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OCTOBER

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TNPSC

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(CURRENT AFFAIRS)

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NATIONAL NEWS

- The **Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** has approved the merger of the existing regulatory institutions in the skills space – **National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT)** and the **National Skill Development Agency (NSDA)** into the **National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET)**.
 - NCVET will regulate the functioning of entities engaged in **vocational education and training**, both long-term and short-term and establish minimum standards for the functioning of such entities.
- External Affairs Minister **Sushma Swaraj** will be participating in the **17th Council of Heads of Government, CHG, meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization** to be held in **Dushanbe, Tajikistan** on 11th to 12th of this month. This will be the **second** CHG meeting since India became a full member of SCO in June 2017.
 - The leaders will be discussing prospects for further development of SCO and will exchange in-depth views on current international and regional issues.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** unveiled a **64-foot-tall statue of peasant leader Sir Chhotu Ram** at his native village **Sampla in Haryana's Rohtak district**. The 64-foot-tall statue has been sculpted by renowned sculptor and Padma Bhushan-recipient Ram Vanji Sutar.
 - Besides unveiling the statue, Prime Minister Modi also inaugurated a **rail coach factory in Haryana's Sonapat**.
- **India's first India-Israel Innovation Centre (IIC)**, an entrepreneurial technology hub, was launched in **Bengaluru**. The IIC is a significant step towards facilitating penetration of Israeli companies in India and aims to forge local partnerships and joint ventures between companies from the two countries.
 - The launch of IIC, at the IoT India Congress in Bengaluru, the first ever in India that aims to meet the long pending need **to connect the start-up ecosystems of Israel and India to improve quality**.
- The Department of Posts will celebrate the National Postal Week between October 9 and 15 to highlight its role and contribution in the lives of people.
 - The department also celebrated the **World Post Day** on October 9 to commemorate the establishment of the Universal Postal Union (**UPU**) in 1874 in the Swiss capital Berne.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (**ISRO**) signed an **MoU** with the Central University of Jammu (**CUJ**) in Jammu for setting up of the **Satish Dhawan Center** for Space Science in the University. Another MoU was signed between **CUJ** and the Central Scientific Instruments Organization (**CSIR-CSIO**).
 - To create awareness about space research and to motivate young minds to take up research related to space, astronomy, geology, atmospheric sciences and

related fields, a two day workshop was also inaugurated at the CUJ campus.

- **Delhi** government signed a **twin-city agreement** with the government of **Moscow** for cooperation in various fields like environment, culture and education, for the next 3 years. The agreement will also help in enhancing friendship and cooperation between the two cities and maintain regular contacts between the two governments.
 - The two governments have mutually agreed to extend the Twining Agreement for a period of 3 years, from November 1, 2018, in environmental protection and air pollution control, cultural and tourism, healthcare, education, sports, transport management and e-governance

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

- **Indian Naval Ship Kulish, a Kora class missile corvette**, commanded by Commander **Deepak Bali and an Indian Dornier** (naval maritime time patrol aircraft) from Andaman and Nicobar command entered Belawan harbour, Indonesia for the opening ceremony of the 32nd edition of India – Indonesia coordinated patrol (**IND-INDO CORPAT**), to be held from 11 – 27 Oct 2018.

ECONOMY

- The government reduced **excise duty on jet fuel to 11 %** from current 14 % in order to help the aviation industry that has been affected badly by high fuel prices. The Revenue Department of the Finance Ministry has notified that the excise duty on aviation turbine fuel (ATF) change will come to effect from 12th October 2018.
- The Centre has notified a higher interest rate **of 8% for the non-government provident, superannuation, and gratuity funds**, effective from October 1. The interest rate on these funds has been raised from 7.6%. The move comes on the back of a hike in small savings rates — by up to 40 basis points for some schemes — that was also made effective from October 1.

APPOINTMENTS

- **PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI)** has announced that **Mahesh Y Reddy has taken over as its Secretary General** with immediate effect. Earlier, Reddy served as Director General of Infrastructure Industry and Logistics Federation of India for eight years.

SPORTS

- **Manu Bhaker became the first shooter from India** to claim a **gold medal at the Youth Olympic Games** taking place in Buenos Aires, Argentina with a spectacular performance in what is being seen as a comeback after a disappointing Asian Games.
- **Pistol shooter Saurabh Chaudhary** has bagged the Gold Medal in the 10-meter air pistol event in the ongoing **Youth Olympic Games in Argentina**. In **Buenos Aires**, the 16-year old blew the field away in the final as he finished a massive Seven and a half points ahead of his closest rival.
 - It is India's third gold medal in the history of Youth Olympic Games and all three have come in this edition in Buenos Aires.

IMPORTANT DAYS

- **International Day of the Girl Child 2018**
 - Since 2012, **11 October has been marked as the International Day of the Girl**. The theme for International Day of the Girl Child 2018 is '**With Her: A Skilled Girl Force**'.
 - The day aims to highlight and address the needs and challenges girls face, while promoting girls' empowerment and the fulfillment of their human rights.