ARUL IAS ACADEMY

JULY - 2018

Current Affairs

News

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APPOINTMENTS

- Adarsh Kumar Goel has been appointed as new Chairperson of National Green Tribunal. Also, L. Narasimha Reddy is appointed as Chairman of Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT).
- Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has been elected as New President of North American nation Mexico.
- Anil Kumar Chawla appointed as chief of Southern Naval Command (SNC).
- Brand Ambassadors (July 2018) -
  - ✓ Vidya Balan (Actress) - Muthoot Pappachan Group.
- D C Raina is appointed as Advocate general of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Democratic National Committee (DNC) of USA appointed Indian American Seema Nanda as its new CEO, making her first Indian American to be appointed as operational head of a major American political party.
- Government reappointed Anil D Sahasrabudhe as chairman All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).
- Haryana Governor Kaptan Singh Solanki has been given additional charge of Himachal Pradesh, during absence of Himachal Governor Acharya Devvrat.
- Hun sen reelected as Prime Miniser of South East Asian Nation Cambodia, after landslide victory in General Elections 2018. He has been rulling cambodia for 33 years.
- Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party emerged as largest party in General Elections 2018 in Pakistan. Imran Khan (Ex-Cricketer) will be Pakistan's new Prime Minister.
- Indian Ambassadors (July 2018) -
  - ✓ Democratic Republic of Congo - Nina Tshering La.
- Indian-American Uttam Dhillon took charge as Acting Director of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) of USA.
- José Eladio Alcain of Uruguay has been appointed as Head of Mission and Chief Military Observer for UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP).
  - ✓ UNMOGIP was established by UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution and started its operations in 1949.
  - ✓ India has maintained that UNMOGIP has outlived its utility and is irrelevant after Shimla (Accord) Agreement and consequent establishment of Line of Control (LoC) in 1971. In Shimla Agreement, India and Pakistan agreed to change ceasefire line to LoC and held that they will resolve their disputes bilaterally without third party interference.
  - ✓ In 2014, India asked UNMOGIP to wind up its work in Kashmir and in 2017, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) reiterated that UNMOGIP does not have mandate to monitor situation in Kashmir.

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Misc. Appointments (July 2018) -

- ✓ Dhanlaxmi Bank appointed T Latha as Managing Director & CEO.
- ✓ Manoj Kumar Pingua has been appointed as the acting MD of National Film Development Corporation (NFDC).
- ✓ Saraswati Prasad appointed as chairman and managing director of steel PSU Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL).
- ✓ Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Ltd (HSBC) appointed Amitabh Malhotra as head of investment banking for HSBC India.
- ✓ Payments Council of India (PCI) appointed Vishwas Patel as its new Chairman.
- ✓ Reliance Foundation proposed Noted scientist Raghunath A Mashelkar as Chancellor of yet-to-be established Jio Institute. Dipak C Jain will serve as Vice-Chancellor of Institute.
- ✓ Rajat Sharma - President of Delhi & District Cricket Association.
- ✓ Girish Pillai - Member (Traffic) in Railway Board.
- ✓ S.N. Agrawal - Member (Staff) in Railway Board.
- ✓ Uday Kumar Varma - Member of Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC).
- ✓ L Narasimha Reddy - Chancellor of University of Hyderabad (UoH).
- ✓ Raj Kumar - Vice Chancellor of Panjab University.
- ✓ T.V Narendran - chairman of Bhushan Steel (acquired by Tata Steel).
- ✓ Arman Ali - Executive Director of National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP).
- ✓ Tahira Safdar - First Chief Justice of a High Court in Pakistan (Balochistan High Court).
- ✓ Rishi Srivastava - MD & CEO of Tata AIA Life.
- ✓ Surendra Rosha - CEO for Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC)'s India Operations.

➢ P K Srivastava is appointed as Director General and Chairman of Ordnance Factory Board.

➢ Sandeep Sancheti is appointed as President of Association of Indian Universities (AIU).

➢ Supreme Court (SC) collegium recommended names of chief justices for 7 high courts -

- ✓ Rajendra Menon - Delhi
- ✓ Gita Mittal - Jammu and Kashmir (First Woman Judge in J & K HC)
- ✓ V K Tahilramani - Madras
- ✓ Hrishikesh Roy - Kerala
- ✓ K S Jhaveri - Orissa
- ✓ Aniruddha Bose - Jharkhand
- ✓ M R Shah - Patna

➢ T.C.A. Raghavan is appointed as new Director General of ICWA (Indian Council of World Affairs).

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- Thottathil Bhaskaran Nair Radhakrishnan will be appointed as Chief Justice of Hyderabad High Court.
- UK Government appointed Jeremy Hunt as new Foreign Secretary, to replace Boris Johnson who resigned in protest against government's plans for a semi-Brexit.
- United India Insurance Company appointed K B Vijay Srinivas as its Director and General Manager.
- Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu is appointed as Chancellor of Pondicherry Central University.

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AWARDS

2018 Ramon Magsaysay Awards - Winners -

Bharat Vatwani (India) - For Tremendous courage and healing compassion in embracing India's mentally-afflicted destitute. Based in Mumbai he started an informal operation of bringing mentally-ill street persons to their private clinic for treatment and established Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation in 1988.

Sonam Wangchuk (India) - For uniquely systematic, collaborative and community-driven reform of learning systems in remote northern India.

- Youk Chhang (Cambodia)
- Maria de Lourdes Martins Cruz (East Timor)
- Howard Dee (Philippines)
- Vo Thi Hoang Yen (Vietnam)

About Magsaysay Award -

- Ramon Magsaysay Awards' is an annual award established to perpetuate former Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay's example of integrity in governance, courageous service to the people, and pragmatic idealism within a democratic society
- It is a reputed honour and termed as Nobel Prize of Asia.

All India Football Federation (AIFF) Awards 2018 -

- ✓ Player of the Year -Sunil Chettri
- ✓ Woman Player of the Year - Kamala Devi
- ✓ Best Grassroots Development Programme - Kerala
- ✓ Emerging Player of the Year - Anirudh Thapa
- ✓ Emerging Woman Footballer of the Year - E Panthoi

- Assamese film Xhoihobote Dhemalite (Rainbow Fields) won 3 top awards at 3rd Love International Film Festival in USA. It won awards for - best film, best actress (Dipannita Sharma) and best music (Anurag Saikia). It was directed by Bidyut Kotoky.
- Environment Ministry re-introduced 'Medini Puraskar Yojna'– a scheme that awards Indian authors for their original work in Hindi on environment, pollution and climate change subjects. It aims to encourage Hindi authors to write on environmental topics.
- Gopalkrishna Gandhi has been chosen for 24th Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award for his contribution in promoting communal harmony, peace and goodwill. He is a former governor of West Bengal. Award contains a citation and a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh, presented on birth anniversary of former PM Rajiv Gandhi (Aug 20, observed as Sadbhavna Diwas).

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Industrial Awards (July 2018) -

- ✓ Ravi Mehrotra (Chairman of Foresight Group International) received lifetime achievement award at Seatrade 30th Anniversary Award Ceremony in Landmark (London).
- ✓ India's Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) project was among 8 projects that won World Bank's internal award for exceptional performance.
- ✓ India Heritage Walk Festival, a collaboration of Sahapedia and YES Arts & Culture, has been awarded PATA Gold Award 2018.
- ✓ A team comprising experts from Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur and University of Oxford based linguist Aditi Lahiri, has been selected for an awardfor exceptional research-led innovation to mitigate arsenic poisoning in Ganga-Brahmaputra delta in north and northeast India.
- ✓ Ajay Singh (SpiceJet CMD) received USISPF Leadership Award at the first Annual Leadership Summit of the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) in Washington DC (USA).
- ✓ Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has been awarded INFRA Icon Award in 'Global Energy' category at mid-day INFRA Icons Awards 2018 in Mumbai.
- ✓ HDFC named as best performing primary lending institution in Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) for EWS (Economically Weaker Section) and LIG (Low Income Group) category.
- ✓ NBFC Repco Micro Finance received Nabard 2018 award for its service to self-help group (SHG) linkage in Tamil Nadu for 2017-18.

- ➢ Kerala's Cochin International Airport has been selected for the Champion of Earth Prize-2018.
  - ✓ Cochin Airport a first in world to be fully powered by solar energy, with solar capacity to be increased to 40 MWp.
  - ✓ CIAL stands 4th in country in terms of international traffic and seventh in total traffic has handled 10 million passengers in 2017-18.
- ➢ Milan Shankar Tare, a fisherman of Palghar district, Maharashtra, is selected for 2018 National Maritime Search and Rescue Award. He saved lives of 12 people from a sinking fishing boat named Shivneri in May 2018.
- ➢ Minister of Railways & Coal, Piyush Goyal distributed awards to winning stations of Station Beautification competition in Rail Bhawan. Balharshah & Chandrapur Railway Stations of Central Railway have been awarded first prize.
- ➢ Ministry of Earth Sciences observed its foundation day**.** Several Scientists were awarded on this occasion -

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- ✓ Life Time Excellence award - K. S. Valdiya (JNCASR, Bengaluru)
- ✓ National award for women scientist - Kusala Rajendran (IISc, Bengaluru)

➢ Mohammed Ayazuddin Patel won Senior Fellowship Award for 2016-17 instituted by Centre for Cultural Resources and Training Centre (Ministry of Culture). It carries a cash of INR 4.8 lakh.

Mohun Bagan Awards 2018 -

- ✓ Mohun Bagan Ratna - Pradip Chowdhury
- ✓ Best Footballer for 2017-18 - Shilton Paul (Goalkeeper)
- ✓ Best Cricketer - Sudip Chatterjee
- ✓ Best Youth Footballer - Sourav Das
- ✓ Special award - Rahim Ali (for his performance in U-17 World Cup)

➢ **Noted Carnatic vocalist Aruna Sairam selected for 2018 Sangita Kalanidhi award of Music Academy. She will preside over 92nd annual conference to be held in December 2018 to January 2019. Other awards -**

- ✓ Sangita Kala Acharya award: - Mridangist Thanjavur R. Ramadoss and vocalist K. Oman Kutty.
- ✓ T.K. Awards - Veena player Kalyani Ganesan and nadaswaram player S.R.G. Rajanna.
- ✓ Musicologist award - Premeela Gurumurthy(Vice Chancellor of Tamil Nadu University).
- ✓ Nritiya Kalanidhi award - Shanta Dhananjayan.

➢ Noted Odia Poet Ramakanta Rath is conferred with Odisha's highest literary award Atibadi Jagannath Das Samman for 2018. It carries a citation and cash prize of Rs 1 lakh. He was given the award for his life time contribution to Odia literature. iv. Apart from Mr.Rath, the Akademi also felicitated 15 other litterateurs of the state.

➢ Noted artist Anjolie Ela Menon received National Kalidas Samman for visual arts from Madhya Pradesh government.

➢ Sri Lanka-born Canadian Author Michael Ondaatje's bestselling novel 'The English Patient' is announced as he winner of Golden Man Booker Prize in London. The prize was instituted as part of celebrations to mark Booker's having completed 50 years.

- ✓ He aso made it to Man Booker Prize list with his latest novel Warlight. Organizers announced 13 books in long list for prestigious award, chosen from 171 submissions.

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BOOKS

- Book Gandhi The years that changed the world (1914-1948), has been written by Ramachandra Guha. It will be released in September 2018.
- Book Two Classical Plays from India, English translation of Hindi plays written by DP Sinha has been released.
- Book When Coal Turned Gold: The Making of a Maharatna Company, written by Coal India Ltd (CIL)'s former chairman Partha Sarathi Bhattacharyya has been released.
- Book Winning Like Sourav: Think & Succeed Like Ganguly, written by Abhirup Bhattacharya has been released.
- Famed Harry Potter Series British Author J K Rowling will launch her new novel, with name Lethal White, as 4th in series about exploits of private investigator Cormoran Strike under her pseudonym Robert Galbraith.

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COMMITTEES

- BN Srikrishna Committee submitted its report on data protection law, applicable for processing of personal data within India. Provisions -
  - ✓ Critical personal data of Indian citizens shall be processed in centres located within country. It leaves it to Central Government to notify categories of personal data that will be considered as critical.
  - ✓ Some personal data can be transferred outside India with some riders,with 1 copy stored in India.
  - ✓ Recommends setting up of a Data Protection Authority (DPA) to prevent misuse of personal information and also provides for setting up an Appellate Tribunal.
  - ✓ It suggests a penalty of Rs 15 crore or 4 % of total worldwide turnover of any data collection entity for violating provisions.
  - ✓ Failure to take prompt action on a data security breach can attract up to Rs 5 crore or 2 percent of turnover as a penalty.
- GST panel under Sushil Kumar Modi (Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister) recommended that there shall be no additional tax incentives for digital transactions for a year, claiming that it is not an appropriate moment to incentivise digital payments as it will have revenue implications.
- Government constituted a committee headed by Home Secretary (Currently Rajiv Gauba), to check incidents of Mob lynching in counrtry after some recent violent incidents.
- Government constituted a high-level task force under Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary PK Sinha to identify measures to reduce dependence on imports. It will suggest ways to cut import of those items which can be manufactured or explored in country. India is heavily dependent on imports, as India's imports stand at around US $450 billion per year.
- Government has set up a 13-member committee for Sub-National Accounts to be headed by Ravindra H Dholakia. Its aim is to upgrade the norms for computation of economic data at states and districts level to revise the base year for National Accounts or GDP calculation.
- Government has set up a committee under Chairmanship of Anil Swarup, to suggest measures to strengthen National Cadet Corps (NCC) and National Service Scheme (NSS). It will deal with on issues like expansion, strengthening training infrastructure, rationalizing resources, reducing manpower deficiency affecting NCC and NSS.
- Haryana government constituted an inter-district council, under chairmanship of CM Manohar Lal Khattar, to identify developmental priorities of Haryana. Also, State's Department of Social Justice and Empowerment announced a special campaign to control the menace of drugs.

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- Insurance regulator Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) constituted a 16-member committee to examine motor third party insurance pricing aspects and make recommendations on the premium rates for 2019-20. P.J. Joseph is appointed as Chairman of committee.
- Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) constituted a 10 Member Committee headed by Secretary of Ministry of Corporate Affairs (Injeti Srinivas), for review of penal provisions in Companies Act, 2013.
- National Green Tribunal formed a monitoring committee on cleaning of Yamuna River, to be headed by NGT Chairman Adarsh Kumar Goel. NGT asked state governments of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to assist committee on Yamuna rejuvenation.
- Odisha government has set up ministerial committee headed by Finance Minister Sashi Bhusan Behera to draft policies for development of Odia film industry, known as Ollywood.
- Scientists discovered largest dinosaur foot ever, with a width of around 1 metre, supposedly belonging to a Brachiosaurus, that inhabited North America 150 million years ago. This is largest dinosaur foot discovered till now. The footmarks were spotted in a Wyoming (USA) in 1998, identified 20 years Later.
- To resolve issued of Stressed Thermal Power Assets, Government has set up a High Level Empowered Committee headed by Cabinet Secretary (Pradeep Kumar Sinha). It would look into the various issues with a view to resolve them and maximise efficiency of investment in sector.
- University Grants Commission (UGC) formed constituted a committee under M.M. Salunkhe, to look into matters related to examination reforms.
- Uttar Pradesh government constituted a committee to listen to the demands of 'shiksha mitras' and suggest a suitable action plan, headed by Deputy CM Dinesh Sharma.

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DAYS

- 2019 Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be held in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) in January 6-9, 2019, with theme Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India.
- July 06 - World Zoonoses Day. Zoonoses are diseases transmitted to Humans from Animals.
- July 1 - Doctors Day in India.
  - ✓ It honours legendary physician and 2nd Chief Minister of West Bengal, Dr Bidhan Chandra Roy. He was born on July 1, 1882 and died on the same date in 1962, aged 80 years. He was honoured with highest civilian award Bharat Ratna in February 1961.
- July 1 - GST (Goods and Services Tax) Day. Govt. Launched GST regime on July 1, 2017. It replaced all indirect taxes in India with a single GST, with 4 Components - CGST, IGST, SGST and UTGST. GST has 5 Tax Slabs - 0%, 5 %, 12%, 18 % and 28 %.
- July 11 - World Population Day. 2018 theme is Family Planning is a Human Right. On this occasion, A workshop with title Population stabilization: A right and Responsibility, was organized in New Delhi.
- July 12- Observed as UN International Malala Day. According to World Bank, not educating girls or creating barriers in their school education globally costs between $15-30 trillion.
  - ✓ July 12 is also Foundation day of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), founded in 1982. On this occasion, A national seminar on 'Collectivisation and Market linkages: Farmers Producers Organizations' organized in Mumbai.
- July 15 - World Youth Skills Day. It aims to raise awareness on importance of investing in youth skills development.
- July 17 - International Justice Day, marks 1998 Rome Statute that created International Criminal Court (ICC).
- July 18 - UN Nelson Mandela International Day 2018. This year marks 100th birth anniversary of Great South African Social Reformer Nelson Mandela.
- July 2 - World Sports Journalists Day.
- July 2 is observed as World UFO (Unidentified Flying Objects) day and World Sports Journalists Day.
- July 26 - Kargil Vijay Diwas. It marks success of Operation Vijay. On this day in 1999, India successfully took command of high outposts intruded by Pakistanis.
- July 28 - World Hepatitis Day. 2018 theme is Test. Treat. Hepatitis.
  - ✓ On this occasion, Government launched National Viral Hepatitis Control Program, aiming to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030. India is also working to end TB by 2025, five years ahead of global target of 2030. It aims to reduce morbidity and mortality due to viral hepatitis.
- July 29 - International Tiger Day. The annual day is celebrated with slogan Their survival is in our hands.

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- July 30 - World Day against Trafficking in Persons. 2018 Theme is responding to the trafficking of children and young people. On This occasion, Ministry of Women and Child Development launched a contest, '#Childline1098'. It invites people to share images of the Childline 1098 logo that they spot at unique locations and send it with a tagline.
- July 31 - World Ranger Day.
- July 4 - American Independence Day. USA Attained independence from UK in 1776.

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DEFENCE

- 6 global aircraft manufacturers have responded Indian Air Force's (IAF) Request for Information (RFI) to supply 110 fighter aircrafts to replace its ageing fleet of MiG-21s and MiG-27s. Out of bids received, Lockheed Martin F-16 and SAAB Gripen are single-engine fighters, while Dassault Rafale, Boeing F-18, Eurofighter Typhoon and United Aircraft Corporation MiG-35 are twin-engine fighters.
- Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) signed MoU with Swedish aerospace and defence firm Saab, for marketing L-Band 3D air surveillance radar (RAWL-03). Its system is based on state-of-the-art GaN TR module technology and incorporates the latest signal processing techniques.
- Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved acquisition of 8 Fast Patrol Vessels (OPVs) for Indian Coast Guard at an approximate cost of Rs 800 crores. These will be procured under 'Buy (lndian-lDDM)' category, indigenously designed and manufactured.
  - ✓ DAC also approved Implementation Guidelines for 'Strategic Partnership Model' to ensure timely delivery of equipment to Armed Forces. It lays emphasis on incentivisation of transfer of technology and Global Majors, that will encourage self-reliance and align defence sector with 'Make in India ' initiative.
- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman stated that India will buy Russian S-400 Triumf air defence missile despite US sanctions on military transactions with Russia.
- Defence Ministry approved construction of 17 new baffle firing ranges at various Military establishments across country, to faciitate firing from 300 to 500 meters. These will be in addition to 60 similar firing ranges existing all over the country.
- High Power Tank Engines V-46-6 and V92S2 handed over to Indian Army, manufactured by Engine Factory Avadi (EFA) under Make in India Inititttive. Indian Army also gave 100 crores contract for 81 high mobility 10×10 vehicles to vehicle manufacturer Ashok Leyland. This is for first time Indian vehicle manufacturer will deliver heavy duty, high mobility vehicles for Army launchers.
  - ✓ India is also looking to procure National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System-II (NASAMS-II) from USA, an advanced air defence system at $1 billion to defend National Capital Region (NCR) from aerial attacks. It features new 3D mobile surveillance radars and 12 missile launchers for quicker reaction.
- Indian Air Force (IAF) for first time will participate in multinational air exercise Pitch Black – 18 (PB-18) in Australia, to be held for 20 days beginning July 27. It will have 12 participant countries.
- Indian Army will resume trials of US-made M777 ultralight howitzer in Pokhran firing range of Rajasthan. Trials were suspended in September 2017 following a barrel burst caused by faulty ammunition during firing.

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- ✓ M777 Howitzer artillery gun is 155-mm, 39-calibre towed artillery gun, manufactured by US based BAE Systems. It has effective firing range of 24 km.
- ✓ Induction of M777 Howitzer artillery guns will add much needed operational advantage to Indian Army as they will be deployed in high-altitude areas in Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh, bordering China.

- ➢ Indian and Bangladesh Coast Guards conducted a 2 day bilateral table-top exercise on maritime pollution in Kolkata.
- ➢ India's first Defence incubators will come up at T-Hub in Hyderabad (Telangana), India's missile development centre and fast emerging hub for aerospace industries. It will be funded through Ministry's Innovation for Defence Excellence (iDEX) scheme.
- ➢ Indigenous fighter aircraft Tejas of No 45 Squadron (The Flying Daggers) of Indian Air Force (IAF) formally commenced operations from Sulur Air Force Station in Tamil Nadu. Tejas is first advanced fly-by-wire Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) developed indigenously by Hindustan Aeronautical Limited (HAL). It is pegged as world's lightest supersonic fighter.
- ➢ Joint Military Exercises of India over past 3 years -

Army -

S. No.	Country	Exercise
1	Australia	AUSTRA HIND
2	Bangladesh	SAMPRITI
3	China	HAND IN HAND
4	France	SHAKTI
5	Indonesia	GARUDA SHAKTI
6	Kazakhstan	PRABAL DOSTYK
7.	Kyrgyzstan	KHANJAR
8	Maldives	EKUVERIN
9	Mongolia	NOMADIC ELEPHANT
10	Myanmar	IMBEX
11	Nepal	SURYA KIRAN
12	Oman	AL NAGAH
13	Russia	INDRA
14	Seychelles	LAMITIYE

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15	Sri Lanka	MITRA SHAKTI
16	Thailand	MAITREE
17	UK	AJEYA WARRIOR
18	USA	YUDHABHAYAS
		VAJRA PRAHAR
19	Vietnam	VINBAX

Navy:

S. No.	Country	Exercise
1	Australia	AUSINDEX
2	Bangladesh	IN-BN CORPAT
3.	Brazil & South Africa	IBSAMAR
4	France	VARUNA
5	Indonesia	IND-INDO CORPAT
		IND-INDO BILAT
6	Myanmar	IMCOR
		IN-MN BILAT
7	Oman	Naseem-al-Bahr
8	Russia	INDRA NAVY
9	Sri Lanka	SLINEX
10	Singapore	SIMBEX
11	Thailand	INDO-THAI CORPAT
12	UK	KONKAN
13	USA	MALABAR
		RIMPAC (Multilateral)
14	Multilateral Exercise by Brunei	ADMM+ Exercise
15	Multilateral Exercise by Indonesia	KOMODO
16	Multilateral Exercise by India	MILAN

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Air Force -

S. No.	Country	Exercise
1	Israel	Blue Flag-17
2	Oman	EASTERN BRIDGE-IV
3	Russia	INDRA-17
4	Thailand	SIAM BHARAT
5	UAE	DESERT EAGLE-II
6	UK	INDRADHANUSH-IV
7	USA	RED FLAG 16-1
8	Multinational Air Exercise Hosted by Australia	Pitch Black – 18
9	Multinational Air Exercise	Samvedna with Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, UAE

- L&T Defence inaugurated 2nd production line for BRAHMOS Transport Launch Canister (TLC) at Ranoli (Gujarat), To cater to serial production requirements of BRAHMOS Supersonic Cruise Missile System.

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ECONOMY

- Banks Board Bureau (BBB) recommended 15 executive directors to be elevated as managing directors (MD) at various public sector banks (PSBs). BBB is headed by B P Sharma.
- **28th GST Council Meeting Held in New Delhi -**
  - ✓ Rates on several commodities slashed. GST Council has left just 35 items in highest tax bracket of 28 %, including automobiles, digital cameras, tyres, yachts, aircraft, aerated drinks and cigarettes. Rate reductions in 28th GST Council Meet will cost government approx 7000 crores.
  - ✓ Notable amendments -

❖ Composition dealers to be allowed to supply services (other than restaurant services), for upto a value not exceeding 10% of turnover in preceding financial year, or Rs. 5 lakhs, whichever is higher. Council members have unanimously voted for bringing into effect theincreased threshold limit of Rs. 1.5 crore from existing Rs 1 crore as soon as possible.

❖ Threshold exemption limit for registration in the States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya,Sikkim and Uttarakhand to be increased to Rs. 20 Lakhs from Rs. 10 Lakhs.

❖ Reverse charge mechanism deferred for a year till 30th Sept 2019.

❖ Creation of GST Appelate Tribunal with National Bench at New Delhi and Regional Benches at Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata. Amount of pre-deposit payable for filing of appeal before Appellate Authority and Appellate Tribunal to be capped at 25 Crores and 50 Crores respectively.

❖ Regular taxpayers with turnover up to Rs 5 crores can opt to file GST return on a quarterly basis against earlier limit of Rs. 1.5 crores. Return can be either 'Sahaj' or 'Sugam', wherein the first one, report only B2C supplies and the other report both B2B & B2C supplies.

❖ Regular taxpayers with turnover over 5 crores have to file monthly returns, THRIUGH NEW SYSTEM NAMED UPLOAD – LOCK – PAY TAX.

Notable Slashed Rates -

❖ **28% to 18% -**

- Refrigerators, freezers and other refrigerating or freezing equipment including water cooler, milk coolers, refrigerating equipment for leather industry, ice cream freezer etc.
- Washing machines, Vacuum cleaners, Domestic electrical appliances
- Televisions upto the size of 68 cm
- Lithium-ion batteries

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- **28% to 12%**
  - Fuel Cell Vehicle. Further, Compensation cess shall also be exempted on fuel cell vehicle.
- **8%12%/5% to Nil -**
  - Supply of Multimodal Transportation (Service)
  - Stone/Marble/Wood Deities
  - Sanitary Napkins,
  - Circulation and commemorative coins, sold by Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd [SPMCIL] to Ministry of Finance.

- **18% to 5% -**
  - Ethanol for sale to Oil Marketing Companies for blending with fuel
  - Solid bio fuel pellets
- 5% GST is being extended to footwear having a retail sale price up to Rs. 1000 per pair. Footwear having a retail sale price exceeding Rs. 1000 per pair will continue to attract 18%.
- IGST @5% on Pool Issue Price (PIP) of Urea imported on Govt. account for direct agriculture use, instead of assessable value plus custom duty.

- Andhra Pradesh Govt. released State Credit Plan (banking) 2018-19, aiming to improve banking services in Andhra Pradesh.
  - ✓ Under it, 194220 INR Crores are allocated for development purpose, with Priority Sector (agriculture and allied activities, SME, poor people for housing, students for education) allocated 144220 crores. Non-priority sector has been allocated 50000 crores.
- As per Financial Data of Public Sector Banks in FY 2017-18 -
  - ✓ Gross NPA ratio for PSBs is 14.6% in 2017-18. In the last 25 financial years, the gross NPA ratio for PSBs was highest in FY 1993-94 at 24.8%. PNB is followed y IDBI Bank with loss of 8,238 Crores.
  - ✓ All PSBs Except Indian Bank and Vijaya Bank reported net losses in FY 2017-18, with PNB posting biggest ever loss of 12,283 Crores. It is mainly due to PNB was hit by recent huge scams.
  - ✓ Vijaya Bank reported net profit of 727 Crores and Indian Bank posted Profit of 1,259 Crores.
  - ✓ IDBI Bank has most Percentage of NPAs (28 %), followed by Indian Overseas Bank (25.3 %).
  - ✓ Finance Ministry will infuse approx 11336 crores in 5 PSBs by September 2018 - PNB (2,816), Corporation Bank (2555), Indian Overseas Bank (2157), Andhra Bank (2019) and Allahabad Bank (1790).

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- As per Prime Database Investment Bankers League table for FY 2017-18, IIFL is India's top investment bank for equity issuances by private sector companies. IIFL Holdings Ltd was formerly known as India Infoline Limited.
- Asian Development Bank approved lining project of Son canal in Shahabad – Bhojpur region of Bihar, to help agri-sector in this region. Cost of this project is USD 503 million (Rs 3272.49 crore) out of which USD 352 million is being provided by ADB.
- Astrosat, India's first dedicated multi-wavelength space observatory, captured images of a special galaxy cluster that is more than 800 million light years away from Earth. Named Abell 2256, it is made of 3 separate clusters of galaxies that are all merging with one another to eventually form a single massive cluster in future.
- Banks and Financial Institutions (FIs) signed Inter-Creditor Agreement (ICA) aimed at faster resolution of stressed assets of 50 crore or more which are under consortium lending. It has been signed by 22 govt banks, 19 private banks and 32 foreign banks as part of project 'Sashakt'.
  - ✓ Under it, lead lender (having highest exposure) will be authorised to formulate resolution plan for operation turnaround of assets which will be presented to lenders for their approval.
  - ✓ Decision making under ICA framework will be by way of approval of majority lenders i.e. lenders with 66% share in exposure.
- Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) signed agreement with Bombay Metal Exchange (BME) for growth of commodity derivatives markets in non-ferrous metals complex. BSE and BME will work jointly on initiatives to deepen understanding of commodity market among stakeholders.
- CSC SPV, a Special Purpose Vehicle under Ministry of Electronics & IT signed agreement with HDFC Bank to enable its three lakh Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) managing Common Services Centers operate as Banking Correspondents of HDFC Bank. HDFC Bank will also support CSC SPV in converting 1000 identified villages into Digi Gaon (Digital Villages) this year.
- Central Board of Direct Taxation extended deadline for PAN-Aadhaar linking from June 30 2018, to March 31, 2019, as 5th time extension in deadline for individuals to link their PAN with their Aadhaar. Over 16.65 crore PANs out of 33 crore were linked with Aadhaar till March 2019.
- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has developed mobile app 'GST Verify' to protect interest of consumers. It will allow customers to verify their bill if any GST amount mentioned is of genuinely registered person or not.
- Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) has been transferred from Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and brought under Finance Ministry's Department of Economic

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Affairs (DEA). Earlier, Budget 2018 amended Central Road Fund Act 2000, and renamed Central Road Fund as Central Road and Infrastructure Fund.

- China, UAE, Cyprus and significantly, Mauritius, along with 21 other countries have been tagged as "high-risk jurisdictions" by global banks acting as custodians for foreign funds which comprise the largest group of investors in Indian stock market.
- Department of Telecom (DoT) gave final approval to merger of Vodafone India and Idea Cellular, after Idea and Vodafone India jointly paid inr 7268 crores under protest. Both the entities will now approach Registrar of Companies (RoC) for stipulated filings for approval, completing last leg of formalities.
  - ✓ Merged identity will be known as 'Vodafone Idea' that will create India's largest telecom company. Kumar Mangalam Birla will be Non-Executive Chairman of Vodafone Idea while Balesh Sharma will be CEO.
  - ✓ Vodafone will hold 45.1 percent of the combined entity and Idea promoters will hold 26.1 percent of entity.
- Department of telecommunications gave conditional approval to merger of Vodafone India with Idea Cellular, seeking over 7,200 crore (3300 crore and 3900 crore from Vodafone India) from both companies on account of one-time spectrum charges and spectrum liberalisation fees.
- Federal Bank (Private Bank) received RBI approval to open offices in Bahrain, Kuwait and Singapore. It is awaiting local clearances before starting operations there.
- Finance Ministry approved Sunil Mehta Committee's suggestions of a 5-pronged strategy to tackle Non-Performing Assets (NPA), in report titled Sashakt. 5 pronged strategy includes SME resolution approach, Bank-led resolution approach, AMC/AIF led resolution approach, NCLT/IBC approach AND Asset-trading platform.
  - ✓ Highlights nine guiding principles aimed at the operational turnaround of the banking sector in a manner that will create jobs and enhance the value of public sector banks.
  - ✓ Resolution of bad assets below Rs 50 crore to be done within 90 days.
  - ✓ Resolution of consortium loans between Rs 50-500 crore to be done within 180 days, using a BLRA (Bank Led Resolution approach).
  - ✓ Loans above Rs 500 crores will be dealt via AMC/AIF-led resolution process.
  - ✓ Recommendations included creating platforms where banks can trade in bunched loan assets.
  - ✓ Committee suggested setting up of an AMC with an equity contribution from banks, foreign funds and infrastructure funds such as the National Infrastructure Investment Fund (NIIF). AMC could be set up under an existing Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC) like Arcil Ltd which is already promoted by banks.

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- Finance Ministry announced to keep interest rates on small savings schemes unchanged for July-September quarter. **I**nterest rates are (in %)
  - ✓ 5 yr Senior citizen Savings Scheme (paid quarterly) - 8.3

❖ Meant for people above 60 years of age. Only one deposit, not exceeding Rs. 15 lakh, is allowed in this scheme. It is payable from date of deposit of March 31/ September 30/ December 31 in first instance and thereafter, interest is payable on March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31.

- ✓ Savings Deposits - 4
- ✓ Public Provident Fund (PPF) - 7.6

❖ A long-term investment option that offers benefits of EEE on income tax. EEE means that PPF returns are exempt from income tax, maturity amount is tax-free and main investment qualifies for a deduction under section 80C of Income Tax Act. Interest on PPF accounts is compounded yearly.

- ✓ National Savings Certificate (NSC) - 7.6

❖ NSC certificates can be purchased from post offices, with tenure of 5 to 10 years. NSCs offer benefits under Section 80C of Income Tax Act. Interest is compounded annually but paid on maturity.

- ✓ Kisan Vikas Patra - 7.3

❖ A Long-term savings plan that can be purchased from post offices. It can be encashed after 2.5 years. Interest is compounded annually. Amount invested doubles in 118 months.

- ✓ Sukanya Samriddhi Account - 8.1

❖ A legal guardian/ natural guardian, on behalf of a girl child, can open this account in post offices or banks. This account matures in 21 years after deposit of money for 15 years. This scheme gives a triple income tax benefit (no tax on amount invested, amount earned as interest and amount withdrawn). It is compounded and calculated on a yearly basis.

- ✓ Term Deposit (1-5 years) - 6.6-7.4
- ✓ 5 year Recurring Deposit - 6.9

- Financial Firm Paytm patrtnered with Japanese Investor SoftBank to launch a payments service in Japan, to be launched by SoftBank's joint venture company PayPal (with Yahoo Japan). It ia aimed at increasing quantity of cashless payments in Japan, which are currently only 20 % of total transactions.
- Financial Services Firm Oxigen and Fincare Small Finance Bank partnered to roll out the Branchless Banking services, using Oxigen's flagship Point of Sale device called Oxigen Micro ATM Super PoS.
- Flipkart subsidiary PhonePe acquired Zopper Retail – a hyperlocal Point of Sale (POS) platform for small and medium businesses.

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- Foreign direct investment in India grew at 5 year lowest rate of 3% in 2017-18 (total FDI USD 44.85 billion). Compared to FDI Growth of 8.67% in 2016-17, 29% in 2015-16 and 27% in 2014-15.
- Google announced Launchpad Accelerator India, as a new mentorship program developed for startups in India, utilising Machine Learning/AI to develop solutions for India's local needs. This is a 3 month accelerator. It will offer mentorship and access to Google's people, network and technologies, to a group of 8-10 Indian startups. Upto $100K of Google Cloud Credits will also be offered.
- Government announced that Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF) Scheme will be open to all potential researchers from 2019 and not limited to candidates from IISc, IITs, NITs, IIEST and IISERs. It was decided after Government failed to find adequate number of candidates for PMRF this year (Only 135 fellowships offered against 1000 positions).
  - ✓ PMRF will be implemented for period of seven years beginning 2018-19 at total cost of Rs. 1650 crores.
  - ✓ B. Tech/Integrated M.Tech/M.Sc students streams will be offered direct admission in PhD programme in IITs/IISc. Selected students will be offered monthly fellowship of Rs.70,000 for first two years, Rs.75,000 for 3rd year and Rs.80,000 in 4th and 5th years.
  - ✓ Each selected fellow students will be also provided research grant of Rs.2.00 lakh for period of 5 years.
- Government imposed safeguard duty of 25% on import of solar cells from China and Malaysia, to help domestic solar cell manufacturing sector.
- Government proposed to bring down number of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) to 38 from present 56, to enable them to minimize their overhead expenses, optimize the use of technology, enhance the capital base and area of operation and increase their exposure.
- Government reduced minimum yearly deposit required under girl child savings scheme Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana, to Rs 250 from Rs 1,000 earlier.
  - ✓ It was launched as a small savings scheme under Beti Bacho Beti Padho (BBBP) in January 2015. Under it, guardian of a girl child can open an account in her name until she attains age of 10 years. Deposits can be made up to 14 years from date of opening of account. Maximum investment amount on yearly basis is Rs 1.50 lakh.
  - ✓ Girl child can withdraw 50% of money after reaching age of 18 for higher education. It will get interest rate of 9.1%. Account will remain operative until girl child reaches 21 age.
- HCL surpassed Wipro to become India's third biggest software services firm in 1st Quarter of FY 2018 - 19, marking first change in pecking order of India's $167 billion information technology (IT) outsourcing industry in 6 years. HCL's revenue increased 0.8% to $2.05 billion, ahead of Wipro.

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- HDFC Bank left past Russia's Sberbank to become most valuable bank in emerging market outside China. HDFC Bank's current market capitalisation is $78.4 billion against Sberbank's $74.4 billion.
  - ✓ Chinese banks are leading in emerging market, with Industrial & Commercial Bank of China topping with market cap of $273.4 billion.
  - ✓ Globally, America's JPMorgan Chase is most valuable with a market cap of $353 billion, followed by Bank of America at $282 billion.
  - ✓ four banks from India that rank among world's 500 most valuable companies. HDFC Bank is followed by Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC), Kotak Mahindra Bank and State Bank of India.
- HDFC securities launched Mutual Funds transactional capabilities on Facebook Messenger through their virtual assistant Arya, with theme The Pace of Innovation.
- Haryana topped states in per capita revenue collection under GST and has become fourth highest generator of e-way bills in country. State also widened tax base by 82.22 %, with 19 % hike in revenue collections.
- ICAT (International Centre for Automotive Technology) gave first BS-VI certification for a heavy duty engine model for Volvo Eicher Commercial Vehicle Limited.
  - ✓ Pro-active approach from the Government has made India leap from conventional BS-IV to directly adopt BS-VI emission norms as next level for regulatory framework in India.
  - ✓ ICAT is one of prime testing agencies recognized by Government as one of accredited 'Type Approval and Homologation' agencies.
- ICICI Bank's mortgage loan portfolio crossed INR 1.5-trillion milestone, making it largest private player in this segment. It is targeting to grow it to Rs 2 trillion by FY20.
- Income Tax Department has launched an 'instant' Aadhaar-based PAN (Permanent Account Number) allotment service for individuals, who requires unique identification number for the first time.
- India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) will go live with 650 branches in addition to 3,250 access points co-located at post offices in August 2018.
  - ✓ IPPB was incorporated in August 2016, with 100% Government of India equity.
  - ✓ IPPB also has been given permission to link around 170 million postal savings bank (PSB) account with its account.
  - ✓ IPPB will offer interest of 4.5% on deposits up to 25,000, 5% on deposits of 25,000-50,000 and 5.5% on 50,000-100,000
- India became world's 6th biggest economy, pushing France into 7th place, according to updated World Bank figures for 2017.
  - ✓ India's gross domestic product (GDP) amounted to $2.597 trillion at end of last year, against $2.582 trillion for France.

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- ✓ Top 10 Economies are (Trillion USD) - USA (19.39), China (12.24), Japan (4.87), Germany (3.68), UK (2.62), India (2.59), France (2.58), Brazil (2.07), Italy (1.93), Canada (1.65)
- ✓ In terms of Per Capita Income, India has $1940 Annual Per Capita Income.

➢ India will provide tariff concessions on 3,142 products to Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) members, from July 2018, as per results of fourth round of negotiations under APTA. With this,coverage of preferences of total tariff lines for each member will come of 10,677 tariff lines (up from 4,270 items at conclusion of 3rd Round).

- ✓ APTA is an initiative under United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UN ESCAP) for trade expansion through exchange of tariff concessions among developing country members of Asia Pacific Region.

➢ India's National Stock Exchange signed agreement with USA's Nasdaq for a suitable platform and technology backbone to effectively tap post–trade delivery capabilities.

- ✓ Earlier, NSE's current clearing and settlement system operated by National Securities Clearing Corporation Limited (NSCCL). Under new agreement, Nasdaq will deliver a customised real-time clearing, risk management and settlement technology to NSE.

➢ IndiaFirst Life Insurance Company (JV of Bank of Baroda, Andhra Bank and Legal and General (UK)) tied up with Oxigen Services India Pvt. Ltd., to establish distribution of its insurance products at Oxigen retail outlets.

➢ Indian Army signed MoU with State bank of India (SBI) on Defence Salary Package, as revised version of first MoU signed in 2011 and renewed again in February 2015. Indian Army has MoUs on Defence Salary Package with 11 public and private sector banks.

➢ Indian GDP Growth Forecasts (July 2018) -

- ✓ International Monetary Fund (IMF) has cut India's GDP growth forecast by 10 basis points to 7.3% in 2019 and by 30 basis points to 7.5% in 2020. India still remains fastest growing country among major economies in 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- ✓ Asian Development Bank stated that India will remain fastest growing economy, with 7.3 % growth in 2018-19 and 7.6 % in 2019-20.
- ✓ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) predicted India's economic growth will rise to 7.4% in 2018 and 7.5% in 2019. China's GDP growth is projected to moderate to 6.7% in 2018 and to 6.4% in 2019.
- ✓ FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) predicted India's economic growth at 7.5 % in FY 2018-19.

➢ Indian Rupee (INR) has been ranked as one of the 10 best-performing currencies, taking into account its performance since May 2014, when Narendra Modi-led National Democratic Alliance government came into power. Although all emerging market currencies have lost value to dollar, rupees slide is relatively controlled compared with peers.

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- India's biggest power producer NTPC signed term loan agreement with HDFC Bank for availing a loan of INR 1500 crores.
- Iran overtook Saudi Arabia to be 2nd largest supplier of crude oil to Indian public sector firms during 1st Quarter of this fiscal (April-June 2018). Top 3 Crude Oil suppliers to India are -
  - ✓ Iraq - 7.27 million tonnes
  - ✓ Iran - 5.67 million tonnes
  - ✓ Saudi Arabia - 5.22 million tonnes
- Jana Small Finance Bank launched its commercial banking operations, being last microfinance company to convert itself into a small finance bank (SFB), 3 years after Reserve Bank of India (RBI) gave its approval. It was earlier called Janalakshmi Financial Services. About Small Finance Banks -
  - ✓ Existing non-banking financial companies (NBFC), microfinance institutions (MFI) and local area banks (LAB) can apply to become small finance banks.
  - ✓ Minimum net worth Required is INR 100 Crores.
  - ✓ 75% of its net credits should be in priority sector lending and 50% of the loans in its portfolio must in 25 lakh (US$38,000) range.
  - ✓ Promoters stake will be at least 40% initially but must be brought down to 26% in 12 years.
  - ✓ At net worth of INR 500 crores, listing will be mandatory within 3 years. SFBs with net worth under 500 crores could also get their shares listed voluntaril.
  - ✓ It shall be required to maintain a minimum capital adequacy ratio of 15 % of its risk weighted assets (RWA) on a continuous basis.
- Karnataka Bank launched DigiLocker facility for customers. Customers can access their digital documents anytime, anywhere and share it online. Digital Locker makes it easier to validate the authenticity of documents as they are issued directly by registered issuer.
- Karnataka Budget 2018 - 19, Presented by new CM H. D. Kumaraswamy (Janata Dal) -
  - ✓ Announced a partial farm loan waiver of over 34000 crores, which will benefit those farmers whose borrowings are less than Rs 2 lakhs. Farmers who repaid loan within time will be credited the repaid loan amount or 25000 whichever is less.
  - ✓ Several Taxes have been hiked, to make up for expenses due to the loan waiver -

❖ Tax on Petrol hiked from 30 to 32 %, resulting in hike of INR 1.14 per litre in Petrol Prices.
❖ Tax on Diesel hiked from 19 to 21 %, resulting in hike of INR 1.12 per litre in Diesel Prices.
❖ Additinal INR 1000 Crores Excise revenue targeted by hiking taxes by 4% in all 18 different slabs of Liquor.
❖ Tax on electricity hiked from 6 to 9 %.

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- Karnataka registered biggest increase in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2017, as inflows from overseas jumped 300% in the 12 months ended March 2018.
- Maharashtra government allocated inr 15 crores for implementation of a pension scheme for senior journalists, called Acharya Balshastri Jambhekar Sanman Yojana.
- Manappuram Finance accriured 85.39 % stake in Indian School Finance (ISFC), for over 212 crores. ISFC lends to educational institutions like private schools, vocational colleges and institutes, coaching centres etc. to build infrastructure.
- Mobile infrastructure company Bharti Infratel got Competition Commission of India (CCI) approval for merging its operations with Indus Towers, valued at 71500 crores. It will create one of largest mobile tower entities worldwide with 1.63 lakh towers in all 22 telecom circles.
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) launched Centre for Climate Change in Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), as first of its kind centre in South East Asia.
- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) exited its helicopter service provider Pawan Hans by selling its entire 49% stake. Rest 51 % is held by government, which is already on offer for sale.
- Private Sector Lender ICICI Bank reported a net loss of INR 120 crores for Q1 of 2018 (Apr - June), on account of rising bad loans and treasury losses. This is the first time that ICICI bank has reported losses from its India operations. Bank's gross non-performing assets (NPAs) rose to 53,464 crores (8.81% of total advances).
- Punjab National Bank (PNB) and Carlyle Group sold over 51 % stake in mortgage lender PNB Housing Finance. PNB owns 32.79 % stake and Carlyle Group owns 32.36 % of PNB Housing Finance.
- RBI allowed Bank of China to operate in India, becoming 2nd Chinese bank to operate in India, after Industrial & Commercial Bank of China that began Indian Operations in Jan 2018. UK's Standard Chartered has highest, 100 branches in India as of now, among all foreign banks in India.
- RBI made it compulsory to incorporate purchaser's name on face of payment instrumens like demand draft, pay order, banker's cheques and other instruments to prevent money laundering. This directive will come into effect from 15th of September 2018.
- Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani became Asia's richest person, (replacing Chinese e-commerce company Alibaba Co-founder Jack Ma). Mr. Ambani's net worth stands at $44.3 billion.
- Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) MD Mukesh Ambani launched its fiber to the home (FTTH) broadband service - JioGigaFiber and Jio phone 2 (Priced 2999).
  - ✓ JioGigaFiber is Reliance Industries' foray into broadband market of country. It will be rolled out from Aug 15, 2018 and will offer Minimum 100 MBPS speed. It is expected to bring competition in broadband sector which does not have many big players.

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- ✓ Reliance Industries is India's Most profitable and largest Tax Payer in private sector (Goods and Services Tax (GST), Excise and Customs Duty, and Income Tax), paying 9844 crores in FY18 as Tax.
- ✓ Shareholders of Reliance Industries also approved Mukesh Ambani as Chairman and Managing Director for another 5 years.

➢ Reliance Industries beat Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) to become most valued company in India, with RIL's market capitalisation being INR 7.44 trillion as compared to TCS' INR 7.39 trillion.

➢ Reserve Bank of India cancelled licence of Alwar Urban Co-operative Bank in Alwar (Rajasthan), due to irregularities in functioning.

➢ Reserve Bank of India will shortly issue INR 100 denomination banknotes with lavender as base colour in Mahatma Gandhi (New) series, wit motif of 'Rani Ki Vav' (the queen's stepwell located at Patan, Gujarat). Dimension of new note will be 66 mm×142 mm.

➢ SBI and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) partnered to provide collateral-free credit through Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) in Telangana. MOU was signed for promotion and credit linkage of 2,000 JLGs during current year.

➢ SEBI approved merger of Bharti Airtel and Indus Towers, to create largest mobile tower operator in world outside China. It will have over 163,000 towers across 22 telecom service areas in India.

- ✓ Bharti Airtel and Vodafone will jointly control combined company, with Vodaphone having 29.4 % Airtel will have 37.2 %. Indus Towers is valued at INR 71500 crores.

➢ Several Indian public and private banks started new AI technologies, to improve operational efficiency.

- ✓ **SBI -**

❖ SBI Intelligent Assistant (SIA) - A smart chat assistant that efficiently resolves queries of NRI customers .

❖ Innovation Centre - Will explore AI Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to make banking process more efficient.

❖ Credit card issuer SBI Card also launched ELA' (Electronic Live Assistant), a virtual assistant for customer support and services.

- ✓ **Bank of Baroda -**

❖ Baroda Brainy - artificial intelligence robot.

❖ Digital Lab - hi-tech digital branch equipped with advanced gadgets.

- ✓ Allahabad Bank -

❖ emPower app - App will have Chatbot and artificial intelligence based e-commerce payments.

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- Tata Steel and German steel giant Thyssenkrupp will set up a 50:50 joint venture, to be called as Thyssenkrup Tata Steel BV. It will be second-largest steelmaker in European steel sector after Lakshmi Mittal's Arcelor Mittal.
- Tax departments, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) files appeals in ITAT (Income Tax Appellate Tribunal) while Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) files appeals in CESTAT (Customs, Excise and Service Tax Appellate Tribunal) and also in High Courts and Supreme Courts. Under new limits -
  - ✓ CBDT and CBIC can file appeals in ITAT/CESTAT only if tax amount involved is Rs 20 lakh or more, up from Rs 10 lakh.
  - ✓ Appeals can be filed in High Courts if tax amount involved in litigation is Rs 50 lakh (up from Rs 20 lakh at present).
  - ✓ For appeals in Supreme Court, threshold is hiked to 1 crore (from Rs 25 lakh at present).
- United Bank of India today will raise up to Rs. 1,500 crore by issuing equity shares in one or more tranches, amid rise in NPAs and Losses.
- World Bank group member International Finance Corporation (IFC) invested $100 million in Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Ltd. (M&M), To give financial assistance to small and medium enterprises.
- Yes Bank received SEBI approval to start mutual fund business, named Yes Asset Management (India) Limited (YAMIL). It will have its Headquarters in Mumbai.
- Yes bank unveiled 7th Transformation Series Challenge with theme Tech for Urban Development. It will focus on Collaborative Innovation – Collaboration as a Service (CaaS) for harnessing innovative solution from young professionals for issues of national importance. CaaS is an extension of the bank's ART (alliances and relationships driven by technology) philosophy.
- e-Commerce retailer Flipkart partnered with video streaming service Hotstar to launch a video advertisement platform called Shopper Audience Network. It will allow brands to target consumers through personalized video ads on Hotstar.

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INTERNATIONAL

➢ Forbes released 4th annual America's Richest Self-Made Women list 2018 -

It lists 60 women with combined net worth of $71 billion, with minimum net worth needed is $320 million.

Top 5 are -

Rank	Name	Company	Net Worth ($B)
1.	Diane Hendricks	ABC Supply	$4.9 billion
2.	Marian Ilitch	Little Caesars	$4.3 billion
3.	Judy Faulkner	Epic Systems	$3.5 billion
4.	Meg Whitman	Hewlett Packard Enterprise	$3.3 billion
5.	Johnelle Hunt	J.B. Hunt Transport Enterprise	$3.2 billion

- ✓ Actress Kylie Jenner is notable entrant in list as at just 21 years, she has built a $900 million cosmetics fortune with virtually no employees or capital. Kylie Cosmetics launched 2 years ago has sold over $630 million worth of makeup accessories.
- ✓ 2 Indian-origin Women named in List. Jayshree Ullal (CEO of Arista Networks, ranked 18th) has net worth of 1.3 billion dollars. Neerja Sethi is Vice president of Syntel and ranked 21st.

➢ **18th International Children's Film Festival began in Kolkata, to screen 36 films from 17 countries. It is organised by Cine Central in collaboration with UNICEF.**

➢ 2018 Soft Power 30 Index, by UK-based firm Portland and University of Southern California

- ✓ UK topped the list, with France placed second. List does not feature India. Germany was ranked 3rd, followed by USA.
- ✓ India does not feature in global list, but is ranked 8th 10 countries in Asia.

➢ 3rd BRICS Film Festival held in Durban (South Africa), along with International Durban Film Festival (DIFF). Last day of festival was celebrated as India Country Day.

Indian winners of Film Festival -

- ✓ Best Actress - Bhanita Das, Village Rockstars
- ✓ Best Film - Newton by Amit Masurkar
- ✓ Special Jury Award - Village Rockstars by Rima Das

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- According to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), India tops list of skilled immigrants to Australia, with 234395 individuals (19 %), followed by England and China at 160,558 (13 %) and 146,842 (12 %) people. Further, 154012 Indians have acquired Australian citizenship.
- According to British aviation intelligence firm OAG, Mumbai is fifth-least punctual airport in world in terms of on-time performance out of 513 airports. Japan Nagoya Komaki airport was ranked best with 94.5% on-time performance during 12-month period.
- According to International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA) 'Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/ GM Crops in 2017' report -
  - ✓ India with 11.4 million hectares (mh) has world's 5th largest area cultivated under genetically modified (GM) crops in 2017. India's entire GM crop area is under single crop BT Cotton incorporating genes from Bacillus thuringiensis or Bt soil bacterium coding for resistance against heliothis bollworm insect pests.
  - ✓ USA has highest area under transgenic crops (75 mh), followed by Brazil (50.2 mh), Argentina (23.6 mh) and Canada (13.1 mh).
  - ✓ In 2017, farmers planted 189.8 mh under transgenic crops, as against 1.7 mh in 1996, when transgenic crops were grown commercially for first time.
  - ✓ Highest share in world's total 189.8 mh GM crop area in 2017 is of soyabean (94.1 mh), followed by maize (59.7 mh), cotton (24.1 mh).

According to Walk Free Foundation's Global Slavery Index -

- ✓ Approx 4 crore people worldwide were subjected to modern slavery in 2016.
- ✓ North Korea has highest concentration of modern slavery where one in 10 people are in this condition.
- ✓ Most action taken by Netherlands, US, UK, Sweden, Belgium, Croatia, Spain, Norway, Portugal, Montenegro.

- Acting New Zealand PM Winston Peters demanded Australia to change their flag, As the Flag of New Zealand looks similar to that of Australia. New Zealand flag was adopted 52 years before Australian flag and was adopted in 1902, replacing union jack. Australian flag was adopted in 1954.
- African Nations Ethiopia and Eritrea declared end to their long conflict,with marking launch of a commercial flight from Ethiopia to Eritrea in 20 years.
  - ✓ Eritrea was once a province of Ethiopia. In 1993, Eritrea separated after an independence struggle. Demarcation of shared border caused a brutal conflict in 1998-2000, in which 80,000 people were killed.

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- After USA withdrawing recently from UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), UN General Assembly elected Iceland to replace USA. Iceland's term will be valid until December 31, 2019.
- American e-Commerce Giant Amazon crossed $900-billion market cap for first time in its history, becoming 2nd company after Apple to achieve this milestone.
- As part of its plan to connect billions of people who are still offline, Facebook will launch Athena, its own Internet satellite, early in 2019. The project is designed to efficiently provide broadband access to unserved and underserved areas throughout the world.
- Australian govt released an India Economic strategy report, recommending to lift India into its top three export markets. It prioritizes trade opportunities in India covering 10 sectors.
- Blood Moon 2018 or century's longest total lunar eclipse of 1 hour 43 minutes occurred on July 27-28, 2018. It was majorly seen in Eastern Hemisphere including Central Asia, Eastern Africa and South East Asia.
  - ✓ Moon was gradually covered by Earth's shadow and totality phase was seen on July 28 and total eclipse lasted up to 2h 43m. During this time, Moon was located at apogee (i.e. at farthest from Earth) in its orbit and moved at slower speed in its orbit, making it longest duration of total eclipse of this century.
  - ✓ Such long duration of total lunar eclipses earlier had occurred on July 16, 2000 for totality duration of 1 hour 46 minutes and on June 15, 2011 for totality duration of 1 hour 40 minutes.

- Central African Nation Democratic Republic of Congo declared end of an Ebola outbreak which was first reported in month of May in Bikoro province. It was the ninth Ebola outbreak since discovery of virus in Congo in 1976.
- China approved USD 1 billion grant to Pakistan, just after Pakistan has been placed in Financial Action Task Force FATF 'grey list', which may hamper Pakistan's Economy and make receiving foreign funds tougher.
- China launched an optical remote sensing satellite which will be used to monitor its Belt and Road Initiative, named Gaofen-11.
- China offered gift of $295 million to Sri Lanka, marking start of construction of a Chinese-funded kidney hospital in Polonnaruwa constituency.
- Chinese tech firm Baidu partnered with Softbank's public-transportation subsidiary SB Drive to launch a self-driving bus service in Japan next year.
- East African Nations Ethiopia and Eritrea agreed to fully implement a peace deal reached in 2000, ending 20-year war between two countries. Eritrea seceded from Ethiopia in 1993, and the two countries fought a border war from 1998 to 2000.

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- European Nation Hungary will withdraw from Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration agreement, to be adopted in December 2018. Hungarian government opposed migration, arguing that UN agreement could aid flow of migrants to Europe and force countries to shelter them. USA withdrew from it last year.
- European Parliament rejected a controversial European Union copyright law proposal that was proposed by Beatles legend Paul McCartney against creators of Wikipedia.
  - ✓ It proposed to put more responsibility on websites to check for copyright infringements and forced platforms to pay for linking to news.
  - ✓ Wikipedia went down on July 4 in Poland, Spain and Italy, in protest against the Draft law.

The two highly contested parts of the law are -

- **Article 11 -**
  - Required online platforms to pay publishers a fee if they link to their news content. It proposed to protect newspapers and other outlets from internet giants like Google and Facebook using their material without payment.
  - However, article failed to clearly define what constitutes a link and hence, could be manipulated by governments to curb freedom of speech on Internet.
- **Article 13 -**
  - Proposed greater responsibility on websites to enforce copyright laws. It would make online platforms legally liable for copyrighted material put on the web by users.
  - It means that social media sites and other websites would check every piece of content uploaded including texts, images, sounds or code. It is too expensive for most companies.
  - Article has been most controversial and it faced most resistance from critics.

- European Union (EU) and Japan have signed Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), as biggest ever trade deal negotiated by EU and creates free trade zone covering nearly third of the world's GDP. Key Fats Include -
  - ✓ Eases up Agricultural exports. It ensures protection in Japan of more than 200 high-quality European agricultural products (Geographical Indications (GIs)), and protection of several Japanese GIs in EU.
  - ✓ Services markets - Opens up services markets, in particular financial services, e-commerce, telecommunications and transport.
  - ✓ Procurement markets - Guarantees EU companies access to large procurement markets of 48 large Japanese cities.
  - ✓ Automotive sector - Addresses sensitivities of EU in this sector and elimination of customs duties in transition periods of up to 7 years.

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- ✓ Trade and sustainable development .
- ✓ Data protection.

- ➢ Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg overtook Warren Buffett as world's third-richest person, with $81 Billion Net Worth. He is now only behind Amazon founder Jeff Bezos ($141 Billion) and Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates ($93 Billion).
- ➢ Facebook obtained a licence to set up a startup incubator in China despite its website being banned in country since 2009. The $30-million subsidiary will be located in Hangzhou city, to reportedly make small investments and give advice to local businesses.
- ➢ Facebook-owned WhatsApp has launched a 'forward label' feature which will highlight the forwarded messages on the platform. The feature will help users in determining that the sender is not the creator of the message. It will prevent spreading of fake messages that prompted many mob lynching cases in India.
- ➢ First-ever land-based communication link between China and Pakistan has been inaugurated, named Pakistan-China Optical Fibre Cable project. It includes an 820-kilometre underground cable that starts from Pakistan's Rawalpindi and ends at Khunjerab bordering China.
- ➢ Forbes Released Celebrity 100 list of World's Highest-Paid Entertainers. USA's Boxer Floyd Mayweather captures top spot with $285 Million Earnings, followed by American Actor George Clooney ($268 Million) and American Actress Kylie Jenner at 3rd Place. Indian Actor Akshay Kumar (40.5 million dollars) is ranked 76th while Salman Khan (37.7 million dollars) is 82nd.
- ➢ Four persons of India-origin are named by Fortune among 40 of most influential and inspiring young people in business under age of 40 -
  - ✓ Dhivya Suryadevara (4th) (CFO of USA Car Major General Motors)
  - ✓ Anjali Sud (14th), CEO of Vimeo
  - ✓ Baiju Bhatt (24th), Cofounder & Co-CEO of Robinhood
  - ✓ Anu Duggal (32nd), founding partner of Female Founders Fund
- ➢ Frence banned smartphones, tablets and other internet-enabled devices in schools, applicable for pupils aged between 3 - 15 years.

Global Innovation Index (GII) 2018, by Corn-ell University, INSEAD and World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) -

India ranked 57th, improving from its last year rank of 60.

- ✓ Top 6 - Switzerland (1), Netherlands (2), Sweden (3), United Kingdom (4), Singapore (5), USA (6)
- ✓ Neighbours - China (17), Bangladesh (116), Pakistan (109), Sri Lanka (88), Nepal (108)

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- High-level talks between USA and North Korea held during U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's Visit to North Korea. Its aim was to make sure North Korea completely discontinues its Nuclear Programme, as decided during a recent high voltage meet US Prez Donald Trump and North Korean Leader Kim Jong un In Singapore in June 2018.
- India and China signed an agreement for reduction of tariffs on Chinese imports of Indian medicines, particularly cancer drugs. China also agreed to increase imports of Indian medicines.
  - ✓ India and China had both slashed import tariffs for a range of products with effect from July 1, following the fourth round of negotiations under the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), which also includes Bangladesh, Laos, South Korea and Sri Lanka.
  - ✓ Under APTA, China reduced tariffs on 8549 items, while India agreed to do the same for 3142 products.
  - ✓ Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), previously named Bangkok Agreement, was signed in 1975 as an initiative of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). It is the oldest preferential trade agreement among the developing countries in Asia-Pacific region.
- India and UAE signed MoU to create a bilateral Artificial Intelligence Bridge that envisages the generation of $20 billion in economic benefits during the next decade. It was signed During Visit of Deepak Bagla to UAE, managing director and CEO of Invest India.
- India become 69th shareholder of European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
  - ✓ European Bank is headquartered in London (UK). President is Suma Chakrabarti (Indian Origin).
- India has been elected new President of Asian Tug of War Federation. India's Gautam Kaul won prestigious post in Federations' Executive Committee elections held in Kathmandu (Nepal).
- India invited USA President Donald Trump to be chief guest at 2019 Republic Day celebrations. If accepted, Trump will be 2nd serving US President after Barack Obama to be invited as chief guest of Republic Day Parade.
  - ✓ Also, 1st India-USA 2+2 Talks may be held in September 2018. On India's Behalf, Sushma Swaraj (External Affairs Minister) and Nirmala Sitharaman (Defence Minister) will be attending the talks.
- India is elected as Vice Chair of Asia Pacific Region of World Customs Organisation (WCO) for 2 years.
  - ✓ WCO is Located in Brussels (Belgium), with 182 customs administrations as Members and Kunio Mikuriya as Secretary General.

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- India is ranked 6th in global optimism index in second quarter (Q2) of 2018, by Grant Thornton's International Business Report (IBR), a quarterly global business survey. It was topped by Indonesia followed by Netherlands, Austria, Philippines and China.
- India moved up 15 places to 73rd in terms of money parked by its citizens with Swiss banks in 2017, while UK remains on top. UK accounted for over 27% (403 billion francs) of total foreign money while India accounted for 0.07%. The money held by Indians rose 50% to 1.01 billion francs (INR 7000 crores).
- India ranked 11 in terms of FDI attractiveness, according to AT Kearney report, down from 8 in 2017 and 9 in 2016.
  - ✓ Top 5 - US (1), Canada (2), Germany (3), UK (4), China (5)
- India ranks 109th in overall 4G mobile internet speeds with an average download speed of 9.12 Mbps which is less than Pakistan (14.03 Mbps), according to data speed tester Ookla. Out of 124 countries, Qatar ranked first with 63.22 Mbps, Norway 2nd with 62.14 Mbps download speed.
- India signed joint venture with Sri Lanka Government to operate loss-making Mattala international airport in southern Sri Lanka, named after former president Mahinda Rajapaksa.
- India-assisted emergency ambulance service launched in Sri Lanka, with Indian grant of $22.8 million - $7.6 million for the first phase and $15.2 million. Under the first phase, 88 ambulances were purchased for the two provinces while another 209 ambulances will be provided to cover all districts in the country.
- Indian Pharma Firm Aurobindo Pharma received approval from United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) to manufacture Azithromycin tablets, used for treatment of patients with mild to moderate infections, in US market.
- Internet Firm Google has been fined a record €4.34bn by European Commission, saying it used Android mobile operating system to illegally cement its dominant position in search.
- Invest India and Business France have signed an MoU to promote investment facilitation and cooperation between startups of India and France, to facilitate direct foreign investment by providing investment information to enterprises and support companies pursue those opportunities.
- Israel government enacted a new law which will financially penalize Palestinian Authority for paying stipends to Palestinians killed or jailed by Israel. Israli PM Benjamin Netanyahu repeatedly demanded to stop Palestinians from paying stipends to prisoners and their families.
- Israel passed a Controversial Bill declaring that only Jews have right of self-determination in country, defining it as an exclusively Jewish state. It also strips Arabic of its designation as

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an official language alongside Hebrew, downgrading it to a special status that enables its continued use within Israeli institutions.

- London administration launched Walking Action Plan, to make London as world's Most walkable City. It aims to reduce air pollution by making streets more pedestrian friendly.
- NASA launched 'Remote Sensing Toolkit' to promote commercial use of satellite data, as part of NASA's Technology Transfer program. It aims to make it easier for users to utilise relevant satellite data for their research or conservation efforts. It aims to spark innovation among entrepreneurial community and lead to further commercialisation of NASA technology.
- Over 100 Swedish intellectuals joined formed The New Academy, as a new prize-giving body to award a new literature prize as 2018's Nobel Literature Prize has been postponed. Swedish Academy that selects Nobel laureates, had postponed 2018's Nobel Literature Prize due to sexual assault allegations. This was he first time in almost 70 years that Nobel literature award has been postponed.
- Pacific nation of Vanuatu reimposed emergency and ordered a mandatory evacuation of residents of Ambae island as a volcano erupted and filled sky with ash. It was temporarily evacuated in September 2017 when eruption cycle began.
- Pakistan launched 2 indigenously built satellites named PRSS1 and PAK-TES-1A, from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in China. PRSS-1 is a Earth observational and optical satellite. PAK-TES-1A is a research satellite.
- Portuguese parliament approved a law that will allow citizens to change their gender and name from age of 16 without a medical report showing identity disruption. Portugal become 6th European country to grant right to self-determination of transgender identity without guardianship of a third party and without a diagnosis of identity.

Property consultant CBRE report on Most expensive markets -

- ✓ New Delhi's Connaught Place ranked 9th most expensive office location, with annual rent of USD 153 per sq ft, Up from 10t place last year. Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) ranked 26th. Central business district (CBD) of Nariman Point ranked 37th.
- ✓ Hong Kong (Central) is at first position with an annual rent of USD 306.57 per sq ft, followed by London (West End), Beijing (Finance Street) in China, Hong Kong (Kowloon) and Beijing (CBD) in China.

- Researchers discovered new strain of Ebola virus in bats in northern Bambuli region of African Nation Sierra Leone, named as Bambuli. It is 6th known virus strain Ebola virus. Others are Zaire, Sudan, Tai Forest, Bundibugyo and Reston. Zaire strain of Ebola virus is the most deadly strain known.

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- Russia established a new directorate in Russian Army to promote patriotism. A similar directorate existed in the Soviet Army to ensure that soldiers remained loyal to then-ruling Communist party.
- Russia will build 2 nuclear power units in China, to be operational by 2026 and 2027 respectively. Russia's Rosatom and China's National Energy Administration signed a deal to build the two 1,200-megawatt units at Tianwan nuclear power plant. Russia has built 35 nuclear power units around the world under intergovernmental agreements.
- South Africa unveiled a powerful radio telescope, part of an international project that scientists say will provide new details on the Milky Way and other galaxies, called MeerKAT.
  - ✓ MeerKAT, originally Karoo Array Telescope, is a radio telescope consisting of 64 mirrors.
  - ✓ It is largest and most sensitive radio telescope in southern hemisphere until Square Kilometer Array is completed in 2024 (tentative).
  - ✓ Square Kilometre Array (SKA) is a large multi radio telescope project aimed to be built in Australia and South Africa. If built, it would have a total collecting area of approximately one square kilometer.
- UK launched new UKRI Science, Research and Academia scheme for overseas scientists and researchers, including Indians, to enhance growth of UK's research sector. It invites researchers and academics to come to UK for up to 2 years. It is being added to the already existing Tier 5 (Temporary Worker Government Authorised Exchange) visa route.
- UN Environment Programme (UNEP) partnered with Google to monitor impacts of human activity on global ecosystems by using sophisticated online tools, to develop platform to enable governments, NGO's and public to track specific environment-related development targets with user-friendly front-end.
  - ✓ In long term, it will strive to establish platform for open-source data and analysis of UN Sustainable Development Goals. It will enable UNEP to get access to most sophisticated online tools to track progress, identify priority areas for action, and needs for making world sustainable.
- UN Member states approved a 6.69 billion US Dollar budget for 13 peacekeeping operations for 2018-19. It is 2nd year in a row, that UN has made significant cuts to overall peacekeeping budget.

Missions include -

- ❖ MINUJUSTH (UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti)
- ❖ MINUSCA (Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Central African Republic)
- ❖ MINURSO (Mission for Referendum in Western Sahara)
- ❖ MONUSCO (Stabilisation Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo)
- ❖ UNIFIL (Interim Force in Lebanon).

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- ✓ United States is biggest contributor to UB, paying 22% of $5.4 billion core budget and 28.5% of US $7.9 billion peacekeeping budget. China is other top contributor with 10.3% followed by Japan with 9.7 %.

- US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the first time approved the use of Epidiolex, an oral solution made from marijuana, for treatment of seizures related to 2 rare and severe forms of epilepsy. Epidiolex is a plant-derived oral solution of cannabidiol (CBD), the main ingredient of marijuana that does not cause intoxication or a euphoric high.
- USA Space exploration firm SpaceX launched Telstar 19 Vantage satellite, world's heaviest commercial communications satellite weighing over 7000 kg, through its Falcon 9 rocket.
- USA designated India as Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1) country that will allow it to buy highly advanced and cutting-edge sensitive technologies from USA, bringing India in par with US's closest allies such as NATO.
  - ✓ Currently there are 36 countries on STA-1 list, wit India being only South Asian on list.
  - ✓ STA-1 treatment will expand scope of technology exports subject to Export Administration Regulations (EAR) that can be made to India without individual licenses.
- USA proposed establishing an Arab NATO force to counter Iran's military expansion in region. Proposed Middle East Strategic Alliance (MESA) will consist of the US, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt and Jordan.
- Udaipur (Rajasthan) has been ranked among World's Best Cities by Travel + Leisure, ranked 3rd among 15 of world's best cities to travel to.
- United Kingdom chosen Sutherland, on A'Mhoine peninsula on north coast of Scotland as site of UK's first spaceport, to send satellites vertically into orbit by early 2020s.
- United Nations E-Government Survey 2018 -
  - ✓ India jumped 22 places to break into top 100 this year, ranked 96th.
  - ✓ Top 5 - Denmark (1), Australia (2), South Korea (3), UK (4), Sweden (5)
- United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres constituted a High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, to be co-chaired by Melinda Gates and Jack Ma (Executive Chairman of Alibaba Group).
  - ✓ Panel has been mandated to contribute to broader public debate on the importance of cooperative and interdisciplinary approaches to ensure a safe and inclusive digital future. It Panel will identify policy, research and information gaps, and make proposals to strengthen international cooperation in the digital space.
- United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 2427 aimed at providing legal framework for mainstreaming protection, rights, well-being and empowerment of children throughout conflict cycle. It strongly condemns recruitment and use of children in armed conflicts.

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- United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 2428 to impose an arms embargo on South Sudan, 5 years after civil war began. It calls upon all UN member states to prevent supply, sale or transfer to South Sudan — from or through their territories till 31 May 2019.
- United Nations finalized Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to better manage international migration and strengthen migrant rights. Its first time that UN Member countries negotiated an agreement covering all dimensions of international migration, forming a non legally binding framework. US did not agreed upon these new UN Migration terms.
- **United States Food & Drug Administration (USFDA) approved Indian Pharma companies to market their medics in USA -**
  - ✓ Sun Pharma - INFUGEM injection, used for treatment of cancer.
  - ✓ Lupin - Tadalafil tablets, used to treat erectile dysfunction and prostate gland enlargement.
- University of Houston (USA) signed MoU with Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy (IIPE) to build scientific and technical knowledge through joint research.
- Video sharing platform YouTube will invest $25 million to counter spread of fake news on its platform, as part of $300 million Google News Initiative launched in March 2018.
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO) designated India as nodal centre for developing customized model to issue advance warning of floods to Asian countries, called as Flash Flood Guidance System.
  - ✓ It will provide forecasts by computing likelihood of rainfall and soil moisture levels to warn of possible floods. It will be customized weather model, originally developed by US and donated to WMO to warn about flash floods at least six hours in advance.
- World's first all-digital art museum opened at MORI Building Digital Art Museum in Japan's Tokyo. It features around 50 kaleidoscopic installations triggered by motion sensors, which are projected across every surface of 100,000-square-foot exhibit space with help of lights.

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MEETINGS

- 16th Workshop on Greenhouse Gas Inventories in Asia (WGIA16) held in New Delhi.
  - ✓ India aims to achieve 175 GW of installed capacity of renewable energy generation by 2022.
  - ✓ WGIA is an initiative of Japan, to improve quality of Greenhouse Gas Inventories of Asian countries by building capacities through training and exchange of experience. 15 countries are WGIA members.
- 17th World Sanskrit Conference held at Vancouver (Canada).
- 42nd World Heritage Committee meeting completed in Bahrain's capital Manama, with 19 new sites inscribed to World Heritage List. New Addition to List are -

✓ **Cultural -**

Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai (India)

- ❖ Aasivissuit – Nipisat, Inuit Hunting Ground between Ice and Sea (Denmark)
- ❖ Al-Ahsa Oasis, an evolving Cultural Landscape (Saudi Arabia)
- ❖ Ancient City of Qalhat (Oman)
- ❖ Archaeological Border complex of Hedeby and the Danevirke (Germany)
- ❖ Caliphate City of Medina Azahara (Spain)
- ❖ Göbekli Tepe (Turkey)
- ❖ Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region (Japan)
- ❖ Ivrea, industrial city of the 20th century (Italy)
- ❖ Naumburg Cathedral (Germany)
- ❖ Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea (Republic of Korea)
- ❖ Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region (Islamic Republic of Iran)
- ❖ Thimlich Ohinga Archaeological Site (Kenya)

✓ **Natural sites -**

- ❖ Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains (South Africa)
- ❖ Chaine des Puys - Limagne fault tectonic arena (France)
- ❖ Fanjingshan (China)

✓ **Mixed sites -**

- ❖ Chiribiquete National Park – "The Maloca of the Jaguar" (Colombia)
- ❖ Pimachiowin Aki (Canada)
- ❖ Tehuacán-Cuicatlán Valley: originary habitat of Mesoamerica (Mexico)

- 4th Bay of Bengal Initiatives for Multi-Sectoral, Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) summit will be held in Kathmandu (Nepal) in August 2018. Nepal is current chair

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of BIMSTEC. Other members - India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka from South Asia and Myanmar.

- 5th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) intersessional ministerial meeting held in Tokyo (Japan). It was first RCEP ministerial gathering to be held outside ASEAN countries. RCEP is a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) or comprehensive regional economic integration agreement between 10-ASEAN countries and its six FTA partners (Australia, New Zealand, India, China, Japan and Korea).
- 6th biennial World Cities Summit was held in Singapore with theme Liveable & Sustainable Cities: Embracing the Future through Innovation and Collaboration.
- International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST)'s 19th World Congress of Food Science and Technology will be hosted by India in Navi Mumbai in October 2018. Focal theme is 25 Billion Meals a Day by 2025 : with Healthy, Nutritious, Safe and Diverse Foods.
- Ireland will hold an international conference of female parliamentarians in September, in Dublin.
- NITI Aayog will organize MOVE: Global Mobility Summit in New Delhi in September, 2018, to help drive Government's goals for vehicle electrification, renewable energy integration and job growth and also speed up India's transition to a clean energy economy.

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NATIONAL

- Government declared 6 educational 'Institutions of Eminence' , out of 114 applications (74 from public sector & 40 from private sector) -
  - ✓ Public Sector - Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore Karnataka, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi.
  - ✓ Private Sector - Jio Institute (Reliance Foundation), Pune under Green Field Category, Birla Institute of Technology & Sciences Pilani, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal (Karnataka).
  - ✓ Each 'Public Institution' selected as 'Institution of Eminence' will get financial assistance up to 1000 Crore over 5 years, to help them become World Class Educational Institutions.
  - ✓ To achieve top world ranking Institutions shall be provided with
- ❖ Greater autonomy to admit foreign students up to 30% of admitted students
- ❖ Recruit foreign faculty upto 25% of faculty strength
- ❖ Offer online courses upto 20% of its programmes and
- ❖ Enter academic collaboration with top 500 in world ranking Institutions without permission of UGC
- ❖ Freedom to fix and charge fees from foreign students without restriction
- ❖ Flexibility of course structure in terms of number of credit hours and years to take a degree

- 1st international festival of Mizoram 'Mizo Zohnahthlak' organized in Aizawl (Mizoram). It is aimed at uniting the Mizo ethnic community socially and culturally under a single platform.
- 4-day annual Meghalaya Annual Cultural Festival Behdienkhlam held in Jowai (Meghalaya).
- According to recently released language data of Census 2011, Hindi is most spoken in India with it being mother tongue of 43.63% Indians, followed by Bengali. Marathi replaced Telugu as 3rd most spoken language in nation. Sanskrit is least spoken in India(Sanskrit by approx 25000 people).
  - ✓ More than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongue.
  - ✓ There are 121 languages which are spoken by 10,000 or more people in India.
- Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh launched Meghalaya Milk Mission in Shillong, to promote Milk revolution in State, along with sanctioning projects 215 crores through National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).
  - ✓ Project consists of 2000 dairy farm units, in one unit there is provision for purchase of 5 cows, shed constructions, storage room construction, animal insurance, 79 bulk milk coolers of 500 litre capacity, 13 milk tankers of 3000 litre capacity etc.
- Airports Authority of India (AAI) will set up Civil Aviation Research Organization (CARO) at Hyderabad's Begumpet Airport, with cost of 1200 crores to be spent over 12 years. Its focus

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will be on pursuing inter-disciplinary solutions to improve the civil aviation sector. CARO will find indigenous solutions to meet challenges posed by growing air traffic and for enhancing safety and efficiency of aircraft operations.

- An innovative cost-effective drinking water project in Bihar will provide safe drinking water at price of 50 Paise / Litre, termed as Sulabh Jal. It is cheapest safe drinkling water solution in world, launched in Darbhanga by Sulabh International.
- Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu laid foundation stone of Amaravati International Sports Complex in Vijayawada. He also launched 'Project Gandiva'. Under it, government will choose students aged between 10-16 years and offer them international level facilities and coaching with an aim to secure medals in Olympic Games in a period of 10 years.
- Andhra Pradesh CM N. Chandrababu Naidu launched 'e-Pragati core platform', aimed at connecting citizens to various Govt departments, autonomous organisations and 745-plus services.
- Andhra Pradesh Government launched 60 Anna Canteens across state in first phase to provide subsidised food to urban poor. They will offer breakfast, lunch and dinner at Rs 5 a meal, to be run by Akshaya Patra Foundation. State Government plans to set up 203 Anna Canteens.
  - ✓ Other States having subsidised food canteens - Amma canteens (Tamil Nadu (1st)).Tamilnadu Inspired other states - Rajasthan (Annapurna Rasoi Yojana), Madhya Pradesh (Deendayal canteens), Delhi (Aam Aadmi canteens), Aahar (Odisha), Indira Canteens (Karnataka).
- Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) allowed photography within premises of all centrally protected monuments/sites except at Ajanta Caves, Leh Palace and Taj Mahal. It has been ruled after PM Narendra Modi questioned logic behind existing restrictions.
- Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) will upgrade infrastructure at 7 sites in Tamil Nadu, under Adarsh Smarak Scheme for Conservation of Monuments. These are Shore Temple in Mamallapuram, Vellore Fort, Brihadeeswarar Temple in Thanjavur, Kailasanathar Temple in Kancheepuram, Sittannavasal Caves, Gingee Fort and Moovar Koil in Kodumbalur.
- As a first such Initiative in Country, Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) will launch India's first public sector hotel run entirely by women for women in capital Thiruvananthapuram, named Hostess.
- As per US-based Institute for Energy Economics & Financial Analysis (IEEFA), Karnataka is new national leader in renewable energy generation, overtaking Tamil Nadu.
- Assam Employees PRANAM Act would be implemented in state from October 02, 2018 (Gandhi Jayanti), To not let employee neglect their loved ones. The Act will deduct 10% of an employee's pay and transfer it to the account of relatives concerned. Another 5% would be deductible if the employee has a differently abled sibling.

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- Assam released final draft of National Register of Citizens (NRC), after first draft released in January 2018 that included 1.9 crore names out of total 3.29 crore applicants. It has left out 40.07 lakh people wherein 2.89 crore people were found eligible.
  - ✓ NRC was prepared in 1951.
  - ✓ Out of 40.07 lakh applicants left out of final draft, 2.48 lakh applicants have been kept on hold including D-Voters (doubtful voters), descendants of D-voters and persons whose cases are pending before foreigners tribunal.
- Ayushman Bharat Yojana under Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Swasthya Suraksha Mission will be implemented in Madhya Pradesh from August 15 this year. Under it, annual health security cover worth Rs 5 lakh will be provided to each family. Expenditure for implementation of yojana is INR 1200 per family.
- BJP led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government won its 1st No Confidence motion moved in Lok Sabha, as moved by a former NDA ally Telugu Desham Party (TDP). In this trust vote, NDA bagged 325 votes against motion, while 126 members voted in favour.
  - ✓ Constitutional rule allows any Lok Sabha MP who can garner support of 50 colleagues, to introduce motion of no-confidence against Council of Ministers. If there are 50 MPs in favour, motion is admitted and speaker allots date for discussion on motion. If government loses trust vote, it has to resign.
  - ✓ Rajya Sabha does not have procedure for moving of no-confidence motion against Government and also adjournment motion, censure motion.
- Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) is setting up a joint venture (JV) in India with Zorya Mashproekt, to overhaul turbines in India. The navy will soon have 34 warships driven by Zorya turbines, with four turbines per vessel, adding up to 136 in-service turbines. A turbine is overhauled after running 30,000 hours. This is costly and time-consuming process as it involves sending turbine back to Ukraine.
- Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) aunched its first Internet telephony service Wings, to be on complete roll out from August 1, 2018. It also launched prepaid initiative in its landline offerings and a rent free landline connection for existing subscribers
  - ✓ To use Internet telephony through Wings, customer needs to install soft app on any of its smart devices, having internet to make and receive calls from anywhere in India and abroad with any party (mobile/landline). Through wings, customer can make or receive calls by using internet service of any operator.
  - ✓ This service will use mobile numbering scheme, provided using IP based access network of IMS NGN Core switches to allow users to make and receive calls over the Internet via their landline or mobile phone.
- Bhitarkanika national park in Odisha became largest habitat of endangered estuarine crocodiles in India with a record number of 101 nesting sites.

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- Bihar assembly passed Bihar Prohibition and Excise (Amendment) Bill 2018, making 16 amendments in Bihar Prohibition and Excise Act 2016, to dilute some stringent provisions. It removed mandatory jail term for first-time offence in case of consumption of liquor, with fine of 50,000 or 3 month jail term for 1st time drinker. But for subsequent offence, jail term of 1-5 years and fine of 1 lakh is provisioned Several Other changes are also made.
- Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) secured image trademark for its iconic building, Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers located on Dalal Street in Mumbai, under Trade Marks Act 1999. Henceforth no one can use images of the Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers for commercial purposes without consent from BSE or paying it licensing fee. BSE's Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers serves as barometer of Indian economy.
- CSIR- National Physical laboratory (NPL) signed MoU with Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) for indigenous development of petroleum certified reference materials (CRMs) under trade name of Bhartiya Niredeshak Dravyas (BNDTM). It will make sure that highest standard quality ecosystem is maintained for petroleum products used by all stakeholders.
- Cab Aggregator Ola signed MoU with Haryana government to create 35000 job opportunities in state, as part of Saksham Haryana initiative.
- Cabinet Approvals (July 18, 2018) –

General Approvals -

- Approved to make district magistrates (DMs), instead of courts, as final authority for approving adoptions. Courts are overburdened and take long time to approve adoptions. Since, DMs have information about adoption cases and have access to all departments, it is easier for DMs to take the process ahead faster.
- Approved to grant Special Remission to Prisoners as part of commemoration of 150th birth anniversary of M K Gandhi to be observed in 2019. Prisoners to be considered for special remission are Male convicts of over 60 years of age (55 for Women and Transgender convicts) and who have completed 50% of their actual sentence period, Physically disabled convicts (70% disability) and more and who have completed 50% of their sentence period AND Terminally ill convicts.

✓ **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) Approvals -**

- To protect interest of sugarcane farmers, Approved Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane for 2018-19 at 275 per quintal for a basic recovery rate of 10% and premium of 2.75 /qtl for each 0.1 % increase in recovery above 10%. Cost of production of is INR 155 per quintal. Remittances to sugarcane farmers will be over 83000 crores. Updated FRP will be w.e.f. 1st October, 2018.

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- Approved establishment of new medical college at Deoria at a cost of INR 250 crores under Phase-II of Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- Approved proposal for Continuation of Pre-Matric, Post Matric and Merit-cum-Means based Scholarship Schemes for the students belonging to the six notified Minority Communities at a total cost of Rs. 5338.32 crore for period up to 2019-20. This will benefit 70 lakh students annually.
- Approved policy framework for streamlining operations of Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) for increased domestic production of hydrocarbon resources. Framework includes -
  - Special dispensation for E&P activities in North Eastern Region (NER), Based on recommendations in 'Hydrocarbon Vision 2030 for North East'.
  - Sharing of Royalty and Cess in Pre-NELP Exploration Blocks, to benefit Pre-NELP Exploration Blocks in which fresh investment for additional development activities is expected as sharing of royalty and cess, and cost recoverability of same will help in making additional investment commercially viable for Licensee company; ONGC/OIL.
  - Extending tax benefits under Section 42 of Income Tax, 1961 prospectively to operational blocks under Pre-NELP discovered fields for extended period of contract under PSC extension policy.
  - Relaxing timeline from 7 days to 15 days for giving written notice to notify the occurrence of a Force Majure event in PSCs.
- Approved completion of 83 minor irrigation projects and 8 major / medium irrigation projects in Maharashtra's drought prone Vidharbha and Marathawada regions. Cost of projects is approx 13651 crores, with Central Assistance of 3831 crores under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana- Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (PMKSY-AIBP).

✓ **MOUs -**

- MoU amongst BRICS Nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) on Regional Aviation Partnership Cooperation.
- Cuba - Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy.
- Indonesia - Pharmaceutical products, pharmaceutical substances, biological product and cosmetics regulatory functions.
- **Approved Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) agreeents -**
  - Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) (signed in 2010) with Institute of Certified Public Accountants (CPA) of Ireland.
  - MoU with Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF).
  - MoU with National Board of Accountants and Auditors, Tanzania.

➢ **Cabinet Approvals (July 4, 2018) -**

✓ **MOUs -**

- With United Kingdom - Law & Justice and to set up a Joint Consultative Committee.

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✓ **General Approvals -**

- Approved creation of 1 post each of Vice-Chairperson and Member in National Commission for Safai Karmacharis.
- Approved renaming Agartala Airport in Tripura as Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore Airport, Agartala.
  - Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore, who ascended throne of the erstwhile Tripura Princely State in 1923, was an enlightened ruler. Agartala Airport was constructed in 1942 on land donated by Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore.
- Approved continuance of 8 existing schemes of Ministry of Home Affairs upto March 2020 for relief and rehabilitation of migrants and repatriates under the Umbrella scheme "Relief and Rehabilitation of Migrants and Repatriates", with financial implication of 3183 crores for 2017-18 to 2019-20. Schemes are -
  - Central Assistance for one-time settlement of displaced families from Pak Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) and Chhamb settled in Jammu & Kashmir.
  - Rehabilitation Package and up-gradation of infrastructure of Bangladeshi Enclaves and Cooch Behar District after transfer of enclaves between India and Bangladesh under Land Boundary Agreement.
  - Relief assistance to Sri Lankan refugees staying in camps in Tamil Nadu and Odisha.
  - Grant-in-Aid to Central Tibetan Relief Committee (CTRC) for five years for administrative and social welfare expenses of Tibetan settlements.
  - Grant-in-Aid to Government of Tripura for maintenance of Brus lodged in relief camps of Tripura.
  - Rehabilitation of Bru/Reang families from Tripura to Mizoram.
  - Grant of enhanced relief of Rs. 5.00 lakh per deceased person, who died during 1984 Anti-Sikh Riots.
  - Central Scheme for Assistance to Civilian Victims/Family of Victims of Terrorist/Communal/LWE Violence and Cross Border Firing and Mine/IED blasts on Indian Territory'.
- Approved DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill 2018, aimed at expanding application of DNA-based forensic technologies to strengthen justice delivery system of country.
  - By providing for the mandatory accreditation and regulation of DNA laboratories, Bill ensures that with proposed expanded use of this technology in country, there is also assurance that DNA test results are reliable and data remain protected from misuse or abuse in terms of the privacy rights of our citizens.
- Approved India's accession to WIPO Copyright Treaty, 1996 and WIPO Performers and Phonograms Treaty, 1996 which extends coverage of copyright to the internet and digital

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environment. These treaties will help India to enable creative right-holders enjoy fruit of their labour, through international copyright system that can be used to secure return on investment made in producing and distributing creative works.

✓ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) Approvals -

❖ Approved expanding scope of Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) by enhancing its capital base to 10000 crores and asking it to mobilise 100000 crores for Revitalizing Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) by 2022. CCEA also approved infusing additional Government equity of 5,000 crore (in addition to 1,000 crore already provided) in HEFA. This would enable addressing the needs of all educational institutions with differing financial capacity in an inclusive manner

❖ Approved increase in Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for all 14 kharif crops for 2018-19 Season, ensuring minimum 50 % profit for farmers. Crops are - Paddy, Jowar, Bajra, Ragi, Maize, Arhar(Tur), Moong, Urad, Groundnut, Sunflower Seed, Soyabean, Sesamum, Nigerseed and Cotton. It will cost INR 15000 Crores to the Government.

➢ Updated MSPs for Kharif Crops are -

Crop	**Earlier MSP**	**New MSP**	**% Rise**
Paddy	1550	1750	12.90
Jowar	1700	2430	42.94
Bajra	1425	1950	36.84
Ragi	1900	2897	**52.47 (Most Increase)**
Maize	1425	1700	19.30
Arhar(Tur) -	5450	5675	4.13
Moong	5575	6975	25.11
Urad	5400	5600	3.70
Groundnut	4450	4890	9.89
Sunflower Seed	4100	5388	31.42
Soyabean	3050	3399	11.44
Sesamum	5300	6249	17.91
Nigerseed	4050	5877	45.11
Cotton	4020	5150	28.11

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➢ **Several Farmer Friendly Initiatives taken by govt. are -**

- ✓ Premium rates to be paid by farmers are very low - 2 % of sum insured for all kharif crops, 1.5% for all rabi crops and 5 % for commercial and horticulture crops. Government launched Mobile App Crop Insurance, to help farmers to find out details about insurance cover available in their area and to calculate insurance premium for notified crops
- ✓ Government launched a scheme to develop a pan India electronic trading platform under 'National Agriculture Market' (NAM) aiming to integrate 585 regulated markets with common e-market platform in order to facilitate better price discovery and ensure remunerative prices to farmers.
- ✓ Government formulated a new model Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (Promotion & Facilitation) Act, 2017 to provide farmers market options beyond the existing APMC regulated market yards.
- ✓ Soil Health Cards are being issued to farmers, renewed every 2 years. SHC provides information on fertility status of soil and a soil test based advisory on use of fertilizers. Over 15 crore Soil Health Cards have been distributed.
- ✓ Under Paramparagat KrishiVikasYojana (PKVY), Government is promoting organic farming and development of potential market for organic products.
- ✓ Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana is being implemented to extend coverage of irrigation 'HarKhetkoPani' and improving water use efficiency 'Per Drop More Crop ' in a focused manner.
- ✓ Government is focusing on improving productivity of crops such as rice, wheat, coarse grains and pulses under National Food Security Mission.
- ✓ A dedicated online interface e-KrishiSamvad provides direct and effective solutions to problems faced by farmers.
- ✓ Government is encouraging formation of Farmer Producer Organisations. Budget for 2018-19 has extended a favourable taxation treatment to Farmer Producers Organisations (FPQs) for helping farmers aggregate their needs of inputs, farm services, processing and sale operations.
- ✓ Government has set up a buffer stock of pulses and domestic procurement of pulses is also being done under Price Stabilization Fund (PSF), mainly to protect consumers. It aims to ensure that farmers should get full benefit of increased MSPs. For this, it is essential that if price of agriculture produce market is less than MSP, Government should purchase either at MSP or work in a manner to provide MSP for farmers through some other mechanism.

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- ✓ A handbook for women farmers 'Farm Women Friendly Hand Book' containing special provisions and package of assistance which women farmers can claim under various ongoing Schemes has been brought out.
- ✓ With above measures taken, Government has set a target to double the farmers' Income by 2022.

❖ Approved extension of scheme of recapitalization of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) for upto 2019-20. It will enable RRBs to maintain minimum prescribed Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) of 9 %.

- ➢ 56 RRBs are functioning in the country. As on 31st March, 2017, credit given by RRBs is 2,28,599 crores.
- ➢ Scheme of Recapitalization of RRBs started in FY 2010-11 and was extended twice in 2012-13 and 2015-16. Amount of 342.80 crores will be utilized to provide recapitalization support to RRBs whose CRAR is below 9%.
- ➢ First regional rural bank was 'Prathama Bank' that was established on 2nd October, 1975 in Moradabad (UP). RRBs are jointly owned by Government of India, concerned State Government and Sponsor Banks with capital shared in proportion of 50%, 15% and 35% respectively.

➢ Central Oil PSUs IOCL, ONGC, GAIL, OIL, and NRL signed agreement for executing 1500 Km North-East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid, to connect all North-East States to National Gas Grid, under Urja Ganga Gas Pipeline Project. JV will have equal equity contribution from all partners. Expenditure is INR 6000 crores and is scheduled to compete by 2022 in three phases.

- ✓ Urja Ganga Gas Pipeline Project was launched in October 2016 with an aim to provide piped cooking (PNG) gas to residents of eastern region of country and CNG gas for vehicles. It envisaged laying 2,050-km pipeline connecting Jagdishpur (UP) to Haldia (West Bengal) by 2018, covering UP, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha.

➢ Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) launched Saathi mobile help centre to reach out to people undertaking annual pilgrimage to 3,880-metre high holy cave shrine of Amarnath.

➢ Central Reserve Police Force launched 'Madadgaar Helpline', a distress helpline for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, with helpline number 14411.

➢ Centre and state governments of Tripura and Mizoram signed agreement for repatriation of thousands of people belonging to Bru community from Tripura to Mizoram. Over 3200 people living in refugee camps in Jampui Hills of Tripura for two decades are being replaced to Mizoram before October 2018.

➢ Chhattisgarh Govt. launched a smartphone distribution scheme called 'Mobile Tihar' under Sanchar Kranti Yojna. It includes distribution of smartphones to 45 lakh women and 5 lakh children and setting up of 556 new mobile towers.

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- Chhattisgarh government launched a new Aabhar Aapki Sevaon Ka Pensioners Portal, enabling a central mechanism for pension database and making payment in a unified manner to benefit 80,000 pensioners. All pensioners can access portal at ekoshonline.cg.nic.in/aabhar/.
- Commerce ministry approved a proposal of HCL Technologies to establish a new IT special economic zone (SEZ) in Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh), with investment of Rs 408 crores.
- Common Service Center (CSC) and National Health Accounts (NHA) signed MoU to implement Ayushman Bharat scheme (NHPS) through 3 lakh Common Service Centers (CSCs) across country.
  - ✓ NHPS aims to cover over 10 crore poor vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) providing coverage of up to Rs. 5 lakh (per family per year) for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.
  - ✓ CSCs will help beneficiary to identify his name in Health Ministry database and his entitlement for the scheme. It will also help beneficiary to scan and upload his KYC documents for verification of his identity and claim his entitlement.
- Competition Commission of India (CCI) launched an Online Guidance System for determining notifiability of merger & acquisitions (combinations) in terms of Competition Act 2002, named as Do It Yourself (DIY): A notifiability check for mergers & acquisitions under the Competition Act 2002.
- Country's first e-waste recycling unit will come up in Bengaluru (Karnataka). As per a report, Bengaluru ranked third after Mumbai and Delhi and generates nearly 92,000 tonnes of e-waste annually.
- Delhi Govt. approved a scheme under which farmers will be able to lease out a part of their agricultural land for setting up of solar panels to get additional income, called Mukhyamantri Kisan Aaye Badhotri Solar Yojana.
  - ✓ Any farmer can rent out not more than one-third of his land to a private firm to set up solar panels at a rate of 1 lakh per annum per acre.
  - ✓ Panels will be set up at a height of 3.5 metres, so that the land can also be used for agriculture.
  - ✓ Farmers will also get 1,000 units of free solar power without any investment.
- Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) released final rankings of States in Ease of Doing Business.
  - ✓ Top 5 - Andhra Pradesh (1), Telangana (2), Haryana (3), Jharkhand (4), Gujarat (5).
  - ✓ DIPP (Ministry of Commerce and Industry) in collaboration with World Bank conducted an annual reform exercise for all States / UTs under Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP). It aims to improve delivery of various Government services in an efficient manner.

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- ✓ DIPP for first time introduced taking feedback to ensure that reforms have actually reached ground level. 78 reforms out of 372 were identified for survey. More than 5,000 private sector users in 23 States and UTs shared their experience.

- Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB) recommended prohibition of 343 fixed drug combinations (FDCs) after reviewing 349 and called for regulation and restriction of remaining six. FDC means combination of two or more drugs in fixed dosage ratio.
- Election Commission of India launched a mobile app called Cvigil**,** for citizens to report any violation of the model code of conduct during elections. It will be operational only where elections are announced, beginning from coming elections in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram and Rajasthan. Vigilant citizen has to take a picture / video of upto 2 minutes duration of scene of violations of model code.
- Environment Ministry has set noise standards for all airports across country, excludING defence aircrafts. Civil airportS with over 50000 aircraft movements per year should not exceed noise levels beyond 75 dB(A) during daytime (till 10pm) and 65 dBA during night. All other airports should not exceed levels beyond 65 dBA during day and 60 dBA during night.
- Facebook and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) partnered to train youth and entrepreneurs in India about digital skills. Courses will be on : digital marketing, online safety and financial literacy in regional languages.
- Finance Ministry hiked threshold monetary limit for tax departments to file appeals all three levels of appeal — Appellate Tribunals, High Courts, and Supreme Court, to decrease taxpayer greivances.
- Food Ministry allowed sugar mills to manufacture ethanol directly from sugarcane juice or an intermediate product called B-molasses, amanding Sugarcane Control Order 1966. It would help mills divert cane juice for ethanol manufacturing during surplus years.
  - ✓ Now,in case of production of ethanol directly from sugarcane juice or B-molasses, recovery rate of sugarcane factory will be determined by considering every 600 liters so produced as equivalent to one tonne of production of sugar.
  - ✓ Earlier, sugar mills were allowed to manufacture ethanol from by-product called C-molasses, after sugar was taken out while processing raw sugarcane juice.
- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched national campaign 'The Eat Right Movement' to improve public health and combat lifestyle diseases. FSSAI also launched Eat Right tool kit and Safe and Nutritious Food at Workplace campaign.
- Gauhati High Court declared Arunachal Pradesh Parliamentary Secretaries (Appointment, Salaries, Allowances and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2007 as "unconstitutional, in line with Supreme court's judgement against a public interest litigation filed by Kyoda Ram on matter of appointing parliamentary secretaries.

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- **General Conferences (July 01 - 10, 2018) -**
  - ✓ National Workshop on Skill Development for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) organized by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) in New Delhi.
  - ✓ Election Commission organized a two-day "National Consultation on Accessible Elections," in New Delhi.
  - ✓ A conference of Ministers for Power, New & Renewable Energy of States & Union Territories held in Shimla (Himachal Pradesh).
  - ✓ Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare held special meet on Marine Fisheries - Mariculture in India in Rameswaram (Tamil Nadu).
  - ✓ 2 Day National Level Consultations on Accessible Elections held in New Delhi. During This, Election Commission Announced several Measures to improve Participation of Persons With Disabilities in Election Process. It Includes Issuing Electoral Photo Identity Cards with Braille Features for Visually Impaired, Auxiliary Polling Stations to be Established, Mobile APP to be Developed by ECI for PWD.
  - ✓ 9th and final meeting of Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on Nepal-India Relations concluded in Kathmandu (Nepal).
  - ✓ 9th Heads of Mission Conference held in New Delhi, with theme Unprecedented Outreach: Unparalleled Outcomes.
  - ✓ Govt. Aims to link 22000 rural markets with Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) by 2020, as announced at AgriVikas 2018 conclave on agriculture and allied sectors in Bhubaneswar (Odisha). It will enable farmers sale directly to potential buyers.
  - ✓ Exhibition titled Arth - art for earth held at IGNCA (New Delhi. IGNCA introduced 5 PG diploma courses and 6 new Certificate Courses in art and culture and related subjects.

❖ **PG Diploma -**

- Cultural Informatics, Preventive Conservation, Buddhist Studies, Digital Library and Data Management, Manuscriptology and Palaeography

❖ **Certificate Courses -**

- Academic Integrity and Research Ethics, Open Access for Library and Information Science Professionals, Open Access for Researchers, Digital Library and Information Management, Research Methodology, Cinema Studies and Cultural Documentation.

✓ Ministry of Statistics &Programme Implementation (MoSPI) organized 2 day International Round Table Conference at New Delhi, called Data for New India. It aims to identify innovative ideas for improving the statistical system in India, taking cue from best practices followed in advanced countries.

✓ 22nd International Conference on Non-Ferrous Minerals and Metals 2018 held at Ranchi (Jharkhand). During this meet, Tapan Kumar Chand, (CMD of NALCO), received

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Knowledge Excellence Award for Outstanding Contribution in Aluminium Knowledge domain.

- ✓ First meeting of Task Force on e-commerce held in New Delhi. Task Force was formed under chairmanship of Suresh Prabhu (Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation). It is divided into nine sub-groups.
- ✓ 2nd meeting of joint working group on tourism cooperation between India and Nepal concluded in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- ✓ 67th plenary meeting of North Eastern Council (NEC) held in Shillong (Meghalaya).
- ✓ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Dharohar Bhawan, new Headquarters building of Archaeological Survey of India, in New Delhi.
- ✓ India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) organized a Capacity Development programme for Media Officials from Bhutan, in New Delhi.
- ✓ Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers and Parliamentary Affairs, Ananth kumar laid foundation stone of new (32nd) Central Institute of Plastics Engineering &Technology (CIPET) Building at Dehradun (Uttarakhand). He also allocated 40 crores for establishing a plastic park in Uttarakhand, to generate employment for over 5000 people.

➢ **General Conferences (July 11 - 20, 2018)**

- ✓ First meeting of India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on Border Haats held in Agartala (Tripura).
- ✓ 10th Delhi Dialogue (DD X) held in New Delhi , with theme Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation. It is an important platform for engagement with ASEAN on political, security and economic issues.
- ✓ All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) and IIT (Indian Institute of Technology)-Delhi signed MoU to enhance research in field of Ayurveda, during 2 day conference on 'Raising towards Excellence' held in New Delhi.
- ✓ Ratha Yatra (Festival of Chariot of Lord Jagannath) celebrated every year at Puri in Odisha. It is be celebrated on 2nd day of shukla pakshya (waxing cycle of moon) of Ashadh Maas (3rd month in Lunar Calendar).
- ✓ 2nd India-China Maritime Affairs Dialogue was held in Beijing, China. 4th India-Japan Maritime affairs dialogue also held in Japan.
- ✓ 7th Indo US Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) held in New Delhi.
- ✓ 1st meeting of Sub-Group of Chief Ministers on coordination between Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and agriculture held at NITI Aayog (New Delhi). It was chaired by Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
- ✓ 1 day meeting of directors of 59 institutes of higher learning held in Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.

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- ✓ Conference of Intra-ocular Implant & Refractive Society of India held in Chennai (TN).
- ✓ 4th National Conclave on Mines & Minerals held at Indore ()Madhya Pradesh).
- ✓ Top Nuke Powers USA and Russia's current Presidents Donald Trump and President Vladimir Putin held their first-ever one-to-one talks in Helsinki (Finland).
- ✓ Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) joined National Day event of Montenegro in India on July 13, 2018 in New Delhi, named Trendy Montenegro with Indian Khadi.
- ✓ SBI organized a Kisan Mela it its rural and semi-urban branches across country to impart financial literacy to farmers.

➢ **General Conferences (July 21 - 31, 2018)**

- ✓ 1st Nepal-India Think Tank Summit held in Kathmandu, to foster greater collaboration and knowledge-sharing among the think tanks of two countries.
- ✓ 11th state-level pineapple festival cum Sellers & Buyers Meet and Youth Festival 2018, held in Thoubal district of Manipur.
- ✓ 2 day Air Defence India 2018 Seminar & Exhibition held in New Delhi.
- ✓ From 1st August 2018, Gaj Yatra exhibition will be conducted to raise awareness about conservation of elephants in Delhi. It will be conducted for 2 months. It is conducted as part of India Habitat Centre year-long multi-media festival on sustainable development named Habitat Photosphere.
- ✓ 2nd Young Superintendent of Police Conference held in New Delhi.
- ✓ 3 day National Traders' Conclave held at Constitution Club of India in New Delhi.
- ✓ 2nd meeting of National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges under POSHAN Abhiyan in New Delhi.

❖ Government launched POSHAN Abhiyaan (PM's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment) from Jhunjhunu (Rajasthan). It aims to use a targeted approach to reduce level of malnutrition across Nation. More Info is available at http://www.icds-wcd.nic.in/nnm/home.htm.

- ✓ International conference on "Empowering Women: Fostering Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Sustainability" organized by NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) in New Delhi.
- ✓ International conference on India-Vietnam economic ties held in New Delhi.
- ✓ 7 day Kharchi Puja held at Puran Habeli in Tripura, as an annual festival to cleanse sins of mortal souls.
- ✓ The tourism department of Rajasthan announced that The 2nd National Tourism Conclave was organised in Jaipur.

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- ✓ World-class permanent exhibition on four eminent personalities of Bengal – Rabindranath Tagore, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and Syama Prasad Mukherjee, held at National Library in Kolkata.
- ✓ On occasion of Guru Purnima, Ministry of Human Resource Development organized a National Conference of Vice Chancellors & Directors of Higher Education Institutions of India in New Delhi, with theme Research and innovation in Higher Education.
- ✓ A conference for Indian Languages Technology Industry 'Bhashantar' held in New Delhi. During this, IT ministry launched a desktop software e-Aksharaya.

- ➢ German auto major Volkswagen (VW) will set up a design centre in Chakan near Pune, to expand its production capacity, with investment of over 8000 crores.
- ➢ Goa government unveiled State IT Policy 2018, replacing the IT policy which was released in 2015. It aims at creating a globally competitive information technology ecosystem in state. Government plans to attract at least five large multinational IT companies and help create 8000 - 10000 jobs for locals.
- ➢ Gorakhpur administration in Uttar Pradesh launched a smart phone application named Stop JE/AES to combat encephalitis. Encephalitis claims lives of several children every year in eastern Uttar Pradesh.
- ➢ Government announced that all villages adopted by Member of Parliaments under 'Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana' would get free Wi-Fi services. Under this, Setting up of 25000 WiFi hotspots at existing rural exchanges of BSNL will be done.
- ➢ Government approved a new scheme to empower rural women through community participation. It is called 'Mahila Shakti Kendra' for 2017-18 upto 2019-20, with cost sharing ratio of 60:40 between centre and states (90 :10 for North Eastern states).It will be done through College Student Volunteers in 115 aspirational districts as part of Block Level initiatives.
- ➢ Government decided that a museum for all prime ministers of country would be constructed in Teen Murti Bhavan complex that houses the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), New Delhi.
- ➢ Government in June 2017 approved setting up 10 indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) of 700 MW each in fleet mode, by Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL). Projects are -

Location & State	Project	Capacity(MW)
Chutka, Madhya Pradesh	Chutka -1&2	2 X 700
Kaiga, Karnataka	Kaiga - 5&6	2 X 700
Mahi Banswara, Rajasthan	Mahi Banswara - 1&2	2 X 700
Gorakhpur, Haryana	GHAVP - 3&4	2 X 700
Mahi Banswara, Rajasthan	Mahi Banswara - 3&4	2 X 700

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With these projects, Total nuclear power capacity of India will reach 22480 MW by 2031.

- Government launched #InnovateIndia Platform as a collaboration between Atal Innovation Mission and Govt.'s citizen centric platform MyGov, to serve as common point for all innovation happening across nation. It is accessible at https://innovate.mygov.in/innovateindia/.
- Government launched Unnat Bharat Abhiyan 2.0, as a flagship programme of HRD Ministry, it aims to link Higher Education Institutions with set of atleast (5) villages, so that these institutions can contribute to the economic and social betterment of these villages. Currently 748 Institutions are participating under it.
- Government launched a new MicroDot Technology that would help check on vehicle thefts. Under this, thousands of small dots laser etched will be sprayed with a vehicle identification number on all over the vehicle's body including its engine. It is yet to be finalized by Central Motor Vehicles Rules -Technical Standing Committee (CMVR-TSC).
- Government named The Walled City of Jaipur (Rajasthan) as proposed site for Inclusion in UNESCO World Heritage List. There are a total of 37 World Heritage sites in India at Present.
- Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani launched 'Poshan Abhiyan'--a statewide mission to eradicate malnutrition among children by providing them nutritious food through Anganwadi centres. He also launched PURNA (Prevention of Under Nutrition and Reduction of Nutritional Anaemia among Adolescent Girls) project to eliminate malnutrition among girls in the age group of 14 to 18.
- Gujarat Government granted religious minority status to approx 170 Jews living in state, being 3rd state in India to grant religious minority status to Jews after West Bengal and Maharashtra.
- Gujarat Govt. approved 39-crore rupees 'Seema Darshan' project for developing more infrastructure facilities from T-Junction to Zero Point at Nadabet near Suigam in Banaskantha district, to instil patriotism through a unique Gujarat initiative for border tourism.
- Gujarat government launched Urban Sanitation and Cleanliness Policy for better management of solid and liquid waste in cities. It focuses on streamlining collection and disposal of all types of waste in cities and towns.
- Gujarat govt. launched Vaccination drive against measles-rubella, with 300 crores help from Central Government.
- Hardeep S Puri (Minister of State (I/C) of Housing and Urban Affairs) launched India Smart Cities Fellowship (ISCF) and Internship (ISCI) program, to provide youth an opportunity to experience aspects of Urban planning and governance. Smart Cities Digital Payments Awards 2018 were also launched.

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- ✓ India Smart Cities Fellowship (ISCF) Program is designed to provide valuable experience to the youth interested in smart cities specifically, and urban renewal sector in general and will bring in new ideas to implement solutions for key urban problems.
- ✓ India Smart Cities Internship (ISCI) Program - MOHUA will engage students pursuing Higher education as Interns to help implementation of Smart City Projects in various States/Cities. Internship will be on unpaid basis for 6 to 12 weeks. They will be given an Experience Certificate at successful completion of program.
- ✓ The Smart Cities Digital Payments Awards 2018 - 100 days Challenge in 100 Smart Cities aims to promote ease of living for India's urban residents. Objective of these awards is to guide and reward Smart Cities for promoting digital payments and carrying out innovative payment initiatives.

- ➢ Haryana Education Department launched 'I am not afraid of English' initiative from Class 1 in the state's primary schools, aimed at capacity building of teachers to enable them to help students to learn, read, write and speak English.
- ➢ Haryana Government launched 'Paudhagiri campaign', to increase green cover in state and improve climatic conditions. Under this, 22 lakh students studying in Class 6th to 12th will plant sapling each, during 3 months of monsoon (July, August and September), provided by State forest department. Student will get total Rs 300 in three years for succesfully looking after its sapling.
- ➢ Haryana government enhanced ex-gratia grant being given to family members of police personnel who die in line of duty, from 10 lakh to 30 lakh.
- ➢ Himachal Pradesh Govt. a 1.55-crore project to set up a cow sanctuary at Kotla Barog. Unlike gaushalas where the animals are kept indoors and fed in-house, animals will be free to roam in fenced area meant to keep a fixed number of cows.
- ➢ Himachal Pradesh adjudged as top performer under Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) in country.
- ➢ Himachal Pradesh government approved implementation of Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of 2,29,136 metric tonnes of apples, with price fixed at 7.50 per kg.
- ➢ Himachal Pradesh government banned use of plastic polythene and thermocol cutlery across state, which was announced by state govt on World Environment Day on June 5, 2018.
- ➢ IFFCO launched e-commerce platform IFFCO iMandi to address needs of 5.5 Crores farming community associated with it, in partnership with Singapore-based technology firm iMandi. Through this, IFFCO is targeting to reach GMV (gross merchandise value) of $5 billion in 2 years. Using it, farmers buy all agri inputs of IFFCO, including fertilisers, agro chemicals and seeds at discounted price and get free delivery at their doorstep.

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- ISRO partnered with J&K's Directorate of Health Services-Kashmir (DHS-K) to set up a telemedicine center at an altitude of 12,700 feet to provide service to pilgrims en route to Amarnath shrine.
- Indian IT industry apex body NASSCOM (National Association of Software & Services Companies) opened Centre of Excellence for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (CoE-DSAI) in Bengaluru (Karnataka). to nurture innovation in emerging disruptive technologies such as AI and to leverage the power of data science.
  - ✓ NASSCOM also signed MoU with NITI Aayog to collaboratively foster applied research, accelerating adoption and ethics, privacy and security.
- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur developed TreadWill, an online tool to help people cope with issues related to mental health. This website designed to help people deal with stress, low mood, lethargy and other depressive symptoms through different online exercises, questionnaires and games.
- Indian Railways launched first consolidated Bridge Management System (IR-BMS), with data on its 1.5 lakh bridges. IR-BMS aims for meaningful assimilation, analysis and dissemination of information related to various activities about its bridges.
- Indian Railways organized a programme on Ethics in Public Governance and Launched "Mission Satyanishtha", at National Rail Museum in New Delhi. It aims to sensitize all railway employees about need to adhere to good ethics and to maintain high standards of integrity at work.
- Indian Railways will start a special train called Shri Ramayana Express, which will cover important destinations related to Ramayana in a 16-days journey in November. It will be spread across India as well as Sri Lanka.
- Indian government approved ters of net neutrality, allowing internet to remain unrestricted and non-discriminatory. Net neutrality implies that telecom service providers must treat all internet traffic equally, without any regard to the type, origin or destination of content. Govt. Also approved installation of around 12.5 lakh WiFi hotspots in all gram panchayats with funding of 6000 crores by December 2018.
- India's first private sector unit for manufacturing Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAV) and light bulletproof vehicles (LBPV) will be set up by DCM Shriram Industries Group on campus of Shriram Rayons in Kota (Rajasthan).
- India's first taxi ambulance services launched in Delhi, a service by a Gurugram-based startup Wagon Cab. Cabs are equipped with medical supplies and medically trained drivers.
- Indigenously manufactured semi high-speed train called Train 2018, code-named Train 18 will be rolled out in September 2018, built by Integral Coach Factory (ICF) of Chennai, It is capable of running at a speed of 160 km per hour. It will be self-propelled on electric traction like metro trains, along with Wi-Fi and infotainment and several other facilities.

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- Jharkhand Government announced to develop country's first Khadi mall.
- Kerala Government declared Kozhikode and Malappuram districts free from Nipah virus infection, as no positive case of the infection was reported till completion of double incubation period of virus.
- Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) launched its, in-housedeveloped,single-umbrella e-marketing systemnamed Khadi Institution Management and Information System (KIMIS). The system can be accessed from anywhere in the country for the sale and purchase of Khadi and Village Industries products.
- Kochi Metro Rail launched India's first exquisite air-conditioned bed space dormitory-Peters Inn, with 200 bed air-conditioned cabins. Daily rent for the bed space is inr 395.
- Law Commission of India (LCI) in its 276th Report Legal Framework: Gambling and Sports Betting including Cricket in India, recommended that gambling and betting on sports be allowed as regulated activities.
  - ✓ It recommended number of changes in law for regulating betting for making it taxable under direct and indirect tax regimes and used as source for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI).
  - ✓ It recommended linking Aadhar or PAN card of individual indulging in betting and gambling and making transaction cashless to regulate illegal activities such as money laundering.
  - ✓ FDI in casino and online gaming industry will bring substantial amounts of investment to those states that decide to permit casinos, propelling growth of tourism, while also enabling such states to generate higher revenue and employment opportunities.
  - ✓ 21st Law commission of India is led by former SC Justice Balbir Sinsh Chauhan, constituted effect from 1st September, 2015. It has a three-year term, ending on 31st August, 2018.
- Lok Sabha MPs will be allowed to ask a maximum of five questions in the house per day from upcoming Monsoon Session, down from earlier 10 permitted questions.
- Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Chauhan inaugurated NTPC's 250 MW Solar Power Plant in Mandsaur, costing approx 1500 crores.
- Madhya Pradesh government launched an outstanding power bill waiver scheme and subsidised power scheme called 'Sambal' for labourers and poor families. Under it, Below Poverty Line (BPL) families would be provided electricity at a cost of Rs 200 per month (maximum).
- Madhya Pradesh govt will appoint girls as a district Brand Ambassador who have recorded significant achievements in any field under the Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao scheme, as a first of its kind initiative.

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- Maharashtra government has set up a seven-member expert panel to prepare guidelines for surrogacy centres in state.
- Maharashtra government will launch one transformer per farmer Scheme, to reduce electricity losses. Under it, 2 lakh farmers will be given electricity connection for high voltage distribution line which will ensure uninterrupted power supply.
  - ✓ Farmers who lose their cattle in attack by wild animals will now get Rs 40,000, up from Rs 25,000 earlier.
  - ✓ Rs 2 lakh hike in for kin of people killed in an attack by wild animals was announced.
- Meghalaya Cabinet approved convergence of phase 4 of Meghalaya Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS) with centre's Ayushman Bharat Yojana. Under this, health coverage has been increased to Rs. 5 lakh from previous Rs.2.8 lakh per household excluding government employees.
- Meghalaya Govt. released policy document of 5 year jackfruit mission, during state's jackfruit festival. It aims to generate employment opportunities for over 80,000 farmers, costing approx 80 Crores INR.
- Microsoft signed MoU with Rajasthan government to provide free digital training to 9,500 college students in one year. Microsoft will also train educators from government colleges through the Microsoft Innovative Educator Programme, building capacity for innovative use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in classroom.
- Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan laid foundation stone for permanent campus of National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) for Women at Mohali (Punjab). This is first NSTI Institute for Punjab and First in India which is exclusively for women.
- Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan laid foundation stone of country's first National Skill Training Institute at Barang near Bhubaneswar (Odisha).
- Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS) launched Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 (SSG 2018) in New Delhi, a survey to rank all states / districts on basis of rural cleanliness.
  - ✓ 6980 villages in 698 districts will be covered. The SSG 2018 will assign 65% weightage to findings and outcome and 35% to service level parameters to be obtained from Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) of MDWS.
  - ✓ Weights to different elements of SSG are - direct observation (30%), citizen's feedback (35%), service level progress on sanitation (35%).
  - ✓ SSG 2018 will be conducted in August 2018. Best states / districts are expected to be awarded on 2nd October 2018.

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- Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) launched a mobile application named Mumbai Weather Live that will provide information on extreme weather events in Mumbai.
- Ministry of Earth Sciences unveiled blueprint of Deep Ocean Mission (DOM), that proposes to explore deep-ocean by emulating success of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in designing and launching satellites. For this, Centre has drawn up five-year, Rs. 8,000 crore plan. Focus will be on technologies for deep-sea mining, underwater vehicles, underwater robotics and ocean climate change advisory services, among other aspects.
- Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) declared 438 sq.km. area around Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu) in Nilgiris as an eco-sensitive zone (ESZ)., to prohibit human activities near the reserve, which was declared a tiger habitat in 2007. It is a critical part of Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve spread over 5,500 sq. km.
- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) will create a National Database of Arms Licenses system from April 2019, with names of all arms licence holders with a unique identification number (UIN), to keeping tab on authorised private gun holders and hold their misuse. Any arms licence without UIN will be considered invalid.
- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) will upgrade National Information Security Policy and Guidelines (NISPG) to secure government data and control access to it, to prevent leaking of sensitive information.
  - ✓ NISPG has been prepared by MHA, based on experience of existing security standards and frameworks and global best practices and experience of implementation in wake of expanding information security threat scenario.
- Ministry of Home Affairs sponsored Student Police Cadet (SPC) Programme launched in Gurugram (Haryana), to build bridge between Police and larger community through school students by inculcating values and ethics in them through classes in school and outside. It focuses on students of class 8th and 9th.
  - ✓ It does not have any prescribed text book and also any exam. Only one class is proposed in a month. Programme will broadly cover Crime prevention and control.
  - ✓ Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) with support of National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has prepared handbook for imparting instructions.
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) will launch Global Housing Construction Technology Challenge as part of technology sub-mission of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U). It aims to accelerate PMAY-U's target of providing 'housing for all', as it is moving very slower than its rural counterpart.
  - ✓ Through this, MoHUA will invite ideas for innovative technologies for mass housing projects that can help build houses faster, cheaper and of better quality with sustainable green materials. Winning technologies will be used for cnstruction under PMAY (U).

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- ✓ Also, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs announced that over 51 lakh houses have been approved under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) in the 3 years of its implementation. Out of Which, 28 lakhs houses are already in various stages of construction and 8 lakh completed. PMAY(U) aims provide affordable houses to all poor in urban areas by 2022. Its objective is to construct 2 crore houses across nation.

➢ Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoUHA) launched Technology Challenge: Identifying solutions for cleaning of Sewerage Systems and Septic Tanks, to promote suitable techniques for cleaning sewers and septic tanks and eliminate need for human entry. It will be conducted for two categories each for cleaning of sewerage and septic tanks to eliminate need for human entry.

➢ Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas amended Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules 1959 to include shale in definition of petroleum, to enable exploration of all hydrocarbons in existing fields which is line with new Hydrocarbon Exploration Licensing Policy (HELP). It will help in enhancing domestic exploration and production of hydrocarbons and increasing India's energy security and reducing dependency on imports.

- ✓ Shale is fine-grained sedimentary rock that forms from compaction of silt and clay-size mineral particles, commonly called as mud. Shale is distinguished from other mudstones due to laminated (rock is made up of many thin layers) and fissile (rock readily splits into thin pieces along the laminations) nature.

➢ Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) issued draft amendments to Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989 -

- ✓ Makes mandatory for vehicles to affix sticker confirming fitting of Fastag in front wind screen of vehicles.
- ✓ Stipulates additional conditions for obtaining national permit.
- ✓ Tanker carrying dangerous or hazardous goods will be painted in white colour.
- ✓ Fitness certification of transport vehicles will be renewed for 2 years for vehicles up to 8 years old and for 1 year for vehicles older than 8 years.
- ✓ Henceforth, pollution under control certificates and driving license can be carried in physical or digital form.
- ✓ Goods carrying vehicles will be required to carry goods in closed body of vehicle or container, or use tarpaulin if needed to carry in open.

➢ Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation launched fortnightly video contest Jal Bachao, Video Banao, Puruskar Pao, to encurage people for better water management. Ministry joined hands with MyGov portal (www.mygov.in) for this contest. Contest will last till 4th November 2018 and three winners will be chosen every fortnight.

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- ✓ Video should be uploaded on YouTube and share its accessible link in MyGov contest page, with duration 2 - 10 minutes. Prize amount for first, second and third positions is Rs 25,000, Rs 15,000 and Rs 10,000 respectively.

➢ Monsoon Season 2018 - 19 Passed Bills -

- ✓ Rajya Sbha passed State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill, 2017 to merge six subsidiary banks with SBI. It was approved by Lok Sabha in 2017. It repeals State Bank of India (Subsidiary Banks) Act 1959 AND State Bank of Hyderabad Act 1956, that established SBI subsidiary Banks.
- ✓ Lok Sabha passed The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Second Amendment) Bill 2017 to abolish 'no detention policy' in schools (meaing that no child can be held back in any class until completion of elementary school (classes 1-8)). It will empower central / state government to allow schools to hold back child in class 5 / 8, after re-examination on being failed at first.
- ✓ Lok Sabha passed Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill 2017 to reduce number of cheque dishonour cases pending in courts, amending Negotiable Instruments Act 1881.

❖ Interim compensation - Allows court trying offence related to cheque bouncing to direct drawer (person who writes cheque) to pay interim compensation to complainant. It will not exceed 20% of cheque amount and will be paid by drawer within 60 days.

❖ Deposit in case of appeal - If drawer convicted in cheque bouncing case files appeal, appellate court may direct him to deposit minimum of 20% of compensation awarded by trial court during conviction. This will be in addition to any interim compensation.

❖ Returning interim compensation - If drawer is acquitted during trial or by appellate court, court will direct complainant to return interim compensation along with interest.

- ✓ Lok Sabha passed National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment) Bill 2017, to approve institutions which are funded by Centre or states, but do not have recognition. It amends NCTE Act 1993. Key Features Include Retrospective recognition of certain teacher education institutions and permits these institutions to start new course / training in teacher education to institutions.
- ✓ Rajya Sabha passed Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill 2013 . It amends Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA) 1988, to bring it in line with United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Key Features Include

❖ Making Giving bribe a punishable offence

❖ Making it mandatory to take prior approval of competent authority to conduct any investigation into offence alleged to have been committed by a public servant.

❖ Sets trail time period. In case of delays, reasons for it must be recorded for every extension of six months obtained. Total trial period may not exceed 4 years.

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- Anyone who is caught bribing government officials can be sentenced to a jail term of up to 7 years.
  - ✓ Lok Sabha passed Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill 2018 that aims to curb practice of evading criminal prosecution by economic offenders fleeing from country to evade clutches Indian law by remaining outside jurisdiction of Indian courts. Key Features -
- It is applicable in cases where total value involved in such economic offences is Rs.100 crore or more.
- It establishes Special Court under the Prevention of Money-laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 to declare a person as FEO. court will appoint 'administrator' to oversee confiscated property.
- It empowers director / deputy director (appointed under Prevention of Money-Laundering Act, 2002) to attach any property mentioned in application with permission of special court. Attachment will continue for 180 days, unless extended by court.
- Bill allows any civil court or tribunal to disallow person declared FEO, from filing or defending any civil claim.
- Director / deputy director will have powers vested of civil court.
- Appeals against orders of special court will lie before High Court.
  - ✓ Lok Sabha passed Homeopathy Central Council (Amendment) Bill 2018, that seeks to replace Central Council of Homoeopathy (CCH) with a board of governors.
- It abolishes CCH, as it does not have the powers to deal with its corrupt chief and other members.
- New board will comprise seven eminent homeopathy practitioners and administrators to be appointed by government.
  - ✓ Lok Sabha passed Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2018 -
- Jail term of minimum 20 years or life imprisonment or death for rape of girl under 12 years.
- Increases minimum punishment from 10 years to 20 years for crime of rape of girl under 16 years, which can be extended to imprisonment for rest of life.
- Increases minimum punishment for rape of women from rigorous imprisonment of 7 years to 10 years, which can be extended to life imprisonment.
- Investigation and trial must be completed in two months. It proposes 6 months' time limit for disposal of appeals in rape cases.

➢ Myanmar joined India-initiated International Solar Alliance (ISA), making it 68th signatory to Framework Agreement of ISA.

- ✓ ISA was jointly launched by India and France in November 2015 at Paris on side lines of COP21 UN Climate Change Conference. Its Framework Agreement came into force in December 2017.

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- ✓ It is headquartered at campus of Natioanl Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), Gurugram, Harayana, making it first international intergovernmental treaty based organization to be headquartered in India. Upendra Tripathy is current head of ISA.

➢ NITI Aayog Approved Bue Print for National health Stack, a Digital Healthcare Infrastructure To Implement Centre's Ayushman Bharat Scheme.

- ✓ National Health Stack will facilitate collection of comprehensive healthcare data across the country. It Includes assigning a Digital Health ID for every Indian Citizen, Which will enable privileged medical institutions to access Person's Health Data.
- ✓ Ayushman Bharat aims to provide a coverage of INR 5 Lakh per family annually and benefit more than 10 crore poor families. NITI Aayog has invited comments from stakeholders on consultation paper, by August 1, 2018.

➢ NITI Aayog signed Statement of Intent (SoI) with Lupin Foundation to collaborate in Aspirational Districts Programme to create templates for concerted development policy. Under this, both parties will partner to improve indicators in education, health and nutrition, financial inclusion and skill development, agriculture and water resources and basic infrastructure in Aspirational Districts.

➢ National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) drafted fee regulations to put in place uniform fee framework to check increases in school fees by unaided private schools. NCPCR will recommend these draft regulations to Ministry of Human Resource Development. It Sugsests -

- ✓ 10% yearly cap on fee hike permissible by private, unaided schools.
- ✓ Setting up district fee regulatory authority in states to monitor school fee increases.
- ✓ Formula for determining fees, based on school's location, costs incurred, revenue earned, student strength and other parameters.
- ✓ It proposes revenue fines of 1 %, 2 %, 5 % on first 3 violations and bar admissions after any further violations.

➢ National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) initiated process of introducing QR code (Quick Response code) in their textbooks, aimed at helping students understand chapters better by watching film or reading additional content on laptops and digital boards.

➢ National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE) has installed a remote sensing instrument- LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) for assessment of offshore wind resource at Gulf of Khambhat, off Gujarat Coast.

➢ National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) organised Ganga Vriksharopan Abhiyan in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. Campaign was initiated as part of Forest Interventions in Ganga (FIG) component of Namami Gange programme.

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- National Security Guard (NSG) became first central paramilitary force to opt for e-ticketing instead of railway warrant. With this, NSG personnel don't have to carry railway warrants as Buying tickets through railway warrant system is a lengthy process.
- Nissan Motors signed MoU with Government of Kerala to establish a new global center for its digital operations in India.
- Niti Aayog proposed 15-point action plan named "Breathe India" for combating air pollution in ten most polluted cities.
  - ✓ Government should increase focus on electric and hybrid vehicles. Procurement of electric vehicles (EVs) should be mandatory for vehicles for central government use. Central government offices should replace existing fleets older than 15 years to electric vehicles by April, 2021.
  - ✓ Niti Aayog has suggested a carrot-and-stick policy towards air pollution adopted in many European countries. It has called for implementing a large scale feebate programme beginning 2020.
  - ✓ Niti Aayog favoured setting up smog-free towers in cities for providing quick relief from sudden spike in air pollution. Smog-free towers are an innovative technological solution deployed across Europe, which cleans polluted air in an area around it.
  - ✓ To deal with Construction dust, Niti Aayog asked government to enforce use of ready-made concrete.
  - ✓ Recommended strategic decommissioning of inefficient power plants, primarily running on coal. Renewable energy sources must be deployed and preferred.
  - ✓ Suggested government to push to rooftop solar panel power generators. Increasing solar power generation is a critical measure that needs to be adopted in order to reduce air pollution.
- Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL) in Assam became first oil public sector undertaking (PSU) in India to adopt an online legal compliance system by introducing 'Legatrix'. Legatrix is cloud-based compliance management system, to effectively manage legal and regulatory compliances through monitoring control at different levels.
- Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurated 300 crores Rukura Medium Irrigation Dam project in Sundargarh district, to irrigate 5,800 hectares of agricultural field.
- Odisha Government launched Green Mahanadi Mission, a plantation drive under which 2 crore saplings will be planted along Mahanadi river and its tributaries. It aims to stop soil erosion on river banks and recharge groundwater reserves. Odisha government will also set up a riverine port on river Mahanadi in Kendrapara district.
- Odisha Government unveiled first-ever 'Tribal Atlas of Odisha', a compilation of demographic and cultural information of the tribal population in state, as first-of-its-kind

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tribal compilation in India. It gives information on tribal regions in state and key demographic indicators like literacy, sex ratio and education.

- Odisha Govt. would implement its own food security act from October 2, 2018. It would cover nearly 34.44 lakhs people left out of National Food Security Act (NFSA).
- Odisha Special Task Force (STF) launched drive to bust international syndicate that peddles pangolin, one of world's most illegally traded mammals. It requested Home Ministry to ask Myanmar government to block transit route for smuggled pangolin under Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT). Pangolin is only scaly mammal on planet. Of its 8 species worldwide, 2 are found in India (Chinese pangolin and Indian pangolin).
- Odisha government constituted a Heritage Cabinet, headed by CM Naveen Patnaik, aimed at protection of cultural and historical monuments.
- Odisha government signed an MoU with global organization Sightsavers to prevent avoidable blindness , to strengthen education for blind students. This would benefit 25,000 visually impaired and 1.3 lakh students with special needs.
- Odisha will host Triennial of International Art (TIA), India's first private sector triennial, in December-January, as a 40 day event.
- Odisha's government decided to increase the inter-caste marriage incentive from 1 lakh to INR 2.5 lakh. They can withdraw amount only after 3 years of marriage.
- Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) launched a digital campaign, ThinkForHealth, calling for ideas to improve access to healthcare in india, in partnership with Telangana government.
- PM Narendra Modi Inaugurated Bansagar Canal Project, aimed to boost irrigation in Mirzapur and Allahabad districts of Uttar Pradesh.
  - ✓ He also laid Foundation Stone of Mirzapur Medical College, inaugurated 100 Jan Aushadhi Kendras in State and launched a bridge over River Ganga at Balughat (Chunar), to facilitate connectivity between Mirzapur and Varanasi.
- PM Narendra Modi laid foundation stone of country's first Mobile Open Exchange (MOX) zone in Noida (Uttar Pradesh), to act as catalyst for growth of mobile and allied sectors in state. MOX will be dedicated ecosystem for mobile industry, providing integrated platform to mobile manufacturers, research and development (R&D) and allied industries. PM Modi also launched 81 investment projects worth INR 60,000 crores in Uttar Pradesh.
- Piyush Goyal (Minister of Coal, Railways, Finance & Corporate Affairs) launched the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS) and Mobile Application 'Khan Prahari' developed by CMPDI (a Subsidiary of CIL).
  - ✓ Basic objective of CMSMS is reporting, monitoring and taking suitable action on unauthorised coal mining activities. CMSMS is a web based GIS application through which location of sites for unauthorised mining can be detected. It will use satellite data

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to detect changes by which unauthorised mining activity extending beyondallotted lease area can be detected.

- ✓ Complaints originating from coal mines allotted to Coal India will go to Coal India Offices and those originating from coal blocks not allotted to Coal India will go straight to State Government Officers and for each complaint the alert will also go to DM and SP of district.
- ✓ System also uses information provided by responsible citizens using smartphones using the mobile application "Khan Prahari'.
- ✓ Its Uniqueness is that it uses satellite data as well as public input to capture information on unauthorised coal mining activities and also take appropriate action on them with due transparency.

- ➢ Power Grid Corporation of India (POWERGRID) signed MoU with Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation (UPPCL) for energy efficiency and agricultural demand side management programme.
- ➢ President Ram Nath Kovind gave is assent to Assam Witch Hunting (Prohibition, Prevention and Protection) Bill 2015, passed by State Assembly in August 2015. It aims to check rising incidents of witch hunting cases across state, eliminating superstition from society by making such offences under it as non-bailable, non-compoundable and cognizable.
  - ✓ It imposes up to 7 years of jail and fine up to 5 lakh rupees. It also proposes sentence of 3 years imprisonment if anybody blames a person for natural disasters in a particular locality.
- ➢ Public Affairs Index 2018 released by think tank Public Affairs Centre (PAC) -
  - ✓ Top 5 States - Kerala (1), Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka and Gujarat (5). Kerala named 3rd best governed state for 3rd consecutive year.
  - ✓ Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar ranked the lowest on PAI.
  - ✓ Top 5 small states - Himachal Pradesh (1), Goa, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura (5). Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya were ranked at the bottom of index among small states.
  - ✓ Total of 30 focus subjects and 100 indicators were measured to derive PAI.
- ➢ Puducherry Tourism announced first Pondicherry International Film Festival (PIFF), to showcase over 100 films from more than 25 countries. It will be held in September 2018, with France as partner country.
- ➢ RPG Group Owned Tyre major CEAT signed MoU with Tamil Nadu State government to invest 4000 crores in a greenfield plant in Sriperumbudur near Chennai to boost State's tyre manufacturing capacity.
- ➢ Railways introduced Double Stack Dwarf Container Services, flagging off from Western Railway's Rajkot railway station on its maiden commercial run. Despite being smaller in size, dwarf containers can hold a capacity of 30,500 kgs.

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- Rajasthan Government signed MoU with a private trust Sohanlalji Buladeviji Ojha Gaushala Samiti to build its first 'Cow Sanctuary', a shelter for 10000 cows, in Bikaner district. State government introduced a 20 % surcharge on liquor to use the proceeds for protection of cows.
  - ✓ In 2015, Rajasthan became first state to have a separate department and ministry for the welfare of cows.
  - ✓ India's first cow sanctuary is located at MP's Agar Malwa district, named Kamdhenu Gau Abhyaranya.
- Rajasthan Govt. launched Bijli Mitra Mobile app, to help farmers to get their defunct transformers replaced within 6 hours of registering a complaint through app. It is initially launched in Jhalawar.
- Rajasthan became first state to implement National Policy on Biofuels, unveiled by central Government in May 2018. Under this, State Government will lay emphasis on increasing production of oilseeds and establish Centre for Excellence in Udaipur to promote research in fields of alternative fuels and energy resources.
- Rajasthan government approved 1 % reservation for 5 communities - Gadia Lohar, Banjara, Gujjar, Raika and Gadariya.
- Rajasthan government launched Annapurna Dudh Yojana, to provide milk thrice a week to 62 lakh students in government schools and madrassas. While students till Class 5 will get 150 ml, students in Class 6-8 will get 200 ml.
- Sambalpur railway division (Odisha) of East Coast Railway Zone has set a record by constructing 6 limited height subways (LHS) at one go, in a single block of four and half hours, as first of its kind launch in Indian Railways. It eliminated all unmanned Level Crossing Gates over Sambalpur Division.
- Science& Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan unveiled a Air Quality and Weather Forecast System– SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting) at Chandni Chowk in Delhi. The giant LED displays real-time air quality index with colour coding alongwith 72-hour advance forecast. The system, first of its kind in the country, was developed by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology Pune.
  - ✓ It will also measure sun's UV-Index (UVI), PM1, Mercury and Black carbon in real time in addition to regular air quality and weather parameters like PM2.5, PM10, Sulfur Dioxide, Ozone, Nitrogen Oxides, Carbon Monoxide.
- Supreme Court Bench (A.K. Sikri and Ashok Bhushan) ruled for the 3rd time that Chief Justice of India (CJI, currently Dipak Misra) is Master of Roster. CJI is an individual judge and not powerful collective of five senior-most judges of Supreme Court called the 'Collegium'. CJI has exclusive authority to allocate cases to fellow judges and is spokesperson of the court.

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- ✓ Judgment was based on petition filed by former Law Minister Shanti Bhushan for considering expression CJI should be read as meaning Collegium for purpose of allocation of cases. Petition mentioned that to have collegium of SC judges collectively to allocate cases rather than leave entire power in hands of CJI in his administrative capacity as 'Master of Roster'.

- Supreme Court ruled that private hospitals in Delhi, which were given land on concessional rate, must provide free treatment to certain percentage of poor patients. It is mandatory for private hospitals, built on land allocated by government on concessional rates, to provide 10 % treatment to In Patient Department (IPD) and 25 % to Out Patient Department (OPD) for free.
- Supreme Court stated that Lieutenant Governor does not have independent decision-making powers in UTs, and is bound to act on the aid and advice of Democratically Elected Council of Ministers.
- Tamil Nadu government has set a 24-hour helpline to assist and protect inter-caste couples, to eradicate 'honour killing' completely.
- Tamil Nadu government released draft state Forest Policy that aims to conserve forests and wildlife, under Vision Tamil Nadu 2023 document.
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu has 30.92 % of the forest declared as 'protected areas'. It has 15 wildlife sanctuaries, 5 National parks, 15 bird sanctuaries, 3 biosphere reserves and 4 project tiger areas.
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu will develop innovative strategies to enhance forest and tree cover from current 21.76 % to 33 % by 2030.
  - ✓ Forest department will also develop mangroves in Tamil Nadu as 'bio-shield' along the coast as per the policy.
- Telangana CM K Chandrasekhar Rao laid foundation stone for Gattu irrigation project in Jogulamba Gadwal district, Telangana, with cost approx 554-crores.
- Telangana Government signed MoU with Singapore-based engineering & consulting firm Surbana Jurong for preparing roadmap for Genome Valley 2.0, an upgraded version of life sciences and biotechnology industrial cluster state's capital Hyderabad.
  - ✓ Genome Valley is India's first organized pharma-biotech cluster for life sciences R&D activities and largest life sciences destination in Asia, being home to over 200 companies employing 10,000 people.
- Telangana government allotted 200 acres to 3 women entrepreneurs' associations in Telangana. 50 acres has been allotted to FLO at Sultanpur. 30 acres has been allotted to Confederation of Women Entrepreneurs (COWE) at Toopran, and 120 acres to Association of Lady Entrepreneurs of India (ALEAP).

ARUL IAS ACADEMY

- To cut costs incurred by state over travel expenses of ministers and bureaucrats, West Bengal Govt. announced one person, one car policy.
- Top beverage companies initiated a buyback programme for all PET bottles sold in Maharashtra, with a predefined buyback price to be mandatorily printed on larger PET/PETE bottles. Most companies have set the buyback value at Rs 15 per kg for PET bottles and 5 per kg for shrink wraps.
- Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) announced that Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) (Main) and National Eligibility and Entrance Test (NEET) will now be held twice a year and over multiple days. Both exams will be conducted by newly formed National Testing Agency (NTA), which will also conduct National Eligibility Test (NET). It will provide more flexibility to aspirants.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) will set up 'Design University for Gaming' in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. For This, UNESCO signed agreement with Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB).
- Uttar Pradesh Government announced a new Defence Manufacturing policy named 'UP Defence Aerospace Unit and Employment Generating Policy 2018'. Under this -
  - ✓ Entrepreneurs will be given land under plug and play formula investment of INR 50000 crore in 5 years. This would generate 2.5 lakh jobs.
  - ✓ Six districts — Aligarh, Agra, Jhansi, Chitrakoot, Kanpur and Lucknow – will be notified for the Defence manufacturing hub, with focus on Bundelkhand region.
  - ✓ There will be 2 categories of investment - mega anchor project worth over Rs 1000 crore which will include companies willing to build aircraft, tanks, choppers and anchor units which could invest 200 - 400 crores in several regions.
  - ✓ Government also approved proposal to get bank loan of INR 12000 crores from PNB for construction of Purvanchal Expressway.
  - ✓ It also approved construction of civil airports at Aligarh, Azamgarh, Moradabad and Shravasti under Regional Air Connectivity policy.
  - ✓ Government also approved asset settlement of UP Mining Development Corporation.
- Uttar Pradesh Government granted Status of Revenue Village to three villages inhabited by the Tongia Scheduled Tribe in and around forests in Saharanpur district under Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA). Villages are - Kaluwala, Sodhinagar and Bhagwatpur.
  - ✓ Granting of Revenue Status to villages means that these villages will now come under revenue department instead of forest department.
- Uttar Pradesh Govt. issued an order to ban use of plastic in state from July 15, 2018, in line with central govt's plan to end use of single-use plastic products by 2022. This will be 3rd Plastic ban in UP since 2015.

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- Uttarakhand High Court declared entire animal kingdom (all animals, including avian and aquatic species) as legal entities with rights, duties and liabilities of living person.
  - ✓ HC was hearing PIL by Narayan Dutt Bhatt, filed in 2014 where petitioner had sought directions to restrict movement of horse carts (tongas) between India and Nepal through Banbasa in Champawat district of Uttarakhand. However, HC enlarged scope of petition in larger public interest to promote protection and welfare of animals.
  - ✓ HC directed State Government that no animal, including horses moving between India and Nepal, carries excess weight. It also banned use of any sharp equipment throughout state to avoid bruises, swelling, abrasions or severe pain to animals.
  - ✓ It also directed all veterinary doctors across state to mandatorily treat animals brought to them.
- West Bengal Assembly passed Lokayukta (Amendment) Bill2018, with 59 state subjects. It allows Lokayukta to investigate other 58 subjects under State List, with approval of two-third of members of assembly. The Bill Keeps CM out of its purview in matters relating to public order.
- West Bengal Governmet signed MOU with British Council, to promote cultural, educational and skill development exchanges between UK and west Bengal, on occasion of British Council's 70th anniversary in India.
- West Bengal state assembly passed a bill to change state's name from West Bengal to 'Bangla' in all three different languages.
- Western Ghats, one of India's Hottest Biodiversity Hotspots and a UNESCO World Heritage site, has been marked 4th in Lonely Planet's top five '2018 Best in Asia' list. One of flowering plant species, Neelakurinji (Strobilanthes kunthiana) which blooms once every 12 years and has started to bloom in famed hill station of Munnar, has been mentioned in report.
- Western Railway renamed Elphinstone Road suburban railway station in Mumbai to Prabhadevi Station (PBHD). It was initially named after Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay Presidency from 1853 to 1860. It has now been renamed in honour of local deity Prabhadevi.

ARUL IAS ACADEMY

PERSONS

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) President M Karunanidhi (Tamilnadu) became first Indian political figure to lead a party for 50 years, Elected as DMK chief in 1969.

- Former Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif has been sentenced to 7 years in jail and and son-in-law captain (retired) Safdar awarded 1 year jail term, along with fine of £8 million on Mr. Sharif and £2 million on Ms. Maryam (His Daughter).
- India's Prabhat Koli became first Asian to swim the choppy water from Jersey (an Island in the UK) to France in cold weather. He covered 25 km in 6 hours and 54 minutes.
  - ✓ He had earlier crossed English Channel when he was 16.
- Indian Navy's Abhilash Tomy will be Asia's only attendant in Golden Globe Race (GGR) that commenced from Les Sables d'Olonne harbour in France. Participants are required to sail around the world, single-handed and non-stop. Boat technology newer than 1968 is not permitted, hence use of Global Positioning System (GPS), satellite communication, navigational aids, etc is forbidden.
  - ✓ GGR is conducted by Sir Robin Knox Johnston of UK to commemorate 50 years since world's first solo non-stop circumnavigation undertaken by him in 1968 onboard Indian built boat, Suhaili.
- Ishwar Sharma, 8-year old Indian-origin boy in England, who is currently under-11 UK national yoga champion has been named the 'British Indian of the Year'. He recently won a gold medal for Great Britain at the World Student Games 2018 in Winnipeg, Canada.

Obituaries (July 2018) -

- ✓ JG Nadkarni - Ex Indian Navy chief
- ✓ M.M. Jacob - former Meghalaya Governor
- ✓ Kabutari Devi - Noted Kumaoni folk singer
- ✓ Kavi Kumar Azad - Actor
- ✓ J N Sadhu - Noted Journalist
- ✓ Kalpesh Yagnik - Noted journalist
- ✓ M.N. Vyasa Rao - Kannada poet and lyricist.
- ✓ Gopal Das Neeraj - Noted Hindi poet.
- ✓ Basabi Nandi - Noted Bengali actress.
- ✓ Swapan Sarkar - Noted Sports journalist.
- ✓ Chiyo Miyako - World's oldest person (117 years)
- ✓ Ramapada Chowdhury - Noted Bengali author

Persons Resigned / Retired (July 2018) -

- ✓ David Davis - Brexit Secretary (UK).
- ✓ Mohammed Kaif - Noted Indian cricketer.

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- ✓ Tushar Arothe - Indian Women's Cricket Team Coach. Ramesh Powar has been named as interim coach of women's cricket team.
- ✓ Parvinder Awana - Delhi Cricketer.
- ✓ Tim Cahill - Noted Austrlian Footballer.
- ✓ Renu Satti - Paytm Payments Bank CEO.

- ➢ Poland's Andrzej Bargiel became the first person to ski down the world's second-highest mountain, the 8,611-metre high K2 peak in Pakistan. K2 also known as "Savage Mountain" is considered to be a more challenging climb than world's highest peak, Mount Everest.
- ➢ President Ram Nath Kovind nominated 4 names to Rajya Sabha. Nominations are Farmer leader Ram Shakal, Author Rakesh Sinha, Sculptor Raghunath Mohapatra and classical dancer Sonal Mansingh.
  - ✓ As per Article 80 (Part V) of Constitution, President can nominate 12 members in Rajya Sabha. These persons should have special knowledge or practical experience in the field of Art, Science, Literature and Social Service.
- ➢ Satyarup Siddhanta become 2nd Indian mountaineer after Malli Mastan Babu to climb Mt Ojos del Salado (6893 m), highest volcano in world on Argentina-Chile border.
- ➢ Shivangi Pathak, who recently became youngest Indian woman to scale Mount Everest, has now scaled Africa's highest peak, Mount Kilimanjaro in 3 days. Tanzania Mount Kilimanjaro measures 5,895 meters in height.
- ➢ Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath created a Record in State's History as he became First CM to visit all 75 districts of state in first 16 months of his rule.
- ➢ VD Dogra became first serving Indian Army officer and only General across world to have completed a gruelling 'Iron Man' competition held in Austria. It consists 3 consecutive events - 3.8 km of swimming, 180 km cycling and 42.2 km of running (a full marathon), to be completed within 17 hours. Actor Milind Soman was first Indian to complete this challenge, in 2015.
  - ✓ Also, Anju Khosla (52 years age) became oldest Indian woman to complete an Ironman Triathlon.

Visits From India (July 01 - 10, 2018) -

- ✓ Kiren Rijij, Minister of State for Home Affairs participated in Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction 2018 (AMCDRR 2018) held in Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia), with theme Preventing Disaster Risk: Protecting Sustainable Development.
- ✓ Union Minister of State for HRD, Satya Pal Singh attended 6th meeting of BRICS Education Ministers at Cape Town (South Africa). In this meeting of BRICS, India was allotted key theme of 'Digitization in Education'.

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- ✓ Minister for Law & Justice and Electronics & IT, Ravi Shankar Prasad visited UK. An MoU for enhancing bilateral cooperation in legal affairs was signed, for promoting greater co-operation between judicial and legal professionals in both countries.
- ✓ Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Ram Vilas Paswan visited Switzerland for attending 3rd Intergovernmental Group of Experts (IGE) meet in Geneva, 0orgznied by UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development).
- ✓ Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Upendra Kushwaha visited Oceanic Nation Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), as first ever ministerial visit from India to RMI. India committed to extend grant of USD 300,000 for a Water and Sanitation Project Proposal of Aur Atoll in RMI.

Visits from India (July 11 - 20, 2018)

- ✓ 8th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting held at Durban (South Africa). Indian delegation was led by J P Nadda (Minister of Health and Family Welfare).
- ✓ Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu visited Oman for participating in 8th India-Oman Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) in Muscat.
- ✓ External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj Visited Bahrain.
- ✓ Ghana's Foreign Minister Shirley Ayorkor Botchway Visited India. 2 Agreements were signed -

❖ On exemption from visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official passports.

❖ Establishment of a joint commission

- ✓ Home Minister Rajnath Singh Visited Bangladesh -

❖ Memorandum of Cooperation signed between Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy Hyderabad and Bangladesh Police Academy for cooperation in training, management and exchange of trainers and trainees .

❖ 6th meeting of India-Bangladesh Home Minister level talks held in Dhaka.

❖ Revised Travel Arrangement 2018 (RTA 2018) was also signed, amending earlier RTA 2013. HM Rajnath Singh also announced withdrawal of e-token system for submission of Visa applications.

Visits from India (July 21 - 30, 2018)-

- ✓ Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi Visited African Nations Rwanda, Uganda and South Africa -

❖ <u>Rwanda -</u>

- ➢ India and Rwanda signed 8 agreements. Including -
- ✓ Cooperation in - Agriculture and Animal Resources, Defence, Cultural Exchange Program for 2018-22, Agricultural Research, Leather and Allied Sectors, Trade Cooperation Framework and 2 Lines of Credit for each $100 Million for
- ✓ Development of industrial parks and Kigali Special Economic Zone.

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- ✓ 3 agricultural projects in Rwanda.
  - ➢ Mr. Modi became first Indian PM to visit Rwanda.
  - ➢ PM Modi also gifted 200 cows to villagers in Rweru Model Village, as a part of Rwandan Government's Girinka Programme.

❖ **Uganda -**

- ➢ India extended 2 lines of credit to Uganda – one of $141 million (around Rs 968 crore) for electricity lines and another of $64 million (Rs 439 crore) for agriculture and dairy production.
- ➢ India and Uganda exchanged 4 MoUs covering Defence Cooperation, Visa exemption for Diplomatic and official passport holders, Cultural Exchange Programme and Material Testing Laboratory.
- ➢ India will open 18 new embassies across Africa.
- ➢ Unveiled a statue of Loh Purush Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (first home minister of India) in Kampala (Capital of Uganda).

❖ **South Africa -**

- ➢ Attended 10th BRICS (Brazil, Russian, India, China, South Africa) summit in Johannesburg. This year's theme is BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for inclusive growth and shared prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution. It was 2nd time South Africa Hosted this event. PM Modi also held bilateral talks with leaders of Russia, Turkey, Angola and Argentina.
- ➢ Next (11th) BRICS summit will be hosted by Brazil in 2019.
- ➢ MOUs signed with South Africa -
  - ✓ Cooperation in Agricultural Research and Education.
  - ✓ Setting up of Gandhi Mandela Centre of Specialisation for Artisan Skills in South Africa.
  - ✓ Cooperation in Exploration and uses of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes.

Visits from India (July 21 - 31, 2018) -

- ✓ Thaawarchand Gehlot, Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment attended Global Disability Summit held in London (UK).

Visits to India (July 01 - 10, 2018) -

- ✓ Raila Odinga, Former Prime Minister of Kenya Visited India.
- ✓ Prime Minister of Bhutan, Dasho Tshering Tobgay visited India.
- ✓ Bernard Makuza, President of Senate of Rwanda (East Africa) Visited India.

❖ Rajya Sabha, for first time in 76 years since it came into being, entered into a MOU with a foreign counterpart for promoting inter-parliamentary dialogue, when it signed MoU with Upper House of Rwanda's Parliament (Senate).

❖ Vice president (currentlyVenkaiah Naidu) is Chairman of Rajya Sabha.

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- ✓ South Korean President Moon Jae-in visited India. He was accompanied with Korean Science and Technology Minister Yiu Young Min and Kim Hyun-chong, Korean Minister for Trade, Industry and Energy.

❖ He, Jointly with Indian PM Narenra Modi inaugurated New Mobile Manufacturing Plant of Samsung at Noida (Uttar Pradesh). With investment of INR 5000 Crores, it is largest Mobile Phone Manufacturing facility in world in terms of number of units produced. It will create 12 Crore Mobile Handsets annually. Samsung provides 70,000 direct and indirect jobs in India.

❖ 4th India-Korea Science & Technology Ministers Steering Committee Meeting held in Delhi. To increase bilateral trade to $50 billion by 2030, India and South Korea signed 11 MoUs, including agreement to discuss upgrade of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). **Signed MoUs -**

- ➢ Joint Statement on Early Harvest Package of the Upgraded Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).
- ➢ Trade Remedies.
- ➢ Establishment of Future Strategy Group
- ➢ Programme of Cooperation 2018-21
- ➢ MoU between Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), and South Korean National Research Council for Science & Technology.
- ➢ MoU on cooperation between Research Design and Standards Organization (RDSO) and Korea Railroad Research Institute (KRRI).
- ➢ Cooperation in Biotechnology & Bioeconomy.
- ➢ ICT and Telecommunications.
- ➢ Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
- ➢ Princess Suriratna (Queen Hur Hwang-ok) Memorial Project - A legendary Princess of Ayodhya, who went to Korea in AD 48 and married King Kim-Suro.
- ➢ MOU Between Government of Gujarat and Korea Trade Promotion Agency (KOTRA).

❖ Agreed to jointly establish 2 additional India-Korea Joint Network Centres in areas among 'Cyber Physical System- Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things focused on agriculture, energy, water and transportation and 'Semiconductor Electronics'.

❖ A financing arrangement of 10 billion USD has been set by South Korea for infrastructure development in India.

❖ India-Korea Technology Exchange Centre was Inaugurated, at National Small Industries Corporation premises in New Delhi.

Visits to India (July 11 - 20, 2018)

- ✓ Ibok-Ete Ekwe Ibas, Navy Chief of Nigeria Visited India.

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Visits to India (July 21 - 31, 2018) -

- ✓ Sam Gyimah, Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation of UK Visited India for 6th India-UK Science & Innovation Council (SIC) meeting held in New Delhi.

ARUL IAS ACADEMY

SCIENCE

- A Massive underground lake has been detected for first time on Mars, discovered by European Space Agency's Mars Express orbiter (launched in 2003). It is about 20 kilometres wide, located under a layer of Martian ice and is largest body of liquid water ever found on Red Planet.
  - ✓ It lies almost 1.5 km beneath the icy surface and water is not drinkable. Tool that detected this is called Mars Advanced Radar for Subsurface and Ionosphere Sounding (MARSIS).
- A group of Russian and Princeton University (USA) scientists revived a pair of frozen roundworms that were 32,000 and 41,700 years old and were found buried in Siberia. Around 300 prehistoric worms were defrosted and brought to 20°C. After weeks of cultivation, two nematodes reportedly showed signs of life by starting to move and eat.
- A rare blood group named "pp" or "P null" phenotype has been identified by doctors from Kasturba Medical College (KMC) in Mangaluru, Karnataka. ABO and Rh D are the most common blood group systems. Doctors confirmed that a needy patient's cells contained rare "pp" phenotype, making it first time that P blood group null phenotype is detected in India.
- Australian scientists at Edith Cowan University (ECU) have developed world's first blood test capable of detecting melanoma in its early stages, the most dangerous form of skin cancer.
- China will launch a 300-satellite array known as Hongyan constellation, with 1st launch scheduled in end of 2018. The constellation will provide worldwide communication services, allowing a mobile phone to be connected anywhere on planet, including remote deserts or middle of an ocean.
  - ✓ Low-orbit satellites have stronger signals and a shorter signal delay than synchronous orbit satellites, which are 36,000 kilometers above equator.
- Delhi government approved delinking Aadhaar number and Aadhaar-linked bank accounts for availing old age, disability and widow pensions. It will pay at old rates all pensions halted due to lack of Aadhaar
- German Researchers created world's first rhino embryos in a test tube to save near-extinct northern white rhinos, which has only two females alive globally. For this, team fertilised southern white rhinos' eggs with dead northern white rhinos' sperm.
- ISRO conducted its first PAT (pad abort test), through Crew Escape System that provides an escape mechanism for astronauts if the launch operation is aborted. Once deployed, India will become 4th nation (after USA, Russia and China), to have human space flight programmes.

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- ✓ Only Indian to ever travel to space was fighter pilot Rakesh Sharma who flew aboard Soyuz T-11, a spacecraft of the former USSR in 1984. India currently does not have a human space flight programme.

- ISRO successfully conducted ground test of its high thrust version of Vikas Engine at ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) in Mahendragiri (Tamil Nadu).
  - ✓ Vikas belongs to family of liquid fuelled rocket engines conceptualized and designed by ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre in 1970s. It is workhorse liquid rocket engine powering second stage of PSLV, second stage and four strap on stages of GSLV and is part of first stage twin engine core liquid stage (L110) of GSLV Mk-III.
  - ✓ Tested high thrust version of Vikas engine will improve payload capability of PSLV, GSLV and GSLV Mk-III launch vehicles.
- ISRO will launch Centauri I satellite later this year, which is a 10-kg nano-satellite made by Indian IOT startup Fleet Space Technologies.
- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Madras commissioned world's first remotely operable Local Electrode Atom Probe (LEAP) microscope, which is operatable through special terminal by researchers divided geographically. LEAP can provide a precise atom-by-atom view of materials, providing atomic-scale insights into metallic.
- India's first biofortified sorghum (jowar) named Parbhani Shakti containing higher iron and zinc than regular sorghum was formally launched, named Parbhani Shakti (ICSR 14001), developed by International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics (ICRISAT). It was released for cultivation by Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth (VNMKV), Maharashtra.
- Mars made its closest approach to the Earth on July 31, 2018. At a distance of 57.6 million km, it was closest since 2003. In 2003, Mars was closest in nearly 60,000 years, at 55.7 million km, which won't be repeated until 2287.
- Ministry of Earth Sciences announced that Century's (2001 AD to 2100 AD) longest total lunar eclipse of 1 hour 43 minutes will occur on July 27-28, 2018, to be visible from all parts of India.
  - ✓ Moon will be gradually covered by Earth's shadow and totality phase will begin on July 28 and total eclipse will last up to 2h 43m.
  - ✓ Longest Total Lunar Eclipse - Moon will be passing through central part of Earth's umbral shadow. During this, Moon is located at apogee (farthest from Earth) and will be moving at slower speed in its orbit. It will take longer time for Moon and greater distance of Earth's umbral shadow to travel, making it longest duration of total eclipse of century.
  - ✓ Such long duration of total lunar eclipses earlier had occurred on July 16, 2000 for totality duration of 1 hour 46 minutes.

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- Mumbai-based automaker Vazirani Automotive unveiled India's first turbine-electric hypercar called 'Vazirani Shul' at 2018 Goodwood Festival of Speed. The car is essentially an all-wheel-drive with four individual motors for each wheel, hence enabling torque vectoring.
- NASA discovered 12 new moons around Jupiter, where one of them is on a collision course which could create a crash large enough to be visible from Earth. This brings total number of Jovian moons to 79, most for any planet.
- NASA's Parker Solar Probe, mission to get closest to Sun than ever by any human-made object has got its revolutionary heat shield "Thermal Protection System or TPS" permanently attached to spacecraft.
  - ✓ Parker Solar Probe will be launched in August 2018, after been in making for 60 years. Spacecraft's orbit will carry it to within 4 million miles of Sun's surface with the help of its heat shield, and will collect data about the inner workings of the corona.
  - ✓ Heat shield's diameter is 8 feet and weighs 72.5 KG.
  - ✓ As Probe approaches Sun, temperatures on heat shield will reach around 1,371 degrees Celsius. But, spacecraft and its instruments will be maintained at a relatively comfortable temperature of nearly 29.4 degrees Celsius.
  - ✓ Sun-facing side of heat shield is sprayed with a specially formulated white coating to reflect most of Sun's energy away.
  - ✓ Parker Solar Probe will travel at a speed of 69,2018 km per hour at its closest approach to Sun.
- NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) become operational, after its launch in April 2018. It will look for potential exoplanets in a strip of sky running from the far south to near equator.
  - ✓ TESS mission is led by Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Kavli Institute for Astrophysics and Space Research.
  - ✓ It is designed to find potential planets orbiting stars close to Earth. It will identify such planets by spotting decreased brightness of stars after planet passes in front of it.
  - ✓ It is successor to Kepler, space observatory which is responsible for detecting most of the currently known exoplanets.
  - ✓ TESS will be able to observe about 85% of sky over its expected two-year mission.
  - ✓ Data collected by TESS will help to study mass, size, density and orbit of large cohort of small planets, including sample of rocky worlds in habitable zones (goldilocks zone) of their host stars.
- National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) added 4 species (Northern River Terrapin, Clouded Leopard, Arabian Sea Humpback Whale and Red Panda) into Centre's Recovery Programme for Critically Endangered Species.

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- ✓ Norther River Terrapin - Species of riverine turtle found in rivers that flow in Eastern India.
- ✓ Clouded Leopard - Found in Himalayan foothills. It is threatened due to habitat loss, poaching for its skin and is also as a live pet trade.
- ✓ Arabian Sea Humpback Whale - Migrates from Oman coast through Arabian sea, along Indian coasts till Sri Lankan coast.
- ✓ Red Panda - Closely associated with montane forests with dense bamboo-thicket. It is found in Sikkim, West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh.

➢ Researchers discovered seven new wasp species belonging to the genus Clistopyga from Peru, Venezuela and Colombia. Most notable among is Clistopyga crassicaudata, named after its distinctly thickened ovipositor, a tube-like organ present in many insects that helps in laying eggs and also in injecting venom.

➢ Researchers from National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) developed a hybrid chayote fruit from two wild Mexican species, which can battle cancer. Raw extract of this fruit is as effective as Cytarabine, a medication used to treat some types of cancer.

- ✓ Also, Mycological Laboratory of Goa university announced discovery of a new pigment from local wild mushrooms that may help fight cancer. The pigment has been declared as world's first sulphur-rich edible melanin.

➢ Scientists approved three new ages on geologic time scale of Holocene Epoch - Meghalayan Age, Middle Holocene Northgrippian Age and Early Holocene Greenlandian Age.

- ✓ These new ages of Holocene Epoch are represented by wealth of sediments that accumulated worldwide on sea floor, on lake bottoms, as glacial ice, and as calcite layers in stalactites and stalagmites.
- ✓ Meghalayan Age -

❖ Named after cave in Indian state of Meghalaya. It helped to define climatic events 4,200 years ago, marking beginning of phase that continues till today. Meghalayan Age was part of longer period known as Epoch, which reflects everything that has happened over past 11,700 years.

❖ It began with mega global drought that devastated ancient agricultural civilisations from Egypt to China. Droughts over 200-year period resulted in human migrations in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Greece, Indus valley and Yangtze river valley.

- ✓ Middle Holocene Northgrippian Age and Early Holocene Greenlandian Age -

❖ These 2 ages are defined with beginnings at climatic events that happened about 8,300 years and 11,700 years ago, respectively.

❖ Lower boundary of Greenlandian and Northgripppian stages are defined at specific levels in Greenland ice cores.

ARUL IAS ACADEMY

- Scientists from Australian National University (ANU) discovered world's oldest colours. 1.1 billion-year-old bright pink pigments, extracted from rocks deep beneath the Sahara desert in Africa, have finally been traced.
- Scientists from Julich Research Centre (Germany) have developed a computer named "SpiNNaker" that mimics human brain's neural networks, and would overcome speed and power consumption problems of conventional supercomputers. It would help to advance our knowledge of neural processing in brain, to include learning and disorders like epilepsy and Alzheimer's disease.
- Scientists from New Zealand performed world's first-ever 3-D, colour X-ray on human, with potential to improve medical diagnostics. The new device is based on the traditional black-and-white X-ray but incorporates particle-tracking technology called Medipix developed by European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN).
- Scientists have developed world's fastest rotor, which will help in studying quantum mechanics. It can spin at more than 60 billion revolutions per minute, making it world's fastest man-made object. Spinning dumbbell functions as rotor, and vibrating dumbbell functions like instrument for measuring tiny forces and torques, known as a torsion balance.
- Scientists identified new shape called scutoid while studying epithelial cells.
  - ✓ Scutoid shape has five sides on one end and six on the other and a triangular surface on one of its longer edges. and It is completely new to geometry and resembles beetle's scutellum (shield-like structure) from top-down view.
  - ✓ It will help to explain how cells arrange themselves in tightly packed three-dimensional (3D) structures that serve as protective barriers in body. It will contribute to tissue engineering specifically development of artificial organs.
- Search engine Google at its Cloud Next 2018 conference held in San Francisco unveiled two new Artificial Intelligence (AI) chips aimed at helping customers develop and deploy intelligent connected devices at scale. They are Edge TPU and Cloud IoT Edge.
  - ✓ Edge TPU - A purpose-built application-specific integrated circuit (ASIC) designed to run AI at the edge. It will bring brain to devices at extremely low cost and high power efficiency without compromising performance.
  - ✓ Cloud IoT Edge - A software stack that extends Google Cloud's powerful AI capability to gateways and connected devices.
  - ✓ During the same conference, Google partnered with Accenture to help enterprises build Cloud solutions customised to their specific industries and needs through Accenture Google Cloud Business Group (ABG). It aims to help companies to build next generation business processes with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) based approaches to develop new value across enterprise.

ARUL IAS ACADEMY

- Tamil Nadu State Animal Nilgiri tahr (a wild goat species) is Reporedtly endangered as climate change may cause it to loose 60% of its habitat by 2030s, with just 2500 left in wild. It is endemic to Western Ghats from Nilgiris to Kanyakumari.
- U.R. Rao Satellite Centre (URSC), ISRO's nodal satellites division has signed separate contracts with three vendors to outsource Spacecraft Assembly Integration and Testing (AIT) activities. Vendors are Alpha Design Technologies, Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) and Tata Advanced Systems.
  - ✓ It aims to promote participation of Indian industry from spacecraft subsystems to spacecraft assembly, integration and testing. Under this, 27 spacecrafts will be made by July 2021.

ARUL IAS ACADEMY

SPORTS

12th Malaysia Open Badminton title -

- ✓ Men's Singles - Lee Chong Wei (Malaysia)
- ✓ Women's Singles - Tai Tzu-ying (Chinese Taipei)
- ✓ Men's Doubles - Japan's Takeshi Kamura AND Keigo Sonoda
- ✓ Women's Doubles - Japan's Misaki Matsutomo AND Ayaka Takahashi
- ✓ Mixed Doubles - China's Zheng Siwei AND Huang Yaqiong

2018 Athletics World Cup held in London (United Kingdom) -

- ✓ This was the first edition of this competition.
- ✓ 416 athletes from 8 nations Participated in 34 Events. India did not participate in the event.

Medal Table -

- ❖ United States (USA) - 28 Medals (11 G)
- ❖ Jamaica - 16 Medals (6 G)
- ❖ Poland - 13 Medals (6 G)
- ❖ Great Britain - 13 Medals (3 G)
- ❖ South Africa - 9 Medals (3 G)

2018 FIFA Football World Cup (21st) -

- ✓ **Winners -**

❖ France Won the Title, Defeating First time finalists Croatia. It was 2nd World cup Title for France.

❖ Final was played in Luzhniki Stadium (Moscow), with Antoine Griezmann (France) named Man of the Match.

❖ Belgium defeat England to finish 3rd. England named 4th.

- ✓ **Notable Facts -**

❖ **Awards -**

- ➢ Golden Ball (Best Player in Tournament) - Luka Modric (Croatia).
- ➢ Goldebn Boot (Top Goal Scorer) - Harry Kane (England)
- ➢ Golden Glove (Best Goalkeeper) - Thibaut Courtois (Belgium)
- ➢ Best young player - Kylian Mbappé (France)
- ➢ Fair play award - Spain

❖ Russia Hosted FIFA World Cup for the First Time.

❖ 32-day tournament featured 32 teams and 64 games, played in 12 stadiums across 11 cities in Russia.

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- Portugal captain Cristiano Ronaldo scored FIFA World Cup 2018's first hat-trick, overall 51st in World Cup history. Ronaldo also became first player to score in eight consecutive major internationals tournaments.
- Argentine Goalkeeper Javier Mascherano announced his retirement from international football after FIFA World Cup 2018.
- Japan became the first-ever Asian nation to defeat a South American country in World Cup history, after defeating Colombia.
- Brazil Holds most WC Titles (5), Followed by Germany and Italy (4 Each).
- 2022 FIFA WC will be hosted by Qatar (32 teams) and 2026 FIFA wc will be hosted by USA, Canada and Mexico (48 Teams), called United2026.
- Anthropomorphic Eurasian wolf Zabivaka was official mascot of 2018 FIFA World Cup.
- 2019 FIFA Women's WC will be held in France.

➢ 2018 Junior World Weightlifting Championships held in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) -

- ✓ Iran claimed title with 512 points, followed by host Uzbekistan (436 points) and Turkey (411 points).
- ✓ Indian lifter Jhili Dalabehera won Bronze, lifting 167 kg in 48 kg category. She is 2nd Indian woman after Saikhom Mirabai Chanu in 2013 to win a medal in Junior World Championships.

➢ 2018 World U20 Championships in Athletics (also known as the World Junior Championships), held in Tampere (Finland) -

- ✓ 1462 Athletes from 158 Nations participated in 44 Events.
- ✓ Top 5 - Kenya (1), Jamaica (2), USA (3), Ethiopia (4), Great Britain (5)
- ✓ Assam's Hima Das became first Indian woman to win gold at IAAF World Under-20 Athletics Championships, after she won Women's 400 Metre Event, clocking 51.46 Seconds.

26th Excellence in Sports Performance Yearly Award (ESPY) 2018, Los Angeles (USA) -

- ✓ Best Male Athlete - Alexander Ovechkin, Washington Capitals
- ✓ Best Female Athlete - Chloe Kim, Snowboard
- ✓ Best International Men's Soccer Player - Cristiano Ronaldo (Portugal)
- ✓ Best Male Tennis Player - Roger Federer
- ✓ Best Female Tennis Player - Sloane Stephens

➢ Assam CM Sarbananda Sonowal named Indian Athlete Hima Das as first sports ambassador of Assam. Hima recently became first Indian to win gold at IAAF World Under-20 Athletics Championships, after winning Women's 400 Metre Event, clocking 51.46 Seconds.

➢ Australia defeated India to win 37th (their 15th title) and last Men's Hockey Champions Trophy tournament, in Breda (Netherlands). It will be replaced by Hockey Pro League (HPL) in 2019.

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- Australian Cricketer Aaron Finch scored highest ever individual score in T20 Internationls, scoring 172 runs in 76 balls against Zimbabwe.
- Ferrari's German racer Sebastian Vettel won Formula 1 British Grand Prix 2018 -
  - ✓ **2018 Formula 1 (F1) Calendar-**

❖

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- India won Kabaddi Masters Dubai tournament in Dubai (UAE), Beating Iran in Final.
- India's gymnast Dipa Karmakar won gold medal in vault event of FIG Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup at Mersin (Turkey). BJP proposed Dipa Karmakar as brand ambassador of state.
- Indian Cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni reached milestone of playing 500 international matches, playing 497 international matches for India and 3 matches for Asia. He is ninth player to achievbe this, apart from two more Indians - Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid. Also, Rohit Sharma became first Indian to hit 3 centuries in T20I cricket, after he recently hit one against England.
- Indian badminton player Lakshya Sen won gold medal in Badminton Asia Junior Championship in Jakarta (Indonesia), defeating Indonesia's Kunlavut Vitidsarn. He is 2nd Indian to get this title since Gautam Thakkar's gold back in 1965.
- Indian badminton player Sourabh Verma won Russian Open Badminton trophy at Vladivostok, defeating Japan's Koki Watanabe. In Mixed Doubles, Rohan Kapoor and Kuhoo Garg, lost against Russian-Korean team of Vladimir Ivanov and Min Kyung Kim.
- Indian squash player Dipika Pallikal has been appointed as Asia's representative in Athletes Advisory Commission of Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF).
- International Cricket Council (ICC) inducted former Rahul Dravid (India), Ricky Ponting (Australia) and English Female circketer Claire Taylor into ICC Cricket Hall of Fame. Dravid became 5th Indian to be named in Hall of Fame, after Bishan Singh Bedi, Kapil Dev, Sunil Gavaskar and Anil Kumble.
- International Olympic Committee (IOC) added 7 medal events to 2022 Beijing Winter Games, with addition of women's monobob, Big Air freestyle skiing for men and women, plus mixed team events in short track speed skating, ski jumping, ski aerials and snowboard cross.

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- July 07 - International Day of Cooperatives (IDC). 2018 theme is Sustainable societies through cooperation. It is also known as World Chocolate Day.

Lagos International Badminton 2018 -

- ✓ Men's Singles - Misha Zilberman (Israel)
- ✓ Women's Singles - Ksenia Polikarpova (Israel)
- ✓ Men's doubles - India's Mannu Attri and Sumeeth Reddy
- ✓ Women's doubles - India's Kuhoo Garg and Ria Mukherjee
- ✓ Mixed doubles - India's Manu Attri and Manisha

- MS Dhoni became fastest wicketkeeper-batsman and third fastest Indian to score 10,000 runs in ODI cricket, achieving it in 273 innings.
- Mercedes's Racer Lewis Hamilton (England) won F1 German Grand Prix -
  - ✓ **2018 Formula 1 (F1) Calendar-**

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Misc. Sporting Events (July 2018) -

- ✓ India's Bajrang Punia won Gold in 65kg Category in United World Wrestling's Tbilisi Grand Prix (Georgia Capital), defeating Iranian wrestler Mehran Nasiri. Also, India's Deepak Punia won bronze medal in 86kg category, defeating Turkey's Osman Gocen.
- ✓ NADA gave 4 year suspension to shot putter Inderjeet Singh for testing positive for anabolic steroids in a dope test before 2016 Rio Olympics.
- ✓ India won 3 silver and 1 bronze to finish joint third with Iran in Asia Cup World Ranking Tournament Stage 3 in Taipei. Korea topped tally with 8 gold, 3 silver and 3 bronze, followed by hosts Taipei.
- ✓ Noted Portugese Footballer Cristiano Ronaldo left Spanish club Real Madrid after 9 years, joining Italian club Juventus in a reported £105-million (INR 956 crores) four-year deal.
- ✓ India's INS Tarangini arrived Sunderland (UK), during its #Lokayan-18 voyage. It also participated in prestigious 'tall ship races – 2018'.
- ✓ Indian shooter Elavenil Valarivan won women's air rifle gold medal in 28th Meeting of Shooting Hopes junior international championship in Plzen (Czech Republic).
- ✓ Indian Badminton Player Ajay Jayaram finished runners-up at White Nights International Challenge in Gatchina (Russia).
- ✓ Golfer Rishi Narain won Indian Golf Union's 48th annual All India Seniors Golf Championship.
- ✓ India's javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra won gold medal in Sottevile Athletics meet (France), covering distance of 85.17 meters. He also won gold medal in Savo Games in Lapinlahti (Finland).
- ✓ Alisson Becker of Brazil became World's most expensive goalkeeper, while transferring clubs from Italy's Roma to England's Liverpool for a record £56 million. Noted Portuguese player Cristiano Ronaldo also changed from Real Madrid (Spain) to Juventus (Italy).
- ✓ Indian Golfer Shubhankar Sharma became youngest Indian golfer to make cut in any major after he capped a wonderful back nine at 147th Open Championships at Carnoustie (Scotland).
- ✓ India won 8 medals in Junior Asian Wrestling Championship concluded in New Delhi., comprisingf of 2 gold (Sachin Rathi, Deepak Punia), 3 silver and 3 bronze.
- ✓ Indian sprinter Muhammed Anas Yahiya broke his own national record to win 400 metres race at Cena Noveho Mesta nad Metuji meet in Czech Republic, with time of 45.24 seconds.
- ✓ Fakhar Zaman became first Pakistani cricketer to score a double century in ODIs, after hitting one against Zimbabwe. He also became quickest player in history to reach 1,000 runs in ODIs, taking 18 innings.

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- ✓ Indian Wrestler Vinesh Phogat won gold at Spanish Grand Prix in Madrid, defeating Canada's Natasha Fox.
- ✓ India won 17 medals to finish at top in 36th Golden Glove of Vojvodina youth boxing tournament in Subotica (Serbia), including 7 Gold, 6 Silver and 4 bronze. Russia was 2nd with 11 medals.
- ✓ Indian team won 4 silver and 5 bronze medals at 7th World Junior Wushu Championships in Brasilia (Brazil).
- ✓ Vancouver Knights won Inaugural 2018 Global T20 Canada Cricket Tournament. Six teams took part in it.
- ✓ Ukraine's Oleksandr Usyk became first man to hold all four world cruiserweight titles, after he beat Russia's Murat Gassiev.
- ✓ BCCI Include 9 More teams in Ranji Trophy Cricket competition for 2018-19 season, now with 37 teams.
- ✓ 28th Meeting of Shooting Hopes junior International Championship held in Pilsen (Czech Republic).

❖ **India won 27 medals (11 Gold, 9 Silver, 7 Bronze)**

❖ **Manu Bhaker won her 9th International Gold medal in 1 year.**

- ✓ Asian Cup for Cadets & Junior Judo Championships 2018 held in Macau. Indian Cadet and Junior Judo Teams have won 15 medals (4 Gold, 2 Silver and 9 Bronze medals).
- ✓ India Cricketer Virat Kohli presented with International Player of the Year award 2017-2018 by England's Popular Cricket Fan Club Barmy Army.
- ✓ Indian women's compound archery team became world rank one side in category, ahead of Chinese Taipei team.
- ✓ Yasar Dogu International Wrestling in Istanbul (Turkey) -

❖ **India won 10 medals, with Bajrang Punia and Pinki winning Gold. Women won 7 medals.**

- ✓ 15th National Youth Athletics Championships held in Vadodara (Gujarat).
- ✓ Kathleen Baker (US) has set a world record of 58 sec to win 100m backstroke at US swimming championships. She has got past 58.10 record set by Canadian Kylie Masse at World Championships in Budapest in July 2017.
- ✓ India won 15 medals (including 2 gold) at Jordan Junior and Cadet Open. Gold was won by Suhana Saini and Deepit Patil & Dev Shroff (Doubles).
- ✓ International Army Games 2018 held at Patriot Park in Moscow (Russia).
- ✓ American Golfer Dustin Johnson won 2018 RBC Canadian Open Golf Championship.
- ✓ Noted Former Indian Cricketer Kapil Dev is selected in national golf team to take part in 2018 Asia-Pacific Senior Amateur Championships to be held in October in Japan.

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- ✓ All five Indian participants won gold medals at 49th International Physics Olympiad held in Portugal.
- ✓ International Cricket Council organised the 'Sano Cricket Curry Festival' in Japanese city of Sano to promote cricket in Japan.

➢ Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) is appointed as official partner for Hockey Men's World Cup 2018 to be held in November - December at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. India will host Hockey WC for 3rd time.

➢ Red Bull's Belgian-Dutch driver Max Verstappen won Formula 1 Austrian Grand Prix 2018 -

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- Sports Authority of India cleared 734 players for a scholarship programme under Khelo India Talent Identification Development scheme, with 1.2 lakh stipend for selected trainees. Talent spotting and age verification of the selected players has been driven by trusted method through TW3.
- Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore stated that name of Sports Authority of India will be changed to Sports India.
- Sports and Youth Affairs Ministry included entire Men's Hockey team of India under Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), being first instance of an entire team made as beneficiary of scheme. 18 team members will be provided with monthly allowance of Rs. 50,000 each under Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).

Thailand Open Badminton 2018 -

- ✓ Men's Singles - Kanta Tsuneyama (Japan)
- ✓ Women's Singles - Nozomi Okuhara (Japan), defeated PV Sindhu (India)
- ✓ Men's Doubles - Japan's Takeshi Kamura AND Keigo Sonoda
- ✓ Women's Doubles - Indonesia's Greysia Polii AND Apriyani Rahayu
- ✓ Mixed Doubles - Indonesia's Hafiz Faisal AND Gloria Emanuelle Widjaja

- Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee officially launched its Olympic mascots Miraitowa and Someity.
  - ✓ Blue-checked Miraitowa is derived from a combination of Japanese words for future and eternity and seeks.

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- ✓ Pink-checked Paralympic mascot Someity owes its name to a type of cherry tree blossom and exhibits enormous mental and physical strength.

➢ US defeated Belgium in 4th Quidditch World Cup 2018 final to win their 3rd title, Hosted by Italy. Quidditch is a game mentioned in JK Rowling's Harry Potter books.

Wimbeldon 2018 Tennis Championships, London (UK) -

- ✓ Men's Singles - Novak Djokovic (Serbia), defeating Kevin Anderson (South Africa). Djokovic won his 4th Wimbeldon title and overall his 13th Grand Slam Title.
- ✓ Women's Singles - Angelique Kerber (Germany), defeating Serena Williams (USA). It was Angelique Kerber's 1st Wimbeldon and overall her 3rd Grand Slam win.
- ✓ Men's Doubles - USA's Mike Bryan AND Jack Sock
- ✓ Women's Doubles - Czech Republic's Barbora Krejčíková AND Kateřina Siniaková
- ✓ Mixed Doubles - Alexander Peya (Austria) AND Nicole Melichar (USA)
- ✓ Boys' Singles - Tseng Chun-hsin (Chinese Taipei)
- ✓ Girls' Singles - Iga Świątek (Poland)

World Junior Squash Championships 2018 (Chennai, India) -

- ✓ Egypt beat England to win World Junior squash team title.
- ✓ Czech Republic and USA finished third and secured the bronze medal. Host India finished 11th overall.

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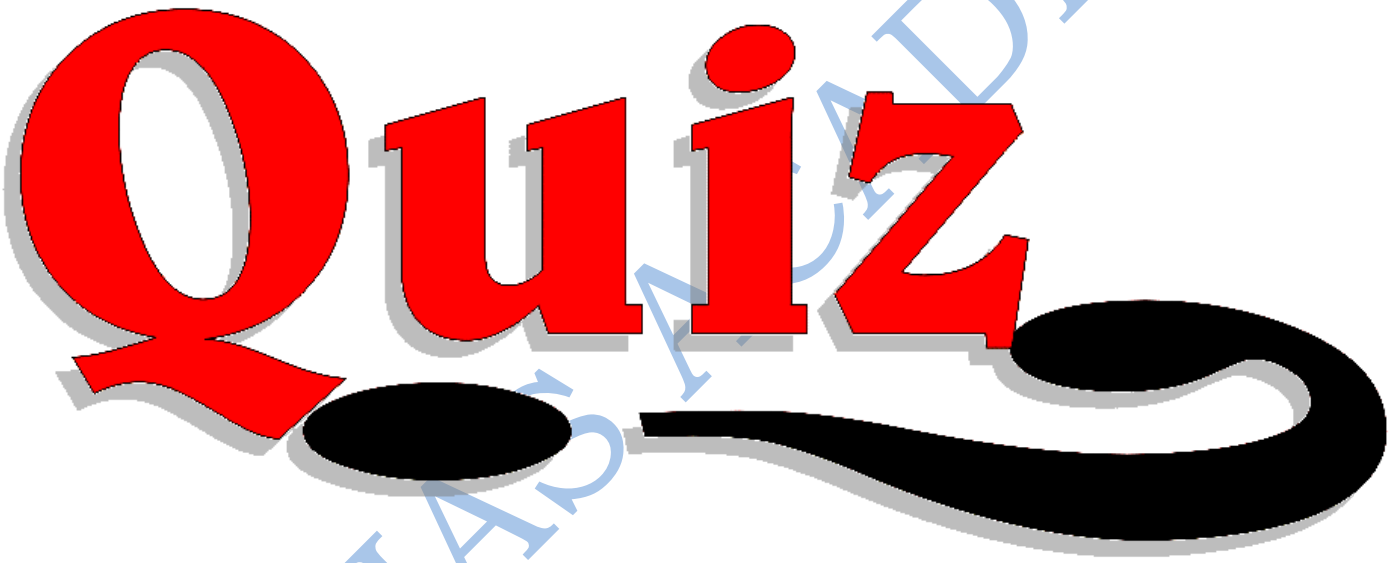

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