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# Monthly Current Affairs Update PDF

## August 2018

Detailed Current Affairs PDF for Bank PO & Clerk exams.

## Finance, Banking and Economy

### RBI hikes repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.50%

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in August, 2018 hiked the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.50 per cent while maintaining neutral stance on the stability in the market.
- The six member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) said that its decision is consistent with the neutral stance of monetary policy in consonance with the objective of achieving the medium-term target for consumer price index (CPI) inflation of 4 percent.
- The MPC added that the volatility in global financial markets continues to impart uncertainty to the inflation outlook.
- Highlighting the inflation, the MPC projected 4.6 percent in Q2FY19, 4.8 percent in H2 of FY19 and 5 percent in Q1FY20.

### Cabinet approves LIC proposal to acquire 51% stake in IDBI Bank

- The government in August, 2018 approved Public insurer Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) proposal to acquire 51 per cent stake in IDBI Bank.
- The decision was taken at a cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi here.
- Briefing media persons about the decision, interim Finance Minister Piyush Goyal said the government will hold about 45 per cent stake in the IDBI bank after fresh equity issue to the LIC.

### Startup India Yatra begins in Chhattisgarh

- The Startup India Yatra began on July 30, 2018 in Raipur.
- Students queued up in large numbers to register for the first boot camp at Raipur.
- The Startup India van will travel to various cities of Chhattisgarh like Bilaspur, Korba, Korja, Surguja, Jashpur, Raigarh, Balodabazar, Durg, Rajnandgaon, Balod, Dhamtari, Kanker, Kondagaon, Jagdalpur and Dantewada.

### Supreme Court overrules its 21-yr-old verdict on tax exemption notification

- The Supreme Court overruled its 21-year-old verdict and held that benefit of any ambiguity in notification related to tax exemptions must be interpreted in favour of the State.
- In 1997, the apex court said that in case of any ambiguity in a tax exemption provision or notification, it must be interpreted in favour the assessee claiming the benefit of such exemptions.

### SBI's YONO to integrate with RIL's MyJio platform

- Reliance Industries (RIL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with State Bank of India (SBI) to integrate its MyJio platform with the latter's YONO application.
- The two companies are entering into the digital partnership which will help SBI widen its "digital customer base multi-fold" and Jio "will now bring in financial services capabilities of SBI and Jio Payments Bank."
- YONO's digital banking features will be enabled through the MyJio platform for an integrated customer experience.

### RBI asks Paytm, Fino payments banks to stop enrolling new customers

- Launched in 2015 with great fanfare, India's payments banking ecosystem has taken a serious hit as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has halted two of the three existing payments bank from enrolling new customers.
- Concerns over the eKYC, or electronically done know your customer process, as well as cases of more than Rs 100,000 being deposited in accounts, have caused the RBI to ask Paytm Payments Bank as well as Fino Payments Bank to halt inducting new customers for the time being.
- Airtel Payments Bank, which was earlier asked by the nodal agency not to enrol new customers, got permission to resume the process last month.

### Cabinet approves extension of Concessional Financing Scheme (CFS)

- The Union Cabinet approved the first extension of Concessional Financing Scheme (CFS) to support Indian Entities bidding for strategically important infrastructure projects abroad.
- Under the CFS, the government has been supporting Indian Entities bidding for strategically important infrastructure projects abroad since 2015-16.
- As the objectives of the Scheme continue to be relevant, thereby, the government proposed to extend the Scheme for another five years from 2018 to 2023.

#### **Cabinet approves re-structuring of Agricultural Scientists' Recruitment Board**

- The Union Cabinet approved the proposal for restructuring of Agricultural Scientists 'Recruitment Board (ASRB).
- The ASRB will now be a 4 member body instead of 3 members. It will have a Chairperson and 3 Members.
- ASRB's Chairperson would serve for a period of three years or till attainment of 65 years of age, whichever is earlier.

#### **CCEA approves issue of fresh equity to the extent of 15% of the paid up equity capital by HCL**

- CCEA approved issue of fresh 13,87,82,700 equity shares to the extent of 15 percent of paid up equity capital efface value of Rs 5 each by Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) through the Qualified Institutions Placement (QIP) route, as per SEBI guidelines.
- As a result, Government of India's shareholding in HCL will come down from 76.05 percent to 66.13 percent.

#### **IDBI Bank names RBSA as financial advisor to vet LIC's acquisition proposal**

- Public sector lender IDBI Bank has appointed investment banking outfit RBSA Advisors as financial advisor for evaluating the potential of an investment proposal by the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC).
- On August 1, the Union Cabinet had approved the LIC's proposed acquisition of up to 51 per cent stake in the debt-ridden IDBI Bank.

#### **India-Israel collaborate to strengthen sectors of agri, health & environment**

- The growing India-Israel relationship took a step further as six Israeli startups with innovative technologies in the fields of healthcare, agriculture and water management interacted with various Indian businesses.
- The innovation week 23-27 July was jointly started over a year ago by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu along with Israel Innovation Authority (IIA) and Invest India and represents a peak in the relationship between the two countries.

#### **World's first thermal battery plant to be inaugurated in Andhra Pradesh**

- The world's first-ever thermal battery plant will be unveiled in Andhra Pradesh by the state's Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on August 6, 2018.
- Manufactured by the Bharat Energy Storage Technology Private Limited (BEST), the first-of-its-kind batteries will aim to boost renewable sources of energy production and reduce the dependence on non-renewable fossil fuel-based energy generation.

#### **Telangana Government Launches Country's First 'Blockchain District'**

- The government of the Telangana, a southern Indian state, is partnering with a major IT firm to establish a district exclusive to blockchain startups in the state's capital city.
- The Telangana State Information Technology, Electronics and Communication Department (ITE&C) has inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with multinational IT services giant Tech Mahindra to establish what is being billed as 'India's first Blockchain District'.

#### **Benelli signs MoU with Telangana Govt to set-up manufacturing plant in the state**

- Italy-based company Benelli, a global leader in the super bike segment has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Telangana Government to set up manufacturing unit in the state in partnership with Adishwar Auto Ride India (AARI), a subsidiary of Mahavir Group.

## **GST Council forms Sub-committee on MSMEs to consider tax relief for small businesses**

- The Goods and Services Tax Council on August 4, 2018 formed a Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by Minister of State for Finance Shiv Pratap Shukla to address various issues faced by small businesses.
- The group will examine all the proposals regarding tax relief for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and make recommendations to the Council. The group will submit its report in the next six weeks.
- Interim Finance Minister Piyush Goyal stated that the issues related to law will be taken up by the Law Committee and those related to the GST rates will be taken up by the Fitment Committee.

## **Startup India launches Academia Alliance Programme**

- Startup India has launched the Startup Academia Alliance programme, which is a unique mentorship opportunity between academic scholars and startups working in similar domains, to fulfill the Indian Government's mission to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship in the country.
- The Startup Academia Alliance aims to reduce the gap between scientific research and its industrial applications in order to increase the efficacy of these technologies and widen their impact.

## **PepsiCo's Indra Nooyi To Step Down As CEO, Ramon Laguarta To Succeed Her**

- PepsiCo Inc said in August, 2018 Indra Nooyi would step down as its longtime chief executive officer, handing over the reins to company veteran Ramon Laguarta at a time the beverage maker navigates a shrinking global soda market.
- Laguarta will take over on Oct. 3 and will also join the board, the company said in a statement.

## **Union Government, NABARD and NWDA sign revised MoA for funding of 99 projects under PMKSY**

- The Union Ministry of Water Resources, the NABARD and the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) on August 6, 2018 signed a revised Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) for funding of central share of 99 prioritised irrigation projects under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).
- The funding will be done through the Long Term Irrigation Fund (LTIF). The Department of Economic Affairs has modified certain existing means of funding of 99 irrigation projects under the LTIF with reference to source of funds, repayment pattern of loan, and rate of interest on loan, etc.

## **Funding of projects under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)**

- During 2016-17 and 2017-18, a cumulative loan amount of Rs 7863.60 crore has been availed from LTIF for funding these projects.
- During 2015-16, the PMKSY was launched by the Union Government with a vision to ensure access to some means of protective irrigation for all agricultural farms in the country and to produce 'per drop more crop'.

## **Transport Ministry launches BIMS, Bhoomi Rashi and PFMS linkage portals**

- The Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Nitin Gadkari launched the Bidder Information Management System (BIMS) and Bhoomi Rashi and PFMS linkage portals on August 6, 2018.
- The two IT initiatives of the Transport & Highways Ministry are aimed at expediting pre-construction processes relating to bidding and land acquisition respectively.

## **Telangana launches life insurance scheme worth Rs 5 lakh for farmers**

- The state government of Telangana on August 6, 2018 launched the first-of-its-kind life insurance programme worth Rs 5 lakh for the farmers in the state.
- The scheme, which is called Rythu Bandhu Life Insurance Bonds, is expected to benefit 2.8 million farmers and their families. The launch comes ahead of the 2019 state and parliamentary elections.
- Under the programme, the families of the farmers will get the insurance amount irrespective of whether the farmer's death is natural or accidental.
- The insurance amount will be given to the farmer's family within 10 days itself.
- The distribution of insurance papers to the farmers would begin from August 15.
- The scheme has been launched with a rough investment of Rs 650 crore.

### **Government sets up GoM headed by Suresh Prabhu to decide on RCEP talks**

- The Union Government on August 6, 2018 constituted a four-member Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Suresh Prabhu.
- The GoM has been constituted to advise Prime Minister Narendra Modi on whether to continue with or withdraw from the 16-member Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations.
- The GoM also includes Finance and Power Minister Piyush Goyal, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Puri.

### **SBI launches unified payment terminal- MOPAD**

- State Bank of India (SBI) in August, 2018 launched the Multi-Option Payment Acceptance Device or MOPAD, a unified payment option that accepts multiple payment methods.
- Under this, customers will be able to pay through credit or debit cards, Bharat QR, Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and SBI Buddy (e-wallet) at a Point of Sale (PoS) terminal. This initiative aims at providing digital convenience to customers and ease of doing business for merchants at the same time.
- A charge-slip as a proof of payment, which was not available for the Bharat QR, UPI, and the SBI Buddy transactions, will be available for customers who pay through MOPAD.

### **PayU, Reliance Money announce strategic partnership for instant loan**

- PayU India in August, 2018 announced entering into a strategic partnership with Reliance Money, leading NBFC brands in India, to offer instant app based personal loans, via LazyPay.
- In an attempt to reach out to the underserved consumers in India, both India">PayU India and Reliance Money will make sure that the entire process is completely digital, saving customers the hassle and the delays usually associated with a loan approval process.
- The loan amount will start from as low as Rs. 100 and will extend up to Rs. 1,00,000 with a duration varying from 15 days to 24 months.

### **JP Morgan-CIIE to set up Financial Inclusion Lab**

- J.P Morgan, a global banking and financial services provider, along with the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad's Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship (CIIE) in August, 2018 announced a collaboration to set up a Financial Inclusion Lab.
- The initiative, estimated to cost around USD 9.5 million, aims at identifying and bringing to scale early-stage FinTech start-ups that focus on helping people in India within the lower and middle income (LMI) segment. The start-ups would enable access and usage of services such as savings, credit, and insurance to lower and middle-income households.

### **RBI to pay Rs 50,000 crore dividend to government for FY18**

- The Reserve Bank in August, 2018 said it has decided to pay a dividend of Rs 50,000 crore to the Union government for the year ending June 30, 2018.
- The decision was taken at its board meeting held here.
- "The Central Board of Directors of the Reserve Bank of India, at its meeting held on August 8, 2018, approved the transfer of surplus amounting to Rs 500 billion for the year ended June 30, 2018 to the Government of India," the central bank said in a statement.
- The RBI follows July-June financial year.

### **NITI Aayog, CII launch partnership on Sustainable Development Goals**

- The NITI Aayog and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on August 8, 2018 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and entered into a three-year partnership.
- The MoU was signed during the Government and Business Partnership Conclave in New Delhi. The conclave was organised jointly by NITI Aayog, Confederation of Indian Industry and the United Nations.

### **India is a source of growth for the global economy for the next few decades: IMF**

- International Monetary Fund (IMF) has said that India is a source of growth for the global economy for the next few decades.
- Releasing the report of its annual consultations with India, IMF's mission chief for India, Ranil Salgado said that India contributes 15 per cent of the growth in the global economy in purchasing power parity measures. He said this is next to only China and the United States.
- In its report, the IMF has forecast India's growth to rise to 7.3 per cent in the financial year 2018-19 and 7.5 per cent in the financial year 2019-20, on strengthening investment and robust private consumption.

#### **Maharashtra Government announces special assistance of Rs 500 crore for OBC community**

- The state government of Maharashtra has announced a special assistance worth Rs 500 crore for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) community in the state.
- With the move, the state government reaffirmed its commitment to retaining OBC quotas in jobs and rejected reports that Maratha community may be included in the OBC category for reservation purpose.
- The announcement was made by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis while addressing the 3rd National Convention of National OBC Association in Mumbai.

#### **Lok Sabha approves government's additional expenditure demand of Rs 11,698 cr**

- The Lok Sabha on August 7, 2018 passed the Supplementary Demands for Grants for the fiscal year 2018-19, in which Government had sought additional expenditure of Rs 11,698 crore.
- As per the latest demands for grants, the net cash outgo amounts to Rs 5,951,22 crore and the government's gross additional expenditure have been shown at Rs 5,745.68 crore.
- The account of expenditure includes a sum worth Rs 1,792 crore to be allocated to the Agriculture Ministry and Rs 1,500 crore to be given to the Textiles Ministry for meeting additional expenditure.

#### **Axis Bank introduces iris authentication for Aadhaar-based transactions**

- Axis Bank has become the first bank in the country to introduce Iris Scan Authentication feature for Aadhaar-based transactions through its micro ATM tablets.
- This service, which requires a customer to scan their iris on a tablet, will boost the bank's financial inclusion efforts by making Aadhaar authentication process hassle-free and offering easier access to digital banking for consumers especially in the rural parts of the country.

#### **President Ram Nath Kovind Inaugurates 'One District One Product' Summit In UP**

- President Ram Nath Kovind in August, 2018 inaugurated 'One District One Product' (ODOP) Summit organised by the Uttar Pradesh government to promote traditional industries in every district of the state.
- The President reached the state capital this morning at Chowdhury Charan Singh airport, where he was received by Governor Ram Naik and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
- During the summit, with a tagline of 'Nayi Udaan, Nayi Pehchan', the President distributed loan sanction papers to some artisans.
- Loan papers amounting to Rs. 1,006.94 crore are to be distributed to 4,085 artisans from 75 districts in the summit.

#### **E-commerce major Amazon inks MoU with UP govt to boost MSME entrepreneurs**

- E-commerce major Amazon India in August, 2018 signed a MoU with the Uttar Pradesh government to support MSME entrepreneurs across nine districts as a part of the state's One District One Product (ODOP) scheme.
- Amazon India through its Kala Haat programme will help traditional industries, synonymous with respective districts of the state, leverage e-commerce to scale and access the Indian market, the company said in a press release here.

#### **Exim Bank signs MoU with BRICS development banks on blockchain technology**

- Exim Bank of India has signed a multilateral cooperation agreement with member development banks of BRICS to undertake "collaborative research" in distributed ledger/blockchain technology.



- The MoU — signed by Exim Bank Managing Director David Rasquinha — was an outcome of the discussions the member development banks had during their annual meeting, with the objective of strengthening the cooperation under the BRICS Interbank Cooperation Mechanism.

#### **PayPal, HDFC Bank partner to offer seamless payment experiences to consumers**

- PayPal, a global technology platform and digital payments leader, has announced its strategic partnership with and HDFC Bank to offer safer, faster and convenient payment experiences for the bank's card holders.
- 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.

#### **Paytm acquires Bengaluru-based Balance Technology**

- Digital payments major Paytm in August, 2018 said it has acquired Bengaluru-based savings management startup, Balance Technology for an undisclosed amount.
- The acquisition will help One97 Communications, which operates the Paytm brand, in further enhancing its user and merchant interfaces, Paytm said in a statement.

#### **SEBI should seek power to tap phone calls: TK Viswanathan Committee**

- The Committee on Fair Market Conduct, headed by former law secretary T K Viswanathan, submitted its report to SEBI Chairman Ajay Tyagi on August 8, 2018.
- In its report, the committee recommended the market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to seek powers to tap telephones and other electronic communication devices to check insider trading and other frauds.

#### **Maharashtra Government announces special assistance of Rs 500 crore for OBC community**

- The state government of Maharashtra has announced a special assistance worth Rs 500 crore for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) community in the state.
- With the move, the state government reaffirmed its commitment to retaining OBC quotas in jobs and rejected reports that Maratha community may be included in the OBC category for reservation purpose.

#### **NITI Aayog will host Investors' Conference**

- NITI Aayog will host an Investors' Conference on August 10, 2018 at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra for the Holistic Development of Islands.
- The Conference will be inaugurated by Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog.
- It will attract investment for the sustainable development of eco-tourism projects in Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands.

#### **Government E-Marketplace completes 2 Years**

- Government e-Marketplace (GeM), the National Public Procurement Portal, turned 2 years old on August 9, 2018.
- It was launched on August 9, 2016 with an aim to create an open, transparent and efficient procurement platform for government.
- Till now, GeM has grossed over Rs 10,000 Crores in Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) through more than 6.16 Lacs transactions on the platform.

#### **Suresh Prabhu launches 'Niryat Mitra' mobile app**

- Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Suresh Prabhu on August 8, 2018 launched the 'Niryat Mitra' mobile App in New Delhi. The app has been developed by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), the largest exporters' organisation of the country.

- Niryat Mitra provides wide range of information required to undertake international trade from the policy provisions for export and import, applicable GST rate, available export incentives, tariff and market access requirements.

#### **Lok Sabha refers bill to ban unregulated deposit schemes to Parliament panel**

- The Lok Sabha on August 9, 2018 referred a bill seeking to ban unregulated deposit schemes to the parliamentary standing committee on the ground that it required thorough deliberations.
- When the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill 2018 was taken up for discussion, the House, through a voice vote, decided to refer it to the Standing Committee on Finance.
- The bill is aimed at tackling the menace of illicit deposit-taking activities across the country.

#### **PM announces setting up of 12 modern biofuel refineries**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced on August 10, 2018 said that 12 modern bio-fuel refineries worth Rs 10,000 crore will be established across the country.
- The establishment of the refineries will provide employment to 1.5 lakh youth. The announcement was made while the Prime Minister was addressing an event on the occasion of World Biofuel Day 2018 in New Delhi.

#### **IMF forecasts India's GDP to grow at 7.3% in current fiscal**

- The International Monetary Fund says India's GDP is poised to grow by 7.3 per cent in the 2018-19 fiscal and 7.5 per cent in 2019-20 on strengthening of investment and robust private consumption.
- IMF, in its latest projection, said the near-term macroeconomic outlook for India is broadly favourable.

#### **Lok Sabha passes Arbitration and Conciliation Bill (Amendment) 2018**

- The Lok Sabha on August 10, 2018 passed the Arbitration and Conciliation Bill (Amendment) 2018, which provides for time-bound settlement of disputes as well as accountability of the arbitrator.
- The bill was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister for Law and Justice, PP Chaudhary on July 18. The bill seeks to amend the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996.
- The Act contains provisions to deal with domestic and international arbitration, and defines the law for conducting conciliation proceedings.

#### **Government unlocks green fund worth over Rs 66000 crore to increase country's forest cover**

- The Union Government has unlocked green funds worth over Rs 66,000 crore to increase the country's forest cover.
- The fund is an accumulated amount of money, which user agencies have been depositing as compensation for diverting forest land for non-forest purposes, including industries and infrastructure, since the past 10 years.
- The government has finally notified the rules for utilisation of the money by states and Union Territories and for setting up of authorities to monitor its use for afforestation and conservation.
- The rules were framed two years after a law to this effect was enacted. However, they were notified on August 10, 2018.

#### **NITI Aayog launches 'Pitch to MOVE' for startups**

- NITI Aayog on August 14, 2018 launched 'Pitch to MOVE', a mobility pitch competition that aims to provide budding entrepreneurs of India with a unique opportunity to pitch their business ideas to a distinguished jury.
- The competition would enable startups working in the various fields of mobility to pitch their ideas to industry leaders and venture capitalists for raising investments. The winners of the event will be felicitated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the valedictory session of the Global Mobility Summit on September 8, 2018.

#### **Government proposes new transaction structure for future of greenfield airports**

- The government proposed a new transaction structure for future of greenfield airports to address the challenges regarding airport infrastructure development.



- This was proposed under Nextgen Airports for Bharat (NABH), Nirman initiative and its guiding principles are affordability, sustainability and predictability.
- The aim of the initiative is to expand airport capacity more than five times to handle a billion trips a year.

#### **IRDAI constitutes working group to review norms for insurance surveyors**

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) on August 13, 2018 constituted a working group to update the norms for insurance surveyors.
- The working group, which will comprise 7 members, has been formed to address areas pertaining to licensing, renewal and IIISLA membership in the context of the existing regulatory framework for surveyors and loss assessors.

#### **Government dismisses Allahabad Bank CEO Usha Ananthasubramanian from service**

- The Union Government on August 13, 2018 dismissed Usha Ananthasubramanian, former CEO/ MD of Allahabad Bank and scam hit Punjab National Bank (PNB), from service.
- Though the Allahabad Bank had divested Ananthasubramanian of all her powers as MD three months back, after she was named in the CBI charge-sheet in the Rs 14,000 crore PNB fraud case, she had continued to be an employee of the bank.

#### **NPCI launches UPI 2.0 with overdraft facility**

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in August, 2018 launched Unified Payments Interface (UPI) 2.0, which among others allows customers to link their overdraft account to UPI, creation of one-time mandates and pre-authorisation of transactions for payment at a later date, and checking the invoice sent by merchant prior to making payment.
- UPI is a system that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application (of any participating bank), merging several banking features, seamless fund routing & merchant payments into one hood. It also caters to the "Peer to Peer" collect request which can be scheduled and paid as per requirement and convenience.
- NPCI is an umbrella organization for all retail payments in India. UPI version 1 was launched in April 2016.
- In addition to current and savings accounts, NPCI said customers can link their overdraft (OD) account to UPI in its latest version. Customers will be able to transact instantly and all benefits associated with OD account will be made available to the users.
- Mandates can be created and executed instantly. On the date of actual purchase, the amount will be deducted and received by the merchant/individual user.
- UPI 2.0 has a feature whereby customers can check the invoice sent by merchant prior to making payment. This is aimed at helping customers to view and verify the credentials and check whether it has come from the right merchant or not.

#### **Airtel Payments Bank, Bharti AXA Life tie up to offer govt's insurance plan**

- Airtel Payments Bank and Bharti AXA Life Insurance in August, 2018 announced a pact to offer Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), leveraging the payments bank's network in rural pockets.
- The alliance will be supported by the payments bank's network "to reach deep rural pockets and serve the underinsured", a company statement said.
- PMJJBY offers life insurance cover of Rs 200,000 at a premium of Rs 330 per annum, and will initially be available at 1,00,000 banking points of Airtel Payments Bank.
- The number of banking points will be scaled to over 5,00,000 over time.

#### **IRCTC Rail Connect Android App Gets PhonePe as a Payment Option**

- PhonePe in August, 2018 announced entering into a partnership with Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) to facilitate convenient, fast and secure payments through PhonePe on the IRCTC Rail Connect Android app.
- The partnership 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 for their travel bookings, PhonePe said.

### **MCX inks MoU with IBJA to set up bullion spot exchange**

- Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX) in August, 2018 said it has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA) to set up bullion spot exchange.
- It will help in establishing trade-efficient and consumer-friendly system of regulated gold exchange in the country for bullion stakeholders for efficient price discovery and transparency, he said.

### **MSME worst hit by GST, Demonetisation, says RBI study**

- A recent study by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has noted that the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have been adversely hit by the Goods and Services Tax (GST) roll-out and Demonetisation, which had a significant impact on the overall credit of the sector.
- "The MSME sector has witnessed two major recent shocks, viz., demonetisation and introduction of goods and services tax (GST). The introduction of GST led to increase in compliance costs and other operating costs for MSMEs as most of them were brought into the tax net," said the report.
- It added that the MSME, however faces operational problems due to its size and nature of business, and is, therefore, relatively more susceptible to various shocks to the economy.

### **ICICI Lombard launches India's first AI to automate instant health insurance claims**

- ICICI Lombard has launched India's first Artificial intelligence (AI) based technology to facilitate instant health insurance claims approval. As a result, the traditional cashless claim request which takes an average of 60 minutes of processing has been drastically brought down to a minute using AI.
- The varied medical procedures where AI is being deployed includes Cataract, Maternity, Appendicitis, Hemodialysis and Hysterectomy.

### **Paytm launches AI Cloud with Alibaba for developers, start-ups, enterprises**

- One97 Communications, the company that owns Paytm, has announced the launch of its artificial intelligence (AI) cloud computing platform Paytm AI Cloud for developers, start-ups, and enterprises in partnership with global tech giant Alibaba.
- The AI-powered cloud computing platform offers a suite of business-centric apps for organisations that need solutions for cloud computing. Microsoft and Amazon are few of the biggest cloud service providers in the country.

### **YES Bank and iCubesWire launch AI enabled digital innovation**

- YES Bank has opted for iCubesWire's AI enabled solution, Instatalk, which provides an accurate platform for the customers to interact instantly with the brand and suits their requirements.
- Through this campaign, YES Bank aims to enhance the user engagement and curtails the long process for queries revolving around savings accounts.

### **Parliamentary Panel seeks Raghuram Rajan's advice to tackle Bad Loans**

- The Parliament's Committee on Estimates, headed by veteran BJP leader Murali Manohar Joshi, looking into the issue of mounting non-performing assets (NPAs), asked former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan to appear before it and brief it on the matter of NPAs.
- Rajan was invited after former Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) Arvind Subramanian praised him before the Parliamentary Committee for identifying the NPA crisis and trying to resolve it.

### **Health Insurance companies to cover mental illness under medical insurance policies: IRDAI**

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) on August 16, 2018 directed all the insurance companies to make a provision to cover mental illness also in insurance policies.
- The authority referred to Section 21(4) of the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017 which states that every insurer shall make provision for medical insurance for treatment of mental illness on the same basis as is available for treatment of physical illness. The Act came into force on May 29, 2018.

## Government invites comments of Stakeholders on Proposed Amendments to Income-tax Rules, 1962

- A Draft Notification proposing amendments in Form No. 13, and Rules 28, 28AA, 28AB, 37G and 37H of the Income-tax Rules, 1962 has been uploaded on the website of the Income Tax Department for comments from stakeholders and general public.
- Income-tax Rules, 1962 (I.T.Rules) prescribe Form No.13 for filing an application for seeking a certificate under Section 197 and/or under Section 206C (9) of the Income-tax Act, 1961 (the Act) and for no deduction of tax; or deduction/collection of tax at lower rate.

## MCX signs MoU with Indian Cotton Federation

- Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX) has signed an MoU (memorandum of understanding) with Coimbatore-based Indian Cotton Federation (ICF).
- ICF, formerly known as SICA (South India Cotton Association), is a premier organisation representing the textile industry, cotton brokers and cotton growers in the country.

## No ATM to be replenished with cash after 9 pm from next year

- No ATM will be replenished with cash after 9 PM in cities and 6 PM in rural areas from next year. The announcement was made by the Union Home Ministry through a notification. The Ministry said that the deadline for putting money in the ATMs located in Naxal-hit areas will be 4 PM.
- It said that private cash handling agencies must collect money from the banks in the first half of the day and transport notes only in armoured vehicles.
- Two armed guards will accompany crisp notes in transit as per a new directive issued by the Home Ministry.
- The new Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) will come into effect from February 8, 2019 in view of the spurt in incidents of attacks on cash vans, cash vaults, ATM frauds and other internal frauds leading to increased sense of insecurity.

## Flipkart acquires AI startup Liv.ai

- Indian e-commerce major Flipkart has augmented its capability to roll out voice-based shopping on its platform to compete with rival Amazon's Alexa by acquiring Bengaluru-based artificial intelligence startup Liv.ai.
- The startup, which set up shop in 2015, has built capabilities in speech recognition and translation in 10 different Indian languages. Flipkart says it will use Liv.ai's voice technologies to reach out to the next 100-200 million non-English speaking shoppers in the country.

## CEPR, NITI Aayog join hands for IBC 2018 to address issues of India's Banking Sector

- Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) along with its knowledge partner and the government Think Tank, NITI Aayog are organizing two-day India Banking Conclave 2018 (IBC) in New Delhi between August 23-24, 2018.
- The conclave, planned with the objective of making the banking sector more adaptable to face multiple future challenges in the coming years, will be addressed by Union Ministers such as Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley, Railways Minister Piyush Goyal and Civil Aviation Minister, Suresh Prabhu, apart from other important dignitaries such as BJP President, Amit Shah and Vice Chairman NITI Aayog, Rajiv Kumar.

## Bajaj Finserv Offers Home Loan Balance Transfer With Additional Top-up Loan of up to Rs. 50 Lakh

- Providing its customers with an effective option to take care of their financial requirements, Bajaj Finance Ltd., the lending arm of Bajaj Finserv, is offering high-value top-up loans of up to Rs. 50 Lakhs on home loan balance transfer. The amount can be used by the customers for any financial requirement, as and when required.
- Bajaj Finserv offers home loans of up to Rs. 3.50 crores with various other benefits such as 3 EMI Holiday, Flexi Hybrid Loan and doorstep collection services. The maximum repayment tenor that can be chosen is 240 months, depending on the financial capacity of the customers.

## Tech Mahindra to acquire Czech-based firm Inter-Informatics for Rs 80 mn

- IT company Tech Mahindra in August, 2018 said it will acquire Czech Republic-based engineering services firm Inter-Informatics for around Rs 80 million through a wholly-owned subsidiary.
- Inter-Informatics had posted a revenue of \$10.7 million in 2017. It has presence in Czech Republic and Romania.

#### **Strong wage policies needed to promote inclusive growth in India: ILO's India Wage Report**

- The International Labour Organisation (ILO) on August 20, 2018 released a report titled 'India Wage Report: Wage policies for decent work and inclusive growth'.
- The report depicts that though India's economy in the past two decades saw an annual average GDP rate of 7 percent, low pay and inequality persists in the country.
- The overall wage inequality in India declined since 2004–05; however, it continues to remain high.

#### **Moody's puts India's economic growth in 2018, 2019 at 7.5%**

- The Indian economy is expected to grow by around 7.5 per cent in 2018 and 2019 as it is largely resilient to external pressures like those from higher oil prices, Moody's Investors Service said in August, 2018.
- In its Global Macro Outlook for 2018-19, Moody's said the run-up in energy prices over the last few months will raise headline inflation temporarily but the growth story remains intact as it is supported by strong urban and rural demand and improved industrial activity.
- Moody's put G-20 growth at 3.3 per cent in 2018 and 3.1 per cent in 2019. The advanced economies will grow 2.3 per cent in 2018 and 2 per cent in 2019, while G-20 emerging markets will remain the growth drivers at 5.1 per cent in both 2018 and 2019.

#### **World Bank launches world-first blockchain bond**

- The World Bank has priced the world's first public bond created and managed using only blockchain in a A\$100 million (\$73.16 million) deal designed to test how the technology might improve decades-old bond sales practices. Commonwealth Bank of Australia, the sole manager of the deal, said in a statement that the two-year bonds had priced to yield 2.251% and would settle 28 August.
- The prototype deal, dubbed a "Bondi" bond - standing for Blockchain Operated New Debt Instrument as well as a reference to Australia's most famous beach — is being viewed as an initial step in moving bond sales away from manual processes towards faster and cheaper automation.

#### **Rajasthan Launches India's Largest Business Incubator Bhamashah Techno Hub In Jaipur**

- In a big step forward to strengthen the startup ecosystem in Rajasthan, the Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje launched India's largest business incubator — the Bhamashah Techno Hub — in Jaipur in August, 2018 (August 23).
- 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 organisations and experts and much more.

#### **Cognizant to acquire Noida-based salesforce consulting firm SaaSfocus**

- Cognizant has entered into an agreement to acquire Noida-headquartered salesforce consulting firm SaaSfocus in its bid to augment its consultancy capabilities in cloud space, apart from expanding its geographical reach in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region.
- The US-based company, which did not disclose the financial details of the deal, said the transaction is likely to be completed in the fourth quarter of this calendar year.

#### **SBI to have multiple modes of biometric authentication for apps**

- The country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) will soon be introducing 'multi-modal' biometric authentication for its mobile applications. This means that one of the two factors of authentication would be by using either fingerprint or face recognition or by using voice recognition software on the bank's servers.

- The bank is planning to use biometrics for various mobile banking products including the mobile wallet and Unified Payment Interface (UPI) transactions. The bank is in the process of finalising a service provider and has called for applications from technology providers.

#### **NSE inks pact with West Bengal for MSME fund raising**

- With an objective of raising MSME funds through equity, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between National Stock Exchange (NSE) and MSME and textiles department of West Bengal government.
- The initiative has been taken to engage the NSE with all the industry associations and chamber bodies, so that large number of SMEs in West Bengal can be encouraged to explore alternate sources of funding and help list them on Emerge platform of NSE.

#### **CONCOR inks pact with Kandla Terminal for rail access**

- Container Corporation of India (CONCOR) has inked a pact with KICTPL for providing rail access to container services.
- The commencement of rail service shall facilitate the shipping lines and customers to utilise Kandla Port as gateway port for container business.

#### **Maharashtra government succeeds in efficiently implementing MUDRA scheme**

- Maharashtra government has succeeded in efficiently implementing MUDRA scheme, an ambitious scheme of the Centre. Over 80 Lakh persons have got sanctioned loans under the scheme in the last three years.
- Maharashtra stands at the fourth position in terms of availing and utilising the 'Mudra' loan scheme in the country. In last three years government has disbursed 36 thousand 156 crore loans to micro-enterprises.

#### **Punjab Cabinet approves bill for price stabilisation fund**

- The Punjab cabinet on August 23, 2018 approved a bill for creation of a price stabilisation fund that will ensure state farmers get minimum support price (MSP). The decision was taken during a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh.
- The cabinet decided to table the bill for enactment in the Vidhan Sabha session. The bill aims to protect the interests of farmers in the event of a sudden fall in prices of certain agricultural commodities.

#### **Commerce Ministry developing National Logistics Portal**

- The Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry is developing a National Logistics Portal to ensure ease of trading in the International and domestic markets. The portal will link all the stakeholders of EXIM, domestic trade and movement and all trade activities on a single platform.
- The portal's main objective will be to fulfill the commitment of the Union Government to enhance trade competitiveness, create jobs, boost India's performance in global rankings and pave the way for India to become a logistics hub.

#### **Punjab National Bank gets top rank in digital transaction as per Finmin report**

- Punjab National Bank (PNB) in August, 2018 said a Department of Financial Services report has rated it as number one state-owned bank in terms of digital transactions.
- The Nirav Modi scam-hit bank is also rated as the sixth overall amongst all banks in India for digital performance, PNB said in a statement.
- The bank is rated as 'Good' by the government with a score of 71 which is the highest category of performance, it said.
- PNB average percentage of technical declines is only 0.83 per cent of total transactions which is an achievement in itself, it said.

#### **Rural Electrification Corporation inks pact with German bank for 200 million euro loan**



- State-run Rural Electrification Corporation in August, 2018 said it has inked a loan agreement with German bank KfW for EUR 200 million facility that would be used to finance clean energy projects in India.

#### **ICICI Bank announces partnership with Manchester United**

- ICICI Bank, India's private sector bank, has agreed to a multi-year partnership with Manchester United, bringing a range of competitive co-branded credit and debit card to the club's 35 million Indian followers.
- According to the announcement, the Bank will be offering fans of the club two types of credit card – Manchester United Platinum Credit Card and Signature Credit Card.

#### **Anil Ambani resigns as Director, Reliance Naval and Engineering**

- Anil D Ambani has resigned as the Director of Reliance Naval and Engineering Ltd (RNAVAL), a company official said in August, 2018.
- As per an official statement from company secretary Paresh Rathod, Ambani resigned in compliance with provisions of Section 165 of the Companies Act, 2013, prescribing the limit on directorships to only 10 public companies.

#### **Yogi Adityanath govt to host global farmers summit 'Krishi Kumbh 2018**

- After hosting big ticket 'UP Investors Summit 2018' and dedicated MSME conclave 'One District One Product Summit', the Yogi Adityanath government is gearing up to organise global farmers meet 'Krishi Kumbh' on October 26-28.
- An estimated 100,000 farmers, agricultural experts, scientists, entrepreneurs, public and private sector representatives are expected at the three-day international event, aimed at promoting modern farming techniques to achieve the ultimate goal of doubling the farm income.

#### **Delhi-Mumbai Expressway work to begin from December 2018: Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari**

- Union Minister for Road Transport, Shipping and Highways, Nitin Gadkari on August 24, 2018 announced that the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) will start the construction of the proposed Mumbai-Delhi Expressway by December 2018.
- The announcement was made during Gadkari's address to media at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) in Navi Mumbai.
- The highway will be ready for use in three years by 2021.
- The first tender for the project worth Rs 44,000 crore between Mumbai and Vadodara has already been floated. Recently, the second tender for the stretch between Delhi-Amritsar was also floated. The actual groundwork will start by December 10, 2018.

#### **SBI changes names, IFSC codes of nearly 1,300 branches post merger with associates**

- As part of rationalisation post merger of six associate banks with itself, the country's largest lender SBI has changed names and IFSC codes of nearly 1,300 branches across the country.
- Accordingly, the lender has published a list of new branch codes as well as the IFSC codes of these branches.
- 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.
- 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 associate banks and BMB, as per the list on its website.

#### **Public Sector Banks give 91 per cent of education loans: RBI report**

- Private sector banks, which have recently come under the scanner for corrupt activities, have little concern for promoting education and literacy in the country by providing education loans. A large part of lending to the education sector in the country has been done by public sector banks. A recent RBI report disclosed that the share of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) in lending to the education sector is 91.42 per cent.



- Data on education loans also reveals a divide between southern states and the rest of the country. It shows that students in southern states (Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh) pursue their studies by taking education loans more than students in the rest of the country.

#### **India's first flight powered by biofuel lands at IGI Airport**

- India's first flight powered by Biofuel landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi on August 27, 2018. The test flight had taken off from Dehradun.
- Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu, Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan and Minister of State for Civil Aviation Minister Jayant Sinha were present to receive the flight as it landed following its maiden run.

#### **Defence Ministry clears procurement of 111 naval helicopters at cost of Rs 21000 crore**

- The Union Defence Ministry on August 25, 2018 gave its approval for the acquisition of 111 utility helicopters for Navy at an estimated cost of over Rs 21,000 crore. The Ministry also approved separate procurement proposals worth nearly Rs 25,000 crore.
- The proposals were granted approval during a meeting of the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), the ministry's highest decision-making body on procurement, chaired by Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

#### **MP 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 the state's Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary.
- The ambitious project, conceived in 2009, had hit a roadblock due to the need 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.

#### **YES BANK, Rajasthan govt. partner to launch payments wallet 'Bhamashah'**

- YES BANK, India's fourth largest private sector bank has announced its partnership with the Government of Rajasthan to launch Bhamashah Wallet, a simple instant payment digital wallet solution for the state of Rajasthan.
- The Bhamashah wallet, Rajasthan government's online payment application was launched by Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Vasundhara Raje. The wallet service was launched as a part of Bhamashah Yojana, a scheme introduced by the Government of Rajasthan to transfer financial and non-financial benefits of governmental schemes directly to women recipients in a transparent way.

#### **Govt, World Bank, EESL ink \$300 mn pact to push energy efficiency programme**

- The government, World Bank and state-owned EESL in August, 2018 inked a \$220 million loan agreement and \$80 million guarantee pact to push energy efficiency programme in India.
- To be implemented by EESL, the programme will help scale up the deployment of energy saving measures in residential and public sectors, strengthen EESL's institutional capacity, and enhance its access to commercial financing.

#### **Petroleum Minister launches online portal for common carrier capacity booking**

- The Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Dharmendra Pradhan on August 27, 2018 launched an online portal to enable easy, efficient and transparent booking of common carrier capacity for natural gas transmission services under GAIL's pipelines.
- The portal will be the first step to facilitate gas trading on a hub or exchange-traded platform in India.

#### **JNPT, Maharashtra, MP and Ministry of Railways sign MoU for Indore-Manmad Railway Line Project**

- The Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust, under the Ministry of Shipping, on August 28, 2018 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Railways, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh for implementation of the 362 km Indore- Manmad New Railway Line Project.

- As of now, containers and other rail traffic from Indore and other Central Indian locations need to follow an indirect route through Vadodara and Surat to reach Mumbai, Pune and ports like JNPT, travelling a distance of 815 km.

#### **Google's payment app for India 'Tez' becomes Google Pay**

- Ready to launch its digital payment service for India, Tez, for a global roll out, Google in August, 2018 renamed the app as Google Pay and introduced new features that could soon help its Indian users get instant "pre-approved" loans from some banks.
- "Building for India has often meant Google building for everyone all around the world," Caesar Sengupta, Vice-President, Next Billion Users initiative and Payments, Google, said at its annual Google for India event here.
- "At the moment, nothing is changing about the experience in India other than the name," he said, adding that Google is working with a few of India's top banks — HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Federal Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank — to offer pre-approved, instant loans to their customers, right from within Google Pay.

#### **Government signs MoU with 6 states for construction of Lakhwar Multi-Purpose Project in Uttarakhand**

- Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari on August 28, 2018 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Delhi, and Himachal Pradesh for the construction of the Rs 3966.51 crore Lakhwar Multi-Purpose projects in the Upper Yamuna Basin near Dehradun, Uttarakhand.
- The MoU was signed by Yogi Adityanath (CM of Uttar Pradesh), Vasundhara Raje (Rajasthan), Trivendra Singh Rawat (Uttarakhand), Manohar Lal (Haryana), Arvind Kejriwal (Delhi), and Jai Ram Thakur (Himachal Pradesh).

#### **99.3 percent of demonetised currency returned: RBI in its Annual Report 2017-18**

- Over 99 percent of the demonetised currency was returned, as per the Annual Report 2017-18 of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The report was released on August 29, 2018.
- In November 2016, the Union Government withdrew Rs 500 and Rs 1000 currency notes from the circulation with effect from November 9, 2016. The demonetisation was hailed as a step that would curb black money, corruption and check counterfeit currency.
- RBI has completed the processing of demonetised Rs 500 and 1000 banknotes; 99.3 percent of the notes worth Rs 15.3 lakh crore have been returned to banks.
- After a thorough verification and reconciliation through Currency Verification and Processing System (CVPS), the total value of the Rs 500 and Rs 1000 banknotes as on November 8, 2016 stood at Rs 15,417.93 lakh crore, and the total value of the notes returned from circulation was Rs 15310.73 lakh crore.

#### **Union Government, ADB sign USD 375 million loan agreement to improve irrigation efficiency in Madhya Pradesh**

- The Union Government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on August 30, 2018 signed a USD 375 million loan agreement for 'Madhya Pradesh Irrigation Efficiency Improvement Project'.
- The loan agreement was signed by Sameer Kumar Khare, Joint Secretary (Fund Bank and ADB), in the Department of Economic Affairs, Union Ministry of Finance, and Sabyasachi Mitra, Deputy Country Director of ADB's India Resident Mission.
- A separate project agreement was signed by A.K. Upmanyu, Project Director of Madhya Pradesh.

#### **Yes Bank gets RBI nod for continuance of Rana Kapoor as MD & CEO**

- Private sector lender Yes Bank in August, 2018 said it has received RBI's approval for continuance of Rana Kapoor as MD and CEO of the bank till further notice from the central bank.
- In June this year, Yes Bank's shareholders had approved the re-appointment of Rana Kapoor as the chief executive and managing director for three years, subject to final approval from the Reserve Bank of India.

#### **Union Government, World Bank and Rajasthan sign agreement to improve power distribution in Rajasthan**

- The Union Government, Rajasthan and the World Bank on August 28, 2018 signed a USD 250 million Development Policy Loan (DPL) to support Rajasthan in improving the performance of its Electricity Distribution Sector under the State's '24x7 Power for All' program.
- The Agreement for the Project was signed by Sameer Kumar Khare, Joint Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs, Union Ministry of Finance; P. Ramesh, Special Secretary of Rajasthan; and Hisham Abdo, Acting Country Director of World Bank India.
- The loan from the World Bank's International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), has a 3 year grace period and a maturity of 21 years.

#### **India, World Bank sign loan agreement to scale-up India's energy efficiency programme**

- The Union Government and World Bank on August 28, 2018 signed a \$220 million loan agreement and an \$80 million guarantee agreement for the India Energy Efficiency Scale-Up programme.
- The programme, which will be implemented by the Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), will help scale-up the deployment of energy saving measures in residential and public sectors, strengthen EESL's institutional capacity and enhance its access to commercial financing.
- The agreement was signed by Sameer Kumar Khare, Joint Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Hisham Abdo, Acting Country Director of World Bank India.

#### **Maharashtra Cabinet clears proposal for financing farmers for purchasing farm equipment**

- Maharashtra Cabinet cleared a proposal for financing farmers for purchasing farm equipment with an initial corpus of Rs 50 crore.
- The scheme is aimed at expediting the government's ambitious plan to double the income of farmers by 2022.
- The farmers from SC/ST community and women farmers would get 35 percent funding of the total cost for purchasing tractor while for other equipment, a subsidy of 50 percent will be given.

#### **NMCG approves projects worth Rs 150 crore for cleaning Ganga River and its banks**

- The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) on August 28, 2018 approved projects worth nearly Rs 150 crores to clean Ganga River and its banks in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal under the Namami Gange programme.
- The decision was taken during the 5th Executive Committee of the NMCG in New Delhi.
- These projects include Interception and Diversion (I&D) works where small rivers, rivulets and drains are intercepted before they empty into the main river and are diverted to Sewage Treatment Plants (STP), so that the water that finally drains into the main river is clean and totally devoid of any pollutants.

#### **Foodgrain production rises to a record 285 million tonnes in 2017-18**

- The production of foodgrains touched a record high of 284.8 million tonnes in 2017-18 on the back of last year's normal monsoon, as per the fourth advance estimates of crop production by the Agriculture Ministry, which were released on August 28, 2018.
- The latest estimates are an upward revision from the 277.5 million tonnes estimated in February.
- According to the agriculture ministry, while production of rice is estimated at 112.9 million tonnes in 2017-18, 2.9 per cent higher than the previous year, production of wheat touched 99.7 million tonnes, about 1.2 per cent higher than the previous year.

#### **Government to launch National Mission on GeM in September**

- The National Mission on Government e Marketplace (GeM) will be launched on September 5, 2018 to accelerate the adoption and use of GeM by major central ministries, state governments and their agencies.
- The main aim of the mission is to promote inclusiveness, transparency and efficiency in public procurement and achieve cashless, contactless and paperless transaction.
- The mission will be launched at the respective state headquarters by the Chief Ministers during the 6 weeks' special drive beginning from September 6 to October 15, 2018.

#### **NITI Aayog kick-starts 'Mobility Week' in run up to 'MOVE: India's First Global Mobility Summit 2018'**

- NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar, along with CEO Amitabh Kant, on August 30, 2018 unveiled a series of events to take place during the 'Mobility Week' from August 31 to September 6, 2018.
- These events will be organised in the run up to 'MOVE: The Global Mobility Summit 2018' that will be held during September 7-8, 2018 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The Summit will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- 'Mobility Week' will see 17 events in 7 days. These events will facilitate interactions with various stakeholders across the mobility domain.

#### **India, ADB sign USD 346 million loan to improve state highways in Karnataka**

- India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on August 30, 2018 signed a USD 346 million loan agreement to finance improvement of over 400 kilometres of state highways under the KSHIP-III Project.
- The loan agreement was signed by Sameer Kumar Khare, Joint Secretary (Fund Bank and ADB) in the Department of Economic Affairs, Union Ministry of Finance, and Kenichi Yokoyama, Country Director of ADB's India Resident Mission.

#### **Indian Railways, GAIL India sign MoU for use of Natural Gas in railway workshops and production units**

- Indian Railways on August 30, 2018 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with GAIL (India) Limited to provide infrastructure facilities for supply of Natural Gas to Indian Railways Workshops, Production Units and Depots.
- The MoU was signed by Chetram, CAO of the Indian Railway Organization for Alternate Fuels (IROAF) on and Gajendra Singh, Director (Marketing) of GAIL (India) Limited.

#### **Shipping Ministry signs new wage agreement to benefit over one lakh port workers, pensioners**

- The Shipping Ministry on August 30, 2018 signed a new wage settlement agreement for Group C & D category of Port and Dock Workers in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The move will benefit around one lakh 35 thousand port and dock workers and pensioners in 12 major ports across the country.
- The agreement was signed by Shipping Ministry, port officials and workers federation in the presence of the Union Minister for Shipping, Nitin Gadkari.

## **India**

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#### **Health Ministry signs MoU with Ministry of Electronics to facilitate access to Ayushman Bharat**

- The National Health Agency (NHA), under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on July 31, 2018 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Common Service Centres (CSC) scheme under the Digital India Programme.
- The MoU was signed with an aim to provide information and eligibility validation services to beneficiaries of the Ayushman Bharat-National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM), especially in remote areas.
- The National Health Agency is the apex body for the implementation of Ayushman Bharat-National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM).

#### **Ministry of Youth Affairs celebrating Swachhta Pakhwada to declare SAI Stadia as Plastic Free Zones**

- Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports is celebrating Swachhta Pakhwada from August 1 to 15, 2018 under the Swachh Bharat Mission Programme of Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation.
- The Ministry aims to make all five SAI Stadia namely Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, Indira Gandhi Stadium Complex, Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range and Dr. SPM Swimming Pool Complex as "Plastic Free Zone".

### **Advanced Air Defence Interceptor Missile successfully test fired from Abdul Kalam Island**

- The indigenously built Advanced Air Defence (AAD) Interceptor Missile was on August 2, 2018 successfully test fired from Abdul Kalam Island.
- The interceptor took off from Abdul Kalam Island in Bhadrak district and successfully hit the target at a height of 20 kms in the sky. The test was conducted to validate some improved features incorporated in the system of the missile.

### **NITI Aayog launches global mobility hackathon**

- Federal think-tank NITI Aayog has launched Move Hack, a global mobility hackathon to crowdsource solutions aimed at the future of mobility in India.
- Envisaged to be one of the largest hackathons globally, Move Hack is focused on 10 themes and structured over three legs: online, followed by Singapore leg, and the finals in New Delhi, an official statement said.

### **India, Germany sign agreement for cooperation in sustainable urban development**

- India and Germany on August 1, 2018 signed an agreement on financial and technical cooperation, with a special focus on sustainable urban development and renewable energy.
- The agreement was signed between German Ambassador to India, Martin Ney and Joint Secretary, (Department of Economic Affairs), Finance Ministry, Sameer Kumar Khare.
- The agreement mainly prioritises cooperation between India and Germany in the area of renewable energy.

### **Ministry of Culture launches 'Seva Bhoj Yojna'**

- The Union Ministry of Culture on August 1, 2018 launched a scheme to reimburse central share of CGST and IGST on food, prasad, langar or bhandara offered by religious and charitable institutions.
- The scheme, Seva Bhoj Yojna, has a total outlay of Rs 325.00 crore for financial years 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- The scheme will compensate the religious and charitable institutions of the Central Government share of the Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) and Integrated Goods and Service Tax (IGST).
- It mainly aims to lessen the financial burden on religious and charitable bodies that provide food, prasad, langar and bhandara free-of-cost without any discrimination to the public.

### **Telangana police gets new tool to identify criminals**

- Telangana police is now equipped with another 'powerful' tool - 'Facial Recognition System' (FRS) that would help them prevent crime and identify criminals/suspects at lightning speed.
- FRS is an integrated feature of TSCOP mobile app for assisting investigation officers for developing effective and efficient services to citizens and thereby improving responsiveness.

### **Rajasthan Government approves setting up of 55 POCSO courts**

- Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje on August 1, 2018 approved a proposal to set up 55 courts under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act in the state.
- The Chief Minister stated that each district would have at least one such court to deal with cases of crime against children, especially rape and to ensure that accused are convicted at the earliest.

### **Biogas plant to be set up at Golden Temple**

- The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbhandhak Committee (SGPC) has decided to install a biogas plant at the community kitchen of the Golden Temple here in an effort to reduce its carbon footprint.
- The SGPC, a body managing the day-to-day affairs of the Golden Temple, said the move was aimed at making the religious shrine environment friendly.

### **Cabinet approves increase in Extra Budgetary Resources for Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin)**

- The Union Cabinet approved raising funds up to Rs 15000 crore as Extra Budgetary Resources (EBR) for Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) (SBM (G)) during the financial year 2018-19 through NABARD.



- The cabinet also approved expansion of the scope of work of International Centre for Drinking Water Quality to authorise it for receiving EBR funds for SBM(G).

#### **Cabinet approves Policy Framework for exploration of Unconventional Hydrocarbons**

- The Union Cabinet approved the policy to permit exploration and exploitation of unconventional hydrocarbons such as Shale oil/gas, Coal Bed Methane (CBM) etc.
- It will be carried out under the existing Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs), CBM contracts and Nomination fields to encourage the existing contractors to unlock the potential of unconventional hydrocarbons.

#### **CCEA approves opening of 13 new Kendriya Vidyalayas in seven States**

- CCEA approved the proposal for opening of 13 new Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) in seven States.
- These 13 schools are in Banda (Uttar Pradesh), Washim (Maharashtra), Chakpikarong (Manipur), Parbhani (Maharashtra), Nawada (Bihar), Mirjapur (Uttar Pradesh), Bhadohi (UP), Palamau (Jharkhand), Siddipet (Telangana), Kudamalakunte, (Karnataka), CISF Surajpur (UP), Devkund (Bihar) and Baoli (UP).

#### **Union Cabinet approves law provisioning death penalty for maritime piracy**

- The Union Cabinet on August 2, 2018 approved a bill provisioning death penalty or life imprisonment to those involved in piracy at sea.
- The main objective of the anti-maritime piracy bill is to have a domestic anti-piracy legislation to provide the necessary legal framework within the country for the prosecution of those involved in piracy-related crimes.
- Under the bill's provisions, the act of committing piracy will be punishable by death or life imprisonment.

#### **Odisha CM Inaugurates India's First "Skill Museum" In Cuttack**

- With an aim to promote skills through ITI, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in August, 2018 inaugurated India's first Skill Museum at the State-run Industrial Training Institute (ITI) in Cuttack.
- The Skill Museum has been set up with several skill-based equipment and machineries, a world-class exhibition that will provide information about skills to students. An auditorium was also constructed at a cost of ₹73 lakh. The museum has been set up in an area of 2600 sq ft.

#### **Kerala police's first ever women battalion with 578 members formed**

- After Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) inducted 500 women personnel in Kashmir, Kerala police formed its first all-women battalion with 578 members on August 1, 2018.
- The passing-out parade was held at the Kerala Police Academy ground and the battalion was addressed by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.
- While addressing the battalion, the CM said that new recruits should stand for secularism and women empowerment.

#### **Defence Minister launches Defence India Startup Challenge**

- With a vision to build an ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship in defence sector and make India self-reliant for meeting defence requirements, Raksha Mantri Nirmala Sitharaman launched defence India start up challenge in Bengaluru.
- The highlight of the event was launch of 11 challenges by MoD now thrown open to provide solutions by the start-up ecosystem.
- Taking forward the IDEX scheme ( Innovation for defence excellence ) launched earlier by the Prime Minister in April this year the ministry of defence launched package of policy and framework for the incubators and partners to empower India and give a thrust to indigenisation in defence sector.

#### **Uttarakhand HC bans commercial use of elephants in state**

- Uttarakhand High Court (HC) on August 3, 2018 banned the commercial use of elephants in the state and directed the state forest department to rescue the elephants deployed for commercial purposes within a time span of 24 hours.



- The division bench comprising Justices Rajiv Sharma and Lok Pal Singh also directed the forest department to issue notices to the owners of the animals and seek an explanation from them.

#### **Government approves 122 research projects under 'IMPRINT-2' scheme**

- The Union Government has approved 122 new research project proposals worth Rs 112 crore for funding under its Impacting Research Innovation and Technology 'IMPRINT-2' scheme.
- The proposals were approved on August 4, 2018 at the IMPRINT 2 Apex Committee meeting held in New Delhi. The initiative aims to advance research in energy, healthcare, security and defence domains in the high education institutions.

#### **UP's Mughalsarai Junction renamed as Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction**

- The iconic Mughalsarai Railway Junction of Uttar Pradesh was on August 5, 2018 renamed as Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction Railway station.
- Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) National President Amit Shah inaugurated the renamed station.

#### **International Conference on Sustainable Growth through Material Recycling inaugurated**

- NITI Aayog's International Conference on "Sustainable Growth through Material Recycling: Policy Prescriptions" was inaugurated by the Union Minister of Road Transport, Highways & Ganga Rejuvenation, Nitin Gadkari at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra in New Delhi on August 6, 2018.
- The conference witnessed participation from NITI Aayog's Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar, CEO Amitabh Kant and renowned experts from all over the world in material recycling.

#### **Rajasthan Info Commission asks courts to reduce RTI application fee**

- Citing an order of the Supreme Court, the Rajasthan Information Commission has asked all courts in the state, including the High Court to reduce RTI application fee.
- Disposing of an appeal of Anndaram Chaudhary, a resident of Merta City, the Commission in its order given last week, the copy of which was made available in August, 2018, has expected from the Rajasthan High Court administration that it will reduce the Right to Information (RTI) application fee considering the apex court's decision.

#### **Government introduces bill in LS to amend Juvenile Justice Act**

- The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill, 2018, which seeks to empower district magistrates to pass orders for adoption of children to reduce the time taken for issuing such directions, was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 6, 2018.
- As of July 20 this year, as many as 629 cases relating to passing of adoption orders are pending in various courts.

#### **ISRO postpones launch of Chandrayaan-2 mission**

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) postponed the launch of Chandrayaan 2 Mission, India's second mission to moon, to January 2019.
- This was the second time that the mission has been postponed. The ambitious mission was earlier planned to be launched in April 2018 and was later fixed for October 2019.

#### **Bihar launches scheme for girl child**

- Bihar CM Nitish Kumar recently launched the 'Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana'.
- The ambitious scheme will provide Rs 54100 to every girl child, from her birth till she graduates.
- The Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana will be run by three departments — education, health and social welfare.

#### **TRAI integrates DND 2.0 & MyCall mobile apps with UMANG Platform**

- The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on August 7, 2018 integrated the TRAI Mobile Apps namely DND 2.0 and MyCall with UMANG Platform.
- From now onwards, the DND 2.0 and MyCall mobile apps will also be available on Umang Platform.
- This integration is part of the policy initiatives of TRAI that the authority has been undertaking over the years to protect the interests of the consumers to safeguard their interests.

#### **SC to constitute panel to look into issues in prisons across country**

- The Supreme Court on August 8, 2018 said that it would constitute a committee under the chairmanship of its retired judge to look into the problems in jails.
- The bench comprising Justices M B Lokur, S Abdul Nazeer and Deepak Gupta expressed its displeasure saying that the government had collected a huge amount under the orders of the apex court but the funds were not being utilised properly.

#### **Goa CM launches new app-based taxi service**

- Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar and Tourism Minister Manohar Ajaonkar on August 7, 2018 flagged off the Goa Tourism Development Corporation's app-based taxi service in Panaji.
- The app-based taxi service, called 'GoaMiles', would ensure that commuters are not cheated and at the same time would increase the earnings of taxi drivers by 'two to three' times.

#### **UP Government to appoint interns for publicity of government's welfare schemes**

- The Uttar Pradesh government has announced that it will appoint interns in every block of the state for publicity of the welfare schemes of government.
- These interns named as 'Lok Kalyan Mitra' will also provide feedback regarding implementation of the welfare schemes.
- The decision was taken at the state cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on August 7, 2018.

#### **Government extends e-visa facility to 165 countries**

- Seeking to promote tourism, the government has extended e-visa facility for citizens of 165 countries at 25 airports and five seaports.
- The government has launched the 'Incredible India 2.0' campaign, marking a shift from generic promotions to market-specific promotional plans.

#### **Delhi Police gets India's first all-women SWAT team "Male Bastion"**

- After more than a year of being put through their paces - learning to scale buildings, defuse bombs and rescue hostages - India's first all-female commando team started work in August, 2018, breaking a traditionally male bastion.
- The 36 women underwent 15 months of rigorous training in weapons handling, counter-terrorism and Krav Maga - the military self-defence technique pioneered by Israel's security forces - to enter the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team.

#### **Santhali becomes India's first tribal language to get own Wikipedia edition**

- Santhali has become the first Indian tribal language to get a Wikipedia edition in its own script after the Santhali Wikipedia went live earlier this month.
- "The Santhali Wikipedia got approval from the language committee of the Wikimedia Foundation on June 28 and went live on August 2," said Jayanta Nath of the Indian chapter of Wikimedia Foundation, which runs Wikipedia.
- Wikipedia contributors from India, Bangladesh and Nepal generated the content to make this page possible, Nath said.

#### **Karnataka launches rural cleanliness campaign 'Swachhameva Jayate'**

- The state government of Karnataka in August, 2018 launched “Swachhameva Jayate”, a campaign to make people in rural Karnataka take a pledge on cleanliness. Primary and high school students, who attended the event to launch the campaign here, took the pledge.
- The Department of Rural Development also released the logo of the campaign — a boy and a girl standing in front of the map of Karnataka. “To take the message far and wide, the government has decided to focus on children as drivers of this message,” said Rural Development Minister Krishna Byre Gowda.

#### **Sikkim’s Khangchendzonga biosphere reserve added to UNESCO list**

- India’s Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve, one of the highest ecosystems in the world, has been added to UNESCO's list of World Network of Biosphere Reserve (WNBR).
- According to a statement issued by the Union Environment Ministry, the International Coordinating Council (ICC) of Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme, UNESCO, had designated Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve for inclusion in the World Network of Biosphere Reserve in its 30th session, which was held from July 23-27, 2018 at Palembang, Indonesia.
- The Khangchendzonga reserve will be India's 11th internationally designated WNBR.

#### **Hardeep Puri to launch Swachh Survekshan 2019, ODF+ & ODF ++ Protocols and Swachh Manch Web Portal**

- Hardeep S Puri, Minister of State for Housing & Urban Affairs, will launch the Swachh Survekshan 2019 on August 10, 2018 in New Delhi.
- Puri will also launch a slew of new initiatives under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) as well as the Ease of Living Index.
- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) had conducted ‘Swachh Survekshan-2016’ survey for the rating of 73 cities in January 2016, followed by ‘Swachh Survekshan-2017’ conducted in January-February 2017 ranking 434 cities.

#### **Jal Bachao, Video Banao, Puraskar Pao contest**

- The Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation announced the winners for the first fortnight of the Jal Bachao, Video Banao, Puraskar Pao contest that was launched on July 10, 2018.
- Shreshth Sahu from Varanasi, Satish Mewada from Bhopal and Gopal Kumar Prajapati from Bokaro have secured the first, second and third positions respectively for the period of July 10-24, 2018.

#### **Ministries of AYUSH, Tribal Affairs sign MoU to promote Medicinal and Aromatic Plants**

- The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED) under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs on August 9, 2018 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), Ministry of AYUSH.
- The MoU aims to promote Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) forest produce for livelihood development of tribal people through the promotion of primary level value addition to MAPs produce from forest area at grassroots level.

#### **Cabinet approves joint issue of postage stamp between India and South Africa**

- The Union Cabinet was apprised of joint issue
- of Postage Stamps on India-South Africa on the theme, "20 Years of Strategic Partnership between India and South Africa".
- The joint stamps were released in June 2018.
- The Commemorative Postage Stamps on India-South Africa: Joint Issue depicts image of Deen dayal Upadhyaya and Oliver Reginald Tambo of South Africa.

#### **Haryana Government to launch Ayushman Bharat scheme on Aug 15**

- The state government of Haryana has announced that it will be launching the Ayushman Bharat-Haryana Health Protection Mission on August 15, 2018.

- The scheme aims to provide cashless healthcare facilities to beneficiaries at empanelled hospitals. The scheme would be initially implemented on a pilot basis in one government hospital in each of the 22 districts, one ESI hospital and one medical college.

#### **NGT forms committee on natural conservation zones**

- The National Green Tribunal has formed a committee to look into whether sub regional plans for protection of Natural Conservation Zones (NCZs) were consistent with the regional plan prepared by the National Capital Region Planning Board.
- The decision was taken by bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel. The bench authorised the Ministry of Environment and Forests to be the nodal agency of the committee and asked the panel to hold its meeting within one month.

#### **Forest department, ISRO to ink MoU for faster fire alerts**

- In the aftermath of Kurangani forest fire in March, which claimed more than 20 lives, State forest department will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ISRO's National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) to get faster fire alerts.
- The MoU is likely to be formalised in a few days. The agreement will reduce the time-lag in communication during emergencies such as forest fires. A top forest official told Express that terms and conditions have been finalised and signed by RK Upadhyay, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and sent to NRSC to complete the agreement.

#### **Nagaland CM launches electronic window for better monitoring**

- With a view to ensure proper monitoring of all government schemes in a transparent manner, Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio in August, 2018 launched "CM Dashboard", an electronic window.
- The CM Dashboard ([www.nl.cmdashboard.nic.in](http://www.nl.cmdashboard.nic.in)) is an electronic window which gives a comprehensive view of various e-Governance projects and schemes running in the state.
- It provides information about some important measurable parameters or progress called KPIS (Key Performance Indicator).

#### **Civil Aviation Ministry approves proposal for setting up water aerodromes**

- Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu on August 11, 2018 approved a proposal for setting up water aerodromes in the country.
- The approval comes after the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issued regulations in June 2018, prescribing procedures and requirement for licensing of water aerodromes.
- Under the proposal, water aerodrome would be set up near locations of tourist and religious importance.

#### **Chandrayaan-2 to be launched in January-March window in 2019**

- India's second moon mission Chandrayaan-2 will now be launched in the January-March window in 2019 instead of later in 2018.
- The main reason for postponing the launch is a change in design, which will enable the spacecraft to land on the lunar surface.

#### **Free sex change operations: Kerala**

- The Kerala government will foot the bill for transgenders willing to undergo sex change operations, CM Pinarayi Vijayan has announced.
- An amount worth Rs 2 lakh will be reimbursed as hospital expenses, while those who have already undergone such surgeries can also apply for reimbursement.

#### **Uttarakhand High Court declares itself legal guardian of cows in state**

- In a first of its kind ruling, Uttarakhand High Court on August 14, 2018 invoked the 'parens patriae' doctrine and declared itself as a legal guardian of members of the bovine family across the state.

- The 'parens patriae' doctrine translates as 'parent of the nation'. It grants the court inherent power and authority to act as guardian for those who are unable to take care of themselves.
- Thus, the court becomes a legal protector for the welfare of cows and other stray cattle in Uttarakhand.

#### **Ministry of AYUSH introduced Central Sector scheme for promoting Pharmacovigilance of AYUSH Drugs**

- Ministry of AYUSH has introduced new Central Sector scheme for promoting pharmacovigilance of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy (ASU&H) Drugs.
- Prime objective of the scheme is to develop the culture of documenting adverse effects and undertake safety monitoring of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs.
- The scheme intends to facilitate the establishment of three-tier network of National Pharmacovigilance Centre (NPVCC), Intermediary Pharmacovigilance Centres (IPVCCs) and Peripheral Pharmacovigilance Centres (PPVCC).

#### **DAC Approves Procurement of Six NGOPVs**

- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) accorded approval for the procurement of six indigenously designed and manufactured Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels (NGOPVs) for the Indian Navy at an approximate cost of Rs. 4941 crore.
- The NGOPVs will be built in indigenous shipyards and will be fitted with state-of-the-art sensor suite with increased endurance.

#### **President's Police medals for distinguished services announced**

- 942 personnel have been awarded Police Medals on the occasion of the Independence Day this year.
- President's Police Medal for Gallantry has been awarded to two personnel.

#### **Union Minister Nitin Gadkari launches road safety awareness video**

- Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari launched road safety awareness video with Brand ambassador of road safety campaign actor Akshay Kumar in New Delhi.
- The priority of the Government is to reduce road accidents.
- The Ministry has written to Home Ministry to consider the good Samaritans in road accidents also for getting National Bravery Awards.

#### **PM Modi's Independence Day Speech 2018 - Key Highlights**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 15, 2018 addressed the country on the occasion of the 72nd Independence Day at Red Fort, Delhi.
- PM Modi highlighted the overall achievements during the past year, important social issues and also drew attention on further developments in the country.

#### **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana Abhiyan (Ayushman Bharat)**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of world's largest government-funded programme – 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Abhiyaan'. It will be launched on the birth anniversary of Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyay on September 25, 2018.
- Under this scheme, any person can get relief from diseases by going to the good hospitals. The healthcare initiative will have a positive impact on 50 crore Indians under Ayushman Bharat.

#### **Launch of 'Gaganyaan' by 2022**

- PM Modi announces manned space mission taking Indian astronauts to space on board 'Gaganyaan' by 2022.
- India will be the fourth country to do this. Prior to the actual launch of this manned mission by 2022, the ISRO will have two unmanned missions and spacecraft will be launched using GSLV Mark-III.

#### **NAVIC**

- With the help of scientists, India will be launching 'NAVIC' which will be very useful for the fishermen and others.

### **Doubling of farmer's income**

- For the first time, India is progressing in the path of Agriculture Export Policy so as to enable farmers to emerge powerful in the world market.
- Now new avenues of organic farming, blue revolution, sweet revolution, solar farming have emerged.

### **Naveen Patnaik launches health scheme in Odisha**

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced the start of Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY), an universal health coverage scheme, in the state from in August, 2018 while unfurling the national flag at Mahatma Gandhi Road here during a drizzle.
- Stating that the scheme would benefit 70 lakh families in the state, Patnaik said it would be implemented with the cooperation of everyone using the state's money.

### **Railway Ministry launches 'Digital Screens' at 22 stations**

- The Union Ministry of Railways on August 15, 2018 launched 'Digital Screens' to spread awareness about Indian Railways Heritage.
- The move is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for creating digital museums at stations using QR code.
- The project, initiated on a pilot basis, aims at showcasing the legacy of Indian Railways through one to two-minute-long movie clips on digital LED screens at the entrance gate of railway stations and also at different comfort areas.

### **Rajasthan to observe September as 'month of nutrition'**

- Rajasthan will observe September as the "month of nutrition" to create awareness among people living in the state.
- In the month of nutrition awareness in rural as well as urban areas will be created for nutrition.

### **Supreme Court approves colour coding of vehicles as per fuel type**

- The Supreme Court on August 13, 2018 approved a proposal to have hologram-based coloured stickers on vehicles which would indicate the nature of fuel being used in Delhi- National Capital Region (NCR).
- The proposal was made by the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH).
- Considering the affidavit filed by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, a bench comprising Justices Madan B Lokur, S Abdul Nazeer and Justice Deepak Gupta asked the government to implement the use of coloured stickers on vehicles plying in Delhi-National Capital Region by September 30, 2018.

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

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched RUCO (Repurpose Used Cooking Oil) initiative for collection and conversion of used cooking oil to biodiesel.
- Under this initiative, 64 companies at 101 locations have been identified to enable collection of used cooking oil.

### **11th World Hindi Conference begins in Mauritius**

- The 11th World Hindi Conference was inaugurated in Mauritius on August 18, 2018 with the theme 'Hindi World and Indian Culture'.
- The three-day conference was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Praveen Kumar Jagannath in Port Louis.



- In a first, a special flight was arranged for official delegates. Around 290 delegates arrived at Port Louis on August 17.

#### **Aditya - L1, ISRO's satellite to study the Sun**

- Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) Aditya-L1 mission, originally named as the Aditya-1 mission, is a satellite designed to study the solar corona (outer layers of the Sun) which is quite similar to NASA's Parker Solar Probe.
- The satellite was conceived as a 400 kg class satellite carrying just one payload, the Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC).
- It was planned to be launched in an 800 km low earth orbit.

#### **Damodar Valley Corp to set up India's largest pump storage hydel power**

- Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) in August, 2018 said it has decided to set up the country's largest pump storage hydel power project of 1,500 MW at an estimated cost of Rs 52 billion.
- "We are preparing to build six 250MW pump storage hydel power plants (1,500MW) at Lagu Pahar on Bokaro River which will be the largest in the country and possibly even in Asia," DVC chairman P K Mukhopadhyay said at the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organised 'Energy Conclave 2018'.

#### **Sushma Swaraj inaugurates Panini Language lab in Mauritius**

- External Affairs Minister (EAM) Sushma Swaraj in August, 2018 inaugurated 'Panini Language Laboratory' at Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) in Mauritius. The lab, gifted by the Indian government, will help MGI in teaching Indian languages in Mauritius.
- Swaraj said that similar laboratories equipped with all modern technologies and similar facilities need to be build up in India also to promote Hindi and regional languages. Education Minister of Mauritius Leela Devi Dookun and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion. Swaraj and Minister of State for External Affairs Gen V K Singh also paid floral tribute to Mahatma Gandhi statue at the institute.

#### **India, Thailand conclude 'Maitree' military exercise**

- The Indian and Thai armed forces in August, 2018 concluded a two-week long platoon level military exercise called 'Exercise Maitree 2018' in Jammu & Kashmir's Srinagar. The exercise was an annual event designed 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.

#### **Telangana govt launches Disaster Response Force in Hyderabad**

- Government of Telangana launched for the first time Disaster Response Force (DRF) vehicles in the Hyderabad city in August, 2018.
- The vehicles will be parked at 24 locations with Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) DRF staff and they will reach the emergency spots in no time.

#### **India, Japan to expand defence ties, to hold first joint Army exercise this year**

- India and Japan have decided to further expand their defence ties, with more bilateral combat exercises, military exchanges and top-level visits as well as collaboration in maritime security and defence production, with an eye firmly on an aggressive and expansionist China.
- Towards this end, India and Japan will hold their first-ever joint Army exercise in the domain of counter-terrorism later this year, while cranking up the level of ongoing naval exercises and interactions, including those in the areas of anti-submarine warfare and mine counter-measures.

#### **Anti-Tank Guided Missile 'HELINA' successfully test fired at Pokhran range**

- Indigenously developed Helicopter launched Anti-Tank Guided Missile 'HELINA' was on August 19, 2018 successfully flight tested from Army Helicopter in the ranges of Pokhran. The test was conducted by the DRDO and the Indian Army.
- The missile was tested for the full range of its weapon system. During the test, the 'HELINA' weapon system released smoothly from the launch platform and was successful in tracking the target all through its course and hit the target with high precision.

#### **Israeli Navy to procure Indo-Israel developed Barak 8 missile defence system**

- Israeli Navy announced to procure multi-purpose Barak 8 missile defence system.
- It will be used by Israeli Navy's Sa'ar-6 corvettes to expand operational capabilities of Israeli navy.
- The system has been jointly developed by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) and India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

#### **UIDAI announces phased rollout of face authentication as additional security layer**

- The Unique Identity Authority of India (UIDAI) announced phased roll-out of face recognition for carrying out Aadhaar authentication from September 15, 2018 as additional security layer.
- It also has announced new feature 'Live Face Photo' which is live feed of person facial features whose 12-digit unique number Aadhaar is submitted.
- The face authentication will be in addition to fingerprint or iris scans for Aadhaar authentication.

#### **Government constitutes Bhaskar Ramamurthy Committee for JEE (Advanced) reforms**

- Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) has proposed to set up five-member committee to suggest changes to JEE (Advanced) in the wake of an inadequate number of candidates qualifying entrance test this year.
- The committee will be headed by IIT-Madras director Bhaskar Ramamurthy.

#### **FSSAI constitutes B Sesikeran Committee to review food labelling standards**

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on August 17, 2018 constituted a group of experts from health and nutrition sector to look into the issue of food labelling.
- The expert panel will be headed by B Sesikeran, former director of National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) and comprises Hemalatha and Dr Nikhil Tandon. The panel will study in detail the concerns of the industry and make recommendations.
- The announcement regarding the constitution of the Committee was made by FSSAI CEO Pawan Kumar Agarwal while addressing a national consultation on the draft regulation on food labelling organised by the CUTS International.

#### **Chandrayaan-I data confirms presence of ice on Moon**

- Using data from the Chandrayaan-I spacecraft that was launched by India 10 years ago, NASA on August 21, 2018 said that scientists have found frozen water deposits in the darkest and coldest parts of the Moon's polar regions.
- Scientists used data from NASA's Moon Mineralogy Mapper (M3) instrument aboard the Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft, launched in 2008 by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), to identify three specific signatures that definitively prove there is water ice at the surface of the Moon.

#### **Government asks WhatsApp to find tech solution to trace origin of fake messages**

- India has asked WhatsApp to set up a local entity in the country and find a technological solution to trace the origin of fake messages.
- The information was shared by the Union Minister of Electronics and IT Ravi Shankar Prasad after his meeting with Whatsapp CEO Chris Daniels in New Delhi on August 21, 2018.

#### **Northern states to set up joint secretariat to fight drug menace**

- The Chief Ministers of four Northern States on August 20, 2018 unanimously decided to set up a joint secretariat at Panchkula, Haryana for data and information sharing to effectively tackle the issue of drug menace in their respective states.
- The decision was taken during the Regional Conference on Drugs – Challenges & Strategies, convened here to discuss and formulate a joint strategy to fight drugs.
- The decision was taken during the regional conference on 'Drugs – Challenges & Strategies', which was convened in Chandigarh to discuss, evolve and formulate a joint strategy to fight drugs.

#### **NOTA option not applicable for Rajya Sabha Elections: Supreme Court**

- The Supreme Court on August 21, 2018 ruled that the 'None of The Above' (NOTA) option will not be applicable for voting in the Rajya Sabha elections.
- The ruling was made by a bench of Justices comprising CJI Dipak Misra and Justices AM Khanwilkar and DY Chandrachud.

#### **Madras HC orders CBSE to publicise 'no homework, no bag' rule for Class I & II**

- The Madras High Court on August 20, 2018 ordered the Central Board of Secondary Education to publicise in media that stringent action would be taken against institutes not following the board's 'no homework' rule for class I and II students.
- The order was passed by Justice N Kirubakaran on a plea by advocate M Purushothaman seeking direction to the CBSE to follow only those books and syllabus, which have been prescribed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training.

#### **Chhattisgarh to rename Naya Raipur as Atal Nagar**

- The state government of Chhattisgarh has decided to rename the state's new capital city Naya Raipur as Atal Nagar in the memory of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The decision was taken during the state's cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Raman Singh on August 21, 2018.
- Vajpayee, one of India's tallest leaders, passed away at the age of 93 on August 16 in New Delhi following a prolonged illness. His last rites ceremony was held with full state honours at Smriti Sthal in the national capital on August 17. The late Prime Minister was also accorded gun salute during the cremation ceremony.

#### **IMD to set up cyclone warning centre in Thiruvananthapuram**

- The Union Ministry of Earth Sciences has proposed to set up a Cyclone Warning Centre in Thiruvananthapuram. The centre is expected to come up by October.
- The decision follows several incidents of tropical cyclones and severe weather events striking over Kerala and Karnataka coasts in the recent times. Currently, the IMD has cyclone warning centers at Chennai, Vishakhapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Mumbai.

#### **MakeMyTrip inks pact with Indonesian tourism ministry**

- Online travel firm MakeMyTrip in August, 2018 said it has signed an agreement with Indonesian tourism ministry to promote the Southeast Asian country as a preferred destination in India.
- Under the partnership, MakeMyTrip and Indonesian tourism ministry will run campaigns across the online travel firm's platforms to endorse tourism to Bali, Jakarta and other regions, the company said in a statement.

#### **Government unveils draft UDAN scheme for International routes**

- The Union Government on August 22, 2018 unveiled a draft scheme for extending the affordable air travel programme- UDAN to international circuits, with state governments identifying the routes for operation.
- The draft International Air Connectivity (IAC) scheme aims to increase the international ticketing to 20 crore by 2027.

#### **Ministry of Health notifies new Health Warnings on Tobacco Products Packs**

- The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on August 20, 2018 notified new sets of specified health warnings for all tobacco product packs.
- The new set of health warnings was notified through an amendment in the Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Packaging and Labeling) Rules, 2008.

#### **President to inaugurate 'International Buddhist Conclave 2018'**

- The President of India Ram Nath Kovind will inaugurate the 'International Buddhist Conclave (IBC), 2018' in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on August 23, 2018. The Minister of State (Independent charge), KJ Alphons will preside over the inaugural function.
- The Conclave is being organised by the Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the State Governments of Maharashtra, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh from August 23-26, 2018 at New Delhi and Ajanta (Maharashtra), followed by site visits to Rajgir, Nalanda and Bodhgaya (Bihar) and Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh).

#### **UIDAI directs enrolment agencies in Kerala to provide free e-Aadhaar printouts**

- The UIDAI has directed the Aadhaar enrolment agencies in Kerala, including banks and post offices, to facilitate retrieval of the 12-digit number and provide free printouts to Aadhaar-holders who have lost their document in the flood-hit state.
- The UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey said, many people have lost their AADHAR cards in the floods. He said that the e-Aadhaar printouts can be taken by people from the enrolment centres by giving their name and biometric authentication.

#### **Aadi Mahotsav hosted in Nagaland to promote the tribal handicraft**

- Recently, in a bid to promote the tribal handicraft and handloom products of the region and to showcase it to the world the essence of ethnicity, the northeastern province of Nagaland hosted the first ever 'Aadi Mahotsav' under the aegis of the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED).
- True ethnicity is the perfect term that reveals the real identity of the handloom and handicraft items from the northeastern states of India. Home to more than 200 tribes, the region's tribal artisans have contributed largely in churning out some of the best quality handloom and handicraft products that hold the viewers captivated with their magnetic charms.

#### **PM Modi inaugurates various projects in Junagadh district**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated various projects in Junagadh district.
- These included the Government Civil Hospital, a milk processing plant and some buildings of the Junagadh Agriculture University.
- He dedicated nine new initiatives worth over Rs 500 crore to the state.
- The Prime Minister said that medical colleges and hospitals are coming up across Gujarat. He mentioned the Jan Aushadhi Yojana, under which Jan Aushadhi stores are being opened, which is reducing the prices of medicines.

#### **CJI launches e-Filing, e-Pay, and NSTEP applications to facilitate litigants and lawyers**

- Justice Dipak Misra, the Chief Justice of India, on August 23, 2018 launched three applications for the benefit of the litigants and lawyers during an event at the Supreme Court of India.
- These applications are - e-Filing, e-Pay, and National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes (NSTEP). These applications have been created under the eCourts project Phase II and developed under the leadership of Justice MB Lokur, Judge-in-charge of eCommittee, Supreme Court.

#### **Punjab Government to make sacrilege of religious text punishable with life imprisonment**

- The Chief Minister of Punjab, Amarinder Singh on August 21, 2018 announced that the state cabinet has approved amendments to the Indian Penal Code (IPC) to make sacrilege of all religious text punishable with life imprisonment.

- The Cabinet approved the Code of Criminal Procedure (Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2018, and the Indian Penal Code (Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2018. The amended bills will be tabled in the upcoming Assembly session.

#### **NITI Aayog launches 5 Thematic Reports on Sustainable Development in Indian Himalayan Region**

- The NITI Aayog on August 23, 2018 released the five Thematic Reports on Sustainable Development in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR), listing the challenges in all the defined 5 thematic areas.
- The reports discuss the significance, the challenges, the ongoing actions and a future roadmap.

Earlier in June 2017, the NITI Aayog had set up 5 Working Groups to prepare a roadmap for actions in 5 thematic areas that are quite significant for the Himalayas. These areas were:

- Inventory and Revival of Springs in Himalayas for Water Security
- Sustainable Tourism in Indian Himalayan Region
- Transformative Approach to Shifting Cultivation
- Strengthening Skill & Entrepreneurship Landscape in Himalayas
- Data/Information for Informed Decision Making

#### **UIDAI makes facial recognition mandatory for Aadhaar authentication**

- Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has announced a new measure that seeks to facial recognition mandatory for every authentication that requires Aadhaar. The information was shared by UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey on August 24.
- The measure is being implemented following official circulars issued by UIDAI to Authentication User Agencies, Authentication Service Agencies and certified biometric device providers.

#### **International Colour Festival inaugurated in Jharkhand**

- Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das on August 23, 2018 inaugurated the five-day International Colour Festival in which artists would depict the state's image in their canvases.
- The festival, which is being organised by the state Art, Culture and Tourism departments, would be held till August 27.
- Stating that an artist depicts the social anguish through his paintings, the chief minister urged them to depict the beauty of Jharkhand in their canvas and exhibit them in international festivals.

#### **Ready to use VVPAT machines during upcoming polls: EC**

- Chief Election Commissioner OP Rawat has said that Election Commission is ready for hundred per cent use of Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail machines (VVPAT).
- Rawat said that the Election Commission has ordered 17.5 lakh VVPAT machines and received 10 lakh out of them by now.

#### **SC refuses to cancel West Bengal panchayat polls**

- The Supreme Court on August 24, 2018 turned down the pleas seeking cancellation of elections to over 20,000 uncontested local body seats in West Bengal.
- A bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud, however allowed those obstructed from filing nomination papers to challenge polls by filing election petitions.

#### **Ban sale of junk food on campuses: UGC directs universities**

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) issued an advisory on August 21, 2018, directing all the universities and higher education institutions to ban sale of junk food on their campuses.
- In this regard, the commission issued a notice to vice-chancellors of all universities to ban junk food in college premises. The notice was released after a directive from the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development which asked the UGC to take a strict action and ban the sale of junk food on premises of higher education institutions.

#### **JNU to rename its Management School after Late PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee**



- The Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) on August 23, 2018 announced that the School of Management and Entrepreneurship will be renamed to 'Atal Bihari Vajpayee School of Management and Entrepreneurship', as a tribute to the late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- Atal Bihari Vajpayee passed away on August 16, 2018. He served as the Member of Parliament for Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. He was a member of the Parliament for over four decades. He was elected to the Lok Sabha for ten times, and was twice elected to the Rajya Sabha, the upper house.

#### **India, China agree to deepen defence cooperation to avoid Doklam-like standoffs**

- India and China on August 23, 2018 decided to work towards a new bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defence Exchanges and Cooperation to replace the MoU signed in 2006.
- The 2006 MoU was signed by the then Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee and envisaged "establishment of a mechanism to ensure frequent and regular exchanges between leaders and officials of the defence ministries and the armed forces of the two countries in addition to developing an annual calendar for holding regular joint military exercises and training programmes."

#### **Prasar Bharati & Mizzima Media of Myanmar ink an MoU**

- Prasar Bharati and Mizzima Media of Myanmar signed a Memorandum of Understanding in August, 2018. This will 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 independent struggle and Prasar Bharati's rich archive will help them relive those precious moments.

#### **Former President Pranab Mukherjee launches NETA App to rate MPs, MLAs**

- Former President Pranab Mukherjee on August 24, 2018 launched the National Electoral Transformation (NETA) mobile application to rate Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs).
- '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.
- To order to rate the representatives, the app requires a combination of mediums like the app itself, IVR calls, SMS and even offline activation.

#### **India's first inter state connected wind power project commissioned, says MNRE**

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in August, 2018 said 126 MW wind power capacity, part of country's first inter state transmission system (ISTS) auction, is commissioned in Bhuj.
- State-run Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd (SECI) had conducted India's first auction of wind power projects in February 2017 in which tariff of Rs 3.46 was discovered, which was much lower than feed in tariffs in vogue those days, a ministry statement said.

#### **Atal Ji Ne Kaha: A book on Vajpayee launched**

- "Atal Ji Ne Kaha" is the latest of the books on the BJP patriarch and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee launched in August, 2018 with a message by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who says the life of the stalwart from Jana Sangh days to "sanyas" from politics in 2007 is a golden document, dedicated to the nation.
- Authored and compiled by Brijendra Rehi, noted Doordarshan producer, senior journalist and then advisor to the former Highways Minister C P Joshi, the 320-page book is a rich repository of the former Prime Minister's select speeches and photographs besides having three interviews by the author.

#### **India approves use of drones; puts restrictions on delivery of goods, food**

- India has finally approved guidelines to bring the use of drones under a legal framework. If all goes well, from December, drones can be used for purpose like mapping, surveying and photography, which till now was illegal due to absence of any guidelines.



- However, following global norms, the government has restricted the use of drones for delivering of goods and food items which may hinder its commercial usage.
- Jayant Sinha, minister of state for civil aviation while announcing the policy indicated that this was done keeping in mind the security aspect and the government will be looking to liberalise the guidelines in future.

#### **Airtel, Netflix announce strategic partnership**

- Airtel and Netflix in August, 2018 announced an expansion of their partnership in India through which subscribers of select Airtel Postpaid and V-Fiber Home Broadband plans will receive a three-month gift of a Netflix subscription.
- Post these three months, these subscribers will be able to pay for their Netflix subscription seamlessly, using their Airtel postpaid or home broadband bill.

#### **FAME India phase II to be launched in September**

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the second phase of the FAME India scheme on September 7, 2018. The scheme offers incentives for mass adoption of electric vehicles with an outlay of Rs 5,500 crore.
- The Prime Minister will unveil the scheme at the inaugural session of 'MOVE' – the global mobility summit, which will be organised in New Delhi from September 7-8. The summit will see in attendance several global CEOs from the automotive sector.

#### **J P Nadda launches logo of Ayushman Bharat Scheme; announces that 29 states and UTs signed MoU for implementation of scheme**

- Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, J P Nadda on August 27, 2018 announced that 29 States and Union Territories (UTs) signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the implementation of on Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (AB-PMJAY).
- These states have already started working on implementation of the scheme. The pilot project has started in 16 States and UTs. Other states/UTs will also start pilots before the pan-India launch of the scheme on September 25, 2018.

#### **Government announces Drone Regulations 1.0 for safe commercial usage of Drones**

- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation on August 27, 2018 issued the Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) or regulations for civil use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) commonly known as drones.
- The regulations were developed after extensive consultations among various stakeholders, and will be effective from December 1, 2018.
- Drones are a technology platform having wide-ranging applications from photography to agriculture, from infrastructure asset maintenance to insurance. Drones range in size from very small and those that can carry multiple kilograms of payload.

#### **Vision document on Taj Mahal should take into account pollution in TTZ: SC**

- The Supreme Court ruled that the vision document on protection and preservation of the Taj Mahal in Agra should be prepared taking into account issues like pollution in the Taj Trapezium Zone (TTZ) and industries operating there.
- The TTZ is an area of about 10400 sq km, spread over the districts of Agra, Firozabad, Mathura, Hathras and Etah in Uttar Pradesh and Bharatpur district of Rajasthan.

#### **ISRO unveils Gaganyaan Mission to put Indians in space before 2022**

- The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) on August 28, 2018 unveiled the details of the Gaganyaan mission for manned space flight before 2022.
- The Gaganyaan mission was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his 72nd Independence Day speech. PM Modi announced that this manned space mission will take Indian astronauts to space on board 'Gaganyaan' by 2022.

- ISRO Chairman, Dr K. Sivan said that the programme will make India the fourth nation in the world to launch a Human Spaceflight Mission. So far, only the USA, Russia and China have launched human spaceflight missions.
- India's first manned space mission 'Gaganyaan' will be launched by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) by 2022.

#### **Union Government asks states to ban e-cigarettes**

- Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issued advisory to all states and Union Territories to not allow manufacture, sale and advertisement of e-cigarettes and other Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS).
- It issued warning that use e-cigarettes and other ENDS devices pose great health risk to public at large, especially to children and pregnant women.

#### **India, EU join hands for research programme Horizon 2020**

- Union Government and European Union (EU) collaborated for research programme named 'Horizon 2020' to develop Next Generation Influenza Vaccine to protect citizens across the globe.
- For this research programme, India's Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and EU committed Euro 15 million (Rs 240 crore).

#### **India Signs MoU with IEA to Enhance Innovation for Clean Energy Transition**

- Department of Biotechnology (DBT), India's Ministry of Science and Technology, and the International Energy Agency (IEA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which aims at enhancing innovation for the clean energy transition. The parties signed the agreement in New Delhi.
- The MoU aims to deepen their co-operation in support of clean energy innovation to accelerate research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) of clean energy technologies in India and recognize the need to support the generation of data for policy-making and improve knowledge of good policy practice for innovation in India and around the world.

#### **Google unveils new platform Navlekha for Indic language publishers**

- Search engine giant Google launched Project Navlekha to make online content relevant for more Indian users especially in local languages.
- It was unveiled along with host of upgrades of Google's other products at fourth 'Google for India' event held in New Delhi.

#### **Assam declares entire state 'disturbed'; extends AFSPA by 6 months**

- The Assam government on August 29, 2018 issued a notification declaring the entire state as "a disturbed area" and extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) for six more months in the state.
- The extension of the AFSPA comes as a precautionary measure to maintain order during the ongoing roll-out of the National Register of Citizens (NRC). The final draft NRC is likely to be published by the end of 2018.

#### **HRD Ministry launches third edition of 'Smart India Hackathon'**

- The third edition of world's biggest open innovation model 'Smart India Hackathon 2019' was launched by the Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Prakash Javadekar in New Delhi on August 29, 2018.
- The 2019 edition is a nationwide initiative, which aims to provide students with a platform to solve some of the pressing problems faced by people in their daily lives and thus, inculcate a culture of product innovation and a mindset of problem-solving.

#### **Google partners with AP State FiberNet for Wi-Fi services**

- Google on August 28, 2018 said it has partnered with Andhra Pradesh State FiberNet Ltd (APSFNL) to facilitate Internet access to more than 12,000 villages, benefitting around 10 million people.

- The tech giant also rebranded its 'Tez' as 'Google Pay' as part of its efforts to take the digital payments app to more online and retail merchants across the country.

#### **Union Cabinet approves Earth Sciences Ministry's umbrella scheme 'O-SMART'**

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on August 29, 2018 gave its approval for implementation of an umbrella scheme 'Ocean Services, Technology, Observations, Resources Modelling and Science (O-SMART)'.
- The CCEA, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the scheme for implementation during the period from 2017-18 to 2019-20 at an overall cost of Rs 1623 crore. The scheme covers a total of 16 sub-projects, which address ocean development activities such as services, technology, resources, observations and science.

#### **Government constitutes new science and technology council to advise PM**

- The Union Government has constituted a 21-member science and technology council to advise Prime Minister Narendra Modi on matters related to science, technology and innovations.
- The council, named as Prime Minister's Science Technology and Innovation Advisory Committee (PM-STIAC), will be headed by K Vijay Raghavan, the principal scientific adviser to the Union Government.

#### **Punjab Assembly passes amendment bill to set up State Security Commission**

- The Punjab state assembly on August 28, 2018 passed the Police (Amendment) Bill 2018 that would pave way for setting up of a State Security Commission for selection of the director general of police (DGP).
- The bill seeks to amend the Punjab Police Act 2007, which was enacted on February 5, 2008. The act did not provide for selection of the DGP from the panel as prepared by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

#### **Amethi village to go digital from Sept 1**

- Pindara Thakur village under coveted Amethi parliamentary constituency of Congress president Rahul Gandhi would go fully digital from September 1, 2018.
- Located in Musafirkhana tehsil of the district, the village would go digital under the Digital India Programme of the Union government.
- It would be digitally linked to the outside world in a formal ceremony on September 1, 2018 by Smriti Irani. Irani had fought the 2014 Lok Sabha elections from Amethi but had lost to Gandhi by over 1 lakh votes.

#### **HRD Ministry launches Atal rankings for Higher Education Institutions**

- The Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar on August 30, 2018 launched the Innovation Cell and Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) in New Delhi.
- The development aims to promote a culture of innovation and research in higher education. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that India lacks innovation, it is a challenge for India to innovate, and innovation will make it prosper. He further said that new thinking must be encouraged and every college must have an innovation cell.

#### **Supreme Court adjourns hearing on validity of Article 35A till January 2019**

- The Supreme Court on August 31, 2018 adjourned hearing on petitions challenging constitutional validity of Article 35 A to second week of January 2019.
- The Article empowers the Jammu and Kashmir legislature to define the state's permanent residents and their special rights and it bars outsiders from buying immovable property in the state.

## Appointments

### India

| Person Name                        | Appointed as                                | Organisation/Country  |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Deepak Parekh                      | Non-Executive Director                      | HDFC  |
| Kumar Mangalam Birla               | non-official independent directors          | Air India   |
| Y C Deveshwar                      | non-official independent directors          | Air India   |
| Sandeep Bakhshi                    | Chief Operating Officer                     | ICICI Bank  |
| Swaminathan Gurumurthy             | Central Board Member                        | Reserve Bank of India                                       |
| Satish Kashinath Marathe           | Central Board Member                        | Reserve Bank of India                                       |
| Justice Indira Banerjee            | Judge                                       | Supreme Court   |
| Justice Vineet Saran               | Judge                                       | Supreme Court   |
| Justice K M Joseph                 | Judge                                       | Supreme Court   |
| Justice Rajendra Menon             | Chief Justice                               | Delhi High Court  |
| Harivansh Narayan Singh            | Deputy Chairman                             | Rajya Sabha   |
| R Madhavan                         | Chairman and Managing Director              | Hindustan Aeronautics Limited                               |
| Abhinav Bindra                     | Member                                      | Athletes' Commission of the International Olympic Committee |
| R S Sharma                         | Chairman                                    | Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)                |
| Justice Gita Mittal                | First Woman Chief Justice                   | Jammu and Kashmir High Court                                |
| Justice Manjula Chellur            | Chairperson                                 | Appellate Tribunal for Electricity (APTEL)                  |
| Justice Vijaya Kamlesh Tahilramani | Chief Justice                               | Madras High Court   |
| Akshay Kumar Singh                 | Director (Pipelines)                        | Indian Oil Corp (IOC)                                       |
| Ramesh Powar                       | Head Coach                                  | Indian women's national cricket team                        |
| Subhash Sheoratan Mundra           | Independent Director                        | Indiabulls Housing Finance                                  |
| Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy              | Chairman                                    | Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)        |
| Prachi Mishra                      | Managing Director and Chief India Economist | Goldman Sachs   |
| Sunil Mehta                        | Chairman                                    | Indian Bank's Association (IBA)                             |
| Anand Kumar                        | Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)               | Rajasthan   |

### World

| Person Name                                | Appointed as                         | Organisation/Country   |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Ramon Laguarta                             | Chief Executive Officer              | PepsiCo  |
| Ajay Data                                  | Council Member                       | Country Code Supporting Organisation of ICANN                      |
| Former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet | Chief                                | UN human rights  |
| Mario Abdo Benitez                         | President                            | Paraguay   |
| Imran Khan                                 | Prime Minister                       | Pakistan   |
| Nandula Raghuram                           | Chair                                | International Nitrogen Initiative (INI)                            |
| Lalchand Rajput                            | Head Coach                           | Zimbabwe   |
| Satya S Tripathi                           | Assistant Secretary General and Head | New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) |

## Days

| Days  | Observed on | Theme/Info                                   |
|---|-------------|--|
| World Bio-Fuel Day                                  | August 10   |  |
| International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples | August 9    | 'Indigenous peoples' migration and movement' |
| International Youth Day                             | August 12   | Safe Spaces for Youth                        |
| Shaheed Saman Diwas                                 | August 14   | Observed in Madhya Pradesh                   |
| World Humanitarian Day                              | August 19   | #NotATarget                                  |
| National Renewable Energy Day                       | August 20   |  |
| National Sports Day                                 | August 29   |  |

## World News

### Scientists discover new shape called scutoid

- Scientists have discovered a new shape called scutoid while studying nature's way of moulding tissue to form the skin, cavity linings and the building blocks of organs.
- The shape has five sides on one end and six on the other and a triangular surface on one of its longer edges.
- Scientists have referred to it as a twisted prism kind of shape that allows the tissue to mould around organs.

### China launches high-resolution Earth observation satellite

- China on July 31, 2018 launched Gaofen-11, an optical remote sensing satellite, as part of the country's high-resolution Earth observation project.
- The Gaofen-11 satellite was launched on a Long March 4B rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in northern Shanxi Province. It was the 282nd flight mission by a Long March carrier rocket.

### US Congress passes bill to slash Pak's defence aid to USD 150 million

- The US Congress on August 1, 2018 passed a defence spending bill capping its security-related aid to Pakistan at 150 Million dollars, significantly below the level of more than one billion US dollars per year.
- The Senate passed the conference report on National Defense Authorisation Act-2019 (NDAA-19), by 87 to 10 votes. The House of Representatives had passed the conference report last week.

### US advises its citizens to reconsider their visit to Pakistan

- The US on August 2, 2018 advised its citizens to reconsider their visit to Pakistan and asked them not to travel to Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province due to threat of possible terror attacks.
- In its latest travel advisory, the US State Department also asked its citizens not to travel to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir area due to threat of terrorism and potential threat of armed conflict between the two South Asian neighbours.

### India elected as President of Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development

- India was on August 3, 2018 elected as the President of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) for a period of two years.
- India got elected against Iran during voting which took place at the 44th annual gathering of AIBD in Colombo. The three-day gathering was inaugurated by Sri Lankan Minister of Finance and Mass Media Mangala Samaraweera.

### Chinese researchers 'create' world's first single-chromosome yeast



- Researchers from China have claimed to have created the world's first single-chromosome yeast while not affecting the majority of its functions.
- The researchers involved in the creation are molecular biologists from the Centre for Excellence in Molecular Plant Sciences in China. The research was published on the website of the journal – Nature on August 2, 2018.

#### **Sunita Williams, 8 other astronauts named by NASA for first manned US space launch since 2011**

- The US space agency NASA on August 3, 2018 introduced to the world the crew of nine astronauts who will fly on American-made spacecraft to the International Space Station (ISS) from the US soil for the first time since the space shuttle's retirement in 2011.
- These astronauts are Indian-origin Sunita Williams, Josh Cassada, Eric Boe, Nicole Mann, Christopher Ferguson, Douglas Hurley, Robert Behnken, Michael Hopkins and Victor Glover.

#### **Japan marks 73rd anniversary of atomic bombing of Hiroshima**

- Japan marked the 73rd anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 2018.
- Tens of thousands of people gathered to honour the victims at an annual memorial ceremony held in the city. They included representatives from 85 countries, as well as survivors of the bombing.

#### **China successfully tests first hypersonic aircraft**

- China on August 6, 2018 announced that it has successfully tested its first cutting-edge hypersonic aircraft, which could carry nuclear warheads and penetrate any current generation anti-missile defence systems.
- The Xingkong-2 or Starry Sky-2, was launched in a target range located in Northwest China on August 3.

#### **UK announces new organ donation plan to address Indian-origin shortages**

- The UK government on August 5, 2018 announced new plans to change the law for organ and tissue donation to address the urgent need for organs within Indian-origin communities in the country.
- The proposed new system is expected to come into effect in the UK in 2020, as part of a drive to assist the black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people awaiting life-saving transplant.

#### **Saudi Arabia ends trade ties with Canada over its interference in Saudi Arabia's internal affairs**

- Saudi Arabia announced to end its all new trade and investment ties with Canada over its interference in its internal affairs.
- The Saudi Arabia's Foreign Ministry expelled the Canadian ambassador and recalled its own envoy in Canada.
- The kingdom gave the Canadian ambassador 24 hours to leave the country.

#### **China launches Exascale Supercomputer Prototype**

- China recently launched a prototype exascale computing machine, the next-generation supercomputer, according to the developers.
- The Sunway exascale computer prototype was jointly developed by the National Research Center of Parallel Computer Engineering and Technology (NRCPC), National Supercomputing Center, China's Shandong Province and the Pilot National Laboratory for Marine Science and Technology (Qingdao).

#### **World's 1st hypersonic aircraft that can fire nuclear warheads successfully test fired by China**

- Beijing successfully tested its first hypersonic aircraft which has the ability to carry nuclear warheads and penetrate any current generation anti-missile defence system owing to its high speed and 'unpredictable trajectory'.
- The test of the Xingkong-2, or Starry Sky-2, was conducted in a target range located in northwest China in August, 2018, the state-run China Academy of Aerospace Aerodynamics (CAAA) said in a statement.

#### **Chinese astronomers discover lithium-rich giant star, bigger than sun**

- Chinese astronomers have discovered the most lithium-rich giant star ever known, which could shed new light on the evolution of the universe.

- With 3,000 times more lithium than a normal star, it was found in the direction of Ophiuchus, on the north side of the galactic disk, at a distance of 4,500 light years from Earth. The star has a mass almost 1.5 times our sun.

#### **Earth heading towards irreversible 'hothouse' state: Study**

- A new study has warned that Earth is at the risk of entering an irreversible 'hothouse' condition, where the global temperatures will rise by four to five degrees and sea levels may surge by up to 60 metres higher than in August, 2018, even if the targets under the Paris climate deal are met.
- According to the researchers, keeping global warming to within 1.5-2 degrees Celsius may be more difficult than previously assessed.

#### **Indian-American Avi Goel wins International Geography Bee World Championship**

- Indian-American high school student Avi Goel won the world championship at the International Geography Bee's junior varsity division which was held in Berlin in July 2018.
- Avi is a tenth grader at Silver Creek High School in Evergreen, San Jose, California.
- He won a gold medal in seven out of the 10 medal events, and a silver medal in two of the events, topping the overall medals tally.

#### **NASA launches Parker Solar Probe spacecraft**

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on Sunday launched the Parker Solar Probe spacecraft.
- The official Twitter handle of NASA made the announcement: 3-2-1. and we have liftoff of Parker #SolarProbe atop @ULALaunch's #DeltaIV Heavy rocket.
- NASA shared on their blog that "NASA's Parker Solar Probe is on its way for a rendezvous with the Sun."

#### **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.

#### **Pakistan releases 30 Indian prisoners as a goodwill gesture**

- Pakistan on August 13, 2018 released 30 Indian prisoners as a goodwill gesture. The prisoners, including 27 fishermen, were handed over to Indian officials at Wagah border.
- The decision to release the prisoners was a humanitarian gesture to mark the nation's Independence Day on August 14.

#### **Iran unveils new short-range ballistic missile**

- Iran's Defence Minister unveiled the next generation of Tehran's Fateh Mobin short-range ballistic missile on August 13, 2018.
- The minister, Brigadier General Amir Hatami, described the new version of the Fateh Mobin as 100-percent domestically made, agile, stealth, tactical and precision-guided.

#### **India grants Rs 470 million for Nepal's Postal Highway Project**

- India released additional Rs 470 million for Phase I of Postal Highway Project being constructed in Southern Plains of Nepal.
- The amount released will help to maintain fund liquidity of ongoing construction of 14 road packages under Postal Highway Project.

#### **24th World Congress of Philosophy held in Beijing**

- The 24th World Congress of Philosophy (WCP) was held in Beijing, China from August 13 to 17, 2018.

- It was organized by the International Federation of Philosophical Societies, and Peking University.
- Its theme was "Learning To Be Human".

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

- The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Radha Mohan Singh on August 16, 2018 wrote to Jose Graziano da Silva, the Director General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UNFAO) to declare the upcoming year as the 'International Year of Millets'.
- Singh stressed on the need to draw wider global attention and action to promote cultivation of millets.
- This proposal came following the earlier communication of the Ministry with the Secretary General of the UN in November 2017 in this regard.

#### **US forms 'Iran Action Group' for post-nuclear deal policy**

- US secretary of state, Mike Pompeo on August 16, 2018 announced the formation of the Iran Action Group (IAG) to coordinate and run the country's policy towards Iran. The development follows President Donald Trump's announcement of the unilateral withdrawal of the United States from the multinational Iran nuclear deal.
- Pompeo has named Brian Hook, the State Department's director of policy planning, as the group's head.

#### **Pakistan pays tribute to Atal Bihari Vajpayee hailing him as 'statesman'**

- Pakistan on August 16, 2018 paid tribute to former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee hailing him as a 'statesman' after he passed away.
- Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesperson said that Vajpayee was a renowned statesman who contributed to bringing a change in India-Pakistan relations and remained a key supporter of SAARC and regional cooperation for development.

#### **World's oldest cheese discovered from Egyptian Tomb: Researchers**

- The world's oldest cheese was recently discovered inside an Egyptian tomb. The tomb of Ptahmes, who was the mayor of Memphis in Egypt during the 13th century BC, was initially unearthed in 1885.
- After being lost under drifting sand, it was rediscovered in 2010 and archeologists found broken jars at the site a few years later.
- One of the jars contained a solidified whitish mass, as well as canvas fabric that might have covered the jar or been used to preserve its contents.

#### **China unveils Chang'e 4 lunar rover to explore far side of moon**

- China has unveiled Chang'e 4 lunar rover to explore the far side of the moon by the end of 2018. In December, the vehicle will travel aboard the unmanned lunar probe Chang'e 4, which is expected to land in the Aitken basin on the far side of the Moon, not visible from the Earth.
- The vehicle is similar to Yutu, China's first lunar rover launched in 2013 along with Chang'e 3, which continues to traverse the visible side of the Moon.

#### **Exercise Pitch Black 2018 concludes in Australia**

- Exercise Pitch Black 2018, a biennial multi-national large force employment warfare exercise, was hosted by Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) from July 24, 2018 to Aug 18, 2018 in Darwin, Australia.
- It was the largest Pitch Black Exercise ever conducted by Australia, which saw participation of 16 nations and more than 140 aircraft.
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent consisted of 145 personnel, including four Sukhoi Su-30 MKIs, an Ilyushin tanker, an Ilyushin Il-78 tanker, a Lockheed Martin C-130J-30 Super Hercules, and a Boeing C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft.

#### **Researchers develop world's first-ever 4D printing for ceramics**

- Researchers from the City University of Hong Kong (CityU) have successfully developed the world's first-ever 4D printing for ceramics that can be used to create complex, shape-changing objects.
- 4D printing is conventional 3D printing combined with the additional element of time as the fourth dimension, where the printed objects can re-shape or self-assemble themselves over time with external stimuli, such as mechanical force, temperature, or a magnetic field.

#### **Turkey initiates dispute complaint with WTO against US**

- Turkey has initiated a dispute complaint with the World Trade Organization (WTO) against the United States for imposing additional tariffs on steel and aluminium imports from Turkey.
- The WTO said Turkey on August 20 requested dispute consultations on claims that the doubling of duties on steel and aluminium were inconsistent with international trade rules.

#### **Researchers develop 'in-body GPS' system to track tumours**

- Researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Massachusetts General Hospital in the United States have developed a wireless 'in-body GPS' system that can track tumours and pinpoint the location of ingestible implants inside the body.
- In tests conducted on animals, the system called 'ReMix' was found to be able to easily track the implants with centimetre-level accuracy. Similar implants could be used to deliver drugs to specific regions in the body.

#### **Chandrayaan-I data confirms presence of ice on Moon: NASA**

- The NASA scientists, using data from the Chandrayaan-I spacecraft, on August 21, 2018 confirmed that there are frozen water deposits in the darkest and coolest parts of Moon's Polar Regions. The findings were published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS).
- The Chandrayaan-I spacecraft was launched in 2008 by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

#### **India's SCO anti-terror exercise with Pakistan begins**

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Exercise began in August, 2018, bringing Indian and Pakistani militaries to participate for the first time in a joint exercise under the anti-terror setting.
- The six-day SCO Exercise, which has brought the two countries together for the Exercise Peaceful Mission 2018, will continue till August 29 at Chebarkul town in Chelyabinsk Oblast in Russia. The Indian contingent will return on August 30.

#### **Sweden launches 'feminist foreign policy' manual**

- Sweden on August 23, 2018 released a handbook of its "feminist foreign policy" for rights groups and foreign governments, showcasing lessons from the nation's flagship approach to promote women's rights globally.
- The manual was published on the Swedish government's website. It is derived from four years of work to place gender equality at the heart of the country's international agenda.

#### **China imposes retaliatory taxes on US products worth 16 billion dollars**

- The United States had imposed 25 percent tariffs on 16 billion dollar worth of Chinese goods coming into the US. China immediately imposed retaliatory taxes on the same value of American products.
- The move brings the total amount of goods flowing between the countries, subject to tariffs, up to 106 billion dollars, which is roughly 17 per cent of all of the bilateral trade.

#### **4th BIMSTEC summit to be held in Kathmandu**

- The fourth Summit of Heads of State/Government of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) will be held in Kathmandu, Nepal on August 30-31, 2018.
- All member states of BIMSTEC have confirmed their participation in the Summit. From India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to participate in the summit.

#### **European Space Agency launches world's first wind-sensing satellite Aeolus**

- European Space Agency (ESA) successfully launched wind-sensing satellite named 'Aeolus' into orbit on board of Vega rocket from French Guyana.
- It is world's first wind-sensing satellite dedicated to map Earth's wind on global scale in particular tropical winds which are very poorly mapped.

#### **6TH RCEP Ministerial Meeting begins in Singapore**

- The 6th RCEP Trade Ministers' Meeting began in Singapore on August 30, 2018.
- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu is leading the Indian delegation for the meeting.
- The Minister will participate in the meeting consisting of 10 ASEAN countries and six ASEAN FTA partners namely, India, China, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

#### **4th BIMSTEC Summit kicks off: PM Modi arrives in Nepal**

- The 4th BIMSTEC Summit began on August 30, 2018 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The two-day Summit will be held during August 30-31, 2018 with the main focus on countering terrorism, enhancing regional connectivity and boosting trade.
- Theme 2018: 'Towards a Peaceful, Prosperous and Sustainable Bay of Bengal Region'. The theme will help shape a collective response to the common aspirations and challenges by the member countries.

#### **Russia successfully conducts a test launch of new interceptor missile**

- Russian military successfully conducted a test launch of a new interceptor missile for Russia's missile defense system.
- The test was conducted at the test site of Sary-Shagan in the Republic of Kazakhstan.
- The interceptor missile successfully performed its task and hit the simulated target with the specified precision.

#### **First SAARC Agri Cooperative Business Forum begins in Kathmandu**

- The first South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Agri Cooperative Business Forum began in Kathmandu on August 28, 2018.
- The theme of three-day Forum is the 'Organizing and Strengthening Family Farmers' Cooperatives to attain the Sustainable-Development-Goals-1 and 2 in South Asia'.

#### **French Environment Minister resigns over sluggish progress on climate goals**

- French Environment Minister Nicolas Hulot resigned on August 28, 2018 in frustration over sluggish progress on climate goals and nuclear energy policy, dealing a major blow to President Emmanuel Macron's already tarnished green credentials.
- Hulot, a former TV Presenter and green activist, who consistently scored high in opinion polls, quit during a live radio interview following what he called an accumulation of disappointments.

## **Awards**

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#### **SK Arora awarded with WHO World No Tobacco Day 2017 Award**

- Delhi government's Additional Director of health, SK Arora was awarded with prestigious World No Tobacco Day 2017 Award of the World Health Organisation (WHO) for his extraordinary contribution towards tobacco control.
- He was presented the award by Henk Bakedam, WHO India country head in New Delhi.



- Delhi government's health department for the past four years has been fighting against direct advertisement of brand promotion of tobacco and surrogate advertisement of tobaccos in name of pan masala and other eatables such as tea, ilaichi (cardamom).

#### **Gopalkrishna Gandhi conferred with Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award**

- Former West Bengal Governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi was on August 20, 2018 conferred with Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award on the occasion of 74th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
- The award was given at a function in New Delhi in presence of former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and Congress leader Karan Singh.

#### **Dheemanth Nagaraj, first Indian technologist to get Intel Fellow award**

- For the first time in its 20-year history, an executive at the Intel India Design Centre has earned the distinction of being designated an Intel Fellow.
- Dheemanth Nagaraj got the honour, which is given to outstanding technological experts within the company, for his innovations such as conceiving and building the Intel Xeon D processor, a density-optimised and low-power chip for the hyper-scale cloud, networking and storage.

#### **Indra Nooyi to be honoured with Asia Society's Game Changer of the Year 2018 award**

- PepsiCo's India-born CEO Indra Nooyi will be honoured with the Game Changer of the Year award by a global cultural organisation in recognition of her business achievements, humanitarian record and advocacy for women and girls around the world.
- The 2018 Asia Game Changer Awards will be given in October to individuals and institutions who have broken barriers, defined courage, worked miracles, and in turn inspired their fellow citizens of the world.

#### **Boat racing team to be added to India's Asian Games contingent after Delhi HC order**

- Boat racing team is set to be added to Indian contingent for next month's Asian Games in Indonesia following Delhi High Court orders.
- The orders came on July 30 on a petition filed by one of the athletes in the boat racing squad, Abhay Singh against Indian Olympic Association's (IOA) decision to not send a team of the water sport.

#### **Badminton World Championships: Sindhu loses final again, settles for silver**

- P V Sindhu finished second best yet again in a major tournament final as she went down tamely to Carolina Marin in the World Championships' women's singles title clash, adding to the Indian's tale of woes here in August, 2018.
- The Olympic silver medallist settled for another white metal following a 19-21 10-21 loss to Olympic champion Marin of Spain.

#### **10-year-old Clark Kent beats Michael Phelps' swimming record**

- Clark Kent Apuada of California has grabbed attention in his sport after finishing first in seven events at the Far West International Swimming Championship, and breaking Michael Phelps's record in the 100-meter butterfly.
- Phelps, who won 23 Olympic gold medals in his career, also set 39 world records before retiring. However, his record of junior best for the 100m butterfly has been smashed now.

#### **Lok Sabha passes National Sports University Bill, 2018**

- The Lok Sabha on August 3, 2018 passed the National Sports University Bill, 2018 that seeks to establish a National Sports University in Manipur as part of a vision to enhance country's standing in sports.
- The Bill was introduced in Lok Sabha by Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports on July 23, 2018. It replaces the National Sports University Ordinance, 2018 that was promulgated on May 31, 2018.
- The National Sports University will be headquartered in Manipur.

### Swastika Ghosh wins bronze in Hong Kong Open TT

- Young Indian paddler Swastika Ghosh claimed a bronze medal in the junior girls' doubles along with Singapore's Jingyi Zhou in the 2018 Hang Seng Hong Kong Junior and Cadet Open that concluded last week.
- The pair defeated their Taipei opponents Pei-Ling Su and Yu-Chin Tsai 3-1 in the round of 16 before overcoming the Chinese duo of Binyue Zhang and Yi Chen with a similar score in the quarter-finals.

### World Champion weightlifter Mirabai Chanu pulls out of the Asian Games

- World Champion weightlifter Mirabai Chanu pulled out of the Asian Games after failing to recover from a lower back injury.
- The reigning CWG champion is struggling with an unidentified lower-back problem since May and is yet to begin full-fledged weight training.

### Games period to be made compulsory in schools: Sports Minister

- The Union Sports Minister, Rajyavardhan Rathore announced on August 6, 2018 that a games period will be made mandatory in all schools from 2019 onwards. Along with this, the Minister said that the Ministry of Education will ensure a 50 per cent reduction in the syllabus.

### Anderson becomes 1st bowler to take 100 wickets at Lord's

- England fast bowler James Anderson in August, 2018 became the first bowler to take 100 Test wickets here at the iconic Lord's Cricket Ground.
- The 36-year-old achieved the feat on day four of the second Test in the ongoing five-match Test series against India, and it was India's opening batsman Murali Vijay who became his 100th Test wicket.
- Vijay knicked a quick delivery off Anderson and wicket-keeper Johnny Barstow made no mistake behind the stumps. The bowler celebrated his 100th wicket in a thrilling fashion along with his fellow teammates, who applauded the bowler for the achievement.

### Teen cyclist creates history by claiming India's first ever medal

- Teen cyclist Esow Alben has created history by claiming India's first ever medal - a silver- at the UCI Junior Track Cycling World Championships in Aigle, Switzerland.
- He put enormous pressure on Czech Republic's Jakub Stastny in the final sprint before settling for the silver medal.

### Shane Warne to come out with autobiography in October

- Spin legend Shane Warne will talk about his extraordinary cricketing career and his life off the pitch besides unveiling several unknown facts in his autobiography which will be published this October.
- Ebury Press in August, 2018 announced that Warne's memoir "No Spin" will have a global release on October 4.

### Veteran India pacer Jhulan Goswami retires from T20Is

- Veteran India pacer Jhulan Goswami in August, 2018 announced her retirement from T20 Internationals with immediate effect.
- She represented India in 68 T20Is, picking up 56 wickets which included a five-wicket haul against Australia in 2012.
- Goswami, a veteran of 10 Tests and 169 ODIs, is currently the leading wicket-taker in the women's ODI format and also the first woman cricketer to take 200 ODI wickets.

### Japan wins first ever U-20 Women World Cup

- A very relentless Japanese side overpowered Spain to lift their first ever Under 20 Women's World Cup, beating Spain 3-1 in France in August, 2018.
- The finals was obviously entertaining for the fans at the Stade de la Rabine, Vannes, as the Europeans held possession early in the first half but their persistent opponent took the lead.

## Nitu clinches second successive gold at world youth boxing championships

- Defending champion Nitu (48kg) claimed her second successive gold at the world youth boxing championships with a gritty performance in the final in Budapest on August 30, 2018.
- The Haryana-boxer, who is also an Asian champion, defeated Thailand's Nillada Meekoon in a split decision on the first day of summit clashes in which she was the only Indian in action here.

## Asian Games 2018

India competed at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta and Palembang, Indonesia, from 18th August to 2nd September. **Neeraj Chopra** was the flag bearer for the opening ceremony while **Rani Rampal** was named as the flag bearer for the closing ceremony.

India ranked 8th in the 2018 Asian Games Medal Table with 69 medals in total.

China topped the medal tally with 132 Golds and total 289 Medals.

Japanese swimmer Ikee Rikako has been named as the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the recently-concluded 18th edition of the Asian Games.

The 18-year-old, who bagged six gold and two silver medals in the tournament, became the first female athlete to win the MVP title.

### Upcoming Asian Games

2022 Asian Games will be held in Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China.

2026 Asian Games will be held in Nagoya, Japan.

### India's Medals in Asian Games 2018

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Gold   | 15 |
| Silver | 24 |
| Bronze | 30 |
| Total  | 69 |

### India's Records in Asian Games 2018

India secured a bronze medal in the men's team regu event which was the country's first medal in sepak takraw since the debut of the sport in the 1990 Asian Games.

India secured its **first ever medal in table tennis in the Asian Games as the men's team won a Bronze medal** by defeating Japan in the quarterfinal of the Table tennis at the 2018 Asian Games.

In the 25 meter rapid fire pistol event, **Rahi Sarnobat became the first Indian woman to clinch the gold medal in a shooting event of Asian Games.**

**Vinesh Phogat**, who won gold in the women's freestyle 50 kg category, **became the first Indian woman wrestler to win a gold medal at the Games.**

**Saina Nehwal & P. V. Sindhu won India's first ever medal in the women's singles event in badminton** at the Asian Games when they reached the semifinals at Jakarta.

**P. V. Sindhu became the first Indian shuttler to reach the final of a singles badminton event** at the Games and eventually won a silver.

**Neeraj Chopra** won the country's **first javelin gold medal**, setting a new national record.

**Indian pair of Pranab Bardhan & Shibnath Sarkar** won the gold medal in the inaugural edition of **Contract bridge** at the **2018 Asian Games – Men's pair.**

**Vikas Krishan Yadav** sets the record to **become the first Indian boxer to clinch a medal in three successive Asian games.**

**Swapna Barman becomes first Indian heptathlete to win Asian Games gold.**

**Arpinder Singh** wins India's first triple jump gold in 48 years.

India's 23-year-old **Tajinder Pal Singh** clinched the gold medal in men's shot put with an Asian Games record by smashing the national and world record.

#### India's Gold Medallists in Asian Games 2018

| Medal | Name   | Sport       | Event                     |
|-------|--|-------------|---------------------------|
| Gold  | Bajrang Punia  | Wrestling   | Men's freestyle 65 kg     |
| Gold  | Vinesh Phogat  | Wrestling   | Women's freestyle 50 kg   |
| Gold  | Saurabh Chaudhary  | Shooting    | Men's 10 metre air pistol |
| Gold  | Rahi Sarnobat  | Shooting    | Women's 25 metre pistol   |
| Gold  | Sawarn Singh, Dattu Baban Bhokanal, Om Prakash, Sukhmeet Singh | Rowing      | Men's quadruple sculls    |
| Gold  | Rohan Bopanna, Divij Sharan                                    | Lawn tennis | Men's doubles             |
| Gold  | Tajinderpal Singh Toor   | Athletics   | Men's shot put            |
| Gold  | Neeraj Chopra  | Athletics   | Men's javelin throw       |
| Gold  | Manjit Singh   | Athletics   | Men's 800 metres          |
| Gold  | Arpinder Singh   | Athletics   | Men's triple jump         |
| Gold  | Swapna Barman  | Athletics   | Women's heptathlon        |
| Gold  | Jinson Johnson   | Athletics   | Men's 1500 metres         |
| Gold  | M. R. Poovamma, Saritaben Gaikwad, Hima Das, Vismaya           | Athletics   | Women's 4 x 400 m relay   |
| Gold  | Amit Panghal   | Boxing      | Light flyweight (49 kg)   |
| Gold  | Pranab Bardhan, Shibnath Sarkar                                | Bridge      | Men's pair                |

## Indexes

### Kerala, Rajasthan top India's first state index for energy efficiency

- On 1 August, India's Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), a sub-agency of the Ministry of Power, released the country's first energy efficiency index for Indian states. The 'State Energy Efficiency Preparedness Index' was prepared by the body in conjunction with Niti Aayog, India's policy incubator.
- The index assesses states on their progress in implementing clean energy projects and achieving energy efficiency targets. It includes 63 indicators along six lines - construction, industry, transport, agriculture, electricity generation and distribution and municipality.

### India ranks 57 in Global Innovation Index 2018

- The 11th edition of Global Innovation Index (GII) 2018 was launched in India on August 8, 2018. The index was based on the theme- 'Energizing the World with Innovation'.
- The India launch was organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), one of the founding partners of GI along with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in collaboration with the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).
- In this year's edition of GI, India's rank has jumped to 57 from 60 in 2017. In fact, India has been consistently climbing the GI ranking for the past three years. It was ranked 66th in the 2016 Global Innovation Index and 81st in 2015 GI.

### Ease of Living Index 2018 released: Pune tops; Delhi at 65

- The Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri on August 13, 2018 announced the Top 10 cities rankings on Ease of Living Index 2018.
- Among the top 116 cities of the country, Kolkata was the only city which refused to participate in the survey.
- Pune emerged as the top-ranked city in the Ease of Living Index.
- Maharashtra's Pune, Mumbai and Navi Mumbai rounded the top three of Ease of Living Index 2018, while Thane was ranked at the 6th spot.
- The national capital New Delhi was placed at a 65th spot.
- Tamil Nadu's Chennai was ranked at the 14th place.
- The bottom 3 cities in the list are Rampur, Kohima and Patna.

### SBI ranked as India's most patriotic brand in survey; Tata Motors, Patanjali follows

- Country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) is considered to be the most patriotic brand, according to a survey, followed by Tata Motors, Patanjali, Reliance Jio and BSNL.
- Around 16 per cent respondents ranked SBI to be the most patriotic brand overall, followed by Tata Motors and Patanjali with 8 per cent each, and Reliance Jio and BSNL with 6 per cent each, the survey conducted by UK-based online market research and data analytics firm YouGov said.
- In terms of sectors, the financial sector topped the chart of the most patriotic brands with two leading names - SBI and Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) - followed by auto, consumer goods, food and telecom sectors.
- 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 between August 2 and August 8 using its panel of an online representation of India.

### Railways Ministry releases Report on Station Cleanliness; ranks Jodhpur as cleanest railway station

- Minister of Railways, Coal, Finance & Corporate Affairs, Piyush Goyal on August 13, 2018 released the Third Party Survey Report on Station Cleanliness.
- The survey was conducted by the Quality Council of India (QCI).



- The Third Party Audit-cum-Survey on station cleanliness covers 407 stations which include 75 stations in 'A1'; and 332 stations in 'A' category stations.
- The rankings depict that in A-1 category stations, two important tourist stations, that is, Jodhpur (1st place) and Jaipur (2nd place) of North Western Railway in Rajasthan have made their mark. Tirupati, which is another important religious station in South Central Railway, is placed at 3rd position in the rankings.
- In A category stations, Marwar was placed at 1st position, followed by Phulera station at 2nd position. Both the stations are from North Western Railway in Rajasthan. The 3rd place goes to Warangal station of South Central Railway in Telangana.
- Among 75 A1 category stations, Gwalior (73rd), Kalyan (74th) and Mathura Junction (75th) were placed at the bottom of the list.

#### **EIU releases Global Liveability Index 2018: Vienna tops; Delhi ranks at 112th**

- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) on August 14, 2018 released the Global Liveability Index 2018, the ranking of 140 global cities based on their living conditions.
- The EIU is part of UK magazine 'The Economist' and provides forecasting and advisory services through research and analysis.
- Delhi and Mumbai were the only two Indian cities that featured in the EIU's annual index. Delhi was ranked at 112th position and Mumbai fetched 117th spot.
- The rankings of both Delhi and Mumbai have slipped by two places this year even as their liveability score remained unchanged due to improvements made by other cities.
- Austria's capital Vienna has been ranked as the world's most liveable city, displacing Australian city of Melbourne, which had held the record as the most liveable city for seven consecutive years.
- Rounding off the top 3 are Vienna, Melbourne, Osaka as the most liveable cities.

#### **Reliance Jio ranked world's top firm on Fortune's 'Change The World' list**

- Richest Indian Mukesh Ambani's telecom unit Reliance Jio has been ranked as the top company globally on Fortune's 'Change The World' list that ranked companies using the profit motive to help the planet and tackle social problems.
- Jio is ranked ahead of pharma giant Merck and Bank of America, according to Fortune list released in August, 2018.
- Chinese group Alibaba is ranked 5th on the list that has food and drug stores Kroger at number six, industrial machinery firm ABB at number 8 and network and communications giant Hughes Network System at number 10.
- Jio stormed the sector with free calls and data forcing rivals to merge or exit in September 2016 and has amassed 215 million subscribers since then and says it is profitable.
- Fortune said Ambani "likes to say it provides the public with 'digital oxygen'" but "two years ago there wasn't much oxygen to go around in the world's second-most-populous country."

## **Obituaries**

#### **Noted ghazal singer Umbayee passes away**

- Noted ghazal singer and composer from Kerala, Umbayee, passed away on August 1, 2018 at a private hospital at nearby Aluva, where he had been undergoing treatment for some ailments.
- The singer, who popularised ghazals among the common people in Kerala, had been undergoing treatment for some ailments for the last seven months.

#### **Veteran screenplay writer Jalees Sherwani dies at 70**

- Jalees Sherwani, who had penned lyrics for several of Salman Khan hit films such as Dabangg, Wanted and Tere Naam, passed away on August 1, 2018. He was 70.
- Sherwani died due to prolonged illness and breathed his last on route to the hospital after his health deteriorated.

#### **Senior Congress leader RK Dhawan passes away**

- Senior Congress leader R. K. Dhawan passed away in Delhi at the age of 81.
- Soon after, the Congress Party through its official Twitter handle posted a condolence message for Dhawan's family.
- According to media reports, Dhawan worked as the personal secretary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi from 1962 to 1984 and reportedly shared cordial relations with the Gandhi family.

#### **M Karunanidhi, former Tamil Nadu CM and DMK patriarch, passes away**

- DMK patriarch Muthuvel Karunanidhi, the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, passed away on August 7, 2018 after battling a brief illness at the Kauvery hospital in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. He was 94.
- To mourn the death of such a strong leader, the Tamil Nadu government announced a public holiday on August 8, 2018. The state will also observe a seven-day mourning as a mark of respect for the former chief minister.

#### **V S Naipaul, author who spared neither colonizer nor colonized, dies at 85**

- V S Naipaul, the Nobel laureate who documented the migrations of peoples, the unraveling of the British Empire, the ironies of exile and the clash between belief and unbelief in more than a dozen unsparing novels and as many works of nonfiction, died at his home in London. He was 85.
- His family confirmed the death in a statement, The Associated Press reported.

#### **Somnath Chatterjee, former Lok Sabha Speaker, passes away**

- Former Lok Sabha speaker Somnath Chatterjee passed away on August 13, 2018 morning after suffering a heart attack at a hospital in Kolkata, West Bengal. He was 89. He is survived by a son Pratap Chatterjee and two daughters Anuradha and Anushila.
- The 10-time parliamentarian was suffering from a kidney-related ailment; and had been in and out of hospital for the last two months. In July 2018, Chatterjee had suffered a hemorrhagic stroke.
- It was during Chatterjee's term as the Speaker of the 14th Lok Sabha from 2004 to 2009 that DD Lok Sabha was replaced by Lok Sabha TV, a move that was recognised for increasing transparency of Parliament.

#### **Chhattisgarh Governor Balramji Das Tandon passes away**

- Chhattisgarh Governor Balramji Das Tandon passed away on August 14, 2018 following a cardiac arrest at Dr B R Ambedkar Memorial Hospital in Raipur. He was 90. Tandon was ailing since past many days.
- He was very active socially and was an excellent sportsperson in Volleyball, swimming, kabaddi and other sports.

#### **Atal Bihari Vajpayee, former Prime Minister, passes away at 93**

- Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who had been admitted to the AIIMS hospital in New Delhi for the past few weeks, died. He was 93.
- "It is with profound grief that we inform about the sad demise of Former Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee at 05:05 pm on August 16, 2018," a statement released by the AIIMS read.
- Mr. Vajpayee was admitted to the AIIMS on June 11 with a kidney tract infection, urinary tract infection, low urine output and chest congestion.

#### **Former Indian cricket captain Ajit Wadekar passes away**

- Former Indian cricket captain Ajit Wadekar passed away on August 15, 2018 after a prolonged illness. He was 77.

- Wadekar is survived by his wife Rekha, two sons and a daughter. He was brought to a hospital in South Mumbai where he was declared dead on arrival. The official statement from the hospital read that he had been critically unwell for some time and was seeking treatment for the same.
- In a side that included cricketers like Sunil Gavaskar, G Viswanath and Bishan Singh Bedi, Wadekar took over the captaincy from M A K Pataudi in 1971.

#### **Former UN chief Kofi Annan passes away at 80**

- Former United Nations chief and Nobel Peace Prize laureate General Kofi Annan passed away at the age of 80, following a short illness. Annan, a Ghanaian national, died in hospital in Bern, Switzerland, in the early hours of Saturday. He is survived by his wife and three children.

#### **US singer Aretha Franklin dies at 76**

- US singer Aretha Franklin passed away recently at the age of 76. The "Queen of Soul" was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and made her debut in 1961.
- Franklin received the Grammy Award 18 times and was the first female vocalist to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

#### **Asian Games gold medalist athlete Hakam Singh passes away**

- Asian Games gold medalist athlete Hakam Singh passed away on August 14, 2018 at a private hospital in Sangrur, Punjab. He had been ailing for some time and was undergoing treatment for liver and kidney ailments. He was 64.
- Singh won gold in 20 km race walk event during the 1978 Asiad at Bangkok. The Dhyan Chand awardee had also served as Havaldar in the 6 Sikh regiment.

#### **Senior Congress leader Gurudas Kamat passes away at 63**

- Senior Congress leader Gurudas Kamat passed away on August 22, 2018 after a brief illness. He was 63. The former Union minister died at Primus hospital in Delhi, where he was admitted.
- Kamat was taken to Primus Hospital in Chanakyapuri around 7 am, after he complained of breathlessness, but he died on the way. He is survived by his wife Maharookh and a son, Sunil.

#### **Veteran journalist Kuldip Nayar passes away**

- Veteran journalist, author and human rights activist, Kuldip Nayar passed away on August 23, 2018. He was 95.
- Nayar, a former editor of the Indian Express, was also the author of 15 books including "Beyond the Lines", "India after Nehru" and "Emergency Retold".

#### **Veteran Marathi actor Vijay Chavan passes away**

- Veteran Marathi actor Vijay Chavan, known for his comic roles, passed away at a hospital in Mumbai on August 24, 2018 after a prolonged illness. He was 63.
- The actor, who featured in more than 350 films, was suffering from weak lungs for quite some time and admitted to Fortis Hospital since the last 2-3 days.

#### **Former Indian cricketer Gopal Bose passes away**

- Former Bengal opener and captain Gopal Bose passed away at Birmingham on August 26, 2018. Bose passed away after suffering a cardiac arrest at a Birmingham hospital. He was 71 and is survived by his wife and son Arijit.
- Bose represented Bengal for a decade and amassed 3757 runs in 78 first-class games with eight centuries and 17 fifties.