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NATIONAL NEWS

- The **world's first-ever facility to create thermal batteries** will be inaugurated in **Amaravati**, Andhra Pradesh. The Thermal batteries will be manufactured by Bharat Energy Storage Technology Private Limited (**BEST**).
 - These batteries are based on alternative sources of **energy production**, and their presence is expected to reduce the dependence on **fossil fuels**. Energy can be stored in it that can **power telecommunications, commercial enterprises, electric vehicles** as well as **charging systems**.
- **NITI Aayog's International Conference on "Sustainable Growth through Material Recycling: Policy Prescriptions"** was inaugurated by the Union Minister of Road Transport, Highways & Ganga Rejuvenation, **Nitin Gadkari** in **New Delhi**.
 - It is expected that the deliberations at the conference will provide inputs for the policy formulation on various aspects related to **material recycling**.
- The **National Green Tribunal constituted a committee**, to be headed by a **former Allahabad High Court judge**, for monitoring the rejuvenation **project of Ganga from Haridwar to Unnao in Uttar Pradesh**.
- The **National Academy of Art, Lalit Kala Akademi (LKA)** celebrated its **64th Foundation Day** and the event was inaugurated by Minister of State for **Culture (I/c), Dr. Mahesh Sharma**.
 - A book on eminent artist **Ganesh Pyne**– "**A Painter of Eloquent Silence**" written by **Pranav Ranjan Ray** was launched.
- The Union Ministry of Water Resources, the **NABARD** and the National Water Development Agency (**NWDA**) signed a revised Memorandum of Agreement (**MoA**) for funding of central share of **99 prioritized** irrigation projects under **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)**.
- **Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar** and Tourism Minister **Manohar**

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Ajgaonkar flagged off the Goa Tourism Development Corporation's **app-based taxi service** called '**GOAMILES**' in Panaji.

- It would ensure that **commuters are not cheated as there would be transparency in fares for the customers**. It will also ensure the increase in earnings of **taxi drivers by "two to three" times**.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- The opening ceremony of **Exercise Maitree**, a joint military exercise between **Indian Army and Royal Thai Army**, was held in **Chachoengsao province**, Thailand. It will be conducted between **August 6-19th 2018**.
 - It is an annual reciprocal training event. Earlier it took place in **Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh in 2017**.
- **Google** has released its latest version of **Android Operating System — Android 9 Pie**, which harnesses the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to predict how users would like to experience their devices while offering a smoother navigation system and an easier way to **track and limit usage of apps**.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- **ISRO** announced that it would launch the heaviest communication satellite **GSAT -11** from **French Guiana** on **November 30, 2018**. This satellite weighs over 5.7 tonnes or **5700 kg**. It will be launched from the **European spaceport Arianespace**.
 - This will help in increasing internet speed of the country of **14 gigabit per second data transfer speed**.

SPORTS

- **Indian men's hockey** team has improved one rank and has reached the **5th spot in the latest FIH rankings chart released on 7th August 2018**.
 - Men's **FIH** rankings released on 7th August 2018
 1. **Australia**
 2. **Argentina**
 3. **Belgium**
 - In the women's rankings, the Indian team improved one spot to and reached **9th position**. **Netherlands** remained in the top position of women's FIH rankings.