

WEEKLY

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22ND JULY – 28TH JULY 2018

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Table of Contents

Awards & Honours	3
Days & Events	3
International Affairs	3
National Affairs	4
India & World	6
Personalities in News	7
Environment	8
Government Policies & Schemes	8
Science & Technology	11
Books and Authors	12
Committees & Recommendations	13
Business & Economy	13
Sports	15
Defence	16
Polity	17
Polity	17

Awards & Honours

ONGC presented with INFRA Icon Award

- ONGC has been bestowed with INFRA Icon Award in the 'Global Energy' category at the mid-day 'INFRA Icons'.
- ONGC has received the top corporate level award in recognition of its valuable contribution in upgrading the country as a whole.
- ONGC is the second largest exploration and production (E&P) company in the world.

Kochi airport gets UN environmental award

- The United Nations has honoured the Cochin International Airport (CIAL) with 'Champion of Earth' award for being the first airport in the world to be completely powered by solar energy.
- CIAL is the first airport in the world to receive the highest environmental award issued by the United Nations.
- UN established 'Champion of Earth' award in 2005 to recognise outstanding environmental leaders.

Bharat & Sonam named Ramon Magsaysay winners

- Bharat Vatwani and Sonam Wangchuk are among the winners of Ramon Magsaysay Award 2018.
- Bharat Vatwani is a psychiatrist who works for mentally-ill people living on the streets.
- Sonam Wangchuk, known for his reforms in the education sector in Ladakh.
- The Ramon Magsaysay Award is often referred to as the Asian version of the Nobel Prize.

Graphic novel in Booker Prize longlist

- A graphic novel was longlisted for the Booker Prize for Fiction for the first time on July 24, with Nick Drnaso's novel Sabrina in contention for the prestigious award.
- The U.S. cartoonist was among the 13 authors longlisted for the prize which markets itself as the leading literary award in the English-speaking world.
- The winner receives £50,000 and the award.

Days & Events

HRD minister releases AISHE Report 2017-18

- The Ministry of HRD organized a National Conference of Vice Chancellors & Directors of Higher Education Institutions of India in New Delhi on Guru Purnima.
- The theme of the conference was "Research and innovation in Higher Education".
- The Minister released the All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) Report 2017-18, Higher Educational Profile 2017-18, and Swachh Campus Manual.

World Hepatitis Day 2018

- Every year on 28 July, the world comes together to commemorate World Hepatitis Day.
- World Hepatitis Day is an initiative of the WHO to spread awareness about this liver disease and minimise the burden of hepatitis globally.
- Viral hepatitis, be it hepatitis A, hepatitis B, or hepatitis C, are a group of diseases that affect the liver.

Earth Overshoot Day 2018 is on August 1

- In 2018, the Earth Overshoot day is set to fall on August 1, which is two days earlier than last year's date, as predicted by the Global Footprint Network (GFN).
- GFN is a think tank which observes the usage of natural resources every year.
- The day signifies the official date when the yearly ecological budget of natural resources is completely exhausted by human beings.

Int. Children's Film Festival inaugurated

- 18th International Children's Film Festival was inaugurated on 25th July in West Bengal.
- The festival is being organised by Cine Central, one of the oldest cine clubs of the country in collaboration with the UNICEF.
- Thirty-six films from 17 countries will be screened in the festival.
- The inaugural film of the festival is 'Moana' from the USA.

19th Kargil Vijay Diwas celebrations begins

- The 19th Kargil Vijay Diwas celebrations began at the Drass War Memorial in Jammu and Kashmir.
- The Kargil Vijay Diwas is celebrated every year for three days till 26th July to commemorate India's emphatic victory against Pakistan.
- During the war, the Indian Army evicted Pakistani intruders and succeeded in recapturing the Tiger Hill and other posts as a part of Operation Vijay.

International Affairs

10th BRICS Summit in South Africa

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 25 landed in South Africa to take part in the 10th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg.
- This 2018 theme for BRICS summit in Africa is 'cooperation for inclusive growth and sharing the benefits of the fourth industrial revolution'.
- Twin stamps of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela will also be released during the meeting of PM Modi and Cyril Ramaphosa.

Conference of female parliamentarians

- Ireland will hold an international conference of female parliamentarians in Dublin.
- Named "The International Congress of Parliamentary Women's Caucuses", the event will be attended by an estimated 300 delegates from over 27 countries and regions.
- It will be organized by the Irish Women's Parliamentary Caucus (IWPC), a cross-party forum for female parliamentarians within the Irish parliament.

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Myanmar to host ASEAN education meet

- Myanmar will host the next ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASEM) that aims to boost its education sector by cooperating with India, China and the US among others.
- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations partner countries include India, China, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Russia, US and Australia.
- The first ASEM was held in Singapore in 2006, while the last in Malaysia.

Venezuela inflation will hit 1,000,000%

- Inflation in Venezuela is expected to reach 1,000,000% by the end of 2018, according to the International Monetary Fund.
- Venezuela's economy has been steadily collapsing since the crash of oil prices in 2014.
- Venezuela's economy is expected to shrink 18% in 2018 -- the third consecutive year of double-digit contractions.

Pakistan gets its first woman chief justice

- Justice Tahira Safdar was named as the Chief Justice of the Balochistan High Court.
- Justice Safdar will take charge of her new role following the retirement of incumbent Balochistan High Court Chief Justice.
- Justice Safdar had made history in 1982 when she became the first woman civil judge in Balochistan.

National Affairs

SC: Scheme to include child victims

- The Supreme Court said that a government scheme for rape survivors should include child victims of sexual assault.

- SC suggested that the Compensation Scheme for Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault/Other Crimes-2018, proposed by the National Legal Services Authority should include child victims.

Kerala to host Global Hackathon series

- AngelHack, the world's largest hackathon organisers, will conduct the Global Hackathon series in the Kerala Startup Mission on July 28 and 29.
- The challenge for this round of the hackathon is to address problems that prevent female entrepreneurship, with its focus on health, safety, economic empowerment and culture.
- The hackathon is being organised to solve social or environmental problems.

NCR brings app to book unreserved tickets

- Passengers in the North Central Railways (NCR) region can now book their unreserved tickets through a mobile-based application.
- The NCR region of the Indian Railways spans over parts of UP, Haryana, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
- For booking of tickets, the passengers have to download the mobile app "UTS on Mobile".
- The app has been developed by the Center for Railway Information Systems.

Govt to develop 17 road-cum-airstrips

- As many as 17 facilities that can be used as roads, as well as airstrips, are being developed in the country.
- The facilities are being developed under the ambitious Bharatmala project that mainly seeks to strengthen roads network in the country.
- These facilities would come up at places in the state where there is no airport in the vicinity of 300 kilometres.

Panel bans 343 cocktail drugs

- A government panel has recommended a ban on 343 fixed-dose-combinations (FDCs), cocktails of two or more drugs, prescribed and sold across India.
- The panel set up by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has submitted its recommendations to the Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB).
- The banned FDCs include pain-killers, anti-diabetic drugs, antibiotics, and cold and cough medications.

Rajnath to inaugurate 2nd conference of SPs

- Home Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the second conference of young Superintendents of Police in New Delhi.
- The theme of the conference is, 'Predictive Policing and Contemporary Challenges for Indian Police Forces'.

- The objective is to generate awareness among young SPs and commandants in the areas of artificial intelligence, cybercrime and surveillance tracking.

Media banned inside Karnataka assembly

- Karnataka Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy has issued an order to not allow access to media personnel inside the Vidhana Soudha- the state assembly building.
- To begin with, the movement of journalists and media personnel will be restricted inside the Vidhana Soudha on a day-to-day basis.
- This is the first time that such a move has been initiated in Karnataka state assembly.

Sitamarhi: 1st ODF district in Bihar

- Sitamarhi becomes the first Open Defecation Free (ODF) district in Bihar with more than five lakh households having toilets.
- Bihar needs to construct over six lakh toilets to go ODF by October 2019.
- Swachh Bharat Mission is a campaign launched on 2 Oct 2014 that aims to achieve Open-Defecation Free and a clean India by 2nd Oct 2019, which is the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Lupin Foundation adopts 3 districts

- An agreement was signed between the Niti Aayog and Lupin Foundation.
- Lupin Foundation has adopted Dholpur, Vidisha and Nandurbar as part of government's 'Aspirational Districts Programme' under the Niti Aayog.
- Dholpur in Rajasthan, Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh and Nandurbar in Maharashtra are amongst the districts ranked at the bottom in terms of development.

Iran pips S. Arabia in oil supply to India

- Iran overtook Saudi Arabia to be the second largest supplier of crude oil to Indian public sector firms during the first three months of current fiscal.
- Indian PSUs bought 5.67 million tonnes of crude oil from the Persian Gulf nation during April-June, higher than imports from Saudi Arabia.
- Imports from Iran were only second to Iraq.

Supreme Court lifts ban on protests

- The Supreme Court lifted the 'complete ban' on holding dharna at the Jantar Mantar and Boat Club near India Gate.
- SC directed the Centre to frame guidelines for granting permission for protests at these sites.
- The SC observed that there was a need to strike a balance between the right to protest and right of citizens to live peacefully.

IIT Bombay Generates Highest Revenue

- According to HRD Ministry data, the revenue generated by IIT-Bombay in the last three years through research, inventions, consultancy and patents was the highest among the premier engineering institutes.
- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay, was followed by IIT-Madras and IIT-Delhi in terms of revenue generated.
- IIT Bombay was founded in 1958.

SAI selects 734 youngsters under Khelo scheme

- The Sports Authority of India (SAI) announced that it has shortlisted 734 young players for a scholarship programme under the Khelo India Talent Identification Development scheme.
- An annual stipend of Rs 1.2 lakh will be given to each player on a quarterly basis to meet their pocket expenses.
- The current Sports Minister is Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore.

Yadagirigutta Temple obtains ISO certificate

- Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao congratulated Yadagirigutta Temple for obtaining International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certification.
- The temple has received the ISO certification for the environment, security, management, power supply, as well as for the management of the temple.
- This is the first ever ISO certification for the temple.

NCERT introducing QR code in textbooks

- The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has initiated the process of introducing QR code in their textbooks.
- The move aims at helping students understand chapters better by reading additional content on laptops & digital boards.
- Quick Response (QR) Code is a machine-readable code used for storing web-links which can be read by a camera on a smartphone.

4.4 million jobs created in 9 months : EPFO

- Retirement fund body EPFO's payroll data suggests that as many as 4,474,859 jobs were created during September 2017 to May 2018.
- During May, the maximum number of enrolment of 2,51,526 were recorded in the age bracket of 18 to 21 years followed by 1,90,090 in 22 to 25 years age group.
- The EPFO manages social security funds of over 6 crore workers in the organised/semi organised sector.

India's 1st ceramics triennale to be in Jaipur

- Jawahar Kala Kendra in collaboration with the Contemporary Clay Foundation presents the first Indian Ceramics Triennale: Breaking Ground.
- The event will be from 31 August to 18 November 2018 in Jaipur.
- The first-ever international ceramics event to be held at the Jawahar Kala Kendra will present 35 Indian Artists, a Symposium, Film Screenings and Workshops for Adults and Children.

India & World

Nepal-India Think Tank Summit

- The first 'Nepal-India Think Tank' summit will begin in Kathmandu to foster greater knowledge-sharing among the think tanks of the 2 countries.
- The summit, proposed to become an annual feature for the participating organisations, will be hosted alternatively each year in Nepal & India.
- The summit aims to support networks & promote mutual understanding through institutional collaboration.

BRICS nations adopt Johannesburg Declaration

- The heads of state and government of all five BRICS nations convened for the 10th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- The BRICS leaders came together and discussed various international and regional issues of common concern and adopted the 'Johannesburg Declaration' by consensus.
- The declaration comes as the United States and China remain deadlocked in a trade war over tariffs.

Indians no longer require airport transit visa

- France has announced that Indian passport holders will no longer require an airport transit visa while transiting through the country.
- An airport transit visa is applicable for the people who are just transiting the Schengen territory and who will not leave the transit area of the airport.
- France forms part of the Schengen Area comprising 26 European states.

India to give flash flood warning

- India has been designated as a nodal centre for preparing flash-flood forecasts by the World Meteorological Organization.
- India will have to develop a customised model that can issue advance warning of floods in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand.
- The proposed model would provide forecasts by computing the likelihood of rainfall and the soil moisture levels to warn of possible floods.

6th India-UK SIC Meeting held in Delhi

- The 6th India-UK Science & Innovation Council (SIC) meeting was held in New Delhi on 26th July 2018.
- In the meeting a range of issues on S&T cooperation between the two countries were discussed.
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Science & Technology, India and Mr. Sam Gyimah, Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, UK led the Indian and UK delegations respectively.

Invest India, Business France sign MoU

- 'Invest India' and 'Business France' have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- The MoU will promote investment facilitation and cooperation between startups of the two countries.
- The goal will be to facilitate direct foreign investment by providing practical investment information to enterprises and support the companies pursuing those opportunities.

Modi gifts 200 cows to Rwanda

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi presented 200 cows to poor villagers in Rwanda to support President Paul Kagame's ambitious "Girinka" initiative for poverty reduction and tackling childhood malnutrition.
- The Girinka (meaning 'May you have a cow') programme started in 2006 to provide one cow to every poor family for their nutritional and financial security.

India, B'desh to set up 6 more border haats

- To improve the livelihood of people on the border, India and Bangladesh will set up 6 more "border haats" (markets) in addition to the existing 4.
- The India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on 'Border Haat' would finalise the places and related issues for six more such by March next year.
- 4 Indian northeastern states of Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram & Assam share the 1,880-km border with Bangladesh.

India, Rwanda sign eight agreements

- India and Rwanda have signed 8 agreements following delegation-level talks between PM Modi & Rwandan President Paul Kagame.
- The two countries signed agreements in the fields of Defence, Trade, Agriculture, Leather and Dairy.
- India also extended 2 Lines of Credit of \$100 million each - one for development of industrial parks & Kigali SEZ and the other for 3 agricultural projects in Rwanda.



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BRO completes strategic road in Bhutan

- Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has completed construction of a strategically key road in Bhutan.
- The road will connect Bhutan's border town of Phuentsholing with its capital city of Thimphu.
- The new road is expected to reduce the travel time between Southern Bhutanese city of Phuentsholing to Thimphu by one hour and reduce the journey by around 19.5 km of steep uphill driving.

India, Japan hold Maritime Affairs Dialogue

- India and Japan held the fourth round of Maritime Affairs Dialogue here during which key issues related to the Indo-Pacific region and maritime security.
- The two sides exchanged views on a range of contemporary disarmament and non-proliferation related issues.
- The two sides exchanged views on topics of mutual interest including the Indo-Pacific region, maritime security and disaster relief.

8th BRICS Health Ministers Meeting at Durban

- The 8th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting was held at Durban, South Africa. The meeting was led by Mr J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health who stated India's commitment to eliminate TB by 2025.
- India has achieved the reduction in the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) by 77% to 130 per 1 lakh live births as recommended by WHO SEARO.
- The 1st BRIC Summit was held in 2009 in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

PhonePe acquires Zopper Retail

- PhonePe has acquired Zopper Retail as part of its strategy to aggressively ramp up its offline business.
- Zopper Retail is a hyper-local Point of Sale (PoS) platform for small and medium businesses.
- PhonePe is a Fin-Tech company that provides online payment system based on Unified Payments Interface. Flipkart is the parent company of PhonePe

Personalities in News

Cherkallam Abdullah passes away

- Senior IUMML leader and former Kerala Minister, Cherkallam Abdullah, passed away after a prolonged illness.
- He was 76 and was undergoing treatment for heart ailment.
- He was a prominent leader of the Opposition Congress-led UDF in north Kerala and is survived by wife, two sons and two daughters.
- He entered the parliamentary politics in 1987.

Shivangi scales Mount Kilimanjaro

- Shivangi Pathak has scaled the Africa's highest peak, Mount Kilimanjaro in 3 days.

- Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro measures 5,895 meters in height.
- She is from Haryana and is also the youngest Indian woman to reach the peak of Mount Everest.

Environment

India's carbon-dioxide emissions will rise

- India's carbon-dioxide emission will rise to 3.8-3.9 gigatonnes by 2030.
- The rise is consistent with the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) pledge made by India at the 2015 Paris summit, according to a study by Centre for Policy Research.
- It also said the country is also expected to make a faster shift from coal to renewable energy.

Google & UNEP to track environmental changes

- The UN has entered into a partnership with Google to monitor the impacts of human activity on ecosystems by using online tools.
- UN Environment Programme (UNEP) aims to develop a platform to enable govt, NGO's & the public to track environment-related development targets.
- Google will produce geospatial maps & data on water-related ecosystems by employing massive cloud computing technology.

SAFAR unveiled at Chandni Chowk

- Minister for Science and Technology, Harsh Vardhan has unveiled the 1st of a kind Air Quality and Weather Forecast System, SAFAR at Chandni Chowk in Delhi.
- The system will measure regular air quality parameters such as PM2.5 & PM10, levels of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide & benzene.
- The station will provide online information about ultrafine particles PM1 & mercury.

Government Policies & Schemes

National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme

- A National Viral Hepatitis control programme was launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with the World Health Organisation.
- The programme was launched on World Hepatitis Day with an aim to combat viral hepatitis and reduce mortality and morbidity associated with it.
- It has been launched in accordance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), 2030.

Law to tackle problems in NRI marriages

- Centre is in the process of framing a new law to tackle problems in NRI marriages.

- Government will make a law, 'Summons and Warrants Against Indian People Living Abroad', which will make provision of confiscating property of NRIs who have abandoned their wives in India & illegally married abroad.
- It will enable online serving of summons/warrants against NRIs who have abandoned their wives.

Projects for 6,320 km roads awarded

- Projects for constructing 6,320 km of road have been awarded under the first phase of the Bharatmala project.
- Under the first phase, a total of 34,800 km of road, including 10,000 km of residual NHDP (National Highway Development Project) have been approved for development.
- The first phase of Bharatmala is to be implemented during the period from 2017-18 to 2021-22.

Railways to launch 'Mission Satyanishtha'

- All the 13 lakh employees of the Indian Railways will take turns to swear an oath publicly to "bring about integrity" and "eradicate corruption".
- Termed "Mission Satyanishtha", the program will involve railwaymen attending formal training course on probity and integrity in public life.
- Railway Board members and all senior officers of the ministry will swear the oath of ethics and integrity.

Govt approves new scheme to empower women

- The government has approved a new scheme to empower rural women through community participation.
- The cost for implementing the scheme, Mahila Shakti Kendra, from 2017-18 up to 2019-20 would be shared in the 60:40 ratio between the Centre and states.
- The scheme is envisaged to work at the national level and state level to governments on issues related to women.

Gujarat govt announces sanitation policy

- The Gujarat government came out with an 'Urban Sanitation and Cleanliness Policy' for better management of solid and liquid waste in cities.
- Among other things, the policy aims at complete abolition of manual scavenging.
- A system to convert solid waste into fuel to generate "green energy" will be set up.

"Innovate India Platform" launched

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog & MyGov launched "Innovate India Platform".
- The #InnovateIndia MyGov-AIM portal creates the much-needed innovations platform for registering both grassroots and deep-tech innovators at a national level.

- With the launch of the platform Indians will be able to upload and rate their/organizations innovation on the platform.

Lok Sabha passes anti-trafficking Bill

- The Lok Sabha passed the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018.
- The Bill proposes establishing a National Anti-Trafficking Bureau (NATB) for coordinating and monitoring of trafficking cases.
- The Bill lays down a stringent punishment of 10 years to life imprisonment for aggravated forms of trafficking.

NITI Aayog mulls using PSUs' CSR funds

- The NITI Aayog is seeking to realign the deployment of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in accordance with the pressing requirements in aspirational districts.
- The transformation of aspirational districts is a flagship initiative of the Centre in partnership with State governments, anchored at the NITI Aayog.

West Bengal may soon be renamed Bangla

- The West Bengal Assembly passed a resolution to change the state's name to 'Bangla' from West Bengal.
- The resolution will now be sent to the Home Ministry for approval.
- In August 2016, the Bengal government had passed a resolution to give three new names to the state: 'Bengal' in English, 'Bangla' in Bengali and 'Bangal' in Hindi.

Government amends definition of hydrocarbon

- The government has amended the Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules 1959 to include shale in the definition of petroleum.
- The change would allow private companies to explore and produce the resource in the blocks they already operate.
- It would help in enhancing domestic exploration and production of hydrocarbons and increasing India's energy security and reducing dependency on imports.

Free WiFi services for villages

- All villages adopted by the Member of Parliaments under 'Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojna', will be provided free WiFi services across India by the Government.
- The government has proposed to set up 25000 WiFi hotspots at existing rural exchanges of BSNL.
- The government has targeted to link each of the 2.5 lakh gram panchayats of India through optical fibre network under Bharat Net Project.

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Kovind to launch Sanchar Kranti Yojna

- President Ram Nath Kovind will launch Chhattisgarh government's Sanchar Kranti Yojna at Jagdalpur in the Naxal-affected Bastar region.
- Under the scheme, 50 lakh smartphones will be distributed free of cost to the people.
- President Ram Nath Kovind is on a two-day trip to Chhattisgarh's Bastar range.

Parliament passes fugitive offenders bill

- Parliament has given its nod to legislation that will help the government to bring back fugitives to stand trial in India.
- The bill empowers the government to attach properties of fugitives who run away from the country after committing tax and loan related offences.
- The Bill enables action against economic offenders committing offences worth Rs.100 crore and above.

Meeting of Nat Council under POSHAN Abhiyaan

- Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India has organised the 2nd meeting of National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges under POSHAN Abhiyaan on 24th July 2018 in New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog.

- The month of September to be celebrated as National Nutrition Month every year.
- POSHAN Abhiyaan was launched on 8th March 2018.

WCD Ministry launches '#Childline1098' Contest

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched a contest, #Childline1098, inviting people to share images of the Childline 1098 logo that they spot at unique locations and send it with a tagline.
- The contest has been organised to mark 'World Day against Trafficking in Persons' on July 30.
- The Childline has been operating at 450 locations across the country.

Tamil Nadu unveils draft forest policy

- The Tamil Nadu government has rolled out the draft state Forest Policy aimed at preserving forests and wildlife, conservation of ecosystems, and climate change mitigation among others in the state.
- The policy seeks the involvement of local tribal communities in protection, conservation and wildlife management.
- Tamil Nadu has about 30.92 percent of the forest declared as 'protected areas'.

Nearly 2.67 lakh more houses sanctioned

- The Centre approved construction of nearly 2.67 lakh more affordable houses for the poor in 10 states under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (Urban).
- The approval was given in a meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee of PMAY(U), which was held under the chairmanship of Union Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra.

U.P. submits draft of Taj vision document

- The Uttar Pradesh government handed over to the Supreme Court its draft of a vision document proposing to declare the Taj Mahal complex a no-plastic zone.
- The Supreme Court has been monitoring the development in the area to protect the UNESCO world heritage structure.
- The draft recommended a comprehensive traffic management plan along the Yamuna river-front.

Lok Sabha clears amendment Bill

- The Lok Sabha passed the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, 2018, that seeks to punish bribe-givers and bribe-takers.
- The Bill provides for a jail term of three to seven years, besides a fine, to those convicted of taking bribes and those giving bribes to public officials.
- It extends the ambit of public servants who would be protected by sanction from prosecution.

Odisha CM launches 'Green Mahanadi Mission'

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has launched the 'Green Mahanadi Mission', a plantation drive under which 2 crore saplings will be planted in the Mahanadi river basin.
- The objective of the mission is to stop soil erosion on river banks and recharge the groundwater reserve.
- The volunteers will plant fruit-bearing trees like mango, jackfruit & jamun within 1 km radius of the river bank.

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Gadkari kicks off work on road projects in MP

- Union roads minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stones for over Rs 35.8 billion of roads projects in Madhya Pradesh.
- The minister said work on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway passing through Jaipur and the Bhopal-Indore Expressway and the Chambal Expressway will start soon.
- The minister also inaugurated the upgraded Shivpuri-Guna, Guna-Biora, Lakhanadoan-Chhapara roads.

First-ever tribal atlas of Odisha released

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released the first tribal atlas of Odisha, a set of maps and statistics highlighting the tribal demography of the state.
- The atlas has been prepared by the SC & ST Research and Training Institute in collaboration with the Academy of Tribal Language and Culture.

- The atlas has been brought out utilising the data of Census 2011 and other relevant statistics.

'Bijli Mitra' Mobile app in Rajasthan

- Farmers in Rajasthan will soon be able to get their defunct transformers replaced within six hours of registering a complaint through a mobile app.
- The government decided to introduce mobile app 'Bijli Mitra' so that farmers can register their complaint.
- The scheme was being launched on a pilot basis from Jhalawara in Rajasthan.

Lok Sabha passes NCTE amendment bill

- The Lok Sabha passed a bill to amend the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Act.
- It will provide post-facto approval to those approved institutions which are funded by the Centre or states but do not have recognition under the 1993 law.
- This has been done as a one-time measure to ensure that the future of students studying in these institutions is not jeopardised.

LS passes Bill on cheque bounce cases

- The Lok Sabha passed the Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill that allows a court hearing a cheque bounce case to direct the drawer to pay interim compensation to the person who filed the complaint.
- The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha in January, 2018.
- The interim compensation, to be paid within 60 days of the court's order, can be up to 20% of the value of the cheque.

RS members can now submit notices through app

- Rajya Sabha members can now submit notices to raise discussions or questions from anywhere with the launch of a new app.
- The 'secure e-Notices' application can be used to submit online notices for raising issues under rules for Question Hour, Zero Hour, Special Mention, Calling Attention and Short Duration Discussion.
- The existing system of giving physical notices would also continue.

Bihar Govt. passes new liquor Amendment law

- The Bihar Government unanimously passed an amendment law on liquor prohibition in the monsoon session of the state assembly.
- The amendment has been passed by voice vote in the assembly.
- Bihar implemented total ban on any type of liquor since 5 April 2016.

Minimum annual deposit requirement slashed

- The government has reduced the minimum annual deposit requirement for accounts under Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana to Rs. 250.
- The move will enable more people to take advantage of the girl child savings scheme.
- The government has amended the Sukanya Samriddhi Account Rules, 2016 for the purpose. The minimum initial deposit to open the account earlier was Rs. 1000.

Science & Technology

Longest Lunar eclipse of the century

- Skywatchers around the world have witnessed the longest "blood moon" eclipse of the 21st Century.
- The eclipse lasted for one hour 43 minutes, and was visible in Europe, West Asia, Africa, Australia, most of Asia and South America.
- A total lunar eclipse takes place when the Earth comes between the Sun and the Moon, and covers the Moon with its shadow.

Lake of liquid water detected on Mars

- A massive underground lake has been detected for the first time on Mars, raising the possibility that more water - and maybe even life - exists there.
- This subglacial lake, discovered by a ground-penetrating radar on the Mars Express spacecraft, is about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) wide.
- Mars Express is a European Space Agency probe that has been orbiting the mars since December 2003.

Fossils of "Lingwulong shenqi" discovered

- Scientists announced the discovery of Lingwulong shenqi, an early member of the well-known group of plant-eating dinosaurs called sauropods with long necks, long tails, small heads and legs.
- Lingwulong lived 174 million years ago during the Jurassic Period.
- The scientists excavated bones from at least eight to 10 Lingwulong individuals, the largest of which was about 57 feet long.

Mars coming closest to Earth

- The mars is making its closest approach to Earth in 15 years.
- The earth and mars will be just 35.8 million miles (57.6 million kilometres) apart.
- That means Mars and the sun will be on exact opposite sides of Earth.
- In 2003, Mars and Earth were the closest in nearly 60,000 years—34.6 million miles (55.7 million kilometres). NASA said that won't happen again until 2287.

Materials that respond to light developed'

- Scientists have developed new materials that move when exposed to light
- The light actuated materials created by researchers are based on the principle of the Curie temperature.
- Curie Temperature is a temperature at which certain magnetic materials undergo a sharp change in their magnetic properties.

Fastest man-made spinning object developed

- Scientists have developed the fastest man-made rotor in the world, which will help them study quantum mechanics.
- At more than 60 billion revolutions per minute, this machine is more than 100,000 times faster than a high-speed dental drill.
- Quantum mechanics is a fundamental theory in physics which describes nature at the smallest scales of energy levels of atoms and subatomic particles.

World's first mission to study the Sun

- NASA will launch mankind's first mission to the Sun - a car-sized probe that will swoop to within 4 million miles of the solar surface.
- The 'Parker Solar Probe' will study the Sun closer than any human-made object ever has.
- The Parker Solar Probe carries a lineup of instruments to study the Sun.
- Parker Solar Probe will explore the corona, a region of the Sun only seen from Earth.

Google is working on project "Fuchsia"

- Google has been working on software that will replace Android.
- The project, known as Fuchsia, was created to overcome the limitations of Android as more personal devices and other gadgets come online.
- It's being designed to better accommodate voice interactions and frequent security updates and to look the same across a range of devices, from laptops to tiny internet-connected sensors.

SpaceX launches block 5 Falcon 9 rocket

- SpaceX launched its second "block 5" Falcon 9 rocket from Florida, and it was loaded with the heaviest commercial communications satellite ever built.
- The rocket carried the Telstar 18 Vantage broadband satellite that will offer connectivity to customers in the Americas.
- SpaceX launched the first block 5 rocket in May 2018.

Meghalayan Age: Latest Era in Earth's History

- The last 4,200 yrs have been classified by geologists as a new distinct age in Earth's history, called the "Meghalayan Age," named after the northeastern Indian state.

- The International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS) has made it a part of Holocene Era.
- The Meghalayan goes back 4,200 yrs when a drought severely impacted civilizations in Egypt, Greece, the Indus Valley, Yangtze River Valley.

IISC, Park Systems to open Nanoscience Lab

- IISC Bangalore India and Park Systems to open 'Park Nanoscience Lab' at Centre for Nano Science and Engineering (CeNSE).
- The Nanoscience Lab will be equipped with Park NX20 AFM at the CeNSE & will hold workshops on the latest advancements in nanometrology.
- The Lab at Indian Institute is a tremendous step forward for researchers in India in fields of science & technology.

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Books and Authors

'The most ambitious book' on Mahatma Gandhi

- 'The most ambitious book' on Mahatma Gandhi
- Renowned historian and author of several bestselling books, Ramachandra Guha has penned a new book on the father of the nation.

- Billed as the most definitive new biography of Gandhi, the upcoming book is titled "Gandhi: The years that changed the world (1914-1948)".
- It will not only tell the story of Gandhi's life, but also the history of our freedom movement and its many strands.

Committees & Recommendations

BN Srikrishna committee submits report

- A committee headed by retired Supreme Court Judge Justice BN Srikrishna has submitted its report on "Data Protection Framework".
- Committee has proposed a draft Personal Data Protection Bill that could form the basis of India's first data privacy law.
- The proposed bill makes individual consent the centrepiece of data sharing, awards rights to users & imposes obligations on "data fiduciaries".

NGT constitutes monitoring panel for Yamuna

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) constituted a monitoring committee to oversee the Yamuna rejuvenation project.
- The committee has been directed to submit the first action plan by September.
- The committee comprises former Delhi Chief Secretary Shailaja Chandra and retired NGT expert member Bikram Singh Sajwan.

Haryana constitutes inter-district council

- Haryana Government has constituted an inter-district council under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Manohar Lal.
- The council would act as continuous discussion forum for evolving a shared vision of developmental priorities of the state.
- The inter-district council will prepare district specific action plans.

Panel to review third party motor cover costs

- Insurance regulator IRDAI has constituted a 16-member committee to examine motor third party insurance pricing aspects and make recommendations on the premium rates for 2019-20.
- This is for the first time the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India has formed such a committee.
- IRDAI Member - Non Life P.J. Joseph will be the Chairman of the committee.

Odisha forms committee for film development

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has set up a ministerial committee to prepare a draft policy for the development of Odia film industry.

- The committee headed by Finance Minister S B Behera, will have Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Minister Prafulla Samal and Industries Minister Ananta Das as its members.
- The committee will examine the problems faced by the Odia film industry.

Panel to suggest steps to check lynchings

- Centre has set up a high-level committee headed by Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba to formulate steps to check mob lynchings.
- Secretaries of Departments of Justice, Legal Affairs, Legislative and Social Justice and Empowerment are members of the committee.
- The government also formed a Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by Rajnath Singh, which will look into the recommendations of the panel

Business & Economy

HCL Tech topples Wipro

- HCL Technologies has surpassed Wipro to become India's third biggest software services provider.
- HCL Technologies' rise has come on the back of years of underperformance by Wipro and a more aggressive approach in acquisitions.
- TCS and Infosys are the two larger Indian IT services firms with revenues of \$5.05 billion and \$2.83 billion, respectively in the June 2018 quarter.

ICICI Bank reports loss for the first time

- ICICI Bank, India's largest private sector lender by assets, has reported a net loss of ₹120 crore on a stand-alone basis for the June quarter.
- This is the first time that the bank has reported losses from its India operations.
- The bank had taken a mark-to-market hit of ₹218 crore on its investments in government securities during the quarter.

ITC becomes India's 4th most valued firm

- ITC has went past Hindustan Unilever to become the country's fourth most valued firm in terms of market valuation.
- Led by the sharp rally in the stock, the company's market valuation rose to ₹3,69,259.15 crore.
- With this, ITC also became the most valued FMCG company.
- TCS is the country's most valued firm with a market cap of ₹7,43,930.44 crore followed by RIL and HDFC Bank.

SoftBank partners with Paytm

- SoftBank Group Corp will launch a digital payments service in Japan, and has partnered Paytm for the service.

- The service PayPay will be launched by SoftBank's joint venture PayPay Corporation (with Yahoo Japan) in 2018.
- Paytm offers seamless mobile payments to over 300 million customers and 8 million merchants in India.

DoT clears Vodafone, Idea merger

- The Department of Telecommunications gave its final approval to the merger of Vodafone India and Idea Cellular.
- The combination, to be known as Vodafone Idea, will create India's largest mobile-phone company.
- The next process is to notify the Registrar of Companies and get the company registered.

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Bharti Infra, Indus tower deal gets clearance

- Bharti Infratel has received clearance from stock exchanges for its merger with Indus Towers.
- It will now approach the National Company Law Tribunal for its approval.
- In April 2018, Bharti Airtel, Idea Cellular and Vodafone Group had announced an agreement for the merger of Indus Towers and Bharti Infratel to create the largest mobile tower operator in the world outside China.

SEBI proposes using UPI

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed allowing investors to use the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) while bidding for shares in an initial public offer (IPO).
- This will reduce the public issue timeline from the current T+6 to T+3.
- T+3 refers to a system wherein the equity shares would be listed on the bourses on the third day from the day the IPO closes.

Rajnath Singh inaugurates Traders Conclave

- Home Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the 3-day National Traders' Conclave organised by the Confederation of All-India Traders, in New Delhi.
- The discussion on simplification of GST, policy for e-commerce, the relevance of FDI in retail business, digital payment & digitization of retail business etc. took place.

- The conclave is organised by Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT).

HDFC AMC IPO subscribed 35% on Day 1

- The initial public offer of HDFC Asset Management Company was subscribed 35% within the first few hours on the first day of bidding.
- The mutual fund firm's Rs 2,800-crore public offer received bids for 64,90,705 shares against the total issue size of 1,88,04,290 shares.
- HDFC AMC operates as a joint venture between Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) and Standard Life Investments.

Karnataka sees 300% jump in FDI inflows

- Karnataka registered the biggest increase in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2017, as inflows from overseas jumped 300% in the 12 months ended March 2018.
- While Gujarat, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh all saw a drop in FDI inflows, data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) presented in Parliament show.
- While Karnataka received \$8.58 billion in 2017/18 and Tamil Nadu netted \$3.47 billion.

Banks, Financial Institutes sign pact

- Banks and financial institutions, including SBI, PNB and LIC entered into an overarching inter-creditor agreement (ICA) to fast track resolution of stressed assets of Rs 50 crore or more.
- Under the pact, which is part of project 'Sashakt', each resolution plan will be submitted by the lead lender to an Overseeing Committee.
- The ICA has been signed by 22 public sector banks.

Federal Bank gets RBI nod

- Federal Bank has received the regulatory nod to open offices in Bahrain, Kuwait and Singapore, but is awaiting local clearances before it starts operations.
- Federal bank already has representative offices in Abu Dhabi and Dubai.
- The bank will be focusing more on the unsecured lending segment, where its book stands at Rs 380 crore at present.

Midhani to set up 4 MW solar plant

- Defence public sector company Midhani has set up a 4 MW solar power plant at an investment of ₹20.36 crore.
- The plant, spread over 20 acres, is expected to generate 7,000 MWhr/year with a projected savings of ₹50 million per annum and a reduction of 5,600 tonnes of carbon-dioxide per year.
- The renewable energy project was inaugurated by Ajay Kumar, Secretary (Defence Production).

Asia-10 to overtake U.S. in GDP by 2030: DBS

- The 10 major economies of Asia, including India, are expected to see robust growth and amount to over \$28 trillion in real GDP terms on aggregate, more than the U.S. by 2030, says a DBS report.
- According to DBS the Asia, the 10 economies are - China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand.

Enerparc commissions rooftop solar project

- Enerparc India, a subsidiary of global solar solution provider Enerparc AG has commissioned 980 KW solar project at Bharat Fritz Werner Ltd. in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- The rooftop solar project at BFW will generate approx. 15 lacs of units annually thus reducing its dependency on fossil fuels.
- Enerparc India had also Installed World's 1st Solar Power Plant on Ship to Shore cranes in Mumbai.

J&K's 1st all women branch at J&K Bank

- First Lady Usha Vohra inaugurated the 1st All-Women Branch of Jammu & Kashmir Bank at the Sher-i-Kashmir centre.
- The bank also launched products designed exclusively for women clients which included Pink Gold Saving Scheme, Pink Platinum Saving Scheme, Special Loan Facility for Women Entrepreneurs.
- J&K Bank started on Oct 1 1983, was the 1st bank in India to emerge as a state-owned bank.

28th meeting of GST council held

- The 28th meeting of GST council was held in New Delhi on 21st July 2018 under the Chairmanship of Piyush Goyal, Union Minister for Railways, Coal, Finance & Corporate Affairs.
- Refrigerators, washing machines, Lithium-ion batteries, Vacuum cleaners were reduced from 28% to 18% tax rate.
- Sanitary Napkins, Coir pith compost, Rakhi were exempted from tax slab from previous 12% tax slab.

Sports

India secures top position in archery

- The Indian women's compound archery team has been ranked as the No. 1 team in the latest world rankings.
- The team, which comprises of V. Jyothi Surekha, Trisha Deb, P. Lily Chanu, Muskan Kirar, Divya Dhayal, and Madhumita, reached the top spot with 342.6 points.
- World Archery Association also announced the rank in compound mixed team and India bagged fifth rank in world rankings.

Floyd Pinto is Indian Arrow head coach


- All India Football Federation (AIFF) appointed Floyd Pinto as the head coach of the Delhi-based Indian Arrow football club.
- The decision was taken unanimously at AIFF's technical committee meeting, headed by the chairman of the committee, Shyam Thapa.
- The committee confirmed that the deputy coach of the Indian Arrow will be appointed later.

Pawan smashes second highest individual score

- Pawan Shah created history as the Indian U-19 cricket team player slammed the second highest individual score in Youth Tests against Sri Lanka.
- The record of scoring highest individual runs currently belongs to Australia's Clinton Peake who scored an unbeaten 304 against India in March 1995.
- Pawan Shah also became the second Indian batsman to score a double century in Youth Tests.

Virat receives Int Player of the Year award

- Virat Kohli received the International Player of the Year award for 2017-2018 from England's Barmy Army.
- Barmy Army is a popular fan club of English cricket supporters.
- In 2018, Kohli has played a total of 19 matches across formats and has scored 1181 runs with an average of 65.61. He has scored four hundred and four half-centuries.



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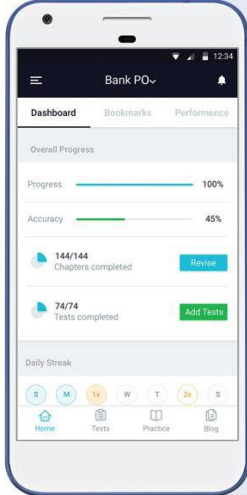
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Pavard won World Cup goal of the tournament

- France's Benjamin Pavard has won the 2018 World Cup goal of the tournament award for his stunning strike against Argentina.
- France defender Pavard's spinning right-foot shot against Argentina in the round of 16 came top out of 18 candidates for the award.
- Luka Modric's long-range goal for Croatia against Argentina was voted into third place.

Dhanvir Singh wins gold in shotput

- Indian shot-putter Dhanvir Singh bagged a gold medal in the ongoing 15th National Youth Athletics Championship.
- While Adish Ghildiyal of Uttarakhand won the silver medal with a throw of 18.23 metre.
- Meanwhile, Dhanvir Singh and the winner of Women's 100-metre hurdle race, Aparna Roy, were declared the 'Best Athletes' of the National Youth Athletics Championship.

Manu-Sumeeth Retain Lagos International title

- The senior national badminton champions Manu Attri and Sumeeth Reddy won the men's doubles title at Lagos International Badminton.
- The defending champions retained the title after thrashing their Indian counterpart S. Vaibhav and Prakash Raj 21-12, 22-12 in the final match.
- In women's singles, Sree Krishina Priya had to settle for a silver medal.

India bags 8 medals at Jr Asian Ch'ship

- India won 8 medals in the Junior Asian Wrestling Championship.
- The medals comprised 2 gold, 3 silver and as many bronze. Sachin Rathi won the gold after winning the bout in the 74 kilogram category.
- Deepak Punia then won the gold in the 86 kilogram category.
- Suraj Rajkumar Kokate won a bronze in the 61 kilogram category while Mohit won bronze in the 125 kilogram category.

Johnson captures Hall of Fame Open at Newport

- In tennis, Steve Johnson beat first-time ATP finalist Indian Ramkumar Ramanathan 7-5 3-6 6-2 at the Hall of Fame Open in Newport for his fourth career title and second of 2018.
- Now, Johnson, who reached as high as No. 21 in the world in 2016, will be ranked 34th.

Sen clinches Asia Junior C'ship title

- Indian badminton player Lakshaya Sen bagged the gold medal after defeating world no. 1 Kunlavut Vitidsaran in the final match of the Badminton Asia Junior Championship held in Jakarta.

- The Indian shuttler created history by beating the top-seed 21-19 and 21-18, thus clinching the championship.
- He was previously the runners-up in Tata Open India International, 2017.

Mohd Anas breaks own national record in 400m

- Indian sprinter Muhammed Anas broke his own national record to win the 400 metres race at the Cena Noveho Mesta meet in Czech Republic.
- Anas set a time of 45.24 seconds to break his own record of 45.31 seconds which he had set during the Commonwealth Games 2018 in Gold Coast.
- He is the third Indian track athlete to qualify for the event at the Olympics, after Milkha Singh & K. M. Binu.

Mascots for Olympics & Paralympics unveiled

- Japan has unveiled the names of its mascots for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- The mascot for Olympics is "Miraitowa" which means 'eternal future'.
- The mascot for Paralympics is "Someity" which means 'so mighty'.
- The Tokyo Olympics are set to begin on July 24, 2020, and run through until August 9.
- The Paralympics will take place between August 25 and September 6 2020.

Defence

'Made in India' engines for the Army

- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has formally handed over two types of indigenously built high-power multi-fuel engines to the Army.
- The first engine V92S2 engine powers T-90 Bhisma Tank, the second engine V-46-6 engine powers the T-72 Ajeya Tank and its variants.
- The Engine Factory under the Make in India programme manufactured the two engines with 100 percent local parts.

India, B'desh Coast Guards conduct exercise

- The Indian Coast Guard conducted a bilateral table-top exercise on maritime pollution response with Bangladesh Coast Guard.
- The two-day exercise is being conducted in the backdrop of the MoU signed between India and South Asian Cooperation for Environment Protection (SACEP).
- The SACEP was approved by Union Cabinet in May 2018.

IAF to participate in multinational exercise

- For the first time, Indian Air Force will be participating in Exercise Pitch Black 2018, a multinational drill scheduled in Australia.
- Ex Pitch Black is a biennial large force employment warfare exercise hosted by Royal Australian Air Force.
- It involves over 100 aircraft from around the globe & will provide a unique opportunity to air-warriors to operate in a dynamic warlike environment.

Army to get artillery guns from September

- From September 2018, the Army will be inducting two types of artillery guns into its arsenal.
- These will be the first induction of heavy artillery since the Swedish Bofors guns imported in the 1980s.
- The Army will start taking delivery of the K9 Vajra-T tracked self-propelled artillery guns from South Korea in September.

Polity

Odisha to implement its own food security act

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has announced that the state government would implement its own food security act from October 2 this year.
- Odisha's own food security act would cover nearly 34.44 lakh people who have been left out from the National Food Security Act (NFSA).
- Earlier, Odisha had launched a scheme to provide rice to poor at Rs 2 per kg in 2008.



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