

# NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## Govt signs deal for Hydrocarbon project in Neduvasal

- Under the Discovered Small Fields (DSF) bidding round in 2016, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) awarded **31 mining** leases across the state of Tamil Nadu.
- Contract area of Neduvasal along with other contract area in Karaikal, Puducherry have an in-place volume of four lakh thirty thousand metric tonnes of oil and oil equivalent gas.

## Sanction of 101 Cold Chain Projects by Central Government

- **Ministry of Food Processing Industries** sanctioned 101 Cold Chains projects across the country.
- The top state which will get maximum benefits through these projects is Maharashtra – 21 projects.
- The government would provide **Rs 838 crore** as grant-in-aid to set up these 101 projects. The remaining fund of **Rs 2,200 crore** will be raised by Private sectors.

## Jharkhand Too Bans Illegal Slaughterhouses

- BJP-ruled state of **Jharkhand** too announced to impose ban on illegal slaughterhouses in the state.
- The government has given **72 hours to slaughterhouses** to shut their illegal businesses in case they failed to obtain licence from the relevant authorities.
- With the issuance of the order, people engaged in the sale of goat meat or chicken will have to obtain licenses from municipal bodies while those involved in slaughter of cows and buffaloes would have to close their illegal business with immediate effect.
- The decision was taken after considering overall public order, safety, and health of the people.

## Government Set to Redefine Blindness to Meet WHO Criteria

- As per **National Program for Control of Blindness (NPCB)**, in India, a person unable to count fingers from a distance of **six metres** is categorized as “blind”.
- However, as per WHO’s norm, person unable to count beyond a distance of **3 metres is termed as blind**.
- The Government of India is soon to amend the definition of Blindness to bring it in line with the definition stated in World Health Organization’s (WHO) criteria.

# INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## Pakistan Begins Building Fence along Border with Afghanistan

- With the growing tensions with **Afghanistan**, **Pakistan** has started constructing a fence along the **Afghan-Pakistani border** to restrict the Islamist militants from Afghanistan to cross the border and launch attacks on Pakistani soil.

- Pakistan and Afghanistan shares 2,400-kilometer (1,500-mile) internationally recognized border known as the **Durand Line**, drawn by Britishers in the 19th century when they dominated South Asia.
- As per Bajwa, the border fencing started in the **Pakistani Bajaur and Mohmand** districts bordering eastern Afghan provinces of **Nangarhar and Kunar**.
- In addition, Pakistan's military plans to build more than 420 small forts along the border and deploy radar sensors to detect cross-border movement of militants.

**World Environmental Education Congress 2017 to be Held in Canada**

- Theme: **Culture Environment: Weaving New Connections**
- The World Environmental Education Congress (WEEC) is an international congress that provides a platform for anyone working for education for environment and sustainable future or who has an interest in the field.
- 2017 WEEC will provide opportunity to learn more about the latest trends in environmental and sustainability education, discuss with people from all over the world, share one's own work and learn from others.
- The congress aims to build a relevant network among environmental NGO's, civil society associations, universities, local authorities as well as institutions from any level.

**India Not Participating in UN Conference for Global Ban on Nuclear Weapons**

- **United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, Leading Towards their Total Elimination**, began at New York
- It is the first multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament at the United Nations since past **20 years**.
- For the first time, India is not participating in the conference, taking into account the nation's own interests. However, India would stay in touch with the developments taking place at the conference.

## **BUSINESS & ECONOMY**

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**Odisha becomes first state to bring banking to remote rural areas through SHG**

- Odisha became the first Indian state to extend banking facilities to masses in unbanked areas through Self- Help Groups (SHGs).
- To implement this initiative, Odisha State Government has signed an agreement with **State Bank of India (SBI)** – the largest public sector bank of India.
- Odisha Govt.'s Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) is the main party (corporate agent) in this agreement with SBI.
- Around three lakh SHGs, currently operating under OLM will take up the role of Banking Correspondents (BCs).

### **40 Ananya branches opened by Syndicate Bank**

- Project Ananya is a large scale transformation program which mainly focuses on improved **customer service** and offering latest in **digital banking**
- The project was launched on **February 2016** for a period of two years which is going to end up with four pillars of transformation. They are
- 1. Business process re-engineering,  
2. Digital channels,  
3. Sales and  
4. Customer relationship management with HR
- By this project, a completely operational account can be opened in less than **1 day** with no additional visits to the branch.

### **ICICI Bank & Truecaller Partners to Launch UPI-based 'Truecaller Pay'**

- **ICICI Bank** partnered with **Truecaller app** to launch a **(Unified Payments Interface) UPI-based mobile payment service** called '**Truecaller Pay**'.
- True Pay aims to provide quick and easy payment methods to mobile phone users in India.
- Truecaller Pay will allow users of the Truecaller app to instantly create a UPI id, send money to any UPI id or a mobile number registered with the BHIM app.

### **India & Nepal Renews Fuel Supply Pact for Five Years**

- **India** has signed a renewed **Petroleum Trade Agreement** with **Nepal** on to supply petroleum products to Nepal with prompt service.
- Under the agreement, India will deliver about **1.3 million tonnes** of fuel annually to Nepal and also double the volume by 2020.
- India has assured to explore the possibility of forming an **IOC-NOC joint venture** for creating marketing infrastructure in Nepal that would include retail infrastructure as well as storage facilities for petrol, diesel, LPG and aviation turbine fuel in remote areas.
- Nepal has been receiving the petro products from India since 1974. Besides, India has also planned to constitute a **high-level official committee** to look into Nepal's demand for a LPG pipeline from Motihari to Amlekhganj as well as extending the natural gas pipeline from Gorakhpur into Nepal.
- India also agreed to extend the proposed Raxaul-Amlekhganj product pipeline to Chitwan and start work on the pipeline in 2017-18.

## **AWARDS**

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### **ISKCON's Govardhan Eco Village Gets 'Water' Award from Water Digest**

- International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) adopted Govardhan Eco Village has received the **11th Water Digest Water Awards** under the category "**Best Water NGO-Water Education**" in **New Delhi**.

- The award was presented on the behalf of '**World Water Day 2017**' which is celebrated on **22<sup>nd</sup> March** every year.

#### **Karur Vysya Bank Receives 'Best Small Bank 2016' Award**

- Tamil Nadu based **Karur Vysya Bank** has been honored as the '**Best Small Bank for 2016**'
- The Bank was adjudged by **Business Today** in association with **KMPG** in Small Bank category with balance sheet size of less than Rs. 1 lakh crore.
- With this award, KVB has attained a **total of 8 awards** in the current fiscal.

#### **Gurinder Chadha the veteran filmmaker gets Sikh Jewel Award**

- Indian origin English film director and screen writer **Gurinder Chadha** gets Sikh Jewel Award, 2017 for her contribution to the British film industries for the past 3 decades.
- "**Viceroy's House**" the film which is directed by Gurinder Chadha stands the main reason for this award. The story of the film tells us the "true story of the final five months of British rule in India and coincides with the 70th anniversary of the Independence of India and the founding of Pakistan".

## PEOPLE IN NEWS

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#### **Dr. Randeep Guleria Appointed As Director of AIIMS Delhi**

- Guleria succeeds **Dr M C Mishra** who retired in January 2017 after serving for three years.
- He has been appointed for a period of **five years** from the date of assumption of charge or till attaining the **age of 65**.
- He is credited with establishment of **India's first centre for pulmonary medicine** and sleep disorder at AIIMS in 2011.
- He was conferred with the **Padma Shri in 2015** by the President of India for his work on respiratory muscle functions, lung cancer, asthma and COPD.

#### **Renowned playwright Arun Sarma Passes away**

- Well known playwright and Sahitya Akademi Award winner **Arun Sarma** passed away at the age of 86.
- Sarma has written more than 50 plays and books in his career for which he has also won a number of awards
- In 2010, he was awarded the **Padma Shri** for his contributions to Assamese literature.
- For two consecutive years, he won the **Axom Sahitya Sabha's** best playwright and the **Sangeet Natak Akademi** award in 2003 for his contributions to drama.
- He received the **Sahitya Akademi** award in 1998 for Aaxirbaador Rang. He was also the recipient of the **Assam Valley Literary Award** in 2005.

#### **Former Punjab Minister & SAD Leader Gurdev Badal Dies**

- Former **Punjab Agriculture Minister Gurdev Singh Badal** passed away at the age of 85.

- Gurdev was a senior **Shiromani Akali Dal leader** and a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly from the **Panjgrain constituency** in Jalandhar district.
- He contested his first election in 1977 with continued victory in the Assembly elections in 1980 and 1985. He had been **5 time MLA** from this constituency, winning others in 1997 and 2002.

#### Senior Advocate TR Andhyarujina Passes Away

- Eminent Jurist and Senior Advocate, **Tehmtan R. Andhyarujina** passed away at the age of 84.
- He has been an integral part of the **legal and constitutional history of India**. At the age of 38, he was designated as the senior advocate.
- Andhyarujina served as the **Solicitor General of India** from 1996 to 1998. Before that he was the **Advocate General of Maharashtra** from 1993-95.
- His first legal Constitutional case was the **Kesavananda Bharati Case** popularly known as the fundamental rights case, which led to the introduction of the Doctrine of Basic Structure or Framework of the Constitution.
- He has appeared in a number of landmark cases in the Supreme Court, relating to **Human Rights and Constitutional Law**.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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#### Government launches Online Film Certification System

- Recent launch of Online Film Certification System of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) reasserts Government's commitment to promote 'Digital India' and 'Ease of Doing Business'.
- The online film certification system named '**E-Cinepramaan**' will come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 replacing the earlier system of physical submission.

#### ISRO Joins 36th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica

- **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** officially declared that it has launched four teams to the 36th scientific mission to Antarctica
- The mission has been organized by The **National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR)**, Ministry of Earth Sciences and Government of India. **Climatic change** is the main area of focus in this Expedition.
- The four teams that went to Antarctica are as follows,
  - 1.Space Applications Centre (SAC) Ahmadabad with two members
  - 2.National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) Hyderabad with four researchers
  - 3.Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS) Dehradun with one scientist and
  - 4.Space Physics Laboratory(SPL) VSSC Thiruvananthapuram with three members

#### Brown dwarf – purest and most massive, found by Astronomers

- An international team of astronomers has identified a **Brown dwarf** which is believed to be with the **purest** composition and the **highest mass**.

- The dwarf is identified as **SDSS J0104+1535**, is a member of the so-called halo – the outermost reaches – of our Galaxy, made up of the most ancient stars.
- Brown dwarfs are intermediate between **planets and fully-fledged stars**.
- The mass of these dwarfs are too small for full nuclear fusion of hydrogen to helium to take place.
- Even though they are not capable of nuclear fusion, they are significantly more massive than planets.

## SPORTS CURRENT AFFAIRS

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### India remains no.1, retains the ICC test championship ranking

- India stayed strong in its **No.1** spot in **ICC test rankings**, after a marvelous win against West Indies in West Indies and followed by a successful home season.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> spot will be decided after the ongoing Hamilton Test between **South Africa** and New Zealand. If South Africa wins or draws against New Zealand then it will remain at 2<sup>nd</sup> spot or **Australia** will take the 2<sup>nd</sup> position.
- India won the away series against West Indies and then followed by four home series win against New Zealand, England, Bangladesh and Australia.

### Gaurvi Singhvi swims to create record in Arabian sea

- **Gaurvi Singhvi**, the 14 year old **Udaipur girl** became the first to swim across Bandra Worli Sea Link to the Gateway of India route in Arabian Sea in a record time of 6 hours and 30 minutes.
- Gaurvi Singhvi is ranked **11th** in the All India Ranking by the Sports Federation of India.
- She also won the **Gold medal** at the State Level and has been a District champion for almost three years.

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