

February 2018 Current Affairs Study Material

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **US to overtake Russia as top oil producer**

According to International Energy Agency, U.S. will overtake Russia as the world's biggest oil producer by 2019 at the latest. U.S. crude oil output rose above 10 million barrels per day late last year for the first time since 1970s, overtaking top oil exporter Saudi Arabia. US oil is also increasingly being exported, including to the world's biggest and fastest growing markets in Asia.

### **Saudi Arabia allows women to enlist in Military**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has for the first-ever time opened applications for women to enlist in the military. Women have been given time till March 1, 2018 to apply for positions with the rank of soldier in the provinces of Riyadh, Mecca, al-Qassim and Medina. The move is a continuation of the Kingdom's effort to enact reforms that grant females more access to a wide range of previously forbidden careers.

### **Russia vetoes UN draft resolution pressuring Iran over Yemen**

Two resolutions were presented in the UNSC over the issue of Yemen. First resolution was presented by the UK and the other one by Russia. However, UK and the USA backed resolution was vetoed by Russia. Russia has vetoed a UN Security Council resolution that would have put pressure on Iran for failing to prevent its missiles from being used in the Yemeni conflict. The Security Council subsequently voted unanimously in favor of a resolution drafted by Russia, which omitted Iran and the findings of UN report that said Iranian made missiles had been found in Yemen.

### **Michael McCormack named Australia's new Deputy Prime Minister**

Michael McCormack has been elected new Deputy Prime Minister of Australia. He has replaced former Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce. The leader of the National Party automatically becomes deputy prime minister under the terms of the coalition agreement with Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's Liberal party.

### **China elected as Vice President of Financial Action Task Force**

China was elected as the Vice President of Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a global body mandated to combat terror financing and money laundering. China's election came after the FATF plenary meeting in Paris. China's election to the FATF assumes significance as Pakistan is set to be put in the FATF 'grey list' in June 2018. The grey lists puts countries under the scanner for not implementing the objectives of the task force. FATF was created in 1997 during G7 summit to counter the increasing problem of money laundering.

### **Maldives announces Presidential elections in September this year**

Despite facing these worse situations, Maldives started doing preparations for the upcoming Presidential elections to be held this year. The first round of the elections is to be held in early September. It is mentioned that the authorities welcome the election body to start the preparations for the elections. The Government took note of its announcement to hold the first round of Presidential elections during early September and encouraged all relevant stakeholders to offer the Commission their full, unreserved support for the conduct of their work.

### **Trump pushes for ban on gun 'bump stocks'**

US President Trump has signed an order to ban bump-stock devices, which were used by a gunman who killed 58 Las Vegas concert-goers last year. Such devices enable a rifle to shoot hundreds of rounds a minute. The gun control debate took on a new urgency after 17 people were killed at a school in Florida last week. He also said arming teachers could 'solve the problem' of school shootings.

### **Cobra Gold Military Exercise held in Thailand**

US Marines in Thailand for the Cobra Gold training exercise took part in one of the wildest parts of the drills – drinking cobra blood. This was the 37th edition of the exercise. Cobra Gold is an annual military exercise for Marines and one of the largest in the Indo-Pacific region. This year, seven countries are participating in Cobra Gold – the US, Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, and Singapore. Part of the drill involves jungle survival. Marines learn which plants and animals are safe to eat if they're ever stranded.

### **Singapore to Impose Carbon Tax From 2019**

Singapore will impose a 'carbon tax' from 2019 to cut its greenhouse gas emissions and make companies more competitive as global agreements on climate change take effect. Finance minister Heng Swee Keat stated that the tax would be levied on all facilities producing 25,000 tonnes or more of greenhouse gas emissions a year. The tax, to be applied to all sectors, will be Sg\$5.0 (\$3.8) per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions from 2019 to 2023.

### **Saudi Arabia allows women to open business without male consent**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia announced a major policy change by allowing women to open their own business without the need of showing consent from a husband or male relative. The announcement was made by the country's Ministry of Commerce and investment, which stated on its website that women can now launch their own business and benefit from governmental e-services without having to prove consent from a guardian.

### **Ethiopia declares national state of emergency**

A state of emergency has been declared in Ethiopia after the resignation of Prime Minister Desalegn. Emergency has been declared as protests have caused massive displacement of citizens, destruction of properties & threats against constitutional order of the country. In August 2017, Ethiopia lifted a 10-month state of emergency imposed after hundreds of people were killed in anti-govt protests.

### **Pakistan to deploy troops in Saudi Arabia**

Pakistan Army has announced to deploy troops in its close ally Saudi Arabia under existing bilateral security cooperation agreement. The decision comes after meeting between Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Saudi ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf. Saeed Al-Maliki at the army headquarters in Rawalpindi.

### **WADA suspends Romanian laboratory**

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has suspended Romania's drug-testing laboratory for six months. WADA has imposed the sanction on the lab in Bucharest due to a number of non-conformities with regulations. The lab is now forbidden from testing any samples and must transfer any in its possession to another laboratory.

### **Brazil to declare 'social emergency' on Venezuela border**

The objective is to tackle the influx of people fleeing the crisis hit country Venezuela. The declaration will free the authorities to allocate infrastructure funds and other humanitarian measures on the Venezuela border. Besides, the number of soldiers will be raised to 200 on the border. Due economic crisis in Venezuela, some 40,000 people have fled to Boa Vista, the capital of Brazil's border state of Roraima.

### **Cyril Ramaphosa sworn in as New President of South Africa**

Cyril Ramaphosa, head of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) has been sworn in as South Africa's new President. He was elected as the new president of South Africa by the ruling party politicians after the resignation of Jacob Zuma. The country's 400-member parliament, dominated by the ruling African National Congress Party (ANC), elected Ramaphosa to finish his predecessor's term, which ends with elections in 2019. The ANC has finished first in every national vote since the end of white-minority rule in 1994.

### **Venezuela, Libya lose UNGA Vote for third time in 3 Years**

Venezuela and Libya were suspended from voting in United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2018-19 session for not paying dues to 193-member world body. It was for third time in three years these countries have been suspended from voting for unpaid dues. Overall, 14 countries including Venezuela and Libya were in arrears for paying to global organization. Venezuela was suspended for not paying minimum of \$25,200,296 and Libya must pay at least \$6,594,842 to restore its voting rights. Venezuela is engulfed in economic and political crisis and Libya has two rival governments, each backed by an array of militias.

### **KP Sharma Oli becomes Nepal's new prime minister**

After Nepal's Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba resigned from his post, Communist Party of Nepal (UML) Chairman KP Sharma Oli has become new Prime Minister of Nepal for the second time.

### **South Africa declares drought a 'national disaster'**

South Africa, declared a "national disaster" over a drought that has ravaged parts of the country and threatened to leave the city of Cape Town without domestic tap water. The department of cooperative governance said it had elevated the drought to a "national disaster" after reassessing its "magnitude and severity". Cape Town is in the grip of a catastrophic three-year-long drought as sparse winter rains have failed to bring relief, and dam levels have dropped to dangerously low levels. South Africa's second city is now facing the prospect of having to turn its taps off under a so-called "Day Zero" scenario to conserve the city's remaining water supplies.

### **Pakistan to get first woman Hindu MP**

The Pakistan Peoples Party's Krishna Kumari is poised to become the country's first woman Hindu lawmaker next month, after the party nominated her for the upcoming Senate elections. Ms. Kumari said she faced a "slave-like situation" during her childhood in the remote village of Nagarparkar in Sindh Province. She worked on the farm of a feudal landlord who was abusive to his workers.

### **Tanzania withdraws from UN refugee programme**

Tanzania has announced its withdrawal of United Nation's "Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework" citing security reasons and lack of funds. Tanzania has long been considered as safe haven for refugees, particularly from conflict hit Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi.

### **Abdul Hamid re-elected as president of Bangladesh**

Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid has been re-elected for a second term. Earlier, the ruling Awami League (AL) nominated Abdul Hamid for his re-election as the country's president.

### **Former Bangladesh PM sentenced for 5 years**

Bangladesh Nationalist Party leader and former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was jailed for five years. She was found guilty in a corruption case by a Special Judge's Court in Dhaka. She was charged with misappropriating Tk 21 million in foreign donations received by the 'Zia Orphanage Trust'.

### **US lists three militants as global terrorists**

The US Department of Treasury has designated three individuals allegedly linked to Pakistan-based terror networks including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Taliban as Specially Designated Global Terrorists. The move is intended to disrupt the South Asian terrorist support networks. The three include Rahman Zeb Faqir Muhammad, Hizb Ullah Astam Khan and Dilawar Khan Nadir Khan.

### **Bermuda becomes first country in world to abolish same-sex marriage**

Bermuda becomes the first country to legalize and then repeal same-sex marriage. Bermuda's governor John Rankin approved a bill reversing the right of gay couples to marry, despite a supreme court ruling last year authorizing same-sex marriage.

### **Maldives Crisis- Government declares state of emergency**

The Maldives president, Abdulla Yameen, has declared a state of emergency in the country as heavily armed troops stormed the country's top court and a former president Chief Justice Abdulla Saeed was arrested in a deepening political crisis. Exiled former Maldivian president Mohamed Nasheed urged India to "act swiftly" to help in resolving the ongoing political crisis in the island nation.

### **Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades wins re-election for second term**

Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades has won re-election for a second term. The official final result after a second round run-off put the conservative incumbent on 55.99 per cent of the vote, ahead of Communist-backed Stavros Malas on 44 per cent. Anastasiades has taken credit for steering the economy of Cyprus to recovery after it was plunged into crisis in 2013 by its exposure to debt-wracked Greece and fiscal slippage under a former left-wing administration.

### **Sri Lanka celebrates Independence Day**

Sri Lanka on 4 February celebrated the 70th Independence Day in a grand ceremony at the Galle Face Green in Colombo. It was on this day in 1948 that country achieved freedom from British rule. Representing Britain's Queen, Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, and the Countess of Wessex participated in the celebrations as Chief Guests. The theme of this year's ceremony was "One Nation".

### **Rwanda becomes 1st poor country to provide Eye Care for all**

Rwanda has become the first low-income country to provide universal eye care for its 12 million population. The government has partnered with the organisation Vision for a Nation (VFAN) to train more than 3,000 eye care nurses based in 502 local health centres, prescribing glasses and referring those with serious eye problems to national clinics.

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## **INDIA & WORLD**

### **India, Seychelles conduct military exercise Lamitye 2018**

The eighth edition Lamitye 2018, bilateral military exercise between Indian Army and Seychelles People's Defence Force was held at Mahe Island in Seychelles archipelago. The Seychelles archipelago falls on one of most significant and busiest sea transport routes of the world in Indian Ocean. The Lamitye exercise is conducted biennially between Indian and Seychelles with aim of enhancing military cooperation and interoperability between the two countries. "Lamitye" means friendship in Creole (local dialect of Seychelles). The aim Lamitye 2018 was fighting insurgency, terrorism and piracy threats.

#### **Inclusive Internet Index 2018: India ranks 47th**

India was ranked 47th out of 86 countries in Inclusive Internet Index (III) 2018 report. India has slipped by 11 positions compared to 36th rank in 2017 III report due to low internet usage and poor quality. The report was commissioned by Facebook in 2017 and is conducted by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). It provides rigorous benchmark of national-level Internet inclusion across four categories: Availability, Affordability, Relevance and Readiness. 2018 edition of report has covered 91% of the world's population and expanded data set of 86 countries, up from 75 countries in 2017.

#### **India contributes \$1 mn for Tonga devastated by Cyclone Gita: UN**

According to United Nations (UN), India is contributing \$1 million for relief efforts in the Pacific Ocean Kingdom of Tonga that was devastated by Cyclone Gita. Of that \$500,000 would be given as immediate relief to Tonga and another \$500,000 would be allocated to it from the India-UN Development Partnership Fund (I-UNDPF).

#### **India 7th most targeted nation for Web Application Attacks: Report**

India has been placed at the seventh spot in the list of targeted countries for Web Application Attacks (WAA), according to a new report titled 'Akamai State of the Internet Security Q4 2017'. The report states that nearly 40 per cent of over 53,000 cyber attacks in India occurred in the financial services sector during 2017.

#### **India ranks 81st in global corruption perception index**

India has been placed at the 81st spot among 180 nations in the global Corruption Perception Index for 2017, which was recently released by Transparency International. The report has, in fact named India among the worst offenders in terms of graft and press freedom in the Asia Pacific region.

#### **Newborn Mortality Rate: India 12th Worst Among Low-Income Countries**

India has been ranked 12th-worst among 52 low-middle income countries based on the number of children dying within the first month of their birth, which is 25.4 per 1,000 live births. Pakistan is the worst with 45.6 newborn deaths per 1,000 live births, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). This is the first time that UNICEF has come out with rankings based on their newborn mortality rate (NMR) (the number of deaths per 1,000 live births). Japan, with an NMR of 0.9 deaths per 1,000 live births, has been ranked the world's safest country in which to be born followed by Iceland (1) and Singapore (1.1).

#### **UK and India upgrade joint research on clean water and clean energy**

United Kingdom and India have launched joint research projects on 'Water Quality Research' and 'Energy Demand Reduction in Built Environment'. The 'Water Quality Research' programme has 8 projects and 'Energy Demand Reduction in Built Environment' programme has 4 projects, with total joint investment of up to £15 million.

#### **India, Indonesia begin joint drill**

A special task force of Indian Army & Indonesian Army have begun the 6th Garuda Shakti exercise in the West Java province of the archipelago country. Drill aims to build experience sharing in counter-terrorism operations, close quarter combat & other areas of special operations. The exercise b/w Indian & Indonesian Special Forces highlights the increasing trust & cooperation b/w the 2 armies.

#### **India-Iran sign 9 MoUs to boost bilateral ties**

India and Iran has signed nine agreements in order to further the bilateral cooperation between the two sides. The pacts were signed after delegation level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and visiting Iran President Hassan Rouhani at New Delhi's Hyderabad house. The two countries inked pacts to enhance cooperation in the areas of taxation, maritime cooperation, health and medicine, trade, agriculture and postal cooperation.

#### **India slides 16 spots on globalisation index**

According to Global Connectedness Index 2016, India dropped 16 spots to 78 from 62 in 11 years to 2015. India's 16-place drop was the 2nd most change among its neighbours in central & south Asia. Georgia fared the best by moving up 43 spots to 56 while Sri Lanka was the worst, dropping 19 spots to 86. The index takes into account international flows of trade, capital, information & people.

#### **Indian Army to deploy 2,300 personnel to join UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan**

The Indian Army would be deploying about 2300 personnel in South Sudan, as a part of UN's peacekeeping mission in the war-torn nation. The announcement was made by Army Spokesperson Col Aman Anand. The mission aims to bring about peace and normalcy in the nation. The Indian army personnel chosen for the mission belong to the Infantry battalion of Garhwal Rifles regiment. The unit will be in operational control of the sensitive Jonglei state of South Sudan.

#### India retains top spot as source market for Dubai in 2017

Dubai witnessed 15% growth in tourist arrivals from India in 2017, hosting 2.1 million visitors, retaining top spot as the source market. It also became the first country to cross the 2 million mark in a single year, according to the latest data published by Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism). The growth is mainly due to the success of Dubai Tourism's ongoing collaboration with Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan in the 'BeMyGuest' campaign.

#### India ranks 44th in Global Intellectual Property Index, US tops

India increased "substantially" its score in the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index, ranking 44th among 50 nations, according to the US Chambers of Commerce report. India's overall score has increased substantially from 25% in the 5th edition of the Index to 30% in the 6th edition, according to the annual report prepared by the Global Innovation Policy Centre (GIPC) of the US Chambers of Commerce. Last year, India ranked 43rd out of 45 countries in the Index.

##### The top 3 countries in the list are-

The USA.  
The United Kingdom.  
Sweden.

#### India Joins Ashgabat agreement

India joined Ashgabat Agreement on the establishment of an International Transport and Transit Corridor between the Iran, Oman, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The agreement was signed in 2011, which envisages facilitation of transit and transportation of goods between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. According to the External Affairs Ministry, the accession to the Agreement would diversify India's connectivity options with Central Asia and have a positive influence on its trade and commercial ties with the region.

#### India slips to 42nd place on EIU Democracy Index, Norway tops

India has slipped to 42nd place on an annual Global Democracy Index according to the data compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). India has moved down from 32nd place last year. The index ranks 165 independent states and two territories on the basis of five categories: electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, the functioning of government, political participation and political culture. The list has been divided into four broad categories- full democracy, flawed democracy, hybrid regime and authoritarian regime. North Korea is ranked the lowest at 167th, while Syria is a notch better at 166th place.

##### The top 5 Countries in the list are-

Norway,  
Iceland,  
Sweden,  
New Zealand and  
Denmark.

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## NATIONAL

#### Andaman & Nicobar Command To Host Milan 2018

The second week of March will witness Andaman & Nicobar Command hosting a multinational mega event MILAN 2018. MILAN is a congregation of littoral navies conducted biennially by Indian Navy at the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The theme of this year's MILAN International Maritime Seminar is 'In Pursuit of Maritime Good Order – Need for Comprehensive Information Sharing Apparatus'. With the underlying theme of 'Friendship Across the Seas', MILAN 2018 will witness a diverse mix of professional exercises and seminars, social events and sporting fixtures.

#### PM Modi Flags Off 'Run For New India' Marathon In Surat

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the 'Run for New India' marathon in Surat, Gujarat. The Marathon is aimed at creating awareness about social causes and call upon all to resolve to build a New India. The Marathon is divided into 4 categories. Around 1.50 lakh runners participated in the 'Run for New India' marathon which was organized by the Surat Nagrik Samiti.

#### CBI arrests Rotomac Pens' owner Vikram Kothari

The CBI arrested Rotomac Pens' owner Vikram Kothari and his son Rahul for allegedly defrauding banks of Rs3,700 crore. Kothari's company had submitted forged documents to get loans and created shell firms to carry out illegal activities. Earlier, authorities had notified all land, sea, and air ports to prevent Kothari and his family members from leaving India.

### Union Government Clears Private Commercial Mining In Coal

In a major reform in the coal sector since its nationalization in 1973, the government allowed private companies to mine the fossil fuel for commercial use. This move ended the monopoly of state-owned Coal India Ltd. The decision was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) under the Chairmanship of PM Narendra Modi. Currently, the private sector is allowed coal mining for captive use only. The reform will bring efficiency into the coal sector by moving away from the era of monopoly to competition and lower power tariffs.

### India Successfully Test-Fires Agni-II Missile

India successfully test-fired Agni II medium-range nuclear-capable missile from APJ Abdul Kalam island off the Odisha coast. The Strategic Forces Command (SFC) fired Agni-II from a mobile launcher at launch complex 4 of the Integrated Test Range. Agni-II, which has a length of 20 meters, weighs 17 tonnes and can carry a payload of 1000 kgs over a distance of 2000 km. It is a part of the Agni series of missiles developed by the DRDO.

### UN names India as Global Host for the World Environment Day 2018

Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan announced that India will host the World Environment Day 2018. The theme for the World Environment Day-2018, held every year on June 5, is "Beat Plastic Pollution". Harsh Vardhan also launched the first electric charging facility at the Lodhi Road UN office – the first ever in a UN office in India.

### 42 Indian languages heading towards extinction

42 languages or dialects in India are considered to be endangered and are believed to be heading towards extinction as only few thousand people speak them. According to report of Census Directorate, there are 22 scheduled languages and 100 non-scheduled languages in country, which are spoken by large number of people – one lakh or more. There 42 languages are spoken by fewer than 10,000 people. A list prepared by UNESCO also has mentioned them as critically endangered languages. The Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore is working for protection and preservation of these languages under central scheme Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India.

### Vice President inaugurates 8th International Theatre Olympics

The Vice President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the 8th International Theatre Olympics 2018 at the Red Fort in New Delhi. He also released the festival logo. The 51-day-long theatrical extravaganza is being hosted in India by the National School of Drama under the aegis of Ministry of Culture. The theme is "Flag of Friendship" that aims to bridge borders and bring people of different cultures, beliefs and ideologies together through the medium of theatrical art. The festival will conclude on April 8, 2018 with a grand ceremony at the iconic Gateway of India in Mumbai.

### India's first radio festival being held in New Delhi

India's first radio festival is being held in New Delhi to mark World Radio Day. The festival is being organized by International Association of Women in Radio and Television, in collaboration with UNESCO. The festival includes live performances, an exhibition, and slotted panel discussions. Apart from touching on the theme for World Radio Day 2018 – radio and sports – the festival is also examining the potential of the medium as a platform for social change, ways to make it more creative and will trace the journey of music on the radio.

### Paschim Lehar: Tri-service maritime exercise held off western coast

Tri-service maritime exercise 'Paschim Lehar' was held off India's western coast with an aim to build interoperability between Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard. This exercise includes participation of large number of ships, submarines and aircraft from Western Naval Command of Indian Navy and units from Eastern Naval Command, Indian Army, Air Force and Coast Guard.

### India's first online radio station 'Radio Umang' launched

Radio Umang, India's first online radio station that allows the listener to just download and tune in, has been launched. Listeners can tune in to this online radio station through web streaming or download the app. With 24 hours programming, it has found listeners in Hindi speaking regions of India and in over 60 countries worldwide.

### India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2017 released by MoEFCC

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has released India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2017. It has revealed that total forest and tree cover in India has increased of over 8,021 sq km (about 80.20 million hectare) which is one percent increase from 2015. 15 states/UTs have above 33% of geographical area under forest cover. About 40% of country's forest cover is present in 9 large contiguous patches of the size of 10, 000 sq.km, or more.

### NITI Aayog unveils Health Index for states

NITI Aayog on 9 February, 2019 released a comprehensive 'Healthy States, Progressive India' report in New Delhi. The health index ranks the states on the basis of their performance on measurable indicators such as infant mortality rate, sex ratio at birth and functional 24x7 public health centres. The healthy state progressive report ranked Kerala, Punjab and Tamil Nadu at the top among the larger states in terms of overall performance. The

report was released by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant in New Delhi. The index has been evolved through comprehensive study and inputs from World Bank India and Ministry of Health.

#### India's 1st defence industrial corridor

The first of the two defense industrial production corridors, as announced in the Union Budget, will link Chennai & Bengaluru and will pass through Coimbatore and several other industrial clusters. The corridor shall provide impetus to the defence production industry in the country and in the region. The announcement on the second corridor would be made soon.

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## STATES

### Parivartan Scheme launched in Haryana

The Haryana government launched Parivartan, a scheme designed to address 10 issues, including cleanliness and pollution, in 46 developmental blocks of the state. The scheme was launched by Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar. The 10 issues include facilitation of financing, making agriculture profitable and sustainable, improving health services, implementing Swachh Bharat, decongesting market areas, engaging the youth, checking air pollution, ensuring availability of identity-related services, effective policing, and ensuring road order and conduct.

### 44th Khajuraho dance festival held in Madhya Pradesh

The 44th edition of Khajuraho Dance Festival 2018 was held at Khajuraho temple, a UNESCO world heritage site in Chhatarpur district, Madhya Pradesh. It was inaugurated by Madhya Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel and was organised by culture department of state government. Khajuraho Dance Festival is annual cultural festival that highlights richness of various Indian classical dance styles. The 6-day festival showcased classical dances including Kathak, Odissi, Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali and Mohiniattam.

### Kamal Hassan launches new political party "Makkal Needhi Maiam"

Actor Kamal Haasan launched his political party Makkal Needhi Maiam (people justice centre) in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. He also unfurled his party's flag, which has six hands – three in red and three in white – joined together around a star on a white background.

### Kerala makes vaccination compulsory for school admissions

Kerala government made vaccination compulsory for school admissions from next academic year onwards. Parents will have to show details of shots given to children at the time of enrolment in schools. The health minister of Kerala KK Shailaja has released the new health policy draft. The move comes in the wake of stiff opposition from certain communities against the vaccination drive.

### Jaipur's Gandhinagar Railway Station becomes fully women operated station

The Gandhi Nagar railway station in Jaipur, Rajasthan became railway station to be fully-managed by women. Gandhi Nagar is important railway station in Jaipur situated on the Jaipur-Delhi rail route. The station has footfall of more than 7,000 passengers every day. There are 40 women staff at the station besides women personnel of the railway protection force have been deployed at the station.

### PM Flags Off Palace Queen Humsafar Express In Karnataka

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the Palace Queen Humsafar Express between Mysuru and Udaipur in Mysuru Railway Station. Both the Mysuru Palace and Udaipur palace are iconic tourist attractions and this special train will create a new tourist circuit connecting North India and the South. The train between Mysuru and Udaipur will act as a backbone of tourism, an employment generating industry. He also dedicated to the nation, the electrified Mysuru-Bengaluru Railway Line and announced two more infrastructure projects for the region.

### West Bengal becomes first state to opt out of 'Modicare'

Claiming that the Bengal government had already enrolled 50 lakh people under its own Swasthya Sathi programme, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has announced the decision to opt out of Centre's 'Modicare' scheme. This makes West Bengal the first state to withdraw from the ambitious programme. Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley had announced the NHPS on February 1, making it the biggest global plan to provide quality health cover to a population larger than the combined citizenry of the US, UK, Germany and France.

### Bihar Government bans sale of loose cigarettes

Bihar Government has banned sale of loose cigarettes in the state. This decision aims to be deterrent to kids and youngsters who start smoking by buying loose cigarettes. In this regard, state health department has issued notification under Section 20 of Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003. Bihar is the 12th state in the country to bring such a ban into effect after Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Delhi and others.



### **MP govt launches app to spread awareness against pollution**

The Madhya Pradesh government launched a mobile application "pollution metre" to spread awareness against pollution in the western part of the state. It has been developed with the help of a private firm and the Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board. With the help of the app, anybody can check the status of air, water and noise pollution in their respective areas.

### **Pelican Bird Festival-2018 held in Kolleru lake**

The 'Pelican Bird Festival-2018' was held for first in Atapaka Bird Sanctuary on at Kolleru lake in Andhra Pradesh. It was jointly organised by Andhra Pradesh Tourism Authority (APTA) and Krishna district administration.

### **32nd Surajkund International Crafts Mela begins**

The 32nd Surajkund International Crafts Mela has begun in Faridabad, Haryana. The Mela is organized by the Surajkund Mela Authority and Haryana Tourism in collaboration with Union Ministries of Tourism, Textiles, Culture and External Affairs. The 17-day cultural extravaganza will see a spectacular showcase of regional and international crafts, handlooms, traditions along with some mouth-watering multi-cuisine food for the visitors. This year Uttar Pradesh is the theme state and Kyrgyzstan is the Partner Nation.

### **Punjab Government bans sale of 20 insecticides**

Punjab Government's Department of Agriculture has issued directions to discontinue the sale of 20 pesticides (insecticides) including Endosulfan harmful to health of humans and environment with immediate effect. This decision was taken based on the recommendations of Registration Committee, Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) and Punjab State Farmers' Commission (PSFC).

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## **CONFERENCES**

### **National Conference On E-Governance In Hyderabad**

The 21st national conference on e-Governance will be held in Hyderabad. The government of India and Telangana Administrative Reforms department are jointly organizing the conference with the main theme around- technology for accelerating development. The two-day conference will deliberate on several aspects of the e-governance including its universalization and replication, governing e-governance, best practices, emerging technologies and synergizing role of national and state government.

### **15th Edition Of BioAsia 2018 Held In Hyderabad**

The 15th edition of BioAsia, the annual flagship event of the Government of Telangana, was held Hyderabad. The theme of BioAsia 2018 was "Right Time, Right Now" focusing on strategies to keep up with the pace of change and innovative ways to develop new models for distribution & healthcare delivery. The event was attended by 1500 delegates from over 55 countries. Ireland, Netherlands and South Africa were the International Partners while Gujarat, Assam and Rajasthan were the partner states for this event.

### **Andhra Pradesh gears up for Partnership Summit 2018 to attract investments for innovation**

Andhra Pradesh woke up welcoming over more than 2000 delegates in its Partnership Summit 2018. The 3rd edition of Partnership Summit 2018 aims to facilitate investments, foster innovations in creating business models. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu expressed his keenness towards Partnership Summit 2018 eager to establish partnerships aimed at collective development and hoping for great engagements with global investors at the Partnership Summit 2018, Vizag.

### **India International Textiles Expo begins in Colombo**

A three day India International Textiles Expo (IITExpo) of India began in Sri Lankan capital of Colombo. It is being organized by Powerloom Development & Export Promotion Council (PDEXCIL) with the support of Union Ministry of Textiles & Ministry of Commerce & Industry. The event was inaugurated by Sri Lankan minister of Special Assignments Dr. Sarath Amunugama. At the event, about 45 exhibitors from various textile clusters of India displayed variety of fabrics, home textiles, traditional items etc. suitable for apparel, industrial, technical application and general consumers.

### **R.K. Singh Inaugurates 'International R&D Conclave' In New Delhi**

Union Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, R.K. Singh inaugurated the 'International R&D Conclave' in New Delhi. It is a two-day conference on Emerging Opportunities and Challenges of R&D in Indian Power Sector. It has been organized by Central Electricity Authority (CEA). The conference was stressed upon the need of a dedicated R&D department in CEA to coordinate the research in the power sector.

### **World Congress On Information Technology And Nasscom India Leadership Forum Held Concurrently In Hyderabad**



Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 22nd edition of the World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT) in Hyderabad through a video conference. The WCIT is held for the first time in India. The 26th edition of Nasscom India Leadership Forum (ILF) was also held in the same venue later on. Nasscom is the host of the of WCIT. Telangana is the state partner for both the events.

#### Health Minister Addresses Global Digital Health Partnership Summit In Australia

Mr. J P Nadda, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare has addressed the Global Digital Health Partnership Summit, at Canberra, Australia. The Union Health Minister spoke on the topic: Making Digital Health Services a Priority in Healthcare Reform. He stated that India is committed to reforms in health service delivery using ICT under Digital India Program of Government of India.

#### India's biggest Global Pharma Conference begins in Bengaluru

India's biggest Global Conference on Pharma Industry and Medical Devices began in Bengaluru with the theme, 'Driving NextGen Pharmaceuticals'. Union Minister for Chemicals & Fertilisers Ananth Kumar inaugurated the three-day event. The event is being organized by the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, along with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).

#### PM inaugurates World Sustainable Development Summit

The three-day event was inaugurated in New Delhi. The event is being organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). The theme of this year is 'Partnerships for a Resilient Partner'. WSDS was first held in 2001 as a platform for global business leaders to deliberate on sustainable development and climate changes.

#### China to host 2018 SCO Summit at Qingdao in June

China will host 2018 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit at Qingdao, eastern Shandong Province in June 2018. China had taken over rotating chair of SCO after 17th SCO summit concluded in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan in June 2017. SCO is a Eurasian economic, political and security organization headquartered in Beijing, China. It was founded in 2001. The full members of the organization are headquartered in Beijing, China. It was founded in 2001.

#### 5th South Asia Region Public Procurement Conference held in New Delhi

The Fifth edition of South Asia Region Public Procurement Conference was held in New Delhi. It was hosted by Public Procurement Division (PPD) of Ministry of Finance and All India Management Association (AIMA). It was held under auspices of South Asia Region Public Procurement Network (SARPPN), which is sponsored and facilitated by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Islamic Development Bank. The theme this edition of the conference was "Public Procurement and Service Delivery".

#### PM Modi inaugurates Global Investment Summit in Assam

The first two-day Global Investment Summit has been organized in Assam. The summit emphasises on promoting investments in the state and the North East. The conference was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Businessmen like Ratan Tata and Mukesh Ambani are taking part in the Summit. Investor's from Bhutan, Bangladesh, Germany and Japan as well as ASEAN countries will attend the summit.

#### 7th India Energy Congress held in New Delhi

The 7th India Energy Congress was held in New Delhi. Over 400 experts are expected to brainstorm on energy transition across the globe in view of technology and digital disruptions. The theme of the 7th edition of India Energy Congress is 'Energy 4.0: Energy Transition Towards 2030'. The India Energy Congress is the flagship event of World Energy Council India (WEC India) and joint event of ministries of power, coal, new & renewable energy, petroleum & natural gas, external affairs and Department of Atomic Energy.

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## AWARDS

#### Roger Federer becomes Most Decorated Laureus Award Winner

Tennis legend Roger Federer became the most decorated winner in the history of Laureus World Sports Awards after he won twin honours at the 18th edition of the awards ceremony in Monaco. It was his sixth award. The awards include the Sportsman and Comeback titles. American tennis great Serena Williams won the Sportswoman of the Year Award following her Australian Open success, her 23rd Grand Slam title. Serena is now the most decorated female Laureus Award winner with five Laureus statuettes.

#### BAFTA Awards 2018: Complete List Of Winners

Crime drama Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri won maximum prizes at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Awards 2018, which took place at the Royal Albert Hall in London, UK.

<b>A. Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
1. Best Film	Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri
2. Outstanding British Film	Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri
3. Best Director	Guillermo Del Toro, The Shape of Water
4. Best Actress	Frances McDormand, Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri
5. Best Actor	Gary Oldman, Darkest Hour
6. Best Supporting Actress	Allison Janney, I, Tonya
7. Best Supporting Actor	Sam Rockwell, Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri
8. Best Cinematography	Roger Deakins, Blade Runner 2049
9. Original Screenplay	Martin McDonagh, Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri
10. Adapted Screenplay	James Ivory, Call Me by Your Name
11. British Short Film	Cowboy Dave
12. Special Visual Effects	Blade Runner 2049
13. Best Animated Film	Coco
14. Best Film Not In The English Language	The Handmaiden
15. British Short Animation	Poles Apart
16. Best Documentary	I Am Not Your Negro
17. Best Production Design	Paul Austerberry, Jeff Melvin, Shane Vieau, The Shape of Water
18. Best Editing	Jonathan Amos, Paul Machliss Baby Driver
19. Best Sound	Dunkirk
20. Best Original Music	The Shape of Water
21. Best Costume Design	Phantom Thread
22. Best Makeup & Hair	Darkest Hour
23. The Ee Rising Star Award (Voted For By Public)	Daniel Kaluuya

#### India's Aadhaar and Umang App win awards at world Government Summit 2018

India's Aadhaar and Umang App have won awards at recently concluded 6th World Government Summit 2018 in Dubai. Umang App won in Best m-Government Service. Umang App won in Best m-Government Service Award for Accessible Government Category and Aadhaar won in the Best Government Emerging Technologies Award. The award for it recognized India's efforts of invention and innovation in the field of technology and making the country completely digitalized.

#### Indian engineer awarded Sci-Tech Oscar Award

Vikas Sathaye, a pune-born Indian engineer was recently honoured with the Scientific and Engineering Academy Award at the Oscars Scientific and Technical Awards 2018 at Beverly Hills in Los Angeles, California. Sathaye received the award along with his team for their contribution towards the conceptualisation, design, engineering and the implementation of the 'Shotover K1 Camera System' during his stint at Shotover Camera Systems in Queenstown, New Zealand.

#### Reliance Industries wins Golden Peacock Award 2017 for CSR

Reliance Industries (RIL) has been awarded the Golden Peacock Award 2017 for corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. The award was a recognition, in particular, of the work done by its CSR arm Reliance Foundation under Founder and Chairman Nita Ambani.

#### Shabnam Asthana wins Times Power Woman 2017 Award

Shabnam Asthana was awarded the 'Times Power Women of the Year 2017'- Pune for Global PR. The Times Group celebrated the invaluable contribution of women by introducing The Times Power Woman 2017 (Pune) awards. These awards focused on the women of Pune and the prestigious list included 34 select women with power, supremacy, command, and control. The award was conferred on her by Dilip Kamble, Minister of State for Social Justice and Special Assistance in the Government of Maharashtra.

#### Shyam Benegal awarded V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award

Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) committee has decided to bestow V. Shantaram lifetime achievement Award to veteran film producer and director Shyam Benegal. The award will be presented at concluding ceremony of MIFF in Mumbai. He will be awarded a trophy, cash price of 10 lakh rupees, a certificate and a shawl by Governor of Maharashtra C. Vidyasagar Rao. Benegal has been selected for his contribution to the promotion of the documentary movement.

#### Odisha wins Geospatial World Excellence Award 2018

Odisha Government won 'Geospatial World Excellence Award-2018' for successful IT application for tracking of mineral production. The award was presented at the Geospatial World Forum Meeting held at Hyderabad, Telangana. The event was attended by more than 3,000 geospatial experts from 90 different countries. i3MS is GPS-linked web-based software designed by scientists of Odisha Space Applications Centre (ORSAC), Bhubaneswar.

#### **Shesh Anand Madhukar honoured with Sahitya Akademi Bhasha Samman award**

Magahi writer Shesh Anand Madhukar was honoured with Sahitya Akademi Bhasha Samman award 2018. He is second writer of Magahi language to be given this award. Madhukar has been working extensively for the development of the Magahi language. In Magahi, his well-acclaimed works are "Eklavya" and "Magahi Bhulachal Hey". His books have been included in the graduate and post-graduate syllabus of Vinobha Bhave University, Hazaribagh.

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### **SPORTS & GAMES**

#### **Davis Cup to convert into 'WC of Tennis'**

The Davis Cup, in existence since 1900, may be converted into a 'World Cup of Tennis' from next year. The new format will feature 18 teams playing a week-long event at one venue, instead of the existing 16 teams playing across four different months. A 25-year, \$3 billion partnership with investment group Kosmos is in place for the new event.

#### **India Clinched 11 medals at Strandja Memorial Boxing Tournament**

India have come up with best ever performance at the 69th Strandja Memorial Boxing Tournament in Bulgaria. At Sofia, the country ended with a whopping 11 medals – five from men and six from women boxers. Overall, the contingent clinched two gold, three silver and six bronze medals. Vikas Krishan, who claimed a gold medal in 75 kg category, was also adjudged the best boxer of the event, a first for an Indian. Another Gold medal was clinched by Amit Panghal.

#### **Tokyo 2020 Olympics mascots unveiled**

The organising committee of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games announced on 28 February, 2018 that two futuristic figures, inspired by anime, have been chosen as mascots following voting by thousands of Japanese children. The voting to choose the mascot was conducted across thousands of schools in Japan. The mascots are aimed at boosting children's participation in the Games.

#### **Karnataka won Vijay Hazare Trophy**

Karnataka defeated Saurashtra by 41 runs in the Vijay Hazare Trophy final on Tuesday to win the tournament for the third time. Batting first, Karnataka put up a total of 253/10 driven by Mayank Agarwal's 90(79), before Saurashtra were bowled out for 212 in 46.3 overs. Agarwal hit 723 runs in eight matches in the tournament, including seven 80+ scores.

#### **India presented with ICC Test mace**

The International Cricket Council presented the ICC Test Championship Mace to Virat Kohli after the end of the final T20 International against South Africa. Kohli received the ICC Test Championship mace on behalf of Team India for the second consecutive year for being the number one Test team. This is the fourth time that India has been presented with the prestigious mace.

#### **Aruna Reddy makes history**

Aruna Buddha Reddy created history by becoming the 1st Indian gymnast to win an individual medal at Gymnastics World Cup as she clinched a bronze in women's vault event. She scored 13.649 average points to finish 3rd & claim the bronze medal. This was Aruna's first international medal, though she has taken part at World Artistic Gymnastics Championships, Commonwealth Games & Asian Games.

#### **Parupalli Kashyap Wins Austrian Open**

Reigning Commonwealth Games champion Parupalli Kashyap overcame Malaysia's June Wei Cheam in straight games in the men's singles final to clinch the Austrian Open International Challenge, his first international title in over three years. The Indian looked in good touch throughout the tournament as he didn't drop a single game en route to his title win.

#### **Cricket Canada unveils ICC-approved T20 League**

Canada's own first franchise-based Twenty20 league "Global T20 Canada", was announced in New Delhi. The Global T20 Canada League will begin functioning from July 2018 at three venues in Toronto. It is conceptualised, designed, developed and managed by Mercuri Group with Cricket Canada. Global T20 Canada League has received official sanction of the International Cricket Council (ICC). Cricket Canada has become the first Associate member of the ICC to start a Twenty20 franchise league in the North America market.

### US wins Ice Hockey Gold at Winter Olympics 2018

The US won the gold medal of Women's Ice Hockey at 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, thus breaking the 20-year medal drought. They last won the medal in 1998 Nagano Games. To win the medal, the women team defeated Canada in the final in dramatic shootout. Canada had won four straight Olympic Golds, three times beating the United States in the final including twice in overtime.

### Norway's Bjoergen becomes most successful Winter Olympian

Marit Bjoergen won her 14th medal at the Winter Games by taking bronze with her Norwegian teammates in the team sprint. With this, she became the most decorated Winter Olympian of all time, breaking the tie she held with Norwegian biathlete Ole Einar Bjoerndalen.

### Virat Kohli, 1st Indian to cross 900 points in ICC ranking

Virat Kohli has become only the second batsman in the history of the game to cross 900-point mark concurrently in Tests & ODIs. Kohli is only the 2nd batsman after AB de Villiers to attain the 900-point mark concurrently in both formats. Kohli thus moved ahead of Brian Lara in the 'all-timers' list & ranks 7th in ODI list of all-time rankings that is led by Vivian Richards with 935 points.

### Australia's Most-Capped female player Alex Blackwell retires

Australia's most-capped female player and vice-captain Alex Blackwell has announced her retirement from international and state cricket. She became just the fourth female Australian to pass 5,000 runs when she batted in the Test, Twenty20 and One-Day arenas, compiling 5,250 runs. Blackwell, who led Australia to victory at the ICC Twenty20 World Cup in the West Indies in 2010, was also a member of Australia's World T20 winning sides in 2012 and 2014 and has two World Cup trophies from 2005 and 2013.

### Bhuvneshwar Kumar first Indian pacer to take five-fors in all formats

Fast bowler Bhuvneshwar Kumar has become the first Indian bowler to take a five-wicket haul in all three formats in international cricket. Bhuvneshwar achieved the feat by taking his first T20I five-wicket haul against South Africa.

### Roger Federer wins Rotterdam Open for 97th Career Title

Roger Federer (Switzerland) celebrated his return to the top of the world rankings by winning the Rotterdam Open, in the Netherlands. It was his 97th career title. The 36-year-old, the oldest No.1 in history, defeated Grigor Dimitrov (Bulgaria) in the final. Federer is three years older than American Andre Agassi was when previously holding the record for oldest No.1 back in 2003. This was his third title in Rotterdam following successes in 2005 and 2012. France doubles pair P. H. Herbert and N. Mahut won the Men's Doubles Title.

### Yuzuru Hanyu retains gold medal

Japan's Yuzuru Hanyu has become the first figure skater in 66 years to win back-to-back Winter Olympic gold medals in the men's singles event. Hanyu won the title with 317.85 points, beating compatriot Shoma Uno and multiple world champion Javier Fernandez of Spain to the second and third spots. He also became the 1,000th gold medal winner in the history of Winter Olympics.

### Jordan Thompson wins Men's Singles of Chennai Open

India's Yuki Bhambri finished runner-up in the Men's Singles in the Chennai Open ATP Challenger Tennis Championships. In the final, he was beaten by top-seeded Australian Jordan Thompson in three sets 7-5, 3-6, 7-5.

### Roger Federer surpasses Agassi to become oldest World No. 1 in tennis history

Twenty-time Grand slam winner, Roger Federer became the oldest world number one after he defeated his Dutch opponent Robin Haase in Rotterdam at the ABN Amro World Tennis Tournament. The Swiss champion once again claimed the top spot after dispatching Haase 4-6, 6-1, 6-1 in the quarterfinals in Rotterdam. In the semi-finals, he would be playing against the winner from the Andreas Seppi and Daniil Medvedev quarterfinal match.

### Indian boxers win 10 medals at Asian Games Test event

Indian boxers have won 10 medals, including 5 gold, at the Asian Games Test event in Jakarta, Indonesia. Manish Kaushik, K. Shyam Kumar, Shaikh Salman Anwar and Ashish won a gold each in their respective categories. Pavitra was the lone Indian gold-winner in the 60-kilogram category of women's draw.

### Guptill becomes the highest run-scorer in T20

Martin Guptill has become the leading run-scorer in T20 Internationals with his 2nd century against Australia. It took Guptill's international T20 career total to 2,188 runs, surpassing Brendon McCullum's 2,140. Kohli is the next highest on the all-time list with 1,956. Guptill's century came off a mere 49 balls, which is also the record for fastest T20 hundred scored by any New Zealand batsman.

### **Tamil Nadu wins Senior Women's National Football Championship for first time**

Tamil Nadu has won the Senior Women's National Football Championship for the first time. Tamil Nadu, which was playing its first-ever final, defeated Manipur, 2-1 at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack, Odisha. Skipper Indumathi and Indrani found the net for Tamil Nadu, while Ratanbala scored Manipur's only goal.

### **India No. 1 ODI team after series win against South Africa**

The Indian cricket team rose to the top of the ICC ODI Team Rankings with 122 points after they took a 4-1 lead in the six-match ODI series against South Africa. The men in blue were placed second in the ICC team rankings chart with 119 points when they came into the series, two points behind top-ranked South Africa who had 121 points. However, India moved to 122 points after it won the fifth ODI at Port Elizabeth by 73 runs, sealing a series win, while South Africa fell to 118 points.

### **Ronaldo 1st player with 100 goals for 1 club**

Real Madrid frontman Cristiano Ronaldo has become the first player in UEFA Champions League history to score 100 goals for a single club. His overall tally in the tournament has gone up to 116 goals, 19 more than Lionel Messi. Further, Ronaldo has scored 10+ UCL goals for the seventh straight season, no other player has done so in three.

### **Kishan Gangolli wins 13th edition of National Chess Championship for Blind**

Defending champion Karnataka's Kishan Gangolli won the 13th edition of the National 'A' Chess Championship for the blind in Mumbai. The championship was organised by All India Chess Federation for the Blind (AICFB). At the end of the 13th round, Asian Championship winner, Gangolli became the champion for the fifth consecutive time with 10.5 points. Gujarat's Ashvin Makwana stood second with 9.5 points, Soundarya Kumar Pradhan of Orissa with 9 points came third.

### **Sharmila Nicollet first Indian Golfer to qualify for China LPGA Tour**

Sharmila Nicollet become the first Indian golfer to qualify for the China Ladies PGA Tour. The 26-year-old Bengaluru golfer fought her way back into the tournament in the last two rounds to earn a card for the Tour. Sharmila, who played on the Ladies European Tour before losing her full card, played her three rounds in the CLPGA Tour Qualifying School to finish in tied 21st and pick one of the 30 cards available in the 88-player field.

### **Shikhar Dhawan becomes first Indian batsman to score century in 100th ODI**

In a landmark moment, Indian opener Shikhar Dhawan became the first Indian batsman to score a century in his 100th One-day International. Dhawan reached the historic mark during the fourth ODI of India's six-match series against South Africa at the Wanderers. This was the batsman's first century in South Africa. His score total included two sixes and 10 fours.

### **Winter Olympic Games starts in Pyeongchang, South Korea**

The 23rd Winter Olympic Games officially kicked off with a colorful ceremony at Pyeongchang in South Korea. Ninety-two countries are participating in the event. There will be 102 medals up for grabs in Pyeongchang, covering seven sports and 15 disciplines. The ceremony was directed by Song Seung-whan, a South Korean actor. Hosts South Korea also produced a show of unity with neighbours North Korea during the ceremony.

### **Khelo India School Games: Haryana tops in medal tally**

The first Khelo India School Games concluded in New Delhi with sports powerhouse Haryana topped the overall medal tally. The state won 102 medals which include 38 gold and 26 silver. Maharashtra with 110 medals (36 of them gold) finished second while Delhi with 94 medals came third. Sports Minister, Col Rajyavardhan Rathore presented the top State Haryana with the glittering trophy.

### **Jhulan Goswami 1st woman in the world to take 200 ODI wickets**

Indian women's cricket team pacer Jhulan Goswami has become the first woman in the world to take 200 wickets in ODI cricket. Goswami achieved the feat playing in her 166th ODI against South Africa. Goswami had become the leading wicket-taker in women's ODIs in May last year, overtaking former Australian pacer Cathryn Fitzpatrick's record of 180 wickets.

### **Jasprit Bumrah, Harmanpreet Kaur in Forbes India 30 under 30 List**

Indian cricketers Jasprit Bumrah and Harmanpreet Kaur as well India women's hockey team goalkeeper Savita Punia and shooter Heena Sidhu are among Forbes India 30 Under 30 list. Bumrah finished the year 2017 as the third highest wicket-taker in ODIs with 39 scalps in 23 matches, whereas in T20Is he grabbed 12 wickets in 11 outings. In December 2016, Harmanpreet became the first Indian woman cricketer to play in Australia's Big Bash League (BBL).

### **Shubhankar Sharma won European Tour title**

India's Shubhankar Sharma came back from a four-stroke deficit to claim a two-shot win at the Maybank Championship in Malaysia for his second European Tour title. Sharma had won his maiden title at the Joburg Open in December last year. The Indian holed 10 birdies to claim the title ahead of Spain's 31-year-old Jorge Campillo.

#### India Open 2018- Complete list of Winners

India Open is a badminton event held annually at the Siri Fort Sports Complex, New Delhi. In women's singles Defending champion P V Sindhu was defeated by American Beiwen Zhang to finish runner-up at the India Open Super 500 tournament.

#### Complete List of Winners-

S.No.	Category	Winner	Runner-Up
1.	Men's Singles	Shi Yuqi (China)	Chou Tien Chen (Taiwan)
2.	Women's Singles	Beiwen Zhang (America)	P V Sindhu (India)
3.	Men's Doubles	Marcus Fernaldi Gideon (Indonesia) and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo (Indonesia)	Kim Astrup (Denmark) and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen (Denmark)
4.	Women's Doubles	Greysia Polii (Indonesia) and Apriyani Rahayu (Indonesia)	Jongkolphan Kititharakul (Thailand) and Rawinda Prajongjai (Thailand)
5.	Mixed Doubles	Mathias Christiansen (Denmark) and Christinna Pedersen (Denmark)	Praveen Jordan (Indonesia) and Melati Daeva Oktavianti (Indonesia)

#### Malaysian chef wins International Young Chef Olympiad 2018

The 4th edition of International Young Chef Olympiad (YCO) concluded in New Delhi with Lai Jia Yi from Malaysia winning the top spot and Indian student chef Surya Sekhar Roy Choudhury claiming the second position. Touted as the "World's biggest culinary battle of student chefs", the competition was judged by eminent celebrity chefs and Michelin-starred winners including Sanjeev Kapoor, Ranveer Brar, John Wood, Chris Galvin, Scott Baechler, and Enzo Oliveri.

#### Golfer Shubhankar wins Maybank Championship

India's Shubhankar Sharma overcame a four-shot deficit to win the US\$3mil (RM11.7mil) Maybank Championship for his second victory on both the Asian Tour and European Tour. Earlier he had won the European Tour's Joburg Open in the second week of December 2017.

#### India lifts U-19 World Cup 2018

India has defeated Australia to lift the Under 19 World cup for the fourth time. The Men in Blue defeated the three-time champions Australia at Bay Oval, New Zealand. The Australian team had set the target of 214 runs and was chased down easily by India. Manjot Kalra was the Hero of the match with his brilliant century.

#### Saurav Ghosal becomes the Highest-Ranked Indian Squash Player

India's leading squash player, Saurav Ghosal jumped five places to No. 14 to become the highest ranked Indian in the latest Professional Squash Association (PSA) rankings. Ghosal beat Joshna Chinappa who slipped three places to No. 17 while Dipika Pallikal Karthik remained on 20. Former Indian national champion Harinder Pal Sandhu was placed at 49th.

#### Mary Kom clinches Gold medal at India Open Boxing tournament

The five-time World Champion and Olympic bronze medallist, Mary Kom on 2, February 2018 claimed the gold medal in the Indian Open International Boxing tournament at Thyagraj Indoor Stadium at New Delhi. Kom defeated Josie Gabuco from the Philippines in a split 4-1 decision to grab the gold in the women's 48kg weight category. The 12th seeded boxer had earlier booked her place in the finals after defeating Mongolian Altansetseg Lutsaikhan in the semi-final clash.

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## ECONOMY

#### Petro: Venezuela becomes first country to launch virtual currency

Venezuela become first sovereign country to officially launch its own cryptocurrency called Petro backed by oil, gas, gold and diamond reserves to circumvent US-led financial sanctions. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has claimed that the pre-mined cryptocurrency Petro has raised US \$735 million on the first day of its pre-sale.

### **PNB Arm, IFC Tie Up To Raise \$800 Mn For Affordable Housing**

PNB Housing Finance Ltd has tied up with International Finance Corporation (IFC), part of the World Bank Group, to raise \$800 million for green and affordable housing in India. IFC is in negotiations with two other housing finance firms to invest another \$150 million, as well as with property developers to assist the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) from both the demand and supply sides. Under PMAY, the government offers interest subsidy of 6.5% to economically weaker sections on their home loans. The scheme is for people with an annual income up to Rs3 lakh.

### **CCI slaps Rs 136 crore fine on Google for unfair business practices**

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has imposed a fine of around Rs. 136 crores on search engine major Google for unfair business practices in the Indian market for online search. The penalty is being imposed on Google for infringing anti-trust conduct. It was alleged that Google is indulging in abuse of dominant position in the market for online search through practices leading to search bias and search manipulation, among others.

### **India contributes \$1 mn to UN Development Partnership Fund**

India has contributed additional \$1 million to India-UN Development Partnership Fund, earmarked for South-South cooperation. The contribution aims to intensify its partnerships with other developing countries in south. India has pledged multi-year contribution of \$100 million to the fund established in June 2017. India has already provided \$6 million within the seven months since launch of fund.

### **Union Govt makes PAN mandatory for transactions over 2.5 lakhs**

The union government made Permanent Account Number (PAN) mandatory for any entity conducting financial transactions of 2.5 lakh or more. Adding that an Aadhaar-like identity number is being developed for enterprises PAN card will also be used as a Unique Entity Number for non-individuals from April 1.

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## **SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

### **Balong 5G01 chipset: Huawei unveils world's first 5G chip**

Chinese electronic device and smartphone maker Huawei has unveiled Balong 5G01, world's first 5G chip at Mobile World Congress 2018 held in Barcelona, Spain. The company also showed its 5G-ready CPE equipment.

### **DRDO Successfully Carries Out Test Flight Of Rustom-2 Drone**

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flown its Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle RUSTOM 2 in Karnataka. The flight assumes significance as this is the first flight in user configuration with higher power engine. India at present depends on America and Israel for such predator drones. DRDO is developing within India a medium-altitude long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicle RUSTOM 2. It has the capability to fly for 24 hours at a stretch at over 200 km/hr speed, and can, not only conduct sustained surveillance but will be able to destroy enemy targets.

### **India Successfully Test-Fires 'Dhanush' Missile**

India has successfully test-fired the nuclear-capable surface-to-surface Dhanush ballistic missile with a strike range of 350 km from a naval ship off Odisha coast. This naval variant of the indigenously-developed Prithvi-II missile was test-fired from the ship positioned near Paradip in the Bay of Bengal. It was developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation. 'Dhanush' missile is capable of carrying a payload of 500 kg and hitting both land and sea-based targets.

### **Progress MS-08: Unmanned Russian Cargo Ship launched to Space Station**

Russian space agency Roskosmos has successfully launched Progress MS-08, an unmanned cargo spacecraft for the International Space Station (ISS). It was launched onboard of Soyuz-2.1a rocket from Russian-leased Baikonur launch facility in Kazakhstan. Soyuz-2.1a has four strap-on boosters and core engine, all fueled by mix of kerosene and liquid oxygen.

### **India successfully test-fires nuclear capable Agni-1 missile**

An indigenously developed short-range nuclear capable ballistic Agni-1 was successfully test-fired from a mobile launcher at Pad 4 of the Integrated Test Range at Odisha's Dr Abdul Kalam Island. It was 18th version of Agni-1, which could achieve all parameters within the stipulated time period. The defence Research and Development Organization (RDO) has successfully tested country's longest indigenously developed nuclear missile Agni-V on 18 January 2018.

### **SpaceX launches the world's most powerful rocket carrying car into space**



US space flight company SpaceX has launched the world's most powerful operational rocket 'Falcon Heavy' into the space. The Falcon Heavy blasted off from the Kennedy Space Centre at Cape Canaveral, Florida, United States. Falcon Heavy carried a red Tesla Roadster car belonging to SpaceX and Tesla founder Elon Musk into space. The car was outfitted with a mannequin dressed in a spacesuit, a high-data storage unit containing Isaac Asimov's science fiction book series, the Foundation Trilogy, and a plaque bearing the names of 6000 SpaceX employees.

#### Google launches '#SecurityCheckKiya' campaign

Search engine giant Google has launched '#SecurityCheckKiya' campaign in India to create awareness around Internet safety. It was launched on the occasion of Safer Internet Day (6 February). The campaign aims to protect first-time web users from account hijacking, safeguard Android devices from malicious apps and secure all their personal data if they lose their device.

#### Japan launches smallest rocket ever to carry tiny satellite into orbit

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) launched the world's smallest rocket with the ability to put a tiny satellite into orbit. The rocket lifted off from the Uchinoura Space Center. It carried a microsatellite TRICOM-1R, a three-unit CubeSat weighing about 3 kilograms. This satellite launch was a re-flight of the TRICOM-1 mission, which was lost in SS-520's failure in 2017. The launch was aimed at testing the ability of JAXA to launch low-cost rockets that can put microsatellites into space at affordable rates.

#### UK allows doctors to create three-parent babies through mitochondrial donation

Britain's fertility regulator Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has allowed doctors to create country's first 'three-parent' babies through mitochondrial donation therapy (or MRT). This move is aimed at preventing passage of incurable genetic diseases from mothers to offspring.

#### INS Karanj is Third Scorpene Class Submarine Launched By Indian Navy

Indian Navy has launched 'INS Karanj', the third of the six indigenous Scorpene-class submarines. The submarine, equipped with superior stealth features and precision-guided weapons built at Mumbai's Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited. Admiral Sunil Lanba, Chief of the Naval Staff, was the chief guest on the occasion. The submarine has an overall length of 67.5 meters and a height of about 12.3 meters.

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## **PERSONS IN NEWS**

### **A) APPOINTMENTS**

#### TV Journalist Rahul Mahajan named Rajya Sabha TV Editor-in-Chief

Television journalist Rahul Mahajan has been appointed as editor-in-chief of the television channel Rajya Sabha TV. Mahajan's name was recommended by a five-member selection committee headed by Prasar Bharti chairman A. Surya Prakash and was approved by the vice-president of India M. Venkaiah Naidu. The committee also included Swapan Dasgupta, Shashi Shekhar Vempati, P.P.K. Ramacharyulu and Rahul Srivastava.

#### Bangladesh appoint Courtney Walsh as coach

Bangladesh has named former West Indies cricketer Courtney Walsh as the interim coach for upcoming tri-nation Twenty20 series. Walsh, who has been Bangladesh's bowling coach since 2016, takes over as interim coach from former Zimbabwean cricketer Richard Halsall. Position of Bangladesh's head coach had been vacant since Oct, when Chandika Hathurusingha quit after three years at the helm.

#### Arvind Jamkhedkar to be next Chairman of ICHR

Archaeologist and historian Arvind P. Jamkhedkar will be the next Chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR). He will replace Prof. K. Sudershan Rao. The post fell vacant after Prof. Rao's retirement. Prof. Jamkhedkar is at present Chancellor of Deccan College, Pune, known in academic circles for its archaeology department.

#### Haruhiko Kuroda reappointed as Bank of Japan Chief

Japan's government has reappointed Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda for another term and chose an advocate of bolder monetary easing as one of his deputies, a sign the central bank will be in no rush to dial back its massive stimulus program. The government also submitted to parliament its nomination of Masazumi Wakatabe, a professor at Waseda University and an advocate of aggressive monetary easing, as deputy governor.

#### Ashok Das appointed Indian envoy to Brazil

Ashok Das, a 1987 batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, was named India's new Ambassador to Brazil. Das, presently additional secretary in the external affairs ministry, is expected to take up his assignment shortly, according to a ministry statement. Both India and Brazil are members of the BRICS economic grouping that also includes China, Russia and South Africa.

#### **Chandrashekhara Kambara elected New President of Sahitya Akademi**

Kannada litterateur Chandrashekar Kambar has been elected as president of the Sahitya Akademi in the election held for the post. He has replaced Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari. Hindi poet Madhav Koushik has been elected as vice-president. This is the second time election was held in the history of Sahitya Akademi, after Ananthamurthy's election to the post. Prof. Kambar has served as the member of the Akademi executive board for over 10 years and was vice-president for 2013-18.

#### **Abhilasha Kumari sworn in as first women Chief Justice of Manipur HC**

Abhilasha Kumari was sworn in as the Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court. She was administered oath of office by Governor Najma Heptulla at the Raj Bhavan. With this, she became first women and third full-time Chief Justice of Manipur High Court.

#### **NPCI appoints Biswamohan Mahapatra as Non-Executive Chairman**

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) appointed Biswamohan Mahapatra as non-executive chairman for two years with immediate effect. He succeeds B Sambamurthy who was the interim chairman.

#### **PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi becomes ICC's 1st Independent Female Director**

PepsiCo Chairman and CEO Indra Nooyi has been appointed as the International Cricket Council's (ICC) first-ever independent female director. Nooyi will join the cricket body in June 2018 for a 2-year term. The introduction of an Independent Director, who must be female, was approved by the ICC in June 2017, aimed at improving the global governance of the sport.

#### **Antony Dominic sworn in as Chief Justice of Kerala**

Acting Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court Antony Dominic was on 9 February, 2018 sworn in as the Chief Justice of Kerala. With this, Justice Dominic became the first keralite to occupy the post of Chief Justice of Kerala in 17 years. The last Keralite who occupied the top post was Justice KK Usha, who served the court in the year 2001.

#### **Jerome H Powell sworn in as 16th Chairman of Federal Reserve**

Jerome H Powell was sworn in as the 16th Chairman of the Federal Reserve for a four-year term. Mr Powell has succeeded Janet Yellen, the first woman to lead the US central bank in its 100-year history. Powell was nominated for the post in November 2017 by President Donald Trump. The oath was administered by Vice Chairman Randal K. Quarles in the Board Room.

#### **Mahmud Hossain Appointed New Chief Justice Of Bangladesh**

The President of Bangladesh, Abdul Hamid appointed Syed Mahmud Hossain as the new Chief Justice of the country. Justice Hossain is the 22nd chief justice of Bangladesh. President administered the oath of office to Justice Hossain.

#### **John Hennessy appointed Alphabet's New Board Chairman**

Alphabet has appointed John L. Hennessy as the new board chairman of the company. Hennessy has been on the board since 2004 and Lead Independent Director since 2007. He has replaced Eric Schmidt. Schmidt will remain as a "technical advisor" to Alphabet. Hennessy is a former president of Stanford University and has had an extensive career in the tech industry.

#### **Dinesh Srivastava takes over as chief executive of Nuclear Fuel Complex**

Distinguished scientist Dinesh Srivastava took over as Chief Executive of Nuclear Fuel Complex (NFC). He has succeeded G Kalyanakrishnan who retired on superannuation. Srivastava will also be Chairman of NFC board. Prior to this assignment, he was holding the position of Deputy Chief Executive at NFR.

#### **Neelam Kapoor appointed as Director General of Sports Authority of India**

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has appointed senior bureaucrat Neelam Kapoor as Director General (DG) of the Sports Authority of India (SAI). ACC was headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. She is 1982 batch officer of Indian Information Service (IIS). At present, she is Principal Director General of the Directorate of Field Publicity. She was Principal Director General of Press Information Bureau (PIB) in UPA Government headed by then PM Manmohan Singh. As PIB chief, she was in-charge of information officers attached to every central government ministry.

#### **Lt. Gen Anil Chauhan takes charge as DGMO of Indian Army**

Lt. Gen Anil Chauhan took charge as the new Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) of the Indian Army. He succeeds Lt General A K Bhatt. Lt Gen Chauhan has held several important posts in the Army and is known for his expertise in counter-insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast.

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## B) RESIGNS

### Ethiopian PM Hailemariam Desalegn resigns

Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn has resigned unexpectedly, saying he hoped to end years of unrest and political upheaval. Mr Hailemariam, who has led the country since 2012, also stepped down as chairman of the ruling coalition. Hundreds of people have died in three years of anti-government protests. Demonstrations first spread across the country in 2015 amid calls for political and economic reform and an end to state corruption.

### Jacob Zuma resigns as South Africa's President

South Africa's embattled President Jacob Zuma has resigned. He announced the decision in a televised address to the nation after the ruling African National Congress (ANC) party threatened to eject him from office via a parliamentary vote of no confidence. The 75-year-old, who was the country's President for the last 9 years, has been under increasing pressure to give way to Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, ANC's new leader. Mr Zuma's resignation followed weeks of intense public pressure to step down amid long-standing corruption allegations.

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## C) DEATHS

### Kanchi Shankaracharya Jayendra Saraswati passes away

Jayendra Saraswati Swamikal, the Kanchi Shankaracharya, passed away on 28, February 2018 in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu. He was 82. He was 69th pontiff of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam. He will be succeeded by the junior pontiff Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswathi, the 70th Shankaracharya of Kamakoti Peetam traditionally referred to as Kamakshi.

### Former Cabinet Secretary T.S.R. Subramanian Passes Away

Former Cabinet Secretary T.S.R. Subramanian passed away. He was 79. Mr Subramanian was a 1961 batch officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre. He served as Cabinet Secretary from August 1996 to March 1998. Mr. Subramanian was part of a group of bureaucrats and diplomats on whose petition the Supreme Court in 2013, rolled out key civil services reforms.

### Legendary Bollywood Actress Sridevi Passes Away

Veteran Bollywood actress and Padma Shri awardee Sridevi, who had an illustrious career spanning over four decades, passed away. She was 54. Sridevi was died due to cardiac arrest in Dubai. She went on a hiatus for 15 years after starring in home production — "Judaii" — co-starring her brother-in-law Anil Kapoor and Urmila Matondkar. It was director Gauri Shinde's "English Vinglish" in 2012 that marked Sridevi's comeback.

### Renowned Violinist MS Anantharaman passes away

Noted violinist M.S. Anantharaman, an exponent of Parur style of violin playing had passed away. He was 94 and is survived by his sons M.S. Sundaresan and M.A. Krishnaswamy and daughter M.A. Bhagirathi, all of whom are proficient in Carnatic music.

### Evangelist Billy Graham dies at 99

The Rev. Billy Graham, one of the world's most famous Christian evangelists, has died at the age of 99. The evangelist brought his "Billy Graham Crusades" around the world, preaching to more than 210 million people in 185 countries and territories. His largest such gathering drew 1 million people in Seoul, South Korea, in the 1970s. As Graham prepared at age 86 for what he called his final U.S. crusade, a three-day event in New York City the weekend of June 25, 2005, he pondered his own mortality.

### Odisha's first female filmmaker Parbati Ghose passes away

Parbati Ghose, Odisha's first female filmmaker, passed away recently following a prolonged illness. She was 85. Parbati Ghose was born in Cuttack district in 1933, Parbati started as a child artiste in All India Radio and soon moved to the silver screen, also as a child artiste, playing Nila Madhava in Shri Jagannath (1949).

### Golden Globe Award winner Musician Johann Johannsson passes away

Acclaimed Icelandic musician and Oscar-nominated composer Johann Johannsson has passed away aged 48. In 2014, he was nominated for BAFTA, Grammy and Oscar awards for his score for 'Theory of Everything', and won the Golden Globe award, making him one of the most well-known composers Iceland has produced.

#### **Pakistani Activist Asma Jahangir passes away**

Asma Jahangir, Pakistan's renowned human rights lawyer, social activist and an outspoken critic of the country's powerful military establishment, passed away of cardiac arrest. She was 66. She was the first woman to serve as the president of Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan.

#### **Renowned literature Chandrasekhar Rath passes away**

Renowned Odia literature Chandrasekhar Rath passed away at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar following age-related ailments. He was 89 and is survived by his wife, three daughters and a son. Rath has written several novels, short stories, essays and poems during his illustrious career. Rath was conferred with several awards including Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award, Odisha Sahitya Akademi Award and Atibadi Jagannath Das Samman for his contribution in the field of literature.

#### **Actor John Mahoney passes away**

Actor John Mahoney passed away after brief illness in Chicago, the USA. He was 77 years old. He was well-known for playing the title character in the "Frasier" show. He worked in films for nearly 35 years. His important works are "The American President", "Moonstruck", "In the Line of Fire" and "Say Anything".

#### **Kathakali Maestro Madavoor Vasudevan Nair passes away**

Kathakali maestro Madavoor Vasudevan Nair collapsed on stage and died while performing at Agasthyacodu Mahadeva Temple, Kerala. He was 89. A recipient of several awards, including Padma Bhushan, he was the follower of the Kaplingattu School, the particular style of south Kerala.

#### **Hukum Singh passes away**

BJP MP Hukum Singh passed away in Uttar Pradesh after suffering from breathing difficulties for long. He had hogged the headlines in 2016 after he released a list of Hindu families and alleged that there had been a mass exodus of Hindus from his constituency. He was an MLA in Uttar Pradesh for seven terms and a minister in the state before entering the Lok Sabha in the 2014 polls.

#### **World's Oldest Man Francisco Nunez Olivera passes away at 113**

The world's oldest man Francisco Nunez Olivera has died just over a month after celebrating his 113th birthday. He was 10 years old when World War One broke out. He passed away in Spain where he had lived throughout his life. He was born on December 13, 1904.

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## **D) VISITORS**

#### **Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein arrives in India**

King of Jordan Abdullah-II bin Al-Hussein has arrived in India on a 3 day visit. This will be his second visit to India after his visit along with Queen Rania in 2006. The two sides are expected to sign a number of memorandums of understanding and agreements in diverse areas of bilateral cooperation. India is Jordan's fourth largest trading partner with bilateral trade worth \$1.35 billion.

#### **Aga Khan's 11-Day Visit To India Begins**

Spiritual leader Aga Khan is on the 11-day visit to India. Sunder Nursery, a 90-acre park near Humayun's Tomb in New Delhi, will be inaugurated by Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu in the presence of the Aga Khan. In addition to these engagements, he will be visiting the cities of Ahmadabad, Hyderabad and Mumbai, where Aga Khan Development Network is involved in various development projects. During his previous visit in 2015, the Aga Khan was conferred Padma Vibhushan for his contributions to social development in India.

#### **Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia**

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley arrived in Riyadh on a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia. He will co-chair the 12th India-Saudi Arabia Joint Commission Meeting to be held in the Saudi capital Riyadh. Mr Jaitley will also open the Saudi-Indian Business Council. Finance Minister will also visit India Pavillion at the Saudi National Heritage and Cultural Festival Janadriyah. Mr Jaitley will meet with the Saudi Minister of Trade & Investment Majid Al-Qassabi to discuss the bilateral issues between the two countries.

#### **Canadian PM arrives for 7-day visit to India**

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on 17 February 2018 embarked on his first visit to India. The Canadian Prime Minister on his seven-day visit will be focused on job creation and strengthening ties between the two nations. Canadian Prime Minister will visit the Golden Temple. While in India, Trudeau will engage with youth and visit several landmarks, including the Taj Mahal, the Jama Masjid, and Swaminarayan Akshardham.

#### **Iranian President Hassan Rouhani visits India**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold bilateral talks with visiting Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in New Delhi, during which discussions on the issues of regional, international and mutual interest will be held. This is the first visit by Iranian President to India in 10 years. In May 2016, Prime Minister Modi had visited Iran and 12 agreements were signed between the two nations.

#### **PM Modi 3 Nation visit- leaves for Palestine**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi left for his three-nation visit to Palestine, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman. This is the first ever visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Palestine, and Prime Minister Modi's second visit to UAE and first to Oman. Prime Minister would be addressing the Sixth World Government Summit being held in Dubai, UAE at which India has been extended 'Guest of Honour' status.

#### **Nepal's ex-King visits India**

Nepal's last monarch Gyanendra Shah has arrived in Odisha to attend the International Gau Sambahana Mahotsav as Chief Guest. He will lay the foundation stone for a Gaumata Mandir. The event was dubbed as the 'Wow Cow Mission' which aims to raise the status of India's 'desi' cow to boost the economy, agriculture and nutrition.

#### **Sushma Swaraj visits Saudi Arabia**

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj attended the opening ceremony of the 32nd Al Jana-driyah festival in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. India has been invited as the Guest of Honour country for the festival. Mrs Swaraj in her first engagement addressed Indian community members at a reception in Riyadh and spoke about the relations between the two countries. During her three day visit, she will meet with the Saudi leadership to discuss bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest.

#### **Sushma Swaraj to embark on two-day visit to Nepal**

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj will embark on a two-day visit to Nepal on 1 February 2018. She will hold discussions with various political leaders on issues of mutual interest and to enhance age-old special ties of friendship between India and Nepal during her stay at Kathmandu. She will meet Communist Party of Nepal (UML) Chairman K.P.Sharma Oli, who is likely to be the new Prime Minister of Nepal. Later she will meet senior leaders of Rashtriya Janta Party Nepal. The Minister will meet Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) Chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda and Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba the next day. She will also call on President Vidya Devi Bhandari.

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### **E) MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **Avani Chaturvedi creates history becomes first Indian woman to fly fighter aircraft solo**

Flying officer Avani Chaturvedi scripted history by becoming the first Indian woman to fly a fighter aircraft solo. She flew a MiG-21 Bison in her first solo flight from Jamnagar base of Indian Air Force (IAF) in Gujarat. Flying officer Avani Chaturvedi belongs to the first batch of female pilots, besides Flying officer Bhawana Kanth and Flying officer Mohana Singh, who were inducted into the Indian Air Force fighter squadron in 2016.

#### **Sanjiv Bajaj named as EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2017**

Business consultancy firm EY named Bajaj Finserv's Sanjiv Bajaj as the entrepreneur for 2017. Sanjiv Bajaj will now represent India at the EY World Entrepreneur of the Year award (WEOY) in Monte Carlo. The company also conferred E. Sreedharan, who spearheaded metro projects in Delhi, Kolkata, Kochi, and Lucknow, with the lifetime achievement award. The awardees were selected by a nine-member jury led by Sun Pharmaceuticals' managing director Dilip Shanghvi.

#### **PM Modi opens 'biggest party office in world'**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the BJP's new headquarters on Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, spread over 1.70 lakh square feet. According to the BJP Chief, the building is bigger than the office of any political party in the world. The new headquarters is fitted with the latest communication technologies and has a spacious social media office.

#### **Amazon Dethrones Microsoft as Third Most Valuable Company**

According to a report in The New York Post, with a market cap of \$702.5 billion, Amazon has become the third most valuable company in the world, racing past Microsoft, which has a market cap of \$699.2 billion. Apple and Alphabet stand ahead of Amazon as the most valuable companies in the world.

### **Wipro among 135 most ethical companies in world**

Tata Steel and Wipro are the two Indian companies that have been named by US-based Ethisphere Institute in the list of World's Most Ethical Companies for 2018. The think tank has honoured 135 companies from 23 countries and 57 industries. Notably, Tata Steel and Wipro are receiving the award for the sixth and seventh time respectively.

### **Andhra's Chandrababu is richest CM in India**

Andhra Pradesh's Chandrababu Naidu is the richest Chief Minister in India with declared assets worth over Rs177 crore, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) stated. Naidu is followed by Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu with assets worth over Rs129 crore and Punjab's Amarinder Singh with Rs48 crore. Tripura's Manik Sarkar with Rs26 lakh is the CM with lowest declared assets.

### **Rohan More becomes 1st Asian to swim across Ocean Seven**

Pune-based swimmer, Rohan More became the first Asian as well as the first Indian to swim across the Ocean Seven. He is the youngest to complete it. He swam across the Cook Strait between North and South Islands of New Zealand in 8 hours and 37 minutes. With this, More becomes only the ninth person in the world to complete it. He has received the Tenzing Norgay Award from the Indian Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The award, also known as the National Adventure Award, was presented by President Ram Nath Kovind.

### **Mumbai 12th richest city globally**

India's financial capital Mumbai, with a total wealth of \$950 billion, has been named among the top 15 wealthiest cities globally, while New York topped the list. Mumbai which also features among the top 10 cities in terms of billionaire population is the home to 28 billionaires. Going forward, Mumbai is expected to be the fastest growing city in terms of wealth growth over the next 10 years.

### **PM Modi conferred with highest Palestinian honour**

In a special recognition of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's contribution to relations between India and Palestine, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas conferred the "Grand Collar of the State of Palestine" on him after the conclusion of the bilateral meeting. The Grand Collar is the highest order given to foreign dignitaries- such as Kings, Heads of State/Government and persons of similar rank.

### **Over 2000 people play Shankh at Rajim Kumbh Mela to create world record**

A record was set on the second day of Rajim Kumbh Mela in Chhattisgarh after over 2,100 saints and locals blew 'shankh' (conch shells) together. Golden Book of World Records certified the record. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh had inaugurated Rajim Kumbh Mela and Ganga Aarti performance at banks of river Mahanadi in Gariyaband's Rajim.

### **Intel sets a Guinness world record with 1,218 drones at 2018 Winter Olympic Games**

The opening ceremony of the Winter Olympic Games 2018 saw a record-setting performance of 1,218 drones (unmanned aerial vehicles), flying in sync to create huge formations of various Olympic sports and the iconic Olympic rings. This record was set by Intel. The drones set a world record for the 'most unmanned aerial vehicles airborne simultaneously,' which was previously held by 500 drones during a 2016 performance in Germany.

### **Eight year old Indian origin girl enters UK Math Hall of Fame**

Sohini Roy Chowdhury, eight-year-old Indian-origin schoolgirl has entered the UK's Mathematics Hall of Fame, an online mathematics-based competitive tool aimed at primary school pupils. She made it into the top 100 World Hall of Fame after solving mathematical puzzles with speed and accuracy. New Delhi born Sohini joined the competition this year as a student of Nelson Primary School in Birmingham.

### **Guinness World Record attempted for playing Ice Hockey at highest altitude**

To set a record in the Guinness book for ice hockey on the world's highest altitude, an international level tournament was organized at recently built international standards open ice hockey rink at an altitude of 4371 meters above the sea level at Chiba Kargyam in Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir. Five international teams from USA, Germany, Canada, Slovakia and Russia and a local team participated in the tournament. It was jointly organized by the Hockey Foundation, USA, Ladakh Winter Sports Club and Lalok Winter Sports Association.

### **Dubai retains rank as World's Busiest International Airport in 2017**

Dubai International Airport has held on to its No 1 ranking as the world's busiest airport for international travel, after seeing around 88.2 million passengers in 2017. Dubai International Airport first surpassed London Heathrow as the world's busiest airport for international traffic in 2014. It has maintained the title ever since, with some 90 airlines flying into Dubai, a gateway for East-West travel.

### **Forbes releases its first-ever cryptocurrency rich list**

Business magazine Forbes released its first-ever Crypto Rich List, comprising 20 wealthiest people in the cryptocurrency space. The list was topped by Ripple Co-founder Chris Larsen, who is estimated to have a crypto net worth of \$7.5-8 billion. He is followed by Ethereum Co-founder Joseph Lubin (\$1-5 billion) and Founder of cryptocurrency exchange Binance Changpeng Zhao (\$1.1-2 billion).

#### Indian princess gets Royal Mail stamp

Indian princess Sophia Alexandra Duleep Singh has been honoured with a Royal Mail stamp of the UK to mark the centenary of the suffragette movement. Sophia, the daughter of Maharaja Duleep Singh, is the only woman to have one of the eight stamps to herself. The image on the stamp shows her selling copies of a Suffragette newspaper in 1913.

#### Nancy Pelosi made history of delivering longest 8 hour speech in American Senate

Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Minority Leader, delivered her speech for more than eight hours in American Senate. The House Historian's Office confirmed the lawmaker's record of longest speech to the media. The previous record of longest speech dates back to 1909 when a Missouri representative, Champ Clark, spoke for 5 hours and 15 minutes against a tariff overhaul. Nancy Pelosi's speech was ended in 8 hours and 5 minutes.

#### THE World Rankings 2018: More Indian Universities in Asia's Top 200

Only two Indian institutes have featured in the top 50 Asian institutes in recently released TIMES Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings for educational institutes in Asia. The two institutes that have made their way to top 50 are Indian Institute of Science (29th rank) and Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (44).

#### Mumbai Airport becomes World's Busiest Single-Runway Airport

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International airport of Mumbai sets record with 980 flights in 24 hours or almost one flight every minute. With this, the Mumbai Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International airport bettered its own feat of 974 flights in 24 hours, recorded in December 2017. While Gatwick, the U.K.'s second-largest airport, remains the most efficient single-runway airport in the world.

#### After 154 years, Nepali tea receives international trademark

Nepalese tea has finally received an international trademark, over a century-and-a-half after cultivation began in the country. Nepali tea producers used to export tea with the respective companies' names or logos. Now, the tea will be sold in the international market with a common logo, which represents the national identity.

#### A hill on Mars is named after Kalpana

NASA named seven hills on planet Mars after the seven crew members, including India-born astronaut Kalpana Chawla, of the Space Shuttle Columbia who lost their lives while returning from their mission. The crew died when the space shuttle disintegrated on re-entering Earth's atmosphere on February 1, 2003. The 16-day mission was dedicated to research in physical, life and space sciences.

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### PLACES IN NEWS

#### World's Tallest Hotel 'Gevora' opens in Dubai

The Gevora Hotel in Dubai, developed by the Al Attar Group has now become the "world's tallest hotel". It stands 356 metres and 53 centimetres tall. It is one metre taller than the previous holder of the title, the JW Marriott Marquis, in the same city. The title has been confirmed by Guinness Book of World Records.

#### China reopens Nathu La route

China has confirmed "resumption" of Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through the Nathu La route. Kailash Mansarovar yatra via Nathu La was not undertaken last year after the Chinese govt cited "unfavourable conditions" to ensure safe & smooth conduct of the yatra on this route. The yatra was stopped by China in the aftermath of the military face-off with India last year at Doklam.

#### UAE launches World's Longest Zip Line

The United Arab Emirates has made a record by opening the world's longest zip line, measuring 2.83 km in length. Guinness World Records officials certified the zip line in Ras al-Khaimah. The Jebel Jais Flight takes thrill-seekers atop the country's largest mountain peak, from a launch pad 1,680 meters (5,512 feet) above sea level.

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## **BOOKS IN NEWS**

### **I&B Minister Smriti Irani Releases 'India-2018' Book**

Information and Broadcasting Minister Smriti Irani released 'India 2018' (English Version) and 'Bharat 2018' (Hindi Version). The books are published by the Publications Division. The book available in both print and online versions. It is an exhaustive publication dealing with all aspects of the country's development. With its latest edition, the book has entered into its 62nd year of publication.

### **Shilpa Shetty's The Diary of Domestic Diva launched**

After the success of her first book The Great Indian Diet, actress cum entrepreneur, and now an author, Shilpa Shetty has released her second book. It is called The Diary of Domestic Diva. The Diary of Domestic Diva is a cookbook that contains recipes of various dishes along with the calorie intake details.

### **Sachin Tendulkar, his wife launch book on child health care**

Legendary Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and his wife Anjali Tendulkar launched a book on child health care titled 'Even When There Is A Doctor'. Penned down by Dr Yashwant Amdekar along with Dr Rajesh Chokhani and Krishnan Sivaramakrishnan, the book describes the role of an individual or parents in improving their child's health.

### **Rajnath Singh releases book titled "Mere Sapnon ka Bharat"**

Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh released a book titled "Mere Sapnon ka Bharat". It is a compilation of interviews of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee by Tarun Vijay, an ex-MP, at a function in New Delhi. The Home Minister described Mr Vajpayee as a distinguished personality who stands alone because of his stature. He is respected by all cutting across the political parties divides.

### **'Exam Warriors'- A Book penned down by PM Modi released**

The book penned down by PM Narendra Modi named 'Exam Warriors' was launched to reach out to the students across the country ahead of their exams. The book was released by External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj. The book has been written to inspire youths to face the difficult moments of examinations and life, with fresh and new energy. 'Exam Warriors' is published by Penguin India, which runs into 208 pages.

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## **COMMITTEES**

### **Committee constituted by Karnataka govt recommends separate state flag**

Nine member committee constituted by Karnataka government has recommended separate state flag. It submitted report on designing separate flag for the state and providing a legal standing for it. It has discounted any constitutional or legal hurdles for it.

### **N Chandrasekaran Task force constituted to study AI application in military**

The Ministry of Defence (Department of Defence Production) constituted a 17 member task force headed by Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran to study use and application of artificial intelligence (AI) in military. The task force will study the whole gamut of issues surrounding strategic implications of AI in national security perspective, in global context.

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## **DAYS & DATES**

### **28th February: World Rare Disease Day**

The World Rare Disease Day was observed across the globe on 28 February, 2018 with the aim to raise awareness about rare diseases and their impacts. The day was commemorated with events in over 80 countries and regions across the world. The day was coordinated by the European Organisation for Rare Diseases (EURORDIS), which promotes research on rare diseases and commercial development of orphan drugs. It is observed on the last day of February each year.

### **28th February: National Science Day**

The National Science Day is observed every year on 28th February with an objective to spread message of importance of science and its application among the people. The theme for National Science Day 2018 is "Science and Technology for a sustainable future". The day is observed to mark the discovery of Raman effect by Physicist CV Raman on 28th February, 1928. For his discovery, CV Raman was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.

#### **21 February: International Mother Language Day**

The International Mother Language Day 2018 was observed across the world on February 21 with an aim to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism. The day promotes the dissemination of mother tongues to encourage linguistic diversity and multilingual education with an aim to develop fuller awareness of linguistic and cultural traditions throughout the world. The theme of 2018 International Mother Language Day is 'Linguistic diversity and multilingualism count for sustainable development'.

#### **13 February: World Radio Day**

Every year 13 February is observed as the World radio Day. Radio is the mass medium reaching the widest audience in the world. World Radio Day is about celebrating radio, why we love it and why we need it today more than ever. It is a day to remember the unique power of radio to touch lives and bring people together across every corner of the globe. For the year 2018, the theme of the world Radio day is Radio and Sports. This year it is the seventh edition of World Radio Day. This year the world radio day will be focusing on diversity and equality in 'Radio and Sports'.

#### **6 February: International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation**

The International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation was observed on February 6, 2018. The day is observed every year to eradicate the practice of female genital mutilation. It was first introduced in 2003. Female Genital mutilation (FGM) comprises procedures that involve altering or injuring the female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is recognised internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women.

#### **4th February: World Cancer Day**

World Cancer Day is being observed on 4th February every year to raise awareness about cancer, its treatment and to encourage methods of its prevention. The primary goal of the day is to reduce the illness and related deaths by 2020. Vice President Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated a medical camp at Swarna Bharat Trust, Atkur in Andhra Pradesh organised on the occasion of World Cancer Day.

Read more: [Current Affairs February 2018 Study Material | FreeJobAlert.com](http://currentaffairs.freejobalert.com/february-2018-current-affairs-study-material/33865/#ixzz5CzxcYmej) <http://currentaffairs.freejobalert.com/february-2018-current-affairs-study-material/33865/#ixzz5CzxcYmej>

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