

IMPORTANT

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JULY 2018

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Awards & Honours

3rd BRICS Film Festival concluded

- The 3rd BRICS Film Festival took place in Durban, South Africa, along with the International Durban Film Festival from 22-27th July, 2018.
- "Newton" won the Best Film and "Village Rockstars" won two awards at the third edition of the BRICS Film Festival.
- The Best Actress award went to Bhanita Das.
- The film festival is aimed at celebrating world-class film productions from the BRICS nations.

HDFC awarded best performing bank

- HDFC has been awarded the best performing primary lending institution in credit linked subsidy scheme (CLSS) for the EWS (Economically Weaker Section) and LIG (Low Income Group) category.
- The award was given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- CLSS was introduced in June 2015 under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana for home loans to customers from the EWS as well as LIG and MIG (Middle income group).

Assamese film wins 3 top awards at US fest

- Assamese film Xoihobote Dhemalite (Rainbow Fields) bagged 3 top awards at the 3rd Love International Film Festival in US including best movie.
- Besides the best film, it also won the awards for best actress and best music at the festival.
- The film, directed by Bidyut Kotoky, deals with the sensitive issue of children of Assam growing up in violent times & witnessing brutality around them.

Pradip Chowdhury to receive Mohun Bagan Ratna

- Mohun Bagan 'Ratna', the highest honour of the century-old club will be conferred on former India international Pradip Chowdhury.
- A former Mohun Bagan captain, Chowdhury was also the India team manager.
- Chowdhury will be the 18th recipient of the award first given to Sailen Manna in 2001.

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.

India Heritage Walk fete wins PATA award

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

'Sangita Kalanidhi' award for Aruna Sairam

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

Awards for Station Beautification competition

- The Union Minister of Railways, Piyush Goyal distributed awards to winning stations of Station Beautification competition in Rail Bhawan.
- Balharshah & Chandrapur Railway Stations of Central Railway have been awarded the first position and cash prize of 10 lakh.

- Total 62 entries were evaluated on the basis of a number of criteria including the depiction of local subjects, culture & themes.

T.K Chand gets knowledge excellence award

- Dr. Tapan Kumar Chand received the Knowledge Excellence Award from Secretary, Mines, Govt. of India for Outstanding Contribution in Aluminium Knowledge domain.
- Chand is an Indian mining veteran and is the Chairman cum Managing Director of National Aluminium Company (NALCO).
- NALCO is the largest integrated aluminium unit in Asia and is also one of the largest aluminium complexes of the world.

Ghatam maestro to receive lifetime award

- The Music Academy has announced a Special Lifetime Achievement Award to be conferred on ghatam maestro T.H. Vinayakram.
- The award is conferred, once in a while, on artists of outstanding calibre who, the Music Academy feels, 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 bagged Bharat Net's project

- Tata Projects 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

World Day against Trafficking in Persons

- World Day against Trafficking in Persons is observed on July 30 every year.
- **The aim is to "raise awareness of the situation of victims of human trafficking and for the promotion and protection of their rights."**
- For 2018, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has chosen "responding to the trafficking of children and young people" as the focus of the World Day.

International Blockchain Congress

- Hyderabad will host a 3 day International Blockchain Congress beginning August 3.
- Jointly hosted by NITI Aayog, Telangana & Goa governments, IBC will bring together 3,000+ blockchain enthusiasts, innovators, businesses & regulators.
- Global Blockchain Protocol Consortium, a body of various countries to further progress the evolution of blockchain technology, will be launched at the congress.

International Tiger Day

- International Tiger Day is celebrated every year on 29 July to raise awareness about tiger conservation.
- It was started in 2010 at the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit in Russia in view of the alarming fall in the number of wild tigers.
- Many factors have caused their numbers to fall, including habitat loss, climate change, hunting and poaching.

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.

Odisha to host mega triennial in Dec-Jan

- Odisha will host to what is billed as India's first private sector triennial in December-January that will

see the convergence of artists from the national and international scene.

- Named the Odisha Triennial of International Art, the events under it will take place in Bhubaneswar, Puri and Konark.
- OTIA is the brainchild of Artists Network for Promoting Indian Culture

World Population Day

- World Population day is an annual event, observed on July 11 every year, which seeks to raise awareness of global population issues.
- This year, the theme for the World Population Day is 'Family Planning is a Human Right'.
- According to UN, China with 1.4 billion & India with 1.3 billion people are the 2 most populous countries, contributing to 19% & 18 % of the global population respectively.

India to hold first ever India Tourism Mart

- To increase tourist footfalls, India will organise its first-ever India Tourism Mart for 3 days from September 16 in New Delhi.
- It is expected to provide a platform for all stakeholders in the tourism & hospitality industry to interact & create business opportunities.
- It will be organised by the Tourism Ministry, in partnership with Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality.

Varanasi to host Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2019

- The next Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be held in the holy city of Varanasi in January 2019.
- The theme of the event, which is being organised in PM Modi's parliamentary constituency, will be the 'Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India'.
- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is observed biennially on 9 January to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community towards development of India.

World Sanskrit Conference in Vancouver, Canada

- HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar will inaugurate the 17th World Sanskrit Conference to be held at Vancouver, Canada from 9th to 13th July, 2018.
- The conference aims to promote, preserve & practice the Sanskrit language all over the world by the people.
- World Sanskrit Conference is being held in various countries across the globe once in every 3 years & so far it has been held thrice in India.

International Day of Cooperatives 2018

- 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 and theme was the 'Sustainable societies through cooperation'.

- Co-operatives are committed to the sustainable development of communities - environmentally, socially and economically.

July 1 to be celebrated as 'GST Day'

- The government will celebrate July 1, 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

U.S. eases export controls on India

- The US has eased export controls for high-technology product sales to India by designating it as a Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1) country.
- The granting of STA-1 status to India comes after the US recognised India as a Major Defence Partner in 2016.
- Currently there are 36 countries on STA-1 list. India is the only South Asian country to be on the list.

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.

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.

Reduction in number of new HIV infections

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

Myanmar joins International Solar Alliance

- Myanmar joined the India-initiated International Solar Alliance (ISA), becoming the 68th member of the group that is aiming at the optimum utilisation of solar energy.
- ISA was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and then French President Francois Hollande at the Paris climate summit in 2015.
- ISA is open to all 121 member countries falling between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn.

BIMSTEC summit to be held in Nepal

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

- The group formed in 1997 consists of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand.

Ex-Prez Park to spend another 8 yrs in jail

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

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

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

Israeli Parliament passes Jewish nation law

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

Turkey lifts state of emergency after 2 years

- In Turkey, the state of emergency, which was imposed after the failed coup two years ago, came to an end on 19th July.
- President Recep Tayyip Erdogan declared emergency on 20th July 2016, five days after warplanes bombed Ankara and clashes broke out in Istanbul that claimed 249 lives.
- Under Turkey's constitution, emergency provision lasts three months which was extended seven times.

EU, Japan sign world's biggest free trade deal

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

Peru declares 60-day state of emergency

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

China to launch 300 satellites

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

UNSC imposes an arms embargo on South Sudan

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

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

- An optical fiber cable project that would be the first land-based communication link between China (PRC) and Pakistan has been launched.
- It will help develop the telecom sector in the Gilgit-Baltistan region and enhance the security of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.
- The project includes an 820-km-long underground optical fiber cable from Rawalpindi to Khunjerab.

First-ever global compact for migration

- For the first time ever, United Nations member states, except the U.S., have agreed on a deal to

better manage international migration, address its challenges, strengthen migrant rights and contribute to sustainable development.

- Known as the Global Compact for Migration, the agreement will be formally adopted by world leaders in Morocco in December.

UN Panel On Digital Cooperation

- UN chief Antonio Guterres has established a first-of-its-kind panel on digital cooperation aimed at addressing concerns of cybersecurity threats and rise in hate speech.
- The high-level panel on digital cooperation will be co-chaired by Melinda Gates and Jack Ma.
- It will have 20 members in total and include leaders from industry, civil society and academia.

Iceland takes up US seat at UN rights council

- Iceland was elected to take up the seat left vacant at the United Nations Human Rights Council after the United States quit the body.
- In a vote at the General Assembly, Iceland picked up 172 votes during a secret ballot as the candidate put forward by the regional grouping for that seat.
- Iceland will occupy the seat vacated by the US for the remainder of the current term.

Portugal approves new gender change law

- The Portuguese parliament approved a law that will allow citizens to change their gender and name from the age of 16 without a medical report showing “identity disruption”.
- Portugal joins Denmark, Malta, Sweden, Ireland and Norway to become “the sixth European country to grant the right to self-determination of transgender identity.”

Canada to command new NATO training Centre

- Canada has announced that it will assume command of a new NATO training and capacity building mission in Iraq.
- Canadian troops will be deployed in the Baghdad region to help Iraq build a more effective national security structure and improve training of security forces.
- Canada is part of the US-led coalition fighting the ISIS is contributing air power & helping in training Iraqi forces.

UK to double number of troops in Afghanistan

- UK government is set to almost double the number of its troops in Afghanistan to help tackle the fragile security situation in Afghanistan.
- The additional forces will take part in a Nato-led training mission, called Resolute Support, to train & assist Afghan forces.

- They will be based in Kabul and will not be in a combat role. Britain ended combat operations in 2014.

UNSC adopts resolution to protect children

- UN Security Council has adopted resolution 2427 aimed at a framework for mainstreaming protection, rights, well-being and empowerment of children throughout the conflict cycle.
- The resolution won unanimous approval of 15 members of the council.
- The resolution strongly condemns the recruitment & use of children by parties to the armed conflict as well as their re-recruitment.

China pledges 20 bn in loans for Arab states

- China will provide Arab states with \$20 billion in loans for economic development, as China seeks to build its influence in Middle East.
- The money will be earmarked for projects that will produce employment opportunities & positive social impact in Arab States.
- China is also prepared to provide another 1 billion yuan to countries in the region to build capacity for stability maintenance.

Jeremy Hunt named UK foreign secretary

- Jeremy Hunt will replace Boris Johnson as the U.K. foreign secretary following Johnson's resignation.
- Hunt had served as health minister for more than 5 and half years, the longest term in the history of the State-funded National Health Service.

Turkey sacks 18,500 state employees

- Turkish authorities have ordered the dismissal of more than 18,500 state employees over alleged links to terrorist organisations.
- The people have been sacked as part of a crackdown following a failed military coup two years ago.
- Turkey has been under a state of emergency since July 2016 following an attempted overthrow of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government.

Maldives signed power deal with Pakistan

- The 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 stopped issuing work permits to Indians.

Gjirokastra at the risk of disappearing

- Gjirokastra, the slanted city of Albania is crumbling and is at a 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, but 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

- The 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 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 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 ninth 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 national park in 1989.
- It also 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 first 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, who would try to resolve disputes within a period of 1 year.
- IACT is due to handle disputes between non-Japanese companies, if both parties agree.

National Affairs

CETF Battalion for Environment Protection

- Sanction has been accorded for raising a new Composite Ecological Task Force (CETF) of Territorial Army to patrol sensitive river areas for protection of biodiversity and other tasks.
- The CETF is expected to be largely manned by ex-servicemen.
- The ministry is implementing the programme of pollution abatement and rejuvenation of the Ganges as per Ganga River Basin Management Plan.

Final draft of NRC released in Assam

- The second and final draft of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) was published on July 30, 2018 with over 2.89 crore names out of the total 3.29 crore applicants in Assam.
- Assam is the first Indian state where the NRC is being updated after 1951, with March 24, 1971 as the cut-off date, to include names of genuine Indian citizens.
- The groundwork for this exercise began in December 2013.

4-lane highway along Indo-Bhutan border

- Centre has agreed in principle to construct a four-lane highway of 264 KM along Indo-Bhutan border encompassing four districts of the state.
- The new connectivity would bring in revolutionary changes not only in connectivity but also in trade and commerce of the areas.

- The Bhutan–India border is 699 km long, and adjoins the Indian states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal, and Sikkim.

Free drugs, diagnostics for hepatitis B & C

- Considering the disease burden of viral hepatitis, government will now offer free drugs and diagnosis for Hepatitis B and C.
- The arrangement has been made under the National Viral Hepatitis Control Program launched.
- The aim of the initiative is to reduce morbidity and mortality due to viral hepatitis.
- The government aims to eliminate viral Hepatitis by 2030.

States agree to supply milk under Mid-Day Meal

- Most states, including Rajasthan, have agreed to supply milk for 2 days a week through Mid-Day Meal & Anganwadi schemes.
- This has been done in order to absorb surplus stock & ensure better prices to farmers, Animal Husbandry & Dairy.
- Farmers are in distress in key milk-producing states because of fall in procurement rate amid surplus milk production & piling up of skimmed milk powder.

Allowance for visiting Central Asian nations

- A proposal to allow Central government employees to go abroad on Leave Travel Concession (LTC) has been finalised by the Personnel Ministry
- The plan proposes to include 5 central Asian countries - Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan under the LTC scheme.
- **It is aimed at increasing India's footprint in the strategically important Central Asian region.**

Conviction under SC/ST Act just 27%

- A meagre 27% of people, accused of committing atrocities & crimes against scheduled castes and tribes, have been convicted during 2014-16.
- According to a report compiled by Home Ministry, the rate of conviction is low despite the country having 195 exclusive special courts to deal with crimes against SCs and STs.
- The reasons for low conviction rate is mostly due to delay in lodging the FIR.

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, cyber crime 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.

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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.

Kochi port to get new cruise terminal

- The Cochin Port Trust is setting up a new cruise terminal capable of handling 5,000 tourists at Ernakulam Wharf.
- The facilities inside the terminal will include passenger lounge, crew lounge, 30 immigration

counters, eight custom clearance counters, seven security check counters, WiFi.

- Kochi has been getting around 40 cruise liners every year, bringing HNI tourists to Kerala.

MIB panel to be replaced soon

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

Third-party insurance must for new cars

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

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

- 5 central oil PSUs - IOCL, ONGC, GAIL, OIL and NRL - signed a joint venture agreement for executing the North-East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid as a step towards the Urja Ganga Gas Pipeline Project.
- The JV company shall develop, build, operate and maintain the Natural Gas Pipeline Grid.
- The project will connect the state capitals of all the eight North Eastern states.

Nabard launches Centre for Climate Change

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

Debate on no-confidence motion in Lok Sabha

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

MoU between Infosys & BMRCL

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

TN govt launches 24h helpline for couples

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

New Manufacturing Facility For EVM Production

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

Andhra CM launches e-Pragati platform

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

RS passes Prevention of Corruption Bill

- The Rajya Sabha passed the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, 2013 which seeks to make giving bribes an offense with a provision of punishment.
- The Bill introduces the offense of giving a bribe as a direct offense. However, a person who is compelled to give a bribe will not be charged with the offense if he reports the matter to law enforcement authorities within 7 days.

Fugitive offenders Bill passed

- The Lok Sabha passed the Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill that replaces the Ordinance by the same name promulgated by the President in April.

- The Bill empowers courts to direct the govt to confiscate all the assets belonging to a fugitive economic offender.
- A Fugitive Offender is a person against whom an arrest warrant has been issued & who has left India so as to avoid criminal prosecution.

CM Raman Singh launches online pension system

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

Cabinet relaxes NELP, pre-NELP pact rules

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

Cabinet amends Section 376 of IPC

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

Right to Services Act repealed in Punjab

- The state govt of Punjab dissolved Right to Service Commission which was created by the former SAD-BJP govt under Punjab Right to Services Act of 2011.
- The act has been replaced by Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Services Act, 2018.
- The Right to Service (RTS) Act was set up by former Deputy CM Sukhbir Singh Badal to provide citizen services through Sewa Kendras.

1st govt-sponsored transgender poets' meet

- India's 1st government-sponsored poets' meet was organized for the transgender community at the Sahitya Akademi in Kolkata.
- The 'Transgender Poets' Meet' was chaired by India's first transgender college principal Manabi Bandopadhyay.

- In the event, each of the poets was given nearly 15 minutes to recite their poetry.
- Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) criminalizes homosexuality.

MicroDot technology to check vehicle thefts

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

BSE Dalal Street building gets trademark

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

Govt to deliver 11 Crore Ayushman Cards

- The government will be printing and delivering 11 crore Ayushman Bharat 'family cards' by organizing public contact programme called 'Ayushman Pakhwaras'.
- The CEO of Ayushman Bharat- National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM) is Indu Bhushan.
- The scheme was announced by Union Minister Arun Jaitley in his budget 2018 and is expected to be the world's largest health coverage scheme.

FASTags compulsory to obtain national permit

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

Centre supports Bru pact

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

Bihar raises compensation for rape victims

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

67th National Garment Fair 2018 in Mumbai

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

SC demands new law to stop lynching

- India's highest court has asked the government to enact a new law to deal with an increase in mob violence and lynchings.
- Supreme Court recommended Parliament to create a new penal provision to punish the offenders and stem the mob-related violence.
- The direction was given by three-judge bench, headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra and ordered parliament to decide within six months.

WR renames Elphinstone station as Prabhadevi

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

J&K abolishes interviews for Class-IV jobs

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

1st dedicated corridor for freight trains

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

Conference of Heads of AYUSH Institutes

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

MCA to review offences under Companies Act

- The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has constituted a 10 Member Committee to review the penal provisions in the Companies Act, 2013.
- The Committee will review the provisions relating to non-compoundable offenses and recommend whether any such provisions need to be re-categorized as a compoundable offense.
- The committee is headed by the Secretary of Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

World's cheapest clean drinking water

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

IR Installs Automatic Train Washing System

- An automatic train washing system has been installed by Northern Railways at Hazrat Nizamuddin station in Delhi.
- This move of govt promotes minimum quantity of water, soap and disinfectants and is eco-friendly.
- It is said that this would save 1,24,000 litres of water per day and more depots will be constructed in the future.

NGT to hear pleas via videoconference

- In a bid to tackle vacancies at the regional Benches of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), the green

panel is set to start hearing matters of the other Benches via videoconferencing.

- The NGT has been functioning with less than one-third of its sanctioned strength of 20 judicial and expert members.
- It is only an interim arrangement till all the members are available.

PM Modi begins his two-day visit to UP

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi begins his two-day visit to eastern Uttar Pradesh.
- He will lay the foundation stone of a 304km long Poorvanchal Expressway in Azamgarh that will connect Lucknow, to Barabanki, Amethi, Ambedkar Nagar, Azamgarh, Mau and Ghazipur districts.
- He will also lay the foundation stone of International Convention Centre in Varanasi and Namami Ganga Programme.

2nd National Tourism Conclave in Rajasthan

- The 2nd National Tourism Conclave was organised in Jaipur on 13th July 2018.
- The conclave was headed by Managing Director of Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation Haulianlal Gite.
- Steps such as improving intra-air connectivity to increase domestic and international tourist footfall in the state were discussed.
- Also, more projects such as "Night Tourism" were also encouraged.

Gadkari inaugurates projects in Vizag

- Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Shipping, Road Transport & Highways will inaugurate five port projects worth Rs 1062 Crores in Vishakhapatnam (Vizag).
- The major project to be inaugurated includes upgradation of existing iron ore handling facility at Outer Harbour of Vizag Port at a cost of Rs 580 Crores.
- This will enhance the capacity of Vizag port under Sagarmala Project.

Railways launches 1st Bridge Management System

- The Indian railways launched its first consolidated Bridge Management System (IR-BMS), a web-enabled IT application to store data on its 1.5 lakh bridges.
- The web-based platform will show the bridge master data, works data, information regarding inspection and maintenance of the bridges.
- The platform is a step towards dissemination of information related to bridge activities.

World Bank report on Malala Day

- In a report of world bank 'Missed Opportunities: The High Cost of Not Educating Girls', not educating girls

or creating barriers in their school education globally costs between USD 15 to USD 30 trillion.

- According to the report, 132 million girls around the world below 17 are still not in school.
- The report was released on 12 July 2018, on the eve of United Nations Malala Day.

Seema Darshan project

- Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani has approved the Rs.39 Cr Seema Darshan project for developing more infrastructure facilities at Nadabet near Suigam in Banaskantha district.
- The project is being developed on Wagah Border pattern & entails a parade ground with an amphitheatre.
- The project will encourage local economic activity in the Rann region & tourists can have a good view of the coastline.

CRPF inks MoU with IRCTC

- CRPF signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IRCTC to usher in the easy & fast e-booking of railway tickets system.
- The e-ticketing will replace the earlier system of railway warrant which was cumbersome and is in line with the e-governance policy of the government.
- The CRPF is the paramilitary force that was raised in 1939 to handle internal security issues & anti-Naxal missions.

Chandrababu Naidu to launch "Anna canteen"

- Andhra CM Chandrababu Naidu launched Anna canteens in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh as a tribute to father-in-law and Telugu Desam Party founder NTR.
- A total of 203 such canteens will come up across the state's 110 municipalities in phases.
- NGO Akshaya Patra will manage state-run canteens and the scheme will reach out to over 2 lakh people per day.

Kolkata gets all women police squad

- The Kolkata Police has commissioned its exclusive women squad "The Winners" to combat crime on women across the metropolitan city.
- The new batch of policewomen would be deployed at specific places to move where civilian women face danger from possible assault and criminal attacks.
- Keshari Nath Tripathi is the current governor of West Bengal.

India's first internet telephony service

- BSNL has unveiled 1st internet telephony service in India that will allow users to dial any telephone number in India through its mobile app, "Wings".

- Before this, phone calls on mobile apps was possible within users of a particular app & not on telephone numbers.
- BSNL customers will be able to make calls on any network in the country even by using BSNL Wi-Fi or any other service provider.

INS Sumitra enters port of Sabang

- Indian naval ship INS Sumitra became the first-ever warship to enter port of Sabang in Indonesia.
- The warship was deployed in Malacca Straits.
- Sabang port is located close to the northern entrance of the Malacca straits.
- **Almost 40% of India's trade passes through Malacca** which is one the busiest shipping routes.

5 new languages for Rajya Sabha members

- Members of the Rajya Sabha can now speak in any of the 22 Scheduled Languages from the Monsoon Session of Parliament beginning on July 18th, 2018.
- The simultaneous interpretation facility has been added in 5 more languages - Dogri, Kashmiri, Konkani, Santhali & Sindhi.
- Of the 22 scheduled languages, Rajya Sabha had earlier established simultaneous interpretation service for 12 languages.

Railways introduces double container service

- In a bid to capture lost traffic & to enhance its freight revenue, Indian Railways has introduced Double Stack Dwarf container services.
- The containers are shorter in size and can run on electrified tracks. They can hold a capacity of 30,500 kgs.
- By using the dwarf containers, the cost will be significantly reduced since rail transport is cheaper than road.

Microsoft signs MoU with Rajasthan Government

- Microsoft signed a MoU with the Rajasthan Government to provide free digital training to 9,500 college students in one year.
- The initiative was taken for the enhancement of digital learning and capacity building of college students in the state.
- The company will run MS office specialist training programme in 50 government colleges from August which will benefit 9,500 students.

'One farmer one transformer' scheme

- In order to reduce electricity losses, the Maharashtra government will launch a new scheme allocating one transformer per farmer.
- The scheme, "one farmer one transformer", will be unveiled on August 15.

- Two lakh farmers will be given electricity connection for high voltage distribution line which will ensure uninterrupted power supply

Gujarat's Jews gets religious minority status

- The Gujarat government has granted religious minority status to the Jewish community in the state.
- The notification to this effect was issued on July 6 by the state's Department of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- They shall get benefits of welfare schemes formulated for religious minority communities within the jurisdiction of Gujarat.

Private hospitals to provide free treatment

- The Supreme Court said all private hospitals in Delhi must provide free treatment to certain percentage of poor patients.
- Providing treatment to the poor was one of the clauses in the lease deed due to which land was given to hospitals at a very cheap price.
- The Supreme Court will monitor the functioning of private hospitals to ensure that the poor patients are treated free of cost.

ADB approves USD 503 mln lining project

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved USD 503-million lining project of the Son canal in Shahabad-Bhojpur region of Bihar.
- This project will bring immense benefits to the agriculture sector of Shahabad Bhojpur region of Bihar.
- The estimated cost of this project is USD 503 million out of which USD 352 million is being provided by ADB.

Institution of eminence status

- Prakash Javadekar has released list of 6 institutes, 3 in public & 3 in private sector, which have been accorded the status of Institution of Eminence by the government.
- In the public sector, IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay & IISc Bangalore have been granted the status.
- Manipal Academy of Higher Education, BITS Pilani & Jio Institute have been granted institution of eminence tag in the private sector

Government sets noise standards for airports

- The Union Environment Ministry has set noise standards for airports across the country, excluding defence aircraft, and those that are landing and taking off.
- A civil airport with more than 50,000 aircraft movements per year should not exceed noise levels beyond 75 dB(A) Leq (decibels) during the daytime.
- It should not exceed 65 dBA during the night.

Bengaluru citizens against CM HD proposal

- The citizens of Bengaluru came out in large numbers to protest against the construction of steel flyover.
- **People are against the CM HD Kumaraswamy's** proposal to construct six interconnected elevated corridors in the coming 4 years.
- The project will be taken up through Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited and will cost around Rs. 15, 825 crores.

Rajnath to chair 2-day plenary meet

- A 2-day plenary meeting of NE Council will be chaired by the Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh in Shillong.
- He will discuss development projects with the Governors and CM of northeast states in the presence of Union Minister for Development of NE Region.
- Some of the major issues set to be discussed at the meet would be water resources management, POSHAN Abhiyan, road connectivity, and more.

Low rainfall slows sowing of cotton, paddy

- Rice-growing Odisha, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh have witnessed rain deficiency which has left an adverse impact on the sowing areas of paddy.
- Rice and cotton are the most affected crops because of the below-normal rainfall.
- **The country's largest producer of rice, West Bengal** received 22% below-normal rainfall, while Odisha and Chhattisgarh received 30% and 21% less rains till July 6.

Bills of Rs 29.41 crore raised by IAF

- Over Rs, 29.41 crores were spent to ferry the newly-issued Rs 500 and Rs 2000 currency notes after **demonetisation using Indian Air Force's ultra-modern** transport aircraft.
- IAF aircrafts C-17 and the C-130J Super Hercules undertook 91 sorties for transporting the currency.
- RBI had spent Rs 7,965 crore in 2016-17 post-demonetisation for printing the new Rs 2000 and Rs 500 notes.

Tenth edition of Delhi dialogue

- India will held the 10th edition of Delhi Dialogue on 19-20 July 2018.
- It is a premier annual event to discuss politico-security, economic and socio-cultural engagement with ASEAN members.
- RCEP is a free trade area consisting of 10 ASEAN members and six FTA partners which includes India.

Indian railways to launch special train

- The Indian Railways is planning to launch a tourist train, Sri Ramayana Express, which will cover all locations associated with the Ramayana.

- The train will run from Ayodhya (UP) to Colombo (Sri Lanka) via Rameshwaram (Tamil Nadu).
- The train will begin from Safdarjung station and its first stop will be in Ayodhya, the birthplace of the Hindu Lord Ram.

National Testing Agency to conduct NEET, JEE

- Newly formed National Testing Agency would now conduct the national-level examinations — NET, NEET, JEE (Mains) that were organised by Central Board of Secondary Education.
- The National Eligibility Test (NET) would be conducted in December & JEE (Mains) twice a year, in January and April.
- NTA would also conduct National Eligibility cum Entrance Test Common Management Admission Test (CMAT).

Round Table Conference on Data for New India'

- The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation will organise a 2 day International Round Table Conference at New Delhi.
- The objective of the conference is to identify innovative ideas for improving the statistical system in India, taking cue from the best practices followed in advanced countries.
- Such a Conference is being organized in India for the first time.

NITI Aayog proposes 'National Health Stack'

- NITI Aayog has unveiled the blueprint of National Health Stack, a shared digital healthcare infrastructure.
- **It is in line with implementation of Centre's Ayushman Bharat & other public healthcare programmes in the country.**
- It will allow policymakers to build their projections around upcoming outcomes, experiment with new services as well as fill the existing gaps in the healthcare industry.
- 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 Reservoirs out of these 91 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 and AI

- 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.
- The 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 of amount overcharged by manufacturer from consumers.

Law Commission suggested 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.
- It also recommended gambling to be 'Cashless' and linking of 'Aadhar' and 'Pan' cards of gamblers.

J&K village gets electricity 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 first global mobility summit

- NITI Aayog, in collaboration with various ministries & industry partners will organise 'MOVE: Global Mobility Summit' in New Delhi.
- **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.

Karnataka to release water

- The Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA), directed Karnataka to release water to Tamil Nadu and other States.
- The CWMA, which is yet to appoint full-time members, is scheduled to meet every 10 days during the monsoon months.

- The CWMA consists of a Chairman, a senior and eminent engineer, 2 whole-time members, 6 part-time members and a Secretary.

EPwD to Organize workshop for PwDs

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

NRL to introduce online legal compliance

- Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL) in Assam has become the first oil PSU to adopt an online legal compliance system by introducing 'Legatrix'.
- The cloud-based compliance management system was inaugurated by Managing Director S K Barua.
- **This initiative will boost up NRL's contribution towards the Digital India Mission and induce a greater transparency in its operations.**

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 to contact the traders & resolve their issues.
- The 'Vaaniya Kar, Aapke Dwaar' (commercial tax at your doorstep) will 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 chromium-nickel 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 will be held in New Delhi to resolve the dispute among southern states.
- The meeting of the 9-member board will be chaired by the Central Water Commission Chairman S Masood Hussain.
- The meeting will discuss 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, and 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 conference is to review various ongoing schemes & deliberate on a host of issues related to the energy sector.
- The conference would of lines of UDAY 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.
- It had targeted to remove all such crossings in 11 of its zones by September 2018.
- West Central Railway, Central Railway, Eastern Railway & South East Central Railway have now become Unmanned Level Crossings free.
- Almost all UMLC on routes having speed of 100 kmph or more has been eliminated so far.

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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

Indo-Nepal forum to be set up for tourism

- A forum will be set up between India and Nepal for mutual consultation and promotion of tourism by the countries.
- In a meeting held on July 6, 2018 of the joint working group of the two countries it was decided that an Indo-Nepal Tourism Forum should be set up.
- The forum will have representation from the government and private sectors of both the nations.

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.

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 Phuen-tshog-ling with its capital city of Thimphu.
- The new road is expected to reduce the travel time between Southern Bhutanese city of Phun-tsho-ling 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.

Emergency ambulance service for Sri Lanka

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

India and Ghana ink 2 MoUs

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

The 6th meeting of India-Nepal mechanism

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

Cabinet approves MoU between India and Cuba

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

Cabinet approves MoU on aviation with BRICS

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

10th edition of Delhi Dialogue in New Delhi

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

India, Bahrain sign pact to boost investment

- India and Bahrain signed agreements in the field of healthcare and renewable energy and decided to enhance investments among both countries.

- The two sides also did an agreement on Exemption from Short Stay Visa for holders of Diplomatic and Official passport.
- The agreement comes after Sushma Swaraj meets Bahrainain Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa.

India signs pact to ease visa restrictions

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

India to be VC of WCO's Asia Pacific region

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

India inaugurates its largest visa centre

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

Rule to deport if H-1B extension is rejected

- H-1B visa holders could be deported if their application for a visa extension has been rejected and the tenure of stay granted has expired.
- A policy memorandum permits the US Citizenship and Immigration Services to issue “notices to appear” (NTA) before an immigration judge.
- The individuals have to stay on in the US for several months without a job which would be troublesome financially.

Sushma Swaraj embarks two-day visit to Manama

- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj will today embark on a two-day visit to Manama to co-chair the second High Joint Commission meeting with her Bahraini counterpart Shaikh Al Khalifa.
- Mrs Swaraj will inaugurate the new Chancery building complex and address the Indian community.

- The visit is expected to provide an opportunity to identify new areas of cooperation between both countries.

Australia releases India economic strategy

- The Australian govt has released an India Economic strategy report recommending to lift India into its top three export markets.
- The strategy prioritizes economic and trade opportunities in India covering 10 sectors such as health, energy, infrastructure etc.
- This would also boost Australia's investment in India to \$100 billion.
- The Author of this report is Australia's PM Malcolm Turnbull

MoU on exchange of experience by legal experts

- India and UK have signed an agreement on exchange of experience by legal professionals and government functionaries for resolution of disputes before various courts and tribunals.
- The MoU aims to enhance the bilateral cooperation in legal affairs between the two countries.
- The two countries would also exchange information regarding current issues of international significance.

Railways to export DMU train sets to Sri Lanka

- Indian Railways is all set to establish its footprint in Sri Lanka with the export of 6 DMU (diesel multiple units) train sets consisting of 78 modern coaches worth Rs 600 crore.
- DMU train sets do not require separate locomotives as the engines are incorporated into one or more of its coaches.
- The contract will be funded under the Indian Line of Credit to Sri Lanka announced in 2011.

India-Korea technology exchange centre

- India-Korea technology exchange centre was inaugurated by MoS MSME, Giriraj Singh & Minister of SMEs & Start-ups of Republic of Korea, Hong Jong- hak in Delhi.
- It will work towards identifying Indian technologies which can be exported to Korea & find suitable Korean partners for the same.
- It will help SMEs of both the countries to learn from each other to enhance their comparative advantages

MoU to boost inter-parliamentary dialogue

- For the first time, Rajya Sabha has signed a MoU with its counterpart in a foreign country, Rwanda, for promoting inter-parliamentary dialogue.
- The MoU, with 6 articles of cooperation, aims to promote inter-parliamentary dialogue, capacity building of parliamentary staff & organisation of conferences among others.

- M Venkaiah Naidu is the first Rajya Sabha chairman to sign such an agreement.

India and South Korea ink 11 MoUs

- India and South Korea have signed 11 MoU's during South Korean President Moon Jae-in's visit to India.
- A MoU on trade remedies was signed for cooperation in the area of trade remedies like anti-dumping, subsidy, countervailing and safeguard measures through consultations.
- A MoU on future strategy group was also inked for cooperation in the development of cutting-edge technologies.

Reduction of tariffs on Chinese imports

- India and China have reached an agreement on reduction of tariffs on Chinese imports of Indian medicines, particularly cancer drugs.
- Both India and China slashed import tariffs of a range of products starting July 1, following the 4th round of negotiations under the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement.
- The agreement will also usher in great opportunities for India and other countries in the region.

Indian warship INS Trikand reaches Sri Lanka

- India's frontline warship INS Trikand has reached Sri Lanka in a goodwill visit.
- Senior Indian officers, including Lt. Colonel Ravi Shekhar Mishra held discussions on matters of mutual interest with their Lankan counterparts.
- INS Trikand is a state-of-the-art warship of the Indian Navy equipped with a versatile range of weapons & sensors capable of addressing threats in all 3 dimensions.

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.
- The meeting 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 deal 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.

Tariffs cut on Asian imports under APTA

- The Centre has implemented the tariff concessions agreed to under the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement by cutting duties on the imports.
- APTA is a preferential trade agreement, under which the basket of items, as well as the extent of tariff concessions, are enlarged.
- The fourth round of trade negotiations under the agreements was conducted in January 2017.

Israel enacted a new law

- Israel government enacted a new law which will financially penalize the Palestinian Authority for paying stipends to the Palestinians killed or jailed by Israel.
- Out of 120 seats in the Parliament, 87-15 voted in favor of this legislation.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had repeatedly demanded to stop the Palestinians from paying stipends to the prisoners and their families.

Interpol issues Red Notice against Nirav Modi

- The Interpol has issued a Red Notice against Nirav Modi on the request of the Enforcement Directorate and the CBI of India.
- Red Notice not only restricts a fugitive's movement in 190 member countries of the Interpol but also empowers agencies to detain the person for deportation or extradition to the requesting country.
- Mr. Modi is involved in the ₹3,578-crore Punjab National Bank fraud.

Asian Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

- India will be participating in the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 03-06 July 2018.

- The theme of the meet is 'Preventing Disaster Risk: Protecting Sustainable Development'.
- The disaster risk reduction is a key instrument to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, as highlighted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Final Nepal-India EPG meeting ends

- The 9th & final meeting of Eminent Persons Group on Nepal-India Relations concluded in Kathmandu.
- The Representatives from Nepal & India deliberated upon various bilateral issues including 1950 Peace & Friendship treaty, trade, transit and border.
- EPG is a joint mechanism consisting of experts & intellectuals from India & Nepal to make suggestions for updating existing bilateral agreements.

Personalities in News

Baker breaks 100m backstroke world record

- Kathleen Baker has set a world record in winning the 100-metres backstroke at the US national swimming championships.
- Baker, silver medalist in the event at the 2016 Rio Olympics, improved on the world record of 58.10 set by Canadian Kylie Masse.
- Baker's performance was more remarkable because she has long had to deal with Crohn's disease.

Venkalah Naidu to be Chancellor

- Vice-President M. Venkalah Naidu has been appointed as the Chancellor of the Pondicherry Central University.
- The appointment was notified by the President, Ram Nath Kovind, in his capacity as Visitor of the university.
- The tenure of the Chancellor will be five years.

First non-Muslim to win National Assembly seat

- Mahesh Malani of Pakistan Peoples Party's has become the first Hindu candidate to win a National Assembly seat.
- Malani contested & won the National Assembly (NA-222) Tharparkar-II seat in southern Sindh province, after defeating 14 candidates.
- Non-Muslims got the right to vote & contest on general seats in 2002 after the then president Gen Pervez Musharraf made amendments in the Constitution

Cherkallam Abdullah passes away

- Senior IUML 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.

- The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. is an American multinational investment bank and financial services company headquartered in New York City.
- Solomon previously worked for Irving Trust and Drexel Burnham.

Nelson Mandela International Day 2018

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

Google celebrated Georges Lemaitre's birthday

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

Assam's first transgender judge Swati Baruah

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

Mukesh Ambani becomes Asia's richest person

- Reliance Industries Ltd Chairman Mukesh Ambani has surpassed Alibaba Group's Jack Ma to become Asia's richest person.
- According to Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Ambani's wealth rose to \$44.3 billion while Jack Ma's wealth stood at \$44 billion.
- He is the 18th wealthiest person in the world, according to Forbes.
- Reliance is India's largest payer of GST and Income Tax in the private sector.

Arothe resigns as India women's cricket coach

- **Indian Women's Cricket Team Coach Tushar Arothe** has stepped down from the role citing personal reasons.
- A former batting allrounder, Arothe took over as head coach in April 2017 after the removal of Purnima Rau from the job.

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.

Dwayne Johnson is highest paid actor

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

Goldman Sachs names David Solomon as CEO

- Goldman Sachs Group Inc named David Solomon as its next chief executive officer.
- Solomon to succeed CEO Lloyd Blankfein, who was the CEO since June 2006 and will be retiring on 1st October.

- Having previously been part of the Indian women's coaching staff between 2008 and 2012, Arothe had been initially appointed until the 2017 World Cup.

Modi third most followed world leader

- According to a study conducted by Burson Cohn & Wolfe, PM Modi is the 3rd most followed world leader on Twitter with 42 million followers.
- Modi is just behind US President Donald Trump & Pope Francis.
- **With over 11 million followers, India's external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj is not only the most followed female world leader & but is also the most followed foreign minister in the world.**

UK's Brexit minister resigns

- Britain's Brexit minister David Davis has resigned from the Cabinet stating policy differences over PM Theresa May's exit plan from the European Union.
- It is a blow to May as she seeks to win over Eurosceptic MPs to her proposed Brexit vision, which would form the basis of UK's position in ongoing talks with EU.
- Junior minister for housing Dominic Raab will be Britain's new Brexit minister.

Siddhanta scales world's highest volcano

- Satyarup Siddhanta has become the 2nd Indian mountaineer after Malli Mastan Babu to climb Mt Ojos del Salado, the highest volcano in the world.
- Ojos del Salado is a stratovolcano in the Andes on the Argentina-Chile border and the highest active volcano in the world at 6,893 metres.
- Satyarup is also set to be the first Indian to climb Mt Sidley, the highest volcano of Antarctica.

PM to inaugurate statue of unity

- PM Modi will inaugurate the Statue of Unity on 31st October 2018, the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- The construction of the tallest statue in the world that began in December 2015, is nearly complete.
- World's tallest statue dedicated to country's first Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is being built with 5,700 Metric tonne structural steel and 1,900 MT of bronze.

Ram Vilas Paswan to attend UNCTAD meet

- Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan will attend the UNCTAD meeting of a third inter-governmental group of experts on consumer protection on July 9-10 in Geneva.
- The group has been set up under the revised UN Guidelines on Consumer Protection.
- The session will also deliberate on measures on protection of vulnerable & disadvantaged consumers.

- UNCTAD is the UN body looking after consumer issues.

South Korean President to arrive in India

- South Korean President, Moon Jae-in is on a four-day visit to India.
- During his visit, he will hold talks with PM Modi on several issues, including the situation on the Korean peninsula & ways to boost bilateral trade and defence cooperation.
- **Moon's visit to India comes nearly a month after the historic summit between US President Donald Trump & North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in Singapore.**

Ambani gets another 5 years as chairman

- Shareholders of Reliance Industries have approved giving Mukesh Ambani another five years as the chairman and managing director of the company.
- Ambani has been on the board of RIL since 1977 and was elevated as chairman of the company after the death of his father Dhirubhai Ambani in July 2002.
- Reliance Industries is India's second most valued firm after Tata Consultancy Services.

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.

President to visit Goa

- The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, will visit Goa on July 7 and 8, 2018. This will be his first visit to Goa as the President of India.
- The President will visit the Basilica of Bom Jesus, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Old Goa, and Shri Mangeshi Temple in Mardol, before returning to Delhi.
- The President will also address the 30th annual convocation of the Goa University.

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, promised to tackle violence and wipe out corruption.
- The 64-year-old former Mexico City mayor will formally take power on December 1.

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 sailing vessel 'Thuriya'** has been built by M/s Aquarius Shipyard Ltd at Goa.

Recommendations for the post of MD in PSB

- Bank Boards Bureau has recommended names of 15 officials for the posts of MD and CEO in several public sector banks.
- The bureau has recommended Anshula Kant, the current deputy managing director of SBI for the post of MD in the bank.
- The post was vacant following the resignation of B. Sriram as the MD of the bank.
- The other 14 names recommended include 6 current DMDs of SBI.

Vitorino to be the head of UN migration agency

- **Portugal's Antonio Manuel de Carvalho Ferreira** Vitorino has been elected as the new head of the UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- Vitorino succeeds William Lacy Swing, who is leaving the IOM after serving two five-year terms as director general.
- Established in 1951, IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration.

Environment

World's first UN Certified Football Club

- The Forest Green Rovers Football Club was recognised by the United Nations as the World's first certified carbon neutral football club.
- The UN campaign, launched in 2015, encourages companies, organisations, governments and citizens to reduce their climate footprints.
- The aim is to achieve a climate neutral world by the middle of this century.

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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.

PepsiCo to help govt in recycling plastic

- PepsiCo India decided to support the government's implementation of extended producer responsibility for plastic waste bottles in Maharashtra.
- PepsiCo India has partnered with Gem Enviro Mgmt to set up reverse vending machines for the collection & recycling of plastic bottles in the State.
- The company has also piloted a 'Film to Fuel' project to convert packaging film waste into fuel.

16th Workshop On Greenhouse Gas Inventories

- A four-day Workshop has been organized by the Ministry of Environment, Govt of Japan from July 10 to 13, 2018 in New Delhi.
- The workshop was inaugurated by Dr Harshvardhan, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- The workshop included policy initiatives of the government to increase penetration of LEDs, 5-10% Ethanol blending in petrol.

15-point action plan to combat air pollution

- Niti Aayog has proposed a 15-point action plan to combat air pollution in 10 most polluted cities in India, including Delhi and Varanasi.
- The action plan titled 'Breathe India' includes encouraging electric vehicles, phasing out private diesel vehicle & development of crop residue utilisation policy.
- The plan includes expediting strategic decommissioning of old & inefficient power plants.

Tree wall to encircle Delhi

- A 'tree wall' of nearly 31 lakh native trees will soon encircle Delhi to protect it from dust storms coming from Rajasthan, a senior official of Union Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change said.
- The government has already begun work of planting saplings.
- The tree wall will come along Delhi border with Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

Section 144 to be used in animal emergencies

- The National Board of Wildlife has recommended that states use Section 144, which prohibits the assembly of four or more people, during wildlife emergencies.
- The provision will be used to "prevent people from gathering in large numbers, which aggravates wildlife emergency situations".
- The Centre is expected to issue advisories to the state governments regarding the recommendation

Government Policies & Schemes

Chattisgarh CM to launch 'Mobile Tihar'

- Chattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh launched the 'Mobile Tihar' (Mobile Festival) under the Sanchar Kranti Yojna (SKY).
- The scheme is for distribution of smart-phone to women and students in the station covering 45 lakh women and 5 lakh students.
- Under the programme, 460,000 students of Chhattisgarh's colleges and 4 million women staying in rural areas will be given smartphones.

LS passes bill to revamp homoeopathy council

- A bill seeking to replace the Central Council of Homoeopathy (CCH) with a board of governors and aimed at bringing accountability and quality in homoeopathy education system was passed by the Lok Sabha.
- The government will reconstitute the CCH within a year.
- As per the bill, the members of the board of governor will replace the existing functionaries of the CCH.

Bill for merger of subsidiary banks with SBI

- The Parliament has passed the State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill, 2017 with the Lok Sabha approving the amendments sent by the Rajya Sabha.
- Under it, the 5 associate banks that were merged are State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur, State Bank of Hyderabad, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Patiala and State Bank of Travancore.
- The merger of these banks is in effect from 1st April, 2018.

Env survey to be conducted in 55 districts

- In a first, around 55 districts across the country have been identified in 2018-19 for conducting an environmental survey covering various parameters like flora, fauna and pollution.
- The National Environment Survey is being undertaken for the first time by the government in India.
- National Environment Survey is proposed under the ongoing Environmental Information System Scheme.

IT ministry launches "e-Aksharayan"

- The IT ministry launched a desktop software "e-Aksharayan" to enable editing of text printed on scanned documents.
- The software can be downloaded for free from its website.
- The software supports editing in seven Indian languages - Hindi, Bangla, Malayalam, Gurmukhi, Tamil, Kannada & Assamese.

Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill passed in LS

- The Lok Sabha has passed the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2018 which replaces the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance promulgated on April 21 2018.
- The bill stipulates punishment for perpetrators of rape, particularly of girls below 12 years and death sentence has been provided for rapists of girls under 12 years.
- The investigation of all cases of rape has to be completed within 2 months.

DAC gives nod to strategic partnership model

- Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) has approved the implementation guidelines for the Strategic

Partnership Model to ensure timely delivery of equipment to the Armed Forces.

- The approval was given at the meeting of DAC chaired by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
- The first project will be 111 utility twin-engine helicopters worth an estimated Rs 21,000 crore for the Indian Navy.

Govt to launch 2nd oil, gas field auction

- The government plans to launch the auction of 60 oil and gas fields being offered in the second round of bidding for Discovered Small Field on August 9, 2018.
- The fields are being offered in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Kutch & Cambay shallow waters, Mumbai offshore, Assam and Tripura, Mahanadi shallow water, Andhra Pradesh and KG offshore.
- The fields hold an estimated 1.4 billion barrels of oil.

CRIF under Finance Ministry domain

- Work related to the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) has been taken away from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
- It will now be under the Department of Economic Affairs, Finance Ministry.
- Budget 2018 amended the Central Road Fund Act, 2000, and renamed the Central Road Fund the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund.

Meghalaya launches milk mission, bull fair

- The Meghalaya government launched 'Meghalaya Milk Mission' and First Meghalaya Bull Fair on 28th July, 2018.
- The Mission aims to plug the demand and supply gap in the availability of per capita milk, to generate alternate livelihoods for the rural people through the dairy sector and to create and revive dairy co-operatives.
- The Mission will benefit 2,000 farmers in the next 4 years.

Modi launches 81 investment projects

- PM Modi launched 81 investment projects worth over ₹0,000 crore for Uttar Pradesh at a ground-breaking event.
- The projects are expected to give a big boost to industrialisation in the state and have the potentials of creating over 2 lakh jobs.
- Around 80 leading industrialists, including Gautam Adani participated in the event, which comes close **on the heels of 'Investors Summit'**.

Govt notifies ethanol-making from sugarcane

- The government has notified a decision to allow sugar mills to manufacture ethanol directly from sugarcane juice or intermediate product called B-molasses.

- The sugarcane control order of 1966 has been amended in this regard.
- So far, mills were allowed to manufacture ethanol from by-product called C-molasses, after sugar was taken out while processing raw cane juice.

Assam to implement Pranam Scheme

- Assam government has decided to implement PRANAM (Parent Responsibility & Norms for Accountability and Monitoring) Scheme that aims to ensure that government staff take care of their parents & physically challenged siblings.
- It mandates deduction of 10-15% of the gross salary of employees who do not take care of their parents & disabled siblings.
- It will come into force from October 2, 2018.

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.

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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.

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.

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.

New cell to resolve child custody disputes

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

Student Police Cadet Programme to be launched

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

Special Package for Irrigation Projects

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

RTE amendment Bill passed in Lok Sabha

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

Continuation of scholarships for minorities

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the proposal for Continuation of Pre-Matric, Post Matric and Merit-cum-Means based

Scholarship Schemes for the students belonging to the six notified Minority Communities.

- The 6 notified minority communities are Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain and Parsi.
- These Schemes shall be implemented through the National Scholarship Portal.

National database for gun licence holders

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

SBI 'kisan mela' on July 18

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

Assam's anti-witch hunting bill

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

CIC launches bilingual mobile app

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

'Paudhagiri' campaign launched in Haryana

- Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched the 'Paudhagiri' campaign, aimed at increasing the green cover in the state.
- Under this campaign, 22 lakh students from class 6 to 12 of all government and private schools in Haryana

will plant a sapling each during three months of monsoon.

- The student will get Rs 300 per year for 3 years for looking after a sapling planted by him or her.

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

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

Men's hockey team to be a part of TOPS

- The Mission Olympic Cell of Union Ministry of Sports **and Youth Affairs has included Men's Hockey team** under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).
- The 18 team members will be provided with a monthly allowance of Rs. 50,000 each.
- TOPS was launched in 2015 by Ministry of Sports with National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) with the aim supporting potential medal prospects for Olympics.

Army, FTII to provide acting courses in J&K

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

Odisha Govt constitutes Heritage Cabinet

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

"I Am Not Afraid Of English" campaign

- The Haryana Education Department has launched "I am not afraid of English" initiative to promote English language right from Class 1 in the state's primary schools.
- The initiative is aimed at capacity building of teachers to enable them to help the students to learn, read, write and speak English.

- To start with, a booklet containing 1,000 sentences/phrases has been prepared.

Govt launches Swachh Survekshan Grameen

- The government has launched Swachh Survekshan Grameen, which will attempt to rank all 698 districts in the country on prevalent levels of cleanliness in the rural areas.
- The parameters of assessment will be availability of toilets, usage of toilets, hygiene of toilets and status of littering among others.
- It will be done through an independent survey agency.

Use of Aadhaar only 'desirable, not must'

- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare stated that furnishing Aadhaar as an identity proof for availing benefits of the Ayushman Bharat scheme is "desirable and not must."
- It also said that there shall be no denial of benefits for the want of Aadhaar.
- The scheme, launched under the National Health Protection Mission was announced during the 2018-19 budget and will be launched on August 15.

Aadhaar must for health mission cover

- The government has mandated the use of Aadhaar card for administering its massive Ayushman Bharat, or National Health Mission, that assures a ₹ lakh health cover to 10 crore families.
- **While possessing an Aadhaar card isn't mandatory to avail services, a proof of enrolment, or request for enrolment, is mandatory.**
- The Ayushman Bharat is scheduled to roll out in August 2018.

Internet to remain free and fair in India

- Internet will remain free and fair in India as the telecom commission has approved net neutrality.
- Net neutrality requires service providers to treat all internet traffic equally & prohibits discrimination in the treatment of content.
- Some mission-critical applications or services like remote surgery and autonomous cars will, however, be kept out of the purview of net neutrality framework.

CM approves yatra scheme

- The Delhi government would send 77,000 senior citizens along with one adult attendant each on all-expenses paid pilgrimages every year.
- Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal approved the Mukhyamantri Tirth yatra Yojana.
- The government would also pay for one attendant over the age of 18 years to accompany each senior citizen.

- The pilgrims would be selected through a draw of lots.

'CITIIS' Challenge Announced by MoHUA

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) announced a new 'Cities Investment To Innovate, Integrate and Sustain' (CITIIS) challenge to identify top projects in 15 of the 100 selected smart cities.
- The projects will receive an additional funding of approximately ₹30 crore each.
- **The new funding will be financed by a €100 million loan from the French government.**

Govt launches LAP and TPS for 25 smart cities

- To fast track the resolution of area based infrastructure issues, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched the Local Area Plan (LAP) and Town Plan Schemes (TPS) for 25 smart cities in the country.
- Under which the ministry will provide Rs 2 crore as central assistance to every city for planned urban expansion.
- The LAP and TPS has been formulated under AMRUT.

Smart Cities fellowship launched

- Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched Smart Cities fellowship and internship programmes.
- The internship and fellowship would provide the youth with an opportunity to experience various aspects of urban planning and governance.
- **The 'Interns' shall be a part of the Smart Cities Mission.**

51 lakh houses approved in 3 years under PMAY

- More than 51 lakh dwelling units have been sanctioned by the government under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (urban) in last 3 years.
- This jump is a huge one in comparison to the erstwhile housing scheme, under which only 12.4 lakh houses were approved in 9 years.
- Out of these 51 lakh houses, over 8 lakh houses have already been completed.

PM laid foundation for urban infra projects

- PM Modi laid the foundation stone of 13 Urban Infrastructure projects for the State of Rajasthan.
- Some of the major projects are integrated infrastructure project for Udaipur, elevated road project for Ajmer and water and sewage projects.
- The Central Water Commission gave hydrological **clearance to Rajasthan's first interlinking of rivers project** — Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP).

Himachal banned sale of thermocol cutlery

- The Himachal Pradesh government has banned the use and sale of thermocol cutlery including cups, plates, glasses, spoons or any other item in the state.
- Those violating the order will be fined according to the quantity of the thermocol.
- The state government has set a deadline of three months for manufacturers to dispose of their stocks.

Delhi Police to control CCTV project

- A panel set up by Delhi L-G Anil Baijal has said Delhi government's flagship CCTV project will not be controlled by the AAP government but will be under the L-G via Delhi Police.
- Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal called the panel "illegal" and directed PWD Secretary Manoj Parida to propose the installation of one lakh cameras in the next cabinet meeting.

Government launches 'technology challenge'

- To eliminate human entry into septic tanks for cleaning, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched a 'technology challenge' seeking suitable solutions.
- The challenge is a part of the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention to be held on 2 October.
- The proposals will be adopted on the basis of operational effectiveness, life of machinery, & ease of use among others.

Subsidy on rooftop solar power installations

- Himachal Pradesh government has announced a subsidy of 10% or Rs. 4,000 per Kilowatt, whichever is less, for installation of solar power plants at the rooftop of their buildings.
- This subsidy would be additional to the subsidy given by Central government.
- The subsidy amount would be deposited directly to the bank account of the consumer through Himachal Pradesh Energy Development Authority.

WB announces 'one person, one car' policy

- In an attempt 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 it's 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.**

CMSMS and 'Khan Prahari' App launched

- Shri Piyush Goyal launched the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS) and **Mobile Application 'Khan Prahari'**.
- It is developed by CMPDI, Ranchi a Subsidiary of CIL and Bhaskarcharya Institute of Space Application and Geo-informatics (BISAG).
- The basic objective of CMSMS is reporting, monitoring and taking suitable action on unauthorised coal mining activities.

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 ₹,750 per quintal from previous year's ₹,550 and corn increased to ₹,700 from ₹,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.

UP Government announced new policy

- UP Government announced a new Defence **Manufacturing Policy, called 'UP Defence Aerospace Unit and Employment Generating Policy, 2018'**.
- The policy is for the entrepreneurs who are willing to invest and would project an investment of Rs. 50,000 crores for upcoming 5 years.
- The policy is also expected to generate 2.5 lakh jobs.

KVIC launches e-marketing system

- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) launched its e-marketing system named Khadi Institution Management and Information System (KIMIS) in New Delhi.
- This software will give real-time data of sales and will also give the updated status of stocks of khadi bhawans and godowns.
- KVIC IT team has developed this foolproof software.

Art and Culture

'Arth-art for Earth' exhibition

- Union Minister of State for Culture Dr. Mahesh Sharma inaugurated exhibition titled "Arth - art for earth" at IGNCA, New Delhi.
- It consists of "Excavations in Hymns of Clay" - a suite of environmental art installations by Manav Gupta weaving all of them with a storyline and poetry.
- The exhibition is available for public viewing until the 22nd of October 2018.

UNESCO adds 8 pre-Islamic Iranian sites

- UNESCO has added 8 pre-Islamic Iranian archeological sites to its World Heritage List.
- The sites collectively appear on the worldwide list as the "Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars region (Islamic Republic of Iran)".
- With the latest addition, Iran now has 24 sites on the heritage list of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

19,500+ mother tongues spoken in India

- According to the latest analysis of 2011 census, more than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongues.
- There are 121 languages which are spoken by 10,000 or more people in India, which has a population of 121 crore.
- 96.71% population in the country have one of the 22 scheduled languages as their mother tongue.

Science & Technology

Mars closest to earth in 15 years

- At 57.6 million kilometres apart, Mars will be closest to Earth in over 15 years.
- With Mars and Sun on each side, the rare event will witness all three celestial bodies falling in a straight line.
- This will also be the closest the red planet comes to Earth until October 2020.
- Back in 2003, Earth and Mars were "only" 56 million kilometres apart- the closest it came in over 60,000 years.

Scientists discover new shape called scutoid

- Scientists have discovered a new shape called **scutoid while studying nature's way of moulding** tissue to form the skin, cavity linings and the building blocks of organs.
- The shape has five sides on one end and six on the other and a triangular surface on one of its longer edges.
- Scientists have referred to it as a twisted prism kind of shape that allows the tissue to mould around organs.

MG Motor partners IIT-Delhi for child safety

- MG Motor India announced a partnership with IIT-Delhi for developing technologies and applications to boost in-car child safety.
- Under the partnership, a team IIT-D is working on a project to develop an application for geofencing for child safety through ECU control.
- MG Motor India is slated to launch its first vehicle in the country in the second quarter of 2019.

Doctors identify rare bloodgroup 'P null'

- A team of doctors from the Blood Bank of Kasturba Medical College (KMC), has identified a rare blood group called "pp" or "P null" phenotype.
- A blood type is considered rare if fewer than one in 1,000 people have it.
- A person is said to have rare blood group when he lacks the high frequency antigen or multiple common antigens.

NASA begins new planet hunting probe

- NASA's latest planet hunting probe - the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) - has started its search for new worlds around nearby stars.
- TESS is expected to transmit its first series of science data back to Earth in August 2018.
- TESS is NASA's latest satellite to search for planets outside our solar system, known as exoplanets.

Govt. plans 'ISRO-like' ocean mission

- The Centre has drawn up a 5-year, Rs. 8,000 crore plan to explore the deep recesses of the ocean.
- The Union Earth Sciences Ministry unveiled a **blueprint of the 'Deep Ocean Mission'**.
- India has been allotted a site of 1,50,000 square kilometres in the Central Indian Ocean Basin by the UN International Sea Bed Authority for exploitation of polymetallic nodules.

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.

NASA launches online toolkit

- NASA has launched an online toolkit to make it easier for users to find, analyse and utilise the most

relevant satellite data for their research, business projects or conservation efforts.

- The "Remote Sensing Toolkit" provides a simple system that quickly identifies relevant sources based on user input.
- The toolkit is designed to help users search for data as well as code to build new tools.

Athena to beam internet on earth

- Facebook is working on an internet satellite project called 'Athena' to beam internet connectivity down to Earth.
- The company aims to launch the satellite in early 2019.
- The new satellite project will provide broadband internet connections to "unserved and underserved areas".

"World's first" remote LEAP microscope

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

ISRO scientists test Vikas Engine

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

NASA Juno spots volcano on Jupiter moon Io

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

South Africa launches powerful new telescope

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

China, India, Italy, New Zealand, Sweden and the Netherlands.

Genova Bio gets patent to treat brain clots

- The Pune-based biotech company has been granted a patent in the US for its version of drug tenecteplase, to treat brain clots (ischemic stroke), the 1st ever in the world.
- In India, Genova has already started marketing Tenectase (tenecteplase) for ischemic stroke as an alternative to drug alteplase, which reduced the cost of treatment to Rs.29000.
- The CEO of Genova Bio is Sanjay Singh.

Century's longest lunar eclipse

- A total lunar eclipse will occur on July 27-28 with a totality duration of 1 hour 43 minutes, the longest in this century.
- In this particular eclipse, the Moon will pass through the central part of the Earth's umbral shadow.
- On July 27, the red planet Mars, will also be at opposition, meaning that the Sun and Mars will lie opposite to each other, with the Earth in the middle.

World's 1st Colour X-Ray Performed On a Human

- New Zealand scientists have performed the first-ever 3-D, colour X-ray on a human.
- The device is based on the traditional X-ray but incorporates particle-tracking technology developed for CERN's Large Hadron Collider.
- This colour X-ray imaging will produce more accurate pictures & help doctors give their patients more accurate diagnoses.
- CERN is a European Organization for Nuclear Research.

Pakistan launches 2 satellites from China

- Pakistan has launched 2 indigenously built satellites into the orbit from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in China.
- One of the satellites launched is PRSS-1, a remote sensing satellite that will enable Pakistan to meet its imagery requirements in areas of land mapping & agriculture classification among others.
- It is the 2nd time both China & Pakistan have collaborated in the space sector.

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 remote-operated 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).

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.**

PSLV bags first Australian order

- The Indian PSLV launcher has bagged its first order from Australian startup.
- Fleet Space Technologies, an IoT (Internet of Things) startup, said that its first 10-kg nanosatellite Centauri I would fly to space on a PSLV.
- The company is planning a series of 10-kg nanosatellites about the size of a shoebox to enable low-cost connectivity for agriculture, logistics, mining sectors.

Rabies is India's most fatal infection

- According to data from National Health Profile 2018, Rabies is the only disease that had a 100% death rate in India in 2017.
- The vaccine-preventable viral disease spreads to people through bites or scratches of animals, mostly infected dogs.
- There were 4,370 rabies deaths in India in 2016, **which accounted for 1 in 3 of the world's 13,340 rabies deaths.**

Places in News

Neelakurinji flowers bloom after 12 years

- The neelakurinji will bloom in the Anamalai hills near Munnar, a phenomenon that occurs once in 12 years.
- Spread over 3,000 hectares of rolling hills, Munnar is home to this rarely occurring neelakurinji flower plants.
- These plants take another 12 years for the seeds to sprout again and grow up to 30 to 60 centimetres high.

MoU between Infosys & BMRCL

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

Sri Lanka to finalize Mattala airport deal

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

Karnataka to set up five tech innovation hubs

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

First Pondicherry International Film Festival

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

India's 1st skill training centre in Odisha

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

Gujarat to form Sanskrit Bhasha Vikas Board

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

Gyan Vani an educational FM radio in Pune

- The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has started its own FM radio network Gyan Vani with the help of All India Radio (AIR).
- In this programmes like primary and secondary education, adult education, technical and vocational

education, higher education is being broadcasted at 105.6 MHz.

- The educational channel is being broadcasted in English, Hindi and other regional languages.

2nd National Tourism Conclave In Rajasthan

- The 2nd National Tourism Conclave was organised in Jaipur on 13th July 2018.
- The conclave was headed by Managing Director of Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation Haulianlal Guite.
- Steps such as improving intra-air connectivity to increase domestic and international tourist footfall in the state were discussed.
- Also, more projects such as "Night Tourism" were also encouraged.

Kochi Metro launches India's 1st AC dormitory

- Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) will open India's first exquisite air-conditioned bed space dormitory.
- The fully air-conditioned rooms are equipped with locker facility, free WiFi, round-the-clock check-in and check-out facility and security cameras.
- It was inaugurated by Kochi's Mayor Soumini Jain.
- The current governor of Kerala is P. Sathasivam.

PM inaugurates new ASI headquarters

- Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, inaugurated Dhrohar Bhawan - the new Headquarters building of the Archaeological Survey of India at Tilak Marg in New Delhi.
- The new headquarters include a central archaeological library with a collection of about 1.5 lakh books and journals.
- ASI is responsible for archaeological research and conservation & preservation of cultural monuments in the country.

Highest LHS launched in Sambalpur

- East Coast Railway launched highest ever 6 (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.

Agartala airport's name changed

- Union Cabinet gave its approval to rename the **Agartala Airport, 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, Banjar, 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 Court-mandated 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 - Elephanta Caves and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus are also on the UNESCO list.

Books & Authors

'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.

J K Rowling's next book 'Lethal White'

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

Committees & Recommendations

Govt. panel to study stressed power sector

- The government will set up a high-level empowered committee under the Cabinet Secretary to resolve the stress in the thermal power sector.
- The committee will have representatives from the Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Power, Ministry of Coal, and the lenders having exposure to the power sector.
- The Committee would look into the various problems faced by power sector.

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.

Govt sets up committee to strengthen NCC, NSS

- The govt has decided to form a committee under former education secretary Anil Swarup, seeking suggestions to strengthen National Cadet Corp & National Service Scheme.
- The Committee will deal with issues like expansion, strengthening training infrastructure & reducing manpower deficiency.
- The Committee will also submit recommendations for building "synergy" between these 2 institutions.

Panel to tackle pollution around Taj Mahal

- The government has formed a committee comprising officials of the environment ministry, experts from NEERI, IITs and various other forums to look into the issue of industrial pollution around the iconic Taj Mahal.

- The committee will be headed by C K Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The committee will take up the problems on a case-to-case basis.

Panel for automatic suspension in RS

- The rules review committee set up by Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu has submitted its interim report.
- It made two key recommendations: automatic suspension of wilful offenders and changing question-hour timing.
- The two-member committee is headed by the former secretary general of Rajya Sabha V.K. Agnihotri.
- The report has to be approved by the Rules Committee of the Upper House.

Panel drafting education policy gets extension

- Union Human Resource Development Ministry has extended till August 31 the term of K Kasturirangan Committee drafting a new education policy.
- The panel headed by K Kasturirangan, the former ISRO chief, was supposed to submit its report by June 30. This is the third extension granted to the panel.
- The existing National Education Policy was framed in 1986 and revised in 1992.

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

RIL reclaims its top slot

- Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) regained its status as **the country's most valued firm by market capitalisation (m-cap)** on 31st July 2018.
- **It replaced Tata Group's Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** from the top slot.
- Reliance Industries had crossed the \$100-billion market capitalisation mark.
- The m-cap figure of companies changes daily with stock price movement.

India Inc's ECB jumps 66% to \$2.71 bn in Jun

- India Inc raised USD 2.71 billion through External Commercial Borrowing (ECB) and rupee-denominated bonds (RDBs) in June 2018, the RBI data said.
- Indian companies had raised USD 1.63 billion from overseas sources in June 2017.
- ECB is basically a loan availed by an Indian entity from a non-resident lender. Most of these loans are provided by foreign commercial banks

India's agricultural land is shrinking

- According to the government data, in 2017, nearly 40 lakh hectares of agricultural land was impacted because of water woes.
- It has resulted in a drop in the area under cultivation for crops like rice, pulses & oilseeds.
- With 1/3rd of agriculture activities in India still depending on groundwater for irrigation, the **country's cultivated land is shrinking due to depleting ground water levels.**

Paytm to roll new retail model for deliveries

- Paytm is now on an expansion spree to build a 'New Retail' model to equip shopkeepers with technology, logistics and marketing capabilities.
- Under this model, the consumers be able to place orders and get instant deliveries.
- The company has partnered with a large network of local shops, restaurants & groceries for accepting Payments & will soon extend 'New Retail' services to them.

OYO inks pact with SBI, Bank of Baroda

- OYO has inked an MoU with SBI and Bank of Baroda for extending support to budget hotels and create jobs across levels.
- The MoU will enable financial support **for OYO's** existing & potential hotel partners for fuelling transformation and standardisation at their properties.
- These loans will help individuals hailing from Tier II and III cities to be self-employed and run their own budget assets.

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 ₹20 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 ₹18 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 ₹,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 ₹,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.

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 ₹0.36 crore.
- The plant, spread over 20 acres, is expected to generate 7,000 MWhr/year with a projected savings of ₹0 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.

Manufacturers print buy back price on bottles

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

BoB inks pacts with ten companies

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

CPPIB to step up investments in India

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

Jana Small Finance Bank launches operations

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

Amazon hits \$900 billion valuation

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

Govt announces capital infusion in 5 PSB's

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

RBI to launch new 100 rupee note

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

Steel Ministry announces pension scheme

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

Nabard award to Repco Micro Finance Ltd

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

WPI jumps to 5.77% in June

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

LIC to acquire 51% stake in IDBI Bank

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

PNB opens centralised loan processing centre

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

India to remain fastest growing economy

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

Transformation Series Challenge by YES Bank

- YES Bank, through partnerships with tech giants such as Microsoft, Cisco, IBM and Adobe has unveiled the 7th edition of 'Transformation Series Challenge'.
- **The Theme of the event is 'tech for urban development'**.
- The issues identified include over-utilisation of plastic and declining air quality in cities.
- Rana Kapoor is Managing Director and Chief Executive of YES Bank.

Malhotra to head Investment Banking of HSBC

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

MF transactions through Facebook messenger

- HDFC securities announced the launch of Mutual Funds (MF) transactional capabilities on Facebook Messenger through their virtual assistant, Arya.

- This makes the company the first broker in the Asia Pacific region for initiating a social media platform for trading mutual funds.
- This particular feature facilitates a quick overview of total portfolio holdings.

4th National Conclave on Mines & Minerals

- The Ministry of Mines organized the 4th National Conclave on Mines & Minerals on 13th July 2018 at Indore.
- CM of MP, Shri Shivraj Singh was the chief guest of the conclave.
- Also, an app of NALCO – NAMASYA was launched by the Ministers.
- For the first time, the conclave had an exhibition in which States put up stalls to showcase their more than 100 mineral blocks which were in the auction.

L&T to build 'tallest' govt. office building

- Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has bagged a construction project to build govt office building at Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh.
- The office will be the tallest government office building in India.
- The buildings will house the headquarters of the various government departments of Andhra Pradesh.
- The project has to its credit of being the 1st Steel Diagrid project with Automatic Climbing Formwork System.

PAN verification during FPI share allotment

- Markets regulator SEBI has said that allotment of shares to foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) in initial public offers would need to be verified with PANs.
- This step is taken as a check against any breach of investment limit through multiple entities.
- Under the rules, purchase of equity shares of each firm by a single FPI would have to be below 10% of **the firm's total issued capital.**

Stock brokers can't accept cash from clients

- Investors **can no longer deposit cash in their broker's account** to trade in stocks.
- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) made it mandatory for stock brokers to accept client funds only by way of bank or electronic transfers such as cheques and mobile banking.
- **The move is in line with SEBI's plans to encourage paperless and cashless stock market trading.**

RBI flags States' fiscal stress

- RBI has pointed to the fiscal stress that States are facing due to several factors.
- **In a report 'State Finances: A Study of Budgets of 2017-18 and 2018-19,' RBI noted that States' consolidated gross fiscal deficit (GFD) overshoot the budget estimates in 2017-18.**

- The report is an annual publication that provides information, analysis and an assessment of the finances of state governments.

Inflation now at a 5-month high of 5%

- Retail inflation spiked to a five-month high of 5% in June on costlier fuel.
- The retail inflation, based on the Consumer Price Index, stood at 4.87% in May. It was 1.46% in June 2017.
- As per the data released by the Central Statistics Office, the inflation in the food basket was 2.91%, compared to 3.1% in May.

Industrial growth slips to 7-month low

- Industrial production growth slipped to a 7 month low of 3.2% in May mainly due sluggish performance of manufacturing and power sectors.
- The mining sector output recorded an impressive growth of 5.7% while the FMCG sector was the worst performer as its output declined by 2.6%.
- In terms of industries, 13 out of 23 industry groups in the manufacturing sector have shown positive growth.

Demand draft to bear name of purchaser

- RBI has directed banks to incorporate the name of purchaser in demand draft in a bid to address concerns of money laundering.
- RBI has made required changes in this regard in the KYC norms, which will come into effect from September 15.
- The step is being taken to address concerns arising out of the anonymity provided by payments through demand drafts & its possible misuse for money laundering

Airtel Payments Bank gets RBI nod

- Airtel Payments Bank has received requisite approvals from the RBI to begin taking in new customers.
- The development comes nearly 7 months after Airtel along with Airtel Payments Bank came under fire for allegedly opening payments bank accounts of its mobile subscribers without their consent.
- UIDAI has allowed them to use the 12-digit unique identification number-based e-KYC.

SEBI to come out with consultation paper

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) will soon come out with a consultation paper on making it mandatory for large corporates to meet one-fourth of their financing needs through bond market.
- SEBI will discuss with stakeholders before finalising the framework for corporates.

- SEBI is the regulator for the securities market in India and its chairman is Ajay Tyagi.

Vistara orders jets from Airbus & Boeing

- Vistara, a joint venture between Singapore Airlines and Tata Sons, on Wednesday said that it has placed a firm order with both US planemaker Boeing and European aircraft manufacturer Airbus worth \$3.1 billion.
- The move is taken as an expansion of its domestic network and to mount medium to long-haul flights on international routes.
- The current CEO of Vistara is Leslie Thng.

Connaught Place: 9th most costly location

- According to the report of property consultant **CBRE, New Delhi's Connaught Place is the 9th most expensive office location in the world with an annual rent of \$153 per sq ft.**
- The ranking was topped by Hong Kong at the 1st position followed by London.
- The survey highlighted that prime office occupancy cost growth was consistent across all regions in the past 12 months.

India becomes 69th shareholder of EBRD

- India has been formally announced as the 69th shareholder of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).
- India has only taken a shareholding in EBRD but it will not be a recipient of EBRD financing.
- London-headquartered EBRD is a multilateral development bank set up in 1991 after the fall of the Berlin Wall to promote private & entrepreneurial initiative in emerging Europe.

India's first private UAV factory

- **India's first private sector unit for manufacturing unmanned air vehicles (UAV) and light bullet proof vehicles (LBPV) will be set up by DCM Shriram Industries Group in Kota.**
- These UAVs and LBPVs are likely to be used by defence and para-military forces in the country.
- The new defence unit in Kota is being set up under **'Make in India' initiative of the union government.**

Google to mentor local AI start-ups

- **Google has announced 'Launchpad Accelerator India,' a mentorship program that would aim to support Indian start-ups that deploy artificial intelligence and machine learning to build solutions for local needs.**
- The three-month accelerator will provide a cohort of 8-10 Indian start-ups with the mentorship of Google.
- The start-ups will also get up to \$1,00,000 of Google Cloud credits.

HDFC Group's market cap crosses ₹10 trillion

- Market capitalisation of Deepak Parekh-led financial services conglomerate - HDFC Group has crossed the ₹10 trillion mark.
- HDFC group is the 2nd Indian business house after the Tata group to achieve this feat.
- The group has 4 listed companies - Housing Finance Development Corp, HDFC Bank, HDFC Standard Life & Gruh Finance.
- HDFC Bank is India's 3rd most valued firm in terms of market cap.

Manufacturing sector records robust growth

- RBI has revealed that India's manufacturing sector recorded robust growth in sales and improvement in operating profit growth in the 4th quarter of the last fiscal.
- Companies posted sales of Rs. 9.25 lakh crore in the last quarter of 2017-18.
- Operating profit growth of the manufacturing sector improved despite increase in input costs, due to higher growth in value of production.

Modi inaugurated largest mobile factory

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South Korean President Moon Jae-in visited Noida and inaugurated the New Mobile Manufacturing Plant of Samsung at Noida.
- Notably, it will be the world's largest mobile factory.
- With the beginning of this New Plant, India's Make In India and Skill India Will get a major Push in the country.

Best-ever Booker Prize winner

- **'The English Patient' was voted as the best-ever Man Booker Prize winner, celebrating five decades of this prestigious literary award.**
- **Michael Ondaatje's 'The English Patient' won the Booker Prize in the year 1992 and was made in a movie in 1996 that won nine academy awards.**
- The novel beat 4 other novels in an online poll that received a total of 9,000 votes.

World's largest mobile factory

- Samsung has set up what is the world's largest mobile factory at Sector 81 in Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
- Not just mobiles, the expansion of current facility will double Samsung's production capacity of consumer electronics like refrigerators.
- Samsung is currently making 67 million smartphones in India & with the new plant being functional, it is expected to manufacture nearly 120 million phones.

PSU banks plan to raise over Rs 50,000 cr

- Public sector banks are planning to tap the markets to raise more than Rs 50,000 crore this fiscal.

- Out of 21 public sector banks, 13 have already taken the approval of their boards or shareholders for raising capital through the equity market.
- Capital is very much required for these banks as they are saddled with non-performing assets (NPAs) of about Rs 10 lakh crore.

Rupee among top 10 EM currencies

- The rupee has been ranked as one of the 10 best-performing 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 **NelsonHall'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 will 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.

RBI grants licence to Bank of China

- The Reserve Bank of India has issued the license to Bank of China to launch operations in India.
- With this, Bank of China becomes the second Chinese bank after the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China to have a branch in India.
- Bank of China is one of the four biggest state-owned commercial banks in China.
- Bank of China opened its first branch in South Asia in Pakistan's Karachi in 2017.

IFC invests \$100 mn in M&M arm

- World Bank Group member IFC has invested \$100 million in Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Ltd.
- This would enable the Mahindra group company to augment its growth by extending loans to individuals along with financing small and medium enterprises.
- The investment will be through secured non-convertible debentures.

Small savings interest rates unchanged

- The government has kept the interest rates on small savings schemes, including NSC and PPF, unchanged for the July-September quarter.
- PPF and NSC will fetch annual interest rate of 7.6% while KVP will yield 7.3% and mature in 11 months.
- The move is aimed at matching the hardening interest rates in the banking sector.

TPREL commissions 100 Mw solar project

- TPREL, an arm of Mumbai-based private power producer Tata Power announced it has commissioned a 100 Megawatt solar power project at Anthapuramu Solar Park in Andhra Pradesh.
- With this, the overall operating renewable energy capacity of the company stands at 2,215 Mw in India.
- The project is under the second phase of Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission through Viability Gap Funding.

IndiaFirst Ties Up With Oxigen

- IndiaFirst Life Insurance Company Limited, a joint venture between Bank of Baroda, Andhra Bank and Legal and General (UK), has announced its tie-up with Oxigen Services India Pvt. Ltd.
- It will establish the distribution of its insurance products at Oxigen retail outlets.
- Oxigen is one of the leading providers of money transfers and prepaid recharges as low as Rs. 10.

Bharti Infratel to merge

- The Bharti Infratel has got the approval of competition watchdog Competition Commission of India for merging its operations with Indus Towers.
- The proposed merger values Indus Towers at an enterprise valuation of ₹71,500 crore & will create

one of the largest mobile tower entities worldwide with 1.63 lakh towers in all 22 telecom circles.

- The combined company will own 100% of Indus Towers.

The committee on NPAs submits its report

- The Sunil Mehta committee formed to tackle Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) & creating credit capacity submitted its report.
- The Sunil Mehta panel presented project 'Sashakt' and has recommended a five-pronged strategy.
- The plan will result in creating additional jobs by reviving businesses and will bring in credible long term external capital to limit the burden on the domestic banking sector.

2021 census data to be stored electronically

- The data collected in the 2021 Census will be stored electronically, the first time since the first decennial exercise in 1951 after independence.
- The schedules and other connected papers shall be disposed of totally or in part by the Director of Census Operations, after creating an electronic record of such documents.
- The spokesperson said enumerators would start "house listing" in 2020.

Index of Eight Core Industries

- The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
- The combined Index of Eight Core Industries stands at 131.4 in May, 2018, which was 3.6 per cent higher as compared to the index of May 2017.
- Core industry can be defined as the main industry of the economy.

RCEP trade bloc at Tokyo meet 2018

- Asian trade ministers from the 16-nation Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, which includes China, Japan and India but not the US, met in Tokyo on 1st July.
- The partnership would include the 10 members of the ASEAN as well as South Korea, Australia & New Zealand.
- The development in RCEP could put pressure on the US to consider rejoining the TPP, as the US-China trade war continues.

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.

FPI outflow hits 10-year high at Rs 48,000 cr

- Overseas investors have pulled out nearly Rs 48,000 crore from Indian capital markets in the first 6 months of 2018, making it the steepest outflow in a decade.
- They withdrew Rs 41,433 crore from the debt markets & Rs 6,430 crore from equities during Jan-June period.
- This is only the second time, when FPIs had taken bearish stance on the capital markets in the first 6 months of the year.

FDI growth hits 5-year low in 2017-18

- Foreign direct investment in India seems to be petering out with the inflows growth rate recording a five-year low of 3% at USD 44.85 billion in 2017-18.
- Foreign inflows in the country grew by 8.67% in 2016-17, 29% in 2015-16 and 27% in 2014-15.
- Mauritius has emerged as the largest source of FDI in India with USD 15.94 billion in 2017-18 followed by Singapore, Netherlands, US & Japan.

Tie-up to develop commodity derivatives market

- Bombay Stock Exchange has entered into an agreement with Bombay Metal Exchange for growth & systematic development of commodity derivatives markets in non-ferrous metals complex.
- Through this MoU, BSE & BME will work jointly on initiatives to deepen the understanding of commodity market among stakeholders.
- BME will assist BSE in designing innovative deliverable products in commodities.

Money in Swiss banks

- India has moved up to 73rd place in terms of money parked by its citizens & companies with Swiss banks.
- India had slipped to 88th place with a 44% plunge in such funds in 2016, but the latest data shows an increase of over 50% during 2017 to CHF 1.01 billion (about Rs 7,000 cr).
- UK continued to account for the largest chunk at about CHF 403 billion of the total foreign money with Swiss banks

IRDAI gives nod to LIC to buy stake in IDBI

- Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India has approved a proposal by LIC to raise its stake in IDBI Bank up to 51% from current 10.82%.
- It will save government from having to infuse more funds into IDBI Bank, which had received Rs 10,610 crore last fiscal, the most by any public-sector bank.
- The acquisition will be seen only as an investment & LIC will gradually lower its stake

Sports

Smriti equals fastest T20 half-century

- India's batswoman **Smriti Mandhana** equalled the record for the fastest half-century in women's T20 cricket during a Kia Super League.
- **Mandhana equalled New Zealand's Sophie Devine's** record of a half-century off 18 balls, set against India during a T20 International in 2015.
- Mandhana also smashed the tournament record for the fastest fifty.

Britain's Thomas wins maiden Tour de France

- Britain's Geraint Thomas has won his maiden 2018 Tour de France.
- Thomas beat Tom Dumoulin of Team Sunweb by one minute and 51 seconds.
- Geraint Thomas became the third Briton to win the Tour de France when he crossed the finish line in Paris.
- The Tour de France is an annual men's multiple stage bicycle race primarily held in France.

Neeraj Chopra won gold in Javelin

- Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra won a gold in the Savo Games in Finland, beating his Chinese Taipei rival Chao-Tsun Cheng.

- Neeraj threw 85.69m in the event held at Lapinlahti, Finland, where he is undergoing training as part of preparations for the Asian Games.
- Cheng managed 82.52m to take the second place.

Sourabh Verma won Russian Open

- Sourabh Verma lifted the 2018 Russian Open Badminton trophy at Vladivostok on
- In the title clash, Sourabh beat Japan's Koki Watanabe and won his first title of the season.
- Sourabh Verma had recently won the All India senior ranking tournament in Bangalore to qualify for the Asian Games squad.

Bajrang Punia, Pinki win gold in wrestling

- In Wrestling, Bajrang Punia has won his second consecutive international gold while Sandeep Tomar won silver medal at the Yasar Dogu International in Istanbul, Turkey.
- Indian wrestlers returned with 10 medals, including seven by women, from the ranking event.
- In the women's competition, Pinki was the lone gold medallist in the 55kg category.

Sourabh lifts Russian Open Badminton trophy

- Ace Indian shuttler Sourabh Verma lifted the Russian Open Badminton trophy at Vladivostok.
- In the title clash, Sourabh came back from a game behind to beat Japan's Koki Watanabe, 18-21, 21-12, 21-17, and win his first title of the season.
- He had clinched the Chinese Taipei Grand Pri Gold and finished runners-up at the Bitburger Open in 2016.

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.

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.

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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.

Mansi settles for silver at Junior Wrestling

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

Alisson is world's most expensive goalie

- Brazil goalkeeper Alisson Becker became the world's most expensive goalkeeper when he joined Liverpool from Roma.

- Roma said the deal for Brazil's starting goalkeeper at the World Cup in Russia "could be worth up to 72.5 million euros" (\$84.5 million).
- He has been at Roma for two years, playing 37 Serie A games in 2017-18.

Alisson became Brazil's starting goalkeeper in 2016.

- IOC adds 7 medal events to 2022 Winter Games
- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has added seven medal events to the 2022 Beijing Winter Games.
- The next Winter Olympics will now include: women's monobob, Big Air freestyle skiing for men and women, plus mixed team events in short track speed skating, ski jumping, ski aerials and snowboardcross.
- **Women's ice hockey will grow by two teams to become a 10-nation lineup.**

Chopra wins Gold at Sotteville Athletics Meet

- Neeraj Chopra, India's javelin star, struck Gold in the Meeting International de Sotteville-les-Rouen in France.
- Chopra's throw of 85.17m was enough to clinch the top spot on the podium.
- The winning distance from Chopra was, however, less than the 86.47m he achieved for gold at Gold Coast CWG.
- Neeraj is a part of India's squad for the Asian Games 2018.

Marc Marquez Wins German Grand Prix

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

Vinesh grabs gold at Grand Prix of Spain

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

Nozomi Okuhara wins Thailand Open 2018

- Nozomi Okuhara of Japan wins Thailand Open 2018 which was held in Bangkok.
- She defeated PV Sindhu 21-15, 21-18 in 50 minutes match. By virtue of this win, Okuhara has taken a 6-5 head-to-head win-loss record over Sindhu.

- The last time the duo met at the All England Championships earlier this year, it was Sindhu who prevailed over the Okuhara.

Awards at FIFA World Cup 2018

- Croatia captain Luka Modric has won the FIFA Golden Ball for the best player at the World Cup 2018.
- England national football captain Harry Kane was awarded the Golden Boot for scoring most goals (6) in FIFA World Cup 2018.
- **Belgium's Thibaut Courtois won the Golden Glove as the best goalkeeper of FIFA World Cup 2018.**

France brings FIFA world cup

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

Brij Bhushan to be Chef de Mission

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

Djokovic clinches fourth Wimbledon title

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

Mike & Jack win 2018 Wimbledon men's double

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

Angelique Kerber wins Wimbledon 2018

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

Elevanil wins gold in junior shooting meet

- Young Indian shooter Elavenil Valarivan claimed the women's air rifle gold medal in the 28th Meeting of Shooting Hopes junior international championship in Plzen, Czech Republic.
- She shot 250.8 in the final to get the better of Italy's Nicole Gabrielli (249.7). She had also topped the qualification with 628.0.
- Aleksandra Szutko of Poland won the bronze with 228.2.

Hima Das scripts history, wins gold in 400m

- Hima Das has scripted history by becoming the 1st Indian woman to win a gold at the IAAF World Under-20 Athletics Championships.
- Das clocked 51.46 secs in the 400m final to clinch the gold medal.
- She is also the first Indian track athlete to have won a medal in the history of this competition.
- Das now joins Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, who won a gold in Poland in the last edition in 2016.

Olympic torch relay to start in Fukushima

- Organizers of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics say the torch relay will start in Fukushima, an area hit by the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster.
- The relay will start on March 26, 2020 in Fukushima and will head southward to Okinawa before making its way north again and arriving in Tokyo on July 10.
- The route was approved by the organizing committee.

India bag four medals at Asian Archery

- India has bagged four medals in the Asia Cup World Archery Ranking Tournament Stage 3 in Taipei.
- The feat comprised 3 silver medals and a bronze. India finished joint third with Iran in the championship.
- India ended their campaign behind toppers Korea and hosts Chinese Taipei.

PR Sreejesh to lead Indian hockey team

- Goalkeeper P.R. Sreejesh will lead the 18-member Indian Men's Hockey Team at the 18th Asian Games, slated to be held in Jakarta and Palembang from August 18.
- Midfielder Chinglensana Singh Kangujam has been named the Vice Captain for the tournament.

- Indian forward Akashdeep Singh has returned to the Indian squad.

Dhoni played 500 international matches

- The Indian team's senior-most player Mahendra Singh Dhoni reached the coveted milestone of playing 500 international matches during the second T20 International against England.
- In doing so, Dhoni became the third Indian after Sachin Tendulkar (664) and Rahul Dravid (509) to breach the 500 match barrier in international cricket.
- He has played 90 Test matches and 318 One Day Internationals.

Dalabehera bags bronze in World Weightlifting

- Indian lifter Jhilli Dalabehera has bagged the bronze medal in the 2018 IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships at Tashkent.
- She lifted 167 kg in the 48 kg category to finish third on the podium.
- According to Indian Weightlifting Federation Secretary General Sahdev Yadav, Jhilli is the 2nd woman lifter after Saikhom Mirabai Chanu in 2013 to win a medal in the Junior World Championships.

Dipa Karmakar clinches gold medal

- India's premier gymnast Dipa Karmakar clinched a gold medal in the vault event of FIG Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup at Mersin in Turkey.
- Karmakar who had finished fourth in the vault event at the 2016 Rio Olympics, scored 14.150 to win gold.
- This is Dipa's first medal in a World Challenge Cup. She had topped the qualification also with a score of 13.400.

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.

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 sports-specific 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 six-nation 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

India plans to buy missile shield from U.S.

- India is in talks with the U.S. to procure an advanced air defence system to defend the National Capital Region (NCR) from aerial attacks.
- The process for procuring the National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System-II (NASAMS-II), estimated at \$1 billion, has been initiated.
- The NASAMS was developed by Raytheon in partnership with KONGSBERG Defence and Aerospace of Norway.

International Army Games 2018 declared open

- The International Army Games 2018 at Patriot Park in Moscow region has been declared open by Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu.
- The games are being held at 24 training grounds in 7 countries namely Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Iran, Kazakhstan, China and Russia.
- Indian teams are taking part in two major competitions - Tank Biathlon event and Elbrus Ring competition.

'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.

International Army Games 2018, Moscow

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

IAF Participates "Pitch Black" War Exercise

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) is participating in the multinational "Pitch Black" warfare exercise in Australia for the first time.

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

BrahMos supersonic missile test-fired

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

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

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

INS Tarangini to take part in Tall Ship Races

- INS Tarangini arrived at her 7th port, Sunderland in the UK, during her Lokayan-18 voyage and to take **part in the prestigious 'Tall Ship Races 2018'.**
- The vessel commenced Lokayan-18 on 10 Apr from Kochi & is set to cover a distance of 20,000 nautical miles.
- **'Sail Training International' organises tall ship races** to promote international friendship between sailors and the visitors.

Indian Naval aircraft deployed for RIMPAC

- Indian Navy's P8I long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft from INS Rajali has inducted at Hawaii for participating in the Rim of Pacific Multinational Naval exercise.
- This is the first time ever that an Indian Naval aircraft has traversed so far east into the Pacific.
- The aircraft will form part of the largest naval exercise which has 26 nations participating in this year's edition.

South Korea scraps annual government war drill

- South Korea has decided to scrap an annual government mobilisation drill this year as part of a suspended joint exercise with US.

- The Ulchi drill, which aims at examining the country's war preparedness, usually takes place in tandem with joint Freedom Guardian military exercise with US.
- The suspension of the combined exercise could facilitate ongoing nuclear talks between North Korea & US.

India reconsidering fighter jet programme

- India has conveyed to Russia its unwillingness to go ahead with the joint development of a fifth-generation fighter aircraft primarily due to high cost involved in the project.
- India and Russia had signed an inter-governmental agreement for the mega project in 2007.
- In December 2010, India had agreed to pay USD 295 million towards the preliminary design of the fighter jet.

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 crore 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 sailing vessel 'Thuriya'** 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 is capable of bringing targets across China including its prominent cities like Beijing & Shanghai under its range.

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.

Nirbhaya rapists to be hanged: SC

- The Supreme Court upheld the death penalty for the convicts of the 2012 Nirbhaya gangrape case, after hearing a review petition seeking a reduction of sentence.
- The death penalty was awarded to four of the six convicts, while the fifth, a juvenile, was sent to a correction home and the sixth had committed suicide inside the Tihar Central Jail.

SC for Live-Streaming Of Court Hearings

- Senior lawyer Indira Jaising and others filed a petition for live streaming of Court's proceedings.
- The Centre in its reply to the petition said if the top court takes a policy decision; it can facilitate the setting up of a separate channel for the Supreme Court.
- Chief Justice Deepak Misra said, "The concept of access to justice can be stretched through live streaming."

Section 144 to be used in animal emergencies

- The National Board of Wildlife has recommended that states use Section 144, which prohibits the assembly of four or more people, during wildlife emergencies.
- The provision will be used to "prevent people from gathering in large numbers, which aggravates wildlife emergency situations".
- The Centre is expected to issue advisories to the state governments regarding the recommendation.

Raman Singh defeats no-confidence motion

- A no-trust motion moved by the Congress against the Raman Singh-led BJP Government was defeated by a voice vote in the Chhattisgarh Assembly.
- This was the third no-trust motion faced by the Singh government, in power since 2013.
- Chhattisgarh has been under the BJP rule since 2003 and will be going to the polls later this year.

SC : CJI is '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".

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.

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 has no 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.

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.