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JULY - 2018

We Are Here..!! To Guide You..!!

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We Shine Study Circle

**Don't stop
when you are tired, **STOP**
when you are **DONE****

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NATIONAL NEWS

July - 1

- The **Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)** has prepared a **team of lady commandos** to deal with the rising number of **women participants involved in the incident of stone pelting across Jammu & Kashmir** region to target security forces.
- Mumbai's **Victorian and Art Deco Ensembles** has been inscribed as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** during 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO at Manama in Bahrain.
 - Collectively it will be known as the **Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai.**
 - This makes Mumbai city the second city in India after Ahmedabad to be inscribed on the World Heritage List.
- The Government of India will celebrate **July 1, 2018, as 'GST Day'** to mark **the first anniversary of the new indirect tax regime.**
 - Goods and Services Tax (GST) was rolled out in the intervening night of June 30 and July 1 in 2017.
- The **NITI Aayog** recently launched the **first Delta ranking (incremental progress)** for the Aspirational Districts, based on self-reported data of districts between **March 31, 2018 to May 31, 2018.**
 - **Dahod district in Gujarat has been ranked first** among 108 'aspirational districts' by the NITI Aayog on the basis of incremental development over two months. West Sikkim district stood second.
 - Telangana Chief Minister **K Chandrasekhar Rao** had laid **foundation stone for Gattu irrigation project in Jogulamba Gadwal district.**
 - The project will provide water to 33,000 acres in four mandals in the district.

- Based upon a report by British aviation intelligence firm OAG, **Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport has been ranked as the fifth least punctual airport in the world** with a rank of 509 out of the 513 airports globally.

July 2

- The **Bhitarkanika National Park (Odisha)** has become the **largest habitat** of the endangered estuarine crocodiles in the country with a record number of their nesting sites spotted in it. Altogether **101 nesting sites** of estuarine **crocodiles** were found this time by enumerators.
- The **Odisha government** signed an **MoU** with the Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (**RIMES**) for enhancing early warning system for effective management of all kinds of disaster in the state, including flood, drought, heat wave, lightning, and road accidents.
- **Jharkhand** Chief Minister **Raghubar Das** announced that the **first 'Khadi Mall'** of the country will be **opened** in Jharkhand. The land in the Heavy Engineering Corporation (**HEC**) campus will be made available to the **Khadi Board** to develop **the country's first Khadi mall.**

July 3

- The Election Commission of India (**ECI**) has organized a two-day “**National Consultation on Accessible Elections,**” from the **3rd July, 2018** in **New Delhi.**
 - It will be inaugurated by the Chief Election Commissioner Shri **O.P. Rawat**, in presence of the Election Commissioners Shri **Sunil Arora** and Shri **Ashok Lavasa.**
- **Madhya Pradesh, the Ayushman Bharat Yojana** under the **Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Swasthya Suraksha Mission** will be implemented in the state from **August 15 this year.**
- The Ministry of **Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare** has notified the “**National Policy on Marine Fisheries, 2017**”, which will guide the development of marine fisheries sector for the **next10 years.**
- Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (**DEPwD**), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is organizing a “**National Workshop on Skill Development for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)**” on **July 3.**

- The International Union of Food Science and Technology (**IUFoST**), the **global voice of food science and technology** in association with Indian National Science Academy (**INSA**) as adhering body, announced the **19th edition** of its prestigious global event to be held in **Navi Mumbai, India in October 2018**.

July 4

- The Delhi government launched '**Happiness Curriculum**' for **school students up to class 8**. The Dalai Lama, Delhi Chief Minister **Arvind Kejriwal** and Deputy Chief Minister and education department in-charge **Manish Sisodia** were present at the occasion.
- Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (**NRL**) in Assam has become the **first oil public sector undertaking (PSU)** to adopt an **online legal compliance system** by introducing '**Legatrix**'.
- **Major General VD Dogra** became the **first serving Indian Army officer** and the only **General across the world** to have completed a gruelling '**Ironman**' competition held in **Austria**. The Ironman is an international triathlon consisting of **three consecutive events- 3.8 km of swimming, 180 km cycling and 42.2 km of running** (a full marathon).
- The Union Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (**DoNER**) **Dr Jitendra Singh** attended the famous **4-day Meghalaya Annual Cultural Festival, "Behdienkhlam"**, held every year at the small peripheral town of **Jowai, Meghalaya**.
- **India First Life Insurance Company Limited**, a joint venture between **Bank of Baroda, Andhra Bank and Legal and General (UK)**, has announced its tie-up with **Oxigen Services India Pvt. Ltd.**, to establish the distribution of its insurance products at Oxigen retail outlets.
- Indigenously built stealth frigate, **INS Sahyadri**, which is participating in **RIMPAC** (Rim of the Pacific Exercise), the **world's largest international maritime exercise**, has been adjudged runner-up in an innovation competition during the harbor phase of the exercise.

July 5

- The **Election Commission of India** has launched a mobile app **eVIGIL**, which citizens can use to confidentially report violation of election code of conduct. The **ECI hopes the app** will ensure a free and fair conduct of **2019 Lok Sabha polls**.
- The Government think tank **Niti Aayog** will hold on **September 7-8** here the **India's first 'Global Mobility Summit'**. It will be inaugurated by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**.
 - The summit will help drive government's **goal for vehicle electrification, renewable energy integration and job growth and also speed up India's** transition to a clean energy economy.
 - '**MOVE: Global Mobility Summit**' will be organised in collaboration with various ministries and industry partners.
- A motorcycle expedition comprising of '**SHWET ASHW**' the elite **Motorcycle Display Team of the Corps of Military Police**, was **flagged off** on **02 July 2018** to commemorate the victory of **Indian Army in Operation Vijay 1999**.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri **Narendra Modi** has given its approval for continuance of the 8 existing schemes of the **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**".
- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri **Narendra Modi**, today gave its **approval to rename the Agartala Airport in Tripura** as '**Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore Airport, Agartala**'.
- Union Minister of Coal, Railways, Finance & Corporate Affairs, Shri **Piyush Goyal** launched the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (**CMSMS**) and Mobile Application '**Khan Prahari**' developed by CMPDI, Ranchi.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri **Narendra Modi** has approved the creation of one post each of Vice-Chairperson and Member in the **National Commission for Safai Karmacharis**.

NOTE:

- The **National Commission for Safai Karamcharis** was constituted on **12 August 1994** for a period of 3 years under the provision of the **National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993** to promote and safeguard the interests and rights of Safai Karamcharis.

July 6

- **Madhya Pradesh**, the government has launched an **outstanding power bill waiver scheme** and subsidized power scheme ‘**Sambal**’ for labourers and poor families.
 - Under the scheme, the Below Poverty Line (**BPL**) families would be provided electricity at a cost of **200 rupees per month**.
- **Union Minister of State for Culture(I/c), Dr. Mahesh Shrama**, inaugurated exhibition titled "**Arth - art for earth**" at **IGNCA, New Delhi**.
 - ‘**ARTH - ART FOR EARTH**’ by **Manav Gupta** consists of "**Excavations in Hymns of Clay**"-a suite of environmental art installations by **Manav Gupta** weaving all of them with a storyline and poetry.
- The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (**CBIC**) has developed and launched a **mobile app** named ‘**GST Verify**’ to protect interest of consumers.
 - The application is to verify if **the person collecting GST from the consumer is eligible to collect it or not**.
 - It also provides the details of the **person / company** collecting **GST**.
- The **Sunil Mehta** committee which was formed with a view to tackle Non-Performing Assets (**NPA**s) and creating credit capacity submitted its report with recommendations to **Finance Minister Piyush Goyal**.
 - The Sunil Mehta panel presented project ‘**Sashakt**’ and has recommended a **five-pronged strategy to deal with stressed assets**.
- The **first ‘pad abort’** test critical for a future human space mission was conducted successfully.
 - The test was conducted at the **Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota**.
 - The **Crew Escape System** is an emergency escape measure to quickly pull the crew module, the astronaut cabin — along with astronauts out to a safe distance from the launch **vehicle in the event of a launch abort**.

July 7

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (**UNESCO**) will be setting up a '**Design University for Gaming**' in **Visakhapatnam**.
 - UNESCO delegation entered into an agreement with Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (**APEDB**) for the establishment of '**Gaming Digital Learning Hub**'.

- A **Rs 250-crore** Civil Aviation Research Organisation (**CARO**) will come up within **18 months at Begumpet in Hyderabad**.
 - Laying the foundation stone for the **CARO project** to be implemented under the **Airports Authority of India**, Union Civil Aviation **Minister Suresh Prabhu** said the focus of the centre will be **on pursuing inter-disciplinary solutions to improve the civil aviation sector**.

- In a **first**, the **Uttarakhand High Court** accorded the status of '**legal person or entity**' to the **animals** in the state. The **HC** stated that "**they have a distinct persona with corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person.**"
NOTE:
 - In **March 2017**, the **Uttarakhand High Court** had accorded the status of '**living human entities**' to the **Ganga** and **Yamuna**, the **two most sacred rivers of India**.

July 8

- Union Minister of Coal, Railways, Finance & Corporate Affairs, **Piyush Goyal** has launched the **Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS)** and **Mobile Application 'Khan Prahari'**.
 - The CMSMS aims to report, monitor and take suitable action on unauthorised coal mining activities.
 - The Khan Prahari app can be used for **reporting any activity taking place related to illegal coal mining like rat hole mining, pilferage etc.**

- The **Uttar Pradesh** Government has issued an order to ban the use of plastic in the state from **15th July 2018**.

- **Commerce Secretary, Rita Teotia**, chaired the **first meeting of the Task Force on e-commerce in New Delhi**. The meeting deliberated upon the suggestions emerging from the sub-group meetings held in June 2018.

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (**ISRO**) on July 5, 2018 conducted successful flight testing of ‘**Crew Escape System**’.
 - The major technology demonstration is the first in a series of ‘**pad abort**’ tests to qualify the system, which is a critical technology relevant for future human space mission.

July 9

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** and South Korean President **Moon Jae-in** visited **Noida** and inaugurated the **New Mobile Manufacturing Plant** of **Samsung** at **Noida**. Notably, it will be the **world's largest mobile factory**.
- South Korean President **Moon Jae-in** arrived in **New Delhi** evening on a **four-day** visit to **India**. He is being accompanied by **First Lady Kim Jung-sook** on his **maiden visit to the nation**.
- **Under PMAY (U)** so far more than **51 Lakhs dwelling units** have been sanctioned against the validated demand of **1 crore** in last **3 years of implementation**.
 - The **Government of India** is committed to provide “**Housing for All**” by the end of the Mission period-**2022**.

July 10

- According to Tourism Minister **K J Alphons**, the **first India Tourism Mart (ITM) 2018** will be organized at **Vigyan Bhawan New Delhi** from **16 to 18th September 2018**.
 - The **India** Tourism Mart will provide a platform for **stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality industries to interact and transact business opportunities**.
- The Asian Development Bank (**ADB**) has approved ‘**Son canal**’ project in **Shahabad-Bhojpur region of Bihar** which would benefit the agriculture sector immensely in the region.
 - The estimated cost of the project is **503 million dollars** (Rs 3272.49 crore) out of which 352 million dollars is being provided by ADB.
- Note:
 - Son River of central India is the **second largest of the Ganges' southern tributaries after Yamuna River**.
 - The Son originates near **Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh**.
 - Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister **Jairam Thakur** has inaugurated the state-level program **Van Mahotsav at Rajgarh in Sirmaur** district.

- According to the Gujarat Chief Minister **Vijay Rupani**, the State Government has granted religious minority status to Jews in the state.
 - **Gujarat** is the **third state** in India (**earlier, West Bengal and Maharashtra**) to grant religious minority status to Jews.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will inaugurate the **Statue of Unity on October 31**, the birth anniversary of **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**.
 - The memorial will be inaugurated in **Kevadiya near Sardar Sarovar Dam** in the tribal-dominated Narmada district, about **190 kilometres from Ahmedabad, Gujarat**.
- The central government think tank **NITI Aayog** has unveiled the blueprint of 'National Health Stack' (**NHS**), a shared digital healthcare infrastructure. The blueprint is in line with the implementation of the **Centre's flagship scheme Ayushman Bharat** and other public healthcare programmes in the country.
- The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (**MoSPI**) has organised a **two-day International Round Table Conference on 'Data for New India'** in New Delhi. The objective of the Round Table Conference was to identify innovative ideas for improving the statistical system in India, taking cue from the best practices followed in advanced countries like **Canada, UK and Australia**.
- Asian Development Bank (**ADB**) has approved **503-million US Dollar** lining project of the Son canal in **Shahabad-Bhojpur** region of Bihar which would **benefit the agriculture** sector immensely in the region.
- Note:
 - The Asian Development Bank is a regional development Bank established in **1966**.
 - **Headquarters** of ADB is in **Manila, Philippines**.
 - **Takehiko Nakao** is Present President of the Asian Development Bank.

July 11

- After **Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh** Government is all set to ban the use of **plastic and thermocol cutlery** in the state.

- The Global Innovation Index (**GII**) has ranked India as the **57th most innovative nation in the world.**
 - The country has improved its ranking from **60th position last year.**
 - India has been improving steadily since it was ranked **81st in 2015.**
 - **Switzerland** ranked for 8th straight year.
- **Microsoft India** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) with the **Rajasthan** government to **improve the integration of technology in teaching and skilling of students and educators in government colleges.**
- Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (**DIPP**), **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**, released the final rankings of States in **Ease of Doing Business in New Delhi.**
 - The top rankers are **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Haryana. Jharkhand and Gujarat** stood fourth and fifth respectively.
 - **Tamil Nadu has 15th position** for ease of doing business.
- **Union Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers and Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Ananthkumar inaugurated the CIPET:** Centre for Skilling & Technical Support (**CSTS**) at ITI Building and laid the foundation stone of new Central Institute of Plastics Engineering & Technology (**CIPET**) Building at Doiwala, Dehradun.
 - **CIPET: CSTS, Dehradun is the 32nd CIPET** centre in the country.
- **India** has become the **world's sixth-biggest economy**, pushing **France** into **seventh place**, according to updated **World Bank figures for 2017.**
- India's gross domestic product (**GDP**) amounted to **\$2.597 trillion** at the end of **2017**, against **\$2.582 trillion** for **France.**
 - The world's top 3 economies are:
 - **The United States,**
 - **China,**
 - **Japan.**
- The **India-Korea Technology Exchange Centre** was inaugurated by the Minister of State (I/C) **MSME Giriraj Singh** and Minister of **SMEs and Start-ups of Republic of Korea, Hong Jong- hak** in **New Delhi.**

July 12

- The **Ministry of Tourism in partnership** with the Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (**FAITH**) and with the help of State/UT Governments is organizing the India Tourism Mart (**ITM**) **2018** from **16th to 18th September, 2018 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi**.
- The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (**MoSPI**) has organised a two-day **International Round Table Conference** on ‘**Data for New India**’ in **New Delhi**. Such a Conference was organized in India for the **first time**.
 - The objective of the **Round Table Conference** was to identify innovative ideas for improving the statistical system in **India**, taking cue from the **best practices** followed in advanced countries like **Canada, UK and Australia**.
- **Odisha** Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** announced a **ban on the use of plastic in the state from October 2**, on the occasion of **Gandhi Jayanti**.
- The next **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** will be held in the holy city of **Varanasi** in **January 2019**. The **theme of the three-day event**, which is being organised in Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s parliamentary constituency, will be the ‘**Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India**’.
- **The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, will inaugurate the new** Headquarters building of the Archaeological Survey of India (**ASI**), at **Tilak Marg** in **New Delhi** on July 12, 2018.
 - It shall include a **Central Archaeological Library** with a collection of about **1.5 lakh books and journals**.
- Inaugurating the 16th Workshop on Greenhouse Gas Inventories in Asia (**WGIA16**) in **New Delhi**, **Dr. Harsh Vardhan** stressed that while efforts of experts are necessary, there is also a need for an active involvement of people in the fight against climate change.
 - He said that India is committed to **achieve 175 GW** of installed capacity of renewable energy generation by **2022**.
- The Global Innovation Index (**GII**) has ranked India as the **57th** most innovative **nation in the world**. The country has improved its ranking from **60th position in 2017**. **India** has been improving steadily since it was ranked **81st in 2015**.
- The **Top 3 Countries in Global Innovation Index** are:
 - **Switzerland,**

- The Netherlands,
- Sweden.

July 13

- Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (**BSNL**) unveiled the **country's first internet telephony service** that will allow users to dial any telephone number in **India through its mobile app**.
 - Now, **BSNL** customers will be able to make calls using the company's **mobile app "Wings"** to any phone number in the country.
- **Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani** has given in-principle approval for the **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.
- The **164th Central Public Works Department Day** celebrations were held in **Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on July 12**.
- **India's first private sector** unit for manufacturing unmanned air vehicles (**UAV**) and light bullet proof vehicles (**LBPV**) will be set up by **DCMShriramIndustries Group on the campus of Shriram Rayons in Kota, Rajasthan**.
 - It will be the country's **first private sector company** to manufacture **UAVs and LBPVs**.
- **India** has become **the world's sixth largest economy** overtaking France, according to World Bank data on gross domestic product (**GDP**) of countries for 2017.
 - United States has topped the list recording a **GDP of USD 19,390,604 million**, followed by **China** with **USD 12,237,700 million**.

July 14

- **Niti Aayog** has proposed **15-point action plan** for combating **air pollution** in **tenmost** polluted cities in the country, including **Delhi, Kanpur and Varanasi**.

- The draft action plan titled ‘**Breathe India**’ includes encouraging electric vehicles, phasing out **private diesel vehicle and development of crop residue utilisation policy**.
- **INSTarangini** arrived at her seventh port, **Sunderland in the UK**, during her **Lokayan-18 voyage** and also to participate in the prestigious ‘**tall ship races - 2018**’.
 - The ship is part of the **first Training Squadron based at Kochi**, under the **Southern Naval Command of the Indian Navy**.
- **Madhya Pradesh** Chief Minister **Shivraj Singh Chauhan** inaugurated state-run power giant National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) **250 MW Solar Power Plant in Mandsaur**.
- The Ministry of Mines organized the **4th National Conclave on Mines & Minerals at Indore, Madhya Pradesh**. Chief Minister of **Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chauhan** was the chief guest of the conclave.
- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has launched national campaign ‘**The Eat Right Movement**’.
 - It aims to **improve public health and combat lifestyle diseases**. FSSAI also launched Eat Right tool kit and Safe and Nutritious Food at Workplace campaign.
- **NOTE: FSSAI**
 - Headquarters: **New Delhi**
 - Chairman: **Ashish Bahuguna**

July 15

- **India has become the Vice-Chair (Regional Head) of the Asia Pacific Region of World Customs Organisation (WCO) for a period of two years** (from July 2018 to June 2020). The underlying Theme of the Inaugural Ceremony is “**Customs – Fostering Trade Facilitation**”.
- **NOTE**
 - The **WCO** has divided its Membership into six Regions.
 - World Customs Organization Headquarters in Brussels, **Belgium**.
 - **Kunio Mikuriya** (Japan) is the Secretary-General of WCO.

- The government has set up a **high-level task force** under the chairmanship of **Cabinet Secretary P K Sinha** to identify various items and policy interventions to **reduce dependence on import**.
- **The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation** launches the **Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 (SSG 2018)** in the Delhi.
 - The objective of SSG 2018 is to undertake a ranking of states and districts on the basis of their performance attained on key quantitative and qualitative SBM-G parameters.
- The Haryana Education Department has launched **‘I am not afraid of English’ initiative to promote English language right from Class 1 in the state’s primary schools**.
 - The initiative is aimed at capacity building of teachers to enable them to help the students to learn, read, write and speak English.
- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal laid foundation stone for the **state’s first cultural university at Majuli** to be built at an estimated cost of Rs 300 crore.
 - **“The Cultural University would be a great place for learning about the state’s vivid culture,”** he said.
- With the launch of cost-effective innovative water project, Bihar will soon provide the cheapest drinking water in the world. The first of such a water project was launched in **Bihar’s Darbhanga district, by Sulabh International**, an organisation that introduced the concept of ‘Sulabh Sauchalya’ in the country.
 - The **‘Sulabh Jal’ project** converts contaminated pond and river water into safe drinking water.

July 16

- The Prime Minister, Shri **Narendra Modi**, laid the Foundation Stone of the **Poorvanchal Expressway in Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh**.
 - The Prime Minister said that the **340 kilometer** long Poorvanchal Expressway would transform the **towns and cities that it passes through**.

- The President of India, Shri **Ram Nath Kovind**, inaugurated the **platinum jubilee** celebrations of the **Institute of Cost Accountants of India** in **New Delhi** on **July 14, 2018**.
- The Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** dedicated the **Bansagar Canal Project** to the **Nation in Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh**. This project will provide a **big boost to irrigation in the region**, and will be greatly **beneficial for the farmers of Mirzapur and Allahabad districts of Uttar Pradesh**.
- The **first of world's cheapest drinking water project** was launched in **Darbhanga district, Bihar**. This was launched by **Sulabh International**, an **organisation** that introduced the concept of '**Sulabh Sauchalya**' in the country.

July 17

- Haryana Chief Minister **Manohar Lal Khattar** launched the '**Paudhagiri**' campaign, aimed at **increasing the green cover in the state**. Under this campaign, **22 lakh students** from class **6 to 12** of all **government and private schools in Haryana** will plant a sapling each during three months of monsoon — **July, August and September**.
- One of the country's **first Defence incubators** will come up in **Hyderabad**, which is India's missile development centre and fast emerging the hub for aerospace industries.
 - The **Telangana** State government proposes to accommodate the **Defence incubator in the upcoming Phase-2 of the T-Hub**.
- **ISRO** successfully conducted a ground test of its high thrust version of the **Vikas Engine** that would improve the payload capability of the space agency's launch vehicles.
 - The test for a duration of **195 seconds** was conducted by scientists at the ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) in **Mahendragiri in Tirunelveli** district of Tamil Nadu.
- **On 16th July 2018**, the **BrahMos** supersonic cruise missile was successfully test-fired from an Integrated Test Range (**ITR**) in **Chandipur, Odisha**.
 - BrahMos is a joint venture of Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**) of **India** and **NPOM of Russia**.

July 18

- On **16th July 2018**, Union Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan** laid the **foundation stone for National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) at Barang, in Bhubaneswar**, to be established at a cost of Rs 160 crore
 - NSTI will function under the Directorate General of Training (**DGT**). It will have training activities like Trainers Training (**Long term/Short term**), Refresher Training and **Re-skilling/Up skilling courses**.
- The ‘**BIMARU**’ Indian states – **Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh** – have the highest numbers of partially immunized and non-immunized children, according to **UN bodies WHO and Unicef**.
 - According to data shared by the **UN bodies on Monday**, the national average for full immunization is **62 per cent**, for diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine (**DTP3**) coverage is **78.4 per cent** and for measles first dose **81.1 per cent**.
- **IIT Madras** has launched “**world’s first**” remotely operatable **microscope** that would enable a precise atom-by-atom view of a material in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.
 - The Local Electrode Atom Probe (**LEAP**) was developed in a collaborative exercise involving eight top research institutions headed by IIT Madras. It was developed at a cost of **Rs 40 crore**.
- The government has decided to set up a committee under the Chairmanship of Mr **Anil Swarup**, former **Secretary, School Education**, with suitable representations from **NCC, M/o Youth Affairs and Ministry of HRD** to suggest measures to strengthen National Cadet Corps (**NCC**) and National Service Scheme (**NSS**).
- A high level **National Conference of State/UT Ministers-in-charge of Women & Child development** was held in **New Delhi**.
 - The meeting was chaired by the Union Minister of Women and Child development, Smt. **Maneka Sanjay Gandhi**.
 - The **National Level Conference** was held with the objective to discuss issues pertaining to **safety of women and children** as well as **Poshan Abhiyan** with the purpose to direct and seek the support of **State Governments** to further their effective implementation.

July 19

- The **Central government** is planning to set up one National Skill Training Institute (**NSTI**) in every State to meet the rising demand for skilled manpower in the country.

- Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship **Dharmendra Pradhan** laid the foundation stone of country's **first such skill training institute** at **Barang near Bhubaneswar**.
- The government has formed a committee comprising officials of the environment ministry, experts from **NEERI, IITs** and various other forums to look into the issue of industrial pollution around the iconic **Taj Mahal**.
 - The committee will be headed by **C K Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**.
- The city of **Udaipur** has once again in **2018** been ranked among the **World's Best Cities by Travel + Leisure**. Udaipur, the heritage-city built by the **Maharanas of Mewar** in the **16th century**, is on the third place among the **15** of the world's best cities.
 - The top **2 cities** are both in **Mexico: San Miguel de Allende and Oaxaca**.
- Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme, **PMEGP** is estimated to have generated over **11,13,000 employments** during the last three years **i.e. 2015-16 to 2017-18**.
 - This information was given by Minister of state for **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Shri Giriraj Singh** in a written reply in the **Rajya Sabha**.
- The **10th edition of the Delhi Dialogue** begins in **New Delhi**. **External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj** delivered the keynote address of the two-day event. The theme of this event is **'Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Co-operation'**.

July 20

- The **Elphinstone Road station in Mumbai** has been **renamed as Prabhadevi station**. The new name came into effect from the midnight of **July 18**.
 - The station code for newly renamed Prabhadevi station will be **PBHD**.
- For the **first time**, the **Indian Air Force** will **participate** with fighter aircraft in **Exercise Pitch Black 2018 (PB-18)**, which is scheduled from **July 24, 2018 to August 18, 2018 in Australia**.
 - The **IAF** contingent consists of **145 air-warriors** including the **Garud** team along with its four frontline **Su-30 MKI Fighters, One C-130 and one heavy lift C-17 aircraft**.

- National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE) has installed a remote sensing instrument- **LiDAR** for assessment of offshore wind resource at **Gulf of Khambat, off the Gujarat Coast.**
- **Facebook** and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) have entered into **strategic partnership** to **train youth and entrepreneurs** in the **country** on **digital skills.**
- The indigenously upgraded artillery gun **Dhanush** has successfully completed final user trials and is ready for induction into the **Army.** Dhanush is an upgraded version of the **Swedish Bofors** gun procured by **India** in the **mid-1980s.**
 - The **first phase of trials** were conducted at the **Pokhran and Babina ranges.**
- **Indian Railways** will become a “**net zero**” carbon emitter by **2030.** It was announced by Railway minister **Piyush Goyal.**
 - With the current action plans on anvil for **100 per cent electrification,** coupled with renewable strategies, Indian Railways will become a net zero carbon emitter by **2030.** He added that the electrification in **2017-18** has increased **seven times.**
- The Visva-Bharati University (**VBU**), founded by **Rabindranath Tagore**, will set up a **yoga centre** inside the campus, named **yoga gram (village).** The centre is aimed at increasing awareness about yoga. The Visva-Bharati University is located at **Santiniketan, West Bengal.**
 - The campus at **Santiniketan** will have several single-storied buildings, termed as kuthis (cottages) dedicated to different techniques of yoga.

July 21

- **The 8th BRICS Health Ministers’ Meeting was held at Durban, South Africa.** Indian deligation was led by Mr J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare. He stated that India is committed to eliminating TB by 2025.
- **NOTE:**
 - BRICS is made up of China, Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa.
 - In December 2010, China, as the Chair, invited South Africa to join BRIC and attend the Summit in Sanya, China.
 - The 1st BRIC Summit was held in June 2009 in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

- The Tamil Nadu government has informed the Madras High Court that a **24-hour helpline has been set up to investigate issues faced by inter-caste couples** and offer them necessary assistance and protection.

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu launched ‘**e-Pragati portal**’, a digital platform for governance in the state, would help to connect all the state government departments and act as a stand-alone to resolve the issues.

- Myanmar has joined the India-initiated **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, becoming the **68th member of the grouping** that is aiming at optimum utilisation of solar energy.
 - ISA was Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and then French President Francois Hollande at the **Paris climate summit in 2015**.

- **The Student Police Cadet (SPC) Programme** is scheduled to be launched nationally on the 21st July, 2018 by the Union Home Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh.
 - The programme seeks to **build a bridge between the Police and the larger community through school students** by inculcating values and ethics in them through classes in school and outside.

- A 2 day International conference on “**Empowering Women: Fostering Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Sustainability**” was organized by NITI Aayog’s Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) and Shri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC), Office of International Programmes (OIP) University of Delhi.

July 22

- The **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** has organised the ‘**Ganga Vriksharopan Abhiyan**’ in five main Ganga basin states – **Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal**.
 - It was aimed to bring awareness among people and other stakeholders regarding the importance of **afforestation for the task of Ganga Rejuvenation**.
 - The afforestation drive was organised during July 9 to July 15, 2018 as ‘**Shubharambh Saptah**’. The campaign was initiated as part of the Forest Interventions in Ganga (FIG) component of **Namami Gange Programme**.

- The **West Bengal government** has signed an agreement to implement the **Centre’s health insurance scheme under the joint banner “Ayushman Bharat – Swasthya Sathi”**.
- The 28th meeting of the GST Council chaired by interim finance minister Piyush Goyal was held in New Delhi. The Council was deliberated upon a number of key issues on its agenda which includes **rate revision on a number of items, amendments to the GST law, simplification of return, and the setting up of a National Appellate Tribunal in Delhi.**
 - The GST Council **has exempted sanitary napkins from Goods and Services Tax.**
- Minister for Science and Technology **Harsh Vardhan** has unveiled the **first of a kind Air Quality and Weather Forecast System, SAFAR at Chandni Chowk in New Delhi.** The giant true colour LED display will give real-time air quality index on the **24×7 basis with colour** coding along with 72-hour advance forecast.
- NABARD has launched a centre for accelerating concerted action on climate change by various stakeholders including government, private and financial sectors.
 - The Centre for Climate Change has been **set up in Lucknow.**
- The Union Home Minister, **Shri Rajnath Singh** launched **The Student Police Cadet (SPC) Programme** nationally.
 - **Objective-**To instill values and ethics to students through classes in schools and outside.
- On July 21, 2018, Scientists from **International Union of Geological Science (IUGS)** have classified as a new chapter in Earth’s history – the **Meghalayan Age.**
- The **Tamil Nadu** government has set a **24-hour** helpline to assist and protect **inter-caste couples.**
 - A special cell has been formed in all districts and cities in the state, comprising district-level officers to receive complaints of harassment .

July 23

- **Minister for Science and Technology Harsh Vardhan** has unveiled the **first of a kind Air Quality and Weather Forecast System, SAFAR at Chandni Chowk in New Delhi.** The giant true colour **LED display** will give real-time air quality index on **24×7 basis** with colour coding along with **72-hour** advance forecast.

- According to the **Public Affairs Index 2018**, **Kerala** is the best-governed state in the country, released by a **Bengaluru think-tank**, Public Affairs Centre.
 - As per the report, **Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka and Gujarat** are among the top five states delivering good governance.
 - **Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha** ranked the **lowest on the index**, indicating higher social and economic inequalities.
 - Among smaller states – with the population less than two crore – **Himachal Pradesh** topped the list of states with good governance, followed by **Goa, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura**.

- Union Environment Minister **Harsh Vardhan** unveiled a state-of-the-art **Air Quality and Weather Forecast System– ‘SAFAR’** (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting) at **Chandni Chowk** in New Delhi. The Environment Ministry’s mission model project ‘SAFAR’ is being implemented in four cities of **India – Delhi, Pune, Mumbai and Ahmedabad as an operational service**.

- The **28th** meeting of **GST Council** was held in **New Delhi**. It reduced tax rates on more than **50 items** and exempted **sanitary napkins, rakhis, stone, marble, wooden deities and Saal leaves from GST**. Finance Minister **Piyush Goyal** chaired the **28th GST Council meeting in New Delhi**.

- The Environment Ministry re-introduced the ‘**Medini Puraskar Yojna**’– a **scheme that awards Indian authors for their original work in Hindi on environment, pollution and climate change subjects**.
- **Objective:**
 - It aims to encourage **Hindi authors** to write on environmental topics.

- **Odisha** will be the host to the **Odisha Triennial of International Art (OTIA)**, India’s first private sector triennial, in **December-January** which will be a **40 day event**.

- The **first international festival of Mizoram ‘Mizo Hnahthlak’** was organized **Dengthuama Hall in Aizawl, Mizoram**.
 - It saw huge participation from the **Mizo** tribal community living in different places and region.

- Considering the increasing incidents of mob lynching, **the Union Government constituted a High-Level Committee chaired by the Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba** to deliberate in the matter and make recommendations.
 - The government also decided to constitute a Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh to consider the committee's recommendations.

- **A Statement of Intent (SoI)** was signed between **NITI Aayog and Lupin Foundation** to collaborate in Aspirational Districts Programme. The SoI was signed by **Yaduvendra Mathur, Additional Secretary, NITI Aayog** and **Sita Ram Gupta, Executive Director, Lupin Foundation**.
 - As per the terms of the SoI, Lupin Foundation, with the NITI Aayog, **will work in three states - Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan** to facilitate the creation of an ideal template to develop economic strength, technological viability and moral leadership across three districts in these states.

- **The Union Government** has reduced the minimum annual deposit requirement for accounts under **Sukanya Samridhi Yojana from Rs 1000 to Rs 250**. The minimum initial deposit to open the account has also been reduced to Rs 250.
 - The Sukanya Samridhi scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 22, 2015, as a part of the **Union Government's Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao** campaign.

- **Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari** launched development projects worth over **5400 crore rupees in Guna district of Madhya Pradesh**.
 - He addressed the gathering during Vikas Parv and farmers' convention in the district.

- The **Women and Child Development (WCD) Ministry** is set to move a proposal for enhanced punishment in cases of **sexual assault of male children**.
 - The Law Ministry has cleared the proposal to amend the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012**, for enhancing punishment in cases of sexual assault against young boys.

July 25

- Minister of State for Railways **Manoj Sinha** inaugurated Regional Rail Training Institute (**RRTI**) in **Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh**.

- The Rail Training Institute (**RRTI**) was inaugurated with an aim to **strengthen the expertise and capabilities of the employees of North-Eastern Railways.**
- The **first meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on Border Haats** was held in **Agartala, Tripura.** The meeting reveal about the positive impact of Border Hatts on the livelihoods of the people living in **areas around the Haats.**
- A senior official said that, a special unit of the **Odisha Police** has launched a **drive to curb an international syndicate that smuggles endangered pangolin**, which is one of the world’s most illegally traded **mammals.**
- **Farmers in Rajasthan** will soon have the ease to get their defunct transformers replaced within **six hours** of registering a complaint through a **mobile app.**
 - Chief Minister **Vasundhara Raje** said the process of replacing transformers used to consume a lot of time, therefore, the government decided to introduce mobile app **‘Bijli Mitra’** so that farmers can register their complaint.
- **The Ministry of Women and Child Development** has launched a contest, **#Childline1098**, inviting people to share images of the **Childline 1098 logo** that they spot at unique locations and send it with a tagline, to mark **World Day against Trafficking in Persons on July 30.**
 - **CHILDLINE is India's first 24-hour, free**, emergency phone service for children in need of aid and assistance. At present, it is operational at **450 locations.**
- A Scheme named **‘Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India’** is implemented by the **Ministry of Culture.**
 - Objective of the scheme: **reinvigorating and revitalizing** several institutions, groups, individuals, identified non-MoC institutions, non-government organisations, researchers and scholars in order to help them involve in activities or projects for strengthening, protecting, preserving and promoting the rich intangible cultural heritage of India.

July 26

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced to build a Gandhi Heritage Centre in Uganda’s Jinja, where a statue of Mahatma Gandhi now stands.
 - He said, “As we approach the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, there can be no better homage than a Centre to remind us of Africa’s role in shaping his mission.”

- The 2nd meeting of National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges under POSHAN Abhiyaan was held in **New Dehli**.
 - The meeting was organized by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD)**. It was held under the Chairmanship of **Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog**.
- **About POSHAN Abhiyaan:**
 - Full form of POSHAN – Partnerships and Opportunities to Strengthen and Harmonize Actions for Nutrition in India
 - Launched – 8th March 2018 from Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan.
- Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik launched a plantation drive named – **'Green Mahanadi Mission'**.
 - Under this scheme, **2 crore** saplings would be planted along the **Mahanadi, Ib and Tel rivers**.
- Tamil Nadu government has released the draft state Forest Policy that aims to conserve forests and wildlife, ecosystems, and climate change mitigation etc. It was released by **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami** as per the Vision Tamil Nadu 2023 document released by **former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa in 2014**, preserving the ecology was among the themes of the document.
- The Women and Child Development Ministry has invited people to share images of the logo of **Childline 1098**.
 - The Childline 1098 is the nationwide emergency helpline **for children in distress**.
 - The contest has been organised to mark **'World Day against Trafficking in Persons'** on **July 30**. The Childline has been operating at 450 locations, including 76 key railway stations, across the country.
- The NITI Aayog has signed an agreement with the **Lupin Foundation** to collaborate in the government's ambitious aspirational districts programme.
 - It aims to quickly and effectively transform some of the most underdeveloped districts of the country.
 - The NITI Aayog and Lupin Foundation will work in three states – **Dholpur in Rajasthan, Nandurbar in Maharashtra and Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh**.

July 27

- **R Ramanan**, Mission Director, **Atal Innovation Mission** and **Arvind Gupta** CEO, **MyGov** launched the “**#InnovateIndia Platform**”, a collaboration between the **Atal Innovation Mission and MyGov**, a citizen-centric platform of the Government of **India**.
 - The **#InnovateIndia MyGov-AIM** portal creates the innovations platform for registering both grassroots and deep-tech innovators at a national level.
- An **international conference on India-Vietnam economic ties** was held in **New Delhi**.
 - **Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Ton Sinh Thanh** was present at the inauguration of the international conference.
- **Objective:**
 - To enhance the economic ties with **Vietnam** and enable government’s **Act East Policy**
- The **National Green Tribunal** formed a monitoring committee for **Yamuna Rejuvenation Project**.
 - **B S Sajwan** and former **Delhi** chief secretary **Shailaja Chandra** has been appointed as **members of the committee**. The committee has been asked to submit the report by **December 31,2018**.
 - This decision was taken by a bench headed by National Green Tribunal (NGT) Chairperson **A K Goel** .
- Chief Minister of **Odisha Naveen Patnaik** inaugurated the **Rs 300 crore Rukura Medium Irrigation Dam** project in **Sundargarh district**.
 - The **Rukura project**, built at a cost of **Rs 296 crore**, is constructed over the **Rukura nullah in Bonai Sub-Division of Sundargarh district**.
- **Karnataka** has become the leading State for renewable energy in India, surpassing **Tamil Nadu**, according to the report “**Karnataka’s Electricity Sector Transformation**” released by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (**IEEFA**).
- Almost two years after the **West Bengal** assembly passed a resolution to **change the name of the State**, the state assembly today passed a bill to change the state’s name from West Bengal to ‘**Bangla**’ in all **three different languages**.
 - This development can be seen as a bid to raise its stature in the alphabetical sequence of state names.

July 28

- **Minister of State for Communications announced** that all villages adopted by the Member of Parliament under ‘**Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana**’ would get **free Wi-Fi services**.
 - Setting up of **25000 WiFihotspots** at existing rural exchanges of **BSNL** will be done.
 - Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana’: **Launch year: 2014**.
 - The development of model villages, called **Adarsh Grams**, through the implementation of existing schemes, and certain new initiatives.
 - Creating models of **local development** which can be replicated in **other villages**.
 - **Each MP** to choose one village each from the constituency that they represent make it a **model village by 2019**.

- The Justice **B.N. Srikrishna** Committee on data protection in **India** has suggested amendments to various laws including the **Aadhaar Act** to provide for imposition of penalties on **data fiduciaries and compensations** to data principals for violations of the **data protection law**.

- All the **13 lakh employees** of the **Indian Railways** will take turns to swear an oath publicly to “**bring about integrity**” and “**eradicate corruption**”.
 - Termed “**Mission Satyanishtha**”, the program will involve railway men attending formal training course on probity and integrity in **public life**.

- The **Gauhati High Court** has declared the **Arunachal Pradesh Parliamentary Secretaries** (Appointment, Salaries, Allowances and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2007 as “**unconstitutional**” in line with **Supreme court’s**.
 - This was against a public interest litigation filed by **Kyoda Ram** on the matter of appointing parliamentary secretaries.

- The **Indian Coast Guard and Bangladesh Coast Guard** conducted a **2 day bilateral table-top exercise** on maritime pollution in **Kolkata** that was held from **July 26-27, 2018** in Kolkata.
 - This exercise was conducted in the backdrop of the **MoU** signed between India and South Asian Cooperation for Environment Protection (**SACEP**).

- The West Bengal Assembly passed the **Lokayukta** (Amendment) Bill, **2018**.
 - **Maharashtra** was the **first state** to introduce the institution of Lokayukta through The Lokayukta and **Upa-Lokayuktas** Act in **1971**.
 - The latest Lokayukta was established in **Tamil Nadu On July 09, 2018**.

- According to the **US-based Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA)** report, **Karnataka** is the new national leader in renewable energy generation. It has surpassed **Tamil Nadu** that had for quite some time been **India's best renewable market**.

July 29

- **Nehru Memorial Museum and Library** announced that a museum for all **former prime ministers** of the country will be built in the 25 acre estate of **Teen Murti Bhavan complex in New Delhi**.
 - This decision was taken in the **43rd** annual general meeting of NMML chaired by Home Minister Rajnath Singh
- Government of India has approved a new scheme to empower rural women through community participation. It is called '**Mahila Shakti Kendra**' for **2017-18 upto 2019-20**.
 - The cost sharing ratio of the scheme is **60:40** between **centre and states** except North Eastern states.
 - North East and Special Category States have the ratio of **90:10**.
- **Indian Railways** organized a programme on Ethics in Public Governance and Launched "**Mission Satyanishtha**" at **National Rail Museum, New Delhi**.
 - The objective is to bring transparency and ethics in the work culture and among all railway employees.
- The Gujarat government launched the '**Urban Sanitation and Cleanliness Policy**' for better management of solid and liquid waste in cities.
 - The policy was launched by **Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani**. The policy focuses on streamlining the collection and disposal of all types of waste in cities and towns.

July 30

- The Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship **Shri Dharmendra Pradhan**, laid the foundation stone of National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) for Women at **Mohali, Punjab**
 - He also launched a **first** of its kind unique Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra (**PMKK**) for differently abled persons in Mohali.

- He also launched India's first in-phone guide and mobile application "Go whats That" in Chandigarh.
- The Union Ministry of Earth Sciences (**MoES**) launched a mobile application named **Mumbai Weather Live** that will provide information on extreme weather events in Mumbai.
- The **high-level panel on data protection framework** headed by Justice **B N Srikrishna** submitted its report to the government.
 - The panel has recommended **2 changes to the Aadhaar Act**. It has said that, amendments are required to ensure the autonomy of the **UIDAI**. The panel regarding data protection has suggested amending the **Right to Information Act** to restrict non-disclosure of information to cases where harm to an individual is more than the importance of transparency and accountability in the functioning of public authorities.
- Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare **Radha Mohan Singh** launched the **Meghalaya Milk Mission in Shillong**. The mission will facilitate in achieving the **Centre's goal of doubling farmer's income by 2022** through the promotion of **milk business in the state**.
- The Indian Railways launched '**Mission Satyanishtha**' and a programme on **Ethics in Public Governance**, in a **first-of-its-kind** event, at a day-long function held at **National Rail Museum, New Delhi**. The Union Minister of Railways, **Piyush Goyal** administered the oath to the officers and supervisors at the programme.
 - The two-day Unified Commanders' Conference (**UCC**) for the year **2018** started at **New Delhi**. The Annual Conference provides a platform for discussions at the Apex Level on all '**Joint Issues**' amongst the three **Services & Ministry of Defence** and enables stock-taking of the previous year and planning the way ahead for the next year.

July 31

- **Rajasthan** Government signed an **MoU** with a private trust **Sohanlalji Buladeviiji Ojha Gaushala Samiti** to build its **first 'Cow Sanctuary'**, a shelter for **10000 cows**.
- Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare **Radha Mohan Singh** launched the **Rs. 215 crore Meghalaya Milk Mission** in Shillong through National Cooperative Development Corporation (**NCDC**).

- Government set up a **High Level Empowered Committee** headed by Cabinet Secretary **Pradeep Kumar Sinha** to address the issues of **Stressed Thermal Power Projects**.
- Unified Commanders' Conference (**UCC 2018**) is held in **New Delhi**.
 - Unified Commanders' Conference (UCC) 2018 is conducted under the guidance of Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (**HQ IDS**). It aims to review **external security challenges and the preparedness of India**.
 - Chiefs of Indian Armed Forces:
 - Chief of the Army Staff (**COAS**) – **General Bipin Rawat**
 - Chief of the Naval Staff (**CNS**) – **Admiral Sunil Lanba**
 - Chief of the Air Staff (**CAS**) – **Air Chief Marshal Birender Singh Dhano**
- Union Home Minister **Rajnath Singh**, inaugurated the **2nd Conference of Young Superintendent of Police**, organized by Bureau of Police Research & Development (**BPR&D**), in **New Delhi**.
 - Theme of the Conference was: **“Predictive Policing and Contemporary Challenges for Indian Police Forces”**.
- President **Ram Nath Kovind** launched Chhattisgarh government's **Sanchar Kranti Yojna at Jagdalpur** in the **Naxal-affected Bastar region of the state**. Under the scheme, **50 lakh smartphones** will be distributed free of cost to the people.
 - The **Micromax Bhagat 4**, with **2 GB Ram, processor of 1.4 GHz, 16 GB storage, five megapixel front camera** and an eight megapixel rear camera with **five-inch screen** will be distributed to the **collegestudents under the scheme**.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

July 2

- With the persistent decline in poverty, **India** is no longer a **nation having the largest number of poor people in the world**, according to a study published by the **US-based think tank, Brookings**.
 - According to the study, **Nigeria** has already overtaken India as the country with the **largest number of extreme poor in early 2018**, and the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** could soon take over the number 2 spot.

- The study, titled '**The start of a new poverty narrative**' and **published in the Brookings'blog**, is authored by **Homi Kharas, Kristofer Hamel and Martin Hofer**.
- The **ninth and final meeting** of Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on **Nepal-India Relations concluded in Kathmandu, Nepal**.
- **Abu Dhabi**, capital of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), has topped the list of "smart cities" in the **Middle East and Africa**, according to the **Abu Dhabi's Department of Culture and Tourism**.

July 3

- The **ninth and final meeting** of Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on **Nepal-India Relations concluded in Kathmandu, Nepal**. The Representatives from Nepal and India deliberated upon various bilateral issues including **1950 Peace and Friendship treaty**, trade, transit and border during the **two-day meeting**.

July 5

- The 5th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Intersessional ministerial meeting was held in Tokyo, Japan. It was first RCEP ministerial gathering to be held outside ASEAN countries.
 - About Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership in Brief (RCEP): RCEP is a proposed proposed free trade agreement (FTA) or comprehensive regional economic integration agreement between the **10-ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam)** and its six FTA partners (**Australia, New Zealand, India, China, Japan and Korea**).
- The **Reserve Bank of India licensed Bank of China** to operate in **India**. **Bank of China** will now have operating offices in India. This will be the second Chinese bank to be operating in the country.

NOTE:

 - **Urjit Patel- 24th Governor of RBI**, Headquarters- Mumbai, Established on- **1st April 1935, in Kolkata**.

July 6

- **India** will be participating in the **Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction** to be held in **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia** from **03-06 July 2018**.
 - The theme of the meet is **‘Preventing Disaster Risk: Protecting Sustainable Development’**.

July 7

- The **Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport (MRIA)** would be operated as a **Sri Lanka-India** joint venture. The **\$210 million facility, 241km south-east of Colombo**, is dubbed the **“world’s emptiest airport”** due to a lack of flights.
- The **2nd meeting** of the joint working group on **tourism cooperation** between **India and Nepal** concluded in **Kathmandu**, Nepal. Both sides agreed to jointly promote **Buddhist and Ramayana circuits and Adventure tourism**. The meeting also decided to set up an industry-led **India Nepal Tourism Forum**.

July 8

- The United States boycotted an informal UN Security Council meeting to mark the **20th anniversary** of the statute that created the International Criminal Court (ICC).
 - US noted concerns about any potential ICC investigation of American personnel related to the situation in Afghanistan.

Note:

- The International Criminal Court (**ICC**) is an intergovernmental organization and international tribunal that sits in **The Hague in the Netherlands**.
- The ICC has four principal organs: the Presidency, the Judicial Divisions, the Office of the Prosecutor, and the Registry.
- The joint working group on tourism cooperation meeting (2nd) between India and Nepal concluded in Kathmandu, Nepal.
 - Both countries agreed to jointly promote Buddhist & Ramayana circuits and Adventure tourism.

July 9

- Human Resource Development Minister **Shri Prakash Javadekar** will inaugurate the **17th World Sanskrit Conference** to be held at **Vancouver, Canada** from **9th July to 13th July, 2018**.
 - The **World Sanskrit Conference** is being held in various countries across the **globe once in every three years** and so far it has been held thrice in India.

July 11

- **Scientists** have discovered the **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.

July 12

- **Nepal** is set to hold a **two-day Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)** Summit, starting from August 31, in **Kathmandu**.
- Union Minister of State for **HRD, Dr Satya Pal Singh** attended the **6th** meeting of **BRICS** Education Ministers at **Cape Town, South Africa**. In this meeting of BRICS, India was allotted the key theme of '**Digitization in Education**'.
- He apprised to all present about the India's initiatives like **SWAYAM, SWAYAM PRABHA, National Digital Library, National Academic Depository, E-Yantra, Virtual Labs, Operation Digital Board, E- Pathshala, Diksha, and Geographic information System (GIS)**.

July 13

- **Nepali** Prime Minister **KP Sharma Oli** inaugurated a library in **Kathmandu** built by the Indian Government in the presence of **Indian Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri**.
- **India** and the **United Kingdom** signed an agreement on exchange of experience by **legal professionals and government functionaries** for resolution of disputes before various courts and tribunals.

July 14

- **New Zealand** scientists have performed the **first-ever 3-D, colour X-ray on a human**. The device is based on the traditional X-ray but incorporates particle-tracking technology developed for **CERN's Large Hadron Collider**.
- The **UN Security Council adopted a resolution 2427**, aimed at a **framework for mainstreaming protection, rights, well-being and empowerment of children throughout the conflict cycle**.
 - The council was chaired by **Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven**.
 - The Portuguese parliament has approved a law that will allow citizens to change their gender and name from the **age of 16** without a medical report showing **"identity disruption"**.
- The **United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres constituted a High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation**. The panel will be co-chaired by **Melinda Gates, Co-Chairman of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Jack Ma, Executive Chairman of Alibaba Group**.

July 15

- A new integrated state-of-the-art integrated **Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC)** was jointly inaugurated by **Home Minister Rajnath Singh and his Bangladeshi counterpart Asaduzzaman Khan** at Dhaka's Jamuna Future Park.

July 16

- **Militaries of India and Pakistan** will be part of a **mega anti-terror drill** in **Russia** named **"Peace Mission"** in **August 2018** which is being organised by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) with an aim to expand cooperation among the member countries to **deal with terrorism and extremism**.
 - The exercise will be joined by all SCO member countries including **Russia, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan**.
- **Two women, Jayshree Ullal and Neerja Sethi**, who belong to an Indian background, have secured a place on **Forbes list of Americas 60 richest self-made women**, ranking on the **18th and 21st spot**, respectively.
 - Ullal, the **CEO of Arista Network** was ranked on the 18th position and **Sethi**, the **Vice President of a tech company called Syntel**, secured 21st position on the **60 richest self-made women list**.

July 17

- **South Africa** has unveiled the **64-dish MeerKAT radio telescope**, slated to be the **world's largest and most powerful telescope** on its completion in **2030**. Built for **\$330 million**, **MeerKAT** will be integrated into an array of **3,000 dishes** spread in a square-kilometre area. It is said to have **50 times** better resolution than **NASA's Hubble Space Telescope when fully operational**.
- **Militaries of India and Pakistan** will be part of a mega anti-terror drill in Russia named "**Peace Mission**" in **August 2018** which is being organised by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
 - It will be for the **first time since Independence that India and Pakistan** will both be part of a military exercise.

July 18

- The UN has entered into a **partnership with Google to monitor** the impacts of **human activity on global ecosystems** by using sophisticated **online tools**.
- The Union Minister of **Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu** co-chaired **8th session of India-Oman Joint Commission Meeting (JCM)** along with **Minister of Industry, Investment, Trade and Digital Economy** of Oman, **Dr Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy**.

July 19

- The **3rd BRICS Media Forum** under the theme of "**BRICS Media Cooperation – Fostering an Inclusive, Just World Order**" will be held on **July 18-19 in Cape Town, South Africa**.
- The **UK** has topped an **annual global ranking of nations' soft power**, with **France placed second on the list of 30 countries** which does not feature **India**.
 - The **2018 'Soft Power 30'** index, published last week by UK-based strategic communications consultancy firm **Portland and the University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy**, ranked **Germany as third** followed by the **US**.
- The **Militaries of India and Pakistan** will be part of a mega anti-terror drill in **Russia** in **August** which is being organised by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The drill, "**Peace Mission**", will take place nearly three months.

- The exercise will be joined by all SCO member countries including **Russia, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.**

July 20

- The **United States** withdrew from the **United Nations Human Rights Council** accusing it of a “**chronic bias against Israel**”.
 - **Nikki Haley**, the US Permanent Representative to the United Nations announced the withdrawal.
- US State Department has announced that the inaugural ‘**two-plus-two dialogue**’ between **India** and the **United States** will be held in **New Delhi in September 2018**. Recently, the US had postponed the dialogue due to ‘**unavoidable reasons**’.

July 21

- Myanmar has joined the India-initiated **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, **becoming the 68th member** of the grouping that is aiming at optimum utilisation of solar energy.
 - The International Solar Alliance was launched jointly by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Francois Hollande on the first day of the COP-21 summit at Paris in 2015.
- The US State Department has announced that the inaugural ‘**two-plus-two dialogue**’ between India and the United States will be held in **New Delhi**.
- The UN has entered into a partnership with **Google** to monitor the **impacts of human activity on global ecosystems by using sophisticated online tools**.
 - The partnership was launched during the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development at the **UN headquarters in New York**.

July 22

- The **8th BRICS Health Ministers’ Meeting** was held at **Durban, South Africa**. Indian deligation was led by Mr. J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare. He stated that India is committed to eliminating TB by 2025.
- Facebook has confirmed it is working on a **new satellite project, named Athena**, that will provide broadband internet connections to rural and underserved areas. The company aims to launch satellite in early 2019.

July 23

- According to report of **Walk Free Foundation, the Global Slavery Index** estimates that **40.3 million** people worldwide were subjected to modern slavery in **2016**.

July 24

- **India and Rwanda** signed **eight agreements** following delegation-level talks between **Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Rwandan President Paul Kagame** in Kigali. The two countries signed agreements **in the fields of Defence, Trade, Agriculture, Leather and allied products and Dairy**.
- **European Union (EU) and Japan** have signed **Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)**. It was signed at EU-Japan summit in Tokyo by **EU Presidents Jean-Claude Juncker and Donald Tusk** and **Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe**.

July 25

- Indian Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) with **United Kingdom** to obtain help in enhancing overall public transport system in **India**.
 - The MoU was signed by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, India, and Transport for London (**TFL**) to develop public transport in **India**.

July 26

- **Thaawarchand Gehlot**, Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment attended the Global Disability Summit 2018 held in **London, United Kingdom**.
- The 10th edition of BRICS Summit began in **Johannesburg, South Africa**. It is a 3-day long summit and will be attended by all the BRICS leaders.
 - The **theme** for this summit is '**BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for inclusive growth and shared prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution**'.

July 27

- **Thaawarchand Gehlot, Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment** attended the **Global Disability Summit** held in **London** on **24th July 2018**. The motto of the Conference was to firm up the commitments of the country leaders towards the cause of persons with disabilities.
- The **6th India-UK Science & Innovation Council (SIC)** meeting held in **New Delhi** discussed a range of issues on **S&T cooperation** between the **two countries**.
 - **Dr. Harsh Vardhan**, Minister of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences & Environment, Forests and Climate Change, India and **Mr. Sam Gyimah**, Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, **UK led the Indian and UK delegations respectively**.

July 28

- **India and the United Kingdom** will enhance their **partnership** in the area of research and innovation. It was attended by Science and Technology and Environment Minister **Dr Harsh Vardhan and his UK counterpart Sam Gyimah**.
 - The objective is to address challenges, such as **water pollution, life-threatening diseases and climate change**.
 - This was agreed to at the delegation level meeting of **6th India-Science and Innovation Council in New Delhi**.

July 29

- The ministry of health of Sierra Leone has confirmed that a new strain of Ebola virus named **Bombali Virus (BOMV)** has been discovered in bats in the **Bombali district of Sierra Leone**.
 - It's not yet known whether the new strain can develop into Ebola disease, if it is transmitted to humans.
- Invest India and the UAE Minister for Artificial Intelligence (AI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for **India – UAE Artificial Intelligence Bridge** in New Delhi.

July 31

- The **3rd BRICS Film Festival** was held in **Durban, South Africa**, along with the International Durban Film Festival (**DIFF**). The last day of the festival was celebrated as **India Country Day**.
- The **first Nepal-India Think Tank Summit** has begun in **Kathmandu** to foster greater collaboration and knowledge-sharing among the think tanks of the **two countries**. The summit is being jointly organized by the **Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Affairs** and **Nehru Memorial Museum Library**.

SPORTS

July 1

- **Rani Rampal** has been named as the **Captain of India's 18-member squad for the women's hockey World Cup** while goalkeeper Savita will serve as her deputy in the World Cup to be played in London from July 21 to August 5, 2018.
- Indian sprinter **Dutee Chand** has set a **new national record in the women's 100-metre race at the 58th National Inter State Senior Athletics Championships** held at Sarusajai Stadium, Guwahati.
 - She clocked 11.29 seconds to beat her own previous record of 11.30 seconds which she achieved at the Indian Grand Prix in 2017.

July 2

- Former captains **Rahul Dravid** of **India**, **Ricky Ponting** of **Australia** and retired **England Women** wicketkeeper-batter **Claire Taylor** were inducted into the **ICC Cricket Hall of Fame 2018** during a glittering ceremony in **Dublin, Ireland**.
- In the summit clash of the **37th and final edition of the Hockey Champions Trophy** at **Breda, the Netherlands**, **India** lost to defending champions **Australia** via penalty shoot-off. The match went into the shoot-off after both the teams were locked at **1-1 in regulation time**.

July 3

- **Malaysian** veteran **Lee Chong Wei** has won the **Malaysian Open Badminton singles title** for a historic **12th time**. In the men's final in **Kuala Lumpur**, he defeated young **Japanese shuttler Kento Momota** in straight games.
- **Red Bull's Max Verstappen** won the **Austrian Grand Prix 2018** title in Austria. **Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen** finished in the **second spot**.

July 4

- **Australian** captain **Aaron Finch** **slammed 172(76)** against Zimbabwe to register the highest-ever individual score in **T20Is**, overtaking his own record of **156 runs**.

July 7

- **Bajrang Punia** emerged champion at the **Tbilisi Grand Prix** in the **65kg** category after outplaying **Iranian wrestler Mehran Nasiri** in the final in **Georgia**. The **2018 Commonwealth Games gold medallist** recorded a comfortable **9-3 win** over the Iranian.

July 8

- Former India captain '**Mahendra Singh Dhoni**' reached the coveted milestone of playing **500 international matches** during the **second T20 International against England**.

July 9

- Returning to action after a long lay-off of nearly **two years due to injury**, India's premier gymnast **Dipa Karmakar** clinched the **gold medal** in the vault event of **FIG Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup at Mersin, Turkey**.
 - The **24-year-old from Tripura**, who had finished **fourth in vault event** in the **2016 Rio Olympics**, scored **14.150** to **wingold** here.
 - This is **Dipa's first medal** in a **World Challenge Cup**.
- Indian lifter **Jhili Dalabehera** has bagged the bronze medal in the **2018 IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships at Tashkent**. She lifted **167 kg** in the **48 kg** category to finish third on the podium.

July 10

- **Indian shuttler 'Ajay Jayaram'** (30-year) finished runners-up at the **White Nights International Challenge** after losing in the finals against **Pablo Abian (Spain)** in **Gatchina, Russia**.

July 13

- **18-year-old Indian runner Hima Das** created history by becoming the **first-ever Indian woman to win an athletics gold** on the **international stage**. **Hailing from Assam, Hima** finished on top of the podium in the women's **400m event at the IAAF World U20 Championship** in **Tampere, Finland**, clocking **51.46 seconds**.

July 15

- **Former world number one Angelique Kerber** defeated **seven-time champion Serena Williams** in the women's singles final to clinch her **first-ever Wimbledon title**. Angelique Kerber hails from Germany.

July 16

- **Olympic silver medalist PV Sindhu's** title drought this year continued as she suffered a straight-game defeat against **Japan's Nozomi Okuhara** in the summit clash of **Thailand Open badminton tournament**.
- **France** overwhelmed **Croatia 4-2** in the **World Cup final at Moscow's Luzhnikistadium** to lift the trophy for the second time in **20 years**.
 - The **2018 FIFA World Cup was the 21st FIFA World Cup**.
 - It took place in **Russia** from **14 June to 15 July 2018**.
 - Golden Boot: **Henry Kane**
 - Best player: **Luka Modric**
 - Best goalkeeper: **Thibaut Courtois**
 - Fairplay Award: **Spain**

July 17

- **Wrestling Federation of India (WFI)** president **Brij Bhushan Saran Singh** is set to be named the **Chef de Mission** of the **Asian Games-bound Indian contingent**.

July 18

- India's star shuttler **PV Sindhu** (seeded second) suffered a defeat to fourth seed **Nozomi Okuhara of Japan** in straight games inside **50 minutes** to settle for runners-up spot in the **Thailand Open at the Nimibutr Stadium in Bangkok**.
 - In men's singles, **Kanta Tsuneyama** (Japan) was the winner and **Tommy Sugiarto** (Indonesia) was runner up.

July 22

- Indian wrestler **Mansi Ahlawat** has won the **silver medal** in the ongoing **Junior Asian Wrestling Championship**. The event was held in **Junior Asian Wrestling Championship**.
 - Another Indian wrestler, Swati Shinde, bagged a bronze medal in **53 kg division** by defeating **Thailand's Duangnapa Boonyasu**.

July 23

- India's **Muhammad Anas Yahiya** broke his own **national record** to win the **400 metres race** at the **Cena Noveho Mesta nad Metuji** meet in **Czech Republic**.
 - The earlier national record of **45.31 seconds** was made by the sprinter during the **2018 Commonwealth Games at Gold Coast, Queensland**.
- **Indian** badminton player **Lakshaya Sen** bagged the **gold medal** after defeating **Indonesia's top-seeded Kunlavut Vitidsaran** in the final match of the **Badminton Asia Junior Championship in Jakarta, Indonesia**.

July 24

- The **mascots of both the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020** greeted the Japanese public for the first time.
 - The **Tokyo 2020 Paralympic mascot's** name was revealed as **Someity**, (pronounced soh-may-tee) which comes from **someiyoshino**, a popular cherry blossom variety, and additionally echoes the English phrase "so mighty". It represents Paralympic athletes who overcome obstacles and redefine the boundaries of what is possible.
- **Rafael Nadal** remains in the **top** position of the **ATP tennis world rankings** as per standings on 23rd July 2018.
 - **ATP standings on 23rd July 2018:**

- 1 – Rafael Nadal (ESP)
- 2 – Roger Federer (SUI)
- 3 – Alexander Zverev (GER)

July 26

- The **15th National Youth Athletics Championships** were held at **Manjalpur Sports Complex** in **Vadodara** from **July 21- 23, 2018**.
 - **Dhanvir** and 100 meter hurdles gold medalist **Aparna Roy** were declared as ‘**best athletes**’ of the meet.

July 27

- **Indiacaptain Virat Kohli** was presented with the **International Player of the Year award for 2017-2018** by **England’s Barmy Army** as **India** concluded **Day 1** of the practice match against **Essex**. **Barmy Army** is a popular fan club of **English cricket** supporters who had last year shared a video of **Kohli**.

July 28

- **India** captain **Virat Kohli** was presented with the **International Player of the Year award for 2017-2018** by **England’s Barmy Army**.
 - **Barmy Army** is a popular fan club of **English cricket supporters**. It was held after the conclusion of the **first day** of **India’s** tour match against **Essex**.

July 29

- The Indian Women’s Compound Archery team has secured number one position in the world rankings as per World Archery Association (WAA).
 - Current world rankings in Women’s Compound Archery:
 1. India
 2. Chinese Taipei
 3. Colombia
 4. United States of America

July 30

- **Ace** Indian shuttler **Sourabh Verma** lifted the **Russian Open Badminton** trophy at **Vladivostok**. In the title clash, **Sourabh** came back from a game behind to beat **Japan’s Koki Watanabe**, **18-21, 21-12, 21-17**, and **win his first title** of the season.

- In Wrestling, **Bajrang Punia** won his second consecutive international **gold** while **Sandeep Tomar** had to be content with a **silver medal at the Yasar Dogu International in Istanbul, Turkey.**
 - In the women's competition, **Pinki** was the **lone gold medallist in the 55kg** category with her 6-3 win over **Ukraine's Olga Shnaider in the final.**

July 31

- **Sourabh Verma** beat **Koki Watanabe** to lift the **Russian Open Badminton trophy 2018.**
 - The 2018 Russian Open, was a badminton tournament which took place at **Sport Hall Olympic in Vladivostok, Russia from 24 to 29 July 2018.**

BANKING/ECONOMICS

July 1

- The Government of India had notified the **Electoral Bond Scheme 2018** on January 2, 2018. The Finance Ministry has announced that the **fourth tranche of electoral bonds sale will take place from July 2-11.**

July 14

- **Essar Vizag Terminal Ltd (EVTL)** has commissioned its **iron ore handling complex in Visakhapatnam**, deemed to be **India's largest**, built with an **investment of Rs 830 crore.**
 - The facility will support both export and coastal traffic, furthering **the vision of the Sagarmala initiative.**

July 17

- The **International Monetary Fund** said **India** remains a key driver of **global growth.** However, the **World Economic Outlook** forecast cut **India's GDP** outlook one-tenth for this year to **7.3 per cent** and **three-tenths** for next year to **7.5 per cent.**

July 20

- As per Asian Development Bank (ADB)'s Asian Development **Outlook report** India continues to be the **fastest growing economy in Asia** with projected **GDP growth of 7.3 per cent**.
 - Growth would accelerate to **7.6 percent in 2019**.
- **Kisan Mela** was organized at **State Bank of India's rural and semi-urban branches** across the country to **impart financial literacy to farmers**. It is one-of-its-kind initiative to develop connect with farmer customers, resolve their grievances and educate them about their various rights and bank's initiatives.

July 21

- According to **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**, India will continue to be the world's fastest growing major economy, ahead of China, with **7.3 per cent growth rate in 2018-19 and 7.6 percent in 2019-20**.

July 23

- A new **Cruise Terminal** capable of handling **5000 tourists** will be set up at Ernakulum Wharf of Cochin Port by **February 2020**. On **20th July 2018**, **Cochin Port Trust** issued work order to the contractor for starting the construction of the **new Cruise Terminal**.

July 24

- The **Goods and Services Tax Council**, at its **28th meeting** has reduced the rates on more than 50 products. GST on **sanitary pads** was cut from **12% to zero**, **rakhis** were exempted from the tax.
 - **Small televisions, washing machines, fridges and kitchen appliances** such as mixers and juicers have their tax rates slashed from **28% to 18%**.
- The **board of ONGC** has approved exiting **helicopter service provider Pawan Hans** by selling its entire **49 per cent stake**.
 - It aims to cut debt and consolidate resources in core oil and gas business.
 - Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) wants its interest to be clubbed with the 51 per cent government stake that is already on offer for sale.

July 30

- **Defence Ministry Nirmala Sitharaman** handed over **two types of indigenously high-power multi-fuel engines** to the **Vice Chief of Army Staff Devaraj** built **Anbu**.
 - The first engine is of **1000 HP named V92S2 engine** and it powers **T-90 Bhisma Tank**.
 - The second engine is **V-46-6 engine** and it powers the **T-72 Ajeya Tank and its variants**.
 - The engines were manufactured by the **Engine Factory, Avadi**, a unit of **Ordnance Factory Board**, Department of Defence Production.

APPOINTMENTS

July 3

- The government has set up a **13-member committee for Sub-National Accounts** will be headed by **Ravindra H Dholakia**, a retired professor of **IIM Ahmedabad**.
 - 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.
- **Shri Ravi Thapar (IFS : 1983)**, presently Ambassador of **India to Panama**, has been concurrently accredited as the next Ambassador of **India to the Republic of Costa Rica**.

July 6

- The Cabinet has approved the appointment of **Former Chief Justice of Patna High Court, Justice L. Narasimha Reddy** as the **Chairman** of the Central Administrative Tribunal (**CAT**).
- UN Secretary-General **Antonio Guterres** has appointed a veteran **Uruguayan Army official José Eladio Alcain** as head of the United Nations mission tasked with monitoring the ceasefire line between **India and Pakistan**.

July 7

- Justice **Adarsh Kumar Goel**, who retired from the **Supreme Court of India**, has been appointed as the **new Chairperson** of the National Green Tribunal (NGT). He has been appointed to the position for a term of **five years**, as per an order issued by the personnel ministry.

July 8

- Justice **Adarsh Kumar Goel** (Former Supreme Court Judge) has been appointed as the **new Chairperson** of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) for five years term.
 - The tribunal's principal bench is in **New Delhi** and its zonal benches are in **Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata & Chennai**.

Note:

- **National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 (NGT)** is an Act of the Parliament of India which enables the creation of a special tribunal to handle the expeditious disposal of the cases pertaining to environmental issues.
- It draws inspiration from **India's constitutional provision of Article 21**, which assures the citizens of India the right to a healthy environment.

July 9

- **Squash player Dipika Pallikal** has been appointed as Asia's representative in the prestigious **Athletes Advisory Commission** of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF).
 - The appointment was made by the CGF.
 - The CGF Athletes Advisory Commission was proposed in **August 2017**.
 - Each continent is represented by one athlete in **CGFAAC**.
- **Michael Ondaatje's 'The English Patient'** was named the greatest-ever winner of the **Man Booker Prize** at an event celebrating **five decades** of the prestigious **literary award**.
 - 'The English Patient' won the Booker in **1992** and was made into a **1996 movie** starring **Ralph Fiennes and Juliette Binoche** that **won nine Academy Awards**.

July 12

- **Recep Tayyip Erdogan** was sworn-in as the President of Republic of **Turkey** for another term under the **new governmental system**.

July 13

- The Vice President of India and the President of Indian Council of World Affairs (**ICWA**), **M. Venkaiah Naidu** has appointed **Dr. T.C.A. Raghavan** as the **Director General**, ex officio Member-Secretary of the Council, **ICWA**.

July 15

- Haryana Governor Kaptan Singh Solanki has been given the additional charge of Himachal Pradesh by President Ram Nath Kovind.

July 19

- Actress **Richa Chadha** has become the **face and voice of the Save the Elephants campaign by animal rights** organisation People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (**PETA**).
- Wrestling Federation of India (**WFI**) president **Brij Bhushan Saran Singh** is set to be named the Chef de Mission of the **Asian Games-bound Indian contingent**.

July 31

- Vice Admiral **Anil Kumar Chawla** has been appointed as the **next Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Southern Naval Command**.

IMPORTANT DAYS

July 1

- **International Day Of Parliamentarism – June 30**
 - The **2018 International Day of Parliamentarism** was observed across the world on **June 30, 2018**.
 - It aims to recognise the role of parliaments in national plans and strategies and in ensuring greater transparency and accountability at national and global levels.

July 2

- **International Day Of Parliamentarism – June 30**
 - The 2018 International Day of **Parliamentarism** was observed across the world on **June 30, 2018**.
 - It aims to recognise the role of parliaments in national plans and strategies and in ensuring greater transparency and accountability at national and global levels.

July 11

- **World Population Day: 11 July**
 - World Population Day was established by the then-governing Council of the **United Nations Development Programme** in **1989**. The theme of **WPD 2018** is '**Family Planning is a Human Right**'. This day seeks to focus attention on the urgency and importance of population issues.

July 18

- **Nelson Mandela International Day** (or Mandela Day) is an annual international day in honour of Nelson Mandela, celebrated each year on **18 July, Mandela's birthday**.
 - The day was officially declared by the **United Nations in November 2009**.

July 20

- **World Refugee Day – June 20**
 - The World Refugee Day is held every year on **June 20th**.

- The **theme** for World Refugee Day 2018 is ‘**Now More Than Ever, We Need to Stand with Refugees**’.
- It is to commemorate the **strength, courage and perseverance** of **millions** of refugees.

July 26

- **India on July 26** celebrated the **19th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas** to mark the success of ‘**Operation Vijay**’ and to remember the supreme sacrifice of the Indian soldiers who lost their lives during the 1999 India-Pakistan Kargil War.
 - Armed Forces personnel and families of soldiers who lost their lives in 1999 Kargil War paid their tributes at the Dras War Memorial in Jammu and Kashmir to commemorate the historic win. **Operation Safed Sagar was successfully launched by Indian Air Force** during Kargil war.

July 29

- **28th July 2018**, World Hepatitis Day 2018 was observed all over the world. World Hepatitis Day, aims to enhance the national and international efforts on prevention and treatment of hepatitis.
 - 28 July is observed as World Hepatitis Day every year. This day was chosen as it is the birthday of scientist **Dr. Baruch Blumberg**, who discovered hepatitis B virus (HBV).
 - WHO (World Health Organisation) has declared **theme** for World Hepatitis Day 2018 as: “**Test. Treat. Hepatitis**”.

July 30

- **International Tiger Day: 29 July**
 - International Tiger Day is being celebrated every year on 29 July to raise awareness about tiger conservation. In **Madhya Pradesh**, State Tiger **Foundation Society of Forest Department** has organized wall painting competition in **6 cities** to raise awareness and support for tiger conservation.

July 31

- **30th July 2018**, **World Day against Trafficking in Persons** was observed all over the world.

- This day is observed to create awareness about the condition of **victims of human trafficking and for promotion and protection of their rights.**
- Theme: **‘Responding to the trafficking of children and young people’** has been declared as theme for World Day against Trafficking in Persons 2018 by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (**UNODC**).

AWARDS

July 3

- **Himachal Pradesh** has been adjudged **first among states for its performance** under the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritav Abhiyan (**PMSMA**) in the country.
 - Union Health Minister **Jagat Prakash Nadda** conferred the award upon the state which was received by **Additional Chief Secretary, Health, BK Agarwal.**

July 4

- The noted artist **Anjolie Ela Menon** has received the **National Kalidas Samman in Delhi** for visual arts from the **Madhya Pradesh** government.

July 15

- India’s Integrated Coastal Zone Management (**ICZM**) project has **won the World Bank’s internal award** for exceptional performance in achieving many development goals.
 - The **ICZM** project is among the eight projects awarded, selected out of 42 final nominations received from the **World Bank Task Teams** in the **South Asian Countries.**

July 17

- **Prominent Carnatic vocalist Aruna Sairam** has been selected for this year’s **Sangita Kalanidhi Award**, instituted by the **Music Academy, Chennai.** The executive committee of **the academy unanimously** selected her for the award.

July 18

- A team comprising experts from the **Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur and the University of Oxford** has been selected for an award for exceptional research-led innovation to mitigate arsenic poisoning in the **Ganga-Brahmaputra delta in the north and northeast India.**

July 20

- **Repc Micro Finance Ltd**, a non-banking finance company promoted by Repco Bank, received **Nabard 2018 award** for its service to self-help group (SHG) linkage in **Tamil Nadu for the fiscal year 2017-18.**

July 25

- **India Heritage Walk Festival**, a collaboration of **Sahapedia and YES Arts & Culture**, has been awarded the **PATA Gold Award 2018.**
 - The award has been announced by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (**PATA**) in Bangkok under the ‘**Heritage-Culture**’ category.
- **Canadian author Michael Ondaatje** has again made the **Man Booker Prize** list with his latest novel “**Warlight**”.
 - “**Warlight**” tells the story of two orphans in London in the immediate aftermath of **World War II.**
- **2017 AIFF Award winners:**
 - 2017 AIFF Emerging Woman Footballer of the Year: **E Panthoi.**
 - 2017 AIFF Emerging Player of the Year: **Anirudh Thapa.**
 - 2017 AIFF Woman Footballer of the Year: **Kamala Devi.**
 - 2017 AIFF Player of the Year: **Sunil Chhetri.**

July 27

- **Two Indians Bharat Vaswani and Sonam Wangchuk** are among six individuals who were declared winners of this year's **Ramon Magsaysay Award.**
 - Established in **1957**, the **Ramon Magsaysay Award** is **Asia's highest honour.**
 - It celebrates the memory and leadership example of the **third Philippine president** after whom the award is named.

July 28

- The Cochin International Airport Ltd (CIAL) has bagged the **‘Champion of Earth Prize -2018’**, the **highest environmental** honour instituted by the United Nations (UN).
 - CIAL has been selected for the award for its successful execution of one of the revolutionary ideas of using solar energy, which made CIAL the **world’s first fully solar-powered airport**.

July 29

- **Mohammed Ayazuddin Patel** has received the **Senior Fellowship Award for 2016-17** instituted by the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training Centre.
- Assamese film **“Xhoihobote Dhemalite” (“Rainbow Fields”)** won 3 top awards at the 3rd Love International Film Festival in United States.
 - Xhoihobote Dhemalite won awards for: **the best film, best actress (Dipannita Sharma)** and **best music (Anurag Saikia)**.
 - The film was directed by **Bidyut Kotoky**. Bidyut Kotoky received the award for the movie under best film category.

July 30

- **Mohun Bagan ‘Ratna’**, the highest honour of **Mohun Bagan** club was awarded to former **India international Pradip Chowdhury** at its foundation day programme.
- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) was awarded the **INFRA Icon Award** in the **‘Global Energy’** category at the mid-day **INFRAIcons Awards 2018, in Mumbai**
 - About Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC):
 - Chairman & Managing Director – **Shashi Shanker**
 - Registered Office – **New Delhi**

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

July 10

- **China** successfully launched two **remotesensing satellites for Pakistan**, marking the **first** international commercial launch for the **Long March-2C rocket** in about **19 years**.
 - The satellites **(a) PRSS-1 and (b) PakTES-1A** - were launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in northwest China.
 - The **PRSS-1 is China's first optical remote sensing satellite** sold to Pakistan.
 - A scientific experiment satellite, **PakTES-1A**, developed by Pakistan, was sent into orbit via the same rocket.

July 21

- **Facebook** has confirmed it is working on a new satellite project, **named Athena**, that will provide broadband internet connections to rural and underserved areas.
 - The company aims to launch satellite in early 2019. In 2016, Facebook's internet satellite for Africa was lost when SpaceX's rocket exploded.

July 25

- The Indian Institute of Technology (**IIT Kanpur**) has created an online tool named **TreadWill**, to help people overcome issues related to mental health.
 - TreadWill has been developed by a team with support from the **Computer Science and Engineering and Humanities and Social Sciences, HSS (Psychology) departments**.

BOOKS

July 11

- The Vice President of India, **Shri M. VenkaiahNaidu** has said that there is a need to revive **Theatre and make it a prominent form of education and entertainment.**
 - He was addressing the gathering after releasing the book ‘**Two Classical Plays from India**’, an **English translation of Hindi** plays written by well-known playwright **Shri D.P. Sinha.**

July 26

- A book titled “Gandhi: The years that changed the world (1914-1948)” has been written **Ramachandra Guha.** This book will be released in September 2018.