

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Approvals by Central government

- Approval for procurement of **Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)** Units for use in the General Elections, 2019.
- Approval for Ex-post facto approval for Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-third Amendment) Bill 2017 and (ii) National Commission for Backward Classes (Repeal) Bill, 2017
- Approval for signing of a Protocol amending the Convention between India and **Portugal** for avoidance of **double taxation** to ensure prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income
- Ban on the use of red beacons atop vehicles of government officials and VIPs. This rule will be effective from May 1, 2017.
- Approved a proposal of extending stock limits on sugar traders by another six months **till October 2017**.

Bengal government introduces Social Security Yojana converges 5 beneficiary schemes

- Bengal government has launched the **scheme for unorganized sectors and self-employed people**.
- 5 crore people will get benefit from the Social Security Yojana and around 1 crore will get direct benefit.
- **People will get more benefit from this new scheme as compared with five earlier schemes**
- 1.State Assistance Scheme for Provident Fund for Unorganised Sector
2.West Bengal Unorganized Sector Workers' Health Security Scheme
3.Social Security scheme for Construction Workers
4.West Bengal Transport Workers Social Security Scheme
5.West Bengal Bidi Workers Welfare Scheme are being converged.

Madhya Pradesh government DMRC to ink pact to supply power from Rewa Project

- **Power Purchase agreement (PPA)** has signed between **Delhi Metro Railways Corporation (DMRC) & Madhya Pradesh Power Management Company (MPPMC)** with Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Limited
- Rewa UMSP had achieved historic results with a record low first year tariff of Rs 2.97 per unit of electricity and a levelised tariff of Rs 3.30 over the term of 25 years.
- The Project will be operated in 18 months. It is a joint venture of solar energy corporation of India and MP UrjaVikas Mission.

India's skewed sex ratio to worsen further says a Government report titled 'Youth in India'

- According to the report of "Youth in India" the **sex ratio in India falls to 898 girls for 1,000 boys in 2031 from 939 in 2011**.
- From the analysis of census and the World Bank India's sex ratio has been decreasing since 1991.

- By 2010, India accounted for 17.8% of the world population an increase of 2.7% since 1970.
- It is projected to continue and by 2030, young Indians would account for 17.97% of global population.
- The projection is based on very low sex ratio at birth in India. The number of girls born for 1,000 boys — the definition of sex ratio — was 914 in 2011 and is projected to fall further in coming decades.
- As per the report the suicide among youth accounted for 33% of such deaths in India in 2015, a 3% percentage point increase since 2010.

UP government renames Gorakhpur and Agra airports

- The **Gorakhpur Airforce Station** has been **renamed as Mahayogi Goraknath Airport**. It was named after the founder of the Nath monastic movement.
- The Agra Airport will be renamed after RSS ideologue Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay airport.

Committee to review UGC recommendations on 7th Pay commission in educational institutes

- The panel had also suggested that pay of teachers should be in accordance with the 7th central pay commission.
- For implementing the recommendations of the 7th pay commission in educational institutions, universities and colleges has submitted its report to the Ministry.
- It means the overall salary of teachers would also go up if the suggestion is accepted by the HRD ministry.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

India jumps to 8th place on Global FDI Confidence Index

- India ranked at **8th position** in the **2017 A.T. Kearney Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Confidence Index**. In 2016 edition of this index, India ranked at 9th position.
- **Top 5 Countries on 2017 A.T. Kearney Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)**

Rank	Country
1 st	United States
2 nd	Germany
3 rd	China
4 th	United Kingdom
5 th	Canada

Executive order to tighten H-1B visa program

- It brings discouragement to Indian IT companies because they send a huge number of **software engineers** to the US on H1-B visas.
- a more merit and transparent way of giving visas to highly skilled workers instead of the present lottery system.
- modifications in government procurement that would give a push for purchases of American products in federal contracts.
- The 'H' visas are for temporary workers. The H1B Visas are for foreign skilled workers in occupations that generally require higher education, including science, engineering or computer programming.
- Every year, the US government awards 65,000 H1B visas and randomly distributes another 20,000 to graduate student workers.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

IMF trims India's growth forecast to 7.2 per cent for 2017

- In the latest **World Economic Outlook (WEO)**, **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has cut down India's growth forecast for year **2017** by 0.4 percentage points to **7.2 %**.
- For **Fiscal Year 2016-17**, it has pegged India's growth at **6.8%**. The report states that demonetization drive by the Govt., affected the cash flow in the system and disrupted the consumption pattern in India.
- India's growth prospects in medium term are favorable. If reforms are carried out as per the plans and supply-side concerns are addressed, India's growth rate is expected to be **8% in the medium term**.

ICICI Bank data centre becomes country's first CII-IGBC platinum rated project

- **Main objective** of becoming partner with IGBC is to **bring the Green Building movement in the country**.
- IGBC Green Data Centre Rating System would provide tangible and intangible benefits.
- Tangible benefits include 20 to 25 per cent reduction in Power Usage Effectiveness and 25 to 30 per cent reduction in water consumption.
- Intangible benefits include enhanced excellent day lighting, air quality, health and well-being of the staff operating such facility.
- IGBC aims to facilitate **10 billion sq. ft. of green building footprint by 2022**.

RBI caps bank's exposure to REITs, InvITs at 10%

- RBI has allowed banks to **invest up to 10 per cent** of the unit capital of a **Real Estate Investment Trust (REITs) or Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs)**.
- In its first bimonthly monetary policy of 2017-18, the RBI had permitted banks to invest in REITs and InvITs.
- It **main objective is to help strengthen the cash-starved infrastructure sector**.

- Introduction to REITs/InvITs will be within the overall **ceiling of 20 per cent** of the net worth.
- Banks are permitted for direct investments in shares, convertible bonds/ debentures, units of equity-oriented mutual funds and Venture Capital Funds (VCFs).
- Banks will have to safeguard guidelines on equity investments, classification and valuation of investment portfolio, Basel III Capital requirements for commercial real estate exposures and large exposure framework.

HPCL and Rajasthan Govt. sign revised Rs 43129 crore Mou for Barmer refinery

- The **state government will have 26 per cent stake** in the refinery project while HPCL will have the rest shareholding.
- Under this the refinery cost has come down to Rs 16,845 crore, which was Rs 56,040 crore in the previous MoU.
- The **Barmer refinery** will be the **first in the country to produce BS-6 standard fuel**.
- Apart from 43,129 crore, additional Rs 27,000 crore investment will be made in the refinery, oil field and petro-chemical complex.

PEOPLE IN NEWS

Devendra Kumar Sharma appointed as new BBMB chairman

- **Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB)** has appointed Devendra Kumar Sharma as a Chairman for a period of **3 years**.
- Devendra Sharma is serving as the Managing Director of Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation Limited
- He was also associated with the industrial giant Larsen & Toubro for a long time in its infrastructure development projects.
- BBMB has managed the release of water in Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan and it controls Bhakra, Pong and other dams.
- He has been associated with the power sector for over 30 years. He was involved in implementing and commissioning of Tata Hydro Power Station in Bhutan.

AWARDS

Sahitya Academy Award for translation of Murugan's Maadhorubaagan

- **Aniruddhan Vasudevan** has been chosen for **Sahitya Academy award**.
- He is chosen for his novel **"One Part Woman"**, a translation of Perumal Murugans controversial Tamil novel **"Maadhorubaagan"**.

Pakistan Hindu youth selected for prestigious US award

- **Raj Kumar**, a Hindu youth from **Pakistan** has been selected for the prestigious '**Emerging Young Leaders Award**' given by the US State Department for the positive role played by youngsters in building sustainable peace.
- He served in various leadership positions within **Pakistan-US Alumni Network (PUAN)** and secured grants totalling USD 10,000 for projects focusing on countering violent extremist voices and promoting pluralism in society.
- He also provided training to women about Pakistani laws that protect their rights.

SPORTS CURRENT AFFAIRS

Gayle becomes first cricketer to score 10,000 runs in T20

- He accomplished this feat while playing for Royal Challengers Bangalore against Gujarat Lions in an Indian Premier League (IPL), 2017 match.
- Before the start of the 2017 IPL, Gayle needed 63 runs to reach the 10,000 milestone. He scored 32, 6, 22 in the three matches he played prior to the one in which he achieved the 10000 runs mark.
- As of now, Gayle is the only cricketer in the 10,000 club in T20s. No other batsman has crossed even 8,000 runs mark in T20s. Highest run-scorer after Gayle is **Brendon McCullum (7596)**.
- Brad Hodge has scored 7338 runs while David Warner has scored 7156 runs.

Visually impaired Indian runner Sagar Baheti completes historic Boston Marathon

- India's **Sagar Baheti** became the first visually impaired Indian runner to complete the historic **Boston Marathon**.
- In 2013, he was diagnosed with Stargardt's disease. It is a type of macular degeneration that eventually leads to blindness. Baheti is a businessman by profession.
- The Boston Marathon is an annual marathon hosted by several cities in greater Boston in eastern Massachusetts, United States. The marathon first began in 1897.
- It is the world's oldest annual marathon and ranks as one of the world's best-known road racing events.

ICC names Ganguly, Ponting as commentators for upcoming Champions Trophy

- International Cricket Council (ICC) has named former Indian Cricket Team Captain, **Sourav Ganguly** and former Australian Cricket Team Captain, **Ricky Ponting** as commentators for the upcoming Champions Trophy
- For the first time in cricket coverage, **six Player Tracking cameras** will be used in each match.
- This tournament will see a state-of-the-art coverage through 34 cameras at every game, including eight ultra-motion Hawk-Eye cameras, front and reverse view stump cameras and a Spidercam