

National Current Affairs

Integrated Check Post near Indo-Bangla border

- The main aim of the ICP is to boost employment opportunity besides boosting bilateral ties with the neighbouring countries.
- The project worth **Rs. 92.34 crore** spans over an area of 22 acres. The ICP project includes a two-floor cargo terminal building of 2,456 square metres, two-floor passenger terminal building of 4,625 sq metres, warehouse 1,420 sq m and parking 60,000 sq metres.
- The project is likely to open up borders for trade and commerce with neighbouring countries in order to bring in prosperity and economic development to the region.

International Current Affairs

Russia, Turkey and Iran to Jointly Monitor Syria Truce

- **Russia, Turkey** and Iran have agreed to jointly monitor the fragile cease-fire between the Syrian regime and rebels to find a political solution of ending the six-year conflict.
- A trilateral mechanism would be established by the group to observe and ensure full compliance with the ceasefire and prevent any provocations.
- The accord was signed by **Moscow and Ankara** and Tehran in Kazakhstan on behalf of the Syrian government and armed rebel groups.

India and France Signs Pact on Maritime Information Sharing in Indian Ocean Region

- **India and France** signed White Shipping Agreement in New Delhi to enable information sharing on maritime traffic and maritime domain awareness in the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**.
- The agreement was signed at the second dialogue on maritime cooperation for the Indian Ocean Region between India and France.
- The agreement aims to enhance the Indo-French maritime security cooperation in the region.
- The Indo-French dialogue also emphasized on freedom of navigation in IOR and Pacific.

Business and Economy

Cabinet Permits NABARD to Raise Rs. 20,000 crores for on-lending to Co-Op Banks

- It permitted the bank to make the short term borrowing at the prevailing market rate and lend to Co-op Banks at **4.5 Percent** rate of interest.
- The move will support the farmers by providing them loans to boost agricultural production.

- Government also announced to provide an additional capital of Rs. 2,000 crores to NABARD for this purpose through the Union Budget. Initially Rs. 500 crores may be released to NABARD during 2016-17.
- An interest subvention of 1.8 percent and NABARD's administrative cost of 0.2 percent would also be provided.
- The extent of interest subvention would depend on the rate at which NABARD raises funds.
- NABARD will also coordinate the conversion of operative/live KCCs into RuPay/ATM-enabled Kisan Credit Cards (KCCs) by Cooperative Banks and Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) in a mission mode.

France Issues First 'Green Bonds' with Record Sale of 7 Billion Euro

- France issued its first **"Green Bonds"** with a record sale of worth seven billion euro (**USD 7.5 billion**) thus leading a significant way towards establishment of a genuine market in renewable energy bonds.
- The proceeds from the bonds will be used by France to finance projects to address climate change.
- The **22-year bonds'** coupon has been set at 1.75 percent which is same as the interest rate on conventional borrowing for the same time frame. This will enable France to finance expenditure on green projects at the same price as traditional borrowing.
- A green bond is like any other regular bond but with one key difference: the money raised by the issuer are used towards financing 'green' projects, i.e. assets or business activities that are environment-friendly.
- Such projects could be in the areas of renewable energy, clean transportation and sustainable water management.

Boeing India Engineering & Technology Centre Launched in Bengaluru

- American aerospace major Boeing Corporation launched the **"Boeing India Engineering & Technology Center" (BIETC)** in **Bengaluru** in a bid to enhance its aerospace innovation in global emerging market like India.
- The engineering and technology centre will employ hundreds of talent of pool employees from within the nation to support its information technology & data analytics, engineering, research and technology and tests to increase productivity and long-term competitiveness in Indian Market.
- BIETC will undertake high quality technology-driven work for the development of advanced environment friendly coatings, and data analytics for next generation Airplane Health Management tools.
- BIETC is expected to be engaged in the development of software tools for airlines and airports to improve their operations and reduce costs, automate next-generation manufacturing systems, infrastructure and analytics.

People in News

Senate Committee Confirms Nikki Haley to Become U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations

- The Senate Foreign Relations Committee cleared by voice vote Haley's bid to be **U.S. ambassador to the United Nations**.
- During her confirmation hearing, Haley declared her support for moving the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem

Indian-origin Mauritius Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth resigns

- 86-year-old Indian-origin **Anerood Jugnauth** resigned and handed over the post to his son.
- **Pravind Jugnauth**, 50, leader of the main political party Militant Socialist Movement (MSM), has already formed his ministerial cabinet after receiving an appointment letter from **President Ameenah Gurib-Fakim**
- According to the Mauritius's Constitution, the President appoints a member of the National Assembly as Prime Minister who has the support of the majority of members.

Donald Trump appoints Indian-American Ajit Pai as FCC chairman

- US President Donald Trump has appointed Indian-American Ajit Pai, chairman of FCC, US communications regulatory agency.
- He becomes the third Indian American picked for key positions in his administration.
- The federal authority regulating cellphone spectrum and services, radio, television, phone, internet and satellite and cable.

Awards

Padma Awards 2017

- This year the President of India has approved Padma Awards to **89 persons**. Out of these 19 are women, 5 awardees are from the category of foreigners, NRIs, PIOs while 6 are posthumous awardees.
- The Award includes **7 Padma Vibhushan, 7 Padma Bhushan and 75 Padma Shri Awardees**.
- **Padma Vibhushan**: is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service.
Padma Bhushan: is awarded for distinguished service of a high order.
Padma Shri: is awarded for distinguished service in any field.

Nita Ambani's Philanthropic Work honoured by Metropolitan Museum of Art

- **Nita Ambani** has been honoured by the **Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Met)** in New York on for her philanthropic work in the areas of education, sports, healthcare, rural transformation, urban renewal, disaster response, women empowerment and promotion of the arts.

- Nita Ambani has become the **first South Asian** to receive the honour for the impressive diversity and scale of the work carried out by Reliance Foundation.
- Nita Ambani's work in developing sports in India was recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which elected her as its first Indian woman member. She is currently the only member from India in the IOC.

Damodar Valley Corporation receives NTPC award 2015-16

- **Damodar Valley Corporation** received **NTPC award 2015-16** amongst the power sectors under for implementation of Official Language.

Science & Technology

Japan Launches First Military Communications Satellite, Kirameki-2

- **Japan** successfully launched its **first military communications satellite** to boost the broadband capacity of its Self Defence Forces.
- It is the **first of three satellites** that will replace three civilian satellites currently used by Japan's military. The new satellites will allow military units to communicate on a high-speed and high-capacity network.

Pakistan Successfully Conducts First Flight Test of N- Capable Ababeel Missile

- The radar-evading Ababeel has the capability of carrying a nuclear warhead up to 2,200 kms and deliver multiple warheads using Multiple Independent Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology.
- The test flight aimed at validating the various design and technical parameters of the weapon system. It can defeat hostile radars with high precision.

Pune Police Launches Beat Marshall Monitoring Mobile App for Mapping Patrolling Teams

- Police Department of **Pune** has launched a Mobile App "**Beat Marshall Monitoring Mobile App**" to trace the location of the patrolling teams from police stations.
- The App has been developed by Pune based IT firm "**Sapience**" and is being used by Pune City Police on experimental basis.
- The application will be installed on the cell phones of Beat Marshals or patrolling cops so that their movements can be mapped on real-time by the control room staffers.
- The locations can be seen on the city map and the data collected through the app would be used for effective response during the emergencies by dispatching the nearest patrolling party for the first response.

US Researchers Develops First Semi Synthetic Organism

- **U.S. scientists** from **The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI)** have announced the development of the first stable semi synthetic organism, "**Escherichia coli bacteria**" that has DNA made up of both natural and artificial bases.

- In general, the DNA of every living being is composed of 4 natural bases, Adenine (A), Cytosine (C), Guanine (G) and Thymine (T). These bases are paired up to form two base pairs, AC and GT.

Scientists Warns Cooking Starchy Food to Brown May Lead to Cancer

- According to the Experts from **Food Standards Agency's (FSA)** based in United Kingdom, Bread, chips and potatoes should be cooked to a golden yellow colour, rather than brown, to reduce our intake of a chemical called Acrylamide which could cause cancer.
- **Acrylamide** is a chemical which forms in some foods when they are cooked in temperatures hotter than 120°C.
- It is formed due to chemical reaction between certain sugars and an amino acid in the food when fried, roasted, baked, grilled or toasted, rather than boiling, steaming or microwaving.
- However, the report is based on experiments on mice, rather than humans to prove that acrylamide causes cancer in people too.

Environment & Ecology

Scientists Unveils Sunspot with Centre Twice the Size of Earth

- Scientists from **European Southern Observatory (ESO)** have discovered a sunspot with dark and contorted centre which is about twice the diameter of the Earth.
- The sunspot was spotted using Atacama Large Millimetre/submillimetre Array (ALMA) antennas.
- ALMA has been carefully designed to image the Sun without being damaged by the intense heat of the focused light.
- They can study the solar activity at longer wavelengths of light including the millimetre and submillimetre portion of the entire electromagnetic spectrum of the Sun.

Sports Current Affairs

AIFF Launches Professional League for Women Footballers

- **All India Football Federation (AIFF)** launched its first ever Indian Women's League (IWL) on in order to make football a professional sport for women in the country.
- The six participating teams include FC Alakhpura (Haryana), Jeppiaar Institute of Technology FC (Puducherry), Aizawl FC (Mizoram), FC Pune City (Maharashtra), Rising Student Club (Odisha) and Eastern Sporting Union (Manipur).
- Indian women's team is ranked 54 in the world which is higher than the men's ranking of 129.

ICC Inducts 4 Women Umpires in Panel for Women's WC Qualifier

- **International Cricket Council (ICC)** named four women to be inducted in the strong group of B to conduct the ICC Women's World Cup Qualifier 2017 in February 2017 in Colombo.

- The **four women** umpires include, **Kathleen Cross** of New Zealand who would also be the head of the women umpires, Sue Redfern of England, Claire Polosak of Australia and Jacqueline Williams of the West Indies.
- The **five men** umpires include Anil Chaudhary, Leslie Reifer, Raveendra Wimalasari (all from the Emirates International Panel of ICC Umpires), Ian Ramage and Mark Hawthorne (both from the ICC Associate and Affiliate International Umpires).

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