

CURRENT AFFAIRS JUNE 2018 PDF

AWARDS & HONOURS

NAME OF THE PERSON	NAME OF THE AWARD	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Tommy Koh - former Singaporean diplomat	Padma Shri award	Felicitated by PM Modi during his Singapore visit.
Karthik Nemmani	91st Scripps National Spelling Bee contest	
Cricketer Yuvraj Singh	Most Inspiring Icon Of The Year For Social Welfare	Awarded by the Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival (DIFF)
Chennai-based startup Calzy 3	Apple Design award 2018	
Virat Kohli	BCCI's best international cricketer (men) for the 2016-17 and 2017-18	
Harmanpreet Kaur	Best international cricketer (women) for 2016-17	
Smriti Mandhana	Best international cricketer (women) for 2017-18	
Virat Kohli	Polly Umrigar Award	For being the best international cricketer for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons at the annual BCCI awards.
Smriti Mandhana	International cricketer of the year 2017-18	-
Harmanpreet Kaur	Player of the year Award in the 2016-17 season.	-
Irish author Mike McCormack	International Dublin literary award	For his one-sentence novel Solar Bones
Bindeshwar Pathak	Japan's prestigious Nikkei Asia Prize	Pathak - founder of Sulabh International
Tamil Nadu's Anukreethy Vas	Miss India at the 55th Femina Miss India 2018	Miss World 2017 - Manushi Chhillar
Actor Tim Robbins	Crystal Globe for Outstanding Contribution to World Cinema	At Karlovy Vary International Film Festival (KVIFF)
Surat	City Award at India Smart Cities Awards	
Vishwas Mandalik from Nasik and the Yoga Institute in Mumbai	Prime Minister's Award	For outstanding contribution for promotion and development of yoga
Veteran director Martin Scorsese	Lifetime Achievement Award at the Rome Film Fest	
Actor Kalki Koechlin	French distinction of Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters (Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres).	For contribution in enhancing Indo-French ties in cinema
Pallavi Durua	First 'Tribal Queen'	Odisha's Koraput district
Rajasthan CM Vasundhara Raje	Chief Minister of the Year award	Awarded at the 52nd Skoch Summit held in New Delhi.

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Lawrence Haddad and Dr. David Nabarro	World Food Prize 2018	For elevating maternal and child undernutrition within food security
Actress Priyanka Chopra	Hottest woman in the world	By Maxim India

APPOINTMENTS

NAME OF THE PERSON	DEPARTMENT/FIELD	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Professor Sanjeev Shrivastava	Brand ambassador of Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha Municipal Corporation	
Mahesh Kumar Jain	Deputy Governor of RBI	He is IDBI Bank's Managing Director and CEO
Defence Secretary Sanjay Mitra	DRDO Chairman (Additional Charge)	Eminent scientist S Christopher has completed his term
Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés	President of the UN General Assembly	She is Ecuador's Foreign Minister
Pranjal Patil	First visually-challenged woman IAS officer in India	
West Bengal Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi	Tripura Governor (Additional Charge)	Tripura Governor Tathagata Roy is on leave
Anupam Kher	Lifetime Achievement Honour	International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) awards
Sarita Nayyar	World Economic Forum (WEF)'s Managing Board	
Former NIA chief Sharad Kumar	Vigilance Commissioner In CVC	CVC - Central Vigilance Commission
Arvind Saxena	Acting Chairman Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)	
Dhivya Suryadevara	US automaker General Motors' CFO	
Ivan Duque	Colombia's next President	Colombia's youngest ever President
Lieutenant General Aziz Ahmed	Bangladesh's Army Chief	He will succeed General Abu Belal Mohammad Shafiul Haque
Pradeep Parameswaran	UBER's President for India and South Asia business	
Sandeep Bakhshi	Chief Operating Officer (COO) of ICICI Bank	
Amit Jain	Managing Director OF L'Oréal India	
AR Rahman	Brand Ambassador of the Sikkim government	
Atul Gawande	CEO of New Amazon led Joint Health Care Firm	
B Sriram	CEO of IDBI Bank	Temporary period of three months

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Arijit Basu	Managing Director of India's largest lender State Bank of India	
Abhay V. Udeshi	President of International Castor Oil Association	
Paul Polman	International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Chairman	Succeeds Sunil Bharti Mittal
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	President of Turkey	
MS Dhoni	Brand Ambassador Sumadhura Group	
Senior bureaucrat S Ramesh	Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)	
Chandra Chaturvedi	Part-time non-executive Chairman and Independent Director of ICICI	Chaturvedi will replace current Chairman MK Sharma



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Banking & Finance

Govt may merge 4 banks to create India's second-largest bank

The government is reportedly planning to merge at least four state-run banks including IDBI Bank, Bank of Baroda, Central Bank of India, and Oriental Bank of Commerce. The merged entity would become India's second-largest bank after SBI, with combined assets of ₹16.58 trillion. The government is also planning to sell 51% stake in IDBI Bank for ₹9,000-10,000 crore, reports said.

Financial Literacy Week starts with theme 'Customer Protection'

The Reserve Bank of India has chosen customer protection as theme for the Financial Literacy Week. This week long event ending on June 8 will focus on creating awareness among customers of banks about financial products and services, good financial practices and going digital.

The week will focus on four consumer protection messages like 'know your liability' for unauthorised electronic banking transaction and Good practices for a safe digital banking experience.

HDFC Bank recognized for best practices in payment security

HDFC Bank has been recognized with the Champion Security Award at the 14th Visa Asia Pacific Security Summit. For the second time in a row, the bank has won the award in the India and South Asia category. The Award is a mark of excellence reflecting leadership in risk management and payment security performance.

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India fastest growing economy in FY19 at 7.3%: World Bank

India will retain the tag as the world's fastest growing major economy advancing 7.3% this fiscal year and 7.5% in the next two, the World Bank has projected. India has overcome the temporary disruptions caused by the implementation of GST, it added. "India's economy is robust, resilient and has potential to deliver sustained growth," a World Bank official said.

RBI hikes repo rate for the first time in 4.5 years

The RBI has hiked the repo rate, the rate at which banks borrow from RBI, by 25 bps to 6.25% during its second bi-monthly policy review of 2018-19. This is the first hike since January 2014, when the rate was raised to 8%. The hike comes amid rising oil prices and high retail inflation, which accelerated to 4.58% in April.

Public Credit Registry: New Information Repository to be set up by RBI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said it would set up a public credit registry—an information repository that collates all loan information of individuals and corporate borrowers. A credit repository will help banks distinguish between a bad and a good borrower and accordingly offer attractive interest rates to good borrowers and higher interest rates to bad borrowers. The public credit repository will address information asymmetry, improve access to credit and strengthen the credit culture among consumers.

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2018 Promulgated

President Ram Nath Kovind gave assent to promulgate the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2018. The Ordinance provides significant relief to homebuyers by recognising their status as financial creditors. It also gives them due representation in the Committee of Creditors and makes them an integral part of the decision-making process. It will also enable homebuyers to invoke Section 7 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016 against errant developers. Another major beneficiary would be Micro, Small and Medium Sector Enterprises (MSME), which form the backbone of the Indian economy as the biggest employer, next only to the agriculture sector.

World Bank approves Rs 6000 crores for Atal Bhujal Yojana aims to improve groundwater management in country

The World Bank has approved India's Rs 6,000 crore central scheme which aims to improve ground water management in priority areas in the country through community participation over a period of five years from 2018-19 to 2022-23.

The ministry will soon seek Cabinet approval for the scheme – called Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABHY). The priority areas identified under the scheme fall in Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

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Government makes PAN mandatory for sending money abroad

The government has made Permanent Account Number (PAN) mandatory for sending money abroad under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS). Earlier, PAN was not insisted upon for current account transactions of up to \$25,000. The scheme allows all resident individuals to remit \$250,000 overseas every financial year for the purposes of education, medical treatment, and purchase of shares among others.

Reserve Bank of India amends Gold Monetisation Scheme

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) made changes in the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) to make it more attractive. The revamping of the scheme is aimed at enabling people to open a hassle-free gold deposit account.

The short-term deposits should be treated as bank's on-balance sheet liability. These deposits will be made with the designated banks for a short period of 1-3 years (with a facility of rollover). Deposits can also be allowed for broken periods (e.g. 1 year 3 months; 2 years 4 months 5 days; etc).

FDI in India rises to US \$61.96 billion in 2017-18: DIPP

Foreign direct investment in India increased to \$61.96 billion in 2017-18. FDI inflows stood at \$60 billion in the previous fiscal. According to an UNCTAD report, foreign direct investment (FDI) to India decreased to \$40 billion in 2017 from \$44 billion in 2016, while outflows from India, the main source of investment in South Asia, more than doubled.

Total loss of state-run banks crossed ₹87,000 crore in FY18

Public sector banks collectively suffered a net loss of ₹87,357 crore in 2017-18, with PNB posting the highest loss of nearly ₹12,283 crore. Of the 21 state-owned banks, only Indian Bank and Vijaya Bank reported profits during the financial year. All the 21 banks had together reported a net profit of ₹473.72 crore in 2016-17.

Truecaller makes first Indian acquisition, buys payments firm Chillr

Swedish caller ID service Truecaller has acquired Kerala-based payments startup Chillr, marking its first acquisition in India. As part of the deal, Chillr Co-founder Sony Joy will join as the Vice President of Truecaller Pay, and the entire team will be retained by the company. Founded in 2014, Chillr lets users send money directly between bank accounts using mobile numbers.

SoftBank to invest \$100 bn in Indian solar project

Japanese conglomerate SoftBank will invest up to \$100 billion in solar power generation project in India. The company is expected to make the investment through a fund backed by Saudi Arabia's government. SoftBank CEO Masayoshi Son may meet Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss the deal.

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HDFC Bank's proposal to raise additional share capital approved

Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for grant of permission to HDFC Bank to raise additional share capital of up to a maximum of 24,000 crore rupees.

The composite foreign shareholding in the Bank will not exceed 74% of the enhanced paid-up equity share capital of the bank. According to the Finance Minister Piyush Goyal, the proposed investment is expected to strengthen the capital adequacy ratio of the bank.

The Cabinet also approved reconstitution of North Eastern Council (NEC).

HDFC ranked 5th biggest consumer financial services company worldwide by Forbes

Housing finance major HDFC has been ranked as the 5th biggest public company globally in the 'consumer financial services category' on a list compiled by Forbes magazine. **MARG ERP Limited partners with ICICI Bank**

Marg ERP limited, a leading Inventory and Accounting software solution company has partnered with ICICI Bank, to offer an integrated payments platform to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) customers, using MARG's accounting software.

This integration aims to promote 'Connected Banking' and enables ICICI Bank's current account holders to securely connect their bank account with the MARG ERP software and undertake an array of digital transactions from within the ERP platform itself.

TCS becomes first Company to close over Rs. 7 Trillion Market Cap

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) became the first company to close the trading session with a market valuation of over Rs 7 trillion on a day when its board approved a share buyback of up to Rs 160 billion. TCS is the country's most valued firm followed by Reliance Industries Ltd with an m-cap of Rs 6.42 trillion, HDFC Bank (Rs 5.28 trillion), HUL (Rs 3.50 trillion) and ITC (Rs 3.22 billion) in the top five list.

Banks Board Bureau recommends 22 GMs for elevation as executive directors at PSU banks

The Banks Board Bureau (BBB), reconstituted in April, has just completed its first major exercise: recommending 22 general managers to be elevated as executive directors at various public sector banks. Set up in February 2016 – based on the recommendations of the RBI-appointed Nayak Committee – its broad agenda was to improve governance at state-owned lenders. Its mandate also involved advising the government on top-level bank appointments and assisting banks with capital-raising plans as well as strategies to deal with bad loans.

SAARC Development Fund to launch Social Enterprise Development Programme

Thimpu-based **SAARC Development Fund** will soon be launching a social enterprise development programme (SEDP) to fund 80 entities annually across the 8-member states including India. SDF was established by the Heads of the eight SAARC member states in April 2010 and its Governing Council comprises finance ministers of these eight countries. SDF has already committed USD 73.74 million

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for social window projects as of date out of which it has disbursed USD 47 million to the member states for social window projects.

India raises import duties on many items against US tariff hike

India raised import duties on almost 30 items including agricultural and steel products in protest against the US imposing higher levies on products shipped from the country. Earlier, US hiked tariffs on certain steel and aluminium products which had tariff implication of \$241 million on India. China, EU and other trading partners have also hiked tariffs in protest.

AIIB to invest \$200 million into NIIF to boost infrastructure projects

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank will invest \$200 million in India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund even as it assuaged concerns over China's dominance over it and stressed that it works for all its shareholders. India is already the largest borrower from the AIIB with \$1.2 billion financing in six projects. In total, the AIIB has invested \$4.39 billion in projects. India is the second largest shareholder of the AIIB with an 8.72 per cent stake.

Though the AIIB has 86-member countries, China has the largest shareholding at about 31 per cent leading to concerns that it may increase the country's influence across the region.

Indian money in Swiss banks rises 50% to over ₹7,000 crore

Reversing a three-year downtrend, Indians' money in Swiss banks rose about 50% to 1.01 billion francs (₹7,000 crore) in 2017, official data showed. In comparison, the funds held by all foreign clients rose 3% to 1.46 trillion francs (₹100 lakh crore). Indians' money in Swiss banks stood at a record high of 6.5 billion francs (₹23,000 crore) at 2006-end.

ICICI Bank loses ₹19,000 crore market cap in 4 days

ICICI Bank's shares have plunged 11% in last 4 sessions, eroding ₹19,066 crore in market capitalisation. This comes after a whistleblower alleged that ICICI inflated profits by at least \$1.3 billion over 8 years by delaying provisioning for 31 bad loan accounts. Further, CEO Chanda Kochhar has gone on an indefinite leave pending a probe into the Videocon loan case.

Climate change will lower Indian living standard: World Bank

Climate change will lower the living standard of 50% of South Asian population by 2050, with residents of central India being hit the worst, a World Bank report has revealed. Over 60 crore Indians will be moderately or severely affected by temperature and rainfall changes. Meanwhile, living standard of people residing in cold and dry mountain areas can slightly improve.

Jio becomes India's second largest telco by revenue

Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Jio has overtaken Vodafone India to become the second largest carrier by revenue in India, as per TRAI data. Jio had adjusted gross revenue (AGR) of ₹6,217 crore in the March quarter compared to Vodafone India's ₹4,937 crore. Market leader Bharti Airtel's AGR fell about 10% from the previous quarter to ₹7,087 crore.

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IRDA approves LIC-IDBI Bank deal

The Board of Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) has approved Life Insurance Corporation's (LIC) proposal to the acquisition of up to 51% stake in state-run lender IDBI Bank. The insurance regulator gave the insurer exemption from 15% investment cap.

The LIC is expected to invest Rs 10,000-13,000 crore in tranches in the NPA-mired state-run lender. The deal will also require approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

India will get Black Money Data from Swiss Bank by 2019

As part of a bilateral treaty signed between the India and Switzerland, India would start getting data on deposits made by Indians this year in Swiss Banks from 2019.

Strong action would be taken against those found guilty of wrongdoing. Under Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) which was introduced by former Finance Minister P Chidambaram, an individual could remit up to USD 2,50,000 per year.



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Indian Affairs

India is the world's largest producer of milk

India is the world's largest producer of milk, contributing about 19% of the world's total milk production with over 150 million tonnes of milk production every year. India, whose milk output surpasses that of all the European Union countries combined, is followed by the US, China, Pakistan and Brazil. World Milk Day is being observed on June 1.

Govt approves construction of 1.5 lakh houses for urban poor

The Centre has approved the construction of 1.5 lakh houses for urban poor under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, which aims to build 1.2 crore such houses till 2022. Over 56,500 houses will be built in Andhra Pradesh, 23,060 in Uttar Pradesh, 13,506 in Maharashtra, among other states. Around 47.5 lakh houses has been approved under the scheme till now.

Foundation laid for India's first Advanced DNA Forensic Lab in Chandigarh

Union Minister for Women and Child Development Maneka Gandhi has laid the foundation stone of an advanced DNA forensic laboratory here as part efforts to reduce the backlog of cases needing advanced forensic analysis.

Built at a cost of Rs 99.76 crore from the Nirbhaya Fund, the state-of-the-art 'Sakhi Suraksha' lab, will come up at the Central Forensic Science Laboratory campus to assist in investigation and prosecution of crimes including those committed against women and children.

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IRCTC joined hands with delivery service partners TRAPIGO

The IRCTC has joined hands with delivery service partners TRAPIGO and Shree Mahalakshmi Swayam Sahayata Bachat Ghat (Ratnagiri) to provide the choice of regional or local cuisines to passengers on trains. TRAPIGO, a startup by IIT-IIM and NIFT graduates, is a last mile 'B2B' logistics service provider for food products.

To ensure reliable delivery of hot and fresh food from the choicest restaurants in the city, TRAPIGO – with its own fleet of delivery boys in co-branded uniforms – will guarantee the execution.

Nuclear-capable Agni 5 missile successfully test-fired

India successfully test-fired the indigenously developed and nuclear-capable Long Range Ballistic Missile Agni 5 on Sunday. This was the sixth trial of the surface-to-surface missile, which has a strike range of 5,000 km. Agni 5 is the most advanced missile with new technologies in terms of navigation and guidance, warhead, and engine, Defence Research and Development Organisation officials said.

Indian Navy evacuates 38 Indians stranded on Yemen's Socotra island

The Indian Navy evacuated 38 stranded Indians from Socotra island in Yemen where they got stuck after a cyclone hit the area 10 days ago, forcing India to launch an operation to rescue them. All are reported to be safe.

The Navy evacuated the Indians as part of operation 'NISTAR' carried out off the coast of Socotra and embarked them at Indian Naval ship INS Sunayna to bring them back to India. A severe cyclonic storm Mekenu crossed the Yemeni Island of Socotra on May 24, leaving 38 Indians stranded on the island with limited food and water.

Asia's first 13 'Blue Flag' beaches to be developed in India

Environment-friendly, clean and equipped with amenities of international standards for tourists, 13 Indian beaches will soon get the Blue Flag certification. These beaches of Odisha, Maharashtra and other coastal states will be the first in not just India, but in Asia, to get the Blue Flag certification. The Indian beaches are being developed by the Society for Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM), an environment ministry's body working for the management of coastal areas.

Ensemble Prediction Systems (EPS): IMD's new forecast model

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has launched a new Ensemble Prediction Systems (EPS) to provide probabilistic weather forecasts up to the next 10 days. These new systems, according to IMD, shall improve upon deterministic forecasts that are prone to high margins of error. The EPS involves generation of multiple forecasts using slightly varying initial conditions.

Central Government forms Cauvery Water Management Authority

The centre has constituted the Cauvery Water Management Authority in compliance with a Supreme Court order to address the water dispute involving the states of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

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A notification by the Water Resources Ministry said the authority will be headed by a chairman and it will have two whole time and as many part time members. While the whole time members will be appointed by the centre, the other two will be nominated by it.

India gets first automated vehicle scrapping and recycling facility

India's first automated and organised vehicle scrapping and recycling facility is up and running in Greater Noida. The five-acre facility, set up by M&M through a joint venture with government owned company MSTC, went on stream in April this year. Construction of five more facilities at different locations of the country is underway and expected to become operational by March next year.

India Successfully Test-Fires SFDR Propulsion Based Missile

Making a breakthrough in missile technology, India successfully carried out the flight test of Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) propulsion based missile, according to the Defence Ministry. The technology demonstrator flight test was conducted from the Launch Centre-III of Integrated Test Range at Chandipur in Odisha.

India Ranked 113th On Childhood Index

According to a Save the Children's "End of Childhood Index 2018", India ranks 113 among 175 countries with regards to where childhood is threatened as a result of poor health, malnutrition, exclusion from education, child labor, and child marriage. The child marriages in India have come down to 15.2% from 21.1% in 2017.

Singapore and Slovenia are placed at the top sharing the first place in the index and Niger figures at the end of the list at 175.

Taj Declaration to Beat Plastic Pollution adopted in Agra

Taj Declaration to Beat Plastic Pollution was adopted as part of which efforts would be made to make the 500-metre area around the historic ivory-white marble monument litter-free and phase out single-use plastic.

The adoption of the declaration – in presence of Minister of State for Environment Mahesh Sharma, UN Environment Programme Executive Director Erik Solheim, UNEP Goodwill Ambassador Diya Mirza – came ahead of the World Environment Day on June 5.

Varanasi airport first to have national highway under runway

The Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport near Varanasi is set to become the first Indian airport to have a national highway underneath its runway. A new underpass that will convert the highway into a four-lane road will be constructed, while the current runway will be expanded from 2,750 metres to 4,075 metres.

India hosts 2018 World Environment Day (June 05)

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India is the global host of 2018 World Environment Day, a UN Environment-led global event which is taking place today. The theme of this year's edition, 'Beat Plastic Pollution', urges people around the world to explore sustainable alternatives and urgently reduce production and excessive use of single-use plastic.

Forty ninth Conference of Governors Concludes In New Delhi

The two-day 49th Conference of Governors concluded in New Delhi. The President exhorted Governors to take the lead in adopting modern technology and methods.

The Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Minister for Home Affairs also addressed the concluding session of the Conference.

Union Government forms 3 key panels for museum of Prime Ministers Project

In a major push towards setting up a unique museum in Delhi on the 'Prime Ministers of India', the Culture Ministry formed three high-powered panels that will work to implement the project.

The three committees, one will focus on project implementation, while the other two will concentrate on choice and development of content for the one-of-its-kind museum.

The Ministry planning to set up a modern museum that will tell the story of all the Prime Ministers of the country at the premises of the iconic Teen Murti Estate, which was the official residence of first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

Maternal mortality ratio in India down 22%

The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in India has declined 22% from 167 in 2011-13 to 130 in 2014-16, according to data released by the Registrar General of India. Maternal mortality is the death of a woman while she is pregnant or within 42 days of termination of the pregnancy, due to any pregnancy-related issue.

Centre approves plan for 3 lakh solar street lights in India

The Union Cabinet has approved a ₹637-crore plan which includes installing 3 lakh solar street lights throughout the country, especially northeastern states and Maoist-affected districts. It also includes distributing 25 lakh solar study lamps to all the students in such areas. Further, the Centre is planning a second phase to build stand-alone solar power plants where grid supply is unreliable.

Reservations in Promotions: Centre gets go ahead from SC

The Supreme Court has allowed the Centre to go ahead with reservation in promotion for employees belonging to the SC and ST category in "accordance with law". The top court took into account the Centre's submissions that the entire process of promotion has come to a standstill due to the orders passed by various high courts and the apex court had also ordered for status quo in a similar matter in 2015. The government said there were separate verdicts by the high courts of Delhi, Bombay, Punjab and Haryana on the issue and the apex court had also passed different orders on appeals filed against those judgements.

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Central Government Constitutes Group To Suggest Changes In SEZ Policy

The Centre has constituted a group of eminent persons headed by Bharat Forge's Baba Kalyani to study the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) policy of the country and suggest measures to make it more relevant for exporters and compatible with World Trade Organisation (WTO) norms.

The SEZ Act was passed in 2005 giving tax incentives to investors, but investments in the zone were subsequently brought under the ambit of Minimum Alternate Tax and Dividend Distribution Tax leading to a dwindling in flow of money into the SEZs.

Election Commission of India launches its online RTI Portal

The Election Commission of India has launched an online RTI portal to help applicants seeking information under the Right To Information Act. The portal can be accessed on the home page of the commission's website 'eci.nic.in', an official statement said. There is also a gateway for making online payment of requisite fees under the RTI Act. The portal also facilitates online reply to applications and also for making first appeal and reply thereto.

India hosted 11th edition of Geo Intelligence Asia

The eleventh edition of Geo-Intelligence Asia 2018 was held at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi on June 4-5, 2018. The annual event was organised by GeoSpatial Media and Communication in collaboration with Directorate General of Information System as Knowledge Partners and Military Survey as co-organisers. The sessions and exhibits in the stalls discussed the latest advancements in Geospatial Technologies, which were widely appreciated by all participants.

Operation Nistar successfully culminates with safe disembarkations of 38 Indian Nationals

Indian Naval Ship Sunayana entered Porbandar harbour after successfully evacuating 38 Indian Nationals at/ off Socotra Islands during a swift Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Operation (HADR), code named Operation NISTAR. The Indian Nationals were stranded for nearly ten days after severe Cyclonic Storm - Mekunu devastated the area around Socotra Island. INS Sunayna was diverted from Gulf of Aden deployment to Socotra Island for search and rescue operations after Indian Navy received a distress call from Directorate General of Shipping and Indian Sailing Vessels Association.

Smriti irani launches GIAN to boost higher education with International collaboration

To boost the quality of higher education in India, government has launched Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN). The initiative is to improve the quality of higher education through international collaboration. IIT Kharagpur is the nodal institution and national coordinator for this flagship programme. Irani said that the courses will have a credit-based approach.

First Indian-made artillery gun ready for induction: Army

India's first indigenous, long-range artillery gun 'Dhanush' has cleared its final test and is ready to be inducted into the Indian Army. Earlier this month, fifty rounds of shells each were fired from six Dhanush guns, which are reportedly called 'desi Bofors'. The gun also passed the tests in cold, humid, and hot conditions.

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Highway Tunnel dedicated to Nation in North Sikkim

Minister of State for Defence, Dr, Subhash Bhamre dedicated a highway tunnel at Theng near Chungthang in north Sikkim to the nation. The tunnel will benefit the tourism and rapidly propel the growth of the state.

The double-lane tunnel stretching about 600 meters has been constructed by the Border Roads Organisation at cost of over 42 crore rupees.

Sports Ministry approves upward revision of Pension to Meritorious Sportspersons

Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Rajyavardhan Rathore approved the upward revision of pension to meritorious sportspersons. Under the revision, the rate of pension has been doubled of the existing rate of pension on winning medals in international sports events.

Following the upward revision of pension, the medallist at the Olympic/Para-Olympic Games will get Rs.20,000 while a gold medallist at World Cup/World Championship in Olympic and Asian Games disciplines will get Rs.16,000.

Indian Coast Guard interceptor ship commissioned

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) commissioned an interceptor boat- ICGS C-439 at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) C-439 was commissioned by Additional Director General K Natarajan, Coast Guard Commander of Western Seaboard.

The ICGS C-439 is designed by the L&T Marine & Ship Design Division, an in-house facility of Larsen & Toubro Limited.

Railways installs first-ever food vending machine in train

The Indian Railways has installed a tablet-operated automatic food vending machine in the newly-launched double-decker Coimbatore-Bengaluru UDAY Express. The machine offers snacks and beverages like biscuits, chips, aerated drinks and tea/coffee. The train is also equipped with an infotainment system with Wi-Fi, GPS-based passenger information system and an exclusive dining area for passengers.

WHO Commends India For Reducing Maternal Mortality Ratio By 77%

The WHO commended India's progress in reducing the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) by 77 percent, from 556 per one lac live births in 1990 to 130 per one lac live births in 2016.

This progress puts the country on track towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal target of an MMR below 70 by 2030. India's present MMR is below the Millennium Development Goal target.

Govt forms panel to look into jobs data calculation

The government has set up a committee headed by former Chief Statistician of India TCA Anant to bring in transparency in the jobs data calculation. The panel will look into the limitations of the

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Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) and submit its report. The government said the survey effectively captures the employment size of only about 5% of the total workforce.

Govt approves 33-pc increase in carpet area of houses under PMAY-U

The government has approved a 33-per cent increase in carpet area of houses eligible for interest subsidy under its affordable housing scheme Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) to attract more beneficiaries, the Housing and Urban Affairs (HUA) Ministry said.

The carpet area of a house has been enhanced to 160 sq m from 120 sq m for Middle Income Group-I (MIG-I), while it has been increased to 200 sq m from 150 sq m in case of MIG-II.

Around 2 lakh 50,000 gram panchayats to be provided broadband connectivity by March next year

Communication Minister Manoj Sinha expressed hope that all the 2 lakh 50,000-gram panchayats will be provided broadband connectivity by March next year. The scheme will make a significant improvement in the lives of rural people.

The telecom sector has witnessed revolutionary changes over the last four years. be a six-fold old increase in government spending on telecommunications infrastructure and service in the country from 9,900 crore rupees between 2009-2014 to 60,000 crores between 2014 to 2019.

Ten new iconic sites selected under Phase III of Swachh Iconic Places of Swachh Bharat Mission

The government has added ten Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) under phase III of its flagship programme, Swachh Bharat Mission.

1. Raghavendra Swamy Temple (Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh),
2. Hazardwari Palac (Murshidabad, West Bengal),
3. Brahma Sarovar Temple (Kurukshetra, Haryana),
4. Vidur Kuti (Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh),
5. Mana village (Chamoli, Uttarakhand),
6. Pangong Lake (Leh-Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir),
7. Nagvasuki Temple (Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh),
8. Ima Keithal/market (Imphal, Manipur),
9. Sabarimala Temple (Kerala) and
10. Kanvashram (Uttarakhand)

The above 10 places have been taken up under Phase III of the flagship project of Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) of the Swachh Bharat Mission. These sites have joined the 20 iconic places selected under Phase I and II where special sanitation work is underway.

IRCTC inks MoU with CSC for delivery of rail tickets

Union Minister Piyush Goyal proposed to open extended banking counters across all 2.9 lakh common service centres (CSCs) that are operated by village level entrepreneurs to provide

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government services in rural areas. Under CSC, around 5,000 villages will also have access to Wi-Fi choupals. The platform aims to connect 2.5 lakh gram panchayats through optic fibre network. Two memorandums of understanding (MoU) were signed between CSC and IRCTC for reservation of rail tickets.

Atal Tinkering Labs: NITI Aayog selects 3,000 more schools

NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) has selected 3,000 additional schools for the establishment of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs), bringing the total number of ATL schools to 5,441. The selected schools shall receive a grant of Rs. 20 lakh spread over the next five years to establish ATLs for nurturing innovation and entrepreneurial spirit among secondary school children across India.

ATLs will soon be established in every district of India, seeking to enable an innovation ecosystem, which will facilitate transformational change in technological innovation and pedagogy.

Surya Kiran-XIII: India-Nepal joint military exercise concludes in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand

Exercise Surya Kiran-XIII, a joint military training exercise, between India and Nepal culminated at Pithoragarh. Troops of both the countries participated in 14-day long joint training based on counter terrorist operations. The training culminated with a 72-hour outdoor exercise in which troops of both contingents carried out a cordon and search operation in a mock counter-insurgency village.

India facing worst water crisis in its history: NITI Aayog

India is suffering from the worst water crisis in its history and millions of lives and livelihoods are under threat, a NITI Aayog report has stated. The report said 600 million Indians currently face high to extreme water stress and two lakh people die yearly due to inadequate access to safe water. The crisis will only get worse, it warned.

India among over 90 nations without paid paternity leave for new dads: UNICEF

India is among almost 90 countries in the world without national policies in place that ensure new fathers get adequate paid time off with their newborn babies, according to a new UNICEF analysis.

Almost two-thirds of the world's children under one year old, nearly 90 million, live in countries where their fathers are not entitled by law to a single day of paid paternity leave, the UNICEF analysis said.

President Ram Nath Kovind to launch Solar Charkha Mission on 27th June

President Ram Nath Kovind will launch Solar Charkha Mission on 27th of this month which will entail a subsidy of 550 crore rupees in the initial two years for 50 clusters.

The scheme is aimed at linking five crore women and self help groups to the initiative. The ministry has provided training to over 15 lakh people over the past four years through its various initiatives. The 15 new technology centres will be set up and out of these, ten will be made operational this year.

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Government launches Swajal Scheme in 115 Aspirational districts

Union Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation announced that Swajal schemes in 115 aspirational districts of the country will involve an outlay of Rs 700 crores through flexi-funds under the existing NRDWP budget. These schemes will aim to provide villages with piped water supply powered by solar energy. The scheme will train hundreds of rural technicians for operation and maintenance of Swajal units. The Minister spoke about the relevance of Swajal in remote rural areas in the aspirational districts of the country.

Cabinet approves withdrawal of Nalanda University (Amendment) Bill, 2013

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the proposal for withdrawal of Nalanda University (Amendment) Bill, 2013 pending in the Rajya Sabha.

The Nalanda University was established on the basis of a Joint Press Statement at the 4th East Asia Summit held in Thailand in October, 2009, which supported its establishment as a non-state, non-profit, secular and self-governing international institution. Subsequently, the Nalanda University Act, 2010 was passed by the Parliament and came into effect from 25 November 2010.

The present proposal is for moving a motion in Rajya Sabha withdrawing the Nalanda University (Amendment) Bill, 2013 introduced in Rajya Sabha on August 26, 2013 to amend certain existing provisions of the Nalanda University Act, 2010 and add some new provisions.

20 States sign MoU for implementing Ayushman Bharat – National Health Protection Mission

J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare exchanged the Memorandum of Understanding with the State Health Ministers of 20 States marking their commitment towards the launch of the Ayushman Bharat – National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM). J P Nadda said that the initiative will change the landscape of healthcare in the country and we would be remembered forever for our work.

AB-NHPM will protect around 50 crore people (from about 10 crore families). It will be cashless and paperless access to services upto Rs. 5 lakhs per year will be available for the beneficiary families at the point of service in both public and private empanelled hospitals across India.

Centre to increase operations against J&K militants under Governor rule

The Centre is planning to scale up its operations against militants in Jammu and Kashmir under the rule of Governor NN Vohra, officials have said. Hardline security-centric policy will especially be used in the Shopian, Kulgam, Anantnag, and Pulwama districts of South Kashmir, the officials added. The government will also use a more aggressive approach along LoC and International Border.

Subramanian to step down as Chief Economic Advisor, will move to US

Arvind Subramanian will step down as the Chief Economic Advisor, Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said in a Facebook post. "He would like to go back to the United States on account of pressing family commitments," Jaitley added. Subramanian's extended term as the Chief Economic Advisor ends in October this year.

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Railways to become net zero carbon emitter by 2030: Minister

Railway Minister Piyush Goyal said that the Indian Railways will become a net zero-carbon emitter by 2030 with the current action plans for 100% electrification and renewable strategies. Adding that the electrification in 2017-2018 has increased seven times, the minister said that a “good, efficient and modern Railways system can do wonders for the Indian economy.”

PM Modi to lead 4th International Yoga Day celebrations in Dehradun

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead the 4th International Yoga Day Celebrations in Dehradun. The Prime Minister will join thousands of volunteers, performing Yoga asanas in the lawns of Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, located in the lap of the Himalayas.

Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar launches National Digital Library of India

The Union Human Resource Development Minister, Prakash Javadekar has launched the new digital initiative of HRD Ministry ‘National Digital Library of India’ (NDL) on the occasion of National Reading Day in New Delhi.

The digital library at present hosts 17 million-plus items (books, audiobooks, images etc) in 200-plus languages from more than 170 institutions.

NHRR Project: Government launches India’s first Nationwide Healthcare Establishment Census

The Union ministry of health and family welfare has launched the National Health Resource Repository (NHRR), the first ever registry in the country registry of authentic, standardised and updated geo-spatial data of all public and private healthcare. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is the project technology partner for providing data security.

Indian Army to observe 2018 as Year of Disabled Soldiers in Line of Duty

The Indian Army is observing the year 2018 as the ‘Year of Disabled Soldiers in Line of Duty’ to honour soldiers who have been disabled in the line of duty while serving the nation and to celebrate the undying spirit of ‘Soldiering’. The main aim of the observance is to alleviate the sufferings of the soldiers, who have done their duty with utmost dedication to the nation and have been disabled for life.

IRDAI constitutes Suresh Mathur committee to review norms related to Insurance Marketing Firms

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) constituted a committee to review the regulations pertaining to Insurance Marketing Firms (IMF). The committee is headed by Suresh Mathur, Executive Director (Insurance Marketing Firms), IRDAI and has nine more members.

Terms of reference of Suresh Mathur Committee

- Revisiting the IRDAI (Registration of Insurance Marketing Firms) Regulations, 2015

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- Recommend guidelines on the areas on which the regulations are silent

Shillong, the capital city of Meghalaya, selected as the 100th Smart City

Shillong has been selected as the 100th city to receive funding under the Centre's flagship "Smart Cities Mission". In January 2016, 20 cities were announced under the Smart Cities Mission, followed by 13 cities in May 2016, 27 cities in September 2016, 30 cities in June 2017, and 9 cities in January this year.

PM Modi inaugurates MP's ₹3866 cr Mohanpura irrigation project

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Mohanpura irrigation project in Madhya Pradesh's Rajgarh district. The ₹3,866 crore project includes a dam and a canal system which will provide drinking water to over 400 villages. "It is a great service to women and sisters who face lots of difficulties in fetching water from long distances," said PM Modi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi lays foundation stone of Vanijya Bhawan

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday laid the foundation stone of Vanijya Bhawan at Akbar Road, New Delhi. The Bhawan, which is likely to be ready by December 2019, will be a completely networked and paperless office equipped with smart access control. The Bhawan will comprise the Minister's room, 85 cabins for senior officers, 19 meeting rooms with seating capacities ranging from 10 to 100, library and more than 1,000 workstations.

Southern Railways imposes penalty of Rs.2,000 for taking selfie in front of train

Indian swimmer Sandeep Sejwal clinched the gold medal in men's 50m breaststroke event at the Singapore National Swimming Championships held in Singapore. Virdhawal Khade grabbed a creditable silver medal in the 50m freestyle event with a timing of 22.68 seconds even as compatriot Aaron Agnel Dsouza crashed out in the semifinals.

PM approves setting up of E Sreedharan committee to lay down standards for metro rail systems

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved a proposal to set up a committee to lay down standards for metro rail systems in the country. The committee will be headed by E Sreedharan, also known as the "Metro Man". A retired Indian Engineering Service (IES) officer, Sreedharan has served as the managing director of Delhi Metro from 1995 to 2012. Inaugurating Delhi Metro's Mundka-Bahadurgarh section, Modi said his government's priority was to build convenient, comfortable and affordable urban transport systems.

Government to make 24 degrees celsius as default setting for air conditioners

Power Minister R K Singh said that the government will consider making 24 degree Celsius as mandatory default setting for air conditioners within a few months. At a meeting with Singh, AC makers were also advised to have labelling indicating the optimum temperature setting for the benefits of consumers both from financial and their health points of view. The temperatures settings

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in ACs will be in the range of 24 to 26 degree Celsius. Some countries like Japan have put in place regulation to keep the temperature at 28 degree Celsius.

India most dangerous country in the world for women: Survey

India has topped the list of the most dangerous countries in the world for women, according to a survey conducted by the Thomson Reuters Foundation. It was ranked one due to the “high risk of sexual violence and the risk of being forced into slave labour” that women face. Afghanistan and Syria were placed on the second and third spot.

Ministry of Health signs MoU with Indira Gandhi National Open University

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare signed an MoU with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) to scale up the short term healthcare courses through its available robust platform. Under this MoU, curriculum for 10 courses especially designed for the health sector will provide more than 14 lakh trained manpower by 2025.

Hindi most spoken language in India, Bengali second

Hindi is the mother tongue of 43.63% Indians, making it the country's most spoken language, followed by Bengali, according to the language data of Census 2011 which was released on Tuesday. Further, Marathi has replaced Telugu as the third most spoken language in the nation. While Sanskrit is least spoken, Urdu became the seventh most spoken language in India.

India no longer has the largest number of poor: Report

As per a study in Brookings blog, India is no longer home to the largest number of extreme poor, being replaced by Nigeria. Further, the report states that India could drop to number three by this year end, with Congo overtaking it. India is pulling 44 people out of 'extreme poverty' every minute, but 78 million people still remain affected.

India 4th most targeted for web application attacks: Report

India ranked fourth in the list of top 10 target countries for Web Application Attacks globally since November 2017, according to Akamai Technologies. Registering over 2.8 crore attacks, India also ranked eighth in the list of Web Application Attack source countries globally. Further, Akamai recorded a 16% increase in the number of Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks since 2017.

President inaugurated Udyam Sangam 2018 in New Delhi

On International MSME (Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) Day 2018 (June 27), the President of India Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the Udyam Sangam-2018 in New Delhi.

It will empower women and weaker sections by providing training to 80 lakh women. The President also launched the Solar Charkha Mission which will cover 50 clusters and every cluster will employ 400 to 2000 artisans.

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Global Real Estate Transparency Index: India ranks 35

India has moved up just one spot in the global real estate transparency index from 36 in 2016 to 35 in 2018, despite the implementation of the Real Estate (Regulation And Development) Act or RERA. RERA was implemented in May 2016 to bring accountability and transparency into the sector. However, unlike a few states such as Maharashtra and Karnataka, several states have been slow in its implementation.

Women Entrepreneurs Platform: NITI Aayog signs SoI with Financial Institutions & Social Organisations

NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurs Platform (WEP) signed five separate Statement of Intent (SoIs) with Shri Mahila Sewa Sahakari Bank Limited, Indiabulls Housing Finance Limited, SREI Infrastructure Finance Limited, Sreemanta Sankar Mission and the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA).

The WEP was established on the occasion of International Womens' Day in March 2018 to substantially increase the number of women entrepreneurs who will create and empower a dynamic New India.

Mumbai is India's most expensive city, Hong Kong named World's most expensive city

According to Mercer's 24th annual Cost of Living Survey, Mumbai is India's most expensive city, followed by New Delhi and Chennai. Kolkata and Bengaluru are the least expensive Indian cities ranked.

Mercer's survey reveals that Hong Kong took the top spot as the world's most expensive city for expatriates. Tokyo and Zurich are in second and third positions, respectively, with Singapore in fourth.

Mumbai architectural site declared World Heritage by UNESCO

The Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai were declared as World Heritage site by UNESCO. The site consists of a 19th-century collection of Victorian structures and 20th century Art Deco buildings. These buildings include public buildings of the High Court, Mumbai University, Old Secretariat, Cricket Club of India, and iconic cinema halls of Eros and Regal.

Nobel laureate Satyarthi launches app to track missing kids

Nobel Peace Prize recipient Kailash Satyarthi, along with union minister Suresh Prabhu, launched a mobile application called 'ReUnite' that tracks missing or abandoned kids. The app is a collaboration between Bachpan Bachao Andolan led by the Nobel laureate and an IT company. The app will be linked with the Delhi Police's database of missing children.

Indian Railways eliminates all unmanned level crossings from four zones

The railways has eliminated all unmanned level crossings from four zones this month. West Central Railway, Central Railway, Eastern Railway and South East Central Railway aggregating 11,545 route

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kilometers have now become Unmanned Level Crossings (UMLC) free on broad gauge route. As of January 1, 2018, 3,479 UMLC on broad gauge routes have been planned for elimination by September this year with a few exceptions.

Integral Coach Factory launches first stainless steel bodied MEMU

Integral Coach Factory flagged off the first stainless steel bodied mainline electrical multiple unit (MEMU). MEMU is a suburban system of train that caters to the needs of medium distance inter-city passengers. Mainline Electrical Multiple Units with the Indian Railways is propelled by conventional DC traction system. ICF has now rolled out an eight car MEMU train set for the first time with on board state-of-the-art indigenous 3-phase AC propulsion system and stainless steel body.



International Affairs

US imposes steel, aluminium tariffs on EU, Canada and Mexico

The US has imposed tariffs on steel and aluminium imports from Canada, Mexico and the European Union (EU). While a 25% tariff will be imposed on steel imports, a tariff of 10% will be imposed on aluminium imports. The EU, Canada and Mexico were temporarily exempted from the tariffs when they were announced by the US two months ago.

North and South Korea hold high level talks at Panmunjom

North and South Korea has agreed to hold military and Red Cross talks later this month on reducing tensions and resuming reunions of families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War. The rivals also agreed at a meeting of senior officials at the border village of Panmunjom to establish a liaison office at the North Korean border town of Kaesong and hold sports talks on fielding combined teams for some sports at the Asian Games in August, as they continue to take steps toward reconciliation.

Pedro Sanchez takes charge in Spain

Socialist leader Pedro Sanchez will become Spain's seventh prime minister after a no-confidence vote in parliament unseated Mariano Rajoy's conservative government. The 46-year-old, until now the head of Spain's largest opposition party (PSOE), could be sworn in by King Felipe VI.

Japan's passport named world's most powerful, India 76th

The Japanese passport has been named the most powerful passport in the world, granting visa-free access to 189 countries. The Indian passport secured the 76th rank in the index with its holders getting visa-free access to 59 countries. The Henley and Partners, a citizenship and planning firm, analyses 199 different passports across 227 destinations to list the rankings annually.

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US, Cuba to permanently restore postal services

US and Cuba will permanently restore postal services after running a pilot program for two years. The restoration would allow delivering posts through direct flights between Cuba and the US. Direct mail service between the former Cold War adversaries was suspended in 1963 following which mails flowed between them through countries including Canada and Mexico.

Spain's direct rule on Catalonia ends as new govt sworn in

Spain's Catalonia region sworn in a new government, ending a seven-month direct rule by the central government. This came on the day Pedro Sanchez was sworn in as the new Spanish PM after Mariano Rajoy lost a confidence vote in the Parliament. Rajoy had imposed direct rule over Catalonia last year after the region held an independence referendum.

Saudi Arabia establishes Ministry of Culture

Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz issued a royal order establishing a Ministry of Culture, separating it from the Information Ministry. King Salman also reshuffled key ministerial posts, including the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and appointed deputies in the ministries of interior, telecommunications among others. This comes amid attempts to modernise the conservative kingdom.

World's first artificial iris approved in the US

US Food and Drug Administration has approved the first prosthetic iris that can be implanted to treat patients with missing or damaged iris (coloured part of the eye). Over 70% of the 389 patients in clinical trials had reported decreased light sensitivity and glare while side effects included dislocation and the need for additional surgery for device repositioning or replacement.

Syrian President to become 1st international leader to meet Kim in N Korea

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad plans to visit North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. He will become the first head of state to meet Jong-un in North Korea since he came to power in 2011. Praising the North Korean leader, Assad said recent developments on the Korean peninsula were a result of Jong-un's "wise leadership".

14th century Maori village discovered in New Zealand

Scientists have discovered the peripheries of a 14th century Maori village in New Zealand, containing tools and food items that can shed more light on the lifestyle of the settlers. The site was located on the edge of an old riverbed. The obsidian (volcanic glass) was used by early Maori settlers as simple cutting tools. The materials found are estimated to date back to the early 1300s.

29th Anniversary of Tiananmen Massacre Observed

Tens of thousands of pro-democracy activists turned out in Hong Kong to commemorate the 29th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square crackdown in Beijing, observing an event that goes largely unmentioned in mainland China.

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The protesters marking the Tiananmen anniversary in Hong Kong have seen their numbers dwindle in the years since the Occupy Central pro-democracy movement gripped Hong Kong in 2014.

Iceland most peaceful country, Syria least peaceful: Study

The Global Peace Index 2018 ranked Iceland as the world's most peaceful country, while Syria, which has been facing a civil war since seven years, was found to be the least peaceful. The Middle East and North Africa remained the least peaceful regions. All the four most peaceful regions—Europe, North America, Asia-Pacific, and South America, registered a decline in peace level.

Iraq orders manual recount of all 1 crore votes

The Iraqi Parliament has ordered a full manual recount of the country's recent parliamentary election where 1.1 crore votes were cast. This came in response to charges of electoral fraud. Elections were held in Iraq last month for the first time since the defeat of Islamic State in the country.

Myanmar, UN sign pact on steps for Rohingya return

Myanmar and U.N. agencies signed an agreement that could eventually lead to the return of some of the 700,000 Rohingya Muslims who fled brutal persecution by the country's security forces and are now crowded into makeshift camps in Bangladesh. The memorandum of understanding promises to establish a "framework of cooperation" that aims to create conditions for "voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable" repatriation of Rohingya refugees but does not address Myanmar's denial of citizenship for the minority.

Biopic 'Making of the Mahatma' screened in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

The screening of a biopic "Making of a Mahatma" marked the opening of a three-day series of events to commemorate the historic incident 125 years of Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha. On the night of June 7, 1893, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a young lawyer then, was thrown off the train's first class compartment at Pietermaritzburg station for refusing to give up his seat.

World first EPR nuclear reactor begins work in Taishan, China

A third generation EPR reactor in China carried out its first nuclear chain reaction, an initial start up which is a world first for the much-delayed European technology. The European Pressurised Reactor (EPR) in Taishan, southern China "carried out its first chain and therefore it has started," tweeted Xavier Ursat, head of new nuclear projects for EDF, which has a 30 per cent holding in two reactors under construction in the city.

China awards its first-ever 'Friendship Medal' to Putin

Chinese President Xi Jinping awarded his country's first Friendship Medal to his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin and called him his best friend. Xi said that the medal is China's highest state honour for foreigners and is presented to those who made outstanding contributions to China's modernisation drive, promoted cooperation between China and the world, and safeguarded world peace.

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Five new countries elected to UN Security Council

The UN General Assembly elected South Africa, Indonesia, Dominican Republic, Germany and Belgium as non-permanent members of the Security Council. Their terms will begin on January 1 next year, with the non-permanent members being elected for a two-year term. The Security Council is composed of 15 members, five permanent and 10 non-permanent.

Netherlands to build world's 1st habitable 3D-printed houses

The Dutch city of Eindhoven is set to be the first in the world to have habitable houses made by a 3D printer. The first house will be a single-floor house, to be occupied by mid-2019, while the other four will be multi-storey houses. The project would help reduce carbon footprint as less cement would be needed for their construction.

US unveils world's most powerful supercomputer, beats China

The US has unveiled the world's most powerful supercomputer called 'Summit', beating the previous record-holder China's Sunway TaihuLight. With a peak performance of 200,000 trillion calculations per second, it is over twice as fast as Sunway TaihuLight, which is capable of 93,000 trillion calculations per second. Summit has 4,608 servers, which reportedly take up the size of two tennis courts.

Bayer closes \$63 bn Monsanto deal, becomes largest seed firm

German conglomerate Bayer has completed its \$63-billion takeover of US-based Monsanto to create the world's biggest agro-chemical and seed company. The deal, announced in September 2016, was closed after Bayer got all necessary regulatory approvals from various countries including the US and India. Bayer announced that the Monsanto name will be retired after the takeover.

Kim Jong-un arrives in Singapore for summit with Trump

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un arrived in Singapore on Sunday for his historic summit with US President Donald Trump on June 12. The trip to Singapore represents the farthest Kim has traveled from North Korea since taking power after his father's death in 2011. He will meet Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong later in the day.

Forty Fourth G7 Summit held in Canada

The 44th G7 summit was held on June 8–9, 2018, in Quebec, Canada. This was the sixth time since 1981 that Canada has hosted the meetings. The 44th G7 summit was the first summit for Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau hosted this summit. The 45th G7 summit will be held in 2019 in France.

Mauritius to host 11th World Hindi Conference

The upcoming 11th World Hindi Conference in Mauritius is likely to produce directives to increase the popularity of Hindi globally. The conference will cover both classical and modern elements of Hindi. The World Hindi Conference is a major event organised every three years by the External

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Affairs Ministry. The conference consists of several Hindi scholars, writers and laureates from different parts of the world to contribute the language.

First World Hindi Conference was inaugurated on 10 January 1975 by then Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi.

Trump, Kim sign agreement to completely denuclearise N Korea

US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un have signed an agreement to completely denuclearise the east Asian nation in exchange for security guarantees from the US. "We are both very honoured to sign the document," Trump said. The two leaders began the Singapore summit with a 40-minute one-on-one talk followed by bilateral discussions with their top aides.

Donald Trump became the first sitting US President to meet a North Korean leader after he shook hands with Kim Jong-un at the Capella Hotel on Singapore's Sentosa island.

International Conference on ICT to be held in Kathmandu

An International Conference on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) will be held in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal from June 17. The Theme of the two-day conference is "Sustainable Development Goals for Smart Society".

The conference is organized by the Federation of Computer Association Nepal (CAN). Around 500 delegates, including ICT users, trainers, professionals, experts, and researchers from Japan, China, Korea, India, and Nepal will attend the event.

Former World Bank economist sworn in as Jordan PM

Former World Bank Economist Omar al-Razzaz was sworn in as Jordan's Prime Minister after King Abdullah issued a decree approving the new government. The 58-year-old, who studied at Harvard University, was tasked with reviewing the country's disputed tax system. Omar succeeded Hani al-Mulki who resigned following mass protests over price hikes and other government economic policies.

North and South Korea hold military talks for the 1st time in 11 years

North and South Korea held military talks for the first time in over a decade. The talks came two days after US President Donald Trump said he would stop war games with the South, following his summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. North Korea had cancelled the talks in May in protest against the US-South Korea military drills.

Asia & Oceania region intergovernmental ministerial meet on anti-doping begins in Colombo

The annual Asia and Oceania region intergovernmental ministerial meeting on anti-doping began in Colombo with representatives from 29 countries including India attending. The 15th such annual gathering, is also being attended by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to discuss important anti-doping issues that will help in the fight for clean sport.

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US withdraws from UN Human Rights Council

The US withdrew from the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) citing anti-Israel bias. US ambassador Nikki Haley termed the body “a hypocritical and self-serving organisation” which acted as a “protector of human rights abusers and cesspool of political bias”. The US was elected to the Council for the first time in 2009 after boycotting it for three years.

Trump orders Defence Department to create ‘Space Force’

US President Donald Trump has ordered the Defence Department to create the sixth branch of the US military, the ‘Space Force’. “When it comes to defending America it is not enough to merely have an American presence in space, we must have American dominance in space,” he said. Notably, the US in 1967 signed a treaty which bans space warfare.

World Bank approves 700 mn dollar to improve primary education in Bangladesh

The World Bank has approved \$700 million to improve the primary education sector in Bangladesh. It will also finance implementation of the government’s Fourth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP4).

This project will build about 95,000 classrooms, teachers’ rooms, and multipurpose rooms. It will also build 80,000 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) blocks and 15,000 safe water sources.

The projects will provide recruitment to about 100,000 teachers.

Trump signs order to stop his policy of separating families at border

President Donald Trump signed an executive order that sought to end immigration policy that separated children from their parents at the U.S. border. In May, Sessions announced that the U.S. would take a stricter stance on illegal crossings at the Mexican border. From April 19 to May 31, some 1,995 children were separated from roughly as many adults at the U.S. border.

U.S. suspends military exercises with South Korea

The United States and South Korea have agreed to indefinitely suspend two exchange program training exercises, in the aftermath of the summit earlier this month between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

North Korea had long sought an end to the war games. The decision to halt military exercises with South Korea baffled allies, military officials and lawmakers. The drills help keep U.S. forces at a state of readiness in one of the world's most tense flashpoints.

World’s hungry population on rise again due to conflict, climate change: UN report

The number of hungry people in the world has risen for the first time in more than a decade, according to a United Nations report. There are now approximately 38 million more undernourished people in the world, rising from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million in 2016.

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According to the United Nations's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2018 report, conflict is now one of the main drivers of food insecurity in 18 countries.

China launches bird-shaped drones to monitor citizens

China has launched bird-shaped drones fitted with a camera, GPS antenna, and satellite communication capability, to monitor citizens living in different parts of the country. The program reportedly codenamed "Dove", is run by Song Bifeng, a professor at Northwestern Polytechnical University. These drones replicate about 90% of the movements of a real dove like diving and turning in the air.

Iran bans import of 1,400 items to support domestic products

In a move aimed at boosting the sales of domestic products amid US sanctions, Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade has banned the import of 1,400 items. Managing Director of Iran's Commerce Services of Trade Development Organisation, Farhad Noori, said that all the banned items have their similar domestic alternatives, adding that "we expect people to support domestic products".

Saudi Arabia becomes last country to allow women to drive

Saudi Arabia became the last country in the world to allow women to drive after it lifted the ban on female motorists on Sunday. "Now every woman has the right to drive a car anywhere in the kingdom," the country's traffic authorities spokesman said. The Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had announced the lifting of the ban last year.

Queen allows UK to leave European Union

The UK's Queen Elizabeth II gave royal assent to the Brexit bill that would allow the country to leave the European Union (EU). The EU withdrawal bill repeals the 1972 European Communities Act through which the UK became a member of the bloc. The bill was passed by both houses of the UK Parliament.

Russian billionaire becomes leader of 'world's first space nation'

Russian billionaire and scientist Igor Ashurbeyli officially declared himself as the leader of the world's first space nation 'Asgardia'. Ashurbeyli's brainchild Asgardia aims to be an independent space nation, with its own government, currency, justice system and calendar. Focused towards establishing a permanent settlement on the moon in 25 years, Asgardia already has 2 lakh citizens.

London is the most desirable city in the world for overseas workers

According to a survey conducted by the Boston Consulting Group and totaljobs.com. London beat New York, Berlin and Barcelona to take the top spot as the most desirable city in the world for overseas workers.

Meanwhile, the UK overall has dropped three places in the country rankings, falling from second in 2014 to fifth.

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Netherlands bans burqa in public

The Upper House of the Dutch Parliament on Tuesday passed a law banning full-face veils such as the burqa and niqab in public places. The law bans wearing the veils in educational and government institutions, hospitals and on public transport, but not on streets. Violation of the law will result in a fine of nearly ₹32,000.

UNESCO may drop the Mesoamerican Reef, Belize from threatened sites list

The Mesoamerican Reef was marked as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1960. It was placed on endangered status in 2009 because of Belize's plans to allow oil exploration. To protect the site a number of measures were taken by the Belizean government and the activists. Now, UN body is considering to remove the reef from the UNESCO's list of threatened World Heritage sites.

China bans HBO after UK comedian criticises President Xi Jinping

China has banned US film and television production company HBO's website following UK comedian John Oliver's critique of Chinese President Xi Jinping on his show. Oliver had compared the Chinese President to cartoon character 'Winnie the Pooh'.

Prince William becomes first British royal to visit Israel and Palestine

UK's Prince William became the first member of the royal family to visit Israel on an official visit. Prince William met Holocaust survivors, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin and PM Benjamin Netanyahu as part of his three-day visit. Prince William will also meet Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas which will mark the first royal visit to the West Bank.

Worlds Largest Multilateral Naval Exercise RIMPAC begun off Hawaii

The 26th edition of two month long exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) begun off Hawaii in the Western Pacific Ocean. Navies of 26 countries including India is participating in this exercise, which is scheduled off Hawaii from June 27 to August 27. INS Sahyadri, Commanded by Captain Shantanu Jha, has reached the Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, to participate in RIMPAC 2018. Subsequently, the 25th edition of the exercise was attended by INS Satpura in 2016.

France brings back mandatory national service for 16-yr-olds

The French government has announced a plan to reintroduce compulsory national service for all 16-year-olds. Under the plan, French boys and girls would do a minimum of one-month service in the first phase which would focus on voluntary teaching and working with charities among others. The second phase will be voluntary and focus on areas linked to defence and security.

Bali volcano erupts again, 450 flights cancelled

Bali's Mount Agung volcano erupted again forcing the cancellation of nearly 450 flights to and from the Indonesian island. The closure of the Ngurah Rai airport affected about 75,000 passengers, said the National Disaster Mitigation Agency. The airport was closed temporarily after a pilot flying overhead detected traces of volcanic ash as high as 7,000 metres.

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Financial Action Task Force places Pakistan in Grey List for failing to curb terror financing

Financial Action Task Force places Pakistan in Grey List for failing to curb terror financing. The announcement comes a day after Pakistan submitted a comprehensive 26-point action plan to the FATF to choke the funding of militants groups, including Mumbai attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed-led JuD and its affiliates, to avoid being blacklisted by it.

North Korea is named as Worst Human Trafficking Country by the US State Department

North Korea has been categorized as one of the “worst human trafficking nations” for the 16th straight year by the US State Department according to the annual 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report.

The report said that the North Korean government continued to use forced labour in prison camps and labour training centers and even encouraged forced labours of students and exported forced labour to foreign organizations. North Korea used state-sponsored forced labour to fund government functions as well as other illicit activities’.

Canada imposes retaliatory tariffs on US imports worth \$12bn

Canada has announced tariffs on US imports worth over \$12 billion. The tariffs were imposed on items including coffee, ketchup and whisky as well as steel and aluminium products. Canada’s move came in retaliation to the 25% and 10% respective tariffs on its steel and aluminium imports imposed by the US.

Portugal’s Antonio Vitorino elected Director General of UN’s International Migration Office

António Manuel de Carvalho Ferreira Vitorino of Portugal has been elected by the member States of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to serve as the agency’s Director General, beginning on 1 October 2018. Mr. Vitorino succeeds William Lacy Swing of the United States, who will have served two five-year terms as IOM chief.



FOREIGN RELATIONS

PM Modi launches BHIM, RuPay and SBI apps in Singapore

PM Narendra Modi launched BHIM, RuPay and SBI mobile payment applications in Singapore at a business event focussed on digital platforms. RuPay was linked up with Singapore’s 33-year old Network for Electronic Transfers (NETS), which will allow Singapore’s NETS users to make online purchases on e-commerce merchant website in India using RuPay’s point of sale terminals.

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RIMPAC 2018: 26 countries including India to participate in biennial exercise in US

As many as 26 countries, including India, would participate in the biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) military exercise from June 27 to August 2, in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California. Known as the world's largest international maritime exercise, RIMPAC this year involves 47 surface ships, five submarines, 18 national land forces, and more than 200 aircraft and 25,000 personnel.

Four countries — Brazil, Israel, Sri Lanka and Vietnam — are participating in RIMPAC for the first time. The theme this year is “Capable, Adaptive, Partners.”

India, Japan, US: Malabar Exercise 2018 to be held off coast of Guam in Philippine Sea

India, Japan and the U.S. will hold the annual Malabar trilateral naval war games off the coast of Guam in the Philippine Sea from June 6-15. The exercise comes at a time of increased friction between China and the U.S. along with the nations bordering South China Sea as Beijing militarises reclaimed islands.

- Indian Navy is sending indigenous stealth frigate INS Sahyadri, anti-submarine corvette INS Kamorta, fleet tanker INS Shakti and P-8I long-range maritime patrol aircraft.
- Japan is deploying its helicopter carrier JDS Ise along with Soryu class conventional submarines and Kawasaki P-1 aircraft maritime patrol aircraft.
- The U.S. is sending its aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan along with strike complement of destroyers, support ships and nuclear attack submarines in addition to P-8A maritime patrol aircraft.

India, Singapore exchange eight key agreements

Talks between Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Lee Hsien Loong led to the signing of 8 agreements between the two sides which covered areas as wide as military cooperation and connectivity.

Prime Minister Modi said that the strategic partnership between India and Singapore has stood the test of time in the real sense. He hailed the close defence cooperation between the two countries and welcomed the completion of the logistics agreement between the two navies.

- 1) Naval cooperation
- 2) Economic co-operation
- 3) Fintech
- 4) Cybersecurity
- 5) Nursing
- 6) Combating Narcotics smuggling & Human Trafficking
- 7) Personnel Management and Public Administration
- 8) MoU between the NITI Aayog and Singapore Cooperation Enterprise (SCE) on Cooperation in the Field of Planning

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Dendrobium Narendra Modi, orchid named after PM in S'pore

An orchid has been named as 'Dendrobium Narendra Modi' as a special gesture for PM Modi during his visit to Singapore on Saturday. The strong and robust tropical orchid can produce upright inflorescence up to 38 cm long with 14-20 well-arranged flowers, the government officials tweeted. PM Modi visited Singapore as part of his three-nation tour.

PM Modi unveils Mahatma Gandhi's plaque in Singapore

PM Narendra Modi, along with Singapore's former premier Goh Chok Tong, unveiled a plaque dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi at Clifford Pier in the city-state, where his ashes were immersed. A rendition of Gandhi ji's favourite bhajan 'Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye' was also sung on the occasion. "Bapu's message reverberates globally," PM Modi tweeted after unveiling the plaque.

India receives first shipment of cheapest LNG from Gazprom Russia

India received its cheapest LNG under a long-term deal as Russia began shipping natural gas at a delivered price of close to \$7 per million British thermal unit.

At current oil prices, the Russian rate is \$1.5 per mmBtu less than the price at which Qatar, India's oldest supplier, delivered liquefied natural gas (LNG). Russian supplies are also cheaper by \$1-1.5 per mmBtu than the LNG sourced from Australia and the U.S.

India begins importing LNG from Russia in 20-yr deal

India began importing Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Russia as it received the first 3.4 trillion British thermal unit of cargo at Gujarat's Dahej terminal. India will be importing LNG worth an estimated \$25 billion over 20 years from Russia. India is the world's fourth-largest buyer of LNG and imports the gas from Qatar, Australia and the US.

IBSA Ministerial Meet held at Pretoria, South Africa

The External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa, Ms. Lindiwe Sisulu and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Mr. Marcos Bezerra Abbott Galvão, met in Pretoria on 4th June, 2018 for the informal meeting of IBSA Foreign Ministers. The Ministers exchanged views on Development Cooperation and South-South Cooperation.

The IBSA Dialogue Forum is an international tripartite grouping for promoting international cooperation among these countries.

Founded: 6 June 2003, Brasilia, Federal District, Brazil

Indian, US, and Japanese maritime forces begin Malabar exercise

Naval ships, aircraft and personnel from India, Japan and the US have begun exercise Malabar 2018. During this exercise, they will practice surface and anti-submarine warfare operations and combined carrier strike group operations off the coast of Guam island in the western Pacific. Malabar will be

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done in two phases: ashore and at-sea training. The harbour phase will occur at Naval Base Guam from June 7 to 10 and the sea phase from June 11 to 16 in the Philippine Sea.

17th round of foreign office consultations between India & Myanmar hold in New Delhi

Senior officials of India and Myanmar met for the 17th round of Foreign Office Consultations during which various aspects of bilateral relations including security concerns were discussed at length. The two sides also discussed developments in the Rakhine State and Myanmar's efforts for repatriation of Rohingya refugees. India has major concerns with regard to security in the bordering areas with Myanmar. India is helping Myanmar with financial aid for the resettlement of Rohingyas following their repatriation.

Nepal's Chief of Army Staff on six-day visit to India

Nepal's Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Rajendra Chhetri has left on a six day visit to India. He is visiting India at the invitation of COAS General Bipin Rawat. General Chhetri will attend the Officer Cadet's 'Passing Out Parade' as Chief Reviewing officer at Indian Military Academy in Dehradun. During his visit General Chhetri will call on Defense Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and meet National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, Air Force and Navy chiefs and other senior officers.

Rajinikanth starrer 'Kaala' became the 1st Indian film to release in Saudi Arabia

Kaala has become the first Indian film to release in Saudi Arabia. Interestingly, Black Panther was the first film to release in the country in 35 years. Saudi Arabia was exhibiting films earlier, but films were later banned due to the strict Islamic laws. Now, after the ban lift, Kaala has become the first film to release in the country.

India and Denmark sign MoU in the field of sustainable and smart urban development

India and Denmark signed an MoU in the field of Sustainable and Smart Urban Development. The MoU will create employment in the areas of integrated solid waste management including waste to energy, sustainable transport systems, water and sanitation management, energy efficiency, resource mobilization.

The objective of this MoU is to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of sustainable and smart urban development on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit through the exchange of knowledge, institutional cooperation, research and development and commercial relations on related issues.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Reaches China To Attend SCO Summit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Qingdao, China, to attend the two-day long 18th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit. This will be India's first participation in the summit as a full-time member of the organization. India, along with Pakistan, became a full-time member during the Astana summit in June 2017.

Prime Minister Modi is also scheduled to hold bilateral talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping apart from holding meetings with various other participating leaders.

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India and China sign 2 agreements on Brahmaputra water data sharing & Non-Basmati rice export

India and China signed two bilateral agreements following the meeting between the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the summit.

The agreements include continuing to share Brahmaputra water data during flood season and exporting non-Basmati rice to China.

The two countries have set a trade target of 100 billion dollars by 2020.

India and Norway sign MoU to extend health cooperation

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to extend the cooperation within the health sector.

The cooperation will be extended through the Norway India Partnership Initiative (NIPI) for a period of three years starting from 2018 to 2020.

This cooperation between India and Norway is aligned with the development goals of Indian Government as outlined in its National Health Policy 2017 for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Nepal-Bharat Maitri Irrigation Project: India gives cheque to Nepal

India has extended a financial aid of Rs 99 million to Nepal for the construction of 2,700 shallow tube well irrigation systems in 12 districts of the country's southern Terai region to boost agricultural productivity.

The assistance has been extended as part of the final payment for the Nepal-Bharat Maitri Irrigation Project, which was launched in January last year to boost growth to the Himalayan nation's agricultural sector through enhanced facilities.

India to host first BIMSTEC military exercise

India will host the first military exercise of the BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) group focussing on counter-terrorism in September. As part of this, a conclave of the Army chiefs of all seven member-states is being planned. The exercise is scheduled to be held in Pune in the second week of September.

BIMSTEC was set up in 1997 and includes India, Bangladesh, Bhutan Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

US approves \$930-mn deal to sell attack helicopters to India

The US government has approved a deal to sell six AH-64E Apache attack helicopters to India for \$930 million. The US will also provide night vision sensors, control radars, Hellfire Longbow missiles

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and Stinger air-to-air missiles to India under the deal. “(The helicopters) will increase India’s capability to counter ground-armoured threats and modernise its armed forces,” the US said.

President Ram Nath Kovind to embark on 3-Nation visit to Greece, Suriname and Cuba

President Ram Nath Kovind will embark on a three-nation tour to Greece, Suriname, and Cuba. On the first leg of the visit, the President will leave for Athens. President Kovind will leave for Suriname on the 2nd leg. A number of agreements and MoUs in the areas of health and medicine, elections, IT, Ayurveda are scheduled to be signed.

Suriname is a founding member of the International Solar Alliance. A Line of Credit of 54.5 million dollars is being offered to Suriname for solar-related projects.

India to host European Union Film Festival

The European Union Film Festival (EUFF) 2018 will premiere in New Delhi. The festival will be organised in 11 Indian cities: New Delhi, Chennai, Port Blair, Pune, Puducherry, Kolkata, Jaipur, Visakhapatnam, Thrissur, Hyderabad and Goa from 18th June till 31st August.

The Festival will be inaugurated by the Hon’ble Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Mr Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore.

Assumption Island: Seychelles denies joint project with India to develop naval base

Ahead of his India visit, Seychelles President Danny Faure has said a joint project with New Delhi to develop a naval base at Assumption Island in his country would not move forward. There has been growing political opposition in Seychelles to a pact it signed with India in 2015 to develop a naval facility at the island which would have given India a strategic advantage in the Indian Ocean Region.

India and Nepal to have four new Air Gateways

India has agreed to open four new air entry points to Nepal in the eastern and western parts of the country. This aims at facilitating movement of international traffic. The four routes that India agreed to make two-way are

- 1) Kathmandu-Biratnagar-Dhaka,
- 2) Kathmandu-Janakpur-Kolkata
- 3) Kathmandu-Janakpur-Patna in the eastern part of Nepal and
- 4) Kathmandu-Mahendranagar-Delhi (L626) in the west.

India is planning to gift a Dornier aircraft to Seychelles

India plans to gift Seychelles a Dornier aircraft this month — second such aircraft that could be gifted to the Indian Ocean Region. An Indo-French-Seychelles trilateral cooperation may safeguard India’s strategic interests in the key Indian Ocean country amid China’s growing interests in the region.

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COMCASA: US experts to discuss key military agreement with India

As part of preparations for the 2+2 dialogue between the foreign and defence ministers of India and the US in Washington, a team of specialists from the Pentagon will be meeting their counterparts on the Indian side in Delhi to negotiate the text of a “foundational” military communications agreement. The US officials will try and address Indian observations on the draft Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) submitted earlier.

Nepal, Bhutan spend more than India on health

Low-income nations like Bhutan and Nepal spend 2.5% and 1.1% of its GDP respectively on public health, which is more than India’s 1%, according to a report. Among the Southeast Asian nations, Maldives with 9.4% has the highest health expenditure. Meanwhile, India aims to increase its public health expenditure to 2.5% of the GDP by 2025.

Indra 2018: Tri-service joint India-Russia military exercise to be conducted in India

The tri-service joint Russia-India military exercise ‘INDRA-2018’ is scheduled for the second half this year. Combined military units of the Russian Eastern Military District will participate in the drills. Members of the Indian defence forces will also be involved in the planning of the exercise including practical operations of the units besides catering, consumer services and medical support for the Russian units.

India to open Iran's Chabahar port by 2019 amid US sanctions

India has said it plans to make the Chabahar port operational by 2019, even as the US reimposed sanctions on Iran after withdrawing itself from the nuclear deal. Recently, India said it won't abide by US sanctions and will only follow UN sanctions. The port is aimed at opening a trade route to Afghanistan and central Asia by bypassing Pakistan.

President Kovind concludes successful tour to 3 nations

President Ram Nath Kovind concludes his successful tour to Greece, Suriname and Cuba. On the final leg of his tour, the President held delegation-level talks with his Cuban counterpart Miguel Mario Díaz-Canel. Cuba reiterate support for India's candidature for a permanent seat in UN Security Council.

India and Cuba have signed two MoUs in the field of biotechnology, traditional medicine and homoeopathy.

India and Tajikistan agree to enhance mutual cooperation for sustainable water development

India and Tajikistan have reaffirmed their commitment to promote bilateral relations and agreed to enhance economic cooperation, particularly in sustainable water development.

Tajikistan President - Emomali Rahmon

Tajikistan currency - Somoni

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Tajikistan capital - Dushanbe

Mongolia launches construction of its first oil refinery with \$1 billion Indian aid

Mongolia launched construction of its first oil refinery, a long-awaited project that is funded by India and designed to end the country's dependence on Russian fuel. The ground-breaking ceremony was attended by Mongolian Prime Minister Khurelsukh Ukhnaa and Indian Minister of Home Affairs Rajnath Singh.

The refinery, in southern Dornogovi province will be capable of processing 1.5 million tonnes of crude oil per year. Mongolia's new refinery, planned for completion in late 2022, will meet all of the nation's demand for gasoline, diesel, aviation fuel and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

Indian Army Contingent part of UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan awarded

The Indian Army said that the 7 Garhwal Rifles Infantry Battalion Group, which is part of the UN peacekeeping force in South Sudan, was awarded the United Nations Medal for "selfless service".

The ceremony was attended by a number of military and civil dignitaries, including Brig Gen Mohammed Al Masoom, Commander United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), and a host of senior commanders of various nationalities

India, US to hold inaugural 2+2 Dialogue in July 2018 in Washington

India and the US will hold the inaugural 2+2 Dialogue on July 6 in Washington, DC. The two sides are expected to share perspectives on strengthening their strategic and security ties and exchange views on a range of bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Swaraj and Sitharaman will take part in the first meeting of the '2+2 Dialogue' with US Secretary of State Michael R Pompeo and Secretary of Defence James N Mattis on July 6. This new dialogue format was agreed upon between the two sides during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Washington in June 2017.

India, Seychelles ink six agreements in several fields

India and Seychelles have signed six MoUs to further expand bilateral ties between the two sides. These include areas of naval cooperation, cybersecurity, culture, development projects among others. The MoUs were exchanged in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Seychelles President Danny Faure after the two leaders held bilateral and delegation level talks in Hyderabad House. The Prime Minister announced a line of credit worth 100 million USD for Seychelles. PM Modi announced that India would help Seychelles in enhancing its defence capability and maritime infrastructure.

CORPAT: India, Bangladesh navies institute annual coordinated patrol

India and Bangladesh have agreed to institute a Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) as an annual feature between the two Navies. The first edition will be inaugurated by Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba during his visit there from June 24 to 29. Naval cooperation between India and Bangladesh has been

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traditionally strong, encompassing a wide span which includes operational interactions through port calls, passage exercises along with capacity building, capability enhancement and training initiatives.

India, Cuba sign two MoUs

Ministry of External Affairs Secretary (East) Preeti Saran informed that India has signed two Memorandum of understandings (MoUs) with Cuba. First MoU signed between India and Cuba is on Bio Technology and another one is on Traditional Systems of Medicine. President Kovind and his Cuban counterpart Miguel Diaz-Canel witnessed the signing of MoUs.

Russia to supply technical security equipment to India

Russian state atomic energy corporation Rosatom said that its subsidiary Nikiret has signed an agreement with Indian engineering services firm Core Energy Systems Pvt Ltd for the promotion of its technical security equipment in India. According to Core Chief Executive Pranay Kumar, the partnership will explore opportunities in the Indian government's Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) project.

India to sign ₹3,400cr deal with Israel to buy 4500 missiles

India is set to sign a ₹3,400-crore (\$500 million) deal with Israel for the purchase of around 4,500 Spike missiles for the Indian Army. Spike is a fourth-generation man-portable fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missile designed by Israeli company Rafael Advanced Defense Systems. Reportedly, the deal will be signed ahead of Israel Defence Director-General Udi Adam's visit to India on July 2.

ADNOC joins Saudi Aramco to build Ratnagiri Refinery

The world largest oil refinery cum petrochemical project is set to come up in Maharashtra's Ratnagiri. UAE's Abu Dhabi National Oil Company or ADNOC along with Saudi Arabia's ARAMCO will together have a 50% stake in the greenfield Ratnagiri refinery project.

While 50% stake will be shared between Aramco and Adnoc the rest will be with Indian Oil, Hindustan Petroleum and Bharat Petroleum.

India plans to cut oil imports from Iran amid US request

India is looking at cutting oil imports from Iran, and replacing them with more purchases from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. This comes after the US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley asked PM Narendra Modi to reduce India's dependence on Iran. The US reimposed sanctions against Iran after it withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal.

EDF and GE sign deal to build 6 nuclear reactors for India

French state-run power utility EDF and American conglomerate General Electric (GE) have signed to build 6 EPR (European Pressurized Reactors) nuclear reactors with capacity 1,650 megawatts (MW) at Jaitapur nuclear plant in Ratnagiri district, Maharashtra.

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This agreement would make Jaitapur power plant the world's largest nuclear power generating station by net electrical power rating. It will also help the Union Government to achieve its ambitious target of 22,480 MW nuclear power generation capacity by 2031.

Indian, Indonesian navies participated in PASSEX

Indian Naval ships INS Shakti and INS Kamorta under the command of Rear Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet, undertook Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with Indonesian Naval Ship KRI Madidihang (855) a Stingrays Class Fast Patrol Craft on leaving the Port of Makassar, Indonesia. During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Indonesia last month, the two countries decided to enhance their maritime cooperation.



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Science and Technology

SpaceX launches communications satellite on Falcon 9 rocket

Elon Musk-led space exploration startup SpaceX on Monday launched its pre-flown Falcon 9 rocket, carrying the SES-12 satellite to a Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO). The satellite, which was deployed about 32 minutes after liftoff, will provide data and video services throughout the Asia-Pacific region. However, SpaceX did not attempt to recover Falcon 9's first stage after launch.

Microsoft launches underwater data centre in Scotland

Microsoft has launched the prototype of an underwater data centre off the coast of Scotland's Orkney Islands. The 40-foot-long capsule, which contains 864 servers and 27.6 Petabytes of storage, has been placed 117 feet below the ocean's surface. It is part of Microsoft's Project Natick and is designed to hold data for up to five years without maintenance.

Nuclear battery that can power spacecraft for 100 years made

Russian researchers have created a battery based on radioactive isotope nickel-63 that has a half-life of 100 years, which could help power deep space missions. The prototype packs about 3,300 milliwatt-hours of energy per gram, which is more than any other nuclear battery based on nickel-63 and 10 times more than commercial electrochemical cells, said researchers.

IISc develops 'LifeBox' to transport organs by drones

Researchers at IISc Bangalore have developed a 'LifeBox' that can extend the preservation time of organs, specifically the heart, and allows for increased travel time and distances. Researchers said that transport of organs using drones could cut down the transportation time by at least 50% compared to green corridors. The technology was used to transport a payload for 10 km.

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Japan plans to launch driverless car system in Tokyo by 2020

Japan is planning to launch a self-driving car service in Tokyo by 2020, according to a government strategic review announced on Monday. The strategy also includes plans to allow the development of virtual power plants by the fiscal year ending March 2022. The government will then try to commercialise the system as early as 2022, as per the review.

Govt approves Rs 10,000 crore to ISRO for future missions

The Central Govt has approved the continuation of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle and Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark-III programmes, costing over Rs 10,000 crore. While ₹6,131 crore was allotted for launching light-weight satellites in 30 PSLV flights, ₹4,338 crore was given for heavy-weight satellites on 10 GSLV missions. The funds will cater to missions from late-2019 to 2024.

C18-Mica-4 can remove majority of pollutants from urban waste water: Spanish scientists

Spanish scientists have identified absorbent materials that can help soak up pollutants found in urban waste water in less than 24 hours. Researchers from University of Seville evaluated two types of phyllosilicates. These are a subclass of silicates and include common mineral in very different environments.

The results show that the material C18-Mica-4 is capable of eliminating the majority of pollutants that were evaluated in urban waste water, as well as surface water and potable water.

Scientists in India discover a planet for the first time

Scientists at Ahmedabad's Physical Research Laboratory have discovered an exoplanet, propelling India into a select group of countries which have found planets outside the solar system. The 'super-Neptune' is about 27 times the mass of Earth and six times its radius. It is most likely 'uninhabitable' due to the proximity to its star, 600 light-years away from Earth, scientists found.

Varanasi airport to be 1st to get facial recognition system

Varanasi's Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport will become India's first airport to have an automated smart facial recognition system at its entry, security and boarding points. The initiative, which is part of the DigiYatra scheme, will ensure quicker entry into airports by facilitating automated check-ins. It will be functional within the next four months, as per Airport Director AK Rai.

India to soon start producing first indigenous Lithium-Ion batteries

According to the Ministry of Science and Technology, India will start producing first indigenous Lithium Ion batteries. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) for transfer of technology for India's first Lithium Ion (Li-ion) Battery project was signed between CSIR's Central Electro Chemical Research Institute (CECRI), Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu and RAASI Solar Power Pvt Ltd.

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Government launches Rail Madad app to expedite and streamline passenger grievance redressal

Indian Railways has for the first time completely digitized the Complaint management system. Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways & Coal launched a new App Rail Madad – An App to expedite & streamline passenger grievance redressal. The App relays real time feedback to passengers on the status of redressal of their complaints- the passenger gets an instant ID through SMS on registration of complaint followed by a customized SMS communicating the action taken thereon by Railway.

Rail MADAD (Mobile Application for Desired Assistance During travel) registers a complaint with minimum inputs from passenger(option of photo also available), issues unique ID instantly and relays the complaint online to relevant field officials for immediate action.

Railways launches 'Menu on Rails' app to check food rates

Railway Minister Piyush Goyal launched 'Menu on Rails' application for passengers that displays various food items served on different trains and stations and their rates. The menu has been divided into beverages, breakfast, meals, and à la carte categories and also caters to diabetic patients. The app will also display pre-booked meals for some trains.

EPIC planet: Indian PRL scientists discover new planet

In an epic Indian discovery, a team from the Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad, has spotted for the first time a distant planet six times bigger than Earth and revolving around a Sun-like star about 600 light years away. Both the planet and the star have been named EPIC.

EPIC 211945201b (or K2-236b) is the name given to the planet by the discovery team led by PRL's Abhijit Chakraborty. The host star is named EPIC 211945201 or K2-236.

Antarctica lost 3 tn tonnes ice in 25 yrs, sea level rose 7.6 mm

Antarctica has lost about three trillion tonnes of sea ice since 1992 contributing to a global sea-level rise of 7.6 mm, according to a research published in the journal Nature. The study found melting tripled in the last five years compared to 2012. Antarctica has enough ice to raise seas by 58 metres if it ever all melted, noted researchers.

Cashless Ticketing through 'Utsonmobile' App developed by CRIS

The Centre for Railway Information System (CRIS) developed a mobile-based application 'utsonmobile'. The 'utsonmobile' application enables booking and cancellation of unreserved tickets, issue and renewal of season and platform tickets, check and load R-wallet balance and helps maintain user profile management and booking history.

DRDO converts Pinaka rocket system into guided missile

The indigenous Pinaka rocket system of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), known for firing a salvo of 12 rockets in just 44 seconds, is being evolved into a precision-guided missile, with enhanced range and accuracy to hit its targets. The missile, which has completed

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the initial trial, will undergo developmental trials next month and is expected to be delivered to the Army in two years, said senior DRDO scientists.

The initial version of the Pinaka rocket was further developed into Pinaka Mark II, which has an enhanced range of 70 to 80 km compared to Mark I, with a range of 40 km.

106th Science Congress to be hosted by Lovely Professional University (LPU) in Jalandhar

The Lovely Professional University (LPU) has announced it has been slated to host world's biggest science event – the Indian Science Congress – next year, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to inaugurate it. The 106th Science Congress will be held from January 3-7 on the private varsity's campus with about 15,000 delegates, including 300 top scientists and Nobel Laureates, from across the world, attending the meet.

Themed "Future India: Science & Technology", the five-day event will have 18 plenary sessions, including those of medical, chemical, environmental and other science domains.

Peggy Whitson most experienced space woman in the world retires as astronaut

NASA's record-breaking astronaut, Peggy Whitson, retired on June 15 after a 22-year-long career. She has spent totally 665 days over three International Space Station missions.

The 58-year-old is the oldest woman to go into space and also the most experienced female spacewalker, with 10 missions.

Russia successfully launches Glonass-M satellite using Soyuz-2.1b carrier rocket

A Soyuz-2.1b carrier rocket with the Glonass-M navigational satellite was launched from the Plesetsk space center in northern Russia. The Glonass network provides real-time positioning data for surface, sea and airborne objects around the globe, at an accuracy reportedly on par with the U.S. Global Positioning System. GLONASS – the Russian acronym for 'Global Navigation Satellite System'.

WHO declares gaming addiction a mental health disorder

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared the addiction to video games or 'gaming disorder' as a mental health disorder. Likening it to substance abuse, WHO stressed it is not a casual term applied to anyone who spends a lot of time gaming. Symptoms must be sustained for at least a year before coming under the category, the organisation added.

Indian Government to team up with Google for flood forecasting

Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Nitin Gadkari has expressed that Union Government's collaboration with Google will help in effective flood management in India.

The Central Water Commission (CWC), India's apex technical organisation in the field of Water Resources, on June 18, 2018 signed a Collaboration Agreement with Google for flood forecasting.

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Northern Hemisphere witnesses longest day of the year on June 21

June 21 marks the beginning of summer in Earth's Northern Hemisphere, referred to as the 'summer solstice', the year's longest day and shortest night. A solstice is an astronomical event when the tilt of Earth's axis with respect to the Sun is maximum. After summer solstice, days start getting shorter till winter solstice on December 21, Northern Hemisphere's shortest day.

India launches its first national healthcare facility registry

The Union ministry of health and family welfare launched the National Health Resource Repository (NHRR), the first ever registry in the country registry of authentic, standardised and updated geo-spatial data of all public and private healthcare.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is the project technology partner for providing data security. It was launched by Union Health Minister J P Nadda.

Bill Gates pumps \$4mn in modified mosquitoes to eradicate malaria

Microsoft Co-founder Bill Gates is investing \$4 million in genetically-modified mosquitoes to eradicate malaria which is spread by female mosquito bites. The research, conducted by UK-based company Oxitec, involves releasing the modified male mosquitoes to mate with female mosquitoes. The male will pass on a self-limiting gene, which will kill their female offspring before reaching maturity.

Baidu tests driverless cars in China for the first time

China's artificial intelligence major Baidu has tested its two driverless cars for the first time in Tianjin City, the company said. The trial run would enable developers to collect data on the cars' performance in positioning, mapping, and self-control, a company engineer said. In 2017, Baidu launched its Apollo program which is a software solution for driverless cars.

RemoveDEBRIS: First satellite to demonstrate technology to clean up space junk deployed

A spacecraft that will demonstrate a range of innovative technologies to clean up space debris has been deployed from the International Space Station (ISS) and will soon begin its experiments in orbit. RemoveDebris, will attempt to address the build-up of dangerous space debris orbiting Earth.

It was transported to the ISS via the SpaceX CRS-14 launch in early April. The satellite was designed, built and manufactured by a consortium of space companies and research institutions, led by the Surrey Space Centre at the University of Surrey. The project is co-funded by the European Commission.

Centre launches app for delivering passports to applicants

On the occasion of 'Passport Seva Divas' (June 26), External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj launched a mobile app aimed at delivering passports to applicants at the addresses provided by them. Users from across the nation can use the 'Passport Seva app' for applying for a passport, following which police will arrive at their residences for verification.

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US approves first marijuana-based drug

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the first marijuana-based medicine in the country which will be used in the treatment of epilepsy. The FDA approved the drug Epidiolex developed by UK-based firm GW Pharmaceuticals. The drug will be used to treat seizures associated with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome (LGS) and Dravet syndrome in patients aged two years or above.

Oxytocin ban to come into effect in India from 1st July

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of India has banned the manufacture of Oxytocin for domestic use from 1st July 2018 as it has been misused widespread in the dairy industry.

Oxytocin is a hormone that occurs naturally to cause uterine contractions during labor and lactation. In dairy industries, livestock is injected with oxytocin to make them release milk at a time convenient for the farmers. It is also used in vegetables to increase their size.



State Related Current Affairs

Andhra to give ₹1,000 monthly allowance to unemployed youth

Andhra Pradesh government has announced a monthly allowance of ₹1,000 each to unemployed graduate youths in the state with an upper age limit of 35. Claiming the scheme to be first of its kind, state minister Nara Lokesh said, "It will cover close to 10 lakh unemployed youth...There is no restriction on the number per family."

IKEA to enter India with first physical store in Hyderabad

Swedish furniture giant IKEA will open its first store in India in Hyderabad this July. There will be 1,000 products at prices below ₹200. In February, Ikea had opened a ₹100-crore distribution centre spread over 2.3 lakh square feet in Pune.

India's 1st national sports university to be made in Manipur

President Ram Nath Kovind gave his approval for setting up India's first-ever national sports university, in Manipur's capital Imphal. The Manipur government has made available around 326 acres of land for the university. The university will teach sports sciences, sports management, sports technology, and sports coaching, besides acting as a national training centre for several sports.

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Gopabandhu Sambadika Swasthya Bima Yojana: Odisha's Health Insurance Scheme for Journalists

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched "Gopabandhu Sambadika Swasthya Bima Yojana" for working journalists. The health insurance scheme for working journalists will be implemented with effect from June 1, 2018. In the first phase, as many as 3,233 working journalists from across the state will get health insurance coverage up to Rs 2 lakh. At least five members of a journalist's family would be covered under the scheme.

Heli-taxis launched to cut Shimla-Chandigarh travel time to 20 min

Himachal Pradesh CM Jairam Thakur flagged off a helicopter taxi service that will reduce the travel time between Shimla and Chandigarh to 20 minutes, against the nearly 3.5 hours by road. The service, operated by Pawan Hans, can accommodate 19 persons on each sortie and will charge ₹2,999 per person.

Tamil Nadu announces plastic ban from 2019 on World Environment Day

On the World Environment Day, Tamil Nadu CM Edappadi K Palaniswami announced that the state would ban the use of plastic from 2019. However, milk and oil pouches, along with other basic need items will be exempted from the ban, he added. In 2017, the state government had banned the manufacture and use of plastic bags below 51 microns.

Polythene To Be Completely Prohibited From 31st July In Uttarakhand

In Uttarakhand, Polythene will be completely prohibited from 31st July in the state. All the polythene vendors have been asked to finish the polyethylene stock before 31st July.

In Dehradun on the occasion of World Environment Day, Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat stated, a comprehensive public awareness campaign will be launched on environmental damage caused by polythene, one week before the entire ban on polythene in the state.

Madhya Pradesh Announces Outstanding Power Bill Waiver Scheme

The Madhya Pradesh government announced an outstanding power bill waiver scheme for laborers and poor families.

The state cabinet headed by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan approved the Bijli Bill Mafi Yojana 2018 (Power Bill Waiver Scheme) which is expected to benefit about 77 lakh people of the state. Laborers falling under the unorganized sector in Madhya Pradesh will get power supply at a subsidized rate.

Andhra Pradesh inks pact with Maharashtra to develop Fintech ecosystem

Andhra Pradesh IT Minister Nara Lokesh took to Twitter and shared the details about the pact signed with Maharashtra. The Minister termed Mumbai and Vizag as the driving force behind the Fintech platform. Lokesh hoped that new association will pave the way for enhanced financial technology innovation in both the states.

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President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates 73 km long NH in Tripura

President Ram Nath Kovind, who is arrived in Tripura, inaugurated National Highway from Matabari to Udaipur-Sabroom and said that the development of northeast India is a priority of the government. While inaugurating the 73 km long NH in Tripura, President Kovind said that infrastructure plays key role in development of any state.

The President also appreciated that though the project entailed working over some difficult terrain, the work was completed in only 30 months.

Mumbai airport handles 1k flights in 24hrs, breaks own record

The Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai, which is the world's busiest single-runway airport, broke its own record by witnessing 1,003 flight operations in 24 hours on Tuesday. The airport's previous record was on May 19, when it handled 988 flights in a day. The increase in flight operations was due to a storm on Monday that led to delays.

Punjab Govt launches 'Business First Portal'

In a bid to give a big push towards the ease of doing business in the State, Punjab Government has launched a "Business First Portal" which was unveiled by Industry Minister Sunder Sham Arora. The Minister said that online portal would facilitate the industrialists for Regulatory Clearances and Fiscal Approvals , real time tracking of applications at common platform. The Minister said that the State Government is committed for ensuring 100% VAT refund to industrialists by the end of this year.

Andhra Pradesh is ODF now, declares CM Chandrababu Naidu

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has announced that Andhra Pradesh is Open Defecation Free (ODF) State. The State achieved the national cleanliness goal by constructing 2.77 lakh individual toilets. In October 2106, all of Andhra Pradesh's urban areas were declared as open defecation free on the occasion of MK Gandhi's birth anniversary. In December 2016, Guntur was given the tag of the first city to be Open Defecation Free (ODF) in the Amaravati capital region in Andhra Pradesh.

President declares 'Queen Pineapple' as state fruit of Tripura

President Ram Nath Kovind declared Tripura's queen variety pineapple as state fruit and said its export was a major step in connecting the state with world trade. The state holds good potential in world trade. Tripura exported its first consignment of one tonne pineapples to Dubai earlier this month.

Andhra Pradesh is set to become first state in India to use auto-disable syringes

The Andhra Pradesh Government has decided to make usage of AD syringes mandatory for all clinical purposes. Andhra Pradesh would be the first state in the country to take this move, which will be enforced from the World Hepatitis Day (July 28). Auto Disable Syringe are Syringe that cannot be reused. They incorporate a mechanism to break or lock the plunger when the injection is given to make the syringe inoperable for being used for second time.

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Portal for job seekers and employers launched in Kerala

A new portal, providing single window facility for job seekers and employers, was inaugurated. The facility has been conceived and developed by Kerala Academy for Skills Excellence (KASE), the umbrella agency for skill development initiatives in the state, leveraging the possibilities of Information Technology.

Hyderabad ranks 3rd in sound polluted cities list

Hyderabad ranks number three in the list of sound polluted metropolitan cities. The city was earlier listed on top 10 most air polluted metropolitan cities. The increasing numbers of cars, traffic jams, sound pollution, and congestion in the city has risen sharply over the years. The Pollution Control Board suggests that noise pollution is exceeding the permissible levels in various parts of the city.

Haryana govt orders sportspersons to pay 33% income to state

The Haryana government has issued a notification directing sportspersons employed with the state to pay 33% of their income earned professionally and through commercial endorsements to the state sports council. They will have to submit their full income if they are considered to be on-duty by the concerned authority. The money will be used for development of sports in Haryana.

England first world No 1 team to lose to an associate nation

England became the first team in cricket's history to be a number one ranked side losing an ODI to an associate nation after their six-run loss against Scotland. Scotland's 371 was the highest ODI total ever by an associate nation, while Jonny Bairstow became the only England batsman to hit a third consecutive ODI ton.

India to get its 1st police museum in Delhi

India will get its first national police museum in Lutyens Delhi. The museum, which will depict the history of central and state police forces, will come up as an underground facility in the premises of the National Police Memorial. It will be inaugurated on Police Commemoration Day, which is held on October 21.

Maharashtra most vulnerable state in disaster risk index

Maharashtra has been ranked the most vulnerable state in the draft National Disaster Risk Index, followed by West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. States like Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh that are prone to natural calamities have been ranked relatively lower. Few factors taken into consideration were exposure of population, agriculture and livestock, environmental risk and economic vulnerabilities.

Nipah virus: Kerala lifts high alert; schools to reopen

The Kerala government has decided to lift the high alert sounded in northern Kozhikode and Malappuram districts in the wake of the outbreak of deadly Nipah virus last month that has so far

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claimed 17 lives. Meanwhile, the vigil is expected to continue till June-end even as the educational institutions, schools and professional colleges will reopen on June 12.

Haryana to develop Madhogarh Fort

Haryana Minister Ram Bilas Sharma has said the Madhogarh Fort in Mahendragarh would be developed on the pattern of the Mughal Gardens in Pinjore. Sharma added that with the completion of the Madhogarh-Mahendragarh-Narnaul-Rewari Heritage Circuit, the pace of development would be accelerated in southern Haryana.

This circuit would not only benefit Mahendragarh and Rewari districts, but also the neighbouring districts of Bhiwani and Gurugram, by creating direct and indirect job opportunities for the youth especially.

Delhi air quality beyond 'severe' level due to dust storms

The air quality in Delhi deteriorated beyond the 'severe' level on Wednesday due to dust storms in western India which increased coarser particles in the air, according to Central Pollution Control Board data. The PM10 level was at 778 in the Delhi-NCR area and 824 in Delhi particularly, which led to hazy conditions and limited visibility.

Telangana govt bans plastic items in all municipal offices

The Telangana government has directed all urban local bodies and civic municipal bodies to ban usage of single-use plastic in the offices. "The use of plastic in its various forms is everywhere in our daily life, little realising that the use and convenience of these items come at a very high cost to the environment," the government letter read.

Gujarat tops Niti Aayog's composite water management index; while Jharkhand ranked lowest

Union Minister for Water Resources Nitin Gadkari released Niti Aayog's composite water management index report in New Delhi. Gujarat topped the list while Jharkhand was adjudged as the worst performer. Gujarat is followed by Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

In the northeastern and Himalayan states, Tripura has been adjudged as the top state in 2016-17 followed by Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Assam.

Integrated Command and Control Centre of Naya Raipur Smart City inaugurated

The Integrated Command and Control Centre of the Naya Raipur Smart City was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Integrated Command & Control Centre of Naya Raipur becomes the 10th Smart City Centre to be operational in the country.

Under the ambitious Smart City Mission, ICCC in 9 cities had already become operational viz. Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Surat, Pune, Nagpur, Rajkot, Visakhapatnam, Bhopal and Kakinada.

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Maharashtra Government & Quebec Province sign pact to increase Economic Cooperation

The Maharashtra government and Canada's Quebec province have signed a pact to increase the economic cooperation, especially in areas of information technology, biotechnology, artificial intelligence and welfare of the tribal community.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who was on a week-long tour to the US and Canada signed MoU to this effect with Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard.

They also discussed ways to increase collaboration over knowledge-sharing on ports.

Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis seeks World Bank support for twin projects

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis met World Bank CEO Kristalina Georgieva at Washington DC.

Two projects were mooted for the World Bank's assistance:

- 1) Rural transformation through sustainable livelihood in 10,000 villages and
- 2) A multimodal transport corridor in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region.

The Ford Motor Company submitted a proposal of 50 million USD for setting up a Centre of Excellence for integrated mobility in Maharashtra.

J&K comes under Governor's rule for 4th time in 10 years

Jammu and Kashmir came under Governor's rule for the fourth time in a decade since Governor NN Vohra assumed the office on June 25, 2008. It is also the eighth time the state witnesses the Centre's rule in the last 41 years. This comes after the BJP on Tuesday pulled out of the BJP-PDP coalition government in J&K.

Punjab govt launched a mobile app named iHariyali to offer free saplings

Punjab govt launched a mobile app named "i-Hariyali" under 'Mission Tandarust' to offer free saplings for users. The users can book a sapling of their choice, a maximum of 25 per person, from a nearby government nursery.

Rajasthan ranked No. 1 in water conservation: NITI Aayog

Rajasthan has been ranked first by the NITI Aayog among all states after it registered a significant increase in groundwater level due to the water conservation structures built under Chief Minister's Jal Swavlamban Abhiyan. The state also witnessed an increase of 81% in irrigation capacity. As many as 4 lakh structures were built in Rajasthan in the last three years.

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World's first International Centre for Humanitarian Forensics launched in Gandhinagar, Gujarat

The world's first of its kind and state-of-the-art International Centre for 'Humanitarian Forensics' (ICHF) was launched at the Gujarat Forensic Sciences University in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The centre is a joint venture of the regional delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in India, Bhutan, Nepal and the Maldives and also Gujarat Forensic Science University. The main aim of the Centre would be to provide service to the nation and to the entire world when the need arises.

Maharashtra makes plastic waste use compulsory to lay roads

The Maharashtra government has made it compulsory for the Public Works Department to use plastic waste for construction and repair of asphalt roads. The step has been taken to sustainably use the increasing amount of plastic waste collected by the state civic bodies. Mumbai civic body has alone collected 1.42 lakh kg of plastic waste since March.

Uttarakhand High Court has banned water sports in the state

The Uttarakhand high court has banned paragliding, and white water rafting and other water sports until the government frames a policy to regulate them.

It also expressed concern over environmental damages, remarking that the state is not maintaining the sanctity of river Ganga.

3-day Annual Sindhu Darshan Festival begins in Ladakh Region of J&K

The three-day annual Sindhu Darshan Festival celebrates on the bank of Indus River started in Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir. The Festival organised by Sindhu Darshan Yatra Samiti and Ladakh Phandey Tsogspa, Leh, will be inaugurate by RSS General Secretary Bhaiya Ji. The programme is focused at national integration, communal harmony and national pride.

West Bengal seeks GI tag for Kohitur mango that cost ₹1,500

The West Bengal government has applied for a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for Kohitur mango, which was sold for ₹1,500 a piece last season. The mango is believed to have been cultivated by a royal breeder named Hakim Ada Mohammadi at the behest of the last Nawab of Bengal Siraj-ud-Daulah. The variety was reportedly only consumed by royals.

Centre approves tourism projects worth ₹1,800cr for Himachal Pradesh

The Centre has approved projects worth ₹1,800 crore for the development of tourism in Himachal Pradesh. He added that the government will make efforts to develop lesser known areas in the state as tourism sites. This comes after tourism was affected in Shimla over severe water scarcity in May.

Gujarat Government launches Suryashakti Kisan Yojana

Gujarat is poised to become the first state in the country to roll out a scheme where farmers can generate electricity using solar energy and sell the surplus to the electric grid. Chief minister Vijay

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Rupani announced Suryashakti Kishan Yojana, besides producing electricity for farm and irrigation purposes, can also sell surplus power to the state owned power companies at Rs7 per unit for a period of seven years under this scheme.

Bengaluru world's 2nd best location to launch tech startups

Bengaluru has claimed the second spot in the list of best locations for launching tech startups, according to research firm SmallBusinessPrices.co.uk. The first place was secured by Boulder city in the US while the third best location was Johannesburg in South Africa. The research measured the average internet speed, the average business valuation, and cost of living, among other metrics.

Odisha Government signs MoU with RIMES for effective management of all kinds of disasters

The Odisha government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) for effective management of disasters. The government also signed three more MoUs that would benefit the farmers and enhance their production.

SPORTS

WINNER	TITLE	ADDITIONAL INFO
Rafael Nadal	French Open Title (Men's)	Nadal defeated Dominic Thiem
India	Intercontinental Cup football title	Defeated Kenya
Simona Halep	French Open Title (Women's)	Halep defeated Sloane Stephens
Saweety Boora	Russian Boxing Tournament (middleweight (75 kg) category)	Defeated Russia's Anna Anfinogenova
Roger Federer	Stuttgart Open final	Defeated Milos Raonic
Chennai's R Praggnanandhaa	World's second youngest Grandmaster	Russia's Sergey Karjakin – Youngest Grandmaster
Archer Deepika Kumari	Wins Gold at Salt Lake World Cup	
Lewis Hamilton	French Grand Prix	
Manu Bhaker	Wins Gold in 10m air pistol event at ISSF Junior World Cup in Germany	

ICC induct Nepal, Scotland, Netherlands, UAE in ODI rankings

The ICC has inducted the nations of Nepal, Scotland, Netherlands and UAE in the ODI team rankings. Netherlands gained ODI status by winning the ICC World Cricket League Championship last year, while the rest of the three national sides finished as the top associate teams in the ICC Cricket World Cup Qualifier tournament.

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Mayweather named world's highest-paid athlete with \$285 million

Undeclared boxing champion Floyd Mayweather has been named the world's highest-paid athlete by Forbes for the fourth time in seven years with \$285 million in earnings. Cristiano Ronaldo, who stood first the last two years, slipped to third with Lionel Messi grabbing the second spot. UFC star Conor McGregor, who fought Mayweather last year, was ranked fourth with \$99 million. With earnings of ₹161 crore, Indian cricket team captain Virat Kohli was ranked 83rd.

Shakib quickest to 10,000 runs, 500 wickets in int'l cricket

Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan became the quickest to reach 10,000 runs and pick 500 wickets in international cricket against Afghanistan. The 31-year-old has now joined former all-rounders Jacques Kallis and Shahid Afridi as only the third cricketer to achieve the 10,000 runs and 500 wickets double. Shakib also became the first Bangladeshi cricketer with 500 international wickets.

Mithali Becomes First Indian To Score 2000 T20I Runs

Indian cricketer Mithali Raj become the first batter from the country to score 2000 runs in T20I cricket. She achieved the feat during India's Women's T20 Asia Cup match against Sri Lanka in Kuala Lumpur.

Mithali has now scored 2015 runs in 74 T20Is with the help of 14 half-centuries. She has a decent average of 38.01 with the highest score of 76 not out.

When it comes to men's T20I, the list is led by Martin Guptill (2271) followed by Brendon McCullum (2140) and Virat Kohli (1983).

Ronda Rousey To Be The First Female Hall Of Famer In UFC

American fighter Ronda Rousey will become the first female MMA fighter to be inducted into the Ultimate Fighting Championship Hall of Fame, the UFC announced. There would be no women in UFC without Ronda Rousey. Rousey had a 12-2 win-loss record, winning 11 of them within the first round of the fight.

Cristiano Ronaldo scores FIFA World Cup 2018's 1st hat-trick

Portugal captain Cristiano Ronaldo scored FIFA World Cup 2018's first hat-trick as Portugal drew 3-3 against Spain in their first match of the tournament. The hat-trick was the 51st in World Cup history, as well as Ronaldo's 51st career hat-trick. The 33-year-old scored his first goal in three minutes and 30 seconds, the fastest WC goal for Portugal since 1966.

Dhawan 1st Indian to slam 100 before lunch on Day 1 of Test

Indian opener Shikhar Dhawan has become the first Indian and overall sixth batsman to smash a hundred before lunch on the opening day of a Test. The 32-year-old achieved the feat by reaching the three-figure mark off 87 balls in the 26th over against Afghanistan. This was the third time that Dhawan scored 100-plus runs in a session.

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Smriti Mandhana to become first Indian cricketer to play in Englands Kia Super League

India Women's Cricket team opener Smriti Mandhana (21 year old) will become the first Indian player to appear in Kia Super League – the women's cricket super league in England.

Kidambi Srikanth named Sports Illustrated Sportsperson of the Year

The country's top-ranked men's shuttler Kidambi Srikanth was adjudged Sports Illustrated 'India's Sportsperson of the Year' for his stupendous performance in 2017.

- Women's cricket team – 'Team of the Year' award
- National football team coach Stephen Constantine – 'Coach of the year'.
- Tennis veteran Leander Paes – 'Outstanding contribution to Sport'
- I-League side Aizawl FC – Editor's Choice for Excellence (Team)
- Commonwealth gold medallist Jitu Rai – Editor's Choice for Excellence (Male).
- Young paddler Manav Thakkar – 'Young Sportsperson of the Year'
- Golfer Shubhankar Sharma – 'Gamechanger of the Year' respectively.
- Legendary hockey player Dhanraj Pillay – Lifetime Achievement Award

England post their 1st ever 5-0 ODI whitewash over Australia

England posted a one-wicket victory in the fifth ODI to register their first-ever 5-0 series whitewash over Australia in ODI cricket. Wicketkeeper-batsman Jos Buttler slammed an unbeaten 110 off 122 balls to help England score 208/9 despite being 114/8 at one stage. England have now won nine of the ten ODIs they have played against Australia in 2018.

Dutee Chand sets new national record in womens 100m

Odisha's Dutee Chand set a new national record in the women's 100m race when she clocked 11.29 seconds at the 58th National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships being held at Sarusajai Stadium, Guwahati, Assam.

The previous record of 11.30 seconds was also set by Dutee at the Indian Grand Prix in 2017. Dutee has qualified for the Asian Games in 100m and 200m by breaching the qualifying timings at the Inter-State Championships.

Rani Rampal to lead Indian Womens Hockey team in 2018 World Cup

Rani Rampal was announced as the captain of Indian Women's Hockey team for the World Cup London 2018. Goalkeeper Savita has been named vice-captain.

Hockey India announced the 18-member Indian women's team for the prestigious World Cup tournament to be played in London in July 2018. India has been placed in Pool B alongside hosts and world no. 2 England, world no. 7 USA and world no. 16 Ireland.

CURRENT AFFAIRS JUNE 2018 PDF

OBITUARY

NAME OF THE PERSON DIED	ASSOCIATED FIELD
Urmila Singh	Former Himachal Pradesh governor and Congress leader
Narayan Prasad Singh	Odisha's most popular lyricist
Adiraju Venkateswara Rao	Veteran journalist and author from Telangana
Martin Bregman	Producer of famous films like Scarface and Dog Day Afternoon, The Bone Collector, Nothing to Lose and One Tough Cop..etc.
Nerella Venumadhav	Renowned mimicry and ventriloquism artist
Peter Thomson	Australian golfer
Charles Krauthammer	Pulitzer Prize winning political commentator



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IMPORTANT DAYS IN JUNE 2018

DATE	DAY OBSERVED	THEME
June 03	World Bicycle Day	
June 04	International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression	
June 08	World Ocean Day	"Preventing plastic pollution and encouraging solutions for a healthy ocean"
June 08	World Brain Tumor Day	
June 12	The World Day against Child Labour	Generation Safe & Healthy
June 14	World Blood Donor Day	
June 15	World Elder Abuse Awareness Day	
June 16	International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR)	Remittances: One family at a time
June 17	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought	Land has true value - invest in it.
June 19	International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict	The Plight and Rights of Children Born of War
June 20	World Refugee Day	Now More Than Ever, We Need to Stand with Refugees
June 21	International Yoga Day	Yoga for Peace

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June 26	International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking	Listen First – Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow healthy and safe.
June 29	National Statistics Day	



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