Punia won Silver Medal

- India's Seema Punia bagged her fourth successive medal at the Commonwealth Games by winning silver in women's discus throw final with a throw of 60.41m in Gold Coast.
- The 34-year-old has now won three silver medals (2006, 2014 and 2018) and one bronze (2010) at the Games.

- Another Indian athlete Navjeet Dhillon won bronze in the same event.

Kiran won Bronze Medal at CWG

- Indian wrestler Kiran bagged a bronze medal in the women's Freestyle 76 kg event after finishing off Mauritius' Katouskia Pariadhaven 10-0 in the first round itself at the Commonwealth Games.
- Earlier in the day, Indian wrestlers had won two medals – one silver medal through Babita Phogat and a gold medal through Rahul Aware.

Sushil Kumar won his 3rd straight CWG Gold

- Indian wrestler and Olympic medallist Sushil Kumar bagged his third straight Commonwealth Games gold medal after winning the men's Freestyle 74 kg event.
- The 34-year-old wrestler won the final 10-0, having dominated all previous opponents with scorelines of 11-0, 10-0, and 4-0.
- Sushil has a silver and a bronze in Olympics and was crowned world champion in 2010.

Rahul won India's 1st Wrestling Gold at CWG

- Rahul Aware bagged India's first wrestling gold medal at the Commonwealth Games 2018.
- He beat Canada's Steven Takahashi in the final of men's Freestyle 57 kg event.
- Before the final, the 26-year-old had claimed two dominating victories with the score lines 11-0 and 10-0, while he defeated Pakistan's Muhammad Bilal 12-8 in the semi-final.

Anish became India's youngest Gold Medalist

- Fifteen-year-old shooter Anish Bhanwala became India's youngest gold medalist at the Commonwealth Games, winning the men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol Finals with a record score at Gold Coast.
- India's Neeraj Kumar stood fifth at the event.
- Anish, who is participating in his first Commonwealth Games, won gold at the ISSF Junior World Cup in Sydney earlier this year.

Tejaswini won Gold at CWG

- Tejaswini Sawant won India its fifth shooting gold medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, winning the women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions Finals in Gold Coast.
- This was 37-year-old Tejaswini's second medal at the 2018 edition, after winning silver at the women's 50m Rifle Prone.
- India's Anjum Moudgil won silver at the event, after having topped qualification.

Babita won Silver Medal at CWG

- Babita Phogat won the silver medal in wrestling at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

- Babita claimed a silver in the 2010 edition before a gold in Glasgow.
- Her medal opened India's account in the wrestling competition of the Games.

Kidambi Srikanth Becomes World No.1

- Indian badminton star Kidambi Srikanth became world No. 1 in the Badminton World Federation (BWF) rankings.
- Srikanth has moved to the top of the men's singles rankings with 76895 points.
- In 2017, he became the first Indian to win back-to-back Super Series titles.
- In October 2017, Srikanth became the second Indian after Prakash Padukone to win the Denmark Open.

Silver Medal for Tejaswini Sawant in Shooting

- Tejaswini Sawant has won silver medal in the finals of the women's 50m rifle prone at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.
- This is the sixth CWG medal for Tejaswini, following two golds in 2006 and a pair of silvers and a bronze in 2010.
- Anjum Moudgil, the other Indian to reach the women's 50m rifle prone finals, finished 16th.

Kohli and Mithali voted World's Best

- Indian captains Virat Kohli and Mithali Raj were named as the leading men's and women's cricketers in the world respectively by Wisden Cricketers' Almanack.
- Kohli won his award for the 2nd year in a row after again starring in all formats.
- Raj was acknowledged after a year in which she became the leading run-scorer in women's One-Day Internationals during India's run to the World Cup final.

Ankur Mittal grabs Bronze Medal in Shooting

- Shooter Ankur Mittal won a bronze medal in the men's double trap finals at the ongoing 21st Commonwealth Games.
- Ankur won the silver medal in the World Championships in Moscow 2017 and he also won silver and gold medal in the ISSF World Cup.
- India's tally at the Games has now increased to a total of 24, including 12 gold, four silver and eight bronzes.

Shreyasi Singh won Double Trap Gold

- Shooter Shreyasi Singh won the gold medal in women's double trap event at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast.
- The bronze medal went to Scotland.
- She had won a Bronze medal at the 2014 Asian Games in Incheon in the double trap team event.
- She won the silver medal in double trap event at the 2017 Commonwealth Shooting Championships.

Om Mitharval won Bronze in 50m Pistol event

- Om Prakash Mitharval won the bronze medal in the men's 50m pistol event at Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.
- It was Mitharwal's second medal in the ongoing prestigious event.
- Australia won the gold medal and the silver medal went to Bangladesh.
- India is currently standing at the third spot with 22 medals, including eleven gold, four silver and seven bronzes.

Sachin bags Bronze in Para Powerlifting

- India's Sachin Chaudhary bagged a bronze medal in the Men's Heavyweight Para Powerlifting at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.
- Nigeria got the gold medal and the silver medal was won by Malaysia.
- India's medals tally currently stands at 11 gold, 4 silver and 6 bronze for a third position on the table.

2018 Asia Cup moved out from India to UAE

- The 2018 Asia Cup, that was earlier scheduled to be held in India, has now been moved out to the United Arab Emirates.
- The decision was taken following a meeting of the executive board of the Asian Cricket Council held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and the winner of Asia Cup qualifier will compete in the 50-overs format event.

Heena Sidhu won Gold Medal in 25m Pistol

- Heena Sidhu won India's 11th gold medal in pistol shooting at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast.
- Heena Sidhu has become the first Indian athlete to win two medals at the 2018 Commonwealth Games.
- India has so far won 20 medals, including eleven gold, four silver and five bronzes.

Indian Men's Table Tennis Team Strike Gold

- The men's Table tennis team won the gold medal by beating Nigeria Table tennis team in Commonwealth Games 2018 at gold Coast.
- India put themselves ahead with the help of Sharath Achanta's win over Bode Abiodun of Nigeria in the men's singles event.
- This is India's ninth gold medal at the Games.
- India is now standing at the 3rd spot on the points table with 18 medals in total.

India bagged first-ever Gold in Badminton

- Indian mixed badminton team claimed the gold medal on day five of the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast.

- India beat Malaysia on the back of strong shuttle play from Ashwini Ponnappa, Satwik Rankireddy, Kidambi Srikanth and Saina Nehwal.
- This is the country's first mixed team badminton gold at any edition of the Commonwealth Games.

Sebastian Vettel won Bahrain GP

- Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel won Bahrain Formula One Grand Prix in his 200th race start.
- It was Vettel's second win in as many races this season, the 49th of his career.
- Lewis Hamilton got the 3rd position.

Mehuli Ghosh clinched Silver in Shooting

- Indian shooters Mehuli Ghosh and Apurvi Chandela bagged silver and bronze respectively in the Women's 10m Air Rifle competition at Commonwealth Games 2018.
- Singapore bagged the gold medal.
- With this feat, India now stands third on the points table with 17 medals in total, including seven in shooting alone.

Weightlifter Pardeep claimed Silver at CWG

- Indian weightlifter Pardeep Singh won a silver medal in the sport at Gold Coast Commonwealth Games 2018.
- Last year, Pardeep had claimed a surprise gold medal in his first senior competition in the 105kg category.
- Pardeep's feat now takes India's medal count to 13 at the Games and 9th in weightlifting alone.

Shooters bag Gold, Bronze for India

- Indian shooters Jitu Rai and Om Prakash Mitharwal won gold and bronze medals respectively at Commonwealth Games 2018.
- In the men's 10m air pistol event at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games 2018, Rai shot a total of 235.1 points, thus, registering a new Games record.
- Mitharwal bagged the Bronze medal after shooting a total of 214.3 points.
- India has won five medals so far in shooting alone.

India clinched Gold Medal in Table Tennis

- Indian women tennis team staged a winning show at Gold Coast Commonwealth Games as they defeated defending champions Singapore 3-1 to claim gold.
- India took the lead with the help of Manika Batra.
- This is India's first ever gold at the multi-sport event.
- It was only the second table tennis team gold for India at the Games with the men achieving the feat in the 2006 Melbourne edition.

Bayern Munich won Bundesliga Title

- German giants Bayern Munich win sixth successive Bundesliga title after hitting Augsburg 4-1 at the Augsburg Arena.

- The result also means that Bayern is the German league champion for the 28th time in its history.
- The result leaves Bayern 20 points clear with five league games left and underlined their absolute dominance of the Bundesliga.

Ravi Kumar won a Bronze Medal

- Indian shooter Ravi Kumar won the bronze medal in the men's 10m air rifle event at the 21st Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia.
- Ravi acquired the third spot with a score of 224.1 after 22 shots.
- Australia's Dane Sampson won the gold while Bangladesh's Abdullah Hel Baki claimed silver.
- India are now third in the Games' medal tally with 10 medals including 6 gold, 2 silver & 2 bronze

Most Capped Women's ODI Cricketer

- Indian women's cricket team captain Mithali Raj has become the most capped player in women's One-Day International (ODI) cricket.
- She achieved the feat (192 matches) during the first ODI against the England women at Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium in Nagpur.
- Mithali surpassed England's Charlotte Edwards, who retired in September 2017 with 191 ODIs under her belt.

Paes becomes most Successful Doubles Player

- Leander Paes created a new world record by becoming the most successful doubles player in Davis Cup history after winning his 43rd such match.
- Paes combined with Rohan Bopanna to create the new record.
- He made his Davis Cup debut in 1990 alongside Zeeshan Ali.
- Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi weaved the longest unbeaten winning streak of 24 matches.

Sathish Sivalingam won Gold Medal at CWG 2018

- Weightlifter Sathish Sivalingam won the gold medal by winning the men's 77kg event at Commonwealth Games 2018.
- In the previous Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Sathish had won gold. Hence, he became the first ever male Indian weightlifter to win gold in two different editions of the Commonwealth Games.
- In 2017, Sathish won gold at the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships.

Weightlifter Deepak Lather got Bronze Medal

- Indian weightlifter Deepak Lather won the bronze medal in the men's 69 kg category on the Day 2 of the Commonwealth Games.
- Gareth Evans of Wales claimed gold medal while Sri Lanka's Indika won the silver medal.
- India till now has four medals at the Gold Coast Games and all four have come from weightlifting.

India won Women Handball Championship

- India defeated Bangladesh to win the fifth South East Asian Women Handball Championship at Lucknow.
- A total of five countries participated in the tournament.
- While Nepal finished as runner-ups in the five-country tournament, Bangladesh settled for the third spot and a bronze medal.

Sanjita Chanu won Gold Medal at CWG 2018

- Weightlifter Khumukcham Sanjita Chanu won India its second gold medal at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games by outshining in the women's 53 kg category event.
- She set a new record in the game by lifting a total of 192 kgs which includes 84 kgs in a snatch and 108 kgs in clean and jerk.
- Papua New Guinea got the silver medal while Canada won the bronze medal.

Mirabai won Gold in Women's Weightlifting

- Mirabai Chanu secured India's first gold medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games when she finished first in the women's 48 kg weightlifting event at Gold Coast.
- Mirabai Chanu broke the Commonwealth Games' weightlifting record by lifting 196 kg.
- The previous Games' record was 175 kg set by Augustine Nwaokolo of Nigeria in 2010.
- This is her 2nd CWG medal following the silver she won in Glasgow.

Weight Lifter P.Gururaja won Silver Medal

- Weightlifter P Gururaja opened India's medal account on the first competition day of the 21st Commonwealth Games by winning the silver medal in Weightlifting.
- In the 56-kilogram category, P Gururaja lifted a total weight of 249 kg to finish second in the event.
- Malaysia took the Gold medal, while Sri Lanka got the Bronze medal.

Aussie Boxer becomes 1st CWG 2018 Medallist

- Australian boxer Taylah Robertson has become the first medallist of the 21st Commonwealth Games without even stepping into the ring.
- She got a bye straight into the 51-kilogram category women's semifinals scheduled for April 13.
- The 19-year-old Taylah got the lucky Bronze medal due to the small size of her draw.

CWG 2018 Inaugurated in Australia

- The 21st edition of the Commonwealth Games commenced in Gold Coast, Australia.
- The inaugural ceremony was held at the Carrara Stadium, Gold Coast.
- For the first time, there will be the same number of men's and women's medal events at the Games.

- The Indian contingent at the ceremony, which consists of over 200 athletes, was led by flag-bearer P V Sindhu, the Rio Olympic silver medallist.

India's Selena, Shreya Clinched Bronze in TT

- India's Selena Selvakumar and Shreya Shivakumar clinched two bronze medals at the 2018 Ivory Coast Junior and Cadet Open Table Tennis Tournament in Abidjan, Africa.
- Selena settled for the bronze in the junior girls' singles.
- Shreya teamed up with China's Yininghua Hu got a medal in the junior girls' doubles category of the event which is part of the International Table Tennis Federation.

John Isner won Miami Open Title

- In Tennis, John Isner has lifted the Men's Singles trophy of the Miami Open.
- John Isner defeated German's Alexander Zverev.
- Following the win, 32-year old Isner, the world number 17, will now move back into the top 10 next week.

Kerala won Santosh Trophy

- Kerala won its sixth Santosh Trophy title in Kolkata on 1st April.
- Kerala had beaten Bengal in the tie-breaker to claim its sixth Santosh Trophy title.
- The Santosh Trophy is an association football knock-out competition contested by the regional state associations and government institutions under the All India Football Federation.

Defence

First-ever Mock Exercise on Bio-Disasters

- National Disaster Management Authority conducted its first-ever Mock Exercise on Bio-Disasters at Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Airport in Patna.
- The exercise aimed at enhancing the preparedness of Airport Emergency Handlers to respond to CBRN emergencies at the airports.
- NDMA jointly with NDRF also conducted its first-ever full-scale Biological Management Emergency Exercise.

Nod for Procurement of NAG Missile

- The Defence Ministry approved military procurement worth Rs. 3,687 crore, which includes anti-tank guided missile NAG for the Army and long-range guns for the Navy.
- The proposals were cleared at a meeting of the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
- The DAC also approved the procurement of thirteen 127 mm calibre guns for the Navy.

Dakota DC-3 Aircraft to be Inducted into IAF

- Dakota DC-3 aircraft of 1940's vintage would be inducted shortly into the Vintage Aircraft Flight of the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- Built in 1944, the aircraft served in the military with the RAF and was also operated by various civil airlines.
- In 1988, a large fleet of Dakota DC-3 served in the Indian Air Force. It was one of the most versatile transport aircraft of its time.

'Sagar Kavach' Began in Kerala

- A two-day coastal security exercise 'Sagar Kavach' began on 24th April to strengthen and assess the loopholes in the coastal security mechanism along Kerala shores.
- The Coast Guard, the Navy, Coastal Police and Marine Enforcement wing are participating in the exercise.
- 3 ships of the navy, 10 of Coastguard, four fishing boats, besides 20 coastal police stations are taking part in the drill.

Navy Chief to Attend Naval Symposium in Iran

- Indian Navy Chief, Admiral Sunil Lanba has begun his visit to Iran to attend the 6th edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium.
- IONS which was conceived by Indian Navy in 2008 aims to enhance maritime cooperation among navies of littoral states of Indian Ocean Region
- Naval Chief's visit is aimed at consolidating bilateral naval relations b/w India & Iran and explore new avenues for cooperation

IAF Conducts Gagan Shakti Exercise

- Showcasing its precision in strike capabilities during day and night, Indian Air Force (IAF) has started exercise Gagan Shakti.
- Gagan Shakti will test the LCA across a varied spectrum encompassing Air Defence and Strike capabilities among others.
- IAF is conducting Exercise Gagan Shakti 2018, biggest air combat exercise along Pakistan, China borders from April 10 to 23 April 2018.

Boeing Signs deal with HAL, Mahindra

- Boeing India has signed an agreement with Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, and Mahindra Defence Systems at the Defence Expo 2018 to manufacture Super Hornet fighter aircraft in India.
- The companies will manufacture F/A-18 Super Hornet for India's armed forces.
- The F/A-18 Super Hornet will deliver on India's need for a carrier- and land- based multi-role fighter jets.

Indo-Korean Joint Exercise SAHYOG- HYEOLBYEOG

- Indo-Korean joint anti-piracy, search & rescue exercise 'SAHYOG- HYEOLBYEOG 2018' was conducted off the Chennai coast.
- The joint exercise is a part of ongoing cooperative arrangements b/w the 2 coast guards for the past 12 years
- The exercise aims to develop working level co-operation & enhance inter-operability in the fields of maritime search & rescue, anti-piracy operations.

IAF to conduct biggest combat exercise

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) is going to conduct its biggest ever combat exercise along Pakistan and China borders.
- The exercise - Gagan Shakti, 2018- will take place from April 10 to 23.
- For the first time, the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft Tejas will be taking part in the exercise and will perform both the offensive and defensive roles.

India-Korea Coast Guards to Hold Exercise

- The Indian Coast Guard and the Korea Coast Guard will hold a joint exercise off Chennai on April 5.
- The joint exercise, named Sahyog - Hyeoblyeog 2018 is part of a proposed establishment of a MoU between the two Coast Guards to improve maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.
- The exercise will see Indian Coast Guard ship Shaurya, and a few interceptor boats taking part in it.

India-Kyrgyzstan Military Exercise Concludes

- The 5th Indo-Kyrgyzstan joint training exercise 'Khanjar V' culminated on March 29 with a 'Joint Tactical Validation Exercise' in Mizoram.
- Kyrgyzstan in the exercise is represented by the military contingent of the military unit of the Armed Forces of the Kyrgyz Republic.
- The exercise which started on March 16, included understanding tactics of platoon level, developing interoperability.

S Korea, US began Joint Military Drills

- South Korea & US have kicked off their annual joint military exercises after they were delayed about a month for Olympics.
- Foal Eagle field exercise, which involves combined ground, air, naval & special operation troops, will continue for a month while the computer-simulated Key Resolve is scheduled for 2 weeks.
- The two drills would involve 23,700 US troops & 300,000 South Korean forces.

Russia Test Fired New ICBM 'Sarmat'

- The Russian military has successfully tested its latest intercontinental ballistic missile 'SARMAT'.
- The RS-28 Sarmat can cross South Pole as well as the North Pole, the shortest route between Russia and US and can strike targets anywhere in the world.


- Sarmat is intended to replace the Soviet-designed Voyevoda, the world's heaviest ICBM known as "Satan" in the West

Polity

Impeachment Motion Against CJI

- Opposition parties led by Congress MP Ghulam Nabi Azad have submitted an impeachment motion against Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra to Rajya Sabha Chairman Venkaiah Naidu.
- Around 60 opposition leaders signed the motion, while TMC and DMK MPs refrained from it.
- The move comes after CJI-led Supreme Court bench dismissed petitions seeking a probe into Judge BH Loya's death.

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