

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Recent Approvals by Central government

- Approved signing of Framework of Understanding (FoU) on Cooperation in the Hydrocarbon Sector with **Bangladesh**.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of justice between India and the North African country, **Tunisia** has been approved.
- The judgment pertaining to **Target Plus Scheme (TPS)** under Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2004-09 was passed by Supreme Court
- **Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy (IIPE)** will be built at a cost of over Rs. 655 crore.
- Cabinet approves setting up of a Special Purpose Vehicle to be called **Government e-Marketplace (GeM SPV)**
- Govt. has hiked the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for raw Jute from Rs. 3200/- per quintal in previous season to **Rs. 3500/- for 2017-18** season.

Petrol and Diesel prices to change every day from 1st May

- Firstly Oil companies will implement pilot project in 5 cities **Puducherry, Vizag in Andhra Pradesh, Udaipur in Rajasthan, Jamshedpur in Jharkhand and Chandigarh**.
- Currently, State fuel retailers revise rates on 1st and 16th of every month based on average international price of the fuel in the preceding fortnight and currency exchange rate.
- Now, Instead of using fortnightly average, pump rates will reflect daily movement in international oil prices and rupee-US dollar fluctuations.
- Aim is to bring market linked rates on a daily basis at all pumps across the country.
- Daily price change will remove the big jump in rates that and it will be affected at the end of the fortnight and consumer will be more aligned to market dynamics.

Andhra to introduce 'Ammaku Vandanam' in Schools

- Under this program the school children will take the blessings of their mothers and also do '**paada pooja**' (washing her feet) called Mother Worship.
- The government also decided to implement the program in 5,000 high schools across the state from academic year 2017-18.
- Under this program the mothers would be invited to the schools on a specific day every year for the special function.
- While the government would provide Rs 1.25 crore, the remaining amount will have to be collected by the headmasters and teachers from alumni or donors.
- It would be a voluntary program, aimed at paying tributes to mothers and respect motherhood.

Ganga Act draft presented to the Union Ministry

- The committee has recognized the various challenges that are being faced to maintain the (Nirmalta and Aviralta) of **National River Ganga**.

- Due to over stressed water demand from agricultural, domestic and industrial sectors, with no possible increase in availability of water in river comparison to the increasing demands.
- The committee has adopted certain strict provision to increase accountability and responsibility for use of resources made available by National River Ganga.
- The option and provision made in suggestive bills available with National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) were also considered and discussed by the committee.

Inter-disciplinary committee to examine existing framework regarding Virtual currencies

- A committee of government and central bank officials in India is set to propose new regulations related to **digital currencies or virtual currencies**
- It includes representatives from NITI Aayog a government think tank and the SBI the country's largest bank.
- The committee will take stock of the present status of Virtual Currencies both in India and globally.
- It also examine the existing global regulatory and legal structures that governs Virtual Currencies
- It also suggests measures for dealing with such Virtual Currencies.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Amazon gets RBI nod for e-wallet in India

- RBI has given an approval to **Amazon India** to launch its own **digital wallet or pre-paid payment instrument (PPI)** in India
- Amazon had launched its **Pay Balance service** in order to boost cashless transactions.
- Amazon mentioned that their focus is providing customers a convenient and trusted cashless payments experience.
- The company recently launched **Amazon Pay** in which customers can fund their pre-paid balance using internet banking and credit or debit card for smooth purchases and payments.
- Customers can go cashless and enjoy fast and easy checkouts, quicker refunds and with a secured shopping experience only on Amazon.in

Cisco Launches 5th Global Cyber Range Lab in Gurugram

- Cisco has launched its fifth global cyber range lab in Gurugram, Haryana with an aim to train Indian firms and government agencies on real-world cyber-attacks.
- Cisco will also launch a Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Pune , its fourth after the **US, Poland and Japan** in the next few months to provide a broad range of services, including monitoring of threats and its end-to-end management for enterprise needs.
- These centres are part of **Cisco's USD 100 million investment commitment to India.**

PEOPLE IN NEWS

Mahabaleshwara MS appointed as new MD and CEO of Karnataka Bank

- Karnataka Bank, one of the leading private sectors banks in South India, **MS Mahabaleshwara** is appointed as **MD and CEO** of the bank.
- Mahabaleshwara become MD and CEO of the bank for a period of **three years** as per the approval received from Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- He has over 29 years of banking experience both at operational and administrative levels.

UN Chief Guterres names Achim Steiner as new administrator of UNDP

- **Achim Steiner** was become the new administrator of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- He is also an expert in the environmental issues and politics. He also headed the UN office in Kenya.
- He is director of the Oxford Martin School since September 2016.

Justice Gita Mittal set to take over as acting Chief Justice of Delhi HC

- **Justice Gita Mittal**, the senior-most judge of Delhi High Court has been appointed as the acting **Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court**.
- Since August, 2008, Justice Mittal has been a member of the **Governing Council of the National Law University**.
- She is also a member of the Governing Council of the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi since 2013 and has been nominated to its Administrative Committee.
- She is presently chairing the court committees on the Delhi High Court's Mediation and Conciliation Centre as well as the committee monitoring the Implementation of Judicial Guidelines for Dealing with Cases of Sexual Offences and Child Witnesses.

Veteran Malayalam actor Munshi Venu passes away

- Veteran **Malayalam actor Munshi Venu**, who was popular in the industry for playing supporting roles, passed away
- He made his debut through Director Kamal's comedy drama 'Pachakuthira' and later was part of many big-budget films.
- Venu has acted in **75 Malayalam Films**. He will be remembered for his comic roles

AWARDS

Abdulqadir Rashik wins top prize at UN challenge for open source tools

- Indian software engineer **Abdulqadir Rashik** has won the top prize at a global challenge for an open-source tool.
- Abdulqadir Rashik, also an entrepreneur, won the '**Unite Ideas UNGA Viz Textual Analysis and Visualization Challenge**' for his '**Global Policy**'.
- Rashik's prototype will be made public and shared with United Nations bodies and member states.

Dilip Kumar honored with Living Legend Lifetime Award by Punjab Association

- Veteran actor **Dilip Kumar** was honoured with the **Living Legend Lifetime Award by the Punjab Association**.
- The actor was also honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 1994 and the Padma Vibhushan in 2015 for his contribution to the Indian cinema.
- The Pakistani government had also honoured him with its highest civilian honour – Nishan-e-Imtiaz, in 1998.

Himachal bags Krishi Karman Award 2015-2016

- **Himachal Pradesh** has been selected for the **Krishi Karman Award 2015-16** for increase in food grains production.
- It had been achieved because of the dedicated efforts of the department in technological inputs and services to the farmers which resulted in increase in **food grains production**.
- The total food grains production has increased from 14.94 lakh tone to 16.34 lakh tone.
- The department has also done the work in promoting poly-house cultivation, crop diversification, micro irrigation, organic farming and soil health management.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

NASA releases new global maps of Earth at night

- NASA scientists have released a new global composite map of planet Earth at night as observed in 2016. These maps show the clearest yet composite view of the patterns of human settlement across our planet.
- **NASA-NOAA Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership (NPP)** satellite was launched in 2011. It observes every location of Earth twice within 24 hours.
- By studying images of Earth at night, researchers can investigate how cities expand, can monitor light intensity to estimate energy use and economic activity, and aid in disaster response.

Global collaboration project Belle-II moves a step forward

- This experiment is designed to study violations of the **Standard Model of particle physics**.
- It is a huge collaboration of 700 scientists from 23 countries.
- Belle-II has a significant Indian participation on experimental and theoretical sides.