

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Election Commission Issues Notification for Assembly Election in Punjab and Goa

- **Important Dates as per the notification**
 - ♦ Last date of filing nominations by candidate: January 18, 2017
 - ♦ Scrutiny of the nomination paper: January 19, 2017
 - ♦ Last date to withdraw nominations from the election: January 21
 - ♦ Date of casting election vote in both the states: February 4, 2017
 - ♦ Counting of the votes: March 11, 2017
- There are 117-Assembly constituencies in Punjab while Goa has 40 assembly constituencies.

World's first gender literature fest to be held in Patna

- Aim : To create a platform, to exchange ideas, and to share and learn experiences of renowned people in the field of gender literature.
- The festival will also act as a platform to increase visibility for gender equity and advocacy in the State of Bihar.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

TN temples to go digital by HDFC Bank

- **HDFC Bank** introduced digital wallets to install point of sale (PoS) terminals at counters in temples of **Tamil Nadu**.
- **Five temples in Kanyakumari** district in southern Tamil Nadu have introduced digital wallets and PoS to enable their devotees pay donations
- The temples that have introduced digital mode include Arulmighu Thanumalaya Swamy Temple, Suchindrum; Arulmighu Bhagavathi Amman Temple, Kanyakumari; Arulmighu Nagaraja Temple, Nagercoil; Arulmighu Bhagavathi Amman Temple, Mondaikadu; and Arulmighu Kumaraswamy Temple, Velimalai.

Citibank Launches Voice Biometrics Authentication for Phone Banking

- **Citibank India** has launched a **Voice Biometrics Authentication** for its phone banking customers that would allow clients to use their voiceprints for authentication rather than remember multiple PINs or respond to questions through current practice of interactive voice response (IVR) used for verifying their identities.
- This new solution is fast, secure and convenient as verification would take only 15 seconds in comparison to the current system that takes about 45 seconds for a customer to verify his/her details.
- The authentication would automatically complete while the customer speak to the bank official when they call CitiPhone Banking.

PEOPLE IN NEWS

Jimmy Adams, former captain, appointed new director of West Indies cricket

- Former West Indies captain **Jimmy Adams** has taken over as the new director of West Indies cricket.
- He was the manager of the **West Indies U-19 team**. He replaces Englishman **Richard Pybus**.

Jazz musician Buddy Greco dies at 90

- American jazz and pop singer and pianist **Buddy Greco** passed away in Las Vegas, USA.
- Greco recorded more than 60 albums and had a hit with a version of “**The Lady Is a Tramp**” which was released in 1962 and sold over a **million copies**.
- He also appeared in TV series and films including “Away We Go” and “The Girl Who Knew Too Much”.
- He is well known for his popular pop, jazz and country songs which include “Oh look a-there”, “Ain’t she pretty”, “Up, up and away” and “Around the world”.

Renowned Daily Telegraph’s Correspondent Clare Hollingworth Dies at 105

- Veteran British war correspondent **Clare Hollingworth**, who reported the news that **World War II** had started, died at the age of 105 in Hong Kong.
- She was a journalist of the **UK’s Daily Telegraph** and is best known for reporting the outbreak of World War II in 1939 mostly described as the scoop of the century.
- During her career she went on to report war outbreaks in Vietnam, Algeria, the Middle East, India and Pakistan, as well as the Cultural Revolution in China.
- Hollingworth received the James Cameron Award for Journalism in 1994 and a lifetime achievement award at the What the Papers Say awards in 1999.

Former MRF director KM Philip passes away

- **KM Philip, 104**, former whole-time director on the board of MRF, passed away.
- Mr. Philip was a **Padma Shri Awardee** and a noted **philanthropist**.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Research finds Human Appendix to Support Immune System

- **Researchers from Midwestern University**, the **human Appendix** which is regarded as a **vestigial organ** can actually serve an **important biological function**.
- Researchers traced the appearance, disappearance, and reemergence of the appendix in several mammal lineages over the past millions of years, to figure out how many times it was cut and brought back due to evolutionary pressures.

- The research conducted on appearance and disappearance of appendix on over 533 mammal species over the past 11,244 million years and found that it was for 'good' intestinal bacteria that help us keep certain infections away and keep the immune system strong.
- They found that the organ has evolved at least 41 times throughout mammalian evolution and has only been lost a maximum of 12 times suggesting that appendix did have some important role.
- The study found that individuals without an appendix were four times more likely to have a recurrence of Clostridium difficile colitis, a bacterial infection that causes diarrhea, fever, nausea, and abdominal pain.

Study Reveals New Fault Forming in Indian Ocean May Trigger Quakes in Future

- A study found the evidence of the possibility of formation of a new plate boundary on the floor of the **Indian Ocean in the Wharton Basin**.
- The study published in the journal **Science Advances** estimated that the **new plate** may be **forming because of the largest earthquake** that shook the Andaman-Sumatra region in 2012 and it may further lead to more earth quakes in future.
- **Slip-Strike Quake** occurs when two plates slide horizontally against one another. Such quakes can be caused by deformations that occur in plates distant from fault lines as pressure builds up across a plate.

Star Wars gibbon is new primate species discovered in China

- **Scientists** have concluded a gibbon living in the tropical forests of south west China is a new species of primate.
- It has been named the Skywalker hoolock gibbon, means "**Heaven's movement**".
- The researchers estimate that there are about 200 of the **Skywalker gibbons** living in China.