

# NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## Five Months Long Narmada Seva Yatra at Amarkantak

- The Narmada Sewa Yatra will cover more than **1,900 kilometres in 16 districts** and create awareness about the conservation of the river.
- **Five months long Yatra** which will continue till May 11, 2017 aims to turn the **Narmada river pollution free**.
- All the villages along the river will have **Narmada Sewa Samiti** to take various corrective actions on measures to be undertaken for its preservation.

## Vintage Tapestries and Carpets Museum inaugurated in Delhi

- The museum will showcase **Zardozi canopies** from the early 1900s, red **embroidered canopy** prepared for the 1911 Delhi Durbar of King George VI, collection of **Buddhist art**, paintings, carvings and miscellaneous **gifts** presented to different Presidents.

## Website of APEDB launched in Andhra Pradesh

- The website, **apedb.gov.in** will provide the information about the **policies** of various sectors of the state, help to track the **areas of investment** in Andhra Pradesh and enable investor to determine various **investment opportunities** available in the state.
- The website will act as a **single point of reference** about investment in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

# INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## India to offer Tsunami Early Warning-System to SCS Countries

- India will provide **Tsunami Early Warning-System** to South China Sea (SCS) countries such as Vietnam, Malaysia and Philippines as a part of a soft-diplomacy effort.
- The warning system has been developed by the scientists at **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)** and uses mathematical modelling to estimate if an earthquake, in India's oceanic neighbourhood, will result in a tsunami.
- India has been providing earthquake and tsunami-warning alerts to several countries in the Indian Ocean neighbourhood.

### **European Union signs Agreement with Mali to return migrants**

- **European Union** has signed an agreement with the **Malian government** to enable the return of **Malian migrants** who have reached Europe's shores and whose asylum requests have been refused.
- The aim of the agreement is to fight the root causes of illegal migration and to enable the return from Europe of Malian migrants
- The deal will form the basis for setting up various schemes to help young people of Mali in finding work and thus strengthen the country's security forces.
- Under the deal, Malian civil servants will travel to EU member states to help determine the identity of migrants, in order to accelerate their return.

## **BUSINESS AND ECONOMY**

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### **Currency Worth Rs 4.27 lakh crore issued post demonetization: RBI**

- Currency notes worth over **Rs 4.27 lakh crore** have been issued to public through banks and ATMs after the demonetisation Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 currency notes.
- About **Rs.11.85 lakh crore** demonetized notes have already been returned in the banking system.
- The central bank will shortly issue **Rs 500** denomination banknotes in the **Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series**, without any inset letter, bearing signature of **Governor Urjit R Patel**.
- The RBI has also made arrangements for supply of adequate quantity of banknotes in various denominations to the public through banks.

### **ONGC to Set Up New Basin in Agartala**

- **Aim:** to increase focus on exploration of oil and gas in the North-East region.
- North East operations of ONGC are divided into two areas: **Assam Shelf from Jorhat to Duliajan** and **Assam Fold Belt from Silchar to Agartala**. Assam Fold Belt has mainly gas, while there are both oil and gas in Assam Shelf.
- **Basin's** job is just to **discover oil and gas** and does not produce anything while an '**asset**' **produces** and sends products to refineries.

### **DGAD suggests imposing anti-dumping duty on China**

- **Directorate General of Anti-Dumping and Allied Duties (DGAD)** has recommended imposing definitive anti-dumping duty on China for imports of **steel tubes and pipes** from the country.
- product under consideration has been exported by China to India under its normal value which has resulted in **dumping**. As a result, the domestic manufacturing has suffered material injury due to dumping.
- The government imposed a provisional anti-dumping duty on seamless tubes, steel pipes, among others, imported from China for six months.

- **DGAD** had suggested to the income department to impose provisional levy on import of certain types of iron and steel pipes from China used in oil and gas exploration in a bid to defend the local manufacturing from reduced imports.
- **DGAD** is an authority that recommends imposition **of definitive anti-dumping duty** on imports of subject goods from the subject country so as to remove the injury to the **domestic industry**.

#### **Microsoft Launches First Cybersecurity Engagement Centre in India**

- It is the first such cyber security centre of Microsoft to be built in India.
- The centre will offer Microsoft capabilities to promote deeper cybersecurity collaborations with public and private sector organizations in India.
- This centre is Microsoft's seventh Cybersecurity Centre in the world and will function as a satellite to the company's Redmond Digital Crimes Unit (DCU).
- Apart from India and Redmond, Microsoft has similar centres in Beijing, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Brussels.

## **AWARDS**

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#### **John Kerry conferred with French Highest Civilian Award**

- US Secretary of State **John Kerry** was honoured with the highest **French civilian award, Legion of Honour for his contribution in the favour of peace**.
- The Legion of Honour, (National Order of the Legion of Honour) is the highest French order for military and civil merits, established 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte.

## **SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

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#### **ISRO Ties with Private Firms to build First Joint Navigation Satellite**

- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** signed a contract with a consortium of **six companies** on December 9, 2016, to build two **navigation satellite** jointly with private firms by March 2017.
- The contract includes assembly, integration and testing (AIT) of two spare navigation satellites consecutively in around 18 months.
- ISRO plans to outsource satellite manufacturing to private firms and focus on research and deep space missions. The vendors will jointly build, test and certify two navigation satellites that would be launched to join the fleet of seven Navic satellites already in space.

**Scientists Identifies Protein Called CD36 Responsible for Spreading Cancer**

- CD36 is found in the cell membranes of **tumour cells** and are dependent on **fatty acids**.
- The researchers found that the protein was present on metastatic (spread) cancer cells from patients with a range of different tumours including oral tumours, melanoma skin cancer, ovarian, bladder, lung and breast cancer.

**Ammonia Has Been Detected in Earth's Lower Atmosphere**

- **German** scientists have detected **ammonia** in the upper troposphere layers for the first-time above India and China.
- They identified atmospheric ammonia – a chemical compound of nitrogen and hydrogen – some **12 to 15 km** (7.5 to 9.3 miles) above sea level in the area of the Asian monsoon.
- This accumulation of ammonia was found at a concentration of up to 33 pptv (33 ammonia molecules per trillion air molecules) above **North India** and **Southeast China**.

## ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

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**Rajasthan Government to Cancel illegal salt pans in Sambhar Lake**

- Central zonal bench of **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** has directed the Rajasthan government to cancel allotments of salt pans in **Sambhar Salt Lake** that fall within the wetland and run against to the order of **Wetland Rules, 2010**.
- Commercial and other activities harming the eco-system of the wetland in and around the Sambhar Lake, were being carried out contrary to the provisions of the Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules framed under the Environment Protection Acts of 1986 and 2010.
- The bench has also directed the state government not to make any further allotments or permit new salt pans within the wetland areas or in the no construction zone identified.
- Sambhar Salt Lake is India's largest inland Salt Lake. It is located in Nagpur and Jaipur districts of Rajasthan. It is India's largest saline lake and is the source of most of Rajasthan's salt production.

**Cyclone Vardah Hits Tamil Nadu, Kills Seven People**

- The very severe cyclonic storm, Vardah made landfall in Chennai about 3 pm on December 12, 2016, killing seven people in the state.
- The storm after crossing Chennai and coastal districts of north Tamil Nadu, will move westward and is likely to emerge in **Arabian Sea** on December 14.
- The cyclone caused severe destruction by uprooting trees, damaging houses, disrupting power services, land and air transport as heavy rains, strong winds hit the city.
- The government has issued a **high red alert**. **15 NDRF teams** have been deployed in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh to conduct the necessary rescue operations.

- The Tamil Nadu government has **declared holiday** for **educational institutions** in Chennai, Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur, coastal Taluks of Villupuram and also requested private institutions and undertaking to remain closed or work from home.

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