

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

9-yr-old Indian youngest to climb 6,153m mountain in Kashmir

9 year old Kaamya Karthikeyan became the youngest person to reach the summit of the 6,153 metres-high Mt Stok Kangri in Kashmir.

Key Points:

- Kaamya reached the peak by climbing 30 km over a course of 3 days, with an altitude gain of 2,750 metres.
- In May 2017, Kaamya had successfully reached the base camp of Mt. Everest at 5,464 metres.

About Jammu and Kashmir & Tourist places of J/K

- Gulmarg is well known for its amazing natural beauty and it is counted as one of unique tourist.
- Sonmarg is located at an altitude of around 2730 meters from the sea level; it has snow-covered mountains as its backdrop against the sky.
- Raghunath Temple is dedicated to the Hindu Lord Shri Rama. All the inner walls of this temple are covered with gold, on three sides.
- Bahu fort is located at a distance of around 5 km from the main city and perhaps is the oldest edifice in the Jammu. This fort is facing the Tawi River.
- There is a temple of goddess kali in the fort.

Jharkhand Assembly passed two bills

Jharkhand Assembly passed the below two bills on August 12, 2017.

Jharkhand Assembly Passes Religious Freedom Bill

Jharkhand Assembly passes land acquisition 2013 amendment bill

1. Jharkhand Assembly Passes Religious Freedom Bill

On August 12, 2017, Jharkhand Assembly passed Religious Freedom Bill, 2017 introduced by BJP-led Government. The Bill aims to stop the forced conversions in the state. The bill will now be sent to the Governor. After the approval by Governor, it will be sent to the President for assent.

2. Jharkhand Assembly passes land acquisition 2013 amendment bill

On August 12, 2017, Jharkhand Assembly passed amendments to the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (also called Land Acquisition Act, 2013)

Indian Coast Guard ship 'Shaurya' commissioned in Goa

On August 12, 2017, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Dharmendra Pradhan commissioned Indian Coast Guard ship 'Shaurya' in Goa.

Features of Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) 'Shaurya':

- ICGS 'Shaurya' is the fifth in the series of six 105-metre offshore patrol vessels (OPVs).
- It has been designed and built indigenously by Goa Shipyard Ltd and is fitted with state-of-the-art navigation and communication equipment, sensors and machineries.
- ICGS 'Shaurya' draws 2,350 tonne and is propelled by 9100 kilowatt diesel engine.
- ICGS 'Shaurya' will be based at Chennai and will be placed under the operational and administrative control of Commander Coast Guard Region (East).

No Gandhi Jayanti holiday this year in Rajasthan varsities

All state-run universities in Rajasthan will not observe a holiday on October 2 on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti this year announced on 11th of August 2017.

Key Points:

- Only 24 holidays have been listed for the academic year 2017-18, in the calendar issued by the office of Rajasthan governor Kalyan Singh and by the Chancellor of all state universities.
- The changes in the new holiday calendar for the academic year 2017-18 have been issued in which the amendment has been made.
- The list has been circulated to all the 12 state-run universities two months ago. Some have already adopted it and the rest will follow the same after their respective governing body's next meeting.

About Rajasthan Forts

Chittorgarh Fort, Kumbhalgarh Fort, Ranthambore Fort, Gagron Fort, Amber Fort, Jaisalmer Fort.

Points to remember

Governor: Kalyan Singh

CM: Vasundhara Raje

Parliamentary panel headed by B C Khanduri recommends 100% pension to widow of deceased soldiers

A Parliamentary Panel has suggested that 100 per cent pension should be given to the widow of the deceased soldier. Standing Committee on Defence headed by Maj. General (Retired) B C Khanduri tabled its report in Parliament. The report said after the death of a soldier, the pension of the spouse comes down to 60 per cent of his pension.

- The committee also recommended that liberalized and special family pensions to be exempted from income tax for the widows of war like counter insurgency situations or on the line of control as is being given to disabled soldiers.
- The panel also supported the demand of Defence Forces representative being included in the Central Pay Commission to address the grievances in respect of pay and allowances and their issues.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Indian Army's T-90 Performance in Tank Biathlon Russia 2017

The Indian Army has been evicted from a multi-nation tank competition in Tank Biathlon Russia 2017 at Russia after their T-90 main battle tanks had technical problems at the Alabino ranges in the Moscow region.

- Our Army sent two T-90s – a main tank and a reserve one – and a 21-man crew for the tank biathlon at the 2017 International Army Games in Russia. India decided to field its Russian designed T-90 Main Battle Tank instead of the Arjun tank which was widely expected to participate at this games. India had a good start at the biathlon but it was disqualified from the competition after both Russian-origin tanks broke down during the penultimate round.
- China with its Type-96B tank and Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan with different T-72 raced to the last round of the competition.
- Other participants included Azerbaijan, Angola, Armenia, Belarus, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, Iran and Mongolia of totally 19 countries participated.
- New third-generation missiles are also part of the T-90 upgrade. The T-90s are a replacement for the T-55 tanks and the older variants of the T-72s. More than 1,000 T-90s have been included in the army.

Aishwarya becomes first woman to raise Indian flag at IFFM 2017

Bollywood star Aishwarya Rai Bachchan has become the first female actor ever to hoist the Indian National Flag at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM), Australia's annual celebration of film from India and the subcontinent.

Key Points:

- Aishwarya was also bestowed with 'Excellence in Global Cinema' award at the film festival.

About IFFM

- The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) is an annual Indian film festival based in Melbourne, Australia.
- It is presented by Film Victoria and the State Government of Victoria, and produced by Mind Blowing Films, a Melbourne-based distributor of Indian cinema across Australia and New Zealand. It was founded in 2010.

BANKING & FINANCE

Indian Bank Brings 2-tier Interest Rate for Savings Accounts

Indian Bank has introduced two tier interest rate structures for saving bank accounts. It will offer 4% per interest per annum for incremental balance over Rs 50 lakh and 3.50% per annum for balance up to Rs 50 lakh.

Key Points:

- The new interest rate will be effective from 16th August 2017.
- Recently SBI had bring down interest rate on savings account deposits by 50 basis points to 3.5 per on balance of Rs 1 crore and below.
- SBI continues to offer 4% interest on savings account balance of Rs 1 crore and above.

About Indian Bank

- Tagline: You Tech-Friendly Bank
- Founded on 15th August 1907

- HQ: Chennai India
- MD & CEO: Kishore Kumar Kharat.

Flipkart has become the third most funded private company globally

Flipkart has taken over the rein of the market by becoming the third most funded private company in the world.

Key Points:

- Flipkart's total raised capital is now almost \$7 billion which is higher than that raised by global giants like online house rental aggregator Airbnb (\$3.3 billion) and mobile phone maker Xiaomi (\$1.4 billion).
- In valuation, Flipkart stands at the 9th position with about \$15 billion.
- Uber is the most valued company at \$68 billion, followed by DidiChuxing at \$50 billion, and Xiaomi at \$46 billion.
- The top two are both ridehailing platforms –China-based Didi Chuxing and US-based Uber.
- In the top 10, four are ride-hailing platforms, the other two being Silicon Valley-based Lyft and India's Ola.
- Flipkart is the only e-commerce company in the top 10.

About Flipkart

- Founded: 2007
- HQ: Bangalore Karnataka India
- Founders: Sachin Bansal, Binny Bansal
- CEO: Kalyan Krishnamurthy

Hike messenger acquires Bengaluru-based tech start-up Creo

Indian messaging app Hike has acquired a Bangalore-based startup Creo. It is known for releasing smartphones, media streaming dongles, and an operating system.

Key Points:

- The Creo team will begin work on a developer platform to enable 3rd party developers to build services on the Hike platform.

- Creo was founded by Sai Srinivas Kiran G, and Shubham Malhotra in 2013, former Hike employees.
- Creo was earlier known as Mango Man Consumer Electronics.
- Its first commercially available consumer product was a streaming media dongle, Teewee.
- The device was similar to Google Chromecast in terms of functionality.
- In 2016 Creo had launched the Mark 1, a smartphone that ran Fuel OS based on Android.
- This is Hike's third big acquisition. Previously, Hike had acquired ZipPhone, a US-based free voice-calling company in 2015 and content sharing platform Pulse.
- Hike Messenger is run by Kavin Bharti Mittal.

About Hike

- Hike Messenger is a cross-platform instant messaging service for smartphones that uses the internet for communication.
- In addition to text messaging, users can send each other graphical stickers, emoticons, images, videos, audios, files, voice messages, contacts and user location.
- Hike was launched on 12th December 2012.

APPOINTMENT & RESIGNS

Dilip Asbe appointed as the acting chief executive of NPCI, after A.P. Hota retires

National Payments Corporation of India has appointed Dilip Asbe, as its Chief Executive Officer in the wake of the retirement of A. P. Hota, its founding Managing Director.

- Mr. Hota, who had served as the MD of NPCI since its inception, retired on August 10, 2017.
- Asbe who currently serves as the organisation's Chief Operating Officer will continue in the same designation, but will also act as the Chief Executive Officer of NPCI. Dilip Asbe, had joined NPCI as its first employee in 2010 as its Chief Technology Officer and was elevated to the position of the Chief Operating Officer in 2013.
- He is well known to be one of the driving forces behind the organisation's revolutionary digital payments initiatives like Unified Payments Interface (UPI), Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) and Immediate Payment Service (IMPS).

Quick Facts about National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI):

- National Payments Corporation of India is the umbrella organisation for all retail payment systems in India, which aims to allow all Indian citizens to have unrestricted access to e-payment services.
- It was founded in year 2008.
- Headquarters of NPCI is located in Mumbai.

Lalit Modi resigns from Rajasthan Cricket Association

Lalit Modi has resigned as the president of the Nagaur District Association on 12th of August 2017. He was severing his ties with the Rajasthan Cricket Association (RCA).

Key Points:

- BCCI had banned Rajasthan Cricket Association due to Mr Modi's presence.
- The former IPL chief faces allegations of money laundering and in exile.
- Lalit Modi handed over his three-page resignation to BCCI CEO Rahul Johri.
- Modi suffered a setback when his 22-year-old son Ruchir lost the RCA presidential elections earlier this year.

Milkha Singh Appointed WHO Goodwill Ambassador

Former Indian track and field sprinter Milkha Singh has been appointed as the World Health Organisation's goodwill ambassador for physical activity in South-East Asia Region (SEAR).

- As WHO goodwill ambassador, Milkha Singh, also known as 'the Flying Sikh', will promote WHO SEAR's non-communicable diseases (NCDs) prevention and control action plan which seeks to reduce the level of insufficient physical activity by 10 per cent and NCDs by 25 per cent by 2025.
- Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia has mentioned that an estimated 8.5 million people die due to non-communicable diseases every year in WHO South-East Asia Region and many of these deaths are premature and nearly all are lifestyle related.

Accomplishments of Milkha Singh:

- Milkha Singh was the only Indian athlete to win an individual athletics gold medal at a Commonwealth Games until Krishna Poonia won the discus gold medal at the 2010 Commonwealth Games.

- He also won gold medals in the 1958 and 1962 Asian Games.
- He represented India in the 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne, the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome and the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.
- He had missed a bronze medal by a whisker in the 1960 Rome Olympics.

Vidya Balan, Gautami in reconstituted CBFC board

National Award winning actress Vidya Balan and Gautami has appointed as part of the reconstituted Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) on 11th of August 2017.

Key Points:

- The CBFC has been reconstituted for a period of three years or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)

- The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) (referred to as the Censor Board) is a statutory censorship and classification body under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.
- It is tasked with “regulating the public exhibition of films under the provisions of the Cinematograph Act 1952”.
- Formation : 1952
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
- Chairperson : Prasoon Joshi
- CEO : Anurag Srivastava, IRS
- Purpose : Film Certification

Earthport appoints Sandeep Gupta as new India Head

Earthport has appointed Sandeep Gupta as its head of India on 10th of August 2017.

Key Points:

- Earthport is a company which runs a network for cross-border payments. Gupta will be responsible for leading the expansion of the business in the primary markets of India and Sri Lanka.
- He has an experience of 20 years in the payments and banking industry.
- He joins from Deutsche Bank where he was Managing Director of Institutional Cash Management, Global Transaction Bank, responsible for managing all the banking relations in South Asia.

- He has also worked as Vice President of Global Payments and Treasury Services at The Chase Manhattan Bank NA and ANZ Grindlays Bank.
- Earthport also recently announced its partnership with Kotak Mahindra Bank.
- Headquarters : United Kingdom
- CEO : Hank Uberoi (18 Feb 2010–)
- Founded : 1997

Rajya Sabha TV CEO Gurdeep Singh Sappal resigns

Gurdeep Singh Sappal has resigned as Rajya Sabha TV CEO and Prasar Bharati CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati has been given the additional charge of the channel.

Key Points:

- Rajya Sabha TV is owned and operated by the upper house of Parliament and the vice president is its chairman.
- As Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, the Vice-President's office also heads RSTV.
- In 2008, Rajya Sabha decided to start its own 24×7 TV channel and after 3 years the decision was taken and Sappal was appointed as its CEO.
- The limited broadcast of the channel was started in August 2011 and it became a 24×7 channel on 26th January 2012.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

N.K. Jemisin has won the Hugo for Best Science Fiction Novel

African-American author Nora K. Jemisin, has won the Hugo Award for Best Novel 2017 for her work 'The Obelisk Gate'. The award was presented at the 75th World Science Fiction Convention in Helsinki, Finland on August 11, 2017.

- 'The Obelisk Gate' is the second in the trilogy that started with 'The Fifth Season', which was New York Times Notable Book of 2015 and won Jemisin the Hugo Award for Best Novel in 2016
 - The novel is about the life on a planet where the inhabitants would undergo a "Fifth Season" of catastrophic climate change every a few centuries.
 - The third book of the trilogy 'The Stone Sky' is due to be published later this month.
-

ENVIRONMENT

New 'invisible' worm species discovered via fossils

Canada based researchers have discovered fossils of a new species of arrow-shaped marine animals.

Key Points:

- They have translucent bodies and it makes them difficult to spot.
- It is 508 million year old fossils and they are much bigger than their modern counterparts. It is 10 cm long.
- The species has around 25 pairs of hooks around its mouth.

13-mn-year-old ape skull confirms African origin of humans

Anthropologists in Kenya have discovered a 13 million year-old baby ape skull that reveals what the common ancestor of all living humans and apes would have looked like.

Key Points:

- According to the study published in Nature roughly the size of a lemon, the skull belongs to a newly identified species of early ape named Nyanzapithecusalesi. Nyanzapithecusalesi was part of a group of primates that existed in Africa for over 10 million years.
- The skull also contains unerupted adult teeth, teeth that have formed but not emerged into the mouth.
- The researchers used X-ray imaging to reconstruct the teeth, which indicated that the ape belonged to a new species.
- Some of its features resemble those of today's living Old World monkeys and apes, and the ace bears a striking resemblance to today's infant gibbons.
- It is thought to be the most complete fossil ape skull ever discovered and dates from the Middle Miocene period, a crucial point in the evolutionary history of apes and humans.
- The skull was preserved due to a volcanic eruption in its vicinity, which covered it in minerals and ash.
- The research team is now intending to study the brain impressions on the interior of the skull and use the well-preserved ear canal to reconstruct more accurately how the ape may have looked.

SPORTS

Maheshwari wins India's first solo medal in women's skeet

Maheshwari Chauhan has won an individual bronze medal at the 7th Asian Championship Shotgun in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Key Points:

- She becomes the first Indian to win a medal in women's skeet at the top international level in Astana, Kazakhstan.
- Rashmni Rathore and Saniya Sheikh have won the silver medal in the Team event.
- WeiMeng of China has won gold in the women's skeet title at the seventh Asian Shotgun Championships.
- The trio shot a total of 190, finishing behind gold medalists China, who shot 195.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Left-handers Day – August 13

International Left-Handers Day is being observed on 13th August. International Left-Handers Day is designated by Left-handers International. It was first observed on the 13th of August, in the year 1976.

Key Points:

- It is meant to promote awareness of the inconveniences faced by left-handers in a predominantly right-handed world.
- Hundreds of millions of left-handed people in today's society have to adapt to use right handed tools and objects.
- Just 10% of the world's population is left-handed and this has remained roughly the case for thousands of years. Men are also more likely to be left-handed.

- Historically left-handed people were considered inferior, with the use of the left hand being associated with witchcraft.
- The word sinister comes from the Latin word “sinestra” which originally meant “left” but took on meanings of “evil” or “unlucky.”
- Left-hand shakes are a sign of disrespect. This derives from the Middle Ages where people used to use their left hand to wipe after going to the toilet.
- Wedding rings worn on the third finger of the left hand originated with the Greeks and Romans, who wore them to fend off evil associated with the left-hand.
- Tennis champion Rafael Nadal switched to being a left-handed player – and there’s a myth that his coach and mentor Toni Nadal noted it would give him a bigger advantage on court.

World Organ donation day

Organ Donation Day is observed every year on 13th of August. The aim of this day is to motivate people to donate organs after death, and to spread awareness about the importance of organ donation.

Organ Donation is donating a donor’s organs like heart, liver, kidneys, intestines, lungs, and pancreas, after the donor dies, for the purpose of transplanting them into another person who is in need of an organ.

Points to be noted

- Should spread awareness to the people about the need of organ donation
- To remove the hesitations of the people about donating organs. Organ donor can be irrespective of their age, caste, religion, community etc. There is no defined age for donating organs. The decision to donate organs is based on strict medical criteria, not age.
- Tissues such as cornea, heart valves, skin, and bone can be donated in case of natural death but vital organs such as heart, liver, kidneys, intestines, lungs, and pancreas can be donated only in the case of ‘brain death’.
- Organs such as the heart, pancreas, liver, kidneys and lungs can be transplanted to those recipients whose organs are failing because it allows many recipients to return to a normal lifestyle.
- Anyone younger than age 18 needs to have the agreement of a parent or guardian to be a donor.