

# NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## **Rajya Sabha Passes HIV/AIDS (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2014**

- **Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2014**, was passed by the Rajya Sabha
- The Bill protects such people from specific acts of discrimination by the state, or any other person.
- It also lays down penal provisions for any discrimination practiced against a person with HIV/AIDS and breach of confidentiality.
- Under the Bill, central and state governments are obliged to provide for anti-retroviral therapy (ART) and management of opportunistic infections (infections that take advantage of weakness in the immune system and occur frequently).
- The protection mandated in the Bill will apply in fields of employment, healthcare services, educational services, public facilities, property rights, holding public office, and insurance.
- It has also adopted “test and treat” policy which means any person testing positive will be entitled for free treatment by the state and central government.

## **Centre Approves Over 1.17 lakh More Houses For Urban Poor at Rs.5,773 crore**

- The total cost of the project is Rs.5,773 cr for which central assistance of Rs.1,816 crore has been approved.
- The construction project is being undertaken under two categories: Beneficiary Led Construction (BLC) and Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP) component. Central assistance of Rs.1.50 lakh is provided for each beneficiary.
- Under BLC, beneficiaries are assisted to build own houses on the land available with them or take up improvement works for increasing living space and other amenities. Under AHP, State Government provides the land to house urban poor.
- The total number of houses being taken up for construction for the benefit of urban poor under PMAY(Urban) has gone up to 17,60,507 with total project cost of Rs.96,018 crore for which central assistance of Rs.27,714 crore has been approved.

## **Initiatives to make Majuli India's First Carbon Neutral District & Biodiversity Heritage**

- Initiative to develop the **World's largest river island, Majuli** into country's first ever **Carbon Neutral district by 2020** as well as a **biodiversity heritage site** to preserve its rich heritage and legacy.
- The project titled '**Sustainable Action for Climate Resilient Development in Majuli**' (**SACReD, Majuli**) has been initiated to combat climate change and ensure reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- Majuli is the biggest river island in the world in the Brahmaputra River, Assam, India. It is also the first island district of the country.

# INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## India Ranks 131 in Human Development Index 2016

- According to the **UN Development Program's** Human Development for Everyone' Report 2016, **India** has been ranked at **131 out of 188 countries** in the **2016 Human Development Index (HDI)**.
- The HDI of India was **0.624** putting it in the medium HDI category. It was placed at **third spot** among the **SAARC nation** with Sri Lanka (73) and Maldives (105) taking the first and second spots respectively and coming under high HDI category with HDI of 0.766 and 0.701 respectively.

# BUSINESS & ECONOMY

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## Mobile Payment Service 'Samsung Pay' Officially Launched In India

- Samsung becomes the **first company to launch a mobile payment service in India**, ahead of Apple Pay or Android Pay.
- Samsung has tied up with **several banks and payment gateways** in India like ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, SBI, Standard Chartered, Citi Bank, and American Express for the payment service.
- Samsung has also tied up with mobile wallet Paytm for payments and will also add UPI based payment soon.
- Samsung Pay is a highly secure platform as it works with three levels of security like **fingerprint authentication, card tokenization** and Samsung's defense-grade mobile security platform, **Samsung KNOX**.

## Government Lowers Cash Transaction Limit to Rs 2 lakh

- Government of India has proposed to lower the limit of cash transaction from Rs. 3 lakh to **Rs. 2 lakh per month** to further tighten and discourage payments by cash as well as curb black money.
- The new limit will be effective from **April 1, 2017**. Any violations to the norms would be subjected to a fine equivalent to the amount of transaction. For example, if a cash transaction of Rs 4 lakh is uncovered, the penalty will be Rs 4 lakh.
- The decision to cap the cash transaction to Rs. 2 lakh was taken based on a report that after a sudden increase, the digital transactions had again declined.
- **Aadhaar** has been made **mandatory for filing tax returns** from July 1. Besides, Aadhaar has also been made mandatory to **apply for permanent account numbers (PAN)**.

## India and ADB Sign \$350 Million Loan for Upgrading 1,500 kms of District Roads in State of Madhya Pradesh

- Philippines headquartered Asian Development Bank and Department of Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance have signed a **\$350 million loan agreement**

- This loan amount will be used to improve 1,500 kilometers of major district roads in India's second-largest State **Madhya Pradesh**.
- The state government of Madhya Pradesh also will allocate **\$150 million** for this project

#### **Government Set to Triple Nuclear Power Generation by 2024**

- Government of India is set to increase the **nuclear power generation capacity** in India to nearly **15,000 MW** by 2024.
- The government is taking a number of steps to accelerate all ongoing nuclear projects and setting up of new plants in different parts of the country.
- The government is actively involved in the process of acquiring uranium from different sources, including exploration in new places like Bihar and Meghalaya.

## PEOPLE IN NEWS

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#### **Upendra Tripathy Appointed as Full Time Interim Director General of ISA**

- **Upendra Tripathy** has been appointed as the **Interim Director General (IDG)** of the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)** on a full time basis
- Upendra Tripathy is an **Indian Administrative Service (IAS)** officer of Karnataka Cadre. He has worked with local, provincial and union governments in India for the last 36 years.

#### **P.V. Sindhu roped as ambassador of PepsiCo's sports drink Gatorade**

- Olympics silver medalist and professional badminton player **PV Sindhu** has been appointed as brand ambassador of PepsiCo's sports based drink for **Gatorade** to popularise the benefits of this drink.
- It was the first time American food and beverage maker PepsiCo Inc has roped an Indian to endorse the brand in India.

#### **Ankur Khanna appointed as new Chief Financial Officer of ICC**

- Air Asia's Chief Financial Officer, **Ankur Khanna** has been appointed as Chief Financial Officer(CFO) of International Cricket Council(ICC).
- He has worked in senior roles at Air France / KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and ITC, an associate company of British American Tobacco.

## AWARDS

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#### **ABB India bags award for restoring 1,035 MW Sharavathi plant in Karnataka**

- **ABB India** has won the India Smart Grid Foundation (ISGF)'s "**Smart Technology of the Year 2016**" award for restoring the crucial power infrastructure of Sharavathi hydropower plant in Karnataka

- ABB India has restored and modernised the critical 1,035 MW **Sharavathi hydropower plant** which will accounts for 25 per cent of Karnataka Power Corporation's generation.
- This project will be key to realizing the objective of India's National Smart Grid Mission.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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### **IIT-Kharagpur Set to Have Supercomputing Facility**

- **Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur** is set to become the first academic institutions in India to receive a **supercomputing facility** of **1 Peta-flop** computing power under the **National Supercomputing Mission (NSM)**.
- National Supercomputing Mission envisages building supercomputing capacity and capability in the country with an estimated budget of **Rs 4,500 crore** over a period of **seven years**.
- The institute is setting up a new **Centre for Computational and Data Sciences (CCDS)** to build, manage, and operate the high-performance computing facility.

### **GRAPES-3 Telescope To Be Upgraded for Precise Detection of Solar Storms**

- The GRAPE 3 telescope became famous in 2015 when it detected the effect of a **solar storm that hit the earth** in June 2015.
- The up-gradation will enhance the capability of the telescope and enable it to give precise information about the propagation of storms with an increased coverage of the sky and improved capacity to determine the direction of incident cosmic rays.
- GRAPES-3 is designed to study cosmic rays with an array of air shower detectors and a large area muon detector.

## ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

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### **NGT Suspends Green Nod for Tamil Nadu Neutrino Project**

- **National Green Tribunal's southern bench**, uspended the **environmental clearance** for the **India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) project** to be set up in Tamil Nadu for research on high energy and nuclear physics.
- As per NGT, the site of INO project is located near **Madhikettan Shola National Park** in Idukki district of Kerala which is just 4.9 km from the project site.
- NGT also informed that the **Tamil Nadu-Kerala border** was only a kilometer away from the project location which made the project fall in Category A level.
- The INO Project is a multi-institutional collaboration aimed at building a world-class underground laboratory spanning approximately 1200 metre inside a deep cave for non-accelerator based high energy and nuclear physics research in India.

## SPORTS CURRENT AFFAIRS

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### **Ravindra Jadeja Outclasses Ashwin to Rank Top Test Bowler in ICC Ranking**

- India's spin-bowler **Ravindra Jadeja** has attained the top spot in the list of the Test bowlers as per the latest **ICC Test Ranking**
- Jadeja has now become the third Indian after Ashwin and Bishen Singh Bedi to be the highest ranked bowler in Test cricket.
- Ashwin, who had a highest rating of 904 points, has slipped 37 points behind Jadeja to 862 points after finishing with two wickets in Ranchi.