

WEEKLY

CURRENT AFFAIRS CAPSULE

14TH OCTOBER – 20TH OCTOBER 2018

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Awards & Honours

Minal Patel awarded at White House

- Minal Patel Davis has been honoured with a Presidential award by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.
- She has been awarded for her extraordinary contribution towards combatting human trafficking in Houston.
- She is the Special Advisor on Human Trafficking to Houston Mayor.
- She is a past speaker at the United Nations World Humanitarian Summit.

Piyush Goyal received Carnot prize

- Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania awarded 4th annual Carnot Prize to Union Minister Piyush Goyal.
- **Carnot Prize is the Kleinman Center's annual** recognition of distinguished contributions to energy policy through scholarship or practice.
- Carnot Prize is named after French physicist Nicolas Sadi Carnot.

- The Breakthrough Prize is sponsored by Sergey Brin, Priscilla Chan and Mark Zuckerberg, Ma Huateng, Yuri and Julia Milner, and Anne Wojcicki.

Suheil Tandon won IOC Grant award

- Suheil Tandon has won the International Olympic Committee's Sport and Active Society Commission's Grant Award.
- The award has been given for his contribution to the development of sports.
- The award ceremony was held at Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Suheil is the founder of Pro Sport Development (PSD) and Executive Director of Martha Farrell Foundation.

Anna Burns won Man Booker Prize

- Author Anna Burns won the Man Booker Prize for her novel "Milkman".
- She has become the first Northern Irish writer and the first woman since 2013 to win the Man Booker Prize.
- Milkman, set in an unnamed city in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, is a coming-of-age story about a young girl's affair with a married man.

Khayyam named for Hridaynath Award

- Mohammed Zahur Khayyam Hashmi has been named for 2018 Hridaynath Award for Lifetime Achievement.
- The Award has been instituted by the Hridayesh Arts and carries a cash prize of Rs 100,000 and a memento.
- He is famously known as 'Khayyam' and is a composer, lyricist and writer.
- The other past recipients of the awards are Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, and Amitabh Bachchan.

IAF to hold competition for drones technology

- **The Indian Air Force (IAF) has announced India's first** competition in the defence sector, the Mehar Baba Prize.
- The IAF is holding a competition for participants to build a swarm of 50 drones.
- The IAF will pick up to three winners, each of whom will get Rs. 10 lakh in prize money.
- The Mehar Baba Prize has been named after Commodore Mehar Singh, DSO MVC, who was often called Mehar Baba.

Prema won social entrepreneurship award

- Prema Gopalan, founder of Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), was awarded the 8th Social Entrepreneur of the Year award, 2018.
- **She was awarded for her work in promoting women's** entrepreneurship at the grassroots and ensuring rural livelihood.
- The award was jointly founded by Jubilant Bhartia Foundation and Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship in 2010.

Breakthrough Prize winners announced

- The winners of the 2019 Breakthrough Prize were announced on 17 October 2018.
- Nine researchers were awarded a total of \$22 million for their innovations in mathematics, fundamental physics and the life sciences.

H M Pernal gets Vishwa Konkani book award

- 'Beeg Ani Beegath', a collection of short stories in Konkani by well-known writer, journalist and critic H M Pernal has bagged the prestigious 'Vimala V Pai Vishwa' Konkani best book award for the year 2018.
- Konkani poet Sharathchandra Shenoy won the Vishwa Konkani best poetry award for his book 'Idam Na Mama'.
- Each award carries a purse of Rs one lakh each, a certificate, memento and shawl.

Conde won alternative Nobel

- Maryse Conde won an alternative award formed in protest to the Nobel Literature Prize which got cancelled in 2018.
- Maryse Condé won the New Academy prize in literature.
- The New Academy was founded by more than 100 Swedish writers, artists and journalists.
- Condé is the author of some 20 novels, including Desirada, Segu and Crossing the Mangrove

Sikkim won '100% Organic State' UN Award

- Sikkim has won 2018 UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's Future Policy for Gold Award.
- The award was given for its achievement in becoming the world's first totally organic agriculture state.
- Sikkim was declared fully organic state in 2016 after phasing out chemical fertilisers and pesticides.

Days & Events

World Osteoporosis Day observed on 20 October

- World Osteoporosis Day 2018 is observed on October 20.
- The day is meant to raise awareness about osteoporosis, a condition which causes the bones to become weak and brittle.
- World Osteoporosis Day 2018 calls for global action in order to improve bone health and prevent fractures caused by osteoporosis.
- The day is organized by the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF).

Int Day for the Eradication of Poverty

- International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is observed every year on 17 October.
- The theme for 2018 is "Coming together with those furthest behind to build an inclusive world of universal respect for human rights and dignity".
- The aim is to promote **people's awareness of the need to eradicate poverty and destitution worldwide, particularly in developing countries.**

World Food Day observed on 16 October

- World Food Day is held annually on the 16th of October.
- This day is dedicated to tackle the problem of global hunger.
- The theme for the year 2018 is "Our Actions Are Our Future".
- Every year World Food Day is celebrated in the honour of the founding date of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
- FAO was launched by the United Nations in the year 1945.

Rashtriya Mahila Kisan Diwas: 15 Oct

- Rashtriya Mahila Kisan Diwas is observed on 15 October in India.
- The day is being celebrated to increase the active participation of women in agriculture.
- In 2016, the Ministry of Agriculture had decided to observe 15th October as Rashtriya Mahila Kisan Diwas.
- The Ministry will discuss the challenges that women farmers face in crop cultivation, animal husbandry, dairying and fisheries.

International Day of Rural Women on 15 Oct

- International Day of Rural Women is observed on 15 October every year.
- The day recognizes **rural women's importance** in enhancing agricultural and rural development worldwide.
- **The theme for the year 2018 is "Sustainable infrastructure, services and social protection for gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls".**

International Affairs

2019 Military World Games in China

- The 2019 Military World Games will be held in China.
- It will for the first time include badminton, tennis, table tennis and men's gymnastics.
- The Military World Games is a multi-sport event for the armed forces being organised by the International Military Sports Council every four years since 1995.
- India hosted the games in 2007.

Amphibious plane completed maiden flight test

- **China's indigenously designed and built amphibious aircraft 'AG600'** successfully carried out its first take-off and landing tests on 20 October 2018.
- The aircraft has been developed and built by Aviation Industry Corporation of China.
- The aircraft code-named 'Kunlong' was piloted by four crew members.
- It will be mainly used for maritime rescue, fighting forest fires and marine monitoring.

World's longest bridge to be opened on 24 Oct

- The world's longest sea bridge 'Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge' will be opened on 24 October 2018.
- The 55-kilometre-long bridge is situated in the Lingdingyang waters of the Pearl River Estuary.
- The bridge connects the cities of Hong Kong, Macau and Zhuhai across the South China Sea.
- The construction of the bridge begun in December 2009.

China & ASEAN will hold joint naval exercises

- China and Southeast Asian Nations will hold their first joint maritime exercises from 22 October 2018.
- The navies of China and ASEAN countries will hold 'ASEAN-China Maritime Exercise' in the South China Sea.
- **The exercise with China's navy will include** operations like maritime safety, medical evacuation, and search and rescue procedures.

Druk Nyamrup to form new govt in Bhutan

- The Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa (DNT) will form the new government in Bhutan.
- The party has won 30 seats in 47 member National Assembly.
- DNT President Dr Lotay Tshering won from South Thimphu constituency and he is set to form the new government.
- **This is the first time in Bhutan's decade-old** parliamentary democracy that a new party has been chosen to form the government.

US announced fresh sanctions on Iran

- The United States Treasury has announced fresh sanctions on Iran, targeting banks and investment companies.
- The new sanctions focused on Bank Mellat and Mehr Eqtesad Bank.
- The US is also imposing sanctions on Iran Tractor Manufacturing Company, Steel Company and others linked to investment, commodities and engineering.

Putin, al-Sisi signed co-operation treaty

- Russian President Vladimir Putin and the President of Egypt Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi have signed a strategic co-operation treaty.
- The treaty, designed to increase trade, military and other ties, was signed on 17 October 2018 in Sochi, Russia.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed on strategic political consultations was signed **between the two countries' foreign ministries.**

China tests world's largest unmanned drone

- **China has successfully tested the world's largest** unmanned transport drone which can carry a payload of 1.5 tonnes.

- A large commercial drone 'Feihong-98 (FH-98)' was developed and modified by China Academy of Aerospace Electronics Technology.
- It was adapted from the prototype of the Shifei Y5B, a China-developed transport plane.

Cannabis became legal in Canada

- Canada has become the second country to legalise possession and use of recreational marijuana.
- Medical marijuana has been legal in Canada since 2001.
- Uruguay was the first country to legalise marijuana, in 2013.
- For buying marijuana, consumers must be at least 18 years old, and the production, distribution or sale of cannabis products is an offence for minors.

Palestinians to lead developing country bloc

- The Palestinians will lead the biggest bloc of developing countries at the United Nations.
- On 16 October 2018, the General Assembly voted to grant Palestine temporary rights to act as chair of the 'Group of 77 plus China'.
- A resolution drafted by Egypt was adopted by a vote of 146 to 3 with 15 abstentions.

Festival of Fulpati celebrated in Nepal

- The festival of 'Fulpati' was celebrated in various parts of Nepal on 17 October 2018.
- Fulpati is observed on the seventh day of Dashain festival.
- Dashain is the biggest festival of Nepal and it began on first day of Navratri.
- The tradition started during the period of King Prithvi Narayan Shah.

6th RCEP Ministerial Meeting in Singapore

- The 6th RCEP Inter-sessional Ministerial Meeting (IMM) was held in Singapore on 12-13 October, 2018.
- The Ministers from 16 RCEP countries discussed a modern, comprehensive and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement among ASEAN and ASEAN's FTA partners.
- Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between ASEAN countries.

National Affairs

India's 1st tunnel railway station in HP

- For the first time in India, a railway station will be built inside a tunnel at a height of 3,000 metres, on the strategic Bilaspur-Manali-Leh line in Himachal Pradesh.
- The Keylong station in Himachal Pradesh will be the first on the railway network to be inside a tunnel.

- Keylong is the administrative centre of Lahaul and Spiti district.

GSI to organise exhibition of rocks, minerals

- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) will organise a two-day exhibition 'Bhusampada 2018' of rocks, minerals and fossils from 22 October 2018.
- Various scientific instruments being used in surveys, mineral exploration, remote sensing, earthquake geology will be displayed at the exhibition.
- The event will provide a suitable platform for students to interact with geo-scientists.

Prez Kovind to inaugurate Peace Conference

- President Ram Nath Kovind will inaugurate a three-day 'Vishwa Shanti Ahimsa Sammelan' (peace conference) in Nashik district of Maharashtra on October 22, 2018.
- 'Vishwa Shanti Ahimsa Sammelan' is organised by Bhagwan Rishabhdev Murti Nirmaan Samiti.
- President Kovind will also present the first international 'Bhagwan Rishabhdev Award' to Teerthanker Mahaveer University.

WDC meet in Mumbai from Oct. 22

- The World Diamond Council (WDC) will hold its 14th annual general meeting in Mumbai on October 22 - 23, 2018.
- The meeting will be hosted by The Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council.
- The focus will be on reforming the Kimberley Process and WDC System of Warranties.
- Kimberley Process was established in 2000 to **prevent 'conflict diamonds' from entering the mainstream rough diamond market.**

6th meeting of NDMA held

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the sixth meeting of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) at New Delhi on 18 October 2018.
- NDMA is an agency of the Ministry of Home Affairs
- NDMA was established through the Disaster Management Act enacted by the Government of India in may 30 2005.
- The Prime Minister is the ex-officio chairperson of NDMA.

Hry to form GST Appellate Tribunal

- Haryana Government has decided to constitute State Bench of Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal in Hisar for speedy settlement of matters related to Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- The State Government would soon send its request to the Central Government.
- Central GST Act, 2017 provides that the Central Government would constitute an Appellate Tribunal known as GST Tribunal.

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Festival to promote organic farming

- The Women and Child Development Ministry will organise the fifth edition of the 'Women of India Organic Festival' in Delhi.
- It will be held from 26 October 2018 to 4 November 2018.
- The move aims to empower women to boost organic culture and promote women organic farmers and entrepreneurs.
- Women entrepreneurs would be coming together from across the country with their organic products

PM Modi to inaugurate Police Memorial & Museum

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the refurbished National Police Memorial and museum in Delhi on 21 October 2018.
- The museum will show the history, artefacts, uniform and gear of central and state police forces.
- The museum project is being steered by the Intelligence Bureau (IB) in coordination with the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs).

Two apps launched by North Central Railways

- The North Central Railways (NCR) launched two apps - 'NCR RASTA' (Railway assets Summarised Tracking Application) and 'Yatri RASTA' (Railway Approach to Station Tracking Application).
- The 'NCR RASTA' app is for the use of railway officers and staff and has the exact mapping of all railway assets.
- The 'Yatri RASTA' app will allow the general public to locate the railway stations easily.

Conclave on Capital Goods in Steel Sector

- Ministry of Steel will organise a Conclave on "Capital goods in Steel sector: Manufacture in India" in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, on 23 October 2018.
- The conclave is an initiative to promote domestic capacity and capability building and manufacturing of capital goods in the steel sector.
- It is being organized with the support of MECON and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

National meet to promote investment in AYUSH

- The Government of India will organise the 'First National Summit on Invest in AYUSH' on 4 November 2018.
- The aim is to encourage various public sector undertakings and private firms to invest in AYUSH.
- The event is jointly organised by NITI Aayog and Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion.

'Statue of Unity' to be unveiled on 31st Oct

- The 'Statue of Unity' dedicated to the 'Iron Man of India' Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is all set to be unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 31st October 2018.

- 'Statue of Unity' is the world's tallest statue.
- It is situated at Sadhu Bet Island on Narmada River in Gujarat.
- The foundation stone of this project was laid on 31st October 2013.

Man-animal conflict a State Declared Disaster

- Uttar Pradesh government has announced that the man-animal conflict will now be considered a 'State Declared Disaster'.
- This will bring such incidents under the ambit of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF).
- In cases of human death due to man-animal conflict, relief of Rs 5 lakh would be given to the family of deceased.
- Uttar Pradesh has 23 wildlife sanctuaries across 27 districts.

Kerala set to become first smoke-free State

- Kerala is set to become the first smoke-free State in the country with public sector oil companies eyeing 100% LPG penetration.
- The target has almost been achieved in most villages, mofussil towns and cities in the State.
- With three bottling plants at Kochi, Kozhikode, and Kollam, LPG is being brought to 49.79 lakh customers through 308 distributors.

Shahi litchi of North Bihar gets GI tag

- The Shahi litchi of North Bihar has got the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- It is the fourth product from the state after Jardalu mango, Katarni rice and Magahi paan to have got the GI tag.
- Shahi Litchi is mainly cultivated in Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Vaishali, East Champaran and Begusarai and some parts of adjoining areas in agro-climatic areas of the Bihar.

Govt launched 'Swastha Bharat Yatra' campaign

- The government launched a national campaign 'Swastha Bharat Yatra' on the occasion of World Food Day on 16 October 2018.
- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is leading this campaign to create consumer awareness about eating safe and nutritious food for becoming healthy.
- Under the campaign, cycle rally is being organised to sensitise people about eating safe food.

Korean War memorial to be built in Delhi

- A Korean War memorial will be built in New Delhi to commemorate India's role in the war which ended in 1953.
- The idea to build the memorial was proposed by the Korean War Veterans Association in India.

- As of now, there are Korean War memorials in about 20 countries around the world which had played a significant role in the war.

Bharosa women's centre inaugurated

- 'Bharosa', a 24-hour state-of-the-art centre to support women and children who are victims of violence and in distress, was inaugurated in Hyderabad Police on 16 October 2018 in Hyderabad.
- The centre would help these women along with dealing in POCSO cases.
- The centre is run by all women staff and provides counselling to women who face sexual assault or sexual abuse.

Andaman's Restricted Area Permit relaxed

- Foreign tourists can now visit Andaman and Nicobar Islands without any restrictions.
- The step was taken to boost the foreign tourist arrivals in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs had removed 29 inhabited Islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands under the Foreigners (Restricted Area) Order, 1963 from Restricted Area Permit (RAP) Regime till 31 December 2022.

EC launched 'C-vigil' app

- The Election Commission of India is introducing the unique internet based mobile app C-vigil in the upcoming assembly polls.
- **The 'C-vigil stands for citizens vigil' and will be operationalized for the first time as a pilot project.**
- The C-Vigil mobile application gives the common man the opportunity to click pictures and take videos of violations and send it to concerned election officers.

IRCTC launched AI chatbot 'Ask Disha'

- The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) launched a chatbot, Ask Disha.
- It is aimed at facilitating accessibility by answering users' queries pertaining to various services offered by IRCTC.
- Ask Disha- is powered by artificial intelligence (AI).
- The Ask Disha chatbot has been developed by IRCTC and CoRover Private Limited.

International Silk Fair to begin on 16 Oct

- 6th edition of India International Silk Fair (IISF) will be inaugurated in New Delhi on October 16, 2018.
- At the event, 108 exhibitors of silk and blended silk will display their products.
- The fair is organised by the Indian Silk Export Promotion Council.
- India is the second largest producer of silk in the world.

46th edition of IHGF-Delhi Fair Autumn-2018

- Minister of State for Textiles Ajay Tamta inaugurated **the 46th edition of world's largest IHGF-Delhi Fair** at India Expo Centre and Mart at Greater Noida on 14 October 2018.
- The fair, IHGF is held biannually and is organised by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts.
- The fair will remain open till 18th October, 2018.

India & World

Modi, Wickremesinghe held talks in Delhi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks with his Sri Lankan counterpart Ranil Wickremesinghe on 20 October 2018.
- They discussed a range of issues related to bilateral ties, including the progress of India-assisted development projects in the island nation.
- Wickremesinghe is on a three-day visit to India for boosting ties in a range of areas, including trade, investment and maritime security.

IFC launched \$1 billion masala bond programme

- International Finance Corporation (IFC) has launched a \$1 billion masala bond programme to fund its investment activities in India.
- The first tranche of \$100 million under the programme was issued on London Stock Exchange.
- Masala bonds are rupee-denominated borrowings issued overseas.
- IFC is a member of the World Bank Group.

Sitharaman to attend ADMM and ADMM-Plus

- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will attend 12th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) and the 5th ADMM-Plus in Singapore on 19 and 20 October 2018.
- The ADMM and ADMM-Plus serve as key Ministerial-level platforms in the regional security architecture, promoting strategic dialogue and practical cooperation between ASEAN and its partners.
- India is a full dialogue partner of the ASEAN.

Sri Lanka constituted a committee

- Sri Lanka has set up a committee to formulate a strategy to help Sri Lankan businesses invest more into the Indian market.
- **The 'Break Into India Strategy Committee' has been appointed by the Sri Lanka's Ministry of Development strategies and International trade.**
- The committee is mandated with preparing an interim report and a market entry strategy before the end of 2018.

India, China to sign agreement on security

- India and China will sign an internal security cooperation agreement on 22 October 2018.

- The proposed pact is expected to cover areas of intelligence sharing, exchange programme, sharing of best practices, and cooperation in disaster mitigation.
- This will be the first such agreement between the authorities of India and China which look after internal security of the respective countries.

Vice President to attend 'Asia Europe Meeting'

- Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu left for Brussels in Belgium on 17 October 2018.
- He will lead the Indian delegation at the 12th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit.
- The theme of 2018 ASEM Summit is "Global Partners for Global Challenges".
- The event is the highest platform for dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe in the areas of trade, investment, security and tourism.

UAE – India meeting on Investments

- The sixth meeting of the UAE – India High-Level Joint Task Force on Investments (**‘the Joint Task Force’**) was held in Mumbai on 15 October 2018.
- India will soon set up a special UAE desk to facilitate investments and resolve any business issues between the two nations.
- The meeting was also attended by Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Crown Prince's Court, Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

India and China to train Afghan diplomats

- India and China have launched their first joint programme for Afghanistan to train its diplomats.
- An understanding to launch a joint programme in Afghanistan was reached during an informal summit between India and China in April 2018.
- 10 Afghan Diplomats will be travelling to India for the 1st India-China joint training programme for Afghan diplomats.

Government Policies & Schemes

NITI Aayog launched guidelines for PPP in NCD

- NITI Aayog launched the model guidelines for Public - Private partnership in Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) on 17 October 2018.
- As per the guidelines, the private partner will invest in upgrading, building and deploying human resources.
- They will be responsible for operational management and service delivery.
- All service in NCD care facility will be offered by a single entity.

A government app to rope in volunteers

- Professionals keen on doing volunteer work will be provided a platform by the government through an app.
- The app named '#Self4Society' has been developed by MyGov.
- The app will have incentives, gamification and intra and inter-company competitions, and social networking.
- Initially this will be aimed at IT companies.

West Bengal govt. extends food security

- The West Bengal government has ensured food security to more than 8.5 crore people of the State under the **'Khadya Sathi'** scheme.
- As per this scheme, people would get rice and wheat at Rs 2 per kg.
- The Khadya Sathi Scheme was launched on January 27, 2016.
- Special assistance is also being given to the people of Jangalmahal and Hill areas besides Aila-affected areas and farmers of Singur.

'Youth Learner Licence' programme launched

- The government of India launched the 'Youth Road Safety Learners Licence' programme in New Delhi on 15 October 2018.
- The aim is to bring a formal and structured training program for young, first-time drivers as they apply for learner's license.
- The programme is an initiative to be run in collaboration with Diageo India and the Institute of Road Traffic Education.

Award scheme launched under 'Saubhagya'

- Government has announced 100 crore rupee award scheme under Saubhagya scheme.
- Awards would be provided for achieving 100% household electrification at DISCOM/Power Department level of the States.
- Saubhagya was launched in September 2017 to achieve the goal of universal household electrification in the country by 31st March 2019.

Science & Technology

China to launch three artificial moons

- China will launch three artificial moons in space in 2022.
- The artificial or man-made moon is a satellite carrying a huge space mirror, which can reflect the sun light to the Earth.
- The man-made moon is expected to be put on an orbit within 500 km from the Earth.
- Man-made moon is especially useful in civil area.

BepiColombo mission launched by ESA

- The European Space Agency (ESA) will be launching a scientific mission to Mercury on 20 October 2018.
- The mission is known as BepiColombo.
- The mission is being led by ESA with cooperation from the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).
- The BepiColombo spacecraft will measure the composition and magnetic field of Mercury.
- It will take approximately seven years to arrive at Mercury.

Oner system developed by CSIR

- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and Indian Institute of Toxicology Research (CSIR-IITR) have developed a technology for disinfecting water.
- The technology has been named 'Oner'.
- It is useful for continuous treatment of water and eliminates all disease causing pathogens such as virus, bacteria etc.
- The technology can be used both at domestic and community level.

Largest structure of universe discovered

- A team of scientists at the European Southern Observatory (ESO) have sited the most massive structure in the early universe known to date.
- The astronomers found this galaxy named Hyperion using Visible Multi-Object Spectrograph.
- The spectrograph is hosted by the Chile-based Very Large Telescope.
- **Hyperion's mass is estimated to be a million billion times that of Sun.**

China launched two more satellites

- China successfully launched twin BeiDou-3 navigation satellites into space on 15 October 2018 to strengthen its satellite navigation network.
- The satellites were launched from a Long March-3B carrier rocket.
- The launch was the 287th mission of the Long March rocket series.
- The BeiDou system started serving China in 2000 and the Asia-Pacific region in 2012.

Books and Authors

Vijayan Bala released his new book

- 'Indian Sports: Conversations and Reflections' written by Vijayan Bala was released on 18 October 2018.
- The book is a compilation of interviews of eminent sportspersons he has conducted since 1971.
- He has earlier published a book called 'Indian Test Cricket back in 1974'.
- In 2016, he authored a second book "The Complete Indian Sports Quiz".

A new book on Maharana Pratap released

- A new book on Maharana Pratap titled 'In Maharana Pratap: The Invincible Warrior' has been released.
- The author of the book is Rima Hooja and is a leading historian of Rajasthan
- The new book on Maharana Pratap examines the life of the great Rajput warrior and also revisits the famous battle of Haldighati with the Mughals.

Hawking's final book launched

- "Brief Answers to the Big Questions" written by Stephen Hawking was launched on 15 October 2018.
- The book tackles issues from the existence of God to the potential for time travel.
- The book has been completed by the theoretical physicist's family and academic colleagues, with material drawn from his vast personal archive.

Personality in News

Arshdeep won 2018 Wildlife Photographer award

- Arshdeep Singh is among the winners of the 2018 Wildlife Photographer of the Year award in the 10-years-and-under category.
- He won the award for his '**Pipe Owls**' photograph.
- The Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition is **organised by the Britain's Natural History Museum.**
- Arshdeep recently won the Junior Asian Wildlife Photographer of the Year award.

US Army gets first woman chief

- Lieutenant General Laura J. Richardson has become the first woman Commanding General of the United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM).
- FORSCOM is based out of Fort Bragg in North Carolina, USA.
- Richardson has been serving the US forces since 1986.
- She will succeed General Robert B. Abrams, who will be moving on to command U.S. Forces Korea.

Nokia appoints Alia Bhatt as brand ambassador

- Alia Bhatt has been appointed as the new brand ambassador for Nokia phones in India.
- In early 2018 Nokia had appointed Parineeti Chopra as the face of its mobile phones.
- As part of the partnership, a print campaign with Alia Bhatt has been initiated already to mark the festive season.
- HMD Global designs and sells phones under the Nokia brand.

Environment

Air Quality Warning System launched in Delhi

- Earth Sciences Minister Dr Harshvardhan unveiled an Air Quality early warning system for Delhi region, in New Delhi.
- The system will help combat air pollution in Delhi by getting information 2-5 days in advance.
- The system has been developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting and India Meteorological Department.

Emergency action plan to be implemented

- An emergency action plan called the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) will be implemented from 15 October 2018 to combat air pollution in Delhi.
- Stringent actions will be implemented based on air quality.
- If the air quality lies in moderate to poor category — measures like stopping garbage burning in landfills and other places would be implemented.

Committees & Recommendations

Par panel to examine functioning of EPFO

- A parliamentary panel will examine the functioning of Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO).
- The panel will be headed by BJP MP Kirit Somaiya.
- It will also review the implementation of labour laws, social security and welfare scheme for workers.
- It will also look into the working conditions and welfare of mine workers, and review the working of Directorate General of Mines Safety.

Advisory panel set up for rebuilding Kerala

- An advisory committee headed by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has been set up for implementation of various projects for rebuilding the flood-ravaged state.
- The first meeting of the committee would be held on 22 October 2018.
- The Chief Minister also launched a portal for crowd funding to mobilise funds for rebuilding and rehabilitating the people affected by the flood in the state.

Business & Economy

RBI opposes the idea of PRB

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has opposed a proposal to set up a separate and independent regulator for the payments industry.
- An inter-ministerial committee was set up by the Department of Economic Affairs to finalise amendments to the Payment & Settlement Systems (PSS) Act, 2007.
- The committee has proposed the establishment of an independent Payments Regulatory Board (PRB).

Anti-dumping duty on China steel products

- India has imposed anti-dumping duties of up to US\$ 185.51 per tonne for five years on certain varieties of Chinese steel.
- This will guard domestic manufacturers from cheap imports from China.
- The revenue department imposed the duty based on recommendations of the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR).

RBI eased liquidity coverage ratio norms

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) permitted banks to use government securities equal to the incremental credit disbursed to NBFCs for meeting liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) requirements.
- The move will provide liquidity to Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) and Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs).
- The RBI eased the single borrower exposure limits for NBFCs not in the infrastructure segment.

Registered valuers to value insolvent assets

- Valuation of assets under insolvency will only be done by valuers registered with the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) from 1 February 2019.
- As on date, India has eight Registered Valuer Organisation and 162 registered valuers.
- The IBBI conducts valuation examinations for all three asset classes - land and building, plant and machinery, and securities or financial assets.

India's first cryptocurrency ATM launched

- Virtual currency exchange 'Unocoin' has installed a currency deposit and dispensing ATM in Bengaluru.
- It allows its customers to deposit and withdraw a minimum amount of Rs 1000 from the platform.
- A cryptocurrency is a digital or virtual currency that uses cryptography to secure and verify transactions

BSNL partnered Nokia for private 4G service

- BSNL has partnered with telecom gear maker Nokia to offer businesses private 4G services.
- The first project under the partnership has been deployed at Nokia's Chennai plant using 4G connection from BSNL's network.
- Nokia also signed a pact with BSNL to implement the next level of industrial automation —Industry 4.0 – leveraging 4G LTE technology.

RBI issued guidelines for PPIs

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the guidelines for interoperability between Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs).
- This will allow users of payment wallets to transfer money from one wallet to another.
- Interoperability across PPIs shall be enabled through Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- RBI also allowed PPIs to issue cards using authorised card networks such as Mastercard, Visa.

Kreditech got NBFC licence

- Kreditech has been licensed by the RBI to operate as Non Banking Financial Company (NBFC) for digital lending business and app-based financing.
- Kreditech will offer individualised direct-to-consumer loans as well as its Lending-as-a-Service Solution for vendors.
- Kreditech is a Germany-based digital lender and has operations in Russia, Poland, Spain and India.

RBI to buy ₹120 bn G-Secs under OMO

- The Reserve Bank India (RBI) has announced that it will purchase government securities (g-secs) worth ₹120 billion under Open Market Operations (OMO).
- The purchases will be done on 17 October 2018 through multi-security auction using the multiple price method.
- The RBI sells g-secs to take out liquidity from the system and buys back g-secs to infuse liquidity into the system.

WPI inflation rises to 5.13% in September

- Wholesale inflation based on the wholesale price index (WPI) stood at 5.13% in September 2018 as compared to 4.53% in August 2018.
- WPI increased mainly due to the rise in the cost of petrol and diesel.

- Food articles witnessed hardening of prices with deflation at 0.21% in September as against 4.04% in August.
- The WPI is published by the Economic Adviser, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Sports

Wimbledon to introduce final-set tiebreaks

- The organisers of Wimbledon have introduced a final set tie-breaker in all the events in the championship.
- A tiebreaker match will be played when the score reaches 12-12 in the final set.
- The first player or team to score seven points, with an advantage of two or more points, will be declared the winner.
- The new method will be applicable from 2019 Wimbledon Championship to all the events.

Akash Malik won Archery silver medal

- Akash Malik became the first Indian to win a silver medal in archery at the 2018 Youth Olympics.
- **Akash finished second in the men's recurve category after losing to USA's Trenton Cowles.**
- India ended their Youth Olympics campaign in the 16th spot with 13 medals (three gold, nine silver and one bronze).
- India stood in the 14th position in the rankings.

Praveen won bronze in Men's Triple Jump

- Praveen Chitravel won the bronze medal in triple jump at the Youth Olympics 2018 Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- **Cuba's Alejandro Diaz won the gold medal** and silver medal went to Emmanuel of Nigeria.
- Chitravel is the 2nd individual from India to bag a medal in athletics.
- **Suraj Panwar had won India's first athletics medal as he bagged a silver in the men's 5,000m race walk.**

Suraj won silver medal at Youth Olympics

- Suraj Panwar won a silver medal in men's 5000m race walk event in the ongoing Youth Olympic Games at Buenos Aires in Argentina.
- Patin Oscar of Equador won the gold medal and Puerto Rico's Jan Moreu won the bronze medal.

- This is India's first athletics medal in this edition and third overall.

India men, women hockey teams won silver medal

- India men's and women's team won silver medals each in the Hockey competition at the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Men's hockey team was defeated by Malaysia and Women's hockey team was defeated by Argentina.
- India are 10th in the medals tally with Russia leading the way (43) ahead of Hungary (21) and China (25).

Great Britain won Sultan Johar Cup

- In Hockey, Great Britain won the 2018 Sultan of Johor Cup in Johar Bahru, Malaysia.
- Great Britain defeated India in the final.
- India settled for the silver medal at the eighth Sultan of Johor Cup U-18 hockey tournament.
- The other teams in the tournament were Japan, Australia, Malaysia and New Zealand.

Novak Djokovic won Shanghai Masters title

- Tennis player Novak Djokovic won the Shanghai Masters title on 14 October 2018.
- Novak Djokovic defeated Croatia's Borna Coric in the final match.
- Djokovic has won all four Shanghai finals he has contested in his career (2012, 2013, 2015 and 2018).
- He previously shared the record of winning three Shanghai titles with Andy Murray.

Leander Paes won Santo Domingo Open trophy

- Tennis player Leander Paes won the Santo Domingo Open trophy with partner Miguel Angel Reyes-Varela on 14 October 2018.
- Paes, who is ranked 69, added 110 ranking points to his tally and shared a prize purse of \$7750 with his partner.
- Paes also ended runner-up at Chicago, Dallas on the ATP Challenger circuit.

Defence

India, Japan, U.S. plan joint air exercise

- India, Japan and the U.S. are set to elevate the bilateral 'Cope India' air exercise to a trilateral format.
- The three countries already conduct naval war games under the expanded Malabar naval exercise.
- The U.S. had proposed a trilateral air exercise between India, Japan and the U.S.
- Cope India was first conducted in 2004.

Indo-Japan Joint Exercise: Dharma Guardian

- India and Japan will hold the first-ever joint military exercise 'DHARMA GUARDIAN-2018'.

- The exercise will be held at Counter Insurgency Warfare School, Vairengte, and Mizoram from 1 November to 14 November 2018.
- The Indian contingent will be represented by 6/1 Gorkha Rifles.
- Japanese contingent will be represented by 32 Infantry Regiment of the Japanese Ground Self Defence Force.

India, China set to resume military drill

- India and China will resume the annual joint Army exercise 'Hand-in-Hand' in December 2018 in China's Chengdu region.
- The scope of the exercise is to understand transnational terrorism and evolve joint drills for the conduct of counter-terrorism operations.
- The last 'Hand-in-Hand' exercise took place in Pune in 2016.
- The Indian side would be represented by the 11 Sikh Light regiment.

Indian Navy acquired DSRVs

- Indian Navy has inducted its first Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRVs)
- It is deployed to rescue the drowned or disaster-struck submarines at high sea.
- At present, the US, China, Russia and a few other countries have the capabilities to deploy DSRVs.
- The second DSRV is expected to be inducted at Visakhapatnam in 2019.

Polity

Punjab extends 50% reservation for women

- The Punjab Cabinet decided to extend the enhanced 50% reservation for women in the matter of rotation for the office of the panchayat sarpanch to the office of the chairperson of panchayat samitis and zila parishads.
- The state government had enhanced reservation for women in these bodies from 33% to 50% in 2017.
- The cabinet has now approved amendments to the Punjab Panchayati Raj Act, 1994.

No time bar for crimes under POCSO Act

- Survivors of child sexual abuse can file a police complaint after they become adults.
- The government clarified that there is no time bar on reporting such crimes.
- The victims can report the cases through POCSO e-Box.
- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), Act 2012, came into force in November 2012.
- POCSO Act is a gender-neutral act.