

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

First rural LED street lighting project to take off in Andhra Pradesh

- The project will be carried out through the **Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL)** under the **Ministry of Power**.
- Gram panchayats of the districts of **Guntur, Prakasham, Nellore, Kurnool, Kadapa, Ananthapur and Chittoor** will be covered under the first phase of the project.
- **French Development Agency Agence Française de Développement (AFD)** will fund the entire upfront capital cost of this project.

MoU signed between Central Industrial Security Force & National Skill Development Corporation

- The MoU aims at assisting retiring, retired, serving low medical category (LMC) CISF personnel to acquire additional skills and facilitate their resettlement through a second career.
- The MoU will remain in effect for a **period of 5 years** starting from 5th June, 2017 till 5th June, 2022, subject to a mid-term review after 3 years.
- It will also provide welfare to wards, family members of serving CISF personnel, retired personnel and personnel killed in action
- The MoU **provides** that **CISF, NSDC and NSDF will work together at CISF units all across the country**.
- Its main purpose is the implementation of CISF Multi Skill Development Institute Projects.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

World's fastest elevator to be installed in skyscraper complex building in China

- The **world's fastest elevator** that can operate at a record breaking speed of **1,260 metres per minute**
- An air pressure adjustment technology eases ear blockage by reducing the changes in air pressure inside elevator car.
- Active guide rollers installed in the elevator absorbs vibration during high speed operation, making the ride comfortable

Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt & Bahrain cut ties with Qatar

- **Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates** cut ties with Qatar in the worst diplomatic crisis to hit Gulf Arab states in decades.
- The three Gulf countries and Egypt charge with **Qatar** for supporting terrorism and destabilizing the region.
- According to Saudi state media Qatar ejected from the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen over alleged support of **ISIS and al-Qaeda**.
- Qatar which shares its only land border with Saudi Arabia has rejected the accusations.

- Qatari citizens have been told that they have 14 days to leave Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE, and those countries also banned their own citizens from entering Qatar.
- Kuwait, Oman and only Gulf Cooperation Council members are remaining with ties to Qatar

Montenegro becomes NATO's 29th member

- **Montenegro** officially joined **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** and thereby became the **29th member country of NATO**.
- The move came in the face of bitter opposition from Russia, which says NATO's steady expansion into the former communist states of Eastern Europe threatens its own security and cannot go unchallenged.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

India Signs Loan Agreement with the World Bank for USD 39.2 Million

- An agreement for **IBRD Credit of USD 39.2 Million from World Bank** for the project "**Assam Citizen Centric Service Delivery**"
- The program **cost is 49-million dollar** out of which 39.2-million dollar will be financed by the Bank, and the remaining amount will be funded-out of State Budget.
- The main objective of the project is to **improve access in the delivery of selected public services in Assam**.
- The project seeks to enable citizens to access services under the RTPS Act in a timely, efficient, and accountable manner.

Vijaya Bank set to develop 100 digital villages

- It will provide internet, free Wi-Fi connectivity, mobile payment facilities, ATM cards, online banking and others besides educating the villagers through door-to-door campaign.
- Vijaya Bank also opens bank accounts to all the eligible villagers including children and encourages them to make transactions digitally.
- The bank has about 13 lakh mobile users and about eight lakh Internet banking users.

Nepal signs agreement for Mega Hydroprojects with Chinese Firm

- It is the biggest hydro project in the landlocked country that could resolve its everlasting power crisis.
- As per the agreement, the storage project would be built under engineering, procurement, construction and finance (EPCF) model.
- Under this model, CGGC will help arrange funds required to develop the project.
- CGGC will also undertake the overall responsibility of executing the project.
- The government has allocated a **budget of Rs 5.33 billion** for the projects development in the current fiscal year.

NHB approves merger between Aadhar Housing Finance and DHFL Vysya Housing Finance

- Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd and DHFL Vysya Housing Finance Ltd will going to be merged into one to create a pan-India entity with **Rs 3,300 crore** of loan assets for financing affordable housing.
- The merger plan received backing from International Finance Company (IFC), which holds 20% in Aadhar Finance.
- It provides financial support to India's scheme of promoting dwelling units for low income families.
- The government's 'Housing for All by 2022' aims to provide finances for two crore affordable houses in urban areas and four crore affordable dwelling units in rural locations.

PEOPLE IN NEWS

Bollywood actress Dia Mirza appointed Wildlife Trust of India's brand ambassador

- Dia has lent her support to WTI's wildlife conservation endeavours for several years now and is a founder-member of the organisation's Club Nature initiative.
- Using her celebrity status, the actress has been an avid advocate for nature conservation in India to bring conservation issues before a wider, more mainstream audience.
- She has been the face of several significant environmental and humanitarian campaigns and was last year made an ambassador for the Swachh Bharat Mission's '**Swachh Saathi**' programme.

AWARDS

Authors Neelakantan, Satpathy to be honoured with Kalinga Awards

- Popular writer **Anand Neelakantan**, Odia poet **Haraprasad Das** and author **Paramita Satpathy** have been announced as winners of this year's **Kalinga Literary Awards**.
- Anand Neelakantan will be conferred Kalinga International Literary Award
- Haraprasad Das will be conferred Kalinga Literary Youth Award.
- Paramita Satpathy will be conferred Kalinga Karubaki Award.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Wildlife Board okays Andamans' Rutland Island for DRDO's missile testing project

- Standing Committee of the **National Board of Wildlife** has given clearance for Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO's) **long-range missile test facility at South Andamans' Rutland Island**.

- The proposal involves diversion of 49.978 acres forest of which 0.84 ha falls in the **Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park** and 49.138 ha reserve forest within 10km of the Eco Sensitive Zone.
- The island is very rich in marine life and was once home to the indigenous **Andamanese group 'Jangil' or Rutland Jarawa**.

IMD to give malaria, chikungunya alerts

- India Meteorological Department (IMD) has announced that it is working on a forecasting system that will give **15-day alerts** on the likelihood of a malaria or chikungunya outbreak across different regions of the country.
- IMD will release five-day and 15-day forecasts of heat-waves, cold waves and disease outbreaks.
- **IMD will offer this service by collaborating with the Medical Council of India and the Red Cross Society.**
- The services are aimed at providing custom, weather-related information to cope with challenges of a global warming and its associated impact of weather.
- At present, the pune Centre is tasked with forecasting the monsoon and documenting monsoon-related statistics.

China successfully tests solid-fuel variable ramjet engine

- **China** has successfully **tested a solid-fuel variable flow ramjet engine** that could enhance the real combat ability of the country's stealth aircraft and boost firing range of missiles
- **China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC)** has successfully conducted two flight tests with the ramjet engine, state-run Global Times.
- The solid-fuel ramjet engine is a member of the ramjet engine family, which has the advantage of low cost, high power, and high controllability with compact size.

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

India's biodiversity riches grow by 499 species

- **'Animal Discoveries 2016, New Species and Records'**, brought out by the **Zoological Survey of India** and **'Plant Discoveries 2016'**, by the **Botanical Survey of India**, 499 new species of animals and plants, (313 species of animal and 186 of plants) have been discovered from various areas of India last year.
- Of the new animal species, 258 are invertebrates and 55 vertebrates. As many as 97 species of insects, 27 of fish, 12 species of amphibians, 10 of Platyhelminthes, nine of Crustacea and six of reptiles have been discovered.
- Along with 186 new species, scientists have discovered seven new genera, four subspecies and nine new varieties from India, taking the number to 206.

Astronomers find hottest giant planet Kelt-9b

- According to a study published in the journal Nature the planet called **KELT-9b is hotter than most stars**.

- KELT-9b is **2.8 times more massive than Jupiter**, but only half as dense.
- The KELT-9b planet was found using the **Kilodegree Extremely Little Telescope**.
- The planet is so close to the star that its surface reaches more than 4,300C (7800F), making it the hottest giant planet ever found.
- The twin telescopes focused on a star called Kelt-9 which at 10,000C (18000F) is nearly twice as hot as the sun.

SPORTS CURRENT AFFAIRS

Real Madrid make history, thrash Juve 4-1 to retain Champions League title

- Real Madrid has won the UEFA Champions League title a record 12 times.
- For Real Madrid, **Cristiano Ronaldo** scored 2 goals, whereas **Casemiro** and **Marco Asensio** scored one goal each.
- This victory means, Real Madrid are the first team to successfully defend the trophy in the Champions League era. AC Milan were the last team to retain Europe's top prize when they triumphed in 1989 and 1990.