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National News

1. Madhya Pradesh bags first position for implementation of PMMVY

Madhya Pradesh bags the first position for the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana. Union Minister of Women and Child Development Smriti Irani will present this award to Madhya Pradesh at a function in New Delhi. Indore district bagged the first place for better performance of the scheme.

The main objective of the Matru Vandana Yojana is to provide incentives of five thousand rupees for the loss of wages of working women and to ensure their proper rest and nutrition during pregnancy. The payment of the incentive amount is deposited directly into the bank account. More than 14 lakh 55 thousand beneficiaries registered under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana. The first installment has been paid to about 13 lakh 40 thousand women while the second installment to around 12 lakh and third installment paid to 8 lakh 80 thousand beneficiaries.

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana is a maternity benefit program run by the government of India. It was introduced in 2016. It is a conditional cash transfer scheme for pregnant and lactating women of 19 years

2. India and Maldives sign four MoUs to establish Addu Tourism Zone

India and Maldives signed five memorandum of understanding (MoUs) on February 02, 2020. The objective of this MoU is to establish the Addu tourism zone on the five islands of Addu Atoll in the Maldives. It will cost twenty-four million ninety thousand dollars. Addu is one of the most beautiful sites of Maldives' 26 coral atolls. It comprises more than two dozens of Maldives' 1192 islands. Addu is also an important site for tourism because it represents the southernmost point of South Asia. About 10% of actual Maldives residents are living here with unique culture and dialect. India is expanding its tourism and infrastructure development limits through off-shore development works. Addu Tourism Zone will increase India's capacity for infrastructure building. Addu Tourism Zone will bring national and international tourists and diplomats that will boost India's and Maldives' tourism sector.

India and Maldives began bilateral relations soon after the independence of Maldives from British rule in 1965. India was one of the first countries to recognize the Maldives as an independent nation. India established its diplomatic mission in Male in 1972, the capital of Maldives.

3. Nine-judge SC bench to frame issues about gender inequality at religious places

The Supreme Court announced that its nine-judge constitution bench will frame issues regarding discrimination against women in various religions and at different religious places including the Sabarimala Temple in Kerala. The constitution bench will frame the issues while considering all cases of gender inequality at religious places across different religions on February 3, 2020. The issues will then be taken up for deliberation. The ruling was delivered by a three-judge bench comprising CJI S A Bobde and Justices B R Gavai and Surya Kant. The bench clarified that it cannot take more than 10 days and even if someone wants more time, it cannot be given. The Supreme Court bench will consider the following gender inequality cases:

- a. Restriction in the entry of Muslim women into mosques

- b. Female genital mutilation in the Dawoodi Bohra Muslim community
- c. Barring of Parsi women, married to non-Parsi men, from the holy fireplace at Agiary.

4. Union govt. to develop five archaeological into iconic sites

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman unveiled a plan in the Union Budget to develop five archaeological sites into “iconic” sites. The government also announced development of museums at these sites. The five sites are Rakhigari (Haryana), Hastinapur (Uttar Pradesh), Sivasagar (Assam), Dholavira (Gujarat) and Adichanallur (Tamil Nadu) — all of which fall in either BJP-ruled states or where it is an alliance partner.

Sitharaman also allocated Rs 3,150 crore for the Ministry of Culture, under which the sites fall.

Rakhigarhi is among the largest known townships of the Harappan civilisation, which existed between 2,600-1,800 BC. It is located in the Hisar district of Haryana, approximately 150 kilometres north-west of Delhi.

Hastinapur is located in Meerut and is considered to be the capital of the ‘Kuru Kingdom’. The site is part of the ASI’s list of ‘Mahabharata sites,’ which are places that are believed to have been featured in the epic. Hastinapur is believed to have been the capital of the kingdom of the Pandavas and Kauravas. It has also found mention in ancient Jain texts.

Sivasagar is named after a lake in the city of Sivasagar in Assam, which was the epicentre of the Ahom kingdom that existed in the Brahmaputra Valley between the 13th and 19th century CE.

Like Rakhigari, Dholavira, which is located in the Kutch district of Gujarat, is also a site of Harappan civilisation. It was discovered by the ASI in 1967. Artefacts found in Dholavira included terracotta pottery, beads, gold and copper ornaments, tools, urns and some imported vessels that indicate trade links with lands as far away as Mesopotamia.

Adichanallur is a site located in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu, and is believed to be dating backing to 696-905 BC, making it the oldest site in the state so far.

5. Centre to bar domestic RO systems in places where tap water meets BIS norms

Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change has published a draft notification that prohibits users from installing membrane-based water purification, mainly reverse osmosis, systems in their homes if the water meets the Bureau of Indian Standards’ drinking water norms.

6. Centre gives nod to nearly ₹6,000-cr multi-purpose project in J-K

The central government has approved a nearly ₹6,000-crore multi-purpose project to provide uninterrupted water for irrigation to farmers in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district and to produce power. It was decided at a high-level meeting that the work for the Ujh multi-purpose project will start immediately and an appropriate mechanism will be developed to utilise the surplus water on the Indian side itself. For this purpose, the administration of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir also offered to come forward with a suitable DPR.

The Shahpur-Kandi project has already taken off and with the functioning of the Ujh multi-purpose project, the entire Kandi belt in Kathua and adjoining parts of Samba district will become fully irrigated, besides becoming irrigation and power surplus. The current estimated cost of the project is ₹5,850 crore and its expected timeline of completion is over six years. The project will store around 781 million cubic meters of water of river Ujh, a tributary of river Ravi. After completion of the project, utilisation of waters of eastern rivers allotted to India as per the Indus Water Treaty would be enhanced by utilising the flow that presently goes across the border to Pakistan. The first stage of the project has already been accepted by the Advisory Committee of the Jal Shakti Ministry and will now be presented to the Expenditure Finance Committee for firming up the funding arrangements.

7. Launch of Portal Santusht

‘Santusht’ - Implementation Monitoring Cell (IMC) has been constituted in the Office of Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour and Employment in January 2020. The objective of ‘Santusht’ is to promote transparency, accountability, effective delivery of public services and implementation of policies, schemes of Ministry of Labour and Employment at grassroot level through constant monitoring. For public grievances, Centralized Public Grievance Redresal and Monitoring System (CPGRAM) portal is already functional. Besides, written grievances as received from stakeholders are also disposed by the Ministry. Further, online portal under ‘Santusht’ for public grievances has not been started so far.

8. No document to be collected during the exercise of updation of NPR

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Nityanand Rai, in written replies to questions regarding preparation and updation of National Population Register (NPR), in Lok Sabha today, said that population register is a register containing details of persons usually residing in a village or rural area or town or ward or demarcated area within a ward in a town or urban area.

NPR was first prepared in 2010 and updated in 2015. In pursuance of Sub - rule (4) of Rule 3 of the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, framed under the Citizenship Act, 1955, Central Government decided to prepare and update the population register during April to September, 2020 throughout the country, except Assam, for collection of information relating to all persons usually residing in village or town. No document is to be collected during the exercise; Aadhaar number is collected voluntarily. Further, no verification is done to find individuals whose citizenship is doubtful, during the exercise. The respondent has to provide information for NPR updation true to the best of his knowledge and belief. The Government is in discussion with the States having concerns in regard to the preparation of NPR.

9. Guidelines in place for recognition of environmental laboratories, MoEF tells NGT

The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) told the National Green Tribunal that a guideline has been prepared for recognition of environmental laboratories and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has been assigned the task of scrutinising the applications received from them.

The CPCB has been entrusted the task of scrutinising the applications received from laboratories to ascertain that they are meeting the pre-requisites and mandatory requirements in respect of infrastructure, human resources,

adoption of sampling methods, laboratory practices, mandatory registration/ accreditation/ certification, quality control measures, etc. as prescribed in the guidelines.

The ministry told the NGT that an expert committee, including an external expert, a CPCB expert, CPCB member convenor and an expert member from the ministry as permanent invitee, is constituted to appraise all proposals.

The ministry also told the tribunal that periodic surveillance of the recognised private environmental laboratories is also undertaken by the MoEF to ascertain compliance with terms and conditions, including renewal of mandatory accreditation and certification.

The report was filed in response to a plea by NGO Social Action for Forest and Environment that contended the environment data generated in the country lacks authenticity and are often fudged to suit requirements, making it ineffective in pollution mitigation.

The NGO had said one of the main reasons for generation of poor quality data and poor monitoring of the environment pollution is cost consideration.

10. SC directs states to issue notification for establishing 'Gram Nyayalayas'

The Supreme Court has directed the states, which are yet come out with notifications for establishing 'Gram Nyayalayas', to do so within four weeks, and asked the high courts to expedite the process of consultation with state governments on this issue. An Act passed by Parliament in 2008 provided for setting up of 'Gram Nyayalayas' at the grass roots level for providing access to justice to citizens at the doorstep and to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to anyone by reason of social, economic or other disabilities. A bench headed by Justice N V Ramana also took into account the fact that several states have issued notifications for establishing 'Gram Nyayalayas' but all of them were not functioning except in Kerala, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

The bench noted that states like Gujarat, Haryana, Telangana, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and Odisha have not yet filed their affidavits on this issue despite the apex court's October 18 last year direction.

11. One in 10 Indians will develop cancer during their lifetime: WHO

India had an estimated 1.16 million new cancer cases in 2018, according to a report by the World Health Organization (WHO), which said that one in 10 Indians will develop cancer during their lifetime and one in 15 will die of the disease. WHO and its specialized International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) have released two reports: one aimed at setting the global agenda on the disease; the other focused on research and prevention. The World Cancer Report said that according to the estimated cancer burden in India in 2018, there are about 1.16 million new cancer cases, 784,800 cancer deaths, and 2.26 million 5-year prevalent cases in India's population of 1.35 billion. The report said that "one in 10 Indians will develop cancer during their lifetime, and one in 15 Indians will die of cancer."

In India, the six most common cancer types were breast cancer (162,500 cases), oral cancer (120,000 cases), cervical cancer (97,000 cases), lung cancer (68,000 cases), stomach cancer (57,000 cases), and colorectal cancer (57,000). Together, these account for 49 per cent of all new cancer cases.

Of the 570,000 new cancer cases in men, oral cancer (92,000), lung cancer (49,000), stomach cancer (39,000), colorectal cancer (37,000), and oesophageal cancer (34,000) account for 45 per cent of cases.

The report added that of the 587,000 new cancer cases in women, breast cancer (162,500), cervical cancer (97,000), ovarian cancer (36,000), oral cancer (28,000), and colorectal cancer (20,000) account for 60 per cent of cases.

12. Rajasthan: 'Pink City' Jaipur receives UNESCO Heritage Certificate

It was a momentous occasion for the Pink City on February 5 as Jaipur was certified as a World Heritage site by United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Jaipur was certified as a World Heritage site by UNESCO Director, General Audrey Azoulay, at a mega event held at the historic Albert Hall in the Pink City. The certification will help in bringing tourism. There are several places in Rajasthan which are not known to people across the globe but they will be on the radar.

13. Govt mulls setting up expert committee to fix new poverty line

Planning minister Rao Inderjit Singh said government is considering the task force suggestion to set up an expert committee to arrive on the level at which the poverty line should be set for India. The report of the task force is under consideration of the government. Government had set up a task force on poverty elimination in the country in 2015 under the chairmanship of then NITI Aayog vice chairman Arvind Panagariya.

According to Singh's reply, the report of the task force states that "a consensus in favour of either the Tendulkar or a higher poverty line did not emerge". Therefore, the Task Force has concluded that the matter be considered in greater depth by the country's top experts on poverty before a final decision is made. Accordingly, it is recommended that an expert committee be set up to arrive at an informed decision on the level at which the poverty line should be set.

14. Soil Health Card scheme of Central Govt

The Soil Health Card scheme launched by the Modi Government during the financial year 2014-15 with a view to address the decline of soil nutrients, has started reaping fruit. In the second phase of the scheme 11.69 crore Soil Health Cards have been distributed to farmers in the last two years. This has enabled the farmers to understand the soil health parameters and improve its productivity by judicious application of soil nutrients.

A study conducted by the National Productivity Council (NPC) says the application of Soil Health Card recommendations has led to a decline of 8-10% in use of chemical fertilizers and also raised productivity by 5-6%. Under the Central Government's Soil Health Card Scheme Phase-I (Years 2015 to 2017) 10.74 crore cards were distributed, while under the Phase-II 11.69 crore cards have been give away during the period 2017-19.

In the current financial year a pilot project "Development of Model Villages" is being implemented under which the sampling and testing of cultivable soil is being encouraged in partnership with the farmers. Under the project a Model Village has been selected for aggregation of soil samples and analysis of each agricultural holding. As part of the scheme 13.53 lakh Soil Health Cards have been distributed during the year 2019-20.

The scheme provides for the analysis of soil composition by the State Governments once in every two years so that remedial steps can be taken to improve soil nutrients. Farmers can track their soil samples and also obtain their Soil Health Card report. While the Soil Health Management Scheme has turned out to be a blessing for the farmers, it is also creating jobs for the agrarian youth. Under the scheme village youth and farmers up to 40 years of age are eligible to set up Soil Health Laboratories and undertake testing. A laboratory costs up to Rupees Five Lakhs, 75% of which can be funded by the Central and State Governments. The same provisions apply to Self Help Groups, Farmers' Cooperative Societies, Farmers Groups and Agricultural Producing Organisations. Interested youth farmers and Organisations can submit their proposals either in person to the Deputy Director (Agriculture) / Joint Secretary (Agriculture) or in their offices in respective districts. For details visit websites agricoop.nic.in or soilhealth.dac.gov.in or dial Kisan Call Centre (1800-180-1551).

15. “Drones” to be used for mapping of villages in Madhya Pradesh

The state government of Madhya Pradesh has decided to employ drones for mapping of villages. The state revenue department of Madhya Pradesh has entered into an agreement with the Survey of India, under the Ministry of Science and Technology. The Survey of India is the India's national mapping agency. Drones will be used for the mapping of 55 thousand villages of the state on a scale of 1:500. The mapping on such a scale will provide a clearer picture of the population area. This work of land survey in the state was earlier used to be done with the help of satellite images.

16. Cabinet approves conferring INI status to five IIITs

The Union Cabinet approved the status of five Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) as Institutions of National Importance. This formalisation will enable them to award degrees of Bachelor of Technology (B Tech), Master of Technology and Ph. D degree as the Cabinet approved the Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020.

The Bill will declare the remaining 5 IIITs-PPP along with the existing 15 Indian Institutes of Information Technology in Public Private Partnership mode as 'Institutions of National Importance' with powers to award degrees. This will entitle them to use the nomenclature of Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech) or Master of Technology (M.Tech) or Ph.D degree as issued by a University or Institution of National Importance. The Institutes will also be able to attract enough student required to develop a strong research base in the country in IT sector.

The cabinet also approved ex-post facto to 21 posts of directors, one each in 20 IITs (PPP) and one in IIITDM Kurnool (IIIT-CFTI) besides ex-post facto to 21 posts of registrars, one each in 20 IIITs (PPP) and one in IIITDM Kurnool.

17. Karnataka launches Janasevaka scheme for home delivery of govt services

The Karnataka government launched the Janasevaka scheme in a few municipal corporation wards to ensure home delivery of various services like ration cards, senior citizen identity and health cards. The scheme, which was launched by Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, will pertain to 53 services involving 11 departments. Janasevaka under the Sakala scheme is a programme to avail the benefits of government schemes at the doorstep. The objective is to make the lives of the citizens of Karnataka easy by launching this scheme.

Sakala aims to ensure in-time delivery of government services to citizens by practising innovative and efficient management systems through capacity building in government and empowering citizens to exercise their right to service.

18. Govt working on scheme to allow NGOs to take care of senior citizens at home

The government announced in Parliament that it will come up with a new programme under which NGOs will take care of senior citizens, who are living alone, at their homes, besides bringing in a law to provide day care facility. There are about 10.38 crore senior citizens in the country based on 2011 census. A 2007 law has the provision for taking care of all senior citizens. However, the government is working on a new law to ensure those senior citizens living alone are take care of in a better way.

19. Sabarimala Temple: SC appoints ex-Kerala HC judge to prepare inventory of ornaments

The Supreme Court appointed retired Kerala High Court judge CN Ramachandaran Nair to prepare an inventory of ornaments of the deity in view of conflicting claims made by warring factions of the Pandalam Royal family. It's widely believed that Pandalam place is where Lord Ayyappa, the presiding deity of Sabarimala Temple, had his human sojourn as the son of the Raja of Pandalam. The top court asked Attorney General KK Venugopal, representing Kerala government, to use his good offices to amicably resolve the dispute.

20. Andhra Pradesh CM Inaugurates First Disha Police Station in Rajamahendravaram

The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy on inaugurated the first 'Disha Police Station' in Rajamahendravaram city on 8 February 2020, which will exclusively handle cases of crime against women and children. In all 18 Disha Police Stations will be set up in all 13 districts of the state, under the Disha Act, enacted by the state government in 2019, to ensure speedy investigation and trial of sexual assault cases.

The state government has allocated a budget of Rs 21.10 crore for the setting up of these police stations.

Each Disha Police station will be headed by a deputy superintendent of police.

Under the Disha law, the state government is also opening 13 special courts (one-stop centre) in each district for expeditious trial of such cases.

Each centre will have 19 staffers and will act as the first point of contact to victims.

This Act prescribes death penalty where rape or gangrape is established.

21. Department of Science and Technology (DST) launched 'Project Digital Poompuhar' to recreate the Chola Dynasty port city (Poompuhar) in Tamil Nadu

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) has launched 'Project Digital Poompuhar' to recreate the Chola Dynasty port city (Poompuhar) in Tamil Nadu. The reconstruction of Poompuhar is a part of DST's Indian Digital Heritage (IDH) project. An exhibition of its first project 'Digital Hampi' is currently on display at the National Museum.

The Poompuhar project is a part of the second phase of IDH. The second phase will focus on the heritage sites that are currently underwater in Gujarat (eg. Dwarka) and Tamil Nadu.

The Poompuhar is mentioned in works of Sangam Tamil literature which refers to the city located 30 km from the existing Poompuhar town in southern Tamil Nadu.

The port city flourished in inter-continental trade but shifted with time. Finally, it was re-established at the present location at the mouth of the river Cauvery around 3,000 years ago.

22. Mukti Caravan mobilising people against child trafficking

A Mukti Caravan has been flagged off in Rajasthan to mobilise people against child trafficking. The Mukti(liberation) Caravan is a nationwide campaign launched by Nobel peace laureate Kailash Satyarthi.

The campaign aims to raise awareness about evils like child trafficking, child labour and child sexual abuse. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act,1956(ITPA) is the premier legislation for prevention of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation.

Criminal Law (amendment) Act 2013 provides for comprehensive measures to counter the menace of human trafficking including trafficking of children for exploitation in any form.

Protection of Children from Sexual offences(POCSO) Act,2012 is a special law to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation.

Economy, Defence and Business News

1. Country to get 13th major port at Vadhavan in Maharashtra for Rs 65,544 cr

The Union Cabinet approved the setting up of the country's 13th major port at Vadhavan in Maharashtra at a total cost of Rs 65,544.54 crore. The Vadhavan port will be developed on "landlord model" (where infrastructure is leased to private firms or industries and chemical plants). A special purpose vehicle (SPV) will be formed, with the government planning to hold 51 per cent stake in the project. The SPV will develop the port infrastructure including reclamation, construction of breakwater, besides establishing connectivity to the hinterland. All the business activities would be undertaken under the private-public partnership mode.

Currently, India has 12 major ports – Deendayal, Mumbai, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), Mormugao, New Mangalore, Cochin, Chennai, Kamarajar, V O Chidambaranar, Visakhapatnam, Paradip and Kolkata (including Haldia).

The reason behind setting up another major port on the west coast is because of the exhaustion of container cargo capacity of the JNPT, which is 10 million TEUs (twenty foot equivalent unit). On the west coast, this capacity is 18 million TEUs while the total requirement will increase to 25 million TEUs in 2030. With development of the Vadhavan port, India will break into the countries with top 10 container ports in the world.

2. CDS aims to set up Air Defence Command by June 2020

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Bipin Rawat is aiming to set up the first integrated tri-services command for handling the air defence of the entire country by June 2020 which will be headed by an Indian Air Force (IAF) officer. The aim is to combine the resources of the three services under one command and activate it to protect the air space of the country.

The Department of Military Affairs under General Bipin Rawat has been given the mandate to create joint military commands along with theatre commands.

The Chief of Defence Staff is also working on the creation of the joint peninsula command and a logistics command apart from the theatre commands. The CDS has started discussions with Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane and Air Force Chief RKS Bhaduria for finalising the structure and assets of the integrated air defence command.

Each service has its individual air defence set-up. The air defence command would integrate the air defence and assets of the Army, Air Force and Navy and jointly provide air defence cover to the country.

3. Budget: Govt to launch campaign to eliminate TB by 2025, says Sitharaman

The government will launch a campaign to eliminate tuberculosis (TB) by 2025, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said. Presenting the Budget for 2020-21, Sitharaman proposed to expand Jan Aushadhi Kendras to all districts of the country to provide medicines at affordable rates.

The government has allocated Rs 1.23 lakh crore for rural development and Panchayati raj while Rs 1.6 lakh crore was earmarked for agriculture and allied activities. The government also plans to expand coverage of artificial

insemination to 70 per cent from 30 per cent to increase livestock productivity, she said adding fish production would be raised to 200 lakh tonne by 2022.

4. Google Launches "SOS Alert" For Coronavirus

The Google search engine would be now be directing the users searching coronavirus to systematically arranged results about safety tips, situation updates, and resources from the World Health Organisation. This new addition comes as a part of Google's SOS Alerts feature.

When you type coronavirus in the Google search engine, it will give you advisory and questions and answers related to the deadly virus strain from the World Health Organisation.

The company has also donated 250,000 dollars through its charitable arm Google.org to the Chinese branch of Red Cross to aid the coronavirus relief work.

5. IRCTC launches third private train Kashi Mahakal Express

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the third train operated by Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) between his parliamentary constituency Varanasi and Madhya Pradesh's Indore. The new Kashi Mahakal Express will connect three places — Jyotirlinga - Omkareshwar (near Indore in Madhya Pradesh), Mahakaleshwar (Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh) and Kashi Vishwanath (Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh). IRCTC's third private train will also connect industrial and educational hub of Indore, and Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh.

The train will begin its commercial run from February 20. The Kashi Mahakal Express will operate three days in a week — it will be a bi-weekly service through the Sultanpur-Lucknow route and a weekly service via the Prayagraj route. Kashi Mahakal Express will follow a dynamic fare structure like the other two Tejas Express trains. According to the IRCTC website, a one way journey from Varnasi to Indore in Kashi Mahakal Express will cost ₹1951.

Indore-Varanasi Kashi Mahakal Express will be the first private train that will run overnight. For a comfortable long distance journey, the train will feature a host of facilities.

6. Navy conducts coastal security exercise 'Matla Abhiyaan'

The Indian Navy carried out a five-day coastal security exercise, 'Matla Abhiyaan', with personnel of two naval boats, holding interactions with all stakeholders along the riverine border with Bangladesh. The exercise, named after Matla River, aimed to interact with coastal communities to spread awareness on coastal security and understand the navigational complexities in the Sunderban deltaic waters. During the exercise, the two boats undertook patrol in the Sunderban delta, and along the Indo-Bangladesh protocol route. The personnel of the naval boats interacted with the crew of fishing boats, tankers and launches operating in the Matla and Hooghly rivers and the narrow creeks of Sunderbans. The sailors also interacted with local fishermen to spread awareness on coastal security, and personnel of marine police stations at Maipith, Gobardhanpur and Gosaba enroute to Hemnagar. The exercise, that commenced on January 29, was completed with the two naval boats returning to Man of War Jetty in the city.

7. MSME implemented new scheme SFURTI to set up traditional industries clusters

On February 03, 2020 the Ministry of Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) implemented a new scheme named “Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries” (SFURTI). Under this scheme, financial support will be given to set up traditional industries clusters viz. Khadi, Coir & Village industries clusters. The main objective of SFURTI is to make sustainable development, employment and strengthen governance systems for traditional rural industries.

8. Xiaomi to bring ISRO's NavIC technology to smartphones in 2020

Chinese tech major Xiaomi will bring ISRO's Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System, NavIC technology to its smartphones. The capability has been currently enabled by Qualcomm Technologies Inc on several of their Qualcomm Snapdragon Mobile Platforms and will be made available across multiple Xiaomi smartphones in India. NavIC-- Navigation with Indian Constellation -- is the regional geo-positioning system designed in India by ISRO to provide accurate positioning in India and around the Indian mainland. It is considered to be at par with US-based GPS, Russia's Glonass and Galileo developed by Europe. NavIC is designed to provide accurate positioning in India and 1,500km around the Indian mainland. The system comprises 7 satellites, 3 of which are in geostationary orbit over the Indian Ocean and 4 in geosynchronous orbit. NavIC is capable of providing location positioning accuracy better than 20 metres.

Some of the key consumer applications of NavIC for mobile include precise location mapping in remote, difficult to access areas, precise timing, along with visual and voice navigation for drivers among others.

9. Budget 2020: 'Vivad se Vishwas' scheme to cut down direct tax litigation

With 4.83 lakh direct tax cases under litigation, the government proposed to come out with a new scheme wherein such taxpayers can pay due taxes by March 31 and get complete waiver of interest and penalty. The Vivad Se Vishwas' scheme announced in Budget 2020-21 by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman would help in reducing litigation. Currently, there are 4.83 lakh direct tax cases pending in various appellate forums -- Commissioner (Appeals), Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT), High Court and Supreme Court.

Under the proposed scheme, a taxpayer would be required to pay only the amount of the disputed taxes and will get complete waiver of interest and penalty provided he pays by March 31, 2020. Those who avail this scheme after March 31, 2020, will have to pay some additional amount. The scheme will remain open till June 30, 2020. In the last budget, the government had brought in 'Sabka Vishwas Scheme' to reduce litigation in indirect taxes. It resulted in settling over 1.89 lakh cases and the government is estimated to have collected more than Rs 39,000 crore in taxes.

10. Cabinet approves amendment to bring cooperative banks under RBI regulation

The Union Cabinet has given its approval to bring cooperative banks under the regulatory mechanism of Reserve Bank of India. The cabinet approved amendments to the Banking Regulation Act, thus allowing multi-state cooperative banks to come under the regulation of the RBI. The move will ensure more accountability and transparency in the functioning of the cooperative banks. It will help prevent malpractices.

11. IOC signs deal with Rosneft for crude supply

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Rosneft entered into a term contract for the supply of two million tonnes per annum of Urals grade crude oil to India. This was entered into in the presence of Union Petroleum and Natural Gas and Steel minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who held a delegation-level talks with Igor Sechin, CEO Rosneft. The two sides reviewed the ongoing investments between Indian oil and gas PSUs and Rosneft and discussed further enhancing energy co-operation and strengthening the hydrocarbons engagement both on the investment front as well as in sourcing natural gas and crude oil.

12. Defence Expo 2020: BHEL, BEL sign MoU to develop, market products

State-owned BHEL has entered into a pact with Bharat Electronics Ltd to develop and market products, systems and sensors for defence and non-defence applications. The pact aims at leveraging the complementary strengths and capabilities of BHEL and BEL to develop and market products, systems and sensors for defence and non-defence applications, the filing added.

The MoU will also enable BHEL and BEL to make joint efforts to explore markets for products individually developed or jointly developed by both companies, it added.

13. DRDO Inks technology development deal with Russian Company for Missiles Propulsion Systems

Pune-based DRDO Laboratory, High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) has signed technology development contract with Rosoboronexport, Russia for development of Advanced Pyrotechnic Ignition Systems. The agreement was signed at the DefExpo2020 in Lucknow.

The agreement will enable advancement in the field of energetic materials and pyrotechnic technology leading to the development of advanced ignition systems.

HEMRL works in the development of spectrum of high energy materials required for missiles, rockets and guns.

14. RBI monitoring revival of sick units in UP, flags financial literacy week

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is monitoring the credit flow to the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) and the revival of sick units in the state. Since MSMEs contribute 60 per cent of UP's industrial production, the state government has stressed on boosting the sector with easy working capital loans for realising its ambitious target of becoming a trillion-dollar economy by 2024. The one-district-one-product (ODOP) scheme together with the MSME sector have the potential to give a major push to the state's economy. Launched in 2018, the ODOP scheme is aimed at reviving UP's indigenous industries through financial, marketing and training support with the help of banks, knowledge partners and private marketing entities, including ecommerce.

15. Russian S-400 missile delivery to India by end of 2021

Russia will begin delivering S-400 surface-to-air missile systems to India by the end of 2021.

India signed a \$5bn deal for S-400 missiles in 2018, drawing warnings from the United States that such an acquisition would trigger sanctions as part of a wider programme against Russia.

Moscow has long been the main supplier of military equipment to India - accounting for 62 percent of its total weapons imports during the last five years, according to the Stockholm Peace Research Institute. In the past three years, New Delhi has bought Russian arms worth \$15bn.

However, in recent years, New Delhi has inched closer to the US and Israel for weapons supply.

The US has warned that India could face sanctions if it goes ahead with the S-400 deal. It has issued similar threats to Turkey over its purchase of the missile defence system.

Under a US law, known as the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), the purchase of defence equipment from Russia can be subject to sanctions. However, the president can opt to issue a waiver.

16. Navy to get third Scorpene submarine in December

The third Scorpene submarine, Karanj, will be delivered to the Indian Navy by December and all six submarine deliveries would be completed by 2022.

The Scorpene submarine has the ability to be equipped with an AIP system. The first AIP will be equipped during the first refit of the first Scorpene. An indigenous fuel cell-based AIP module is currently under development by the DRDO. The project reached a milestone in October 2019 with the successful operation of a land-based prototype engineered to the form-and-fit of a submarine. The DRDO has expressed confidence that the module will be ready in time for installation on Kulvari. An AIP module gives stealth and extended endurance to diesel-electric submarines by allowing them to stay submerged longer.

Naval Group is among the five Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) shortlisted for the Navy's project for advanced submarines under Project-75I being processed through the Strategic Partnership (SP) model of defence procurement. MDL and Larsen & Turbo are the two Indian companies shortlisted under it and the Request For Proposal (RFP) would be issued to them.

MDL is manufacturing the submarines with technology assistance from the Naval Group under a \$3.75 bn deal signed in October 2005.

17. RBI rules out printing more money to cover fiscal deficit

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the central bank has no plans to monetise the rising fiscal deficit. This is the third consecutive year that the government has revised its fiscal deficit target. The budget has pegged fiscal deficit at 3.8 per cent for the current fiscal year, up from 3.3 per cent projected in the previous budget; and at 3.5 per cent for FY21, up from 3 per cent estimated in the July 2019.

The government has already crossed the fiscal deficit at 132 per cent of the estimate as of December end. The government has utilised 'escape clause' under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act which provides it a 50 bps leeway for relaxation of fiscal deficit roadmap during time of stress.

Accordingly, it has budgeted a net borrowing Rs 5.45 lakh crore from the market in FY21.

18. Hyderabad Metro Rail becomes second largest metro network in India

With the launch of another 11-km stretch, Hyderabad Metro Rail has become the second largest metro rail network in the country after Delhi.

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Reddy flagged off the metro train on Green Line stretch from Jubilee Bus Station (JBS) to Mahatma Gandhi Bus Station (MGBS), connecting the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Hyderabad Metro Rail, the world's largest public-private partnership project, is now the second largest operational metro network in the country covering 69.2 kms. The JBS-MGBS stretch is part of Corridor II JBS-Falaknuma (14.78 km). The work on the stretch from MGBS on Musi river to Falaknuma, the famous palace in the old city, is yet to start.

The stretch, which has nine metro stations, is expected to reduce travel time to just 16 minutes from one end to the other, as against 45 minutes by road. MGBS inter-change station, which is said to be the largest metro station in the country, connects the Green Line to Red Line or corridor I from L. B. Nagar to Miyapur (29 km). At JBS, Green Line is connected to Blue Line or corridor III from Nagole to Raidurg (29 km).

19. PFRDA doubles minimum net worth for pension fund managers to ₹50 cr

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), the regulator of the National Pension System (NPS), has doubled the minimum net worth criterion for pension fund managers to ₹50 crore from the ₹25 crore stipulated earlier. Existing pension fund managers must comply with this requirement within such time as the PFRDA stipulates. This brings pension funds on par with mutual funds which have to meet a minimum net worth requirement of ₹50 crores, under SEBI rules.

20. Government Weaves Tax Net For Internet's Global Biggies

India has introduced an enabling provision that will make an overseas platform that advertises, streams or sells goods to an Indian IP address taxable in the country. This marks the first step toward a global digital tax and means that India will be ready to implement the levy once the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) framework, currently under discussion, is finalised. The government will then be able to tax revenues of e-commerce firms such as Amazon, Alibaba and Ebay selling goods or services based on data collected from residents and those engaged in targeted advertisements such as Facebook and Google, besides streaming services like Netflix. Those monetising data, through cookies for instance, will also be covered. India had imposed a 6% equalisation levy, sometimes referred to as the 'Google tax', in 2016. But this latest development is a significant move toward capturing tax on incomes earned by overseas companies through consumption by Indians. The government had introduced the concept of significant economic presence (SEP) in line with its plan to tax digital companies in the Finance Act, 2018. SEP was defined to mean, among other things, systematic and continuous soliciting of business activities or engaging in interaction with such number of users as may be prescribed in India through digital means. This provision was earlier proposed to be effective from assessment year 2021-22, but has now been deferred to 2022-23.

21. Indian Army Major develops world's first bulletproof helmet against AK-47 bullet

An Indian Army Major who had developed a bulletproof jacket for protection against sniper bullets, has now developed a helmet which is claimed to be first such in the world that can stop an AK-47 bullet round from a distance of 10 meters. The ballistic helmet has been developed under project Abhedya by Major Anoop Mishra

who has also developed a full-body protection bulletproof jacket which can withstand even sniper rifles. The officer is part of the Indian Army's College of Military Engineering and had got into the development of bulletproof jackets after he had received gunshots on his vintage bulletproof jacket. The College of Military Engineering (CME) at Pune, a premier tactical & Technical training institution is the alma mater of the Corps of Engineers. CME is responsible for training of personnel of the Corps of Engineers besides imparting instructions in Combat Engineering, CBRN Protection, Works Services and GIS matters to the personnel of All Arms & Services.

22. RBI proposes setting up a self-regulatory body for digital payments ecosystem

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed setting up a self-regulatory organisation “for orderly operations of the entities in the payment system” which will serve as a two-way communication channel between the industry and the regulator, in its statement on developmental and regulatory policies. The apex bank will release a framework for establishing this organisation by April 2020, “with a view to fostering best practices on security, customer protection and pricing, among others”.

The central bank also said that it will periodically publish a composite “Digital Payments Index” (DPI) to capture the extent of digitisation of payments effectively. This index would be prepared based on “multiple parameters,” and will be made available from July 2020 onwards.

23. First batch of Kamov choppers to be rolled out from Tumkur by 2025: Report

The first batch of Kamov military helicopters, to be manufactured in India under an Indo-Russia joint venture, is expected to be rolled out by 2025. In October 2016, India and Russia finalised a broad agreement for the joint venture between Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and two Russian defence majors for production of the helicopters in India.

Under the joint venture, 200 Kamov 226T helicopters will be produced. Of these, 60 will be supplied to India in fly-away condition while 140 choppers will be manufactured in India under a USD 1 billion deal.

India is procuring the Kamov choppers to replace its ageing Cheetah and Chetak helicopters. The Kamov Ka-226T helicopter has 72 per cent Russian components and 28 per cent from various western countries.

The Kamov helicopters will be supplied to the Indian Air Force and the Army. Both the forces have been pressing for early conclusion of the deal so they can replace their ageing fleet within the next three to four years. The joint venture has already finalised an agreement specifying work-schedule and techno-commercial issues.

24. Contribution Of Renewable Energy Sources Estimated To Be Around 21% Of Electricity Demand In 2021-22

As per Central Electricity Authority's National Electricity Plan, contribution of renewable energy sources is estimated to be around 21% of the total electricity demand of the country in the year 2021-22 and 24% by 2026-27. The major efforts being taken by the Government to meet the targets of renewable energy in the country, inter-alia, include Permitting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) up to 100 percent under the automatic route, strengthening of Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), mandating requirement of Letter of Credit (LC) as payment security mechanism by distribution licensees for ensuring timely payments to RE generators, setting of Ultra Mega Renewable Energy Parks to provide land and transmission on plug and play basis to investors, waiver of

Inter State Transmission System (ISTS) charges and losses for inter-state sale of solar and wind power for projects to be commissioned by 31st December, 2022, notification of standard bidding guidelines to enable distribution licensee to procure solar and wind power at competitive rates in cost effective manner, declaration of trajectory for Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO) up to the year 2022, laying of transmission lines under Green Energy Corridor Scheme for evacuation of Power in Renewable rich states, launching of new schemes, such as, PM-KUSUM, Solar Rooftop Phase II, 12000 MW CPSU Scheme Phase II, etc. As part of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Accord on Climate Change, India has made a pledge that by 2030, 40% of its installed power generation capacity shall be from non-fossil fuel sources and will reduce its carbon emission intensity of GDP by 33-35 % considering 2005 level. The Government has set a target to install 175 GW of renewable energy capacity in the country by the year 2022.

International News

1. Bangladesh's PM Sheikh Hasina inaugurates "Ekushey Book Fair"

Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has inaugurated the Ekushey Book fair. The Ekushey Book fair has been organised at Bangla Academy premises in Dhaka. The book fair is annually celebrated to commemorate the martyrs of the language movement which helped in establishing Bangla as the official language of the then East Pakistan. The book fair aims to publicize the art, culture and literature of Bangladesh across the globe.

The Ekushey Book Fair is the longest and biggest book fair of Bangladesh. The Bangladesh's Language Movement started in 1948 and it reached to its peak when eight people laid down their lives on February 21, 1952. The movement concluded with the adoption of Bangla as the official language of the then East Pakistan. As a result of the movement, 21st February is observed every year to commemorate the martyrs of the Bangladesh's Language Movement. UNESCO has also adopted a resolution to celebrate 21 February as International Mother Language Day. The resolution and the marking of the day is an honour bestowed by the international community on the Language Movement of Bangladesh.

2. Maldives rejoins Commonwealth as UK leaves EU

Maldives was officially readmitted to the Commonwealth more than three years after the Indian Ocean archipelago nation quit the organisation over criticism of its human rights record, taking the count of the bloc's membership countries back to 54. The island nation's rejoining came just over an hour after the United Kingdom left the European Union following 47 years of membership. The island nation had quit the Commonwealth in October 2016 after being threatened with suspension over its human rights record and lack of progress on democratic reform.

It submitted a request to rejoin in December 2018, when President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih wrote to Commonwealth Secretary. Maldives joined the Commonwealth in 1982 and was a member until it withdrew in 2016.

The Commonwealth is a political association of 54 member states, nearly all of them former territories of the British Empire. Its members have agreed to shared goals like development, democracy and peace. Any country can join the modern Commonwealth. The last country to join the Commonwealth was Rwanda in 2009.

3. UAE discovers new natural gas reserves

The United Arab Emirates has discovered huge shallow natural gas reserves between the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. The newly discovered gas reserves contain about 80 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. The discovery of the huge gas reserves will help the nation achieve self-sufficiency in gas production. Shallow gas resources are reserves that are found trapped not too deep from the surface but they require advanced technology for production. The produced gas will then be supplied to Dubai, which currently imports most of its gas from Qatar. The agreement between ADNOC and Dubai Supply Authority has reinforced ADNOC's commitment to enable gas self-sufficiency and ensure a sustainable and economic gas supply in the nation. ADNOC had granted several

international companies with the concession rights of new and existing oilfields in 2018. It has also allocated about \$132 billion to invest in the oil sector over the next five years.

The company aims to increase gas production UAE to become a net exporter gas and raise its oil output capacity to four million BPD in 2020 and five million BPD by 2030.

The United Arab Emirates consists of seven emirates –Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Fujairah, Ras Al-Khaimah and Umm Al-Quwain. About 30 percent of the country's GDP is directly based on oil and gas output.

4. Bhutan ends free travel for Indian passport holders. Add Rs 1,200 per day to your trip

Ending the provision of free entry for Indian tourists into the country, Bhutan recently announced that it will levy a daily fee of Rs 1,200 per person from July 2020. Other countries included in the scheme are Maldives and Bangladesh. As for children between the age of 6 and 12 years, a fee of Rs 600 needs to be paid. The fee, called a Sustainable Development Fee (SDF), is a provision recently introduced by the Bhutanese government to help regulate the heavy tourist traffic in the country. The SDF for Indian passport holders is quite less compared to citizens of other countries, who have to pay USD 65 (Rs 4,631) along with a compulsory flat cover charge of USD 250 (Rs 17,811) per day. The decision to introduce the fee was passed by the country's National Assembly as the Tourism Levy and Exemption Bill of Bhutan, 2020. Earlier, Indian nationals visiting Bhutan were only required to carry any of the two valid travel documents necessary, and did not have to pay an entry fee. The travel documents were an Indian passport with minimum 6 months validity and/or a voter ID card issued by the Election Commission of India. Indian citizens did not require a visa to visit Bhutan.

5. Trump acquitted at end of months long impeachment process, found not guilty of two articles

The Senate voted to acquit President Donald Trump on two articles of impeachment marking the inevitable and historic end to a bitterly fought, divisive impeachment trial that will reverberate into the 2020 election and shape Trump's presidential legacy. But the final day of the Senate's impeachment trial was not without suspense: Sen. Mitt Romney, a Utah Republican, found the President guilty of abuse of power, becoming the first senator in US history to vote to remove from office a president from the same party.

The third Senate impeachment trial of a sitting president in US history concluded Wednesday afternoon with votes finding the President not guilty of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, the impeachment articles the House charged Trump with in December. Romney was the sole Republican to vote to convict the President on the first article of impeachment, abuse of power, joining with all Senate Democrats in a 52-48 not guilty vote. Romney voted with Republicans against the obstruction of Congress charge, which fell along straight party lines, 53-47 for acquittal.

The acquittal verdict was the final act of a four-month impeachment process that inflamed the partisan tensions simmering throughout the course of the Trump administration, friction that boiled over during the State of the Union even though Trump left impeachment out of his speech.

6. Nuclear war causes ocean acidification

A nuclear conflict could worsen the impact of ocean acidification on corals, oysters and other shelled marine animals, according to a study which simulated a range of hypothetical wars. Ocean acidification refers to the

process of our planet's oceans becoming more acidic due to the global increase in carbon dioxide emissions. The study was published in the journal Geophysical Research Letters.

People in News

1. Iraqi President appoints new Prime Minister despite rejection by protesters

Iraqi president Barham Salih officially appointed Muhammad Tawfiq Allawi to form the new Iraqi cabinet. Protesters in Baghdad and other major cities had already rejected the former Minister of Communications' candidacy for the role of Prime Minister before it was officially announced.

2. NASA astronaut Christina Koch returns to Earth after record-breaking spaceflight

NASA astronaut Christina Koch wrapped up her first stay on the International Space Station Feb. 6, 2020, and it is one for the record books. Koch arrived in space in March 2019 and spent a total of 328 days living and working in the orbiting laboratory.

Koch's stay set a new record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman, breaking the record previously set by NASA astronaut Peggy Whitson. It was also the second-longest single spaceflight by a NASA astronaut, after Scott Kelly's yearlong mission in 2015.. During her time in space, Koch worked on a host of science experiments and performed spacewalks including the first ever performed by two women.

Also in the Soyuz capsule Koch rode home were Russian cosmonaut Alexander Skvortsov and European Space Agency astronaut Luca Parmitano. Remaining in orbit are NASA astronauts Jessica Meir and Andrew Morgan and Russian cosmonaut Oleg Skripochka. A new trio of crewmembers is slated to launch in April to join them.

3. RBI governor Shaktikanta Das is Asia Pacific central banker of the year

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das has been named the Central Banker of the Year, Asia-Pacific 2020, by the Banker magazine, a unit of Financial Times (FT). The award is given to central bankers who have "best managed to stimulate growth and stabilise their economy." Jorgovanka Tabakovi, National Bank of Serbia, was adjudged the winner as the Global Central Banker of the Year.

Events

1. Country's biggest horticultural fair begins

The four-day mega event 'National Horticultural Fair 2020' at ICAR-Indian Institute of Horticultural Research kick-started today in Bengaluru. The institute is expecting 50,000 farmers from various States of the country. As 'Making farming an enterprise' is the theme of this year's fair, special focus has been given to showcasing technologies, crop varieties and management practices that can turn farming into a sustainable as well as a profitable venture.

Awards

1. Waheeda Rehman conferred with Kishore Kumar Samman at her residence.

Veteran actor Waheeda Rehman was conferred with Madhya Pradesh government's prestigious Kishore Kumar Award for 2018. Madhya Pradesh culture minister Dr Vijaylaxmi Sadho presented the award to the actor at the latter's residence in Bandra in Mumbai. The award carries a cash prize of Rs 2 lakh and a citation.

Rankings

1. Maharashtra registers maximum number of missing women & MP tops in missing children in 2016, 2017 & 2018: NCRB report

On February 3, 2020, According to the report titled 'missing women and children in India' released by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), an Indian government agency responsible for collecting and analyzing crime data. The highest number (33,964) of women who go missing in India are from Maharashtra & the number of missing children are maximum (10, 038) in the State of Madhya Pradesh (MP) in the year 2016, 2017 & 2018.

2. India ranks as second largest steel producer of crude steel: Dharmendra Pradhan

India now ranks as the second-largest producer of crude steel after China, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said. India's crude steel production in 2018 was at 109.3 million tonnes, up by 7.7 percent from 101.5 million tonnes in 2017. This moved up to 111.2 million tonnes in 2019.

On the other hand, Japan ranks third globally with 104.3 million tonnes of crude steel production in 2018 and 99.3 million tonnes in 2019. In contrast, China remains number one with 920 million tonnes of production in 2018 and 996.3 million tonnes in 2019. The United States and South Korea rank fourth and fifth respectively.

3. India slips to 40th position on International Intellectual Property Index

India slipped to 40th position on the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index, which analyses the IP climate in 53 global economies, this year, according to a report of US Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center. Last year India was ranked at 36th position out of 50 countries. The US, the UK, Sweden, France and Germany remained the top five economies on the intellectual property index in 2019 retaining their spots from the last year.

Implementation of the policy has improved the speed of processing for patent and trademark applications, increased awareness of IP rights among Indian innovators and creators.

Sports News

1. Deepa Malik elected as the President of the Paralympic Committee of India

Indian para athlete and lone woman Paralympic Games medalist Deepa Malik has been elected as the President of the Paralympic Committee of India in the polls held in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) is the governing body that is responsible for selection of Indian athletes to represent the nation at paralympic events across the country as well as international events.

2. Mirabai Chanu sets new national record to win gold at National Championships

Mirabai Chanu on bettered her own national record enroute to winning the ongoing senior National Weightlifting Championships in Kolkata. Mirabai lifted a total of 203kg to win the 49kg gold, bettering her previous record of 201 which she had achieved at the World Championships in Thailand last year.