WEEKLY

15TH JULY - 21ST JULY 2018

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Awards & Honours

India Heritage Walk fete wins PATA award

- India Heritage Walk Festival, a collaboration of Sahapedia and YES Arts & Culture, has been awarded the PATA Gold Award 2018.
- Sahapedia is an open online resource on the arts, cultures and heritage of India.
- Sahapedia got the award, announced by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) in Bangkok, has been presented to it under the 'Heritage-Culture' category.

'Sangita Kalanidhi' award for Aruna Sairam

- Carnatic vocalist Aruna Sairam has been selected for this year's 'Sangita Kalanidhi' award of the Music Academy.
- Veteran Mridangam artiste 'Thanjavur' R Ramadas was selected for the 'Sangita Kala Acharya' award.
- The 'Sangita Kalanidhi' and other music awards would be presented at the 'Sadas' of the music festival on January 1, 2019.

Days & Events

Odisha to host mega triennial in Dec-Jan

- Odisha will host to what is billed as India's first private sector triennial in December-January that will see the convergence of artists from the national and international scene.
- Named the Odisha Triennial of International Art, the events under it will take place in Bhubaneshwar, Puri and Konark.
- OTIA is the brainchild of Artists Network for Promoting Indian Culture.

International Affairs

Reduction in number of new HIV infections

- India saw a major reduction in the number of new HIV infections, AIDS-related deaths and people living with HIV from 2010 to 2017, according to a UN report.
- It was published by the Joint UN Agency on AIDS report titled 'Miles to go — closing gaps, breaking barriers, righting injustices'.
- India has an approved social protection strategy, policy or framework that is being implemented, it said.

Myanmar joins International Solar Alliance

 Myanmar joined the India-initiated International Solar Alliance (ISA), becoming the 68th member of

- the group that is aiming at the optimum utilisation of solar energy.
- ISA was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and then French President Francois Hollande at the Paris climate summit in 2015.
- ISA is open to all 121 member countries falling between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn.

BIMSTEC summit to be held in Nepal

- The 4th BIMSTEC Summit will be held in Kathmandu from 30-31 August 2018, the Nepal government said.
- Sub-regional connectivity and poverty alleviation will be top of the agenda during the two-day BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multilateral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Summit.
- The group formed in 1997 consists of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand.

Ex-Prez Park to spend another 8 yrs in jail

- South Korean court sentenced Ex-President Park Geun-hye to 8 more years in prison after finding her guilty on charges of causing loss of govt funds & interfering in a 2016 parliamentary election.
- The court handed Ms. Park 6 years on the spy fund charges and 2 further years in jail for improperly intervening in the selection of election candidates.
- The current President is Moon-Jae-in.

First High-Level '2+2 Dialogue' With India

- The inaugural 'two-plus-two dialogue' between India and the US will be held on September 6 in New Delhi.
- Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defence Secretary James Mattis would travel to India for the dialogue.
- The landmark discussions would be covered by the US to recognize that its purchase of the S-400 air defense system from Russia and CAATSA.

Israeli Parliament passes Jewish nation law

- The Israeli parliament has passed a bill that defines the country as an exclusively Jewish state.
- The bill also removes Arabic as official language giving it a "special status" that enables its continued use in Israeli institutions.
- There are 1.8 million Arabs, about 20% of the population of Isreal who viewed the move against their interest.
- The Current PM of Isreal is Benjamin Netanyahu.

Turkey lifts state of emergency after 2 years

- In Turkey, the state of emergency, which was imposed after the failed coup two years ago, came to an end on 19th July.
- President Recep Tayyip Erdogan declared emergency on 20th July 2016, five days after



- warplanes bombed Ankara and clashes broke out in Istanbul that claimed 249 lives.
- Under Turkey's constitution, emergency provision lasts three months which was extended seven times.

EU, Japan sign world's biggest free trade deal

- The European Union and Japan signed a huge free trade deal that cuts or eliminates tariffs on nearly all goods.
- The agreement covers 600 million people and almost a third of the global economy.
- It will remove tariffs on European exports such as cheese and wine.
- Japanese automakers and electronics firms will face fewer barriers in the European Union.

Peru declares 60-day state of emergency

- Peru declared a 60-day state of emergency on its Colombian border to ensure security from the menace of drug trafficking in a region.
- The state of emergency has been declared in Peru's Amazonian province of Putumayo, which is separated from Colombia by the river of the same name.
- The president informed the first patrol was carried out by the Peru police and armed forces.

China to launch 300 satellites

- China plans to launch 300 low-orbit satellites to provide worldwide communication services, with the first in the series to be launched later this year.
- The first in the 300-satellite array -- known as the Hongyan constellation -- is set to be launched by the end of this year.
- China is already developing BelDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) to rival America's Global Positioning System.

UNSC imposes an arms embargo on South Sudan

- The United Nations Security Council has imposed an arms embargo on South Sudan, nearly five years after civil war erupted in the country.
- A United States-drafted resolution won the minimum nine votes needed, while 6 member states including Russia and China abstained.
- South Sudan has been at war since 2013, when President Salva Kiir accused then-deputy Riek Machar of plotting a coup.

1st land-based comm. link between Pak and PRC

- An optical fiber cable project that would be the first land-based communication link between China (PRC) and Pakistan has been launched.
- It will help develop the telecom sector in the Gilgit-Baltistan region and enhance the security of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

• The project includes an 820-km-long underground optical fiber cable from Rawalpindi to Khunjerab.





National Affairs

Kochi port to get new cruise terminal

- The Cochin Port Trust is setting up a new cruise terminal capable of handling 5,000 tourists at Ernakulam Wharf.
- The facilities inside the terminal will include passenger lounge, crew lounge, 30 immigration counters, eight custom clearance counters, seven security check counters, WiFi.
- Kochi has been getting around 40 cruise liners every year, bringing HNI tourists to Kerala.

MIB panel to be replaced soon

- A committee set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) to devise ways to regulate online media and other content has been disbanded.
- The 10-member committee was set up in April.
- Its mandate will now be handed over to a panel overseen by the ministry of electronics and information technology (Meity).
- The committee has the secretary of MeitY, Ajay Prakash, as convener.

Third-party insurance must for new cars

- Third-party insurance for three years will become mandatory for cars being sold from 1 September 2018, said the Supreme Court.
- The SC also made it compulsory for two-wheeler owners to take third-party insurance for five years.
- The order is expected to help road accident victims recover compensation from insurance firms, without going after the owner of the offending vehicle.

5 oil PSUs sign JV pact for N-E gas pipeline

- The JV company shall develop, build, operate and maintain the Natural Gas Pipeline Grid.
- The project will connect the state capitals of all the eight North Eastern states.

Nabard launches Centre for Climate Change

- NABARD has launched a centre for accelerating concerted action on climate change by various stakeholders including government, private and financial sectors.
- The Centre for Climate Change has been set up in Lucknow
- It would also support capacity building and project preparation effort in developing countries in the region as also in Africa.

Debate on no-confidence motion in Lok Sabha



- Speaker Sumitra Mahajan announced that the Lok Sabha has taken up the debate on no-confidence motion moved by Oppn parties.
- The motions dealt on issues like special status to Andhra Pradesh, cow vigilantism, lynching and dilution of the SC/ST Act.
- A motion of no-confidence is a statement or vote which states that the ruling govt is no longer deemed fit to hold the position of power.

MoU between Infosys & BMRCL

- The Infosys Foundation signed a MoU with the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) to build a metro station at Electronic City.
- The station, part of Phase II metro line under from R.V. Road to Bommsandram, will be named the 'Infosys Foundation – Konappana Agrahara Metro station'
- The Foundation is spending close to Rs. 200 crore to build the station at Konappana Agrahara.

TN govt launches 24h helpline for couples

- The Tamil Nadu govt has informed the Madras High Court that a 24-hour helpline has been set up to investigate issues faced by inter-caste couples and offer them necessary assistance and protection.
- A special cell has been formed in all districts and cities in the state, comprising district-level officers at the city level, to receive complaints of harassment & threat to inter-caste couples.

New Manufacturing Facility For EVM Production

- Election Commissioner Shri Sunil Arora inaugurated a new Manufacturing Facility For EVM Production At Bharat Electronics Limited, Bangalore.
- Braille EPICards were also distributed for the first time in Karnataka to visually impaired voters.
- Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) are being used in Indian General and State Elections to implement electronic voting and are part from 1999 elections.

Andhra CM launches e-Pragati platform

- Andhra Pradesh CM N. Chandrababu Naidu launched 'e-Pragati' project, a digital platform for governance in the state.
- The e-Pragati project, launched at Undavalli, Guntur plans to achieve digitalization in the state & bring transparency in governance; it will work through cloud management.
- Reforms in education, agricultural marketing, panchayat raj are also available on this platform.

RS passes Prevention of Corruption Bill

 The Rajya Sabha passed the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, 2013 which seeks to

- make giving bribes an offense with a provision of punishment.
- The Bill introduces the offense of giving a bribe as a direct offense. However, a person who is compelled to give a bribe will not be charged with the offense if he reports the matter to law enforcement authorities within 7 days.

Fugitive offenders Bill passed

- The Lok Sabha passed the Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill that replaces the Ordinance by the same name promulgated by the President in April.
- The Bill empowers courts to direct the govt to confiscate all the assets belonging to a fugitive economic offender.
- A Fugitive Offender is a person against whom an arrest warrant has been issued & who has left India so as to avoid criminal prosecution.

CM Raman Singh launches online pension system

- Chhattisgarh CM Dr. Raman Singh launched an online portal and mobile app called 'Aabhaar-Aapki Seva ka' for the pensioners of the state.
- Through this app and the website, 80,000 pensioners of the state will get all the information related to pension and payment online.
- The beneficiaries will be provided updates via SMS regarding the status of their pension account.

Cabinet relaxes NELP, pre-NELP pact rules

- The Cabinet approved the policy to streamline production sharing contracts signed in the pre-New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) and NELP periods.
- Based on recommendations in 'Hydrocarbon Vision 2030 for North East', the govt has extended timelines for the exploration period by 2 yrs.
- The Centre has also allowed marketing, including pricing freedom for natural gas from discoveries.

Cabinet amends Section 376 of IPC

- The Cabinet approved a Bill to enhance the punishment for rape, including awarding death penalty to convicts of raping girls under 12 yrs.
- The Bill amends Section 376 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO Act), 2012, and the Code of Criminal Procedure.
- The Bill will increase the minimum punishment for rape from the existing 7 yrs to 10 yrs.

Right to Services Act repealed in Punjab

 The state govt of Punjab dissolved Right to Service Commission which was created by the former SAD-BJP govt under Punjab Right to Services Act of 2011.



- The act has been replaced by Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Services Act, 2018.
- The Right to Service (RTS) Act was set up by former Deputy CM Sukhbir Singh Badal to provide citizen services through Sewa Kendras.

1st govt-sponsored transgender poets' meet

- India's 1st government-sponsored poets' meet was organized for the transgender community at the Sahitya Akademi in Kolkata.
- The 'Transgender Poets' Meet' was chaired by India's first transgender college principal Manabi Bandopadhyay.
- In the event, each of the poets was given nearly 15 minutes to recite their poetry.
- Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) criminalizes homosexuality.



MicroDot technology to check vehicle thefts,

- The govt will set a new standard to use a technology which involves spraying small dots laser etched with a vehicle identification number throughout the vehicle body.
- The tech named 'MicroDots' makes it almost impossible to remove the dots and hence will prevent the vehicle's identity.
- Annually about 2.14 lakh vehicles are stolen across the country with Delhi topping the list at 38,644.

BSE Dalal Street building gets trademark

- Stock exchange major BSE has secured a trademark for its iconic building Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers, located on Dalal Street.
- Initially known as BSE Towers, the building was soon renamed after the late chairman of BSE, Sir Phiroze Jamshedji Jeejeebhoy.
- The stock exchange major was founded in 1875. It began as a small group of brokers who functioned under a banyan tree on Dalal Street.

Govt to deliver 11 Crore Ayushman Cards

 The government will be printing and delivering 11 crore Ayushman Bharat 'family cards' by organizing public contact programme called 'Ayushman Pakhwaras'.

- The CEO of Ayushman Bharat- National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM) is Indu Bhushan.
- The scheme was announced by Union Minister Arun Jaitley in his budget 2018 and is expected to be the world's largest health coverage scheme.

FASTags compulsory to obtain national permit

- Vehicle tracking systems and FASTags for electronic toll collection will be made mandatory for all commercial vehicles obtaining the national permit.
- The proposed amendment also provides that driving license and pollution control certificates can be carried in physical or digital form.
- It also provides that no fitness certification at the time of registration for new transport vehicles.

Centre supports Bru pact

- The Home Ministry is committed to implementing the agreement signed to repatriate 33,000 Bru refugees living in camps in Tripura & Mizoram.
- As per the agreement each of the 5,407 families will get Rs. 5,000 per month along with ration for 2 years and house-building assistance of Rs. 1.5 lakh.
- The Bru community had fled Mizoram in 1997 following an unrest and are in relief camps in Tripura.

Bihar raises compensation for rape victims

- The Bihar government increased the compensation amount for acid-attack and rape survivors from Rs 3 lakh to 7 lakh.
- Human traffic victims would receive a compensation of Rs 2 lakh each instead of the Rs 1 lakh paid currently.
- The acid attack victims would be given a monthly compensation of Rs 10000 instead of lump sum.
- Survivors who are under the age of 14 would get 50% more compensation.

67th National Garment Fair 2018 in Mumbai

- The Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI) organized "India's Largest Apparel Trade Show - The 67th National Garment Fair" from 16th July to 19th July 2018 at Bombay Exhibition Centre, Mumbai.
- A Memorandum of Understanding between Govt of Gujarat & CMAI was signed to promote Gujarat as a destination for investments.
- The Fair was inaugurated by Kishore Biyani, CEO of Future Group.

SC demands new law to stop lynching

• India's highest court has asked the government to enact a new law to deal with an increase in mob violence and lynchings.



- Supreme Court recommended Parliament to create a new penal provision to punish the offenders and stem the mob-related violence.
- The direction was given by three-judge bench, headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra and ordered parliament to decide within six months.

WR renames Elphinstone station as Prabhadevi

- Western Railway renamed Elphinstone Road Station to Prabhadevi on Mumbai's suburban section.
- The station, named after Lord Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay from 1853 to 1860, is renamed after the local deity 'Prabhadevi'.
- Elphinstone is the station where 23 people were killed and over 39 injured in a stampede at the railway station's foot over bridge on September 29, 2017.

J&K abolishes interviews for Class-IV jobs

- The Jammu and Kashmir government today abolished interviews for all Class-IV posts in the state and the selection.
- All recruitment for Class-IV posts under State, Divisional and District Cadres also for companies, organizations & bodies substantially owned by Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB).
- The decision will speed-up the selection process against these posts.

1st dedicated corridor for freight trains

- Indian Railways is set to get its first publicly-owned dedicated corridor for freight trains on 15th August 2018.
- The 190-km railway line between Dadri in Uttar Pradesh and Phulera in Rajasthan, which fall under the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC).
- It will connect Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat and then will terminate at Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Conference of Heads of AYUSH Institutes

- All India Institute of Ayurveda (AllA) under Ministry of AYUSH is organizing two days Conference of Heads of AYUSH National Institutes at India International Centre, New Delhi.
- Minister of Human Resource Development Shri Prakash Javadekar will inaugurate the conference.
- Health Universities and research institutes sign MoUs with Sports Authority of India, Indian Institute of Technology.

MCA to review offences under Companies Act

 The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has constituted a 10 Member Committee to review the penal provisions in the Companies Act, 2013.

- The Committee will review the provisions relating to non-compoundable offenses and recommend whether any such provisions need to be recategorized as a compoundable offense.
- The committee is headed by the Secretary of Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

World's cheapest clean drinking water

- With the launch of the cost-effective innovative water project, Bihar will soon provide the cheapest drinking water in the world.
- The first of such project was launched in Bihar's Darbhanga district, by Sulabh International.
- With the help of this project, people will be able to get clean water in 50paisa/litre.
- The project converts contaminated pond & river water into safe drinking water

India & World

Emergency ambulance service for Sri Lanka

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will eflag a countrywide emergency ambulance service for Sri Lanka through video conferencing from New Delhi.
- The service has been introduced in two provinces of Sri Lanka with grant assistance from Government of India.
- India has given a grant of USD 22.8 million to Sri Lanka.
- This is the largest Indian grant project in Sri Lanka after Indian housing project.

India and Ghana ink 2 MoUs

- India and Ghana signed two agreements in an effort to enhance the bilateral cooperation between the two countries.
- The 2 MOUs were signed on Cultural Exchange Programme & on cooperation between Bureau of Indian Standards and Ghana Standards Authority.
- Sushma Swaraj & Ghanaian counterpart Shirley Botchway discussed enhancing cooperation, capacity building, trade & people-to-people relations.

The 6th meeting of India-Nepal mechanism

- The 6th meeting of India-Nepal oversight Mechanism was held to review the progress of all the bilateral projects in New Delhi on 19 July 2018.
- The projects included cross-border rail projects, integrated check posts, Terai Roads Project, crossborder transmission lines, Arun-II hydropower project.
- The Current PM of Nepal is Khadga Prasad Oli.

Cabinet approves MoU between India and Cuba



- The Union Cabinet has given its ex-post facto approval for the MoU between India and Cuba on cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy.
- The MoU was signed on 22nd June 2018.
- The MoU will enhance bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the areas of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy.

Cabinet approves MoU on aviation with BRICS

- The Union Cabinet approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) amongst BRICS nations on Regional Aviation Partnership.
- The government aims for the BRICS nations to benefit from the establishment of an institutional framework to corporate in the field of civil aviation.
- The MoU has the potential to spur greater trade, investment, tourism amongst the BRICS Nations.

10th edition of Delhi Dialogue in New Delhi

- The 10th edition of the Delhi Dialogue begins in New Delhi
- The theme of the event is 'Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Co-operation'.
- Political leadership, officials, diplomats, business leaders, think-tanks and academicians from India and the ASEAN Member States participated in Event.
- Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a group of 10 nations with General Secretary Lim Jock Hoi.

India, Bahrain sign pact to boost investment

- India and Bahrain signed agreements in the field of healthcare and renewable energy and decided to enhance investments among both countries.
- The two sides also did an agreement on Exemption from Short Stay Visa for holders of Diplomatic and Official passport.
- The agreement comes after Sushma Swaraj meets Bahrainain Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa.

India signs pact to ease visa restrictions

- India on July 15 signed a revised travel agreement with Bangladesh to ease visa restrictions for citizens from the neighbouring country.
- Under the Revised Travel Arrangement (RTA)-2018, freedom fighters and elderly Bangladeshi nationals will get five year multiple visa from India.
- Mr. Singh and Mr. Khan also held the 6th Home Minister-Level Talks between India and Bangladesh.



India to be VC of WCO's Asia Pacific region

- India has become the Vice-Chair of the Asia Pacific Region of World Customs Organisation (WCO) for a period of two years, from July 2018 to June 2020.
- A ceremony will be organized in New Delhi on 16
 June. The Theme of the Inaugural Ceremony is
 "Customs Fostering Trade Facilitation".
- WCO represents 182 Customs administrations across the globe that process approx 98% of world trade.

India inaugurates its largest visa centre

- India has inaugurated its largest visa centre in the world in Dhaka to reduce the waiting time for applicants.
- Bangladeshis constitute one of the largest number of visitors from a single country to India. Last year, India issued 1.4 million visas to Bangladeshi nationals.
- India has 12 visa centres in Bangladesh, which is the highest number the former has in any country in the world.

Personalities in News

Dwayne Johnson is highest paid actor

- Dwayne Johnson, with earnings of Rs. 850 Crore has been named the highest-paid actor by Forbes.
- It is also the highest-ever total for acting earnings in the 20-year history of Forbes' Celebrity 100 list.
- He ranked fifth on the overall list of Forbes highest entertainer list.
- Dwayne earned double the earnings total of \$65 million he posted in 2017's list.

Goldman Sachs names David Solomon as CEO

- Goldman Sachs Group Inc named David Solomon as its next chief executive officer.
- Solomon to succeed CEO Lloyd Blankfein, who was the CEO since June 2006 and will be retiring on 1st October.
- The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. is an American multinational investment bank and financial services company headquartered in New York City.



 Solomon previously worked for Irving Trust and Drexel Burnham.

Nelson Mandela International Day 2018

- Nelson Mandela International Day is an annual international day in honor of Nelson Mandela, South Africa's 1st black president which is celebrated each year on 18 July.
- The day was 1st celebrated as UN Mandela Day on 18
 July 2010 and 2018 marks the 100th birth anniversary.
- Mandela is remembered for his anti-apartheid activities and fight against poverty and promoting justice for all.

Google celebrated Georges Lemaitre's birthday

- Google celebrated the 124th birth anniversary of Belgian astronomer Georges Lemaitre with a doodle on 17 July 2018.
- Lemaitre is credited with the Big Bang Theory, which says that the universe originated from a single atom called 'Cosmic Egg'.
- In 1934, Lemaître received the Francqui Prize, the highest Belgian scientific distinction.



Assam's first transgender judge Swati Baruah

- The court in Guwahati has got the first transgender judge of Assam.
- Swati Bidhan Baruah has been appointed as a judge to mediate cases in Lok Adalat.
- She is the third transgender judge in the country and will mediate in pre-litigation cases related to finance companies.
- Joyita Mondal of West Bengal is India's first transgender judge.

Government Policies & Schemes

New cell to resolve child custody disputes

- A mediation cell would be set up under the apex child rights body, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), to resolve child custody disputes arising from cases of transnational marital discord.
- The Ministry of Women and Child Development has in-principle decided to establish a Mediation Cell under the NCPCR chairperson.

Student Police Cadet Programme to be launched

- Home Minister Rajnath Singh will launch Student
 Police Cadet Programme in Gurugram.
- The programme seeks to build a bridge between the Police and the larger community through school students by inculcating values and ethics in them.
- The initiative seeks to cover broadly two kinds of topics: crime prevention and control, and values and ethics.

Special Package for Irrigation Projects

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the implementation of Centrally Sponsored-Scheme for completion of 83 Minor Irrigation projects and 8 major/medium irrigation projects of Marathawada, Vidharbha and drought prone areas of the rest of Maharashtra.
- Completion of these projects will ensure assured source of water to the farmers in the command area of these projects.

RTE amendment Bill passed in Lok Sabha

- The Lok Sabha passed The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Second Amendment) Bill 2017 which allows detention of school students in class 5 and 8.
- The original RTE Act stipulated that no child admitted in a school shall be held back in any class or expelled from school till the completion of elementary education.
- The original RTE Act came into force on April 1, 2010.



Continuation of scholarships for minorities

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the proposal for Continuation of Pre-Matric, Post Matric and Merit-cum-Means based Scholarship Schemes for the students belonging to the six notified Minority Communities.
- The 6 notified minority communities are Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain and Parsi.
- These Schemes shall be implemented through the National Scholarship Portal.

National database for gun licence holders

- From April 2019, names of all arms licence holders, new or old, will be included in a national database and they will be issued a unique identification number (UIN).
- The move is aimed at keeping a tab on authorised private gun holders.
- Every licensing and renewing authority will have to enter the data in the National Database of Arms Licences system, which will generate a UIN.

SBI 'kisan mela' on July 18

- State Bank of India (SBI) will organise 'kisan melas' in 875 rural and semi-urban branches spread across Karnataka on July 18.
- It is an initiative of the bank to connect with farmers and resolve their grievances.
- The bank also plans to offer Kisan Credit Cards to farmers. The bank will also make farmers aware of the benefits of timely renewal of KCC account & usage of KCC Rupay Card.

Assam's anti-witch hunting bill

- President Ram Nath Kovind has approved the Assam Witch Hunting (Prohibition, Prevention and Protection) Bill, 2015, converting it to an Act.
- The bill has been converted into an Act after almost three years it was passed by Assam's state assembly on August 13, 2015.
- It imposes imprisonment of up to seven years, along with a fine of up to Rs 5 lakh, for branding someone as witch.

CIC launches bilingual mobile app

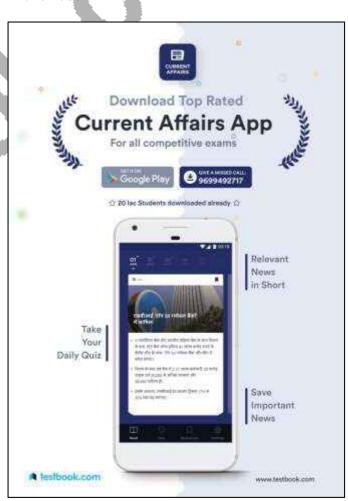
- The Central Information Commission (CIC) has launched an updated version of its mobile application in Hindi.
- RTI applicants can submit their second appeal or complaint and link papers in both the languages i.e. in Hindi and English, through this app.
- Using this app, people can get real-time status in both the Hindi and English languages.

'Paudhagiri' campaign launched in Haryana

- Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched the 'Paudhagiri' campaign, aimed at increasing the green cover in the state.
- Under this campaign, 22 lakh students from class 6 to 12 of all government and private schools in Haryana will plant a sapling each during three months of monsoon.
- The student will get Rs 300 per year for 3 years for looking after a sapling planted by him or her.

T-Hub to host country's 1st Defence incubator

- India's first Defence incubators will come up in Hyderabad, which is India's missile development centre.
- The T-Hub is India's largest incubator that will be funded through the Ministry's Innovation for Defence Excellence (iDEX) scheme.
- The iDEX will be funded and managed by a Defence Innovation Organisation.
- Initially, a corpus of ₹100 crore has been created by two PSUs--HAL and BEL.



Men's hockey team to be a part of TOPS

• The Mission Olympic Cell of Union Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs has included Men's Hockey team under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).



- The 18 team members will be provided with a monthly allowance of Rs. 50,000 each.
- TOPS was launched in 2015 by Ministry of Sports with National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) with the aim supporting potential medal prospects for Olympics.

Army, FTII to provide acting courses in J&K

- Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) has joined hands with the Indian Army to provide acting courses for the youth of J&K.
- Renowned actor Gufi Paintal was invited as a special guest faculty to mentor the youth for the course.
- The youth trained by the Army in theatre and art earlier this year also witnessed the creative rendition of the budding artists.

Odisha Govt constitutes Heritage Cabinet

- The Odisha Government constituted Heritage Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to preserve the history and culture of Odisha.
- The Cabinet comprises eight members, including the Chief Minister.
- While the Chief Secretary will be Secretary of Heritage Cabinet, Secretary in the Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture will be the convenor.

"I Am Not Afraid Of English" campaign

- The Haryana Education Department has launched "I am not afraid of English" initiative to promote English language right from Class 1 in the state's primary schools.
- The initiative is aimed at capacity building of teachers to enable them to help the students to learn, read, write and speak English.
- To start with, a booklet containing 1,000 sentences/phrases has been prepared.

Science & Technology

NASA launches online toolkit

- NASA has launched an online toolkit to make it easier for users to find, analyse and utilise the most relevant satellite data for their research, business projects or conservation efforts.
- The "Remote Sensing Toolkit" provides a simple system that quickly identifies relevant sources based on user input.
- The toolkit is designed to help users search for data as well as code to build new tools.

Athena to beam internet on earth

• Facebook is working on an internet satellite project called 'Athena' to beam internet connectivity down to Earth.

- The company aims to launch the satellite in early 2019.
- The new satellite project will provide broadband internet connections to "unserved and underserved areas".

"World's first" remote LEAP microscope

- IIT Madras has launched "world's first" remotely operatable microscope that would enable a precise atom-by-atom view of a material.
- The Local Electrode Atom Probe (LEAP) was developed in a collaborative exercise involving eight top research institutions headed by IIT Madras.
- It was developed at a cost of Rs 40 crore.

ISRO scientists test Vikas Engine

- ISRO has successfully conducted a ground test of its high thrust version of the Vikas Engine that would improve the payload capability of the space agency's launch vehicles.
- The Vikas Engine is the liquid rocket engine used to power the second stage of the ISRO's trusted Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).
- The test was conducted at the ISRO Propulsion Complex in Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu.

NASA Juno spots volcano on Jupiter moon lo

- Scientists have discovered a volcano close to the south pole of Jupiter's moon lo, using data collected by NASA's Juno spacecraft.
- The infrared data were collected in December 2018, when Juno was about 470,000 kilometres away from the moon, using its Jovian InfraRed Auroral Mapper (JIRAM) instrument.
- Juno was launched on August 5, 2011, from the US.

South Africa launches powerful new telescope

- South Africa has unveiled the 64-dish MeerKAT radio telescope, slated to be the world's largest and most powerful telescope on its completion in 2030.
- Built for \$330 million, MeerKAT will be integrated into an array of 3,000 dishes.
- The telescope is being built by an international consortium, including Australia, Britain, Canada, China, India, Italy, New Zealand, Sweden and the Netherlands.

Places in News

MoU between Infosys & BMRCL

- The Infosys Foundation signed a MoU with the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) to build a metro station at Electronic City.
- The station, part of Phase II metro line under from R.V. Road to Bommsandram, will be named the



- 'Infosys Foundation Konappana Agrahara Metro station'.
- The Foundation is spending close to Rs. 200 crore to build the station at Konappana Agrahara.

Sri Lanka to finalize Mattala airport deal

- Sri Lankan government said that it is in the process of finalizing a joint venture with India for operating the Matalla international airport, located in the south of the Sri Lanka.
- AAI will own 70% majority stake in the venture while the rest will be owned by Sri Lankan govt.
- Matalla airport is the world's emptiest airport as there is no passenger flight in service.

Karnataka to set up five tech innovation hubs

- Karnataka's first 'K-Tech Innovation Hub' was inaugurated in Belagavi by K J George, Karnataka Minister for IT/BT & ST.
- The K-Tech Innovation Hub backed by providing space and infrastructure, prototyping facilities and a world-class innovation network.
- The K-Tech Innovation hub leverages the globally connected ecosystem & brings infrastructure similar to the MIT Fab Lab to Belagavi.

First Pondicherry International Film Festival

- The festival organized by Pickurflick and Puducherry Tourism Department, which will begin on September 26, will be hosted at Puducherry.
- The inaugural edition of the festival will focus on the cinema, art, and culture of France, which is the partner country for the five-day long event.
- The mega festival will also promote Puducherry as a tourist destination.

India's 1st skill training centre in Odisha

- Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan laid the foundation stone of India's first National Skill Training Institute in Bhubaneshwar, Odisha.
- The proposed institute will impart training to trainers and create a skill-based ecosystem to meet the industry demands.
- The Institute costing Rs 160 crore will come up over five acres of land and have state-of-the-art facilities.

Conference of Heads of AYUSH Institutes

- All India Institute of Ayurveda (AllA) under Ministry of AYUSH is organizing two days Conference of Heads of AYUSH National Institutes at India International Centre, New Delhi.
- Minister of Human Resource Development Shri Prakash Javadekar will inaugurate the conference.
- Health Universities and research institutes sign MoUs with Sports Authority of India, Indian Institute of Technology.

Gujarat to form Sanskrit Bhasha Vikas Board

- The Sanskrit language, the state government has decided to form the Sanskrit Bhasha Vikas Board.
- The decision was announced by state education minister Bhupendrasinh Chudasama at an event held at the Gujarat University.
- The university has started a dedicated centre for spoken Sanskrit and also plans to celebrate Sanskrit Utsav.

Books and Authors

J K Rowling's next book 'Lethal-White'

- J K Rowling will come out with the fourth novel "Lethal White" in the series about the exploits of private investigator Cormoran Strike under her pseudonym Robert Galbraith.
- The three previous Strike novels are "The Cuckoo's Calling" (2013), "The Silkworm" (2014) and "Career of Evil" (2015).
- J K Rowling is well renowned for her Harry Potter Series.



Committees & Recommendations

Govt sets up committee to strengthen NCC, NSS

 The govt has decided to form a committee under former education secretary Anil Swarup, seeking



- suggestions to strengthen National Cadet Corp & National Service Scheme.
- The Committee will deal with issues like expansion, strengthening training infrastructure & reducing manpower deficiency.
- The Committee will also submit recommendations for building "synergy" between these 2 institutions.

Panel to tackle pollution around Taj Mahal

- The government has formed a committee comprising officials of the environment ministry, experts from NEERI, IITs and various other forums to look into the issue of industrial pollution around the iconic Taj Mahal.
- The committee will be headed by C K Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The committee will take up the problems on a caseto-case basis.

Business & Economy

Manufacturers print buy back price on bottles

- In a bid to comply with new regulations, leading beverage makers such as Coca-Cola, Pepsi and Bisleri have begun printing a buyback value on all their PET bottles sold in Maharashtra.
- Consumers will be able to return the plastic bottles after consumption and will be paid back according to the value printed on the bottles.
- Most beverage makers have settled on Rs 15 per kg for the bottles.

BoB inks pacts with ten companies

- Bank of Baroda signed agreements with 10 companies promote micro and small business entrepreneurs.
- These companies are from e-commerce, logistics, service providers and traditional small business which contribute 31% to GDP and 45% of exports and employ over 100 million.
- These MoUs with will help enhance the bank's footprint in the MSME eco-system.

CPPIB to step up investments in India

- Canada's biggest public pension scheme, Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) views India as its main focus for investment in Asia.
- CPPIB manages Canada's national pension fund, has invested nearly C\$7 billion (\$5.30 billion) in India.
- CPPIB currently owns shares in some leading fast moving consumer goods companies like ITC Ltd., Hindustan Unilever Ltd. & Britannia Industries Ltd.

Jana Small Finance Bank launches operations

- Jana Small Finance Bank announced the commercial launch of its banking operations to convert itself into a small finance bank (SFB), 3 years after the RBI gave its in-principle approval.
- The bank was earlier called Janalakshmi Financial Services and weathered huge losses on account of demonetization.
- Ajay Kanwal is managing director and chief executive officer of Jana Small Finance Bank.

Amazon hits \$900 billion valuation

- Amazon.com's stock market value reached \$900 billion for the first time in its 20 year history.
- It has now become only the second company after Apple to achieve this milestone.
- The Current market cap of Amazon.com stands at \$902 billion as of 18th July 2018.
- Apple is currently the world's most valuable company with a market cap of \$935 billion.
- The CEO of Amazon is Jeff Bezos.

Govt announces capital infusion in 5 PSB's

- The government has announced an infusion of Rs 11,336 crore in five public sector banks as part of its Indradhanush scheme.
- The five banks are Punjab National Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank & Allahabad Bank.
- Indradhanush is a scheme for recapitalization of PSBs, with a view to make sure they remain solvent & comply with the global capital adequacy norms, Basel-III.

RBI to launch new 100 rupee note

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) would soon issue new Rs 100 notes, with a base color of Lavender.
- According to the new policy on theme-based currency notes, the new Rs 100 note will have the impression of Gujarat's Rani-ki-Vav (Queen's stepwell).
- The new Rs 100 note will be slightly bigger than the Rs 10 note and weigh less than the old note & will be printed by Dewas-based Bank Note Press.

Steel Ministry announces pension scheme

- The steel ministry has agreed to introduce a pension scheme for its CPSEs (Central Public Sector Enterprises) like SAIL and RINL.
- The pension scheme is estimated to cost an additional financial burden of Rs 540 crore.
- The pension scheme will be subject to factors like affordability, capacity to pay and sustainability by the CPSEs.
- The current Steel Minister is Chaudhary Birender Singh.

Nabard award to Repco Micro Finance Ltd



- Repco Micro Finance Ltd, a non-banking finance company received Nabard 2018 award.
- The award is given service to self-help group in Tamil Nadu for the fiscal year 2017-18.
- The NBFC has disbursed loans amounting to ₹2,500 crore to over 10 lakh beneficiaries.
- NABARD Financial Services Limited is a subsidiary of NABARD to provide financial services in areas of agriculture & microfinance.

WPI jumps to 5.77% in June

- India's wholesale inflation grew 5.77% in June, a fourand-half year high, driven by some food items and fuel prices.
- Wholesale inflation rate, measured by Wholesale Price Index (WPI), is a marker for price movements in bulk buys for traders and broadly mirrors trends in shop-end prices.
- The data for the month of April has been revised to 3.62% from 3.18%.

LIC to acquire 51% stake in IDBI Bank

- The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) gave approval to the acquisition of up to 51% stake in debt-ridden IDBI Bank.
- This was informed by Economic Affairs secretary S C Garg. Now, the state-owned LIC will approach market regulator SEBI on the matter.
- The LIC stake buy will help the IDBI get a capital support of 10,000 to 13,000 crore rupees.

PNB opens centralised loan processing centre

- PNB has announced opening of second centralised loan processing centre, in a Mumbai branch.
- The centre aims to strengthen the bank's internal systems and processes.
- Under this, the bank will focus on profit maximisation, improvement of asset quality & recovery, and increasing productivity among others.
- PNB's first CLPC is located at Connaught Place branch in New Delhi.

India to remain fastest growing economy

- The International Monetary Fund has projected a growth rate of 7.3% in 2018 & 7.5% in 2019 for India as against 6.7% in 2017.
- The latest growth rate projection for India is slightly less 0.1% in 2018 and 0.3% in 2019 than its April projections.
- According to IMF, India will remain the fastest growing major economy in 2019.

Transformation Series Challenge by YES Bank

• YES Bank, through partnerships with tech giants such as Microsoft, Cisco, IBM and Adobe has

- unveiled the 7th edition of 'Transformation Series Challenge'.
- The Theme of the event is 'tech for urban development'.
- The issues identified include over-utilisation of plastic and declining air quality in cities.
- Rana Kapoor is Managing Director and Chief Executive of YES Bank.

Malhotra to head Investment Banking of HSBC

- The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (HSBC) has appointed Amitabh Malhotra as the Head of Investment Banking for HSBC India.
- Amitabh will lead the Investment Banking and Equity Capital Markets business.
- Prior to HSBC, Amitabh worked at Rothschild India, where he was the co-head and managing director of the Global Investment Bank, based in Mumbai.

MF transactions through Facebook messenger

- HDFC securities announced the launch of Mutual Funds (MF) transactional capabilities on Facebook Messenger through their virtual assistant, Arya.
- This makes the company the first broker in the Asia Pacific region for initiating a social media platform for trading mutual funds.
- This particular feature facilitates a quick overview of total portfolio holdings.

Sports

Mansi settles for silver at Junior Wrestling

- India won two medals with Mansi claiming silver and Swati winning bronze in their respective weight categories in women's freestyle in the Junior Asian Wrestling Championships, 2018.
- In the 57 kilogram category, Mansi had to settle for a Silver after she lost to Japan's Akie Hanai in the Final.
- The overall trophy went to Japan, who finished with seven gold medals.

Alisson is world's most expensive goalie

- Brazil goalkeeper Alisson Becker became the world's most expensive goalkeeper when he joined Liverpool from Roma.
- Roma said the deal for Brazil's starting goalkeeper at the World Cup in Russia "could be worth up to 72.5 million euros" (\$84.5 million).
- He has been at Roma for two years, playing 37 Serie A games in 2017-18.
- Alisson became Brazil's starting goalkeeper in 2016.

IOC adds 7 medal events to 2022 Winter Games

 The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has added seven medal events to the 2022 Beijing Winter Games.



- The next Winter Olympics will now include: women's monobob, Big Air freestyle skiing for men and women, plus mixed team events in short track speed skating, ski jumping, ski aerials and snowboardcross.
- Women's ice hockey will grow by two teams to become a 10-nation lineup.

Chopra wins Gold at Sotteville Athletics Meet

- Neeraj Chopra, India's javelin star, struck Gold in the Meeting International de Sotteville-les-Rouen in France.
- Chopra's throw of 85.17m was enough to clinch the top spot on the podium.
- The winning distance from Chopra was, however, less than the 86.47m he achieved for gold at Gold Coast CWG.
- Neeraj is a part of India's squad for the Asian Games

Marc Marquez Wins German Grand Prix

- Marc Marquez cruised to his ninth consecutive German Grand Prix win to extend his MotoGP lead at Sachsenring.
- The Marc Marquez has won in the top category for the last six years and before that won three times in the smaller classes.
- Rossi finished second and Maverick Vinales coming third.

Vinesh grabs gold at Grand Prix of Spain

- Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat grabbed a gold at the Spanish Grand Prix in Madrid.
- Vinesh won the gold medal in the women's freestyle 50kg category.
- Vinesh outclassed Canada's Natasha Fox in the final to claim her second consecutive gold.
- She had won a gold at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in the 50kg category.

Nozomi Okuhara wins Thailand Open 2018

- Nozomi Okuhara of Japan wins Thailand Open 2018 which was held in Bangkok.
- She defeated PV Sindhu 21-15, 21-18 in 50 minutes match. By virtue of this win, Okuhara has taken a 6-5 head-to-head win-loss record over Sindhu.
- The last time the duo met at the All England Championships earlier this year, it was Sindhu who prevailed over the Okuhara.

Awards at FIFA World Cup 2018

- Croatia captain Luka Modric has won the FIFA Golden Ball for the best player at the World Cup 2018
- England national football captain Harry Kane was awarded the Golden Boot for scoring most goals (6) in FIFA World Cup 2018.

• Belgium's Thibaut Courtois won the Golden Glove as the best goalkeeper of FIFA World Cup 2018.

France brings FIFA world cup

- France lifted the FIFA World Cup 2018 for the second time by defeating Croatia with a 4-2 victory.
- Didier Deschamps, the captain of the 1998 French side, became the third man to win the World Cup as player and coach after Brazil's Mario Zagallo and Germany's Franz Beckenbauer.
- Belgium won the 2nd runners-up position defeating England.

Brij Bhushan to be Chef de Mission

- Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Saran Singh is set to be named the Chef de Mission of the Asian Games-bound Indian contingent.
- The four deputy Chefs de Mission are set to be be appointed.
- The IOA has announced a 524-member contingent of athletes for the August 18-September 2 Asian Games in Indonesia.

Djøkovic clinches fourth Wimbledon title

- Novak Djokovic defeated South Africa's Kevin Anderson to clinch his fourth Wimbledon title.
- This is Djokovic's first Grand Slam victory in more than two years.
- With 13 major titles, Djokovic now stands in fourth place in the all-time Grand Slam singles final list, behind Roger Federer (20), Rafael Nadal (17) and Pete Sampras (14).

Mike & Jack win 2018 Wimbledon men's double

- Mike Bryan teamed with US compatriot Jack Sock to beat Raven Klaasen of South Africa and New Zealand's Michael Venus in the final of Wimbledon 2018.
- Bryan is the oldest man in the Open Era to win the Wimbledon title and it is his 17th Grand Slam title.
- Bryan had also won the doubles title in 2006, 2011 and 2013 alongside brother Bob.

Angelique Kerber wins Wimbledon 2018

- Angelique Kerber became the first German woman to win Wimbledon in 22 years since Steffi Graf after she defeated Serena Williams in the finals.
- Kerber is just the second player to beat Serena in multiple Major finals after Venus Williams.
- It was Kerber's third title at the majors to add to her Australian Open and US Open triumphs in 2016.

Defence

International Army Games 2018, Moscow



- Indian Army team has reached Moscow to participate in the International Army games scheduled from July 28 to August 11.
- India is participating in 2 competitions including the Tank Biathlon and Elbrus Ring - which is mountain warfare combat patrol competition near Elbrus Mountain.
- The Army games 2018 will be held in 7 countries -Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Iran, Kazakhstan & Russia.

IAF Participates "Pitch Black" War Exercise

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) is participating in the multinational "Pitch Black" warfare exercise in Australia for the first time.
- The IAF contingent for biennial exercise will consist of 4 Su-30MKI fighters, C-130 special operations aircraft and C-17 transporter.
- Pitch Black is hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) & will see eight other nations participating with over 100 aircraft.

BrahMos supersonic missile test-fired

- India's indigenously developed surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile BrahMos was successfully test-fired from Chandipur Test Range off the Odisha coast.
- BrahMos is a joint venture between DRDO and NPOM of Russia.
- BrahMos is the first Indian missile whose life has been extended from 10 to 15 years.
- BrahMos has been operationalised in the Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force.

T-Hub to host country's 1st Defence incubator

- India's first Defence incubators will come up in Hyderabad, which is India's missile development centre.
- The T-Hub is India's largest incubator that will be funded through the Ministry's Innovation for Defence Excellence (iDEX) scheme.
- The iDEX will be funded and managed by a Defence Innovation Organisation.
- Initially, a corpus of ₹100 crore has been created by two PSUs--HAL and BEL.

