

# NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## **Ministry of AYUSH constitutes a 16-member Committee to Prepare a Yoga Protocol for Diabetes Control**

- The Ministry of AYUSH has constituted a **16-member committee** under the chairmanship of **Dr. H.R. Nagendra**, Chancellor, S-Vyasa University, to prepare a Yoga Protocol for Diabetes Control.
- Aim is that regular yoga practice can help reduce the level of sugar in the blood, along with lowering blood pressure, keeping a weight check, reducing the symptoms and slowing the rate of progression of diabetes, as well as lessening the severity of further complications.

## **Goa Distributes Pink Teddy Bears to First-Time Female Voters**

- In a move to encourage active participation in the assembly poll especially by women voters, the government of **Goa** conducted a unique experiment, which involved giving away **600 pink teddy bears** to **first time women voters** across the state.
- The experiment was seen to be a fruitful effort.
- The 40 themed polling booths got 2 percent more voting than the average polling rate in all the other regular polling booths.

# INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## **Qatar Airways Launches World's Longest Flight**

- The **Qatar Airways** has launched the **World's longest scheduled commercial service** to ply between **Doha to Auckland**.
- The inaugural service of **Flight QR920** took off from Doha and will take **16 hours and 20 minutes** to travel **14,535 kilometers** to reach Auckland in New Zealand.
- However, during the return flight, the **Boeing 777 flight** would take **17 hours and 30 minutes** due to high-altitude winds.

## **Mexico & Turkey Agrees to Speed Up Negotiations for Free Trade Agreement**

- **Mexico and Turkey** agreed to **speed up negotiations** on bilateral free trade agreement facing US President threat to leave **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)**.
- Besides, the two nations also proposed to strengthen MIFTA forum which is a political and trade forum that includes Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey and Australia.
- The United States, Canada and Mexico are preparing to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

- However amid Trump's threat to leave NAFTA, Mexico is speeding up negotiations with the European Union and seeking to tighten trade bonds with other nations.
- Earlier Mexico launched free trade negotiations with Australia, Brunei, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and Vietnam following the US withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) free trade treaty.

## BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

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### Ministry of Coal to Open Coal-Mining Market for First Time in Four Decades

- **Ministry of Coal**, has informed that India has planned to allow the **non-state mining companies** for the first time in four decade to mine and sell coal.
- The Ministry of Coal is set to auction four mines to both **state-run and private companies** during the year 2017-18 starting April 1.
- The winner of the auction would have the freedom to sell the coal. Earlier this freedom vested only to a handful of state-run companies.
- The move will allow miners across India to have an opportunity to take the benefit from one of the World's top coal market.

### Google to Sell its Satellite Imaging Company to Startup Firm Planet Labs

- Technology giant **Google** has announced to sell its **Terra Bella** business which includes a group of **SkySat Earth imaging satellites** to an imaging start-up, **Planet Labs**.
- Google had acquired Terra Bella in **2014 for \$ 500 million** and that time it was known as Skybox Imaging.
- The deal will help Planet Labs to widen its potential customer base and broaden its available data.
- Once the deal closes, Google will enter into multi-year contract to purchase Earth-imaging data from Planet Labs.
- It aims to harness technology to develop smaller and low cost satellites to make it easier to deploy large networks of satellites at less risk and lower cost.
- Planet has also announced a plan to launch 88 small, lower cost satellites named cubists.

## PEOPLE IN NEWS

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### Sasikala Sworn in as AIADMK Legislature Party Leader

- Tamil Nadu's political party **AIADMK** has elected **Sasikala Natarajan** as the **Legislative Party leader**.
- Sasikala, the general secretary of AIADMK was unanimously elected by the AIADMK MLAs at a party meeting in Chennai.
- Her name was proposed by O. Panneerselvam.
- Now she is set to become the Chief Minister of the state.
- Ms. Sasikala will be sworn in as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on February 9 after which Panneerselvam will hand over his resignation letter to the governor.

#### **Arun M Kumar Appointed as the Chairman and CEO of KPMG India**

- Leading professional services firm **KPMG India** has appointed the former US government official **Arun M Kumar** as the **Chairman and CEO** to lead KPMG India operations.
- Prior to this, Kumar had served as Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Global Markets and Director General of the US and Foreign Commercial Service in the administration of former US President Barack Obama.
- He has also spent majority of his career with KPMG US operation including serving on the KPMG US and KPMG Americas boards from 2008-2013.

## AWARDS

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#### **Alastair Cook Rewarded Top British Honor By Prince Charles**

- The England Test captain Alastair Cook was honored with the Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) by Prince Charles at Buckingham Palace, London.
- CBE is one of the highest Order of honors among a series of top 5 British honors.
- It is rewarded for contributions made in the field of arts and sciences, work with charitable and welfare organizations, and public service outside the Civil Service.
- The 32-year-old also became the youngest batsman to score 10000 run in Test cricket in May 2016.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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#### **World's Smallest Pacemaker Unveiled in US**

- Oncologists in **United States** successfully implanted **World's smallest pacemaker, Micra Transcatheter Pacing System (TPS)**, in a patient in US.

- The pacemaker TPS is as much as a vitamin capsule in size and provides the most advanced pacing technology.
- The TPS system was approved by the **US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** recently and unlike other traditional pacemakers it does not require any cardiac wires (leads) or a surgical pocket under the skin to deliver a pacing therapy.
- It has been developed for patients with Bradycardia. It is a condition in adults with slow heart rate, usually less than 60 beats per minute.

## SPORTS

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### **Vijay Goel lays foundation stone of CoE for Para Sports in Gujarat**

- Sports Minister Vijay Goel laid the foundation stone of the India's **first Center of Excellence for Para Sports** to help para athletes in showcasing their skills and talent further both at the national and international level in **Gujarat**.
- The Center will have a fully air conditioned indoor hall, fully air conditioned elite hostel of 100 beds, 20 VIP accommodation for foreign guest which will also be air conditioned and open land for warm-up.
- Goel also inaugurated the **SAI Training Center (Para)** at SAI NSWC Gandhinagar.
- This Center will provide facilities for training in athletics, swimming and powerlifting the age group of 14-20 years.

### **India to host FIBA Women's Asia Cup in July 2017 in Bengaluru**

- Basketball Federation of India announced that India will host **FIBA Women's Asia Cup basketball tournament** in July 2017 in **Bengaluru**.
- India also set to host the **FIBA U-16 Women's Asian Championship** from October 22 to 28 in Hyderabad.
- This will be the first time since 2009 that India will host a major FIBA (International Basketball Federation) event.

### **Sharath Kamal wins his 7th natl crown at the 11Even Sports Senior Table Tennis Nationals**

- Veteran **Achanta Sharath Kamal** won the men's singles title after defeating Soumyajit Ghosh.
- This is Kamal's seventh national crown at the **11Even Sports Senior Table Tennis Nationals** held at the Manesar Sports Club in Haryana.
- **Madhurika Patkar** won the women's singles title.

**Indian Team Defeats Malaysia to Win Gold in Asian Junior Squash**

- India's boy team defeated **Malaysia 2-0 in Hong Kong to clinch the gold medal at the Asian Junior Squash championship.**
- This is the second time that the Indian boys had won the title. Earlier in 2011 they defeated Pakistan in Colombo.

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