



RANKING

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NATIONAL NEWS

National Health Authority and Google Tie up for Ayushman Bharat Implementation



The National Health Authority (NHA) has joined hands with Google to collaborate and strengthen the implementation of the government's flagship health scheme, Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan ArogyaYojana (AB PM-JAY).

The two organizations will be working closely to explore various user cases for increasing process efficiencies in day-to-day applications. Google will also support NHA in improving PM-JAY's digital presence and showcasing relevant content to the 50 crore entitled beneficiaries. In addition, Google will also help provide training and support to NHA personnel to build on digital skills. The collaboration will seek to bolster PM-JAY's objective of reaching the poor and vulnerable, reducing their high out-of-pocket health expenditure, and improving access to quality healthcare. The

NHA is implementing the programme, hailed as the world's largest public funded health insurance scheme aimed to bring quality healthcare to around 50 crore poor and vulnerable Indians across India. The mission of NHA is to create the world's best health assurance programme on an efficient and technologically robust eco-system.

India, Bangladesh inaugurate 3 more bilateral projects this year

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina inaugurated three more bilateral projects. The projects include import LPG from Bangladesh, inauguration of the Vivekananda Bhavan at Ram Krishna Mission in Dhaka and inauguration of Bangladesh-India professional skill development Institute at the Institute of Engineers in Khulna. These agreements are the very basis of India-Bangladesh relations and it ensures the prosperity of the people of two nations.

The Bangladesh-India professional skill development Institute will help develop skilled manpower and technicians to support Bangladesh's industrial development. While the Vivekananda Bhavan has been inspired by two great people - Swami Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Paramahansa-- who have greatly influenced the lives of the people of the two countries, the Prime Minister stressed. The Bhavan has a scope to accommodate more than a 100 university students and scholars, Modi said while divulging details of the project. India and Bangladesh signed seven agreements in areas of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on the use of Chattogram and Mongla ports, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) withdrawal of 1.82 cusec of water from Feni river by India for drinking water supply in Tripura, agreement concerning implementation of GoI Line of Credits (LOC) extended to Bangladesh, MoU between University of Hyderabad



and University of Dhaka, cultural exchange programme, MoU on co-operation in Youth Affairs, and an MoU on providing coastal surveillance system.

Chandrayaan 2: ISRO releases pictures of moon's surface

Days after all hopes of communication with Chandrayaan 2 lander Vikram were lost, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has released some pictures of the moon's surface, which have been captured by Chandrayaan 2 Orbiter. The Orbiter's High-Resolution Camera (OHRC) took pictures of the lunar surface from a height of 100 km. The ISRO says the OHRC image was acquired on September 5, and that it covered a part of Boguslawsky E Crater (named after German astronomer Palon H Ludwig Boguslawsky) and surroundings on the southern polar region of the moon. The crater has a 14 km diameter and 3 km depth.



The OHRC onboard Chandrayaan 2 orbiter is an important tool for lunar topographic studies of select regions, as it provides very high spatial resolution images of the moon, claims the ISRO. "The Vikram lander was scheduled to touch down on the Moon's surface at 1.55 AM on September 7 in India's first attempt at a soft landing on the moon. It lost communication with the orbiter on September 7, moments before it was scheduled to land on the moon. The United States' premier space agency NASA, which had also tried to establish contact with the lander, said it had a "hard landing" on the moon's surface.

While releasing high-resolution images captured by its Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera (LROC) during a lunar flyby, the agency said the Vikram lander attempted a soft landing on a small patch of lunar highland smooth plains between "Simpelius N and Manzinus C craters" on September 7.

India's first e-waste clinic for segregating, processing and disposal of waste from household and commercial units to be set-up in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

India's first e-waste clinic for segregating, processing and disposal of waste from household and commercial units will soon be set-up in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) for its establishment. The clinic is a three-month pilot project. If it would be a success, then the same would be replicated throughout the country. Electronic waste will either be collected door-to-door or could be deposited directly at the clinic by individuals.



The CPCB will provide technical support at the unit and the collected hazardous waste will then be sent to Bengaluru for recycling. This would ensure scientific handling and disposal of electronic waste generated from households and commercial establishments.

The clinic is being conceived in compliance with the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. These rules also focus on segregation of waste at source and charge user fees for collection, disposal, and processing from the bulk generator. In

the absence of a safe disposal mechanism, currently, the electronic waste which includes defunct and useless electrical or electronic devices is being discarded along with other household waste. Therefore, there was a dire need for such a clinic that could efficiently and safely segregate and dispose of the hazardous waste.

Mizoram Rejects Proposed Forest Act Amendment

The Mizoram government has rejected the Centre's proposal to amend the "anti-indigenous people" Indian Forest Act, 1927. The government of Mizoram cites that provisions of the Indian Forest Act of 1927 are in conflict with the special provisions of the State under Article 371G of the Constitution. The proposed amendment in the Indian Forest Act would challenge Mizo customary laws and practices, ownership and transfer of land as well as the powers conferred upon the autonomous district councils, conferred to Mizoram under the article 371G of the Constitution of India.



The State's areas under forest have been governed by the Mizoram Forest Act of 1955 in accordance with the customary laws and needs of the local people. So that the Indian Forest Act of 1927 had not been enforced in Mizoram.

Forest rights activists and tribal welfare organizations are against this amendment bill that seeks to give higher management powers beyond what is provided in the Forest Rights Act of 2006, threatens to evict forest dwellers and promotes forest produce through private firms.

Mizoram is among the 15 States and Union Territories with more than 33% of the

geographical area under forest cover. The State is among India's "tribal districts" with a total forest cover of 421,000 sq. km.

Jal Shakti Ministry launches Ganga AamantranAbhiyan

The newly constituted Jal Shakti Ministry has launched Ganga AamantranAbhiyan, a unique open-water rafting and kayaking expedition on the Ganga River to create awareness on Ganga rejuvenation and water conservation. Ganga AamantranAbhiyan will be held from October 10 to November 11, 2019. The expedition will start from Devprayag and end at Ganga Sagar, covering the whole stretch of 2500 Km of the Ganga River. The Minister of Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat launched the Abhiyan on October 7, 2019 and he would be participating in the event as well. The Minister is expected to lead from the front, he will flag off the expedition and be a part of it from Devprayag to Rishikesh.



The 'Ganga AamantranAbhiyan' is a unique social awareness initiative that is expected to play a historic and pioneering role in connecting with the people. This will mark the first-ever effort by the National Mission for Clean Ganga to raft across the entire River. It will also be the longest-ever social campaign implemented in form of an adventure sport to spread the key message of river rejuvenation and water conservation on a massive scale. The open-water rafting expedition is expected to highlight the ecological challenges faced by the Ganga River.

The Ganga AamantranAbhiyan will cover the five Ganga basin states- Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar and West Bengal. It will have stops at five spots including Rishikesh, Haridwar, Kanpur, Allahabad, Varanasi, Patna, Sonapur and Kolkata. The expedition will be undertaken by a nine-member team comprising rafters and swimmers of the Indian Armed Forces, led by international open-water swimmer Wing Commander Paramvir Singh from the Indian Air Force.

The expedition team will engage in the public awareness campaign and organize mass cleanliness drives, interact with students and conduct various awareness exercises regarding river conservation at each of the stops.

Besides this, the CSIR-IITR will be collecting water samples from across the river for water testing and the WII members would be undertaking a flora and fauna census for the year 2019.

India to get BS-VI fuel from next April, vehicular pollution to be down by 80-90%: Javadekar



Bharat Stage (BS)-VI fuel will be available in several big cities of the country, including Jaipur, from April 1 next year and the initiative will reduce vehicular pollution by 80-90 per cent, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said.

The government has prepared a national clean air programme for 122 cities of the country under which schemes for reducing pollution will be made.

AIIMS, health ministry launch 'eDantSeva'

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences in collaboration with the Union Health Ministry launched the first-ever website and mobile application on oral health awareness. The digital platform, 'e-DantSeva', contains information about the National Oral Health Programme, a detailed list of all the dental facility and colleges, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material and a unique feature called the 'Symptom Checker'. The website also provides GPRS route and satellite images of the facility for easier access to the people. The digital platform will provide oral health information gathered from authentic scientific resources and connect the people to timely advice for managing any dental emergency or oral health problem. The 'eDantSeva' website and mobile application will reach out to more than one billion people with just one click.

India announces cotton TAP for 5 African nations in Geneva

In its endeavor to build long-term development partnership with African nations, especially in cotton, India has announced the launch of the second phase of cotton Technical Assistance Programme (TAP) for 5 African countries.

In the 5-year-long second phase, TAP will be introduced for Mali, Ghana, Togo, Zambia and Tanzania.

Notably, India had implemented a TAP for cotton in 6 African countries, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Malawi, Nigeria and Uganda from 2012 to 2018.



Google Arts & Culture Platform to Showcase Indian Handicraft Heritage

DastkariHaatSamiti, Ministry of Tourism, and 20 other cultural organizations have launched the new online project, titled "Crafted in India" in collaboration with Google. The project aims to showcase the country's rich handicraft heritage while making it accessible for the world to experience. It provides an immersive tour of varied Indian craft forms -- from fabrics to embroidery, wall paintings to stonework, metal casting to wood carving. The online exhibition also touches upon the value of waste and various ways of crafting paper from the most waste materials like pineapple fibers, old currency, and animal dung.

Delhi CM launches FarishteDilliKe



Delhi Chief Minister ArvindKejriwal launched FarishteDilliKe', a new initiative aimed at felicitating citizens who take accident victims to hospitals. The government will bear all the expenses related to a road accident. FarishteDilliKe' scheme was launched in February 2017, by the state government as a pilot project. Under the scheme, the government provides a reward of Rs 2,000 and a certificate to a good samaritan for taking the accident victims to a hospital. The Samaritans will be rewarded with Rs 2,000 and they will also not be liable to any questions by the police.

Centre denies permission to ArvindKejriwal to attend C40 Climate Summit in Denmark

The central government has denied permission to Delhi Chief Minister ArvindKejriwal from participating in the C40 Climate Summit to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark starting October 9. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) denied but has not yet revealed the reason behind denying permission.

India helps Mongolia for its first petrochemical refinery

As part of its strategy of creating an energy security architecture for its partners, India's oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan is in resource-rich Mongolia for the commissioning of railway, road and power transmission infrastructure for the construction of country's first petrochemical refinery. The Mongol refinery project is the largest project undertaken by the government of India under its Lines of Credit (LoC) programme and is expected to cut some of Mongolia's fuel import dependence. The petrochemical refinery to be built at an approximate cost of \$1.25 billion utilizing the \$1.236 billion line of credit from India comes in the backdrop of China'



Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Once ready, the capacity of the refinery will be 1.5 million metric tons per annum, with diesel and gasoline as the primary products and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), fuel oil and jet fuel being produced as secondary products. State-run Engineers India Ltd (EIL) is the project management consultant for the development of the oil refinery—near Sainshand in southern Dornogovi province— expected to be completed by 2022.

This comes in the backdrop of Mongolia, which has large uranium deposits signing an agreement for civil nuclear cooperation with India in 2009 and China unfolding its BRI. New Delhi is opposed to the BRI, which seeks to invest about \$8 trillion in infrastructure projects across Asia, Europe and Africa, as it says the initiative lures countries into debt traps and does not respect sovereignty or address environmental concerns.

India had taken up work for the construction of 27 kilometers of railway line, 17.5 kilometers of road and 19 kilometers of power transmission line to connect the refinery to existing networks in Mongolia, sandwiched between Russia and China.

Leh: SC judge inaugurates first govt. operated day care for senior citizens

Supreme Court Judge, Justice S. Abdul Nazeer, inaugurated the first government-sponsored and operated Day Care-cum-Recreation Centre for senior citizens in Leh in presence of Chief Justice Jammu and Kashmir, Gita Mittal. It will be one-stop-shop for entertainment, medical services and legal aid for the aged people of the region. The Centre, co-sponsored by Government and the District Legal Service Authority will also provide a raft of medical facilities including geriatric care, health consultations and check-ups, physiotherapy as well legal service the senior citizens would require on various legal issues. The premises will also be equipped with computer learning and a library. The aged citizens can entertain themselves with indoor games and recreational activities.

India's first 'Garbage Cafe' opens in Chhattisgarh's Ambikapur

Chhattisgarh has got its first-of-its-kind 'Garbage Cafe' in Ambikapur. The cafe was inaugurated by State Health Minister T S Singh Deo. 'Garbage Cafe' is set up by Ambika Municipal Corporation. The cafe will provide food to citizens in exchange for plastic waste. Citizens will get free food in exchange for 1 kg of plastic while breakfast will be provided in exchange of half a kilogram of plastic.



Health Minister launches WHO India Country Cooperation Strategy 2019–2023

Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare has launched 'the World Health Organization (WHO) India Country Cooperation Strategy 2019–2023: A Time of Transition'. The Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) is a medium-term vision for WHO's cooperation with a given Member State. The CCS provides a strategic roadmap for the WHO to work with India towards achieving its health sector goals.

The four areas for strategic cooperation of WHO with India include:

Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

Health and wellness by addressing the determinants of health.

Protection against health emergencies.

India's global leadership in health.

The India CCS fully aligns itself with WHO 'triple billion' targets, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and WHO South-East Asia Region's eight Flagship Priorities. It urges to address emerging health scenario of the country like non-communicable diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and air pollution, etc.

The India CCS also connects with India's National Health Policy 2017, and other initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, National Viral Hepatitis programme, Eat Right India movement, the Fit India movement and PoshanAbhiyaan that have collectively engaged with the people and enhanced the awareness about crucial health areas.



Govt launches disaster warning device

The government launched a device that will help provide information related to disaster warnings when fishermen move away from the coast beyond 10 to 12 kilometers. Gagan Enabled Mariner's Instrument for Navigation and Information (GEMINI) device will disseminate seamless and effective emergency information and communication on disaster

warnings, Potential Fishing Zones, PFZ, and the Ocean States Forecasts to fishermen. The satellite-based communication is suitable to the dissemination of such emergency information.

Stop our exclusion from 6th Schedule, Meghalaya minor tribes tell CM

Organizations representing five minor tribes in Meghalaya have asked State Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma to intervene in the move to exclude them from the provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. Five minor tribes – Bodo-Kachari, Hajong, Koch, Mann and Rabha – are clubbed as “unrepresented tribes” for nomination in Meghalaya’s autonomous tribal councils. These councils are in the names of Garo, Jaintia and Khasi, the State’s three major matrilineal communities. Parts or the whole of four Northeastern States – Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura – fall under the Sixth Schedule, which makes special provisions for “tribal areas”. On September 26, a sub-committee on the amendment of the Sixth Schedule constituted by the State government decided to recommend to the Standing Committee of the Parliament the removal of the word “unrepresented tribes” from the amended special provision.



The minor tribes are indigenous to Meghalaya and have been living in the State from much before its creation in 1972. The State government’s move will deprive us of the opportunity to be represented in the autonomous district councils as it will not be possible for us to get elected on the basis of adult suffrage.

Child Has Right To The Affection Of Both His Parents, Says SC

The Supreme Court recently in a case has ruled that ‘a child has the right to affection of both his parents’. The order is based on a plea by a man for custody of his child, who is with the wife. The court declined to interfere with the family court’s order granting custody of the child to the mother. However, it gave the man liberty to approach the family court for enhancement of his visitation rights. The interest of the child should be kept foremost in custody battles between separated parents.



Family courts should grant visitation rights in such a manner that a child is not deprived of the love and care of either parent. The legal provisions which currently exist as per various personal laws are in the nature of entrusting the custody of children exclusively to one of the parents in case of separation. Also, there are a number of provisions in various family law statutes which discriminate on the custodial rights of separated parents solely on the basis of their gender. This presumption severely affects the rights of the spouse who has been denied custody rights and the rights of the child who will be deprived of care and love of both parents. It is argued that the present family laws lack a child-centric approach, which is based on the idea of shared parenting.

The Supreme Court has recently agreed to examine provisions in family laws which allow exclusive custody of children to just one parent after a marital separation.

Recently, the Supreme Court exercised its inherent powers under Article 142 of the Constitution to annul a marriage of an estranged couple, residing separately for over two decades, saying it was a case of irretrievable breakdown of wedlock.

Article 142 empowers the apex court to "pass such decree or make such order as is necessary for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it".

The apex court in a series of verdicts has asked the Centre to amend the law to introduce irretrievable breakdown as a ground of divorce but the law remains unamended and divorce is denied even if the couple are not living together for years and their relationship bruised beyond repair. This effectively denies them an opportunity to explore life afresh as their marriage survives in law even if not in substance.

Even the Law Commission, in its reports in 1978 and 2009, recommended the Centre to take "immediate action" to amend the laws with regard to "irretrievable breakdown" where a "wedlock becomes a deadlock".

As the Centre failed to act on the suggestions, the apex court has from time to time invoked Article 142 for dissolution of a marriage where the court finds that the marriage is totally unworkable, emotionally dead, beyond salvage and has broken down irretrievably, even if the facts of the case do not provide a ground in law on which the divorce could be granted.

HRD Ministry launches 'Dhruv' for meritorious students of science, performing arts, creative writing

The Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry launched the Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning Programme called 'Dhruv', a platform to help meritorious students achieve excellence in science, performing arts and creative writing. The



programme has been launched to identify and encourage talented children to enrich their skills and knowledge. At centres of excellence across the country, gifted children will be mentored and nurtured by experts.

The programme included students of performing arts, since it had the power to move ideas and people. In the first batch, 60 outstanding students have been selected. To begin with, it will cover science and performing arts. The students have been broadly chosen from classes IX to XII. At the 14-day programme science and performing arts students will be separated into two groups. The programme was launched at the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) headquarters in Bengaluru. It was also attended by ISRO Chairman K Sivan.

Cabinet okays Rs 5.5 lakh package for PoK families who initially settled outside J&K

The Union Cabinet has also approved Inclusion of 5,300 Displaced Persons (DP) families of Jammu & Kashmir who initially opted to move outside the State of Jammu & Kashmir but later on returned and settled in the state.

The approval will enable such Displaced Families to become eligible to get one-time financial assistance of Rs 5.5 Lakhs under the existing scheme, and in turn, be able to get some sustained income which the existing scheme is aimed at.

Solar, wind farms soon along India-Pak border

To address the issue of land availability for clean energy projects, India will set up solar and wind projects on fallow land along its international border with Pakistan. The idea was first mooted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and will help tackle the problem of agricultural land being diverted for such projects. Accordingly, a 30km long and 20km wide parcel of land has been identified along the border in Kutch district of Gujarat and stretches along the border in Bikaner, Barmer and Jaisalmer districts of Rajasthan. India is running the world's most ambitious renewable energy programme, with a target of achieving 175 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity by 2022 as part of its climate commitments. Currently, India generates 82,580 megawatts (MW) of clean energy, or 23% of its total power production.

Accordingly, the Ministry has requested both Rajasthan and Gujarat to identify



suitable land near international border (20-25km strip) where solar and wind projects can be installed," according to a government document reviewed by Mint. As part of its commitments to combat climate change, the government has proposed that state-run companies build massive clean energy parks at a cost of around \$2 billion each, with built-in incentives to ensure states and operators are invested in the success of the parks. The proposed renewable energy power parks of 2,000MW each will help developers achieve economies of scale and further bring down solar and wind power tariffs. There are other problems such as delays in payment by state-run power distribution companies that range from two months to 15 months and non-allocation of land-to-wind power projects, as well as transmission- and connectivity-related challenges.

Government launches SUMAN scheme, assures free medicines for pregnant women

Aiming zero preventable maternal and newborn deaths in India, the central government launched the SurakshitMatritvaAashwasan (SUMAN) scheme, under which pregnant women, mothers up to 6 months after delivery, and all sick newborns will be able to avail free healthcare benefits.



The scheme will largely help in bringing down maternal and infant mortality rates in the country. Under the scheme, the beneficiaries visiting public health facilities are entitled to several free services. These include at least four ante natal check-ups that also includes one checkup during the 1st trimester, at least one checkup under Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan, Iron Folic Acid supplementation, Tetanus diphtheria injection and other components of comprehensive ANC package and six home-based newborn care visits. Under the scheme there will be zero expense access to identification and management of complications during and after the pregnancy. The government will also

provide free transport from home to health institutions. There will be assured referral services with scope of reaching health facility within one hour of any critical case emergency and Drop back from institution to home after due discharge (minimum 48 hrs.). Under the scheme, the pregnant women will have a zero expense delivery and C-section facility in case of complications at public health facilities. The government will ensure respectful care with privacy and dignity, with early initiation and support for breastfeeding, zero dose vaccination and free and zero expense services for sick newborns and neonates. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines quality of care for mothers and newborns as "the extent to which health care services provided to individuals and patient populations improve desired health outcomes. In order to achieve this, health care must be safe, effective, timely, efficiently integrated, equitable and people-centered."

According to government, India's maternal mortality rate has declined from 254 per 1,00,000 live births in 2004-06 to 130 in 2014-16. Between 2001 and 2016, the infant mortality rate came down from 66 per 1,000 live births to 34.

GRP website, mobile app launched to facilitate railways passengers

Union Minister of State for Home, Nityanand Rai launched a Government Railway Police (GRP) website and a mobile App (Sahyatri-Delhi Railway police) at NDMC convention Centre in Delhi. This Sahyatri App not only helps to reduce crime in railways but also provide medical facilities in running trains to save passengers life.



Cabinet doubles honorarium for Asha workers; to open 40,000 wellness centres under Ayushman Bharat Scheme



Union Cabinet has doubled honorarium for ten lakh ASHA workers from the existing 1000 rupees to 2000 rupees per month. The government has also decided to provide other benefits to ASHA workers in addition to the hike in their monthly honorarium. Mr. Javadekar said the government will open 40,000 wellness centres across the country this year under Ayushman Bharat Scheme. The government also announced five per cent Dearness Allowance (DA) for Central Government employees and pensioners. Mr. Javadekar and it will benefit 50 lakh Central Government employees and 65 lakh pensioners. The Cabinet has also approved relaxation of the mandatory requirement of Aadhar-seeded data as a

pre-condition for release of funds to the beneficiaries under the PM-Kisan scheme. The relaxation will be till 30th November this year. The scheme provides income support of 6,000 rupees per year to landholding families, subject to certain exclusions. The government has also sanctioned a relief package for displaced Kashmiri families who had come from areas of Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. An amount of 5.5 lakh rupees will be given per family. These 5,300 displaced families initially opted to move outside the State of Jammu and Kashmir but later on, returned and settled there. The Government also approved MoUs between India and Foreign Broadcasters in the field of Radio and Television. The MoUs will help the public broadcaster in exploring new visions and strategies to address new technological demands and stiff competition. Following the decision, broadcasting of programmes will be obtained through mutual exchange and co-production. This will lead to equity and inclusiveness among viewers and listeners of DD and AIR.

POSHAN atlas to map local crops, food grains for tackling malnutrition

In a bid to tackle malnutrition, government is developing an Atlas to map the crops and food grains grown in different regions of the country so that nutritious protein rich food in local areas can be promoted. The ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) in association with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Deendayal Research Institute is developing a POSHAN atlas under POSHAN abhiyan, government's multi-ministerial convergence mission with the vision to ensure attainment of malnutrition free India by 2022. The POSHAN atlas will map the crops and food grains grown in different regions of the country because the solution to tackling malnutrition lies in promoting regional cropping patterns and embracing local food that are rich in protein.

According to the World Bank Global Nutrition Report – 2018, malnutrition costs India at least \$10 billion annually in terms of lost productivity, illness and death and is seriously retarding improvements in human development and further reduction of childhood mortality. POSHAN abhiyan is focusing on ensuring the nutrition of children, women, and pregnant mothers in impoverished areas and the government seems to be looking at community management of the problem.

WCD Ministry observed POSHAN Maah in September 2019.

To Combat Land Degradation, Government Plans 1400-km-long Green Wall in Northwest India

As environmentalists wage war against authorities for cutting down hundreds of trees in Mumbai, reports suggest that the government is planning a massive afforestation drive in northwest India. The Centre is planning an ambitious 1400 km long and 5 km wide green belt from Gujarat to Delhi. The wall, similar to the Great Green Wall of Africa, is likely to boost India's action against climate change. The Great Green Wall of the Sahara and Sahel is led by the African Union to combat the impacts of climate change and desertification. The African green wall is 7,600 km long and 15 km wide.



As of now, around 15% of the wall is complete with millions of trees planted in Senegal, Nigeria and Ethiopia. The report states that even though the idea is yet to take shape, it has already created great enthusiasm among government officials from multiple ministries. If approved, the wall can help combat the growing challenge of land degradation across the Thar Desert and the Aravalis.

Moreover, the green wall planned from Porbandar to Panipat can also act as a dust-barrier for many polluted regions in the north. Dust storms are a common concern for north India due to the desert in western India and Pakistan. In May 2018, more than 125 people died in 48 hours due to a massive dust storm in northern states.

CSIR launches eco-friendly crackers

Minister for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences Harsh Vardhan launched a set of new crackers that promises to help reduce particulate emissions by 30 per cent while producing the same level of light and sound effects of traditional fireworks. The new firework, which covers popularly used sound-emitting crackers, flowerpots, pencils, chakkar and sparklers, are based on formulations developed by a consortium of eight laboratories under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) led by Nagpur-based National Environmental Engineering Research Institute. About 230 firework manufacturers had signed the memorandum of understanding for using the formulations developed by CSIR scientists. Of them, 165 have gone further and have also entered into a non-disclosure agreement. CSIR had taken up the project to develop eco-friendly crackers in the wake of directions of the Supreme Court restricting the use of fireworks to address the growing problem of pollution in different parts of the country.

The project adopted a two-pronged approach. While one stream of activity was focused on improving the traditional crackers through reduction in the level of Barium Nitrate, which is the main villain, the second pathway aimed at replacing Barium Nitrate with a more benign Potassium Nitrate.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Hong Kong introduces anti-mask law

The government of Hong Kong's Chief Executive Carrie Lam introduced a ban on people wearing masks at public assemblies, a colonial-era emergency legislation that has not been used in more than half a century. The ban was aimed to putting a stop to nearly four months of anti-government protests in the city that started against the now-shelved extradition bill. The violators of the law could be sentenced to one year in prison, or fined HK\$25,000 (\$3,188).



US blacklists China organizations over Xinjiang 'Uighur abuse'

The US has blacklisted 28 Chinese organizations for their alleged involvement in abuses against ethnic Uighurs in China's Xinjiang province. The organizations are now on the so-called Entity List, which bars them from buying products from US companies without approval from Washington. The 28 targets include both government agencies and technology companies specializing in surveillance equipment. China reacted angrily, dismissing the US allegations as groundless. It is not the first time the US has put Chinese groups under a trade ban. In May, the Trump administration added telecommunications giant Huawei to the Entity List because of security fears over its products.

NASA's Curiosity Rover Finds an Ancient Oasis on Mars



On its latest trek through the Gale Crater on Mars, the Curiosity Rover has discovered evidence that's leading scientists to believe there was an oasis at the base of that 150-kilometer-wide crater. Researchers analyzing data from the Rover are extrapolating from the data that rocks enriched by mineral salts are evidence of briny ponds that went through periods of drying out and overflowing. Those deposits serve as a watermark made by climate fluctuations as Mars' climate changed from a wet one to the current frigid ice desert it is today. The Gale Crater is the leftover geological formation from an impact that changed the surface of Mars.

Eventually water and wind filled the crater and the hardening sediment, carved by wind, created the Mount Sharp geological formation that the Curiosity Rover is scaling right now. The Rover is taking samples of each layer as it climbs and is sending that data back to reveal new information about the environment on Mars over time.

Turkey launches military offensive in Syria, days after Trump announced pullback of US troops

Turkey began a planned military offensive into northeastern Syria launching airstrikes and artillery fire across the border just days after the Trump administration announced it was pulling US troops back from the area. The operation is aimed at pushing Kurdish forces -- who were a key ally of the US in the fight against ISIS -- away from Turkey's border.

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) who operate in the area are US allies. They are led by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), which Turkey considers a terrorist organization.

The SDF suspended their counter-ISIS operations amid the bombardment in order to focus on the Turkish offensive.

The Syrian National Army is considered the biggest umbrella group for the factions of the Turkish-backed Free Syrian Army.

UNICEF launches crypto currency fund

UNICEF will now be able to receive, hold and disburse donations of crypto currencies ether and bit coin, through its newly-established UNICEF Crypto currency Fund. In a first for United Nations organizations, UNICEF will use crypto currencies to fund open source technology benefiting children and young people around the world. Under the structure of the UNICEF Crypto currency Fund, contributions will be held in their crypto currency of contribution, and granted out in the same crypto currency. The first contributions to the UNICEF Crypto currency Fund will be received from the Ethereum Foundation and will benefit three grantees of the UNICEF Innovation Fund – and a project coordinated by the GIGA initiative to connect schools across the world to the internet.



France makes move to revive Kaveri Jet Engine Project

France has made fresh efforts to revive plans to develop the indigenous Kaveri fighter jet engine as part of the Rafale offsets deal, with a briefing for the project made to defence Minister Rajnath Singh during his visit. A detailed presentation on creating an aircraft engine ecosystem in India was given to the minister who had gone for the handing over ceremony of the Rafale fighter jets. French engine manufacturer Safran, which makes the engines and electronics for the Rafale fighters, pitched its proposal for the co-development of the Kaveri engine for the Indian Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) program. The French side emphasized that India was the only country to which such advanced technology transfer was being offered and that the country would achieve 'sovereignty' on aero engine tech.

Saudi Arabia allows women to serve in armed forces; move comes as part of measures taken to increase women's rights



Saudi Arabia announced that it will allow women in the ultra-conservative kingdom to serve in the armed forces as it embarks on a broad programme of economic and social reforms. The move is the latest in a series of measures aimed at increasing the rights of women in the kingdom, even as rights groups accuse Riyadh of cracking down on women activists.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom's de facto ruler, has approved a handful of reforms aimed at widening women's rights, including allowing them to drive and to travel abroad without consent from a male

"guardian". But he has at the same time overseen the arrest of several prominent women's rights campaigners, including activist Loujain al-Hathloul. Saudi Arabia, the world's largest crude exporter, is pushing to improve its image and attract tourists as part of a plan to diversify its economy away from oil.

UN Faces "Severe Financial Crisis", Donald Trump Dismisses Concerns

US President Donald Trump dismissed concerns that the United Nations is on the verge of going broke because members have not paid their dues, with the United States leading the pack.

The United States is simultaneously the largest donor and the largest debtor. The United States owes \$381 million from prior budgets and \$674 million for the regular budget, according to figures provided by the US mission to the United Nations. It also owes more than \$2.6 billion for active peacekeeping missions.

The amount of US debt is to some degree a result of the fact the UN runs its budget on a calendar year while the US fiscal year begins in October. A US official said the "vast majority" of the US debt should be paid up by the end of November. Traditionally, the United States has paid 22 percent of the UN's operating budget and 28 percent of its peacekeeping budget. A 1999 law limits peacekeeping dues to 25 percent, but the cap has frequently been lifted by Congress.

Over the past three years, the United States has accrued about \$750 million in arrears for peacekeeping costs, a figure that is expected to approach \$1 billion by the middle of next year. The US arrears have led to cash shortages in UN peacekeeping missions, and some contractors have been paid late.

NASA Launches Satellite to Explore Where Air Meets Space

NASA launched a satellite to explore the mysterious, dynamic region where air meets space. The satellite — called Icon, short for Ionospheric Connection Explorer — rocketed into orbit following a two-year delay. The ionosphere is the charged part of the upper atmosphere extending several hundred miles (kilometers) up. It's in constant flux as space weather bombards it from above and Earth weather from below, sometimes disrupting radio communications.



There's too much going on in this region to be caused by just the sun. Hurricanes, tornadoes and other extreme weather conditions on Earth are also adding energy. The more scientists know, the better spacecraft and astronauts can be protected in orbit through improved forecasting. The refrigerator-size Icon satellite will study the airglow formed from gases in the ionosphere and also measure the charged environment right around the 360-mile-high (580-kilometer-high) spacecraft. A NASA satellite launched last year, Gold, is also studying the upper atmosphere,

but from much higher up. More missions are planned in coming years to study the ionosphere, including from the International Space Station.

Northrop To Launch First-Of-Its-Kind Satellite Refueling Spacecraft

Space Logistics LLC, a subsidiary of Northrop Grumman, has launched a satellite that can extend the life of other satellites. The satellite is called MEV-1, or Mission Extension Vehicle-1. MEV-1 is the first of its kind. MEV-1 was launched on a Russian Proton rocket from the BaikonurCosmodrome in Kazakhstan on October 9th. It's going to rendezvous with Intelsat-901 (IS-901) a communications satellite launched in 2001 that is almost out of fuel. MEV-1 will dock with Intelsat-901, fire its thrusters, and boost the communication satellite's orbit, extending its life by about five years.

MEV-1 has the capability to extend satellite life by 15 years, so once it's spent five years attached to IS-901, it can, in theory at least, un-dock from the communications satellite and dock with another satellite, extending that one's operational life. MEV-1 is basically a space tug, but only for geosynchronous satellites.

ECONOMY NEWS

Defence minister Rajnath Singh approves 4-fold increase to families of battle casualties

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved a four-fold hike in assistance to the next of kin for all categories of battle casualties from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 8 lakh. The amount will be granted under the Army Battle Casualties Welfare Fund (ABCWF).



Earlier, there was a provision of financial assistance of Rs 2 lakh to the battle casualties which are fatal, 60 per cent and above disability, battle casualties invalidated out due to disability and Rs 1 lakh to disability less than 60 per cent. It was in addition to liberalized family pension, financial assistance from Army Group Insurance, Army Welfare Fund and ex-gratia amount. The ABCWF was instituted in July 2017 and was implemented with effect from April 2016. It was set up under Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (ESW) after a large number of people offered to provide monetary assistance to the families of

battle casualties following an incident in February 2016 at Siachen where 10 soldiers were buried in an avalanche. This fund was set up in addition to the various existing schemes for the welfare of next of kin of battle casualties and their children. In addition to the assistance under the ABCWF, the already existing monetary grant includes ex-gratia for various ranks ranging from Rs 25 lakh to Rs 45 lakh and Army Group Insurance ranging from Rs 40 lakh to Rs 75 lakh, officials said.

Cabinet approves new disinvestment process to speed up stake sale in PSUs

The Union Cabinet approved the new policy under which the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) under the Ministry of Finance has been made the nodal department for the strategic stake sale. This was done with a view to streamlining and speeding up the process, reducing the role of administrative ministries which often used to place hurdles in the path of major stake sales. While presently PSUs for strategic sale are identified by NITI Aayog, the tweak in policy has now brought DIPAM into the picture. DIPAM and NITI Aayog will now jointly identify PSUs for strategic disinvestment. Also, DIPAM secretary would now co-chair the inter-minister group on disinvestment, along with the secretary of administrative ministries concerned.

The change comes within a week of a group of secretaries agreeing for sale of government's entire 53.29 per cent stake in Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd and its 63.75 per cent stake in Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), 30 per cent in Concor, 100 per cent NEEPCO and 75 per cent in THDC. The strategic sale may involve two-stage bidding beginning with an expression of interest (Eoi) or a preliminary intent showing bid, and a final financial bid. Pre-bid meetings with likely bidders and roadshows to attract potential investors will form part of the process to provide clarity on every aspect of the stake sale.

The government has set a target of mobilizing Rs 1.05 lakh crore from disinvestment proceeds and achieving this has become more critical after it doled out Rs 1.45 lakh crore stimulus by way of a cut in corporate tax. Disinvestment proceeds will be critical for the government to stick to its target of keeping fiscal deficit at 3.3 per cent of the GDP in the current fiscal year ending March 31, 2020.



IAF 87th anniversary: India gets first Rafale, celebrates Balakot strike

As the Indian Air Force (IAF) celebrated its 87th anniversary on 8 October, a clear theme was the operations of February 26, when Indian fighter aircraft attacked the Balakot terrorist training camp in Pakistan and skirmished with counter-attacking Pakistan Air Force (PAF) fighters the next morning. Drawing thunderous applause from spectators at Hindan Air Base outside Delhi was the “avenger formation” in the fly-past, a three-aircraft formation led by Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman in his MiG-21 Bison fighter, flanked by two Mirage 2000 fighters flown by pilots who had bombed Balakot. Varthaman was shot down and captured by the Pakistani military in that skirmish, but only after shooting down a PAF F-16 fighter, as claimed by the IAF. Meanwhile in Merignac, France, aerospace firm Dassault delivered to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh the first of 36 Rafale fighters the IAF has bought for Rs 7.8 billion.



Saturn overtakes Jupiter, becomes the planet with the most moons

The International Astronomical Union (IAU) announced its latest discovery of Saturn’s 20 new moons. Saturn now has 82 moons, 3 more than Jupiter. Saturn now has the most number of moons among planets. The discovery comes from observation made between 2004 and 2007. During this time, scientists had identified some spots of light near the planet but weren’t sure if these light spots revolved around the planet or not. Scientists have also found that these new moons are 5 km or less in diameter, and one of them is the farthest moon from Saturn that scientists are currently aware of. Seventeen of these moons are in retrograde orbits, revolving around Saturn in the direction opposite to the planet’s rotation. These moons take over three earth-years to complete one revolution.

Govt gives green nod to Rs 1,400 crore airport project in Kutch

The Centre has given its green nod for developing a commercial airport in Kutch, Gujarat, entailing an investment of about Rs 1,400 crore. The proposed project to be developed by Mundra International Airport Pvt Ltd was recently approved by the Union Environment Ministry after taking into consideration the views of an expert panel. The environment clearance has been given to Mundra International Airport's proposed project subject to the compliance of



certain conditions. The company has been asked to obtain the clearance from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for safety and project facilities. The project, which is estimated to generate employment for over 8,000 persons, is proposed to be commissioned in 2021-22.

The proposal is to develop the existing airstrip in Mundra into a full-fledged commercial airport serving Boeing 747-400 category aircraft. A dedicated aerospace manufacturing facility will also be a part of the project.

Besides improved air connectivity in the region and employment for local people, Mundra International said the proposed project is expected to bring improvement in education, community health, sustainable livelihood and rural infrastructural fronts.

BSE joins hands with Ficci to enhance MSME and start-up environment

To enhance MSME and startup environment, leading stock exchange BSE in association with FICCI organized a brainstorming session to identify gaps in the existing policies and make suggestions for robust policies. Besides, the session was organized to promote UdyamSaathi and UdyamSakhi initiatives to foster the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector.

The MSMEs were invited to present their summary of ideas and suggestions as well as discuss their main issues of concern to the ministry. Some of the other suggestions presented at the session were to create database of businesses that have a chronic habit of issuing cheques that bounce; to increase digitization of corporate reporting; not allowing GST reporting waivers; digital exchange of documents in the transport industry and to fix the rating agencies incentives linked to job creation.



India starts sharing maritime data through Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region

The Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) set up last year has started functioning as an information sharing hub of maritime data and “cuing incident responses” to maritime security situations through a collaborative approach. The Centre is actively interacting with the maritime community and has already built linkages with 18 countries and 15 multinational/maritime security centres.

The major centres with which regular exchange of maritime security information is being undertaken include Virtual Regional Maritime Traffic Centre (VRMTC), Maritime Security Centre – Horn of Africa (MSCHOA), Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery (ReCAAP), Information Fusion Centre-Singapore (IFC-SG), and International Maritime Bureau – Piracy Reporting Centre (IMB PRC).

Govt constitutes panel to suggest measures to augment GST revenue



GST collections dropped sharply to a 19-month low of Rs 91,916 crore in September, mirroring a widening slowdown in the economy triggered by shrinking consumer demand. This was the second straight month of decline in GST collections, which from July 1, 2017, amalgamated 17 different central and state levies, including excise duty, service tax and VAT. The fall in tax collections is seen as a reflection of economic activity and a decline in collections indicated a downturn.

India's GDP growth slowed to more than six-year low of 5 per cent in April-June, prompting the government to take an array of steps to boost the economy, including the steepest cut in corporate tax rate which would cost Rs 1.45 lakh crore.

RBI gives final nod for formation of Kerala Bank

The Kerala government's long pending dream of setting up its own bank, by merging district co-operative banks, is all set to become a reality with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) giving the final nod for the move. With its formation, the proposed "Kerala Bank" will be largest banking network in the state. The "Kerala Bank" would be formed amalgamating the district co-operative banks (DCBs) with Kerala State Co-operative Bank. According to government sources, 13 DCBs would be merged with the Kerala State Co-operative Bank for forming the proposed Kerala Bank. All the DCBs, except

the one in Malappuram district controlled by the opposition Congress-led UDF, had approved the Left government's proposal of amalgamation in their respective general body meetings.

Cabinet approves 5% hike in DA for central govt employees

The government hiked dearness allowance (DA) given to central government employees by 5% in what seems to be a move aimed at reviving consumer demand amid an economic slowdown. Dearness Allowance or DA is paid by the government to its employees as well as pensioners to offset the impact of inflation. The move will be effective from July 2019 and is a major relief for government employees who will now be entitled to an additional five per cent dearness allowance.



PM releases commemorative stamp on Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the 'at home' programme of the Indian Air Force to mark its 87th raising day and released a commemorative stamp to honour Marshal of the Air Force late Arjan Singh. He became the first and only officer of the Indian Air Force to be promoted to five-star rank as Marshal of the Indian Air Force, equal to the

army rank of Field Marshal.

Textiles Minister to represent India at World Cotton Day celebrations in Geneva

Union Minister of Textiles, Smritilrani participated in the plenary session of World Cotton Day being observed from October 7-11, 2019 in Geneva, which will also serve to shed light on the challenges faced by cotton economies around the world.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) organized World Cotton Day event in collaboration with the Secretariats of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC). The plenary session of the event to be attended by heads of states, heads of international organizations and executives from the private sector. WTO is hosting the event at the request of the Cotton – 4 countries, Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali to celebrate their official application for the recognition of 7th October as World Cotton Day by the United Nations. World Cotton Day will celebrate the many advantages of cotton, from its qualities as a natural fiber, to the benefits people obtain from its production, transformation, trade and consumption. World Cotton Day will also serve to shed light on the challenges faced by cotton economies around the world because cotton is important to least developed, developing and developed economies worldwide.

The objective of observing October, 7 as World Cotton Day is to give exposure and recognition to cotton and all its stakeholders in production, transformation and trade; to engage donors and beneficiaries and strengthen development assistance for cotton; seek new collaborations with the private sector and investors for the cotton related industries and production in developing countries and promote technological advances, as well as further research and development on cotton.



India receives first tranche of Swiss account details of its residents

India has received the first tranche of details about financial accounts of its residents in Swiss banks under a new automatic exchange of information framework between the two countries, marking a significant milestone in the fight against black money suspected to be stashed abroad. India figures among 75 countries with which Switzerland's Federal Tax Administration (FTA) has exchanged information on financial accounts within the framework of global standards on Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI). This is the first time that India has received details from Switzerland under the AEOI framework, which provides for exchange of information on financial accounts that currently active as well as those accounts that were closed during 2018. The next exchange would take place in September 2020, the spokesperson added.



However, the exchange is governed by strict confidentiality clauses and the FTA officials refused to disclose specific details on the number of accounts or about the quantum of financial assets associated with the accounts of Indian clients of Swiss banks. Overall, the FTA has sent information on around 3.1 million financial accounts to the partner states and received information on around 2.4 million from them.

The exchanged information includes identification, account and financial information. These include name, address, state of residence and tax identification number, as well as information concerning the financial

institution, account balance and capital income.

PEOPLE IN NEWS

Antonio Costa re-elected as the PM of Portugal

Antonio Costa has been re-elected as the Prime Minister of Portugal after winning the general elections. He will continue lead the government for another four years.

Indian-American SampatShivangi to serve on panel of US health body



In US, SampatShivangi, an influential Indian-American community leader, has been invited to serve on the national advisory committee of a key health body dealing with mental health. Shivangi, a physician, has been invited by the US Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M Azar to serve on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Mental Health Services National Advisory Council. Azar said the appointment is for the term beginning immediately and ending on July 30, 2023. He is a recipient of the PravasiBharatiyaSamman Award, 2017 for his contributions to India-US relationship.

ArvindKejriwal to address C-40 Climate Change Summit through video conference

Delhi Chief Minister ArvindKejriwal will address the C-40 Climate Change Summit through a video conference after the Ministry of External Affairs denied him permission to visit Denmark.

GS Lakshmi: First woman to be appointed as match referee for ICC event

The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced match officials for the league phase of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Qualifier 2019 to be held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from October 18 to November 2, and India's GS Lakshmi is among them.

With the development, Lakshmi is the first woman match referee to officiate in an ICC event. Reportedly, Lakshmi will officiate along with Sam Nogajski and Sundaram Ravi for a match featuring Hong Kong and Ireland at Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on the opening day.



Mexican actress Aparicio named UNESCO ambassador



The United Nations' cultural agency UNESCO has appointed Mexican actress YalitzaAparicio as its goodwill ambassador for indigenous peoples. The 25-year-old actress made history as the first indigenous performer nominated for a best actress honor at the Academy Awards this year for her performance in the film "Roma", in which she speaks in an indigenous language and in Spanish.

Vinod Kumar Sharma takes oath as Punjab Lokpal



Justice Vinod Kumar Sharma (retired) took oath as the Lokpal of Punjab. The post of anti-corruption ombudsman Lokpal was lying vacant in Punjab from April last year.

Yes Bank appoints ICICI Bank's Anita Pai as COO

Anita Pai has been appointed as the Chief Operating Officer and Jasneet Bachal as its chief marketing officer. Anita Pai was the Senior General Manager and Head of ATM Business, Branch banking Service and Phone Banking at ICICI Bank. She has also been associated with ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company Limited and HDFC Limited.

Seven high courts get new chief justices

The Centre government has appointed seven Chief Justices to seven High Courts. All these appointments have been made due to some recent elevations in the Supreme Court. Acting Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh Ravi Shankar Jha has become the Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court.

Justice V. Ramasubramanian, Justice S. Ravindra Bhat, Justice Krishna Murari and Hrishikesh Roy were elevated to the Supreme Court recently. The Ministry of Law also clarified that these posts were vacant due to the recent appointment of several High Court judges to the Supreme Court.



Justice Ajay Lamba of Allahabad High Court has been appointed as Chief Justice of Guwahati High Court. Justice Inderjit Mahanty of Bombay High Court has become Chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court.

Justice Indrajit Mahanty of Bombay High Court has become chief justice of Rajasthan High Court.

Justice A Mani Kumar of Kerala High Court has been appointed as Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court.

Madhya Pradesh's Justice Ravi Shanker Jha has appointed as the Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

Apart from that, Justice Bishwanath Somadar of Calcutta High Court and Justice Vivek Agarwal of Telangana High Court have been sent to Allahabad High Court and Justice PV Sanjay Kumar of Madhya Pradesh High Court to Punjab and Haryana High Court.

India's Vishnu Nandan among 300 researchers to join largest ever Arctic expedition

Vishnu Nandan, a 32-year-old polar researcher from Kerala, will be the only Indian among 300 scientists from across the world aboard the multidisciplinary drifting observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate (MOSAIC) expedition. The MOSAIC mission stands for Multidisciplinary drifting Observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate. Its aim is to study the impact of climate change on the Arctic and how it could affect the rest of the world.

MOSAIC, the largest ever Arctic expedition in history, will be the first to conduct a study of this scale at the North Pole for an entire year. Previous studies have been of shorter periods as the thicker sea ice sheets prevent access in winter.

Under it, the German research vessel Polar stern has been anchored on a large sheet of sea ice in the Central Arctic. They will allow the water to freeze around them, effectively trapping themselves in the vast sheet of white that forms over the North Pole each winter. They will build temporary winter research camps on the ice, allowing them to perform tests that wouldn't be possible at other times of the year or by satellite sensing.



DAYS AND EVENTS

Wildlife Week India 2019 (2- 8 October)

Theme: Life Below Water: For people and planet.

The Wildlife Week is celebrated all over the country every year between 2nd October and 8th October. The aim is to preserve animal life in India. Throughout the week events and campaigns are organized to teach people about animal life and encourage them save large number of animals by not killing them for food and other purposes. It is because of animal population in forest and other areas the environmental balance is preserved in nature. There is lack of awareness about this fact. According to The Science Magazine, around 5,500 species of birds, amphibians and reptiles are being sold in world markets. It is a multi – dollar business and is considered as the most severe threats of biodiversity during the week, many experts conduct seminars to introduce challenging aspects of wildlife conservation. Background the week was first celebrated in 1972. The event is organized by National Board of Wildlife since its establishment in 1972.



World Space Week (4-10 October)

2019 theme- “The Moon: Gateway to the Stars.”

World Space Week is observed from October 4-10 annually. It is the largest space event on Earth. The United Nations General Assembly declared in 1999 that World Space Week will be held each year from October 4-10. These dates commemorate two events:

October 4, 1957: Launch of the first human-made Earth satellite, Sputnik 1, thus opening the way for space exploration

October 10, 1967: The signing of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

World Habitat Day-7 October

2019 theme: Frontier Technologies as an innovative tool to transform waste to wealth

The United Nations designated the first Monday of October of every year as World Habitat Day to reflect on the state of our towns and cities, and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter. The Day is also intended to remind the world that we all have the power and the responsibility to shape the future of our cities and towns.

Building on last year’s theme “Municipal Solid Waste Management” which focused mainly on managing garbage, the focus of this year’s World Habitat Day is promoting the contribution of innovative frontier technologies to sustainable waste management to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 11: inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities. Going beyond solid waste this includes all waste produced by human activity (solid, liquid, domestic, industrial and commercial), which continues to have a devastating impact on climate change, public health and the environment.



Frontier Technologies as an Innovative
Tool to Transform Waste to Wealth

World Mental Health Day-10 October **Theme for 2019- Suicide prevention.**

World Mental Health Day is observed on 10 October every year, with the overall objective of raising awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilizing efforts in support of mental health. The Day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide.

International Day of Girl Child-11 October **2019 Theme — Girl Force: Unscripted and Unstoppable**

International Day of the Girl Child is an international observance day declared by the United Nations; it is also called the Day of Girls and the International Day of the Girl. October 11, 2012, was the first Day of the Girl Child. The day aims to highlight and address the needs and challenges girls face, while promoting girls' empowerment and the fulfillment of their human rights



AWARDS

IFS officer Ramesh Pandey selected for Asia Environmental Enforcement Award by UNEP

Senior Indian Forest Service officer Ramesh Pandey has been selected for the prestigious Asia Environmental Enforcement Award by the United Nations Environment Programme. The 1996-batch IFS officer, posted as Chief Conservator Forests in Lucknow and Secretary, UP State Bio-diversity Board, is known for his investigation and intelligence gathering on poachers. Pandey will receive the award on November 13 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok.

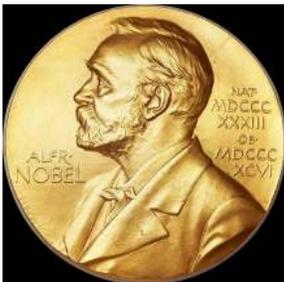


The excellent work in combating trans-boundary environmental crime by Mr. Pandey has been recognized by the selection panel. The purpose of the Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards is to publicly recognize outstanding achievements by public organizations and individuals in Asia to combat Transboundary environmental crime.

“Spirit Of Kerala” wins People’s Choice Award

Short film from Kerala “Spirit of Kerala” has won the People’s Choice Award at the recently concluded My Rode Reel film competition. The film won the honour beating 1,680 entries. The short film is based on a boat race and directed by Arun Joseph. My Rode Reel film competition is touted as the ‘world’s largest short film competition’.

The Nobel Prize in Literature 2019



The Nobel Prize in Literature 2019 was awarded to Austrian author Peter Handke and the 2018 Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Polish author Olga Tokarczuk.

The Nobel Prize announcement was made at the Swedish Academy in Stockholm on October 10, 2019. This time, the winners were named for both 2019 and 2018, as the prize was not awarded in 2018. The Swedish academy had suspended the prize in 2018 following a sexual assault scandal.

The Nobel Prize in Literature 2019 has been awarded to Peter Handke for his influential work that explores the specificity of human experience.

The Nobel Prize in Literature 2018 was awarded to Olga Tokarczuk for her narrative imagination that represents the crossing of boundaries as a form of life.

Nobel Prize in Medicine

Britain’s Peter Ratcliffe and William Kaelin and Gregg Semenza of US shared the 2019 Nobel Medicine Prize for their work on how cells sense and adapt to oxygen availability. The team revealed the understanding of how oxygen levels affect cellular metabolism. Kaelin works at Howard Hughes Medical Institute, US. Semenza is the director of Vascular Research program at Hopkins Institute of Cell Engineering. Ratcliffe is the director of Francis Crick Institute in London. The trio will share prize money of 914,000 USD. The team identified the molecular machinery that regulates the activity of genes to varying levels of oxygen. It has paved way to understand the strategies to fight cancer, anemia and other diseases. Based on their findings, many laboratories and pharmaceutical companies are now on the path of developing drugs that can interfere with disease states by activating or blocking the oxygen – level in the cells.

Nobel Prize in Chemistry



John B. Goodenough, M. Stanley Whittingham and Akira Yoshino have been awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the development of lithium-ion batteries. Lithium-ion batteries have revolutionized the world of technology. The batteries power everyday products such as smartphones, laptops and even electric vehicles. John B. Goodenough was born in Germany in 1922 and is currently at the University of Texas in the US. M. Stanley Whittingham was born in 1941 in the UK and currently teaches at the Binghamton University in the US. Akira Yoshino was born in 1948 in Japan and is currently a professor at the Meijo

University in Japan.

Nobel Prize in Physics

The Nobel Prize in Physics 2019 was awarded "for contributions to our understanding of the evolution of the universe and Earth's place in the cosmos" with one half to James Peebles "for theoretical discoveries in physical cosmology", the other half jointly to Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz "for the discovery of an exoplanet orbiting a solar-type star."

Nobel Peace Prize

The Nobel Peace Prize 2019 was awarded to Abiy Ahmed Ali "for his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighboring Eritrea." The prize is also meant to recognize all the stakeholders working for peace and reconciliation in Ethiopia and in the East and Northeast African regions.

SPORTS NEWS

NBA India Games 2019: Indiana Pacers defeat Sacramento Kings

In the first-ever NBA match in India, Indiana Pacers registered win over Sacramento Kings by a point after the matches ended in a draw in the regulation time. Indiana Pacers defeated Sacramento Kings 132-131 in the first NBA match in India.



SalwaEidNaser creates history, becomes first Asian to win women's 400m world title

Bahrain's SalwaEidNaser became the third-fastest female 400m runner in history after completing the sprint in 48.14 seconds in the ongoing World Athletics Championships. Naser, who is 21-year-old, clinched a gold medal while Shaunae Mille-Uibo of The Bahamas had to settle for a silver medal, clocking 48.37 seconds. Shericka Jackson of Jamaica bagged bronze by after completing in 49.47 seconds.

2020 Tokyo Olympics: India to host 3x3 basketball qualifiers, confirms FIBA



India will be hosting the 3x3 basketball qualifiers for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in March next year, basketball world governing body FIBA has announced. The tournament will feature 40 teams (20 in each gender), the location for which will be announced later. Six tickets (three per gender) to next year Olympics will be awarded at the Olympic qualifying tournament. In addition to the host teams, the remaining of the 40 participating teams are qualified via the FIBA rankings and the results of the FIBA World Cup held in Amsterdam.

On June 9, 2017, 3x3 was added to the Olympic Program and the discipline will be making its Olympic debut in Japan next year where eight-team tournaments will be held for men and women.

Mithali Raj becomes first female to complete 2 decades in international cricket

India captain Mithali Raj became the first female player to last more than 20 years in international cricket. She achieved the feat while leading India to an emphatic eight-wicket win over South Africa women in the first ODI of the three-match series. Mithali, who made her ODI debut against Ireland on June 26, 1999, completed 20 years and 105 days in the 50-over format.

She, thus, became the only female cricketer to have played ODI cricket for over two decades. The right-handed batswoman has played 204 ODIs till now, the most by a female, followed by England's Charlotte Edwards (191), JhulanGoswami (178), and Alex Blackwell (144) of Australia. Mithali, 36, has also played 10 Tests and 89 T20Is for India. She retired from T20 cricket last month.

With 8th world medal, magnificent Mary Kom surpasses herself as the most successful boxer

Six-time champion M C Mary Kom (51kg) surpassed herself as the most successful boxer in the history of the Women's World Championship, securing an unprecedented eighth medal by advancing to the semifinals in Russia. The third-seeded Indian boxer defeated a spirited rival in Colombia's Valencia Victoria, fetching a unanimous 5-0 verdict to make the last-four stage.

RANKINGS

India slips down 10 places to 68th rank on global competitiveness index

India has moved down 10 places to rank 68th in a global index that measures competitiveness, as it fared poorly in most parameters such as infrastructure, the adoption of information, communications and technology (ICT), financial markets, skills, and innovation capability, compared to last year.

The Global Competitiveness Report 2019 was released by the Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF) with as many as 141 countries were surveyed for the index. On macroeconomic stability, however, India's position improved to 43rd from 49th in 2018. This came at a time when analysts have expressed doubts over the government's ability to meet its fiscal deficit target of 3.3 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) for 2019-20.



Keeping inflation in check seems to have worked in favor of India, which was the top-most country on this front, scoring 100 per cent as against 99.9 per cent last year. The other segment within macroeconomic stability in which the country's ranking improved was debt dynamics. Product market efficiency, where India improved its ranking to 101 from 110 last year, is undermined by a lack of trade openness, the WEF said. These were the only two broad parameters where India bettered its ranking and score in 2019 compared to last year. Within the parameter of institutions, the freedom of the

press saw India's rank dropping to 114th from 112th. In the overall index, India scored 61.4 out of 100, as against 62.1 last year. The WEF said the drop was only partly the consequence of a relatively small decline in the score, by 0.7 points, and more significantly, the progress made by several countries ranked close to India: Colombia with 62.7 points (ranked 57th), Azerbaijan (62.7 points at 58th), and Turkey (62.1 points at 61st). Within the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) nations, India trailed China by 40 places and 14 points. South Africa was at 60th position with 62.4 points. Along with Brazil, India was among the low-performing countries in the grouping, said the WEF. Brazil was placed at 71st with 60.9 points. Russia was at the 43rd rank with 68.7 score. On the crucial financial sector parameter, India's position deteriorated to 40th from 35th. However, the WEF said India's financial sector was relatively deep and stable despite the high delinquency rate (10 per cent of the loan portfolio -- ranked at 106th), which contributed to the weakening of its banking system. India performed well in innovation, securing the 35th position, well ahead of most emerging economies and on a par with several advanced economies.

One in 7 diabetics is visually impaired: Survey

One in eight persons above 50 years in India is a diabetic; One in every 46 diabetics is blind; and one in seven has some form of impairment in their vision due to high blood sugar levels, according to a diabetes and diabetic retinopathy survey by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in collaboration with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare carried out between 2015 to 2019.

PMJAY, first year: 90,000 cancer claims, Tamil Nadu tops list

In its first year, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), the tertiary care arm of Ayushman Bharat, has funded the treatment of 90,000 cancer patients through 1.8 lakh hospital admissions. This is according to data available with the Union Health Ministry, which also shows that every year there are 11.57 lakh new cancer patients in India and 7.84 lakh cancer deaths. At any given point, there are 22.5 lakh Indians living with cancer.



Tamil Nadu, with 40,056 cases, tops the state where the most cancer patients availed treatment under PMJAY, followed by Kerala (22,000), Madhya Pradesh (19,455), Chhattisgarh (15,997) and Gujarat (14,380). The figures reflect not just cancer incidence in these states but also the availability of treatment facilities and how well PMJAY is performing in these states. The cancer care claims under PMJAY show a steep rise over the past year. In September 2018 — the scheme was launched on the 23rd of that month — there were just 906 hospitalization claims across the country for cancer. In September 2019, the figure was 87,382.

The National Health Authority (NHA) has so far sanctioned Rs 321 crore for cancer care. Of the total cancer packages claimed, 30,376 are for cancer of the reproductive system such as the cervix, ovary, testes etc. 28,506 breast cancer packages have been claimed while PMJAY has funded treatment of 21,379 GI cancer cases and 14,639 of blood and blood vessels. NHA officials say these figures are in line with cancer incidence in the country.

The NHA is responsible for the implementation of PMJAY under which 10.74 crore families will be entitled to an annual health cover of Rs 5 lakh per family. Until now, of the intended 50 crore beneficiaries, over 10 crore e-cards have been issued.

DAYS & EVENTS

SARAS AajeevikaMela at India Gate Lawns (October 10 – 23, 2019)



SARAS AajeevikaMela is an initiative by the DeendayalAntyodayaYojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India, with an objective to bring the rural women Self Help Groups (SHGs) formed with support of DAY-NRLM, under one platform to show-case their skills, sell their products and help them build linkages with bulk buyers. Through participation in SARAS AajeevikaMela, these rural SHG women get vital national level exposure to understand the demand and taste of urban customers. The Mela is organized by the marketing arm of the Ministry, Council for Advancement

of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART).

The Ministry of Rural Development is organizing SARAS AajeevikaMela at India Gate Lawns from 10th October to 23rd October, 2019. Union Minister for Rural Development Shri Narendra Singh Tomar will formally inaugurate the Mela at India Gate lawns, New Delhi.

KIIT to host 39th World Congress of Poets

The 39th World Congress of Poets (WCP) will commence in KIIT Deemed to be University, Odisha from October 2, 2019, coinciding with the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. More than 1000 poets, writers from 82 countries including India and 500 poets from Odisha will attend the Congress, which has 'Compassion through Poetry' as its theme to commemorate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Bapu. This is the third time WCP is being hosted in India – on previous two occasions it was held in Chennai in 1986 and 2007. It is a matter of pride for Odisha and India to be hosting such a coveted Congress. Dr. AchyutaSamanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS and the President of 39th WCP took initiatives to bring this mega event to Odisha to promote the art, culture, heritage, literature, tradition and tourism of India and Odisha at international level. He has taken all steps to make it a grand and colorful event.