# Daily Current Affairs 28 September 2018

## Current Affairs related to Banking and Finance

**Ravi Shankar Prasad launches DigiVAARTA to increase awareness on Digital Payments**

- Union Electronics and Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Friday launched DigiVAARTA, a multi-channel citizen engagement programme that can run on both feature and smartphones.
- DigiVAARTA is a welcome addition to the government's drive to promote adoption and awareness on digital payments.
- The technology underlying the multi-channel engagement programme is SAMWAD – a platform for intuitive and interactive communication – supported by Centre for Digital Financial Inclusion (CDFI).
- Developed with an objective to increase awareness and familiarity of individuals on various financial products and services and to educate the unbanked and under-banked individuals, SAMWAD provides enabling engagement across multiple channels in the form of stories, images and videos in any chosen language.
- The learnings and insights from research studies commissioned by CDFI resulted in an idea of a larger engagement tool that could be used by the government to communicate with the citizens of the country. It is this that led to DigiVAARTA, which is customized and re-branded form of SAMWAD that is being deployed for MeiTY by CDFI.

**RBI cancels Bandhan Bank's permission for new branches, freezes chief's pay**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has restrained Bandhan Bank from opening new branches and also ordered freezing of remuneration of its CEO Chandra Shekhar Ghosh for not meeting the licensing conditions, the newly-launched bank said Friday.
- The bank, on its part, said it is taking steps to comply with licensing condition to bring down the shareholding of non operative financial holding company (NOFHC) in the bank to 40 per cent.
- "RBI has communicated to us that since the bank was not able to bring down the shareholding of NOFHC to 40 per cent... general permission to open new branches stands withdrawn and the bank can open branches with prior approval of RBI and the remuneration of the MD & CEO of the bank stands frozen at the existing level, till further notice," it said in a filing to stock exchanges.
- Headquartered in Kolkata, Bandhan, which started as a micro-finance company in 2001, received banking licence by RBI in 2014.
- Besides Bandhan, the RBI had also given the banking licence to IDFC.

**ICICI Bank launches co-branded credit cards with MakeMyTrip**

- ICICI Bank has partnered with travel marketplace MakeMyTrip to launch a range of co-branded credit cards which offers benefits on travel related spends.
- As part of the agreement, ICICI Bank will offer two types of credit card — MakeMyTrip ICICI Bank Platinum Credit Card and MakeMyTrip ICICI Bank Signature Credit Card.
- Each reward point earned on the credit card has a value of Re 1 and can be redeemed across an array of categories on the travel portal such as air-travel, hotel booking, holiday packages.

**IndusInd Bank Launches Voice-Based Banking Services Through Amazon Alexa**

- IndusInd Bank has always aimed at creating path breaking solutions by leveraging emerging technologies.
- In keeping up with this legacy, the Bank has launched its Artificial Intelligence (AI) based Alexa Skill – 'IndusAssist' – that enables its customers to conduct financial and non-financial banking transactions on Amazon Echo and other Alexa-enabled devices using voice based commands.
- Alexa is a virtual assistant developed by Amazon, and is capable of voice interactions for music playback, booking cabs, ordering food, providing information and much more.

**GST Council sets up GoM to look into Kerala's demand for imposing extra cess in case of disasters**

- The GST Council on Friday decided to set up a seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to look into Kerala's demand for imposing an additional cess over GST to meet the financial requirements in case of a natural calamity.
- Apart from senior union ministers, the committee would comprise members from the North Eastern, hill and coastal states which are most vulnerable to natural calamities, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley told reporters here after the council meeting.

**Govt forms committee on Corporate Social Responsibility**

- The government on Friday constituted a High Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility-2018 (HLC-2018) under the Chairmanship of Injeti Srinivas, Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) to review the existing framework, guide and formulate the roadmap for a coherent policy on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
- According to Ministry of Corporate Affairs, the Committee will review the existing CSR framework as per Act, rules and circulars issued from time to time and recommend guidelines for better enforcement of CSR provisions. It will also analyse outcomes of CSR activities/programmes/projects and suggest measures for effective monitoring and evaluation of CSR by companies. Suggestions are also expected on innovative solutions, use of technology, platform to connect stakeholders, and social audit.
- The provisions of section 135 of Companies Act, 2013 (Act) pertaining to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) came into force on 01.04.2014 with a view to promoting responsible and sustainable business through inclusive growth.

**Government approves constitution of High Level Advisory Group to review India's global trade strategy**

- The Union Commerce Minister, Suresh Prabhu, has approved the constitution of a High Level Advisory Group (HLAG) to make recommendations for identifying opportunities and addressing challenges in order to find a way forward for India in the contemporary global trade scenario.
- The HLAG will be chaired by Surjit S Bhalla, who is the Director of Oxus Research and Investments.
- The key responsibility of the group will be to consider ways for boosting India's share and importance in global merchandise and services trade, managing pressing bilateral trade relations and mainstreaming new age policy making.

## Current Affairs related to India and states

**PM Modi inaugurates Parakram Parv in Jodhpur**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 28, 2018 inaugurated the Parakram Parv at the Combined Commanders' Conference in Jodhpur to mark the second anniversary of the surgical strikes carried out by the Indian army on September 29, 2016.
- Modi also paid homage to the martyrs at the Konark war memorial. He was briefed by the three service chiefs regarding the situation prevailing along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, Line of Actual control along the border with China and about the situation in Kashmir Valley.
- The Parakram Parv, an exhibition, is being organised by the Konark Corps at the Jodhpur Military station. Parakram Parv is being celebrated to highlight the valour and accomplishments of the Indian Army.
- A three-day main event from September 28-30, 2018 will be organised at the India Gate lawns in New Delhi besides similar events at 53 locations in 51 cities across the country.
- The Day will also be marked to remember the sacrifice of soldiers during the 'Uri incident'.

**Government launches Rail heritage digitisation project in collaboration with Google**

- The railway ministry in collaboration with Google has launched rail heritage digitisation project. The project is a first of its kind to showcase country's rail heritage to national and international audience in an online story-telling platform.
- India Railways has a history of more than 165 years and has a rich heritage that includes the Imperial and the princely railways.

**Government constitutes Lokpal Search Committee headed by Justice Ranjana Desai**

- The Union Government on September 27, 2018 constituted the Lokpal Search Committee under the chairmanship of former Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai for recommending names for Lokpal.
- The notification was issued by the Department of Personnel and Training.

**Sabarimala temple verdict: Supreme Court allows women of all age groups to enter Kerala temple**

- In a historic judgment, the Supreme Court on Friday allowed women of all ages to enter the Lord Ayyappa temple at Sabarimala in Kerala. In its 4:1 verdict, the five-judge Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra said that barring women into the temple is gender discrimination and the practice violates the rights of Hindu women.
- While Justices RF Nariman and DY Chandrachud concurred with the CJI and Justice AM Khanwilkar, it was only Justice Indu Malhotra, the lone woman judge in the Bench, who passed a dissenting verdict.
- Notably, the Kerala government had been changing its stand on the contentious issue. On July 18, the Kerala government had told the SC that it was now in favour of the entry of women of the menstrual age group entering the Sabarimala temple. The petitions were filed by Indian Young Lawyers Association and others.

**NITI Aayog, UN sign Sustainable Development Framework for 2018-2022**

- NITI Aayog and United Nations in India on September 28, 2018 signed the Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) for 2018-2022 at an event in New Delhi. The agreement is a reflection of the commitment and efforts made by India towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.
- The framework was signed by the NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant and United Nations Resident Coordinator in India Yuri Afanasiev at a special signing ceremony presided over by NITI Aayog Vice Chairperson Rajiv Kumar.
- Rajiv Kumar emphasised that the period between 2018 and 2022 will be a crucial phase in India's development story since the year 2022 marks the 75th anniversary of India's Independence.
- Hence, at such a time, partnership instruments such as the UNSDF assume gain even more significance to accelerate the pace towards building a New India by 2022, an India that is free of poverty and equal for all.

**IT Minister launches Centre of Excellence for Data Analytics (CEDA)**

- Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on September 28, 2018 launched Centre of Excellence for Data Analytics (CEDA) in New Delhi.
- The technology backbone of the government – the National Informatics Centre (NIC), in a joint initiative with National Informatics Centre Services Incorporated (NICSI) has set up the CEDA.
- The CEDA will aid in fast-tracking the adoption of advanced analytics in government.
- It has been created to support government departments to unlock the hidden potential of the data that they are generating as a part of the governance processes, and use it to improve the overall governance. It will provide world class data analytics services to the Government.

**PM inaugurates Conference on Academic Leadership on Education for Resurgence**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Conference on Academic Leadership on Education for Resurgence on September 29, 2018 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- The event saw participation from the Vice-Chancellors and Directors from more than 350 universities. This event is being organized jointly by UGC, AICTE, ICSSR, IGNCA, IGNOU, JNU and SGT University.
- The theme of the Conference is to deliberate on the challenges facing the Indian education system and to work out a plan for a paradigm shift both in terms of achieving academic outcomes and also in regulation of education.

**Punjab, HP sign MoU to set up Sri Anandpur Sahib-Naina Devi ropeway project**

- Tourism in the region is all set to get a big boost with the government of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for setting up a ropeway between Shri Anandpur Sahib and Naina Devi .
- Vikas Pratap, Secretary, Tourism and Cultural affairs, Punjab signed the MoU with Ram Subhag Singh, Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism, Himachal Pradesh in the presence of both chief ministers of Punjab and Himachal pradesh on the auspicious occasion of 111th birth anniversary of Shaheed Bhagat Singh.

# Current Affairs related to World

**Russia, Islamabad sign MoU to build gas pipeline from Iran to Pak and India**

- Russia and Pakistan signed a memorandum of understanding on implementing a project to build an underwater gas pipeline from Iran to Pakistan and India, the Russian Energy Ministry said in a statement Thursday.
- Russian Deputy Energy Minister Anatoly Yanovsky and Pakistan's Ministry of Energy Additional Secretary Sher Afgan Khan signed the document in Moscow.

**Uber pays 148m over data breach cover-up**

- Ride-hailing firm Uber is paying 148 million dollars to settle legal action over a cyber-attack that exposed data from 57 million customers and drivers.
- The massive data breach happened in 2016 but Uber sought to hide it from regulators. The company paid the hackers behind the intrusion 100,000 dollar to the data they grabbed from Uber's cloud servers.
- The payment settles action brought by the US government and 50 states over Uber's failure to disclose details of the data loss.
- Uber revealed some information about the breach in November 2017 and admitted that it should have been more open about the attack.
- The personal data from 57 million Uber accounts also included information about 600,000 driving licence numbers.

# Current Affairs related to Appointments

### Rajni Kant Misra appointed BSF chief, S S Deswal to head SSB

- Senior IPS officers Rajni Kant Misra and S S Deswal were Thursday appointed director general of the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) respectively, according to an official order.
- Misra, a 1984-batch IPS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, is at present serving as the SSB chief.
- He has been tasked to head the BSF for a period up to his superannuation on August 31, 2019 in place of K K Sharma, who retires this month end, the order issued by the Personnel Ministry said.

### Ravi Venkatesan appointed UNICEF'S special representative of young people

- The UNICEF has appointed Ravi Venkatesan has its special representative of young people.
- In a statement, the UN body said Venkatesan in his new role will provide strategic guidance and support UNICEF globally with high-level outreach, partnerships and scaling innovations.
- "Ravi Venkatesan has been appointed as UNICEF's Special Representative for Young People," the statement said.

# Current Affairs related to Awards

### National Tourism Awards 2017: Ahmedabad, Mandu jointly win 'Best Heritage City' award

- The National Tourism Awards 2016-17 were presented by Union Minister for Tourism (IC), K J Alphons on September 27, 2018, on the occasion of the World Tourism Day, which is being celebrated globally with the theme 'Tourism & Digital Transformation'.
- The Tourism Minister also launched the 'Incredible India Mobile App' and the 'Incredible India Tourist Facilitators Certification' programme. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that tourism is the cornerstone of the Indian economy, as it is a major source of employment and foreign exchange, and in order to tap the full potential of this sector, the industry has to join hands.
- The Minister also announced that India will be the host country for official World Tourism Day celebrations for the UNWTO, in 2019.
- The application showcases India as a holistic destination, revolving around major experiences, such as spirituality, heritage, adventure, culture, yoga and wellness.
- It has been designed keeping in mind the preferences of the modern traveller and follows the trends and technologies of international standards.
- It has been equipped with features to assist the traveller in each phase of their journey in India. The app has been developed by Tech Mahindra.

# Days observed on 28 September 2018

**World Tourism Day observed across the world**

- World Tourism Day observed across the world on September 27, 2018.
- "Tourism and the Digital Transformation" is the theme of this year's World Tourism Day (WTD).

**World Rabies Day observed across the world**

- The World Rabies Day was observed across the globe on September 28, 2018. The day is celebrated annually to raise awareness about rabies prevention and to highlight progress in defeating the disease.
- The theme of the day for the year 2018 is 'Rabies: Share the message. Save a life'. The theme highlights the importance of education and awareness to prevent rabies.
- Overall, the international day provides a platform to improve awareness, engage communities and help endemic countries in building successful and sustainable rabies programmes.