WEEKLY

1ST JULY TO 7TH JULY 2018

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Awards & Honours

Ghatam Maestro to Receive Lifetime Award

- Music Academy has announced a Special Lifetime Achievement Award to be conferred on Ghatam Maestro T.H. Vinayakram.
- The award is conferred by Music Academy, once in a while, to artists of outstanding calibre who deserve independent recognition.
- Vikku Vinayakram, is a Grammy Award-winning Indian percussionist and is a recipient of Padma Shri and Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship.

Tata has Bagged Bharat Net project

- Tata Project has bagged an Rs.3,057 crore project of optical fiber cable network of Bharat Net in Chhattisgarh.
- Important services such as 102, 108, and PDS would be effectively executed at the Gram Panchayat level and around 2.6 crore people would be benefited through the project.
- It will strengthen the state's economy and enable local people to lead an easy life.

Anjolie Ela Menon Conferred the Kalidas Award

- Noted artist Anjolie Ela Menon has received the National Kalidas Samman for visual arts from the Madhya Pradesh government.
- The award was conferred in recognition of her insightful and sensitive portrayal of the identity and spirit of women through her meaningful paintings in a variety of media.
- Menon is India's most accomplished artists and is the recipient of the Padma Shri.

Days & Events

International Day of Cooperatives 2018 - 7th July

- The International Day of Cooperatives is an annual celebration of the co-operative movement, observed on the first Saturday in July since 1923.
- Observed on 7 July 2018, this year's theme was 'Sustainable societies through cooperation'.
- Co-operatives are committed to the sustainable development of communities - environmentally, socially and economically.

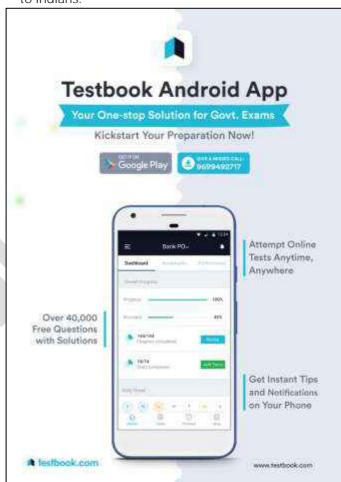
'GST Day' - 1st July

- The government is celebrating 1st July, 2018, as 'GST Day' to mark the first anniversary of the new indirect tax regime.
- Goods and Services Tax was rolled out in the intervening night of June 30 and July 1, 2017, in a ceremony held in the Central Hall of Parliament.
- GST binds India into an Economic Union, promotes 'Make in India' and has improved 'Ease of Doing Business.

International Affairs

Maldives Signed Power Deal with Pakistan

- Maldives has signed a capacity-building agreement in the power sector with Pakistan, thus posing fresh security challenges for India.
- Officials of the Maldives state electricity company, Stelco signed a MoU for cooperation in institution building activities when they visited Pakistan last week.
- The Maldives has also stopped issuing work permits to Indians.



Gjirokastra at the Risk of Disappearing

- Gjirokastra, the slanted city of Albania is crumbling and is at risk of disappearing.
- Many of the fortified and century-old buildings of the town which are a tourist attraction, won a place in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2005, are at a risk of disappearing.
- Most of the buildings date from the 17th and 18th centuries.

UN Member States Approve USD 6.69 bn

- UN member states have approved a 6.69 billion US Dollar budget for 13 peacekeeping operations for the year 2018-19.
- It is the second year in a row, the committee has made significant cuts to the overall peacekeeping budget.

• The United States is the biggest contributor to the United Nations.



World's First All-Digital Art Museum at Tokyo

• The world's first digital art museum is opened at the MORI Building Digital Art Museum in Tokyo, a collaboration between the developer and art collective TeamLab.

- Owing to projection-mapping technology, the artworks react to movement and touch, inviting visitors to imagine as if they possess new superpowers.
- In 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics visitors to Tokyo will experience something unique.

Chinese Military Delegation arrived at Sukna

- A high-level Chinese military delegation arrived at Sukna.
- Modi and the Chinese President Xi Jinping during Wuhan summit reaffirmed the need to strengthen bilateral ties.
- During their stay, the dignitaries will hold delegation level talks, besides interaction at various levels for a better understanding of each other and exchange of ideas.

New World heritage site: Chiribiquete Park

- Being the 9th site in Colombia to be given the status of world heritage site, Chiribiquete park is the country's largest park and has one of the highest rates of plant diversity in the northern Amazon.
- It is located on one of the world's oldest rock formations, the Guiana Shield.
- It was first declared a protected area in 1989 and bears traces of ancient human life.

Sri Lanka to Shift its Naval Base

- Sri Lanka is shifting one of its naval base to a port controlled and built by China.
- This move will strengthen the security at a harbour that China might use for military purposes.
- The base is currently in the Galle district and will be moved 125 km east along the southern coast of Sri Lanka to Hambantota.

ROK & DPRK Reopen Maritime Communication

- North Korea and South Korea Sunday reopened maritime communication channel for the first time in 10 years with vessels from the 2 countries making contact.
- North Korean patrol boat responded immediately when the South Korean Navy contacted it via an international radio channel in the western sea.
- The Korean govt on both sides are working on confidence-building measures to boost cooperation.

Asia's 1st Patent Arbitration Centre

- Asia's 1st arbitration centre specialised in intellectual property will open in Tokyo to resolve growing number of disputes in the region.
- International Arbitration Centre in Tokyo is set to have around a dozen arbitrators from around the world, which would try to resolve disputes within a period of 1 year.
- IACT is due to handle disputes between non-Japanese companies also, if both parties agree.

National Affairs

Thermal Power Output Rises 6%

- The ignorance of warnings against reducing offtake during the period of scheduled power demand caused the problem of low stocks of coal.
- CIL cautioned power producers against repeating the mistake by reducing coal intake in monsoon.
- The facts indicate that complaints of coal shortage to the power ministry by generators may not be widespread.

Water Level of Major Reservoir Went up 20%

- The water storage available in 91 major reservoirs of the country has gone to 20% of their total capacity which was reported 18% in last week.
- 37 out of these 91 reservoirs have hydropower benefit with installed capacity of more than 60 MW.
- The storage during the current year is less than last year in Northern, Western and Central regions.

Nasscom Unveiled New Center for Data Science and Al

- Nasscom opened a Center of Excellence for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence with an aim to strengthen the country's AI ecosystem.
- It also signed a MoU with Niti Aayog to foster privacy, security, applied research and accelerate ethics.
- CoE initiative is a nationwide programme which is based on innovation and would focus on solutions.

NPPA Fixed Prices of 58 Drugs

- The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) fixed the prices of 58 drugs formulations used for the treatment of Cardiac conditions, Hepatitis C etc.
- NPPA implements and enforces the provisions of Drug Prices Control Order (DPPO) and this move has been taken under DPPO order, 2013.
- NPPA is also entrusted with the task of recovering the amount overcharged by manufacturer from consumers.

Law Commission Suggests Gambling in Sports

- The Law commission headed by Justice B.S Chauhan (rtd.) submitted a report suggesting that gambling in sports should be regulated as it can not be stopped.
- Law Commission recommended the classification of 'Proper gambling' and 'Small gambling' in terms of stakes involved are high or low respectively.
- It also recommended gambling to be 'Cashless' and linking of 'Aadhar' and 'Pan card' of gamblers.

J&K village gets Electricity for First Time

 A village in J&K's Rajouri district, Narla Bambal, received electricity connection and metalled road for the first time since Independence.

- It is the district's last village to be connected to the rest of the state by road, reports said.
- "All the developmental works in these areas can now be done without any problem," Rajouri District Collector Shahid Iqbal said.

Repatriation Agreement of Bru persons

- An agreement has been signed by Government of India, Governments of Mizoram and Tripura and Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Forum (MBDPF).
- Persons presently in temporary camps in Tripura will repatriate to Mizoram and a Committee under Special Secretary will coordinate the implementation of this agreement.
- India will provide financial assistance for rehabilitation of Brus in Mizoram.

India's 1st Global Mobility Summit

- NITI Aayog, in collaboration with various ministries & industry partners will organise 'MOVE: Global Mobility Summit' in New Delhi in September 2018.
- This Summit will help drive Government's goals for vehicle electrification & renewable energy integration & speed up India's transition to a clean energy economy.
- It aims to engage with key stakeholders within the rapidly transforming global mobility landscape.

EC launches Mobile App 'cVIGIL'

- Election Commission has launched a mobile application named 'cVigil' for citizens to share proof of malpractices by political parties, their candidates and activists.
- The application facilitates sharing of geo-tagged photographic and video evidence without disclosing the sender's identity.
- The app will be operational only in election-bound states where dates of polling have been announced.

DEPwD to Organize workshop for PwDs

- Dept. of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) organized a "National Workshop on Skill Development for Persons with Disabilities".
- The workshop was organized with a view to provide a platform to all stakeholders ranging from training partners to the policy makers as well as employers.
- Workshop will dwell upon all the issues involved in the skill development for PwDs.

NABARD Assigns 735 Cr for Projects in Bengal

- NABARD has sanctioned Rs 735.53 crore in the first quarter of the current fiscal under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) for West Bengal.
- They include six solar power, one medium irrigation, five minor irrigation and 12 flood protection projects.

 The work on the irrigation projects is expected to benefit 11,554 hectares of land and provide supply of water in commercial areas.

India's 1st Khadi Mall in Jharkhand

- India's first khadi mall would come up in Jharkhand and would provide a major boost for khadi and other handicrafts industry.
- The Jharkhand Khadi Board would be providing people employment along with training, raw materials and machinery.
- Apart from this, the role of the urban market along with rural haats and tourists spots would also generate significant revenue.

GST Diwas Marked in Uttar Pradesh

- The GST Diwas was marked in Uttar Pradesh with the state govt launching a scheme under which Commercial Tax department officials will contact the traders & resolve their issues.
- The 'Vaanijya Kar, Aapke dwaar' (Commercial Tax at your Doorstep) was be implemented from July 1 to August 31.
- Its main aim is to stop the exploitation of the traders, & making commodities available at fair price.

Stainless Steel Charkha Unveiled at Sabarmati

- BJP president Amit Shah unveiled a stainless steel Charkha at the Sabarmati riverfront in Ahmedabad.
- The charkha, which is 21 feet in length, 11 feet in height, and 6.5 feet in breadth, is made of chromiumnickel stainless steel and is installed on the Sabarmati Riverfront across the Sabarmati Ashram.
- The move is said to popularise 'Khadi' amongst youth in the country.

1st Meeting of Cauvery Water Management Board

- The first meeting of the Cauvery Water Management Board was held in New Delhi to resolve the dispute among southern states.
- The meeting of the 9-member board was chaired by the Central Water Commission Chairman S Masood Hussain.
- The meeting discussed the issues including water storage in Cauvery basin reservoirs with the judgement of the Supreme Court in this regard.

India is Home to 19,500 Mother Tongues

- According to Registrar General and Census Commissioner, more than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongues.
- Nearly 96.71% population in the country have one of the 22 scheduled languages as their mother tongue.
- There has been a significant increase in Bengali speaking people and a decrease in Bhili language speaker.

Instant e-PAN based on Aadhaar launched

- The govt has launched e-PAN that will have the same name, date of birth, gender, mobile number and address as in the Aadhaar.
- The e-PAN facility is only for resident individuals and not for Hindu Undivided Family, firms, trusts and companies.
- According to Section 139 AA (2) of the Income Tax Act, every person having PAN as on July 1, 2017, are eligible to obtain Aadhaar.

Dalai Lama launches 'Happiness Curriculum'

- The Deputy CM Manish Sisodia and Dalai Lama launched the 'Happiness Curriculum' in the Delhi government schools on July 2.
- The new initiative that focuses on holistic education would cover around eight lakh students.
- The curriculum focuses on meditation, moral teachings, and mental exercises, with the aim of turning students into good human beings.

PAN-Aadhaar Linking Deadline Extended

- The CBDT (Central Board of Direct Taxes) extended the deadline for the PAN-Aadhaar linking to March 31, 2019.
- The policy-making body of the tax department issued an order, under Section 119 of the Income Tax Act extending the deadline.
- The CBDT order has come against the backdrop of the Supreme Court's extension of the March 31, 2018 deadline for linking Aadhaar card.



MPs Can ask only 5Q per day from Next Session

- Lok Sabha members can ask only up to 5 questions per day now from the upcoming session of the House instead of 10 allowed.
- The Speaker's direction 10B as per Lok Sabha has been amended now due to the number of notices for the questions exceeding 230 per day.
- The speaker's new direction would be effective from the next sessions of the House, i.e., from the 15th session of the 16th Lok Sabha.

Conference of States Power Ministers

 A conference of Ministers for Power, New & Renewable Energy of States & Union Territories will be held on 3rd July at Shimla.

- The aim of the conference is to review various ongoing schemes & deliberate on a host of issues related to the energy sector.
- The conference would be on UDAY's performance assessment, shifting to the prepaid system in 3 years & 24X7 Power for All from 1st April 2019.

Railways Eliminates Unmanned Level Crossing

- Indian Railways has eliminated all unmanned level crossings from 4 zones.
- West Central Railway, Central Railway, Eastern Railway & South East Central Railway have now become Unmanned Level Crossings free.
- It has targeted to remove all such crossings in 11 of its zones by September 2018.
- Almost all UMLC on routes having speed of 100 kmph or more has been eliminated so far.

Swaraj Inaugurates Heads of Missions Meet

- Sushma Swaraj inaugurated the 9th Heads of Mission Conference in New Delhi.
- Government is likely to brief the diplomats on economic reform taken for improving ease-of-doing business in India.
- Theme of the conference is 'Unprecedented Outreach: Unparalleled Outcomes'.
- It comes at a time when India is monitoring important global developments including sanctions imposed by US on Russia & Iran.

India & World

UK launched New Visas to Indian Scientists.

- The UK has launched new visas that will be open to overseas scientists and researchers, including Indians.
- UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Science, Research, and Academia scheme is being added to the already existing Tier 5 visa route.
- UKRI along and other organisations such as the Natural History Museum will now be able to directly sponsor highly skilled individuals.

Nepal, India to jointly promote tourism

- The 2nd meeting of the joint working group on tourism cooperation between India and Nepal concluded in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Both sides agreed to jointly promote Buddhist and Ramayana circuits and Adventure tourism.
- They also decided to set up an industry-led India Nepal Tourism Forum.
- The Indian delegation was led by the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism Suman Billa.

25 Countries In Global Banks' 'High Risk' List

 China, UAE, Cyprus and significantly, Mauritius, along with 21 other countries have been tagged as

'high-risk jurisdictions' by global banks acting as custodians for foreign funds.

- It comprises the largest group of investors in the Indian stock market.
- Large investors and beneficial owners of these funds entering India through these high-risk jurisdictions will face close scrutiny.

Maldives is Evasive on Indian Maritime Craft

- Maldives is evasive on proposed LoE for deployment of India's Dornier maritime surveillance aircraft in the archipelago.
- It led to a protracted standoff between two countries on the issue of defense and security offenses.
- Maldives had asked India to remove both ALH Dhruv chopper from the Maldives by end of June but India is still looking for some settlement with the Maldives.

Trade Ties of India and US to be Mended

- Indian Delegation headed by Santosh Sarangi on its visit to US in mid-July may fix some deals on trade tussles going between both countries.
- US is likely to maintain Generalised System Preferences (GSP) for India which will allow many exporters to enjoy low tariffs.
- India may change the price restrictions imposed on Medical devices imported from America to trade margin rationalisation.

UNESCO to set up Design University for Gaming

- UNESCO has come into an agreement with the Andhra Pradesh government to set up a 'Design University for Gaming' in Visakhapatnam.
- A UNESCO delegation met with CM Chandrababu Naidu and asked for 100 acres of land to develop the city as an 'International Gaming and Digital Learning Hub'.
- They will develop edutech gaming in the state, with the target of providing 50,000 jobs in 10 years.

Centre Approved WIPO Treaties

- The Union Cabinet approved the WIPO Copyright Treaty and WIPO Performers and Phonograms Treaty, 1996.
- It extends coverage of copyright to the internet and digital environment.
- The approval is a step towards the objective laid in the National Intellectual Property Rights Policy.
- It will enable creative right-holders enjoy the fruit of their labour, through international copyright system.

WIPO treaties approved

- The Union Cabinet approved MoU between India and United Kingdom regarding cooperation between both countries in the sphere of Law & Justice.
- A Joint Consultative Committee will also be set up.

 It concerns exchange of experience by legal professionals, government functionaries for resolution of disputes.

Centre approves MoU between ICAI, SOCPA

- Cabinet has given its ex-post facto approval for the MoU signed in 2014 & approval for renewal of MoU between Institute of Chartered Accountants of India & Saudi Organisation for Certified Public Accountant.
- The MoU promotes mutual co-operation framework in quality assurance, forensic accounting & Islamic finance among others.
- ICAI is a statutory body to regulate profession of CA in India.

Personalities in News

Nawaz Sharif sentenced to 10 years in jail

- The former Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif has been sentenced to 10 years in prison for corruption.
- The court ruled that Sharif and his family laundered money in the 1990s to pay for 4 luxury apartments in London.
- The court also sentenced Sharif's daughter, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, to seven years' imprisonment, fined the family £10m and ordered the seizure of the Avenfield properties.

Anju Khosla completed Ironman Triathlon

- Anju Khosla, aged 52 became the oldest Indian woman to complete an Ironman Triathlon, which is one of the toughest one-day sporting events.
- She completed the event in Carinthia, Austria in 15 hours, 54 minutes and 54 seconds.
- The event comprised 3.86 km of swimming leg, 180.25 km bike leg, and a 42.2km marathon to be completed without any break.

Zuckerberg becomes 3rd richest person

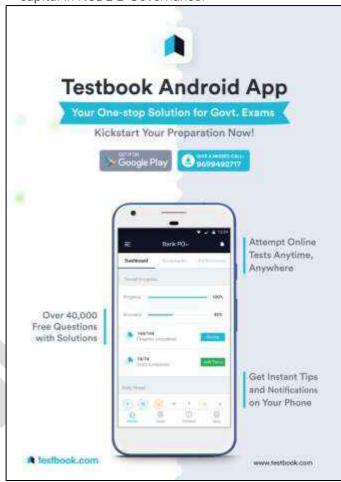
- Mark Zuckerberg has leapfrogged Warren Buffett to become the third richest person in the world.
- Zuckerberg is now worth \$81.6 billion, about \$373 million more than Buffett, the chairman and chief executive officer of Berkshire Hathaway Inc.
- Zuckerberg trails only Amazon.com Inc. founder Jeff Bezos and Microsoft Corp. co-founder Bill Gates.

SAIL appointed new CMD

- Saraswati Prasad has been appointed as the new CMD of the Steel Authority of India.
- Saraswati Prasad has also taken over the additional charge of the post of managing director and chairman of SAIL on July 1, 2018.
- The appointment was made after the retirement of former CMD P.K. Singh.

60.5 Lakh shares to be sold by Dena Bank

- Dena Bank would be selling 60.5 lakh shares in three entities, which also includes SIDBI.
- It would be requesting for quotation for purchase of equity shares in three public sectors.
- The bank will sell 1.563% of the total paid-up equity capital in NSDL E-Governance.



Rajat Sharma becomes DDCA president

- Renowned journalist Rajat Sharma has been elected as the President of Delhi & District Cricket Association.
- Sharma surpassed former World Cup winning Indian cricketer Madan Lal by 517 votes to register his win.
- Sharma is currently the Chairman and Editor in Chief of India TV and has been awarded Padma Bhushan by Government of India in 2015 in the field of Literature and Education.

Bhutan PM to visit India

- Bhutan PM Tshering Tobgay would be arriving in Delhi for a 3-day visit to India.
- Both the nations would be discussing about host issues such as security ties and economic cooperation.
- This visit is expected to advance the 'exemplary ties of friendship' between both the nations.
- Thimphu is the capital of Bhutan.

First woman DGP assumes office

- The first woman Directorate General of Police of Puducherry, S. Sundari Nanda assumed office on Monday.
- She is replaced by outgoing DGP S.K Gautam, who is transferred to New Delhi.
- Ms. Nanda has earlier served as the Special Commissioner of Police (Headquarters), Delhi Police.

Andres Manuel elected as Mexico's President

- Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has been elected as Mexico's President with over 53% of the vote, according to the country's electoral commission.
- Obrador, who has won the presidency at the third attempt, has promised to tackle violence and wipe out corruption.
- The 64-year-old former Mexico City mayor will formally take power on 1st December.

Government Policies & Schemes

WB announces 'one person, one car' policy

- To cut the costs incurred by the state over travel expenses of ministers and bureaucrats, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced the 'one person, one car' policy.
- Further mandating economy class travel in low-cost airlines for all domestic air trips, she added that foreign travels will be sanctioned only by her.

Delhi launched its first Cyber Forensic van

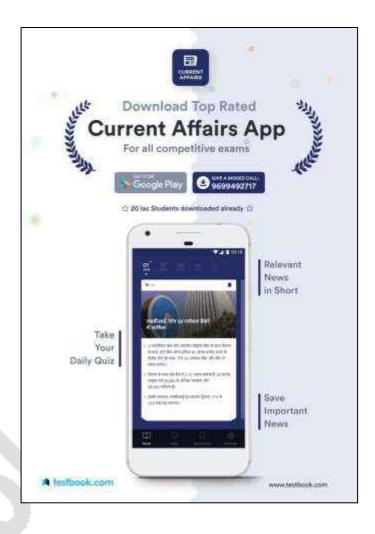
- First cyber Forensic van of Delhi police was launched to help people in cyber crimes especially for the senior citizens who are the soft targets of cyber crimes.
- Home Ministry is planning to launch an online cybercrime portal where people can file a complaint online.
- The Van will be available on 24x7 basis.

Punjab orders mandatory dope test

- Punjab CM Captain Amarinder Singh has ordered a mandatory dope test for all government employees, including police personnel, from the time of their recruitment through every stage of their service.
- Drug screening will be mandatory in cases of promotions, and also be a part of annual medical examinations.
- The state's Chief Secretary has been asked to issue an order.

Boost to Higher Education

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the proposal for expanding the scope of Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA).
- HEFA's scope expanded to meet the rising financial requirements of educational infrastructure in the country.
- HEFA is a Non Profit, Non Banking Financing Company for mobilising extra-budgetary resources.



CCI launched an Online Guidance System

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) launched an Online Guidance System for determining notifiability of merger & acquisitions.
- The Guidance System has been named as "Do It Yourself (DIY): A notifiability check for mergers & acquisitions under the Competition Act, 2002".
- It is a part of CCI's outreach initiatives and measures to simplify compliance requirements regarding combinations.

Extension of RRBs' recapitalisation scheme

- The Cabinet has approved the extension of the scheme of recapitalization of Regional Rural Banks, RRBs for the next three years upto 2019-20.
- This will enable the RRBs to maintain the minimum prescribed Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio, CRAR of 9%.
- There are 56 RRBs functioning in the country. As on 31st March, 2017(Prov.), the total credit given by RRBs is Rs.2,28,599 crore.

DNA Technology Regulation Bill, 2018

 The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved The DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill 2018.

- The bill aims to expand the application of DNA based forensic technologies to support and strengthen the justice delivery system of the country.
- Bill's provisions will enable the cross-matching between persons who have been reported missing.

Govt approves hike in Minimum Support Price

- The Centre approved the raise in Minimum Support Price (MSP) for kharif crops in line with its budget announcement to ensure that farmers get at least 1.5 times of the production cost.
- The MSP for paddy has been hiked to around ₹1,750 per quintal from previous year's ₹1,550 and corn increased to ₹1,700 from ₹1,131.
- The MSP of cotton (medium staple) has been increased to Rs 5,150.

Special drive launched by Gujarat CM

- CM of Gujarat, Vijay Rupani launched a special drive called 'Poshan Abhiyan' to eradicate malnutrition among children.
- 'Purna' project was also launched under this drive for malnutrition girls under the age group of 14-18 years.
- Nutritious food will be served to these children through Anganwadi centres and Rs 270 crore has been allocated by the government to control malnutrition in girls.

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Science & Technology

NASA puts Kepler space telescope to sleep

- The Kepler Space Telescope, which is a famous planet-hunting telescope of NASA has been put to sleep since it is almost out of fuel.
- The telescope was launched by NASA in 2009 to learn more about the frequency and number of planets in our galaxy.
- Scientists have found many exoplanets with the help of this telescope, which is 94 million miles away from the Earth.

Cosmic rays may reach Earth

- The most massive stellar system Eta Carinae is accelerating particles to high energies in the form of cosmic rays which might even reach Earth.
- Eta Carinae is famous for the 19th-century outburst that made it the second brightest star of the sky for a brief time.
- It is located 7,500 light years away in southern Constellation of Carina.

NASA prepared to 'touch the sun'

- NASA is prepared for a launch on August 4 to touch the sun, for the first time in human history.
- NASA unveiled a cutting-edge heat shield that will protect the spacecraft from getting burnt.
- It was installed on June 27,2018.
- The shield will prevent the spacecraft core from being exposed to temperatures around 1,370 degrees celsius.

ICAT completed first BS-VI certification

- ICAT has completed the first BS-VI certification for M/S Volvo Eicher Commercial Vehicle Limited for its heavy-duty engine model.
- The engine was developed and manufactured in India by Volvo Eicher.
- It would be implemented on April 1, 2020.

• ICAT is one of the prime testing agencies recognized by the Government of India.

ISRO's first 'pad abort' test successful

- The first 'pad abort' test critical for a future human space mission was conducted successfully by ISRO.
- 'PAT' is the 1st in a series of tests to qualify a crew escape system technology of a manned mission in the future.
- Crew Escape System is an emergency escape measure to quickly pull the crew module along with astronauts to a safe distance from the launch vehicle in event of a launch abort

NASA set to test supersonic flights

- NASA is set to test a flight manoeuvre that will allow jets to travel at a speed faster than sound without generating the sonic boom.
- NASA showed that a repurposed fighter jet F/A-18 can be used to generate quiet sonic thumps over a particular area.
- The Gulf Coast city was chosen since it is near the Gulf of Mexico and enables the F/A-18 to keep its loud sonic beams out to the sea.

NASA to use submarines for hunting meteorite

- Scientists from several organisations in the US, including NASA, are planning to use remoteoperated submarines to hunt for the remains of an outer space object.
- The Nautilus research ship of the non-profit group Ocean Exploration Trust (OET) will aid in the scavenger hunt, Digitaltrends.
- The object splashed down into the Pacific Ocean on March 7.

1st image of baby planet being formed

- Astronomers say they've captured the first confirmed image of a planet forming in the dust swirling around a young star.
- Scientists said the planet appears as a bright spot in the snapshot taken using the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope in Chile.
- It is said to have a cloudy atmosphere and a surface temperature of 1,000 degrees Celsius (1,832 degrees Fahrenheit).

Japanese mission reached asteroid Ryugu

- A Japanese probe has reached an asteroid 300
 million km away to collect information about the
 birth of the solar system and the origin of life after a
 more than three-year voyage through deep space.
- The Hayabusa2 probe successfully settled into an observation position 20 km above the Ryugu asteroid, officials from the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) reported.

Longest total lunar eclipse of century

- The moon will enter the shadow of the earth for about 4 hours, and the event will be seen clearly across at least 3 continents.
- According to the Dubai Astronomy Group, the eclipse will last for about 1 hour and 43 minutes and will also feature a "blood moon".
- "Blood moon" is a non-scientific term used to refer to the red tinge on a fully eclipsed moon.



Places in News

Highest LHS launched in Sambalpur

- East Coast Railway launched highest ever six Limited Height Subways (LHS) in Sambalpur Division.
- With this, the Sambalpur Division became the first to eliminate all unmanned Level Crossing Gates in Indian Railways.
- In view of the launching of six LHS, 7 unmanned Level Crossing gates will be totally closed in Bhawanipatna-Lanjigarh Road Section of Kalahandi area of Odisha.

UP banned plastic bags

- UP government has banned the use of polythene bags and other commonly used items of plastic from 15 July.
- Allahabad High Court in 2015 directed the state government to issue a notification for a complete ban on the sale of polythene.

• Recently in March 2018 Maharashtra government also banned the manufacture, use, sale, distribution and storage of plastic materials.

Animal kingdom declared as legal entity

- The Uttarakhand High Court declared the entire animal kingdom including birds and aquatic animals a legal entity with rights of a living person.
- "The entity acts like a natural person but only through a designated person, whose acts are processed within the ambit of law," said HC.
- Hence, the animal kingdom could be represented by a custodian.

Agartala Airport's name changed

- Union Cabinet gave its approval to rename the Agartala Airport at Tripura as 'Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore Airport, Agartala'.
- Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore, ascended the throne of the erstwhile Tripura Princely State.
- Due to his initiative, an aerodrome at Agartala was constructed that is second busiest airport in the North East and provides crucial air connectivity to Tripura.

Bengaluru to get India's first e-waste plant

- The country's first e-waste recycling unit will come up in Bengaluru, Union minister of chemicals and fertilisers Ananth Kumar said.
- A 2016 study by Assocham and KPMG ranked India among the top five countries in e-waste generation.
- The e-waste recycling unit will be set up by the Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology (CIPET).

Rajasthan approves 1% reservation for Gujjars

- The Rajasthan government announced 1% reservations for five communities— Gujjar, Banjara, Gadia-Lohar, Raika, and Gadariya— under the Most Backward Classes (MBC) category.
- This comes after Gujjar leaders threatened to launch protests during PM Narendra Modi's upcoming Jaipur visit.
- The Gujjars were seeking 5% reservation within OBC quota to not violate the 50% Supreme Courtmandated cap.

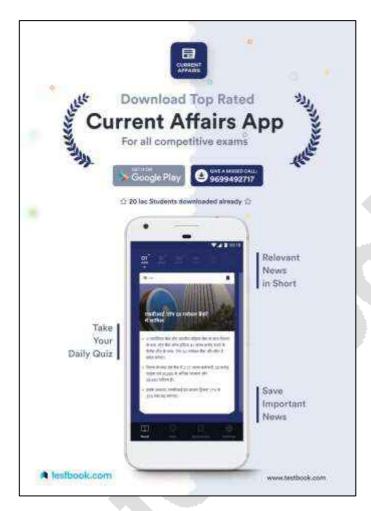
World heritage tag for Victorian and Art Deco

- Victorian Gothic & Art Deco buildings of Mumbai have been declared as a World Heritage site by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO.
- The decision was taken at the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO in Bahrain.
- With this, Mumbai gets its 3rd such site along with Elephanta Caves and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus on the UNESCO list.

Committees & Recommendations

Panel to upgrade norms for data collection

- Government has set up a 13-member committee to upgrade the norms for computation of economic data at states & districts level.
- The Committee for Sub-National Accounts will be headed by Ravindra Dholakia, a retired professor of IIM Ahmedabad.
- Panel has been asked to review concepts, definitions, data sources & requirements for preparation of State Domestic Product & District Domestic Product.



Business & Economy

Rupee among top 10 EM currencies

- The rupee has been ranked as one of the 10 bestperforming currencies, beating rivals like Real and Rand ever since the NDA government came into power in May 2014.
- Although all emerging market currencies have lost value to the dollar, rupee's slide is relatively controlled compared with peers.
- In the 4-year period, the dollar index gained 17% compared with 14.2% loss in the rupee's value.

Union Bank of India to raise equity capital

- Union Bank of India will raise equity capital of Rs. 1500 crore.
- The proposal was approved at its Annual General Meeting by the bank's shareholders.
- The bank said that this capital raise will be in addition to the capital support which has been granted by the government.

Forex reserve fell to 10.8 months.

- RBI in its biannual report announced that import cover of foreign exchange (Forex) reserve had fallen to 10.8 months in December.
- The Forex reserve is India's holdings of cash, bank deposits, bonds denominated in currencies other than, the Indian rupee and managed by the RBI.
- Import cover is an indicator for currency's stability, typically a 10 months cover is seen as stable for the economy.

TCS recognised as a leader in GDPR services

- Tata Consultancy Services has been recognized as a leader in offering General Data Protection Regulation Services (GDPR) by Nelson Hall's NEAT evaluation.
- The GDPR is a comprehensive set of directives put in place by the European Union to protect the personal data of all its citizens.
- TCS offers a full suite of services including consulting, professional, and damaged services related to GDPR.

Most valuable bank in the emerging market

- HDFC Bank has gone past Russia's Sberbank to become the most valuable bank in the emerging market outside China.
- HDFC Bank was one of the top performing major banks globally in 2017. The Bank's current market capitalization is \$78.4 billion.
- Globally, America's JPMorgan Chase is the most valuable with a market cap of \$353 billion, followed by Bank of America at \$282 billion.

ICICI's mortgage portfolio crosses 1.5 tn

- ICICI Bank has announced that its mortgage loan portfolio crossed the Rs 1.5-trillion milestone.
- This made it the largest private player in the segment, and the lender is targeting to grow it to Rs 2 trillion by FY20.
- At Rs 1.5 trillion, the mortgage loan-book is half of the bank's overall retail loan portfolio of around Rs 3 trillion.

YES Bank to launch Mutual Fund Business

- Private lender YES Bank announced that it has received final regulatory approval from the Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to start mutual fund business.
- This approval is subsequent to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) approval.

 YES Asset Management (India), a wholly owned subsidiary of YES Bank, will launch fund offerings across the spectrum in both debt and equity markets.



Cryptocurrency transactions to be ceased

- No transactions in cryptocurrencies should be made by the commercial banks from 6th July onwards as per the RBI directive.
- RBI had already barred all its regulated entities in order to curb money laundering and other financial irregularities and protect consumers.
- All the regulated entities have been given 3 months to exit their relationship with businesses and individuals.

Small loans rising faster than total credit

- According to Crisil research Small tickets, Unsecured loans have grown four times as much as total credits of the banking sector.
- Between financial years 2015-2018, unsecured loans, personal loans, SME credit and Credit card loans have risen to four times of credit.
- The lenders need to remain watchful and disciplined in credit underwriting going forward because unsecured loans are vulnerable

Oil prices: Main risk to Indian economy

- According to MOODY's survey Oil prices, Pace of Banks' balance sheet clean-up and investment are the main risks to the Indian economy.
- These issues were raised at MOODY's 4th annual India credit conference held at Mumbai and Singapore in June 2018.
- Banks have not been able to raise capital from equity market as planned under government's recapitalization mesurer.

Sports

Sports Authority of India's name changed

- Union Ministers of Youth Affairs and Sports
 Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore announced that Sports
 Authority of India (SAI), will now be known as 'Sports
 India'.
- SAI is a successor organization of the IXth Asian Games held in New Delhi in 1982.

• It aims at the joint preparation of long term sportsspecific development plans by National Sports governing bodies and federations of India (NSFs).

Australia wins Champions Trophy 2018

- World Champions Australia defeated India 3-1 via shoot-off after both teams were locked at 1-1 in regulation time to clinch its 2nd consecutive Champions Trophy Hockey title.
- It was the 37th and final edition of the tournament with Australia winning 15th Champions Trophy title.
 It was being held at Breda.
- India won their consecutive silver medal while the Netherlands won the bronze medal.

Lee Chong Wei wins 12th Malaysia Open title

- Malaysian Lee Chong Wei beat Japanese shuttler Kento Momota 21-17, 23-21 to grab the Malaysia Open title for a historic 12th time.
- In the women's singles final, top seed Tai Tzu Ying from Taiwan saw off China's He Bingjiao.
- Indian campaign had ended with the defeat of PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth in their semi-finals.
- Lee Chong Wei is currently world number 6.

India clinch Kabaddi Masters title

- Putting up yet another superlative show, India thrashed Iran 44-26 to emerge champions of the sixnation Kabaddi Masters Dubai.
- India is the reigning world champions and has won gold medals in all the Asian Games to date, and all World Cup events so far.
- The six-nation invitational tournament was organised by International Kabaddi Federation.

Defence

17 fire ranges approved for set up

- 17 firing ranges have been approved for construction by the Defence Ministry at a cost of Rs. 238 crores in select military stations.
- Under the Southern Command, 7 ranges will be set, one in each Central and Southern Western Commands, 2 in Northern Command and 3 in Eastern Command.
- 60 firing ranges at present are operational across the country.

Golden Globe Race 2018

- Commander Abhilash Tomy of the Indian Navy will be participating in the prestigious Golden Globe Race that commences from Les Sables d'Olonne harbour in France on 1st July.
- The uniqueness of the race is that use of GPS, satellite communication, navigational aids, etc is forbidden.
- Cdr Tomy will be sailing in vessel 'Thuriya' which has been built by M/s Aquarius Shipyard Ltd at Goa.

Agni-V to be inducted soon

- India is in the process of inducting the first batch of its intercontinental ballistic missile system Agni-V.
- The missile system, with a strike range of 5,000 km and capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, is being inducted into the elite Strategic Forces Command.
- The missile can bring targets across China including its prominent cities like Beijing & Shanghai under its range.

Polity

SC: CJI is the 'Master of Roster'

- A two-judge bench, comprising Justices A K Sikri and Ashok Bhushan upheld the CJI's role as "Master of Roster".
- The bench further held that CJI's role cannot be interpreted to include the Collegium in allocation for cases as it will make day-to-day functioning difficult.
- In January this year, four senior-most judges in a press conference said that the situation in the SC was "not in order".

New post in Safai Karamchari's Commission

- The Union Cabinet has approved the creation of one post each of Vice-Chairperson and member in the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis.
- It is intended to optimize the functioning of the Commission and fulfilling objectives of welfare and development.
- It is mandated to work towards the elimination of inequalities and to ensure rehabilitation for Safai Karamcharis and Manual Scavengers.

SC verdict on Delhi CM vs L-G

- LG does not have independent decision-making power and cannot behave as an obstructionist.
- Except for the three issues, including land, law and order, Delhi government should be allowed to legislate.
- LG being the administrative head of Delhi must be informed of all executive powers but he cannot stall all the decisions of the council of ministers.

