

National

Transforming India Website launched

- a repository for sharing the impact of various governance initiatives with citizens in real-time.
 - website provides information in a user-friendly format enabling citizens to view the content in the form of Infographics, e-books etc.
 - **Key Features:** Performance Dashboard, Infographics, Voice of India, Live Events, Videos Weekly Summary, Citizen Speak, Social Media Corner.
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Virtual, digital classrooms across 32 ITIs in state

- **new facilities of virtual and digital classrooms in 32 ITIs across the state on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day.**
 - facilities will be soon extended to all ITIs which will and bridge the rural, urban connect the gap between rural and urban areas.
 - An initiative to make these classrooms and course content **3D enabled and use of simulators** to give hands-on training to youths.
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'Ramayana month' begins in Kerala

- traditional annual **Ramayana Month** began in Kerala with temples and Hindu houses resonating with the chanting of the epic Ramayana.
 - Karkkidakam is the last month in the **Malayalam calendar**, is observed as the auspicious Ramayana month across the state
 - a decade-old tradition that devotees and spiritual classes and discourses on Ramayana by doyens would be conducted in various temples, as well as at the famed Sree Krishna Temple in Guruvayur till the end of the month.
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International

UNESCO declares Nalanda Mahavihara(Nalanda University) as World Heritage Site

- 5th Century ancient seat of learning, '**Nalanda Mahavihara(Nalanda University)** has been declared as a Heritage Site by UNESCO finally.
 - This will be 33rd site to get this tag.
 - decision was taken at the **UNESCO World Heritage Committee's 40th session**, at **Istanbul, Turkey**.
 - would be the second UNESCO heritage site in Bihar after **Mahabodhi temple in Bodh Gaya**.
 - **Tentative List of World Heritage:**
 - ◆ Zuojiang Huashan Rock Art Landscape (China)
 - ◆ Persian Qanat (Iran)
 - ◆ Nan Madol (Eastern Micronesia)
 - ◆ Nalanda Mahavihara (India)
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Gandhi's stone statue in Mongolian monastery

- seen as symbol of India-Mongolia cultural and spiritual ties.
 - **Pethub Monastery**, considered as symbol of India-Mongolia cultural and spiritual ties, was inaugurated in August, 1999
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11th ASEM summit begins in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

- 11th edition of Asia-Europe Meeting Summit (ASEM11) or ASEM2016 began with World leaders including from the leaders of 51 member countries and the representatives of European Union
 - Summit is held with the theme of **20 Years of ASEM: Partnership for the Future through Connectivity**.
 - Indian delegation is led by **Vice President Mohammad Hamid Ansari** with an agenda to push the efforts to boost **inter-continental connectivity**.
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India's Biking Queens fight against female foeticide

- Four Indian women motorcyclists are campaigning **against female foeticide** and raising awareness by taking **a trip around Asia** covering **10 nations and over 10,000km** in about 40 days.
 - They visited schools and universities as well as non-government organisations in countries such as Bhutan and Thailand.
 - Psychologist **Sarika Mehta**, headed the team, which ended in Singapore. With her were interior designer Yugma Desai, travel agent Durriya Tapia, and MsKhyati Desai, who works in human resources.
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Lifeline Express, world's first hospital train, celebrates 25 years of service

- Lifeline Express, the **world's first hospital on a train**, aka the Magic Train of India, today celebrates **25 years** of service.
 - Five-coach train provided medical facilities **to poor and rural people** where there were no hospitals available.
 - has completed **173 projects in 18 state** and also covered two lakh kilometers distance.
 - was given by the Indian Railways in 1991 and served more than **10,00,000** poor in rural India.
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Science and Technology

Chinese bullet trains cross at high speeds in world's first

- two trains **Golden Phoenix** and **Dolphin Blue** travelling at **420 km per hour** crossed on lines between Zhengzhou in the central Henan Province and Xuzhou in the eastern Jiangsu Province.
 - This feat using homegrown trains, demonstrated that China has fully mastered the core technology of high-speed trains.
 - country has built over **16,000 kms** of high-speed train tracks connecting most of the major cities also it is very significant for the branding and **export of Chinese high-speed trains**.
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NASA's Next Mars Rover Progresses towards 2020 Launch

- NASA is in the final **design and construction** of its next **Mars rover**, aimed to launch in **2020**
 - Will probe for evidence of past life on the red planet and help prepare for future manned missions.
 - Rover is set to arrive on the planet **in 2021 to study** a region of Mars where the ancient environment may have been **favorable for microbial life**.
 - **Mission is the first step in a potential multi mission campaign to return carefully selected and sealed samples of Martian rocks and soil to Earth.**
 - Important milestone in **NASA's Journey** to Mars to find whether life has ever existed on Mars, and to advance our **goal of sending humans to the Red Planet**.
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Business and Economy

RBI allows foreign players to hike stake in Axis, IDFC Bank

- allowed foreign investors to up their stakes in Axis Bank and IDFC Bank to up **to 74 per cent and 46 per cent**.
 - Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs)/Registered Foreign Portfolios Investors (RFPIs) can now invest up to 74 per cent of **the paidup capital** of Axis Bank.
 - India's central Bank in a separate note said FIIs/RFPIs can now invest from the existing 24 per cent up to **46 per cent of the paidup capital** of IDFC Bank Limited under PIS.
 - Both the lenders agreed on enhancing the limit for the purchase of its equity shares and convertible debentures **by FIIs/RFPIs**.
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India slips to third place on business optimism index

- According to the **latest** International Business Report (IBR) carried out by London based **Grant Thornton**
 - India **ranked third during** the April June quarter of 2016 on the scale of business optimism because of delays in key reforms like the GST **and bad loans facing state owned banks**.
 - report went on to say that the growth in employment expectations dropped to second position during this period from top rank in the previous quarter (January-March this year),
 - India continues to top the chart on **expectations** of increasing revenue as **96 per cent of** the respondents within the survey have voted in favor of increasing revenue.
 - business confidence in India has plummeted, there is a tremendous rise in the optimism for an increase in exports and 35 per cent of respondents expect a rise in exports
 - India however, continues to rank number 2 in citing regulations and red tape as a constraint on growth for two consecutive quarters.
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Tata Advanced Systems, Bell Helicopter sign chopper deal

- Tata Advanced Systems Limited (**TASL**) and **Bell Helicopter** has signed an agreement to manufacture helicopters under “**Make in India**” initiative
 - The pact includes Production, Training, Research & Development, Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul(MRO) and technology sharing.
 - agreement covers both Commercial and Government rotary wing markets in the light utility and reconnaissance segments.
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