

# NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## Tamil Nadu Chief Minister E Palaniswami Wins Trust Vote In Assembly

- Newly appointed **Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Edappadi Palaniswami** won the **trust vote** in the Assembly on February 18, 2017 where **122 MLAs** voted for him, while 11 voted for O Panneerselvam.
- To win, a majority of **68 votes** were needed. With this Palaniswami will continue to remain at the position of CM.

## Maharashtra Approves Rs. 250 crore Cloud Seeding Program

- State government of **Maharashtra** has approved a **Rs. 250 crore Cloud Seeding Program** to experiment whether cloud seeding produces sufficient rain.
- Seeding is a technique which involves spraying chemicals into clouds. Under the program, the weather scientists will fly airplanes loaded with **silver iodide** over clouds above Solapur, Maharashtra during the monsoon 2017 beginning with a three year initial investigation.
- The move is part of a larger experiment of the Earth Sciences Ministry to understand how clouds and aerosols interact and influence climate.

## Mil Banche Program held in all Government Schools of Madhya Pradesh

- An initiative by the government of Madhya Pradesh, "**Mil Banche MP**" (**Let MP read together**) **program** was held in all the **primary and middle government schools** of the Madhya Pradesh to increase knowledge and the understanding about language among students.
- Under the program, all the district administrators, government officials, public representatives, college students, retired officials, businessmen, media persons, doctors, engineers, sports persons and including common man will teach and interact with students of all government schools of the state.
- More than two lakh people of every walk of life taught in 1,12,073 primary and middle schools of the state under this statewide program.

## ICAI's Accounting Research Foundation signs pact with Railways

- **CA Institute's Accounting Research Foundation (ARF)** has signed an agreement with Indian Railways for the national rollout of accrual accounting in **Railways**
- According to the agreement accrual accounting will be introduced at **17 Railway zones** and **8 production units** across the country.
- It is the part of accounting reforms, accrual based financial statements will be rolled out in Railways by **March 2019**.

# INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## India Approves USD 340 million Loan to Nepal for Development Programs

- Under this program Mahalaki bridge and 15 roads will be constructed in various parts of Nepal.
- The move is a part of India's commitment for **strengthening infrastructure** in Nepal. The completion of infrastructural projects will not only strengthen physical connectivity but also emotional bonding between the people of both the countries.

# BUSINESS & ECONOMY

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## Oriental Bank of Commerce Launches Mobile Wallet 'Batuaa'

- The OBC bank introduced a new version of mobile banking in the form of mobile app under the name '**Oriental Batuaa**' to provide banking services through app.
- OBC also launched **two new RuPay cards, Oriental Premium card and Oriental Prepaid Card**.
- The bank also launched two MSME schemes '**Oriental Sanjeevani**' and '**Oriental Budget Hotels and Restaurants**'.
- The OBC bank aims to achieve at least **75 percent** of its total transactions through non-branch channels by March 2018.

## GST Council Approves Law to Compensate States for Revenue Loss

- **GST Council** approved a **law to compensate** states for any **loss of revenue** from the implementation of the **Goods and Service Tax (GST)** in the first five years.
- After laws are approved, the Council will get down to fixing rates of taxes for different goods and services by fitting them into the four approved slabs of 5, 12, 18 and 28 percent.
- The GST will replace central and state taxes. Under it, C-GST will be levied by the Centre, S-GST by states and I-GST on inter-state supply of goods and services.
- Different indirect taxes of central excise duty, central sales tax and service tax will be merged with C-GST while S-GST will absorb state sales tax, VAT, luxury tax and entertainment tax.

## Srinagar Airport Gets Its First Foreign Airline Service

- **AirAsia** became the first foreign airline to begin its operations from **Srinagar international airport in Jammu and Kashmir**
- The flight operation by AirAsia is expected to give a boost to tourism in the valley.
- AirAsia will operate one flight daily between Delhi and Srinagar initially.

## PEOPLE IN NEWS

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### **Ranganathan, Mehta appointed Non-Official Director in IOB, PNB**

- **T C A Ranganathan** and **Sunil Mehta** were appointed as Non-Official Directors in Indian Overseas Bank and Punjab National Bank by the Appointments Committee of Cabinet.
- Prior to this, T C A Ranganathan has worked as the **CMD of Exim Bank** while Mehta is currently **Chairman & Managing Director at SPM Capital Advisors Pvt Ltd.**

### **Former Chief Justice of India Altamas Kabir Dies at the age of 68**

- He was the **39th Chief Justice of India** who held office from September 29, 2012 to July 18, 2013.
- During his tenure as a Supreme Court judge, Justice Kabir delivered several important judgments, particularly relating to human rights and election laws.
- Kabir had also been part of the bench hearing the case of the two Italian Marines who allegedly shot dead two Kerala fishermen, taking them to be pirates.
- He had also decided the important issue of whether an MP suspended from a political party can continue as MP.

## AWARDS

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### **Indian Movie Newton Wins top Honour at Berlin Film Festival**

- Indian Cinema movie "**Newton**" directed by **Amit Masurkar** was honored with the **Art Cinema Award** in the Forum Segment at the 67th Berlin International Film Festival held in Berlin, Germany.
- **Rajkummar Rao** and **Anjali Patel** starrer **political comedy** Newton had its world premiere during the film festival. The film revolves around a clerk placed on election duty in a conflict-ridden area of Chhattisgarh.
- The film is **produced by Manish Mundra** of Drishyam Films, company best known for bankrolling critically-acclaimed projects such as Masaan, Ankhon Dekhi and Umrika.

## ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

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### **Scientists Discover Lost Continent Zealandia Hidden Submerged in Pacific Ocean**

- A **Lost Continent** that sunk about **100 million years ago** has been discovered underneath New Zealand by the scientists.
- **Zealandia**, a lost continent submerged in the **southwest Pacific Ocean**, is large enough to be recognized as a separate continent.

- Zealandia covers nearly **5 million sq. km** (1.9 million sq miles) out of which **94 percent is under water** and surrounds New Zealand, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, the Lord Howe Island group and Elizabeth and Middleton reefs.

#### **India's only Volcano in Andaman & Nicobar Island Active Again**

- The volcano of **Barren Island** last erupted in 1991 after lying dormant for 150 years.
- Again the volcano has started showing sporadic activity in small intervals of 5-10 minutes.
- As per the scientists, during the day only ash clouds were observed, but after sunset red lava foundations were erupting from the crater into the atmosphere and hot lava streamed down the slopes.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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#### **India Vetiver Network (INVN) launched in Tamil Nadu**

- India Vetiver Network (INVN) has been launched at **Tamil Nadu Agricultural University** in **Coimbatore**.
- Aim: To **protect the environment** using vetiver
- INVN is a **not-for-profit scientific network** to promote vetiver in India. Vetiver has worldwide application to tackle many environmental issues like soil erosion, mitigation of soil and water pollution.

#### **NASA to create Space Technology Research Institutes for Deep Space Exploration**

- In order to focus on deep space missions, the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** has proposed to set up of **two multi-disciplinary**, university-led research institutes that will work to develop technologies having potential to extend human presence **deeper into the solar system**.
- The new STRIs created under the proposals will bring together researchers from various disciplines and organizations to collaborate on the advancement of cutting-edge technologies in bio-manufacturing and space infrastructure.
- Through the new institutes NASA aims to shift the focus from low-earth orbit to deep space missions by way of developing technologies that will allow long-duration mission crews to manufacture the products they need rather than relying on the current practice of resupply missions from Earth.
- Each STRI will receive up to **\$15 million** over the five-year period of performance.

## SPORTS CURRENT AFFAIRS

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#### **Akhil and Jitender Kumar Signs Deal to Turn Professional Boxers**

- Following the path of Indian boxing sensation Vijender Singh, Olympic quarterfinalists boxers **Akhil Kumar and Jitender Kumar** are also stepping up to enter **professional boxing**.

- Both the boxers will make their **pro debut** on the same day when Vijender will take on China's WBO Oriental Super Middleweight Champion Zulpikar Maimaitiali in Mumbai.
- Akhil would be competing in the super lightweight category while Jitender would be seen fighting in the super featherweight division.
- Both Akhil and Jitender are former Asian Championships bronze-medallists and serving DSPs in the Haryana Police. They turned professional after getting permission from their department.

**Haryana's Sandeep Kumar Breaks his Own Record to Win Gold in 50km Race Walk**

- Athlete **Sandeep Kumar** of Haryana won the **gold medal** in the **Men's 50km** event of the **National Race Walking Championships**
- Sandeep finished the race in **3:55:59.05 seconds** to break his own earlier record at 3:56:22 which he made at the IAAF World Race Walking Cup at Taicang, China.
- With this achievement, Sandeep has now qualified for the **London World Championships** to be held in August.
- From services athletes Jitender Singh (4:02:11.58) and Chandan Singh (4:04:18.41) won the silver and bronze respectively.