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AWARDS AND HONOURS		
Name of the Award	Award Winner	Additional Information
Fields Medal	Akshay Venkatesh	Fields Medal is dubbed as the "Nobel prize for mathematics"
Best performing primary lending institution in Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS)	HDFC Bank	For the EWS (Economically Weaker Section) and LIG (Low Income Group) category
Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award 2018	Former West Bengal Governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi	The award carries a citation and a cash award of Rs.10 lakh.
"Outstanding Parliamentarian" award	For 2013 - Dr Najma A. Heptulla For 2014 - Hukumdev Narayan Yadav For 2015 - Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad, For 2016 - Dinesh Trivedi For 2017 - Bhartruhari Mahatab	The Outstanding Parliamentarian Award was established in 1995.
Top honours at the Swachhta Pakwada Awards	Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC)	Indian Oil Corp (IOC) bagged the runner-up's award.
MasterChef Australia 2018	Indian origin prison guard Sashi Cheliah	
100 women who changed the world	Marie Curie	Poll conducted by BBC
Geography Bee World Championship	Indian-American high school student Avi Goel	
Kotak Wealth Hurun-Leading Wealthy Women 2018 list	Smitha V. Crishna	Estimated wealth of ₹ 37,570 crore.
Shaurya Chakra	Rifleman Aurangzeb & Major Aditya Kumar	-
Vayu Sena Medal (Gallantry)	Group Captain Abhishek Sharma, Squadron Leader Vernon Desmond Keane and Sergeant Shashidhar P Prasad	
2018 Albany Medical Center Prize in Medicine and Biomedical Research	James Allison, Carl June and Steven Rosenberg	Three US scientists
US Legion of Merit 2018	General Dalbir Singh Suhag	The Legion of Merit is awarded in four degrees; Degree of Chief Commander, Degree of commander, Degree of the officer, Degree of Legionnaire.
WHO World No Tobacco Day 2018 Award	S K Arora	

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Fortune's global 'Change the World' list	Reliance Jio	American pharma company Merck ranked second while Bank of America ranked third on the list.
2018 UEFA President's Award	David Beckham	Union of European Football Associations (UEFA)
2018 Asia Game Changer of the Year award	PepsiCo's India-born Chairman and CEO Indra Nooyi	Awarded by global cultural organisation Asia Society.

APPOINTMENTS

Name of the Person	Name of the Position	Additional Information
Kumar Mangalam Birla and YC Deveshwar	non-official independent directors in Air India	
HDFC chairman Deepak Parekh	Reappointed as non-executive director on the board of Housing Development Finance Corp. Ltd (HDFC)	
Hollywood actor Steven Seagal	Special representative for Russian-US humanitarian ties	Russian President Vladimir Putin had handed a Russian passport to Seagal in 2016.
Chief Justice Gita Mittal	Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court (HC)	She is the first woman Chief Justice of J&K HC
Vijay Thakur Singh	Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs	She is a 1985 batch officer of the Indian Foreign Service.
Ram Sewak Sharma	TRAI's Chairman	Till September 2020
Michelle Bachelet	UN human rights chief	Selected by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres
Gopakumar	Director and General Manager In United India Insurance Company	
Harivansh Singh	Rajya Sabha's Deputy Chairman	Harivansh Singh is a member of the Janata Dal (United), the BJP's ally in Bihar.
Justice Vijaya Kamlesh Tahilramani	Chief Justice of Madras HC	
Justice Gita Mittal	Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court.	First woman CJ of J & K
Swaminathan Gurusamy and Satish Kashinath Marathe	part-time non-official directors on the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) board	For a period of four years.
Rekha Sharma	Chairperson of National Commission for Women	She belongs to Haryana.
Former cricketer and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan	Prime Minister of Pakistan	
Film Actor Akshay Kumar	Brand Ambassador for Road Safety Campaigns	

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Asad Qaiser	Speaker of Pakistan's parliament	He secured 176 votes and defeat Khursheed Shah
Mario Abdo Benitez	50th President of Paraguay	
Ibrahim Boubacar Keita	President of Mali	
KS Srinivas	Chairman of Marine Products Export Development Authority	
Satya Pal Malik	13th Governor of Jammu and Kashmir	He has replaced NN Vohra
TP Sharma	Chief Of Chhattisgarh Lok Ayog	Sharma previously holds the post of Chairman, Chhattisgarh Law Commission.
Tathagata Roy	Governor of Meghalaya	-
Lalji Tandon	Governor of Bihar	-
Ganga Prasad	Governor of Sikkim	-
Kaptan Singh Solanki	Governor of Tripura	-
Satyadev Narayan Arya	Governor of Haryana	-
Baby Rani Maurya	Governor of Uttarakhand	-
Actor Raveena Tandon	Brand ambassador of SGNP	Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP)
Scientist G Satheesh Reddy	DRDO Chairman	Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO)
Emmerson Mnangagwa	President of Zimbabwe.	-
UK Varma	Assocham Secretary General	Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM)
Satya Tripathi	UNEP Assistant Secretary-General	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
Mukul Deoras	Chairman of Consumer goods company Colgate-Palmolive India	-
Gary Kirsten	Coach and Mentor of Royal Challengers Bangalore	Former South African batsman - Gary Kirsten

BANKING & FINANCE

Reliance Jio partnered with SBI for digital services

RIL's telecom subsidiary Reliance Jio partnered with State Bank of India (SBI) to extend the next generation of digital banking and payments services to customers.

MyJio platform will enable SBI YONO's digital banking features and solutions for a seamless, integrated and superior customer experience. It will also extend the financial services capabilities of SBI and Jio Payments Bank.

Bandhan Bank pips Yes Bank to become 7th most valuable bank

Kolkata-based Bandhan Bank briefly became India's seventh most valued listed lender, surpassing Yes Bank, which has a nearly seven times larger loan book. Bandhan Bank shares

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rose to a record, giving the company a market capitalisation of ₹84,325.35 crore. Notably, the bank's stock has gained 88.44% since listing on March 27 this year.

RBI hikes repo rate by 25 bps for second time in a row to 6.5%

The RBI's monetary policy committee in its third bi-monthly monetary policy review of 2018-19 on Wednesday hiked repo rate by 25 bps for the second time in a row to 6.5%. In its June policy meet, the repo rate was hiked by 25 basis points. Repurchase (repo) rate is the rate at which the RBI lends money to commercial banks.

NHAI to ink MoU with SBI for Rs 25,000 Crore loan

NHAI will tomorrow ink a pact with State Bank of India (SBI) for a long-term unsecured loan to the tune of Rs 25,000 crore. This is SBI's highest long-term unsecured loan to any entity and also the largest ever loan sanctioned to NHAI. An MoU in this regard will be signed in the presence of Union Minister Nitin Gadkari. The total sanctioned amount is to be disbursed to NHAI within March 31, 2019. NHAI has traditionally relied on borrowing through long term bonds issued to various investors, including LIC, EPFO and other qualified investors, and Tax Free bonds and Masala Bond issued in 2017.

India levies 25% safeguard duty on import of solar cells

With the aim of protecting the domestic solar industry, India imposed a safeguard duty on solar cell imports for a year till July 29, 2019. This imposes safeguard duty accounts to 25% on the imports of solar cells. According to the notification, the safeguard duty will not be imposed on imports from developing countries, except China and Malaysia.

Banks collect Rs 5,000 cr as minimum balance penalty in FY18

Three private lenders and 21 public sector banks (PSBs) collected Rs 5,000 crore from depositors in the financial year 2017-18 as penalties for not maintaining required minimum balance in accounts. Among PSBs, SBI emerged as the highest collector with Rs 2,433 crore in penalties, almost half of the total collection. HDFC Bank was the highest collector among private banks with Rs 590 crore.

Mallya tops the List of India's 28 Fugitive Economic Offenders

Vijay Mallya (promoter of defunct Kingfisher Airlines) allegedly defrauded banks of about Rs 7,500 crore, according to the list the Finance Ministry submitted in the Lok Sabha.

Mehul Choksi, promoter of Gitanjali Jewels (₹7,080 crore) and his nephew Nirav Modi (₹6,498 crore) took the second and third spots.

The list also includes Sterling Biotech promoters Chetan Sandesara, Nitin Sandesara and Diptiben Sandesara, who allegedly defrauded banks of ₹5,383 crore.

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Mauritius' SBM gets Reserve Bank of India approval for Subsidiary

State Bank of Mauritius (SBM) is the first foreign lender to receive such a license after local incorporation was introduced in 2013. SBM started in India since 1994 and currently operated through four branches, in Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Ramachandrapuram.

Walmart's acquisition of Flipkart gets CCI's approval

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) said it has approved US retail giant Walmart's proposed acquisition of Flipkart announced in May this year. Walmart had announced acquiring a 77% stake in Bengaluru-based Flipkart in a \$16 billion deal. The deal values the 11-year-old e-commerce firm at nearly \$20.8 billion.

RBI to transfer ₹50,000 crore surplus to government

The Reserve Bank of India's board has approved the transfer of a surplus amount of ₹50,000 crore to the government for the year ended June 30, 2018. The RBI had transferred a surplus of ₹30,659 crore to the government for the fiscal ended June 2017, which was less than half of what it paid in the previous year (₹65,896 crore).

Mobile banking transactions cross 300 million mark for first time

The volume of transactions through mobile banking crossed the 300 million mark for the first time, according to RBI data. Transactions went up by around 14% to 306.42 million in June from 267.78 million in the previous month. The value of transactions increased to ₹1.9 trillion in June, an 11% rise from the previous month.

India will be source of global growth for next 30 years: IMF

International Monetary Fund's mission chief for India Ranil Salgado has said that India will be a source of global growth for the next 30 years. "India can be almost what China was for the world economy for a while," he added. Salgado further said India has three decades before it hits the point where the working-age population starts declining.

IMF forecasts India's GDP to grow at 7.5% in 2019/20 fiscal

India's GDP is poised to grow by 7.3 per cent in the 2018-19 fiscal and 7.5 per cent in 2019-2020 on strengthening of investment and robust private consumption, the IMF said in its latest projection. Growth is forecast to rise to 7.3 per cent in fiscal year 2018/19 and 7.5 per cent in 2019/20 on strengthening investment and robust private consumption.

NMCG asked SBI to make arrangements to donate to the CGF from ATMs

The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) asked the State Bank of India (SBI) to make it possible to donate to the Clean Ganga Fund (CGF) from ATMs. It is aimed at making the donation easier for the public to participate in the efforts. NMCG, an affiliate of the Union Water Resources Ministry, government's Rs.20,000 crore and CGF, a separate corpus made up corporates and individuals donations, holds Rs.250 crore for the commitment to clean the Ganga.

PayPal and HDFC Bank partner to offer Seamless Payment Experiences

To initiate incremental digital spend, the HDFC cards will be presented as a payment option during enrollment and subsequent payments with the ability for consumers to easily open PayPal accounts and set it as their preferred payment method. This partnership will create a number of joint growth opportunities that will advance PayPal and HDFC Bank's shared vision of offering consumers greater choice and flexibility.

HSBC launched Online Platform MyDeal to Raise Funds via Capital Markets

The online platform contains all the information relating to a client's capital markets transaction and is updated on a real-time basis. In its pilot phase, MyDeal raised over USD 25 billion in the first seven months through over 30 transactions globally.

SBI launched unified payment terminal MOPAD

State Bank of India (SBI) launched its latest customer-friendly digital initiative Multi Option Payment Acceptance Device (MOPAD) at a shopping mall, in Visakhapatnam. The new device titled MOPAD is a Point of Sale (PoS) terminal that would along with cards accept payments through UPI, Bharat QR, and SBI Buddy wallet which till now required different tools to receive payments.

World Bank to issue world's first blockchain bond

The World Bank has mandated the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) to issue the world's first blockchain-based bond. The Kangaroo bond, referring to foreign bonds issued in Australia in the local currency, has been named bond-i, an acronym standing for Blockchain Offered New Debt Instrument. (It's also a reference to Bondi Beach, an iconic spot in Sydney.)

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance and Vijaya Bank entered into Bancassurance Deal

This corporate agreement will enable distribution of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance products through the bank's network of 2,129 branches across the country. Bajaj Allianz General Insurance will offer personal lines of insurance products such as health, personal accident, home, motor and travel along with a commercial line of insurance products.

Axis Bank introduced first Of Its Kind Iris Authentication for Aadhaar-Based Transactions

Iris scan technology is totally contactless and provides up to 98.2 per cent authentication success rate (as per study conducted by the International Centre for Biometric Research) and offers an edge over other prevalent biometric modes.

Axis Bank presently running a pilot program for its customers at eight branches in rural segment largely covering areas of Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.

Exim Bank signed MoU with BRICS Development Banks

The MoU signed by Exim Bank Managing Director David Rasquinha. The main objective is to strengthen the cooperation under the BRICS Interbank Cooperation Mechanism. The

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signatories agreed to constitute a joint research working group which will formulate the research agenda and targeted outcome.

State Bank of India ranked as India's most patriotic brand

According to the survey conducted by UK-based online market research and data analytics firm, *YouGov* Country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) is considered to be the most patriotic brand, followed by Tata Motors, Patanjali, Reliance Jio and BSNL. The survey, which covered 152 brands across 11 categories, is based on data collected online by YouGov Omnibus among 1,193 respondents in the country.

Indian health insurance companies to now cover mental illness

Insurance regulator IRDAI on Thursday notified insurance companies asking them to cover medical treatment for mental illnesses on the same basis as it is available for treatment of physical illnesses. The order is applicable to all insurance companies in India with immediate effect. The order comes three months after the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017 came into force on May 29.

PhonePe partners with IRCTC app Rail connect to facilitate convenient payments

This will enable PhonePe's 100 million-plus users to now pay directly from their bank accounts using UPI, credit and debit cards and also the PhonePe wallet. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) app will have a trusted digital payment platform for the transactions.

Reliance becomes 1st Indian company to hit ₹8 trillion m-cap

Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries (RIL) became the first Indian company to hit ₹8 trillion or ₹8 lakh crore in market capitalisation after its stock rallied 1.31% to hit a record high of ₹1262.50. This comes after TRAI data showed that Reliance Jio continued to add more subscribers. Notably, Reliance Industries shares have surged nearly 37% this year.

US imposes anti-dumping duty on metal pipes made in India

The US has imposed preliminary anti-dumping duties on metal pipes imported from India, China, Canada and three other countries. India has been slapped with an anti-dumping duty of 50.55% while China will face 132% duties. At \$295 million, India is the only country on the list that had greater exports of the pipe to the US last year than Canada.

PM Narendra Modi to launch India Post Payments Bank on September 1

The launch of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) was recently rescheduled in the wake of seven-day national mourning declared after the demise of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. IPPB has permission to link around 17-crore postal savings bank (PSB) accounts with its account.

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India Banking Conclave 2018 held in New Delhi

Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) and the government Think Tank NITI Aayog organised two-day 'India Banking Conclave' (IBC) in New Delhi between August 23 and August 24, 2018.

Focus:- On reform in the banking sector.

About Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) :

- ◆ CEPR is network of over 1100 researchers who are based mainly in universities throughout Europe and collaborate in research and its dissemination.
- ◆ It aims to enhance quality of economic policy-making within Europe and beyond

Govt ranks PNB as best state-run bank for digital transactions

Punjab National Bank (PNB) said that a Department of Financial Services report has ranked it as the best state-owned bank in terms of digital transactions. "The bank is fully committed to 'Digital India' initiative," PNB said in a statement. It has been rated as the sixth-best in the overall category amongst all banks in India for digital performance.

Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway confirms investment in Paytm

World's third richest person Warren Buffett-led American conglomerate Berkshire Hathaway confirmed that the company has made an investment in Paytm's parent company One97 Communications. However, it clarified that Buffett is not directly involved in the transaction. Earlier reports said the company is investing up to ₹2,500 crore for 3-4% stake in Paytm, valuing the startup at \$10 billion.

SBI suggested its customers to switch to EVM cards

State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest lender, has asked its customers to replace their ATM cards for Europay, MasterCard, Visa (EMV) chip based ATM-cum-debit cards with magnetic stripe before December 31.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had asked banks to issue only chip-based and Personal Identification Number (PIN) enabled debit and credit cards to protect customers from frauds. EMV chip card protects against counterfeit skimming (card fraud). EMV chip card and PIN protects against both counterfeit skimming and lost and stolen card fraud.

Tez rebranded as Google Pay, to offer instant bank loans

Google rebranded its India-based payments app Google Tez into Google Pay and has partnered with four private banks to offer consumer loans online. The US search giant said that customers will get instant, pre-approved loans "right within Google Pay in a matter of seconds". Google has claimed that it has 2.2 crore monthly active users on Google Pay.

World Bank signed to loan USD 300 million to EESL

Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), the Centre and the World Bank signed a \$220 million loan agreement and an \$80 million guarantee agreement. The loan amount is to be used for the India Energy Efficiency scale-up programme.

The programme aimed to scale up the deployment of energy-saving measures in both the residential and public sectors, strengthen the firm's institutional capacity and enhance its access to commercial financing. It also supports the UJALA and SLNP schemes. The programme plans to help avoid lifetime greenhouse gas emissions of 170 million tonnes of carbon dioxide and contribute to avoiding an estimated 10 GW of additional generation capacity.

DBS Named World's Best Bank in nod to its Digital Innovation

It is the first Asian bank to receive the accolade from the New York-based publication, which last year gave the title to ING Bank. DBS branches and offices in China, Dubai, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, United Kingdom and The United States.

SBI changes names, IFSC codes of nearly 1,300 branches across India, post merger with associates

Names and IFSC codes of a total of 1,295 branches have been changed across the country as per the SBI list enlisting the old and new IFSC codes after rationalisation/merger with six associate banks and Bhartiya Mahila Bank (BMB).

The merger of six associate banks and Bhartiya Mahila Bank (BMB) with State Bank of India (SBI) came to effect from April 1, 2017 resulting into increase in size and valuation of the bank. SBI had 22,428 branches across India by the end of the first quarter of the current fiscal.

MRPL is to be merged with HPCL

Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) is on discussion with ONGC to merge its subsidiary Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL) with itself. HPCL is owned by ONGC. The Centre has transferred its 51% stake in HPCL to ONGC for Rs. 36,915 crore, in early 2018. HPCL owns 17% stake in MRPL while its parent ONGC holds a majority 71.63% stake in the company.

Vodafone-Idea merger completed, becomes India's biggest telco

Idea Cellular and Vodafone have merged their operations and have officially become operational as a single entity under the name 'Vodafone Idea Limited'. After National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) cleared the merger on August 31, Vodafone Idea topples Bharti Airtel as the largest telecom service provider in India with a subscriber base of over 408 million. The Board has appointed Baresh Sharma as the CEO of Vodafone-Idea.

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India and ADB sign \$375 Million loan to improve Irrigation Efficiency in Madhya Pradesh

The Madhya Pradesh Irrigation Efficiency Improvement Project will develop 125,000 hectares of new, highly efficient and climate resilient irrigation networks.

- Asian Development Bank is a regional development Bank established in 1966.
- Headquarters of ADB is in Manila, Philippines.
- Takehiko Nakao is Present President of the Asian Development Bank.

INDIAN AFFAIRS

Kadaknath chicken meat from Jhabua gets GI tag

The famous Kadaknath chicken meat from Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh has now got a Geographical Indication (GI) tag. The tag denotes that the product comes from a particular geographical area, and often enhances its commercial value. The Gramin Vikas Trust of Krishak Bharati Cooperative (KRIBHCO) had sought GI tag for the protein-rich and black coloured meat of Kadaknath variety of chicken, which is mainly reared in Jhabua.

Lok Sabha passes OBC Commission Bill

The Lok Sabha passed the Constitution 123rd Amendment Bill. The Bill seeks to grant constitutional status to the National Commission on Backward Classes. Earlier, the Lok Sabha had passed the bill in April last year and the Rajya Sabha passed it with certain amendments in August last year and returned it to the Lower House. The NCBC was created as a statutory body in 1993. This Bill makes it a constitutional Body.

Govt launched e Aksharayan Software in 7 Indian languages

E-Aksharayan is free, desktop software for converting scanned printed Indian Language documents into a fully editable text format in Unicode encoding. The software supports editing in seven Indian languages – Hindi, Bangla, Malayalam, Gurmukhi, Tamil, Kannada & Assamese.

Red Fort at MMC is to be remodeled into Museum

Red Fort, which is at the east of Madras Medical College (MMC) Chennai, is planned to be remodelled into a museum. The building was constructed in 1897, the red brick structure has been classified as a Grade I heritage building by the Justice E. Padmanabhan Committee on heritage structures. The building is of Indo-Saracenic style.

The State government has sanctioned Rs.1.97 crore for the restoration process of the building. On completion, the building is planned to be remodelled into a museum.

Reliance Beats TCS and became India's Most Valued Company

India's richest person Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) beat Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) to become the most valued company in India.

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RIL's market capitalisation during the day was Rs7.44 trillion as compared to TCS' Rs7.39 trillion. RIL had recently reported its highest ever quarterly net profit of Rs9,459 crore, for the April-June quarter.

UN E-Government Index: India ranked 96th Denmark tops the list

India jumped 22 places to 96th rank in the top 100 of the United Nations E-Government Development Index (EGDI) 2018. Denmark, with an index value of 0.9150, topped the 2018 E-Government Development Survey.

The E-Government survey is released by the United Nations in every two years. The 2018 edition was titled as 'Gearing E-Government to Support Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies'.

India, which was ranked 118 in 2014, jumped 11 places to be ranked 96 in 2018.

Lok Sabha passed the Commercial Bill

The Lok Sabha passed the Commercial Courts, Commercial Division and Commercial Appellate Division of High Courts (Amendment) Bill, 2018. It aims at improving the ease of doing business in India.

The Bill will designate some courts as commercial courts. By doing so, the commercial disputes can be resolved swiftly. It will also reduce the monetary jurisdiction of these courts from Rs.1 crore to Rs.3 lakh.

TRAI announced auction of 5G spectrum for Rs.492 crore per MHz

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) announced a mega spectrum auction of 5G services at a pan-India reserve price of about Rs.492 crore per MHz for the first time in India. TRAI has introduced a reduction of 43% in the reserve prices of 700 MHz band spectrum.

In 2016, when TRAI held the spectrum auction there were no takers because of high pricing. Previously, in 2016 the recommended pan-India reserve price for 700 MHz was Rs. 11,500 crore and it has been reduced to Rs.6,538 crore per MHz in 2018. The major participants are Bharti Airtel, Vodafone-Idea and Reliance Jio.

Cabinet approved Bill to restore the original provisions of the SC and ST

Cabinet has approved to introduce a Bill to restore the original provisions of the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. The Supreme Court has ruled out the Bill on 20th March. The Union Cabinet will be introducing the Bill in Parliament during the ongoing session.

The Amendment Bill introduces three new clauses after Section 18 of the original Act. The three clauses are:

1) The preliminary enquiry shall not be required for registration of a First Information Report against any person

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- 2) The arrest of a person accused of having committed an offence under the Act would not require any approval
- 3) The provisions of Section 438 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which deals with anticipatory bail, shall not apply to a case under this Act, in spite of any judgment or order of any Court.

PHDCCI and CNI sign MoU to set up Indo-Nepal Centre

PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) and Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish India-Nepal Centre. The MoU aims to promote Indian investment in Nepal, Work with Indian ventures in Nepal to resolve problems being faced by them, Promote industrialization in Nepal and provide training to Nepali entrepreneurs.

Indian Army's 'Project Roshni' illuminates remote villages in the Valley

Project Roshni by Indian Army is illuminating homes in remote villages of Jammu and Kashmir. The Army Personnel have distributed solar lamps in remote areas. Under Project Roshni, the Army has distributed 17,000 such lamps till now.

Dozens of hilly villages in the state still have no access to electricity due to weather or other factors while difficulties continue for the residents in these villages. The Army is continuously taking steps to provide a solution and solar lamp distribution is a move in this direction and using such lamps and charging them is quite easy.

LS passes bill to create national sports varsity in Manipur

A bill to establish a National Sports University in Manipur to promote sports education was passed by the Lok Sabha. The National Sports University Bill 2018, which seeks to replace an ordinance promulgated on May 31, was passed by a voice vote.

The legislation was earlier introduced in the Lok Sabha in August 2017, but could not be passed. Hence, the government had to come out with an ordinance.

The bill seeks to set up a specialised university in Manipur, which would be the first of its kind, to promote sports education in the areas of sports sciences, sports technology, sports management and sports coaching.

Ministry of Textiles and Power launches SAATHI initiative

SAATHI (Sustainable and Accelerated Adoption of efficient Textile technologies to Help Small Industries) aims to accelerate the adoption of energy efficient textile technologies in the power loom sector and cost savings due to use of such technology.

Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) will replace old inefficient electric motors with energy efficient IE3 motors which will result in energy and cost saving up to 10-15% in the first phase.

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Power loom clusters at Ichalkaranji, Bhiwandi, Erode, Surat, Bhilwara and Panipat have been identified for pilot study.

Centre approved to elevate KM Joseph as Supreme Court judge

Centre approved the appointment of 3 judges to Supreme Court – Uttarakhand Chief Justice KM Joseph along with Madras HC Chief Justice Indira Banerjee and Orissa HC Chief Justice Vineet Saran are elevated as Supreme Court judges.

10,000 jobs to be created under ‘Modicare’ scheme

At least 10,000 new jobs will be created with the implementation of the Ayushman Bharat-National Health Protection Mission, popularly known as Modicare, an official said. Around one lakh Ayushman Mitras will be deployed at both private and government hospitals under the scheme. The scheme aims to provide a cover of ₹5 lakh per family annually to 10 crore poor families.

Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill gets President’s nod

President Ram Nath Kovind on Sunday gave his assent to the Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill, 2018, which will prevent offenders from evading legal process and fleeing the country. A fugitive economic offender is one against whom an arrest warrant is issued for economic offences of Rs 100 crore and above. Further, the offender should have left India to avoid criminal prosecution.

NHAI to ink MoU with SBI for Rs 25,000 Crore loan

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is getting an unsecured loan of Rs 25,000 crore from State Bank of India (SBI) for 10 years with 3 years of moratorium on repayments. This is SBI’s highest long-term unsecured loan to any entity and also the largest ever loan sanctioned to NHAI.

Logo And tagline For Geographical Indications Launched

Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu launched a logo and tagline for Geographical Indications (GI) to increase awareness about intellectual property rights (IPRs) in the country.

The slogan for the GI tag is- ‘Invaluable Treasures of Incredible India’.

A GI product is primarily an agricultural, natural or a manufactured product (handicraft and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory.

FICCI FLO launches WOW mobile app for women’s wellness

FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO), the women’s wing of Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has launched WOW (Wellness of Women) mobile application aimed at creating awareness on preventive healthcare for women across the country. It is powered by ‘Ask Apollo’ of the Chennai-based Apollo Hospitals Group.

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Bill proposing death penalty for child rape cleared by Parliament

The Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha have cleared a bill proposing death penalty for the rape of girls below the age of 12 years. This will replace the ordinance that was passed in April following the outrage over the Kathua and Unnao rapes. The bill also increases the minimum punishment for rape from 7 years to 10 years.

Lok Sabha passes prevention of atrocities against SC, STs amendment bill

The Lok Sabha passed the Prevention of Atrocities against SCs and STs Amendment Bill restoring its provisions prior to the 20th of March Supreme Court order. The apex court's step had led to a lot of furor and protests throughout the country as several groups felt that the law had been diluted. The amended bill not only restores previous provisions but also gives it more teeth.

The law to prevent atrocities against scheduled castes and scheduled tribes will remain as stringent as ever. The Prevention of Atrocities against SCs/STs amendment bill not only restores its provisions but also make them stricter.

The restoration of the provisions of the bill will mean that

- No preliminary inquiry will be required before registering an FIR against anyone
- The investigating officer will not require the approval of any authority for the arrest of an accused
- Persons accused of committing an offence under the Act cannot apply for anticipatory bail
- The Bill clarifies that this provision will apply despite any judgements or orders of a court that provide otherwise

Parliament passes bill to grant constitutional status to NCBC

The 123rd constitutional amendment bill giving constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes has got Parliamentary assent. It will give the institution all powers to safeguard the rights of the socially and educationally backward classes and fulfils a long pending commitment of the central govt to the OBCs.

Defence Minister Launched Defence India Startup Challenge

The India Startup challenge was launched with a vision to build an ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship in defence sector and make India self-reliant for meeting defence requirements.

The defence ministry also signed a MoU with 5 incubators. IIM Ahmedabad, IIT Mumbai, Forge IIT Madras, and T hub who will work in tandem to provide solutions for defence requirements in Airforce, Navy and for Army.

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Union Govt approved research projects worth over Rs 100 crore under IMPRINT-2 scheme

Around 122 new research projects of 112 crore rupees under its Impacting Research Innovation and Technology 'IMPRINT-2' scheme are approved.

IMPRINT – 2 is a government initiative to address the major science and engineering challenges that India must address and champion to enable, empower and embolden the nation for inclusive growth and self-reliance.

Govt asks citizens not to use national flags made of plastic

Ahead of Independence Day, the government has urged citizens not to use national flags made from plastic. Since plastic flags don't decompose for a long time, ensuring its appropriate disposal commensurate with the dignity of the flag is a practical problem, a Home Ministry advisory stated. The advisory added that paper flags shouldn't be thrown on the ground after events.

Triple Talaq bill deferred to next session of Parliament

The government has decided not to table the Triple Talaq bill in the Rajya Sabha, deferring it to the next Parliament session. The Lok Sabha cleared the bill last year but needs to pass it again due to amendments made by the Cabinet. The Cabinet approved a provision to grant bail to those found guilty of giving instant Triple Talaq.

Santali 1st Indian tribal language to get own Wiki edition

Santali has become the first Indian tribal language to get a Wikipedia edition in its own script after the Santali Wikipedia went live earlier this month, according to a report. Wikipedia contributors from India, Bangladesh and Nepal generated the content for the page, officials said. Santali is written in Ol Chiki script and spoken by 6.4 million people in India.

Lok Sabha passes four amendment bills related to GST

Four amendment bills related to GST were passed by Lok Sabha. Several legislative changes have been incorporated to enhance ease of doing business for owners of MSMEs.

The Lok Sabha also passed the Representation of the People Amendment Bill to give proxy voting rights to overseas Indians. The bills passed included GST Amendment Bill, Integrated GST Amendment Bill, Union Territory Amendment Bill and GST (Compensation to States) Amendment Bill.

President inaugurates 'One District One Product' Summit

President Ram Nath Kovind on Friday inaugurated the 'One District One Product' Summit in Lucknow. The summit has been organised by the Uttar Pradesh government to promote traditional industries and spur local trade.

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The President expressed confidence that the 'One District One Product' scheme will enhance skills of local people as well as increase the reach to products, which will in turn result in economic progress of artisans of Uttar Pradesh.

PM Modi unveils National Biofuel policy

Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted that biofuels will help boost farm income, aid India's energy security and create jobs, in a cleaner environment. Speaking at an event to mark the World Biofuel Day, Prime Minister Modi said the government's focus was to make the village economy stronger. Government plans to set up 12 modern biofuel refineries across the country.

Project 'SWAYAM' launched By HRD Ministry

'Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds' (SWAYAM), aims to provide one integrated platform and portal for online courses. This course covers all higher education subjects and skill sector courses. The main objective is to ensure that every student in the country has access to the best quality higher education at the affordable cost.

Lok Sabha passed The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill

Lok Sabha passed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, outlawing talaq-e-biddat. According to the Bill, talaq-e-biddat has been made a cognizable and non-bailable offence.

Three provisions of the Bill:

- ◆ Instant triple talaq is illegal
- ◆ It imposes a jail term of up to three years and fine
- ◆ It provides additional safeguards from the Act being misused

It also provides for subsistence allowance to Muslim women and custody of minor children as may be determined by the magistrate.

50% reservation announced for women in Railway Protection Force

Union Minister of Railways Piyush Goyal announced a 50% reservation for women in the upcoming recruitment of up to 10,000 Railway Police Force jawans. He added that 13,000 jobs are also coming up in Railways for which a computer-based test will be conducted and no interviews will be taken.

NITI Aayog Hosts Investors Conference in Andaman & Nicobar, and Lakshadweep Islands

This NITI Aayog conference was inaugurated by Amitabh Kant, CEO of NITI Aayog. The 11 anchor tourism projects are proposed to be implemented with private sector participation under the suitable risk-sharing model and through open-competitive bidding.

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India ranked 177 on the Environmental Performance Index 2018

According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) ranking, India has been placed 177th rank out of 180 countries on the Environmental Performance Index 2018. The Union Environment Ministry has rejected the score by considering it as arbitrary and unscientific. India slipped 36 points from 141 in the 2016 report, prepared by Yale and Columbia Universities along with the WEF.

Khangchendzonga became 11th biosphere reserve in World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)

The decision to include Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve in WNBR was taken at the 30th Session of International Coordinating Council (ICC) of Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme of UNESCO held at Palembang, Indonesia.

India has 18 Biosphere Reserves and with the inclusion of Khangchendzonga, the number of internationally designated WNBR has become 11, with 7 Biosphere Reserves being domestic Biosphere Reserves.

Cabinet approved for four more NDRF battalions

The Union Cabinet approved for four more battalions of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). The estimated cost for the approval is Rs.637 crore. It aimed at reducing the response time considering the country's vast geographic area.

Among the four battalions, initially, two battalions will be raised in the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and one each in the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Assam Rifles. Once raised in the marked areas, these battalions will be converted into NDRF battalions.

TRIFED signed MOU with National Medicinal Plant Board

The main aim is to promote Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) forest produced for livelihood development of tribal people by promoting primary level value addition to MAPs produce from forest area at the grassroots level. Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) was established in August 1987 by the Ministry of Welfare, Government of India.

Rajya Sabha passes Immovable Property Amendment Bill

The Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property (Amendment) Bill, 2017 which was moved by Union Urban Development Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, was adopted by a voice vote.

The Lok Sabha had passed the bill in December last year.

Aim:- To amend the regulations governing the compensation payable for acquisition of immovable property by the Centre for defence and security purposes.

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Pune ranked first in Ease of Living Index; Delhi at 65

Maharashtra's Pune has topped the Ease of Living Index rankings released by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. While Navi Mumbai has grabbed the second spot, Greater Mumbai was ranked third, and national capital Delhi was ranked 65th. The survey was conducted across 111 cities based on four parameters – governance, social institutions, economic and physical infrastructure.

India gets its first all women 'SWAT' unit

Ahead of the Independence Day, the Delhi Police inducted India's first all-woman Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team for anti-terrorist operations. 36 women commandos from the northeastern states have been inducted into this squad. While 13 members are from Assam, rest of them hail from Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Manipur.

Indian Railways to stop free travel insurance from September 1

Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has decided to stop free travel insurance starting September 1 and "free insurance will be optional".

The insurance provided by the IRCTC had a maximum cover of Rs. 10 lakh in case of a person's death during a train journey, Rs. 7.5 lakh if a person is disabled due to an accident, Rs. 2 lakh if injured and Rs. 10,000 for transportation of mortal remains.

PM Modi announces Rs. 1,000 crore financial aid for IIT Bombay

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay will get this financial aid under the status of Institution of Eminence (IoE). Prime Minister Modi also inaugurated the new building of the Department of Energy Science and Engineering and Centre for Environmental Science and Engineering at IIT Bombay.

He stated that, in the last four years, seven IITs, seven IIMs (Indian Institute of Management), two IISER (Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research) and 11 IIITs (Indian Institute of Information Technology) have been approved.

NITI Aayog Launches Pitch To MOVE

It is a mobility pitch competition that aims to provide budding entrepreneurs of India a unique opportunity to pitch their business ideas to a distinguished jury. The main aim is to identify and incentivise the startups, which will help the Government realize its vision of Shared, Connected, Intermodal and Environment-Friendly Mobility for India.

FSSAI launches RUCO initiative to collect, convert used cooking oil into biofuel

Around 64 companies at 101 locations have been identified to enable collection of used cooking oil. According to the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), India has the potential to recover 220 crore litres of used cooking oil for the production of biodiesel by 2022 through co-ordinated action.

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NPCI launched UPI 2.0 with overdraft facility

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) launched an upgraded version of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), UPI 2.0. Customers can now link overdraft account to UPI in addition to current and savings account, and the transaction limit has been doubled to ₹2 lakh.

UPI 2.0 also allows customers to check invoice before making a payment to the merchant. NPCI is an umbrella organization for all retail payments in India. UPI version 1 was launched in April 2016.

Tamil Nadu bans students from using mobile phones in colleges

The Tamil Nadu government has issued a directive asking all government and private colleges to ban students from using mobile phones on premises. Centre-run institutes like IIT Madras have been exempted from the ban stating 'their students know how to use mobiles reasonably'. This comes after complaints of boys taking videos of girls and mobiles being used in exams emerged.

World Hindi Conference begins with homage to late Atal Bihari Vajpayee

The 11th World Hindi Conference begins in Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius; External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj addresses the inaugural session of the 3-day conference; exhorts world community to contribute in promotion of Hindi language.

In the beginning of the conference a two-minute silence was observed to pay tribute to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Inaugurating the conference Prime Minister of Mauritius Praveen Kumar Jagannath said that with the passing away of Vajpayee ji a great son of India and a dear friend to Mauritius has been lost.

SC asked NCMC to find ways to reduce the water level in the Mullaperiyar dam

The Supreme Court suggested the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), the Disaster Management Sub-committee, and the supervisory panel who monitors the Mullaperiyar dam to find ways to reduce the water level in the reservoir to 139 feet as it hit 141.5 feet.

Ministry of Agriculture proposes to UNFAO to declare 2019 as International Year of Millets

The adoption of this proposal by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UNFAO) with the support of its Member Nations will enable it to be moved to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) for the declaration of an upcoming year as International Year of Millets.

Cigarette packs to carry 'Quit Today' message from Sept 1

The Ministry of Health announced all cigarette and tobacco packs will carry new pictorial warnings including 'Quit Today' message from September 1. The packs will also carry a helpline number to help people quit tobacco. The first image will be carried for a year from September 1 and the second image will come into effect after a year.

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India successfully tests Anti-Tank Guided Missile HELINA in Pokhran

The indigenously designed and developed guided bombs Smart Anti Airfield Weapon (SAAW) successfully flight tested from IAF aircraft at Chandan range in Jaisalmer. The missile is one of the most advanced anti-tank weapons in the world. The SAAW and Helina are being developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation(DRDO).

August 20: Sadbhavana Diwas

Sadbhavana Diwas or Harmony Day is celebrated on August 20 each year all over India to commemorate the birth anniversary of the former Prime Minister of India named Rajiv Gandhi. Sadbhavana meaning – having good feelings for others.

On this day, Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award is presented to commemorate the contribution made by Rajiv Gandhi for promoting the communal harmony, peace and national integration.

September 2018 will be observed National Nutrition Month

Union Ministry of Women and Child Development announced to observe September 2018 as the National Nutrition Month to mark the country's fight against malnutrition.

The month-long intensive campaign will be undertaken with an aim of reaching every household with message of nutrition — 'har ghar posha.

FSSAI Constitutes B Sesikeran Committee to Review Food Labelling Standards

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) constituted a group of experts from the health and nutrition sector to look into the issue of food labelling.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

HAL becomes first public sector enterprise to transact on TReDS

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has become the first public sector enterprise to make a transaction on the "TReDS platform", which is an online electronic institutional mechanism for facilitating the financing of trade receivables of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) through multiple financiers.

TReDS refers to Trade Receivables Discounting System.

During October 2017, the central government mandated all major PSUs to join TReDS platform to facilitate payments to MSME vendors.

India banned petroleum coke import for use as fuel

Among polluting fuels, petroleum coke (Petcoke) remains one of the most polluting ones as it emits 11% more greenhouse gas compared to coal. India is the world's biggest consumer of Petcoke. Industries use pet coal because it's much cheaper than coal and is easier to handle as fuel.

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Import of Petcoke is allowed for only cement, lime kiln, calcium carbide and gasification industries, when used as the feedstock or in the manufacturing process on actual user condition.

Government unveils draft UDAN scheme for international route

The objective of the UDAN International scheme is to enhance international air connectivity between Indian states and select international destinations through the provision of financial support to airlines.

Under the scheme, the state governments will be responsible for funding the financial benefits. The Assam government has committed to fund the subsidy amount of Rs 100 crore per annum for three years.

Center imposes curbs on import of biofuels

Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) imposed restrictions on the import of biofuels through an amendment in the import policy. The bio-fuels include ethyl alcohol and other denatured spirits, biodiesel, petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals other than crude. The free import of biofuels is now made available only for non-fuel purposes.

Govt clears procurement of 111 naval helicopters at a cost of Rs 21K cr

In a major decision, the Defence Ministry gave its nod to acquisition of 111 utility helicopters for the Navy at a cost of over Rs 21,000 crore besides approving separate procurement proposals worth nearly Rs 25,000 crore, according to officials.

The procurement of the naval utility helicopters will be the first project under the ambitious strategic partnership (SP) model which provides for roping in private firm to build select military platforms in India in partnership with foreign defence manufacturers.

August 26 : World Sanskrit Day

The World Sanskrit Day, also known as Sanskrit Diwas, is being celebrated on August 26. The Day is aimed at promoting and reviving the ancient Indian language of Sanskrit.

It is celebrated on Sravana Poornima every year, that is the Poornima day of Sravana month in the Hindu calendar. Sanskrit has been known as the primary language of Hinduism and forms the basis of several other languages. Sanskrit Day was first celebrated in 1969.

Govt permits commercial flying of drones in country from Dec 1

The government announced that industries including real estate, power and agriculture will be able to legally fly drones in the country for commercial purposes from December 1. Initially, drones will be allowed only along visual line-of-sight during day-time with a maximum altitude of 400 feet. The usage of drones for delivering goods and food items has been restricted.

BNHS to open its first regional centre near Chilika Lake

The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), one of India's premier avian research institutes, will start operating its regional centre on the campus of Wetland Research and Training Centre near Chilika Lake.

The BNHS has been active in avian research in the Chilika Lake, which hosts nearly one million birds with 97 species being intercontinental migratory in nature during the winter season. The avifauna observatory will be inaugurated by BNHS director Deepak Apte.

Universal Influenza vaccine identified

Scientists of NIAID's influenza research program have found a potential universal influenza vaccine which could protect people against most strains of the virus.

A strong antibody response to a structure on the surface of flu viruses called the Hemagglutinin (HA) stalk. It has the potential to be developed into a universal flu vaccine. Unlike the current seasonal flu vaccines, it could be given a few times over a lifetime to provide protection potentially similar to a tetanus vaccine.

Supreme Court clarified Second marriage is valid even if plea against divorce is pending

Interpreting section 15 of Hindu Marriage Act, SC bench observed that restriction placed on the second marriage in Section 15 of the Act till the dismissal of an appeal would not apply to a case where parties have settled and decided not to pursue the matter.

Section 5(1) of the Hindu Marriage Act places a bar on marriage by a person who has a spouse living at the time of the marriage.

Section 11 makes such a marriage null and void.

Section 15 tells when a divorcee can marry again.

Cabinet approved 79.3% rise in outlay for postal bank

The Cabinet approved an increase of 79.3% in the project outlay for setting up the India Post Payments Bank to Rs.1,435 crore. The approval comes three days ahead of the nationwide roll-out of the payment bank by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The additional sum of Rs.635 crore in the revised cost estimates is on account of Rs.400 crore for technology costs and Rs.235 crore for human resource expenses.

Minister of State for Communications Manoj Sinha said that the launch will more than double the number of bank branches in the country, from the present 1.40 lakh to more than 2.90 lakh.

Mahabaleshwar beats Cherrapunji to become India's wettest place this year

Maharashtra's Mahabaleshwar has become the wettest place in India this year, leaving behind Meghalaya's Cherrapunji. India Meteorological Department (IMD) data revealed that the hill station in the state of Maharashtra received a staggering 5661.6 mm rainfall this season till now, much more than Cherrapunji's 4735 mm.

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Cherrapunji holds two Guinness world records for receiving the maximum amount of rainfall in a single year, 26,471mm (1,042.2 in) of rainfall between August 1860 and July 1861 and the maximum amount of rainfall in a single month (9,300mm) in July 1861.

Arunachal Cabinet passed Bill for creation of 3 new districts

The Arunachal Pradesh Assembly passed a Bill for the creation of three new districts, namely Pakke-Kesang, Lepa Rada and Shi Yomi, in the State. Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein had introduced the Arunachal Pradesh Re-Organisation of Districts (Amendment) Bill, 2018, in the House. The Assembly passed the Bill by voice vote. Arunachal Pradesh as of now has 22 districts.

- The Pakke-Kessang district will be carved out of East Kameng district with five administrative units.
- The Lepa Rada district would be created by bifurcating the Lower Siang district with headquarters at Basar and four administrative units.
- The Shi-Yomi district would be created by bifurcating the West Siang district with its headquarters at Tato and four administrative units.

Cabinet approved Rs.1,623 crore to set up more disaster warning systems

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs cleared an outlay of Rs.1,623 crore to get more disaster warning systems and desalination plants along Indian coasts. The system will be functioning under the programme called O-SMART (Ocean Services, Technology, Observations, Resources Modelling and Science). O-SMART is monitored by the Union earth sciences ministry.

O-SMART provides economic benefits to a number of user communities in the coastal and ocean sectors, namely, fisheries, offshore industry, coastal States, defence, shipping, ports, etc.

MoU signed between Department of Biotechnology and International Energy Agency

The main aim of the MOU is to deepen cooperation in support of clean energy innovations to accelerate the research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) of clean energy technologies. India will help support the generation of data for policy making and improve knowledge of good policy practices for innovation in India and around the world.

STATE RELATED CURRENT AFFAIRS

Delhi celebrates its first ever dragonfly festival

This is First-ever festival for insects that help maintain ecosystem and is being organized from Aug 3 to Sept 1 jointly by WWF (World Wide Fund) India and the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). This will culminate towards a dragonfly census on August 19.

India has about 500 different types of species at present, while around 3012 species were recorded worldwide until 2010.

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Karnataka made Yoga mandatory for all colleges and universities in the State

The Karnataka government has made Yoga mandatory for all colleges and universities in the State. It was decided at a meeting of Vice-chancellors and other officials of state universities which was chaired by State Higher Education Minister G T Devegowda.

According to the officials, all government, aided and private degree colleges in the state must conduct yoga for 20-minutes. It also said that a proposal to recruit 5,000 teaching staff has been approved by the Chief Minister and the Finance Department of the State.

Rajasthan is the first state to implement Biofuel Policy

Rajasthan become the first State in the country to implement the national policy on biofuels unveiled by the Central government. This policy on biofuels seeks to help farmers dispose of their surplus stock in an economic manner and reduce the country's oil import dependence.

UP's Mughalsarai junction named Deen Dayal Upadhyaya junction

Uttar Pradesh's iconic Mughalsarai junction was officially named after RSS ideologue Deen Dayal Upadhyaya. BJP President Amit Shah, Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath and Union Railway Minister Piyush Goyal were present at the renaming ceremony of the station. Notably, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya was found dead in mysterious circumstances near the Mughalsarai station in February 1968.

Delhi pips Gujarat to top investment potential index

Delhi has replaced Gujarat to top the State Investment Potential Index list of 21 states and Union Territories, prepared by economic think tank NCAER. Tamil Nadu moved up four spots to 2nd while Gujarat fell two spots to rank at 3rd. Assam, Jharkhand and Bihar are ranked among the least favourable states for investment.

Uttarakhand 1st state to give ID cards to gau rakshaks: Reports

Uttarakhand will become the first state to give identity cards to gau rakshaks (cow protectors), reports quoting officials said. The initiative is aimed at differentiating people who protect cows from those who resort to violence in the name of cow vigilantism. Officials said "genuine gau rakshaks" from six of the total 13 districts in Uttarakhand have been identified.

Telangana government asked ICRISAT to study the Mission Kakatiya project

International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Catchment Area Development Authority of Telangana Irrigation Department at the State Secretariat.

Upon this, Telangana government has asked the ICRISAT to conduct a research on the impact of Mission Kakatiya programme.

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Kerala government made e-way bill mandatory

Kerala government has made e-way bill mandatory for inter-State goods movements as it concerns at the loss of revenue over Rs. 400 crore. To implement it, the government has planned to set up 190 inspection squads.

The collection of tax has increased the revenue income to Rs. 4,661 crore being collected in June as against the Rs. 2,760 crore in May. It registered a 52% growth rate over in the State.

Bharti Airtel plans to provide optical fibre network in Tamil Nadu

Bharti Airtel plans to provide optical fibre network in Tamil Nadu. Being the largest telecommunications provider, it aims to improve network connectivity in the State.

Currently, Tamil Nadu has a fibre network for 14,000 km. With Bharti Airtel's plan for a rollout of 3,000 km of fresh optic fibre, it would touch 17,000 km in 2021. The company has planned to invest Rs. 24,000 crore to Rs. 26,000 crore pan-India in mobile network sites, capacities, fibre rollout and digitalisation among others.

Karnataka Government launches Swachhameva Jayate

In order to achieve the status of Open Defecation Free (ODF), Karnataka launched "Swachhameva Jayate" a rural cleanliness and sanitation campaign. This campaign will aim to boost the Swachh Survekshan Grameen in all the districts with the help of school children.

Andhra Pradesh government launched 'Mukhya Mantri Yuva Nestham'

Under the scheme, an allowance of Rs 1000 per month will be provided to unemployed youth in the state. About 12 lakh youths in the age group of 22-35 years will get the benefit of the scheme.

Delhi, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat emerges most-attractive state for investors in Investment Potential Index

Delhi emerged the most-attractive state for investors on the top position on the National Council for Applied and Economic Research (NCAER)'s 2018 State Investment Potential Index. Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh retained their first and second positions.

Himachal Pradesh launches Shaur Nahin mobile application

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched 'horn not ok' awareness campaign and 'shaur nahin' (no noise) mobile application.

The main aim is to spread awareness of unnecessary blowing horn as it creates unnecessary noise pollution.

The app will enable the general public to report cases of noise pollution. It has settings for two types of users general public and officers both of whom have a one-time password (OTP).

Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana was launched in Bihar

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar launched 'Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana', a scheme for the girl child. The scheme will provide Rs.54,100 for a girl child from her birth until she graduates.

This is to express the State government's resolve for the empowerment of women. The 'scheme will be run by three departments namely education, health and social welfare. The Chief Minister also said that the amount under the 'Bicycle Yojna' will be increased from Rs.2500 to Rs.3000.

Goa govt launches its own app-based taxi service 'GoaMiles'

In a bid to end the taxi issue in Goa, the state government has launched its own app-based taxi service 'GoaMiles'. "The taxis will charge government approved rates," Goa's Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar said after launching the app. As of now, ride-hailing platforms Ola and Uber have not been allowed to enter the coastal state due to regulatory norms.

World's largest bird sculpture Jatayu sculpture will be inaugurated in Kerala

The Jatayu sculpture at the Jatayu Earth Center (JEC) at Chadayamangalam in Kollam district, Kerala, said to be world's largest bird sculpture, will be inaugurated on August 17 by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. This Rs 100 crore-project is a creation by film director and sculptor Rajiv Anchal.

Italian Bike-Maker Benelli signs MoU for Plant in Telangana

The company would initially start assembling CKD (Completely Knocked Down) kits of the bike for Benelli to assemble, manufacture bikes and import exclusive range of the bikes from Italy and SouthEast Asian regions. Benelli is one of the oldest Italian motorcycle-manufacturer and has a presence in over 60 countries such as America, Africa, Europe and Asia Pacific regions.

International Conference on Sustainable Growth Through Material Recycling inaugurated in New Delhi

The conference was inaugurated by the Union Minister of Road Transport, Highways & Ganga Rejuvenation, Nitin Gadkari at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra in New Delhi.

The day-long conference has 5 technical sessions on Circular Economy in Material Recycling", "Infrastructural Issues in Recycling Industry", "Standardization and certification in Recycling Industry", "Environmental Benefits of Material Recycling", "Financial and Taxation issues in Recycling Industry".

Kerala, Maharashtra, K'taka, TN get 60% of total remittances

Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu together received nearly 60% of the total remittances in 2016-17, according to an RBI survey. Over 70% of all reported transactions were of more than \$500. UAE emerged as the top source of remittances with a share of 26.9%, followed by the US (22.9%), Saudi Arabia (11.6%), Qatar (6.5%) and Kuwait (5.5%).

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Three northeastern States emerge as new HIV hotspots

According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura have emerged as the new hotspots for HIV. In terms of persons living with HIV (PLHIV) who are on Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART), Maharashtra has the highest number (with 2.03 lakh persons) followed by A.P.(1.78 lakh) and Karnataka (1.58 lakh persons).

Delhi vehicles to get blue sticker for petrol, orange for diesel

The Supreme Court accepted a proposal seeking to issue hologram-based coloured stickers for vehicles in Delhi based on the fuel used. While petrol and CNG vehicles will need to have a blue sticker, diesel vehicles must carry an orange one. This plan is aimed at better tackling of air pollution-related issues in the national capital.

Pineapple festival organised in Manipur's Thayong

A 10-day pineapple festival showcasing different varieties of the fruit has been organised in Manipur's Thayong village. The festival aims at encouraging farmers and locals to plant and cultivate pineapples. The village produces 20-30 tonnes of pineapple in a year, said an official of the organising committee.

Rajasthan's Jodhpur railway station ranked as India's cleanest

Rajasthan's Jodhpur railway station was ranked the cleanest station in the A1 Category in a cleanliness report released by the Ministry of Railways. Jodhpur was followed by stations Jaipur and Tirupati in cleanliness in the A1 Category of railway stations. Rajasthan's Marwar topped among the A Category railway stations, followed by Phulera and Warangal.

India's first genetic bank for wildlife conservation inaugurated in Hyderabad

It is India's first genetic resource bank where the genetic material will be stored for posterity which will further the cause of conservation of endangered species. It is equipped with sophisticated equipment to preserve the genetic resources that could be utilized to virtually resurrect an animal species. Laboratory of Conservation of Endangered Species (LaCONES) developed a universal DNA based marker for identification of wild animals from parts and remains.

Karnataka government to launch Green Mysuru drive on 15th August

The Forest Department of Karnataka is to launch a Green Mysuru drive on 15th August 2018 under Hasiru Karnataka programme. The aim is to increase the tree cover of the city and the district. The program involves planting saplings in vacant spaces of government offices and schools, available space on the roadside, embankment abutting farmland and agricultural fields, courtyards etc.

The drive considers the participation public as its key success of the programme. A total of 100,000 saplings have been prepared in various nurseries of the Forest Department.

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Haryana to inaugurate its first licensed Hisar Airport

The airport will be inaugurated on August 15 by Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar. The team informed that the airport selected by the Ministry of Civil Aviation under the RCS-UDAN Scheme in which one airline namely M/s Pinnacle Airways Limited have bid for two routes namely Delhi-Hisar and Hisar-Chandigarh.

Indian Navy launched 'Operation Madad' in flood hit Kerala

The Southern Naval Command (SNC) launched 'Operation Madad' for assisting the Kerala administration and undertaking disaster relief operations due to the unprecedented flooding experienced in many parts of Kerala. All the five gates of the Idukki (Cherurhoni) Dam in Kerala have been opened for the first time in 26 years, due to heavy rain and flooding. The Idukki Dam system is constructed across the river Periyar.

Assam rejected Centres move in reducing area under AFSPA

The government of Assam has declined the Centre's move in reducing the 'disturbed areas' under the Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA).

On July 19, the parliamentary committee headed by P.Chidambaram, former Union Finance Minister and senior Congress leader, reported that by improving the security situation in most northeast States the government should gradually reduce the area under AFSPA, especially in the States of Assam and Meghalaya. But the Assam government did not concur as it said that was not the right time to reduce the area under AFSPA.

India's First project of Swadesh Darshan launched in Manipur

The Manipur Governor, Dr. Najma A. Heptulla inaugurated the project 'Development of North East Circuit: Imphal & Khongjom' implemented under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

The project which covers two sites – Kangla Fort in Imphal and Khongjom was taken up at an estimated cost of Rs. 72,22,82607 under the Union Ministry of Tourism. 'Swadesh Darshan' (tour of country) is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Tourism for the development of thematic circuits in the country in a planned and prioritised manner.

Odisha government launched Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana

On the occasion of 72nd Independence Day, Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik launched Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) which provides annual cashless health coverage of Rs 5 lakh per beneficiary family per annum.

More than 70 lakh families will be benefited by the scheme. Patnaik also handed over 'Uttam Jeevan Rakshya Padak' and 'Jeevan Rakshya Padak' to two children – Pankaj Kumar Mahanta and Mamata Dalai, respectively, for their act of bravery.

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International Conference on Recent Advances in Food Processing Technology (iCRAFPT) gets held at IIFPT, Thanjavur

The theme of the conference was “Doubling farmers’ income through food processing”. The conference provides a strong platform for knowledge sharing and meaningful delegation among industry, academia, researchers and farmers, which will potentially impact the food sector growth to a newer height.

Centre declares Kerala floods ‘Calamity of Severe Nature’

The Centre has declared the Kerala floods as a ‘Calamity of Severe Nature’, categorising it as a Level 3 disaster. The highest Level 3 designation is given when the state may not have the capacity to respond adequately and require assistance from the Centre. Now MPs can use up to ₹1 crore from their local development fund to help Kerala.

Bengaluru Kempegowda International Airport is World’s second fastest growing airport

As per the RoutesOnline company report, Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), Bengaluru is next to Tokyo’s Haneda Airport which is the world’s fastest growing airport, in terms of actual growth in number of passengers.

KIA opened in May 2008 was initially named Bangalore International Airport. The Government of India has granted Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) to operate KIA airport for 30 years.

Government to set up Cyclone Warning Centre in Kerala

The Ministry of Earth Sciences has proposed to set up a Cyclone Warning Centre (CWC) in Thiruvananthapuram following unprecedented flooding in Kerala.

The Ministry is also planning to set up another C-Band Doppler Weather Radar at Mangalore by end of 2019, which will cover the northern parts of Kerala.

At present, India Meteorological Department (IMD) has cyclone warning centres only at Chennai, Vishakhapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Mumbai.

International Water Colour Festival in Ranchi

Five-day long ‘International water colour festival’ is held in Ranchi at Audrey House, to promote the rich art and culture of Jharkhand.

This is the first time in the country that international artists will paint together. In this program 24 countries of the world, 25 states of India and 24 districts of the state are participating.

ICOMOS launched initiative to save cultural heritage damaged in flood-hit Kerala

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), a global monument conservation body, has launched an initiative to assess the damage to the rich cultural and built heritage in flood-devastated Kerala and set up an emergency response platform.

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ICOMOS is also an advisory body to the UNESCO for cultural heritage, in particular for implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

India's Largest Business Incubator Bhamashah Techno Hub Launched In Jaipur

The main aim of the Techno Hub is to strengthen the startup ecosystem in Rajasthan. The incubator will provide end-to-end support to startups, ranging from infrastructure, technology, angel funding, access to venture capitalists, mentorship, exposure to national and international organizations and experts.

Madhya Pradesh Government seeks revival of Cheetah Reintroduction Project

The Madhya Pradesh forest department has written to the National Tiger Conservation Authority to revive the plan to reintroduce cheetahs in the State's Nauradehi sanctuary. The ambitious project, conceived in 2009, had hit a roadblock for want of funds. The country's last spotted feline died in Chhattisgarh in 1947. Later, the cheetah — which is the fastest land animal — was declared extinct in India in 1952.

Centre, 6 states sign MoU for ₹4,000cr Yamuna basin project

The Centre and six states have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for Lakhwar multi-purpose project on Yamuna basin that will cost nearly ₹4,000 crore. The project involves construction of 204-metre high concrete dam in Uttarakhand with live storage capacity of 330.66 million cubic metre. Besides generating power for Uttarakhand, it will cater to water needs of the six basin states.

US based GEER to investigate the impact of the torrential rains that hit Kerala

A team of scientists from the U.S.-based Geotechnical Extreme Events Reconnaissance (GEER) Association is to investigate the impact of the torrential rains that hit Kerala. The team will be arriving on September 3, 2018.

The delegation is led by Thomas Oommen, Associate Professor, Michigan Technological University and Richard Coffman, Associate Professor, University of Arkansas. Sajin Kumar K.S., Assistant Professor, Department of Geology, University of Kerala, will be coordinating the visit. The week-long study is sponsored by the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF).

India's first interstate connected wind power project commissioned in Bhuj

126 MW wind power capacity, part of country's first Inter State Transmission System (ISTS) auction, is commissioned in Bhuj, Gujarat. The energy generated from this project is being purchased by Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.

This was a 1,000 MW bid for projects to be connected on ISTS (inter-state transmission system) wherein power generated from one state (renewable resource rich state) could be transmitted to other renewable deficient states.

Madhya Pradesh Government seeks revival of Cheetah Reintroduction Project

The Madhya Pradesh forest department has written to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) to revive the plan to reintroduce cheetahs in Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary located in Sagar district of state. The ambitious project was conceived in 2009 but had hit roadblock for want of funds.

Cochin Airport resumes operation after the flood in Kerala

Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL), the country's first Greenfield airport, is to commence its operations after 15 days on 29th August 2018. The flood caused damage to the 30 lakh square feet of its built-up area and 1,400 acres of an operational area was covered under thick layers of slimy mud.

Floodwaters also smashed about 2.6 kilometres of its perimeter wall, besides 800 lights installed on both sides of the runway. The total loss incurred due to the flood sums around Rs.300 crore, including the damage sustained to the core infrastructure and machinery inside.

Tamil Nadu CM inaugurated India's tallest Film Studio

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami has inaugurated India's tallest Film Studio named 'MGR Centenary Film Studio'. The 56 feet tall, 110 metres long and 100 feet wide studio was constructed using funds collected by the Federation of Film Employees Union of South India (FEFSI), at Paiyanur. The studio is named after former Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran.

Punjab Assembly passed Bills against sacrilege

The Punjab Assembly, led by chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh, unanimously passed Bills for an amendment to the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) to make desecration of all religious texts punishable with life imprisonment.

The IPC (Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2018, has inserted Section 295AA. The Bill provides that whoever causes injury, damage or sacrilege to Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Srimad Bhagavad Gita, the Holy Quran and the Holy Bible with the intention to hurt the religious feelings of the people shall be punished with imprisonment for life.

Mumbai airport renamed as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport

Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport was renamed as Chhatrapati Shivaji 'Maharaj' International Airport. The Maharashtra government on December 8 decided to insert the word 'Maharaj' to the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport as it felt the Maratha warrior king deserved to be paid more respect. A proposal was passed in the Assembly and forwarded to the Centre in December 2016. Mumbai's airport was formerly known as Sahar International Airport. It was renamed as Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in 1999.

Arunachal Pradesh is threatened by high water discharge from China

Arunachal Pradesh is threatened by the high water discharge from China. This is the highest discharge of water in the last 50 years. The unusually high discharge might submerge at least

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12 villages along the river Siang in Arunachal Pradesh. It is expected that the sudden release of water may be from man-made barriers or a natural dam that was formed due to landslides caused by major earthquakes in the Tibetan region of China in November 2017.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

India and USA Military Cooperation Meeting begins In New Delhi

The meeting was co-chaired by Lt Gen Satish Dua, Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to the chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee (CISC) and Lt Gen Bryan Fenton, Deputy Commander, Indo-Pacific Command.

External Minister Sushma Swaraj and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman would meet their US counterparts in 2 plus 2 meeting in September in New Delhi. The main aim of the meeting is on strengthening defense and strategic ties.

India and Germany Sign Pact On Financial And Technical Cooperation

India and Germany have signed an agreement on financial and technical cooperation focusing on sustainable urban development and renewable energy.

The government-to-government Umbrella Agreement on Financial Cooperation and Technical Co-operation 2017 is worth about 5,000 thousand crore rupees.

The agreement under the Indo-German Bilateral Development Cooperation was signed between Joint Secretary in the Finance Ministry, Sameer Kumar Khare, and German Ambassador to India, Martin Ney, in New Delhi.

India becomes 3rd Asian nation to get STA-1 status from US

India has become the third Asian nation after Japan and South Korea, and 37th overall, to get the Strategic Trade Authorization-1 status from the US. It paves way for high-technology product sales to New Delhi, particularly in civil space and defence sectors. The US made an exception of India, which is yet to become a member of Nuclear Suppliers Group.

India elected president of Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development

India got elected against Iran during voting which took place at the 44th annual gathering of Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) in Colombo. The period of India as President is two years.

AAI to joint venture with Sri Lanka in Mattala airport project

India's Airport Authority of India (AAI) joint ventures with the Airport & Aviation Services in Sri Lanka to run the loss-making Mattala airport, located in Sri Lanka's Southern Province. So far, three rounds of official negotiations were completed.

After detailed negotiations, the two governments have agreed that India, with a 70% stake in the joint venture, will contribute \$225 million to revamp and run the airport, while the Sri Lankan side will invest the balance. India will operate the airport on a 40-year lease. Once the

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technical aspects of the joint venture are prepared, the draft agreement will be presented for Cabinet clearance.

India and Kyrgyzstan deepen bilateral ties on health, tourism, defence and security

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj met Kyrgyzstan Foreign Minister Erlan Abdyldaev discussed possible areas of collaboration and the areas discussed during the bilateral meeting includes political and parliamentary exchanges, defense and security, science and technology, economic, health and tourism.

Maitree 2018 Joint Military Exercise between India and Thailand held in Thailand

Exercise 'Maitree' is a joint military exercise between Indian Army and Royal Thai Army and is running on in Thailand from 6 to 19 August 2018. Maitree 2018 was platoon level exercise that comprises of infantry component. The objective is to develop mutual understanding and bonhomie between the two armies in order to counter terrorism.

Special meeting of Senior Officials of BIMSTEC held

A special meeting of Senior Officials of the Bay of Bengal Initiatives for Multi-Sectoral, Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) was held in Kathmandu. The meeting was organised as part of preparations for the 4th BIMSTEC Summit to be held in Kathmandu on August 30 and 31. Senior officers from all member states and Secretary General of BIMSTEC attended the meeting.

Govt extended eVisa facility for citizens of 165 countries

In order to promote tourism, the Indian government has extended e-visa facility for citizens of 165 countries at 25 airports and five seaports. On March 2018, The Ministry of Tourism has launched the 'Incredible India 2.0' campaign, to promote various destinations and tourism products of the country including spiritual, medical and wellness tourism in important and potential source markets overseas.

Nepal-India Literature Festival 2018 commenced at Birgunj

The festival was inaugurated by Chief Minister of Province 2 Mohammad Lal Babu Raut. The main aim of the festival is to strengthen Indo-Nepal ties. Around 250 participants from India and Nepal attending the two-day festival.

Australia resumes adoption of children from India

Australia has resumed the adoption of children from India after reportedly 8 years, the Women and Child Development (WCD) Ministry said. Australia had suspended the adoptions over reports of trafficking of children. Australia's Assistant Minister for Children and Families David Gillespie said India had "improved its processes" to comply with the Hague Convention on Adoption.

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India releases 470 million Nepali rupess grant for Terai roads project in Nepal

The Government of India has released 470 million Nepali rupess grant for Terai roads project in Nepal. Indian Ambassador to Nepal Manjeev Singh Puri handed over a cheque of grant to Secretary, Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport of Nepal, Madhusudan Adhikari in Kathmandu.

The amount has been released to maintain fund liquidity for the ongoing construction of 14 road packages under Postal Highway Project.

India to participate in SCO Peace Mission 2018 exercise at Russia

India will participate for the first time in the joint SCO Peace Mission Exercise, a part of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) initiatives, being conducted by Central Military Commission of Russia from August 22-29 at Chebarkul. India became a full member of the SCO in June 2017.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an eight-member multilateral organization, established on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai, China. 8 members of SCO are:- China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.

Indo-Israel missile defence system Barak 8 to be procured by Israeli Navy

The multi-purpose Barak 8 missile defence system, jointly developed by India and Israel, will be procured by the Israeli Navy to protect its economic zones and strategic facilities from diversified threats and the sales for it have exceeded USD 5 billion.

Barak-8 is an operational air and missile defense system used by the Israeli Navy as well as by the Indian Navy and air forces.

Barak 8 has been jointly developed by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), India's DRDO, Israel's Administration for the Development of Weapons and Technological Infrastructure, Elta Systems, Rafael and some other Indian defence companies.

India sent INS sahyadri to Fiji to boost ties

Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sahyadri (F49) is the third and latest ship among the Shivalik Class of indigenously built stealth frigates and forms a part of the Eastern Fleet of Indian Navy.

INS Sahyadri ship celebrated the 72nd Independence Day of India in the Port of Suva, Fiji on August 15. INS Sahyadri draws its name from the beautiful, age-defying Western Ghats (also known as Sahyadri ranges) stretching across 1,600 km along India's western coast.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurates Panini Language Laboratory in Mauritius

The lab is gifted by the Indian government and will help MGI in teaching Indian languages in Mauritius. Education Minister of Mauritius Leela Devi Dookun and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

India and Japan agree to expand maritime co-operation to ensure peace & stability in Indo-Pacific region

India and Japan have resolved to expand their maritime cooperation and work together to ensure peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Both sides also exchanged views on the current security situation in the Indo-Pacific region, including developments in the Korean Peninsula.

India and Thailand concludes Maitree Military Exercise

A two-week long platoon level military exercise called 'Exercise Maitree 2018' concluded at Jammu & Kashmir Srinagar. The main aim of the military exercise is to strengthen the partnership between armies of the two countries. The exercise began on August 6 and comprised of cross-training period, which included familiarization between the two armies to evolve drills and procedures that help in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations in varied terrains under the United Nations (UN) mandate.

First-ever IAF-RMAF joint air exercise begins in Malaysia

This is the inaugural bilateral exercise between Indian Air Force (IAF) and the the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF).

It was inaugurated by Gp Capt CUV Rao, team leader IAF & Col Mahadzer, Ex director of RMAF. It is the first ever bilateral exercise launching two Sukhoi Su-30MKM and Su-30MKI Flankers each from Subang airport.

India, Pakistan take part in SCO military drill for 1st time

India and Pakistan are for the first time taking part in a counter-terrorism drill organised by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The SCO Peace Mission Exercise 2018 is being held in Russia until August 29 and will involve the participation of at least 3,000 soldiers. Both India and Pakistan became full members of the SCO in 2017.

India, China agree to expand military cooperation

India and China have agreed to expand military cooperation and implement confidence building measures to maintain peace. This came following a meeting between Indian Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and her Chinese counterpart Wei Fenghe. India and China have sought to improve their ties after being involved in the 73-day-long Doklam standoff last year.

Prasar Bharati & Mizzima Media of Myanmar ink an MoU

Prasar Bharati and Mizzima Media of Myanmar signed a Memorandum of Understanding to boost centuries old ties between India and Myanmar. It will also strengthen India's soft power in its neighbourhood.

The Agreement will realize cooperation and collaboration in various fields of broadcasting. It also envisions content-sharing covering a wide range of genres, including culture, entertainment, education, science, news and sports. India and Myanmar have shared history of their

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independent struggle and Prasar Bhart's rich archive will help them relive those precious moments.

India, Singapore sign protocol to boost bilateral trade

India and Singapore signed a second protocol amending the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) to boost trade ties. The two countries are also exploring the possibility of launching the Third Review of India-Singapore CECA in September 2018. India is the largest trading partner of Singapore in South Asia, with a bilateral trade of \$17.7 billion in 2017-18.

Myanmar Media Group inks MoU With Prasar Bharati

The agreement was signed in the presence of Prasar Bharati CEO, Shashi Shekhar Vempati and Editor-in-chief and MD, Mizzima in New Delhi. The main aim of the agreement is to maintain cooperation and collaboration in broadcasting and envision content-sharing covering a wide range of genres, including culture, entertainment, education, science, news and sports along with other areas of mutual interest.

Sushma Swaraj inaugurated 'Jaipur Foot' camp in Vietnam capital Hanoi

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj who is on a four day two nation tour of South East Asia which includes Vietnam and Cambodia, presented free India-made prosthetic limbs for 500 Vietnamese beneficiaries.

Last month, it was announced in Jaipur that about 1,000 differently-abled people in Myanmar and Vietnam would be provided 'Jaipur Foot'. The Jaipur-based Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS) has started an artificial limb fitment camp in association with the Central government at Myanmar's Yangon city.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

World's largest king penguin colony shrunk 90% in 35 years

The world's biggest colony of king penguins and the second biggest of all penguins has reduced by 88% over the past 35 years for reasons yet unknown, according to scientists. Indian Ocean's Pig Island was home to 500,000 breeding pairs and consisted of over two million penguins during the 1982 survey, while the latest satellite survey reported only 60,000 pairs.

Catholic Church to seek worldwide abolition of death penalty

The Roman Catholic Church has said that it will seek the worldwide abolition of death penalty, changing the previous Catholic teaching that allowed it in rare cases. The previous teaching supported capital punishment "if it's the only way of effectively defending human lives against the unjust aggressor". Pope Francis said that death penalty is inadmissible as it attacks human dignity.

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UAE begins visa amnesty program for illegal foreign workers

The UAE has begun a three-month visa amnesty program which allows illegal foreign workers to legalise their status in the country or return home. Residents overstaying their permits will not be fined if they leave the country voluntarily. The amnesty also grants those seeking employment a six-month visa to find a job.

US passes bill to waive sanctions on India over Russian arms

The US Senate passed a bill waiving sanctions against India for buying Russian arms. The bill, called the National Defence Authorisation Act (NDAA) 2019, has now been sent for President Donald Trump's approval. Earlier, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said India will purchase the Russian S-400 air defence systems despite US sanctions on military transactions with Russia.

ASEAN Foreign Ministers meet begins in Singapore

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong kicked off the 51st ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting in Singapore. Lee emphasised the need for ASEAN countries to be united to avoid repercussions amid trade tensions between the United States and its long-time trading partners, including China, the EU and Canada.

North Korea builds intercontinental ballistic missiles

Washington Post reported that North Korea seems to be building one or two new liquid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missiles at a factory at Sanumdong. It also said that the advancement of the missiles is unknown. North Korea has produced the country's first missiles which are capable of reaching the United States.

United States to grant India the STA 1 trading status

US President Donald Trump decided to grant India the STA-1 (Strategic Trade Authorization) status equivalent to American allies for procurement of military weapons. This is a big rebuff to China for blocking India's entry into the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

The US President has relaxed a key condition set by the Obama Administration that India would be eligible only after it had secured the membership of all four technology control regimes – the NSG, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group.

Japan overthrows China to become world's 2nd-biggest stock market

Following the latest slump, the value of China's stock market fell to \$6.09 trillion, losing its spot as the second biggest stock market to Japan (\$6.17 trillion). This comes amid China's trade war with the US and its campaign to cut debt. China's stock market overtook Japan's in 2014 and soared to an all-time high of over \$10 trillion in 2015.

Mnangagwa re-elected Zimbabwe Prez in 1st post-Mugabe poll

Emmerson Mnangagwa has been re-elected Zimbabwe's President after winning presidential elections held for the first time since the ouster of Robert Mugabe. Mnangagwa took over as President last year after Mugabe was ousted by the Army. Mugabe ruled over Zimbabwe for 37 years, having been one of the world's longest-serving leaders.

UNICEF warns of another cholera outbreak in Yemen

World Health Organization (WHO) warned Yemen may be on the verge of another cholera epidemic, which could be deadlier than previous ones because of widespread malnutrition in the war-torn country.

Since April 2017 to February 2018, more than 1,060,000 suspected cases of cholera and 2300 deaths have been reported in Yemen.

About 65,000 Indonesians performed poco poco dance to promote Asian Games 2018

Indonesia's Capital city Jakarta and the city of Palembang on Sumatra will jointly host Asian Games from August 18, 2018.

Indonesian president Joko Widodo along with 65,000 Indonesians performed a mass dance through the streets of Jakarta to promote the Asian Games 2018 and try to set a world record along the way. Poco-poco is the original culture of Indonesia and it's a native dance.

Nepal, Bangladesh sign MoU to enhance cooperation in power sector

Nepal and Bangladesh have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance cooperation in power sector.

Nepal's Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Barsha Man Pun and Minister of State for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources of Bangladesh, Nasrul Hamid signed the MoU in Kathmandu. It aims to increase collaboration in electricity generation, grid connectivity, energy efficiency, renewable energy and development of hydro power for mutual and regional benefit.

Malaysia plans internet ban from 12 am to 6 am for teens under 17

The Malaysian government is considering to ban internet from 12 am to 6 am daily for teenagers under 17 years of age, Deputy Health Minister Lee Boon Chye said. The move aims at reducing video game and social media addiction among teens. "There are gaming providers which prevent users from playing for one to two hours," Chye added.

Koreas to hold summit in North Korea next month

North and South Korea agreed to hold an inter-Korean summit in North's capital Pyongyang in September. The decision follows high-level negotiations between the two countries at the border truce village of Panmunjom. The leaders of the two countries had first met in April and agreed to sign a peace treaty to end the 65-year-long Korean War.

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Macau set to overtake Qatar as world's richest place by 2020

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Macau in China would overtake oil-rich Qatar with the highest per-capita gross domestic product of any country or jurisdiction on earth, by 2020.

Macau is the only place in China where casinos are legal and its gross domestic product has more than tripled from about \$34,500 per capita in 2001, the IMF data shows.

Vienna named world's most liveable city, Melbourne at 2nd

Austria's capital Vienna has topped the Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index for the first time, beating Australian city Melbourne, which had topped the list for the past seven years. Syrian city Damascus was placed at the bottom of the list, while Bangladesh's capital Dhaka, and Nigeria's Lagos were placed at the second last and third last position respectively.

Iran unveils new ballistic missile amid tensions with US

Iran has unveiled the next-generation of its 'Fateh' short-range ballistic missile amid ongoing tensions with the US. The new missiles reportedly have a range of between 300 and 500 kilometres. Iran has vowed to continue with its missile programme to enhance its defensive missile capability despite objections by the US.

New Zealand bans sale of homes to foreigners

New Zealand's parliament passed a bill banning the sale of existing homes to foreign buyers, saying that citizens were being "tenants in our own land". The government said the ban would lower the cost of homes, and supply would increase. The ban applies to all nationalities, except foreigners with residency status and buyers from Singapore and Australia.

Twenty fourth World Congress of Philosophy held in Beijing, China

The event was organized by the International Federation of Philosophical Societies and Peking University. The theme of the event "Learning To Be Human". More than 6,000 philosophers and academics from 121 countries and regions attended the event.

Afghanistan celebrates its 99th Independence Day

Afghanistan on August 19th celebrated its 99th Independence Day, with President Ashraf Ghani laying a wreath at the Independence Minaret to pay tributes to security forces who lost their lives. Afghanistan gained independence from the British Empire in 1919 under the leadership of Shah Amanullah Khan after signing the Anglo-Afghan Treaty.

Iran unveils 1st domestic fighter jet amid tensions with US

Iran unveiled its first fighter jet designed and manufactured by domestic military experts amid increased tensions with the US. The aircraft dubbed 'Kowsar' was unveiled ahead of the National Day of Defence Industry on August 22. President Hassan Rouhani said that Iran's military strength was only designed to deter enemies and create "lasting peace".

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World Humanitarian Day observed on 19 August

The campaign launched on World Humanitarian Day is “#NotATarget”. People in cities and towns struggle to find food, water, and safe shelter, while fighting drives millions from their homes. Children are recruited and used to fight, and their schools are destroyed. Women are abused and humiliated. The day was designated by the UN General Assembly to commemorate the 19 August 2003 bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq.

Ten day long ‘Esala Maha Perahera’ festival begins in Sri Lanka

The Kandy Esala Perahera also known as ‘The Festival of the Tooth’ is a grand festival celebrated in July or August in Kandy, Sri Lanka. This historical procession is held annually to pay homage to the Sacred Tooth Relic of Lord Buddha, which is housed at the Sri Dalada Maligawa in Kandy.

World Mosquito Day observed on 20th August

World Mosquito Day is a commemoration of British doctor Sir Ronald Ross’s discovery in 1897 that female mosquitoes transmit malaria between humans. Mosquito name comes from Spanish word meaning “little fly”. Around 6 million deaths every decade occur owing to malaria.

International Day of Remembrance and tribute to the Victims of Terrorism is observed on 21 August

This day is observed in order to commemorate the core values of the United Nations and is an indiscriminate threat that affects people and countries across the globe.

Iran unveiled its first domestic fighter jet named ‘Kowsar’

The aircraft is nicknamed ‘Kowsar’, which in Islam is a river in paradise and also the title of a chapter in the Koran. This defence programme was motivated by repeated threats from Israel and the US. Iran celebrates National Defence Industry Day on August 22.

Fourth BIMSTEC summit to be held on 30th and 31st of this month in Nepalese capital Kathmandu

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) will be held at Kathmandu in Nepal on August 30 and 31.

BIMSTEC is a regional economic bloc comprising seven member states lying in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal constituting a contiguous regional unity. The group was formed in 1997. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka Myanmar and Thailand.

Australia gets its fifth Prime Minister in five years

Liberal Party leader Scott Morrison was elected Australia’s fifth Prime Minister in five years after successfully challenging the leadership of former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. Morrison had earlier led a ‘stop the boats’ initiative to check illegal immigration to Australia and directed the country’s fiscal policy as the Treasurer since 2015.

Scotland 1st country to give students free sanitary products

Scotland has become the world's first country to provide free sanitary products to all students in a bid to tackle "period poverty". Nearly 4 lakh pupils and students are expected to benefit from the Scottish government's scheme. The move primarily aims to ensure that students do not miss out on education due to lack of access to sanitary products.

US, Mexico to replace NAFTA with new trade deal

The US and Mexico reached a deal to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the 'United States-Mexico Trade Agreement'. Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto said his country wanted to incorporate NAFTA partner Canada into the new deal. US President Donald Trump had threatened to withdraw from NAFTA, claiming that the trilateral deal disadvantaged the US.

Iran, Syria agree to expand military cooperation

Iran and Syria have signed a deal to expand military cooperation after Iranian Defence Minister Amir Hatami's visit to the country. Iran also pledged to help reconstruct the war-torn country, following Hatami's meeting with his Syrian counterpart Ali Abdullah Ayoub and President Bashar al-Assad. Iran is supporting Assad's government in Syria's ongoing civil war.

Third Indian Ocean Conference held in Hanoi, Vietnam

With successive two years in its bag, the third edition of Indian Ocean Conference is set to begin on August 27 at Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. The theme of the two-day conference will focus on 'Building Regional Architectures', particularly with regards to trade and commerce, security and governance. This year's conference will see 43 countries as participants while 28 ministers and officials are set to address the event.

Scotland 1st country in the World to give students free sanitary products

Scotland has become the world's first country to provide free sanitary products to all students in a bid to tackle "period poverty".

Scottish government approved a £5.2 million (\$6.7 million) initiative that will make sanitary products free at all schools, colleges and universities. Nearly 4 lakh pupils and students are expected to benefit from the Scottish government's scheme.

China uses Robot teachers in Kindergarten

China is using robots to teach the Kindergarten children. The 60cm high, autonomous Keeko robot is an unconventional teacher. It covers things like storytelling and problem-solving. More than 600 kindergartens across the country use Keeko robots. The robot makers are hoping to expand it into Greater China and Southeast Asia. Beijing has invested money and manpower in developing artificial intelligence as part of its "Made in China 2025" plan.

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Exercise Peace Mission 2018 ended in Russia

Exercise Peace Mission 2018, the joint military exercise of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), ended in Russia. Eight-member states participated in this joint training on combating terrorism. The exercise began on August 24 at the firing ranges in Chebarkul. This is the first time India and Pakistan participated in the exercise.

India, China, Kazakhstan and Russia showcased their armoured and mechanised forces while Pakistan has sent only Special Forces personnel. The Indian delegation was led by Lt. Gen Satish Dua, Chief of Integrated Defence Staff.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Specially-bred mosquitoes help prevent dengue outbreaks in Australian city

In a first, Australian researchers have successfully protected an entire city from dengue outbreaks by deploying captive-bred mosquitoes that are unable to spread the deadly virus. Mosquitoes bred to carry naturally-occurring Wolbachia bacteria, which prevents the transmission of viruses, were let loose over 66 square kilometres of Townsville, Queensland in places where they could naturally breed. In four years since the mosquitoes were introduced, no new cases of dengue have been reported in the area.

Apple becomes First \$1 Trillion Company in History

Apple Inc. became the first U.S.-based company with a market value of \$1 trillion, four decades after it was co-founded by Steve Jobs in a Silicon Valley garage and later revolutionized the worlds of computing, music and mobile communications. The iMac desktop computer, the iPod, iPhone, and iPad were smash hits.

Supersonic interceptor missile successfully test-fired

India successfully test-fired its indigenously developed supersonic interceptor missile, capable of destroying any incoming hostile ballistic missile, from a test range off Odisha coast. The endo-atmospheric missile, capable of intercepting incoming targets at an altitude of 15 to 25 km was launched against multiple simulated targets of 1,500 km class ballistic missile. The interceptor is a 7.5-metre long single stage solid rocket propelled guided missile equipped with a navigation system, a hi-tech computer and an electro-mechanical activator.

DTAB to impose ban on Oxytocin

The Drug Technical Advisory Board (DTAB) recommended the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to lift the ban on Oxytocin. Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940 and Rules 1945, the ban will be imposed citing the serious misuse of oxytocin in the dairy sector.

Also, DTAB suggested that only Karnataka Antibiotics and Pharmaceuticals Ltd., a PSU, could manufacture and supply the drug across the country.

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India's Chandrayaan-2 Moon mission launch delayed for 2nd time

The launch of India's second Moon mission Chandrayaan-2 has been delayed for the second time from October to January next year, according to reports. The mission's launch was first planned in April and was pushed to October. The delay in launch comes after ISRO faced two setbacks this year, losing communication with GSAT-6A satellite and failing PSLV-C39 mission.

World's 1st Hindi-Speaking Robot Rashmi

Ranchi-based software developer Ranjit Srivastava is developing the world's first Hindi-speaking humanoid robot called Rashmi. The robot will speak Bhojpuri, Marathi, and English, and is equipped with facial expressions and recognition systems.

Google launches Android 9.0 named 'Pie'

Google announced 'Pie' as the name for the latest version of the Android operating system, succeeding Android Oreo. Android 9.0 Pie version includes AI-powered adaptive battery system and navigation system featuring a single home button, among others. The version has begun rolling out to Pixel phones and will be available to other devices later this year.

ISRO to launch its heaviest satellite GSAT 11 on November 30

Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) heaviest satellite so far – the GSAT-11 (weighing over 5.7 tonnes i.e., 5,700-kg)- which the space agency had cleared for launch in June, will take off a spaceport in French Guiana on 30 November.

GSAT-11 carries 40 transponders in the Ku-band and the Ka-band frequencies, and is capable of providing high bandwidth connectivity with up to 14 GB per second data transfer speed. GSAT full form – Geo synchronous SATellites.

US to create Space Force by 2020

The US Defence Department will create a Space Force as the sixth branch of the military by 2020, Vice President Mike Pence announced. Advancements in space technology made it clear that space is the new battlefield for the 21st Century, Pence said. Pence also announced plans to establish the US Space Command and the Space Development Agency.

Google launches video Q&A app Cameos aimed at celebrities

Technology major Google has launched a video-focussed question and answer (Q&A) app Cameos which allows users to answer questions about themselves. The app also allows celebrities to see the top questions on the internet, so they can pick and choose which of those they want to answer. Currently, Cameos can be accessed only through invite and is available on iOS.

Indian telescope discovers the most distant radio galaxy

Breaking a 20-year-old distance record, a team led by PhD student Aayush Saxena has found a radio galaxy from a time when the universe was only 7% of its current age, at a distance of

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12 billion light-years. The Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT) near Pune was used to identify the galaxy while the distance was determined using US-based telescopes.

An invasive agriculture pest Fall Armyworm is found in Karnataka

The Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) discovered an invasive agricultural pest Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) in Karnataka. Shivamogga's University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences Entomologists C.M. Kalleshwara Swamy and Sharanabasappa suspected the unusual happening in maize crops in Shivamogga this year.

A major maize pest in North America, the Fall Armyworm arrived in Africa in 2016. It has threatened the continent's maize crop, a staple which feeds 300 million people. The pest feeds on around 100 different crops, such as vegetables, rice, and sugarcane and it spreads in no time. The Karnataka finding is the first report of the pest in Asia.

Chandrayaan-2 lander named 'Vikram' to honour ISRO Founder

The lander of India's second lunar exploration mission 'Chandrayaan-2', scheduled for next year, will be named 'Vikram' in honour of ISRO Founder Vikram Sarabhai. Marking his 99th birth anniversary on Sunday, ISRO also unveiled Vikram Sarabhai's bust at its headquarters in Bengaluru. Further, as a tribute to Sarabhai, ISRO plans to launch 9 missions over the next five months.

Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu launched Mobile App Niryat Mitra

The app developed by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) is available both on Android and on IOS platforms. The app provides a wide range of information required to undertake international trade right from the policy provisions for export and import, applicable GST rate, available export incentives, tariff, preferential tariff, market access requirements – SPS and TBT measures.

NASA launches the first-ever mission to 'touch' the Sun

NASA successfully launched its Parker Solar Probe, aimed to enter the Sun's corona (outer atmosphere), where no spacecraft has gone before. The mission will probe why temperatures in corona reach a million °C while Sun's visible surface below it only reaches about 5,500°C. The spacecraft will make its first close approach in November and send data in December.

Parker Solar Probe is the first NASA mission to be named after a living individual, Dr Eugene Parker. In 1958, the 91-year-old American solar physicist predicted the existence of the solar wind, a stream of charged particles blasted from the Sun.

Google launches Video Q and A App Cameos aimed at celebrities

This app allows people to answer questions about themselves, then share those answers directly on Google. With the Cameos app, famous personalities can address fans questions in their own voice, instead of leaving the answers up to other websites.

ISRO to launch incubators for Indian space startups

ISRO has announced its plans to launch incubators across India to support startups working on building newer solutions in rocketry, communication satellites and applications based on remote sensing data. Till now, ISRO has been engaging with startups through its commercial arm Antrix Corp. The arm worked with startups including Bellatrix Aerospace, Aniara Communications and Exseed Space.

India to launch its second lunar mission Chandrayaan-2 on January 3 next year

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is aiming to launch the mission but the window to land on the lunar surface is open till March 2019. The 800-crore rupees is the overall cost of lunar mission named "Chandrayaan-2"

The 3,890-kg Chandrayaan-2, which will be launched onboard the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mk-3, will orbit around the moon.

NASA launched Parker Solar Probe to touch Sun

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) launched off a \$1.5 billion spacecraft toward the Sun to protect the Earth by unveiling the mysteries of dangerous solar storms. The probe is designed Sun's mysterious atmosphere known as corona coming within 3.83 million miles (6.16 million kilometres). It is the first major mission under Nasa's Living With a Star program with 1.5 billions.

Researchers found that Aspirin may help to prevent AIDS

Researchers have found that Aspirin which is an affordable and globally available drug could help prevent HIV transmission. They tested the effect of acetylsalicylic acid or aspirin and other anti-inflammatory drugs on HIV target cells. It showed that Aspirin was the most effective as it reduced the number of HIV target cells.

Scientists found that marine reefs could survive global warming

Scientists found that the marine reefs could survive global warming as the combination of coral reefs and the mutualistic micro-algae withstood various climate change events since the Mesozoic era.

The micro-algae, commonly called zooxanthellae, lives inside the cells of coral reefs. It allows them to acquire energy from sunlight and to build the massive, economically valuable reef formations upon which countless marine organisms rely for habitat.

'Zombie' gene behind why elephants rarely get cancer: Study

A University of Chicago study has identified a 'zombie' gene that makes elephants nearly immune to cancer. In response to DNA damage, a tumour-suppressing protein wakes up the non-functioning gene called LIF6 to kill cancer-prone cells. Researchers were able to mimic this effect by turning on LIF6 in mice and hope to develop new cancer treatments for humans in future.

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Modi announced manned space mission taking Indian astronauts to space on board 'Gaganyaan' by 2022

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will have two unmanned missions and spacecraft will be launched using GSLV Mark-III. GSLV Mark III launch vehicle will be fully equipped with crew module and life support system for a manned mission in the next two years. If successful, India would be fourth nation to achieve that feat.

Ashok Leyland unveiled Innoline, its new technology

Ashok Leyland, the Hinduja Group's flagship company, introduced Innoline technology. Innoline is a BS IV engine driven by an in-line fuel pump. This technology is a combination of the indigenous mechanical pump for BS III engines with iEGR (Intelligent Exhaust Gas Recirculation) technology.

iGER is a renowned technology with the in-line pump or SADA pump. This in-line pump is well-known in the Indian commercial vehicle industry and is preferred by drivers and service mechanics alike, Ashok Leyland said in a statement.

Fast melting Arctic ice may impact Indian monsoon: Study

A study by Indian researchers has found that the fast-melting rates of Arctic ice can have adverse implications for Indian monsoon rain. The team has reconstructed the warming of the Arctic over the last two centuries in order to study the impact. A scientist added that climate change in polar regions is taking place at twice the global average.

Chandrayaan-I data confirms presence of ice on Moon

Using data from the Chandrayaan-I spacecraft, Scientists have found frozen water deposits in the darkest and coldest parts of the Moon's polar regions.

M3, aboard the Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft, launched in 2008 by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), was uniquely equipped to confirm the presence of solid ice on the Moon.

AK-47 maker unveils own electric 'supercar' to rival Tesla

Russian arms maker Kalashnikov, known for making the AK-47 machine gun, has unveiled its concept 'electric supercar', inspired from a 1970s Soviet model. When fully developed, CV-1 would travel 350 km on one charge and go from 0-100 kmph in six seconds, Kalashnikov said. This technology would allow us to compete with electric car producers like Tesla, the company added.

Government allowed Oxytocin sale through all private chemists

The Health Ministry has lifted the ban and allowed all private retail stores to sell Oxytocin, life-saving hormone, from 1st September. It has already banned the import of oxytocin and its formulation.

Earlier, the Ministry said that the sale of Oxytocin through private retail chemists will be banned from 1st July and the State-owned Karnataka Antibiotics Pvt. Ltd. (KAPL) will be the

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only company to manufacture and distribute oxytocin. It would be sold only in government hospitals and clinics.

European wind survey satellite Aeolus launched from French Guiana

This satellite will be put into orbit at an altitude of 320 kilometers (200 miles) above the Earth which will track global winds, allowing for improved weather forecasting.

Aeolus is equipped with a single instrument: a Doppler wind lidar — an advanced laser system designed to accurately measure global wind patterns from space. Aeolus is the fifth of the ESA's planned Earth Explorer missions.

NASA's 1st asteroid-bound spacecraft sends 1st image of rock

After an almost two-year journey, NASA spacecraft OSIRIS-REx, caught its first glimpse of asteroid Bennu and began its final approach toward the space rock. The spacecraft obtained the image from 2.2 million km and is scheduled to arrive at Bennu in December. OSIRIS-REx is NASA's first mission aimed to visit a near-Earth asteroid and send back its sample.

Researchers develop ReMix an in-body GPS system to track tumours

Researchers able to track implants with centimeter-level accuracy in animal tests. Similar implants can be used to deliver drugs to specific regions of the body. The test was conducted by scientists from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in the US.

SpiceJet successfully operates India's 1st biofuel-powered flight

SpiceJet successfully completed India's first ever biofuel-powered test flight. The airline flew a Bombardier Q400 aircraft using 75% aviation turbine fuel and 25% biojet fuel from Dehradun to New Delhi. Around 20 people including officials from the aviation regulator and SpiceJet were onboard the test flight that lasted for around 25 minutes.

Former President Pranab Mukherjee Launches NETA App To Rate MPs And MLAs

NETA National Electoral Transformation (NETA) Leaders Report Card App, the brainchild of 27-year-old entrepreneur Pratham Mittal is a platform where voters can review and rate their elected representatives and hold them accountable as well.

Google launches 'Navlekhā' for Indian language publishers

Google has unveiled Project Navlekhā to help Indian language publishers take their content online. "When you search in Indian languages, the content available is just 1% of what's available in English," Google said. The new platform will allow 1.35 lakh Indian publishers to digitise their offline content by creating instant web pages using scanned documents or PDFs.

India's 1st manned space flight to send 3 persons for 7 days

India's first manned space flight is expected to send a three-member crew for seven days into space, said Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Atomic Energy and Space. "The programme

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is expected to be completed before 2022 with the first unmanned flight within 30 months,” Singh said. The launch will use ISRO’s three-stage heavy-lift rocket GSLV Mk III, he added.

Google to display technology in Indian vernacular languages

Google plans to introduce technology and product experiences which are locally relevant to users in India in vernacular languages. It has been observed, so far, that the majority of Internet users are Indian language users, a number expected to reach 500 million-plus in the next two years.

Earlier, Google launched ‘Project Navlekha’ which helps to easily make offline content fully editable and publish on a branded domain without expert digital knowledge. The search feed will now also display users’ topics of interest and news, from both English and Hindi sources.

Census revealed that the population of Nilgiri tahr has increased

A recent census has revealed that the population of the Nilgiri tahr, an endangered mountain goat, at the Mukurthi National Park has grown by 18% from 480 to 568 in the last two years. The population estimation exercise was conducted by the Forest Department and the Department of Zoology and Wildlife Biology, Government Arts College, Udthagamandalam.

Nilgiri tahr also faces several threats. The continuing spread of invasive species of flora, such as wattle and pine, and exotic weeds like the scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) and gorse diminish the grazing land for the tahrs. The Forest Department is stepping up efforts to eliminate those weeds in over 125 hectares of Shola grasslands.

SPORTS

Name of the Sportsperson/Country	Key Information
Neeraj Chopra	Won a gold medal in the Savo Games in Lapinlahti, Finland
Lewis Hamilton	Hungarian Grand Prix for the 6th time
World Junior Squash Championships 2018 Winners	Venue : Chennai
1. Men’s Individual- Mostafa Asal (Egypt)	
2 Women’s Individual -Rowan Elaraby (Egypt)	
3. Men’s Team – Egypt	
PV Sindhu	Won the silver medal at the Badminton World Championships. Gold Medal - Olympics champion Carolina Marin
Grandmaster Vaibhav Suri	Biel Masters Chess title at Switzerland. Vaibhav beat Prthi Gupta.

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Indian golfer Gaganjeet Bhullar	European Tour in the form of the Fiji International championship
Virat Kohli	Topped ICC Rankings for Test Batsmen
Karman Kaur Thandi - 20-year-old Delhi girl	Ranked 200th in the WTA (Women's Tennis Association) list.
Netherlands	World champions for the eighth time at Women's Hockey Tournament
Wrestler Bajrang Punia	India's first gold medal at the 2018 Asian Games.
Rishabh Pant	First Indian cricketer to take five catches in his Test debut (against England)
Novak Djokovic defeated Roger Federer 6-4, 6-4 in the final of the Cincinnati Masters	
Sixteen-year-old shooter Saurabh Chaudhary won the men's 10m Air Pistol event to bag India's first shooting gold at the 2018 Asiad.	

QUICK SPORTS UPDATES

Australian fast bowler Mitchell Johnson announces retirement from all forms of Cricket

36-year-old Johnson announced his retirement from international cricket during the Test series against New Zealand in Perth in November 2015, but remained a useful bowler in Twenty20 competitions, including for Perth Scorchers in the Australian 'Big Bash' tournament.

Ankita 2nd Indian to win women's singles tennis Asiad medal

Ankita Raina has become the second Indian woman after Sania Mirza to win a medal in the women's singles event at Asian Games. Raina won bronze medal after losing 4-6, 6-7 to world number 34 Zhang Shuai in the semi-finals. Mirza had won women's singles silver medal in the 2006 edition and a bronze in the 2010 edition.

VVS Laxman wrote down his autobiography titled '281 and Beyond'

The autobiography will be released by the Westland Publications on November 20, 2018. Indian cricketer VVS Laxman who announced his retirement from international cricket in 2012, played 134 Tests, scoring 8,781 runs at an average of 45.97. He also played in 86 ODIs for an aggregate of 2338 and average of 30.76 in the shorter format.

Shane Warne autobiography No Spin to be released in October

Australian cricketer Shane Warne's autobiography "No Spin" will have a global release on October 4. The memoir is written with cricketer and TV presenter Mark Nicholas.

PV Sindhu only Indian in Forbes' list of top paid female athletes 2018

With earnings of \$8.5 million (nearly ₹60 crore), Rio Olympic silver medallist PV Sindhu is the only Indian to feature in Forbes' list of top 10 highest-paid female athletes of 2018.

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India finish second in women's kabaddi for 1st time at Asiad

India bagged silver medal in women's kabaddi at the Asian Games 2018 after losing to Iran in the final. The Indian women's kabaddi team finished second for the first time at Asiad after having won gold in the 2010 and 2014 editions. India have won six gold, five silver and 13 bronze medals at Asiad 2018 so far.

Tejinderpal Singh wins India's 1st Athletics gold at Asiad 2018

Tejinderpal Singh won India's first Athletics medal at the Asian Games 2018 in the form of his Shot Put gold. The 23-year-old threw 20.75 metres in his fifth attempt to take the first spot in the final of the event. Tejinderpal's gold-winning attempt was an Asian Games record and a national record.

Kho-Kho gets recognition from Olympic Council of Asia OCA

Kho-Kho will be included as a demonstration sport in the Asian Indoor Games. Also, it has the possibility to be included as a discipline in the next Asian Games. Rajeev Mehta is the Secretary General of Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

Pacer Jhulan Goswami announced her retirement from Women's T20 Internationals

Goswami is currently the leading wicket-taker in the women's ODI format and also the first woman to pick up 200 ODI wickets. She played 68 T20 Internationals and took 56 wickets at an economy rate of 5.45.

Asian Games 2018: Rahi Sarnobat Indian Female Shooter to win Asiad Gold

She is the first ever Indian female shooter to win gold in the history of Asian Games. India won two gold medals in shooting at the Asian Games 2018. Bhin Bhin, Kaka, and Atung are the mascots of the 2018 Asian Games.

Germany's Mario Gomez retires from International Football

Veteran German striker Mario Gomez (33-year-old), who made his debut for Germany in 2007, scored 31 goals in 78 international appearances. He represented his country at the FIFA World Cup in 2010 and 2018 and the Euro Cup in 2008 and 2012.

20-yr-old Neeraj Chopra to be India's flag-bearer at Asiad

Neeraj Chopra, the first-ever Indian to win gold in javelin throw at Commonwealth Games, has been chosen as India's flag-bearer at the opening ceremony of the Asian Games 2018.

Footballer Lionel Messi confirmed as the new Barcelona captain

Lionel Messi has succeeded Andres Iniesta as captain of Barcelona, after the Spaniard ended his 22-year stay at the club to join Japanese side Vissel Kobe in May. Sergio Busquets will be the vice-captain, with Gerard Pique and Sergi Roberto the third and fourth captains respectively. Messi, 31, joined the Barcelona club in 2001 and is their record goalscorer.

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Andaman athlete misses India's 1st cycling WC gold by 0.017s

Esow Alban, an athlete from Andaman and Nicobar Islands, missed out on winning India's first-ever gold medal at the Junior Track Cycling World Championships by a margin of 0.017 seconds. Alban, competing in the Men's Keirin event, won his silver medal after a photo-finish. This is India's first-ever medal at any cycling World Championship event.

14-yr-old Kerala boy becomes India's 53rd Chess Grandmaster

Kerala-born Nihal Sarin has become India's 53rd Grandmaster after attaining his third and final GM-Norm by drawing in the eighth round of Abu Dhabi Masters against Uzbekistan's Temur Kuybokarov.

Shooters Apurvi, Ravi win India its 1st medal at Asiad 2018

Shooters Apurvi Chandela and Ravi Kumar opened India's medal tally at the 2018 Asian Games by winning bronze in the final of the 10m Air Rifle mixed team event. Apurvi and Ravi, who had clinched bronze medal in women's and men's 10m Air Rifle events at 2018 Commonwealth Games respectively, shot a cumulative score of 429.9 to finish third.

North and South Korea march together at Asian Games

North and South Korea marched under a united flag at the opening ceremony of the 18th Asian Games in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta. Both the nations will field joint teams in canoeing, rowing and women's basketball. The Koreas also walked together at the opening ceremony of the PyeongChang Winter Olympics in February.

India improve to World No 96 in FIFA rankings

India's improvement in the ranking list is seen after the introduction of a new ranking system called ELO by FIFA. The Top five positions in the latest Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) ranking are occupied by France, Belgium, Brazil, Croatia, and Uruguay respectively.

UAE to host Asia Cup 2018

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) declared that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) will be hosting the Asia Cup 2018. The tournament will be held from September 15 to 28 in Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Afghanistan will be participating in the tournament. The opening game of the tournament will be played by Bangladesh and Sri Lanka at the at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

Indonesia hosts the 18th Asian Games 2018

Indonesia hosts the 18th Asian Games 2018. The games are to be held from 18th August to 2nd September 2018 in Jakarta and Palembang. The motto of the event is 'Energy of Asia'. Around 45 countries are participating in the 18th Asian Games.

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The opening ceremony was held on 18th August at Gelora Bung Karno Stadium, Jakarta. It is a multi-sport event. It would feature 484 events in 42 sports. India hosted the first Asian Games in 1951.

Vaishali R becomes India's latest Woman Grandmaster

The sister of R Praggnanandhaa, Vaishali R (17-year-old), became India's latest Woman Grandmaster (WGM) after earning her third and final WGM norm at Riga Technical University Open at Latvia.

New Delhi to host shooting World Cup in 2020

New Delhi has been granted hosting rights of the Combined ISSF (International Shooting Sport Federation) World Cup, to be held before the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. India is scheduled to host the World Cup next year from February 20 to 28, which will offer Olympic quota places for Tokyo.

Vinesh Phogat 1st Indian woman wrestler to win gold at Asiad

Two-time CWG champion Vinesh Phogat defeated Japan's Irie Yuki in the women's freestyle 50kg final to become the first Indian woman wrestler to win gold at the Asian Games. Vinesh, who had won bronze medal in the 2014 edition of the Asian Games, bagged her second Asiad medal. India have won two gold medals at 2018 Asiad so far.

India wins first ever medal in Sepaktakraw at Asian Games

The Indian Sepaktakraw men's team won the nation's first ever medal in the sport after winning the bronze medal in the Men's Team Regu category at the Asian Games 2018. The Indian team lost 0-2 to Thailand in the semi-final, registering India's third bronze and ninth medal overall at the 2018 edition of the Asian Games.

Neeraj gives India 1st javelin gold in Asiad history

Neeraj Chopra became the first-ever Indian javelin thrower to win a gold medal at the Asian Games. The 20-year-old junior world record holder hurled the javelin to a distance of 88.06m to bag the Asiad gold. Notably, Neeraj had also become the first Indian to bag gold in javelin throw at the Commonwealth Games earlier this year.

Manjit Singh wins Asiad gold in 800m, 9th gold for India

India's 28-year-old sprinter Manjit Singh won the gold medal in the men's 800m event at the 2018 Asian Games, securing the ninth gold for the country. Another Indian sprinter Jinson Johnson, who is ranked first in Asia, won the silver at the event. Meanwhile, Dutee Chand secured herself a place in the women's 200m finals, while Hima Das was disqualified.

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India bag 1st ever table tennis medal in Asian Games history

India clinched their first-ever table tennis medal in the history of Asian Games as the men's team bagged bronze after losing in the semi-finals. Sathiyam Gnanasekaran, Sharath Kamal Achanta and Anthony Amalraj lost their respective matches as South Korea whitewashed India 3-0. India had clinched men's table tennis team gold at Commonwealth Games earlier this year.

Japan Won first Ever Title at FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup France 2018

Japan completed the trifecta of Women's World Cups by winning the FIFA U-20 title to add to the 2011 World Cup and 2014 FIFA U-17 titles, becoming the first nation to win all three crowns. The 3-1 win over Spain in the final was remarkable as the European champions had defeated Japan 1-0 in the group stage and looked to have a slight edge going into the final.

National Sports day observed on August 29th

The legendary hockey player Dhyan Chand birthday is commemorated as National Sports day. He was famously known as 'The Wizard' for his superb ball control.

Indian women's hockey team enter Asiad final for 1st time in 20 years

The Indian women's hockey team defeated three-time champions China 1-0 in the semi-final to reach their first final at Asian Games since 1998. Indian defender Gurjit Kaur scored the only goal of the match. India will face Japan in the final match on Friday, August 31.

Swapna Barman becomes first Indian to win Asian Games gold medal in the women's Heptathlon event

The 21-year-old Swapna Barman logged 6026 points from the seven events competed for two days. She won the high jump (1003 points) and javelin throw (872 points) events and finished second-best in shot put (707 points) and long jump (865 points).

she is only the Fifth Women to cross 6000 points. The heptathlon consists of seven events including 100m race, high jump, shot put, 200m race, long jump, javelin throw and 800m race.

OBITUARY

Name of the Person Died	Related Field
Jalees Sherwani	Screenplay writer
RK Dhawan	Senior Congress leader and long-time aide of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi
Rajan Nanda	Engineering company Escort Group's Chairman
DMK chief M Karunanidhi	Served as Tamil Nadu Chief Minister five times
Somnath Chatterjee	Former Lok Sabha Speaker
Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul	Trinidad-born Indian-origin author
Balram Das Tandon	Chhattisgarh Governor
Aretha Franklin	Singer
Atal Bihari Vajpayee	Former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna awardee

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Ajit Wadekar	Former India Test captain
Kofi Annan	Nobel laureate and former UN chief
Uri Avnery	Israeli Journalist and Peace Activist
Kuldip Nayar	Veteran journalist
Gurudas Kamat	Former Union Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology
John McCain	Former US presidential candidate