

# NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

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## **RCEP trade negotiating Committee meeting held in Hyderabad**

19th round of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) meetings and other related meetings were held from 17th to 28th July 2017 in Hyderabad, India.

- The Meeting was inaugurated by Rita Teotia, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Government of India on 24 July 2017.
- During the 19th round, parallel meetings were held by the three main Working Groups on Trade in Goods, Trade in Services and Investment, including their respective Sub-Working Groups.

## **Constitution 123rd Amendment Bill passed with amendment in Rajya Sabha**

On July 31, 2017, Constitution 123rd Amendment Bill, 2017 for setting up of a National Commission for Backward Classes was passed by Rajya Sabha after dropping an important clause. Constitution 123rd Amendment Bill passed with amendment in Rajya Sabha

- Rajya Sabha passed the bill by dropping Clause 3 which pertains to the insertion of a new article 338B about the constitution and powers of the National Commission for Backward Classes.
- One amendment sought increase in the number of members of the proposed commission from three to five with reservation for a member from a minority community and another for women. Another amendment spoke about protecting the rights of states by making their recommendations binding.

## **MMR vaccination campaign launched in Kangra**

A campaign to protect children from major childhood diseases like measles, mumps and rubella has been started in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh from August 1, 2017.

More Information about MMR Vaccination Campaign:

- The campaign has been initiated by Dharamshala Municipal Corporation Mayor Rajni Vyas.
- Under the Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccination programme, all children between the age of nine months to 15 years shall be vaccinated.
- All government and private schools as well as anganwadis shall be covered under the programme by well-trained health officials.

## **SC bans use of five metals in Firecrackers**

The Supreme Court has imposed a ban on the use of five harmful heavy metals like lithium, antimony, mercury, arsenic and lead in the manufacturing of firecrackers as they cause air and noise pollution.

- The Supreme Court maintained that it is the responsibility of the Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO) to ensure compliance of ban particularly in SC bans use of five metals in Firecrackers Sivakasi in Tamil Nadu where there are a large number of firecracker manufacturers.
- The court also asked CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board) and PESO to make collaborative efforts for setting up standards with regards to air pollution caused by the bursting of fire crackers.
- The Supreme Court order came on a 2015 petition filed by three Delhi children who had requested the court to involve regulating the use of crackers and fireworks during festivals like Diwali.

### **PM Modi announces Rs.2,350 crore relief package for floods in North East region**

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has announced a package of Rs 2350 crore for relief, rehabilitation and building flood mitigation infrastructure in the flood-affected North-Eastern states including Assam on 1st August 2017.

- The PM announced to set up a high-powered committee to find a long-term solution to the flood and erosion problem in the North east region.
- Out of the Rs 2350 crore announced by the PM, Rs 1200 crore will be given by the Union.
- He said the committee would get in touch with even the flood-hit people in the ground.
- The Union Government will also provide Rs 100 crore for carrying out the study by the high-powered committee to synergize efforts towards finding time-bound long term solutions to recurrent floods in the region.
- The funds will be utilized for repair, maintenance, and strengthening of roads, highways, bridges, and other damaged infrastructure.
- In the current financial year, the Union Government has approved Rs 600 crore as central share of SDRF for Assam.

## **INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS**

### **India, China home to 39% of young Internet users – UN report**

As per 'ICT Facts and Figures 2017', released by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations specialised agency for Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), India and China are home to 39% of the 830 million young people worldwide who use the Internet.

- As per the report, there has been a significant increase in broadband access and subscriptions with China leading the way.
- Youths (15-24 years old) are at the forefront of Internet adoption. In Least Developed Countries (LDCs), up to 35% of individuals using the Internet are aged 15-24, compared with 13% in developed countries and 23% globally.

### **China opens its first overseas Military base in Djibouti**

China has formally launched its first overseas naval facility in Djibouti, an East African nation.

- Five Chinese formations and Djibouti's Three Services HonorGuard took part in the launch ceremony on 1st of August 2017.
- The event marked the 90th anniversary of the Chinese military.
- The base is set to enable China to better support its patrols in waters China opens its first overseas Military base in Djibouti off Somalia and Yemen and carry out international humanitarian operations as well as naval exercises.
- More than 300 people attended the ceremony, including deputy Chinese naval commander Tian Zhong and Djibouti's defense minister.
- This year, the Chinese military industry commissioned China's first aircraft carrier, Liaoning, with the second carrier of the same class on the way in coming years.

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## **BUSINESS & ECONOMY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

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### **Airtel Payment Bank ties up with HPCL for ATM services**

Airtel Payments Bank, India's first payments bank has announced a strategic partnership with Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) on 1st of August 2017.

- Under which 14,000 HPCL fuel stations will act as banking points for Airtel Payments Bank.
- It also offer facilities such as opening of account, cash deposit and cash withdrawal to the payment bank's customers.
- Airtel Payments Bank customers will also be able to make digital payments for fuel purchases across 14,000 HPCL fuel stations by using their mobile phones.
- These cashless payments can be made via smartphones (MyAirtel App) as well as feature phones (USSD).
- There is no transaction fee for these digital payments

### **India-Bhutan New Trade and Transit agreement come into force**

The new bilateral Agreement on Trade Commerce and Transit between India and Bhutan came into force on 29th July 2017.

- The agreement was last renewed on 29th July 2006 for ten years.
- The validity of the same was extended (with effect from July 29, 2016) for one year or till the new agreement comes into force, through the exchange of diplomatic notes.
- It aims to further strengthen the bilateral trade relations between both countries.
- The agreement provides for a free trade regime between the territories of India and Bhutan.
- The bilateral trade relations between India and Bhutan are governed by the Agreement on Trade, Commerce, and Transit.

## **PEOPLE IN NEWS**

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### **Mukesh Ambani becomes Asia's 2nd richest person**

Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani has become Asia's 2nd richest person announced on 1st of August 2017. Ambani Net worth is \$35.2 billion.

- i .He has overtaken Hong Kong business magnate Li Ka-shing to become Asia's second-richest man.
- ii. According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Ambani's wealth has seen a rise of \$12.1 billion with the oil-to telecom conglomerate's shares.
- iii. LiKa-shing is the richest man in Hong Kong with a business empire that ranges from Mukesh Ambani India's richest for 9th consecutive year - Forbestelecommunications to retail and port.

- iv. Mukesh Ambani has announced the launch of the JioPhone. The phone is effectively free for buyers.

### **Sameer Garde named Cisco president for India, Saarc region**

Tech giant Cisco has named Sameer Garde as President for its India and Saarc operations announced on 31st of July 2017.

- Garde would join the company on 1st August 2017. He succeeds Dinesh Malkani.
- He will be responsible for Cisco's senior-level external engagement, including those with government and industry associations

### **NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Arvind Panagariya resigns**

Arvind Panagariya, the first vice-chairman of NITI Aayog announced his resignation from office on 1st of August 2017.

- Arvind was considered to be Prime Minister Narendra Modi's personal pick for economic reforms.
- He said he has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to relieve him of his duties by 31st August as he was not getting an extension of leave from Columbia University.
- He is an economist and a professor of economics at Columbia University.
- Panagariya has earlier been the Chief Economist of the Asian Development Bank and a Professor of Economics and Co-director, Centre for International Economics, the University of Maryland at College Park. Aayog's vice chairman Arvind Panagariya

### **Lt.Gen. Abhay Krishna new Eastern Command chief**

Lt General Abhay Krishna has appointed as the Chief of the Indian Army's Eastern Command on 1st of August 2017.

- Krishna succeeds Lt Gen Praveen Bakshi who has retired from service.
- He was currently serving as the Head of the Army's Jaipur-based Southwestern Command.
- He has served four tenures along the Line of Actual Control on the northern borders and commanded an infantry battalion in Sikkim.
- He had also commanded an infantry division and a Corps in the Northeast.
- He is a gallantry award winner in counter insurgency operations in Manipur and commanded Rashtriya Rifles Battalion in the Kashmir Valley.

## **Eminent Dhrupad singer Ustad SayeeduddinDagar passes away at 78**

Ustad Hussain Sayeeduddin Dagar, one of the foremost exponents of the Dhrupad tradition, died on 30th of July 2017. He was 78.

- Sayeeduddin Dagar was born in Rajasthan on 29th April 1939 and was part of the illustrious Dagar family of musicians.
- He was the youngest of the famous seven 'Dagar Bandhus' and had dedicated his life to keeping the Dhrupad tradition alive. Eminent Dhrupad singer Ustad SayeeduddinDagar passes away at 78

## **SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

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### **Jeep Compass SUV launched in India**

The all-new Jeep Compass SUV has been finally launched in India with prices starting at a very competitive Rs. 14.95 lakh for the entry-level Sport petrol and goes up to Rs. 20.65 lakh (ex-showroom) for the range-topping diesel.

- The all-new Jeep Compass SUV will be offered in a total of three variants – Sport, Longitude and Limited.
- It will be available in both petrol and diesel engine options.
- The company has already secured bookings of over 5000 units and 38000 enquiries for Compass.
- It is available in 10 different variants and 5 colours. The Compass SUV is available in both 4X2 and 4X4 version.

## **SPORTS AFFAIRS**

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### **ICC Rankings: Ravindra Jadeja maintains Top Position, Virat stays 5th**

According to the latest ICC Test Rankings Ravindra Jadeja maintained his top position in the bowlers' list while India skipper Virat Kohli remained stayed at fifth place in the batting charts released on 1st of August 2017.

- In the batsmen's rankings, Cheteshwar Pujara is the top-ranked Indian at the 4th position while opener Shikhar Dhawan climbed 21 places to be ranked 39th.
- The batting list is being topped by Australia captain Steve Smith followed by England's Joe Root and New Zealand's Kane Williamson.
- In the bowlers' chart, Ravichandran Ashwin replaced Sri Lanka captain Rangana ICC Rankings: Ravindra Jadeja maintains Top Position, Virat stays 5th Herath to claim the second spot back.
- Herath is third in the rankings. Pacer Mohammed Shami gained a place to be 23rd.
- In the all-rounders' list Jadeja and Ashwin also maintained second and third ranks respectively.
- Bangladesh's Shakib Al Hasan is still maintained at the top of the table. South Africa's Vernon Philander to take fifth position in the list of all-rounders.

### **Summer Olympics Host : Paris gets – 2024 , Los Angeles – 2028**

Paris will host the 2024 Summer Olympics Games. Los Angeles will host the 2028 Summer Olympics after reaching a deal with Olympic organizers, the Los Angeles Times reported on 31st of July 2017.

- The IOC welcomes this decision of the Los Angeles Olympic and Paralympic Candidature Committee.
- The Los Angeles Olympic and Paralympic bid committee in cooperation with the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
- IOC president- Thomas Bach

## **ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY**

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### **Earth to warm 2 degrees Celsius by end of this century says Study**

As per two different studies, using entirely different methods published in the journal Nature Climate Change, the global temperature is likely to rise more than 2 degrees Celsius by the end of this century.

- One study used statistical analysis to show that there is a 95% chance that Earth will warm more than 2 degrees at century's end, and a 1% chance that it's below 1.5 Celsius.
- As per this study, the likely range of global temperature increase is 2.0-4.9 degrees Celsius and the median forecast is 3.2 C.