

National Current Affairs

SC strikes down instant Triple Talaq

The Supreme Court of India has declared Islamic practice of instant divorce through triple talaq as unconstitutional, illegal and void and not protected by Article 25 (freedom of religion) of the Constitution.

The verdict was given by the 5 member multi-religion constitutional bench of the SC. Justice Kurian Joseph (Christian), Justice U.U Lalit (Hindu) and Justice Rohinton F. Nariman (Parsi) gave majority judgment. Chief Justice J.S. Khehar (Sikh) and Justice S. Abdul Nazeer (Muslim) dissented against majority judgment.

SC Judgement

- In a 3:2 majority judgment, the SC held that triple talaq (referred as Talaq-e-Biddat) is against the basic tenets of Quran and hence, is unacceptable.
- The three majority judges held that triple talaq is manifestly arbitrary and violative of the constitution and fundamental right under Article 14 (equality before law) so it must be struck down.
- Two dissenting judges were in favour of putting the practice on hold for six months and asking the government to come out with a law.

Background

- Triple Talaq is a personal practice followed by Muslim communities in the country as a form of divorce wherein a man can unilaterally and arbitrarily end his marriage by merely pronouncing the word Talaq thrice. The man pronouncing the divorce may deliver it through a letter, text message, email or even through a video recording. This practice also does need valid reason to be provided either.
- The controversy surrounding the issue arises from the fact that the divorced woman is not provided any legal safeguards under the rule of law against such a divorce or any injustice arising from it. It was alleged that this practice adversely impacts rights of women to a life of dignity.
- It is also held that this practice against constitutional principles such as gender equality, secularism, international laws etc. It also undermines gender equality is a sacred principle of our constitution and modern society. Even 21 Islamic theocratic countries including Pakistan, Afghanistan have abolished it.

Cabinet Approval on August 22nd 2017

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved below schemes.

- Cabinet approves MoU between India and Nepal for construction of a new Bridge over Mechi River
- Cabinet approves New Central Sector Scheme – ”Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana”
- Cabinet approves setting up of a Commission to examine the Sub-Categorization within OBCs
- Cabinet approves Closure of loss making Bharat Wagon and Engineering Company
- Cabinet gives in-principle approval for Public Sector Banks to amalgamate through an Alternative Mechanism (AM).

Cabinet approves commission on sub-categorisation of OBCs

The Union Cabinet approved a proposal for setting up of Commission under article 340 of the Constitution to examine the issue of sub-categorization of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

The Commission shall be known as the Commission to examine the sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes (OBCs). It will submit its report within 12 weeks from date of appointment of the Chairperson.

Terms of references of Commission

- The Commission will examine the extent of inequitable distribution of benefits of reservation among the castes included in the broad category of OBCs, especially with reference to the OBCs included in the Central list.
- It will work out the mechanism, norms, criteria and parameters, in a scientific approach, for sub-categorization within such OBCs.
- It will also take up the exercise of identifying the respective castes/sub-castes/communities synonyms in the Central List of OBCs and classifying them into their respective sub-categories.

Background

- The Supreme Court in Indra Sawhney and others vs. Union of India case (1992) had observed that there is no constitutional or legal bar on states for categorizing backward classes as backward or more backward.
- It had also observed that it is not impermissible in law if a State chooses to do sub-categorization. So far, 9 states/UTs viz., Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Haryana, Jharkhand, Telangana, Puducherry, West Bengal, Bihar, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have already carried out sub-categorization of OBCs. There is no sub categorisation in the central list.

CCEA approves closure of Bharat Wagon and Engineering Company

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved closure of Bharat Wagon and Engineering Company Limited (BWEL). BWEL is a Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under Ministry of Railways (MoR).

Proposal in this regard was forwarded to CCEA by the MoR. The CCEA decision will stop flow of financial support from public funds for carrying on the operations of BWEL resulting in savings for the Government.

Background

- CCEA decision comes in view of the continues poor physical and financial performance of the BWEL for more than 10 years, in spite of financial assistance and other support provided by MoR.
- The decision to wound up BWEL comes after its low probability of revival in future.

Bharat Wagon and Engineering Company Limited (BWEL)

- BWEL was incorporated as a CPSE in 1978 after taking over two sick private sector companies – Arthur Butler & Company, Muzaffarpur and Britannia Engineering Company, Mokama. It was engaged in manufacture and repair of wagons. It was having two manufacturing units at Muzaffarpur and Mokama in Bihar.
- The administrative control of BWEL was transferred to the MoR from Department of Heavy Industry (DHI) in August, 2008, as approved by the CCEA. The Company was referred to BIFR (Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction) in December, 2000 and was declared sick in the year 2002. Since then it remained sick (loss making) company.

Cabinet approves alternative mechanism Framework for consolidation of Public Sector Banks

The Union Cabinet has approved Framework for Consolidation of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) through an Alternative Mechanism (AM).

The decision would facilitate consolidation among the nationalised banks to create strong and competitive banks and also improve their competitiveness and efficiency.

Features of approved Framework for Consolidation of PSBs

- Under this framework, the decision regarding creating strong and competitive banks will be solely based on commercial considerations based on approval of the Boards of Banks (PSBs). The proposals of Banks to formulate schemes of amalgamation must be approved by the Alternative Mechanism (AM).

- There will be a ministerial committee to oversee the mechanism. The members of the panel will be decided by the Prime Minister. After in-principle approval from AM, the Banks can take steps in accordance with law and Security Exchange Board of India's (SEBIs) requirements. The final amalgamation or consolidation scheme will be notified by the Union Government in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Benefits

- The decision is expected to facilitate the creation of strong and competitive banks in public sector space to meet the credit needs of a growing economy, absorb shocks and have the capacity to raise resources without depending unduly on the state exchequer.
- It will further add commercial strength and prevent multiplicity of resources being spent in same area.

Background

- The banking scenario has changed since 1970/80s when banks were nationalised, with an increased banking presence from PSBs, non-banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Payment Banks and Small Finance Banks (SFBs). There are now 20 PSBs other than SBI.
- In 1991 after announcement of liberalisation of economy, it was suggested that there should be fewer but stronger PSBs in the country. However, the effective action for consolidating PSBs began in May 2016 after announcement of amalgamation of six subsidiary banks into the State bank of India (SBI). The merger was completed in record time, unlike earlier mergers of PSBs.

Cabinet approves India-Nepal MoU on Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs

The Union Cabinet approved signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Nepal on Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

The MoU lists out the areas of cooperation on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, their precursor chemicals and related matters between both neighbouring countries. It also indicates mechanism of information exchange and competent authorities between both countries responsible for the implementation of the MoU.

Features of MoU

- Develop mutual cooperation: to effectively resolving the issue of illicit traffic in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, cooperate in drug demand reduction through prevention, education, awareness and community based programmes, treatment and rehabilitation.

- Exchange of information: It will be in operational, technical and general nature in drug matters. Moreover, there will be exchange literature on their existing laws, rules, best practices and methods of curbing illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs.

Background

- India has always supported global efforts to counter drug trafficking. It is party to several multilateral and bilateral initiatives in this regard as also United Nations (UN) led initiatives.
- India has entered into multiple bilateral agreements/MoUs with neighbouring countries and countries having direct bearing on country's prevailing drug situation in accordance with the spirit of UN Conventions on Narcotic Drugs. Such bilateral agreements have already been executed with various countries.

NITI Aayog launches Mentor India Campaign

The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog has launched Mentor India Campaign, a strategic nation building initiative to engage leaders for guiding and mentoring students at Atal Tinkering Labs.

- The Mentor India Campaign aims at maximising the impact of Atal Tinkering Labs by engaging leaders who will nurture and guide students in the Atal Tinkering Labs.
- Under this initiative, NITI Aayog is looking for leaders who can spend one to two hours every week in one or more such labs to enable students learn, experience and practice future skills such as design and computational thinking.

Atal Tinkering Labs

- More than 900 Atal Tinkering Labs have been established across the country as a part of the Atal Innovation Mission.
- These labs are meant to be non-prescriptive by nature, and mentors are expected to be enablers rather than instructors.
- They are dedicated works spaces where students from Class 6th to Class 12th learn innovation skills and develop ideas that will go on to transform India.

Atal Innovation Mission

- NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission is among one of the flagship programs of the Government to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the country and to set up the Atal Tinkering Labs across the country. It aims to give substantial boost to the innovation ecosystem and to catalyze the entrepreneurial spirit in the country.
- Its prime objective is to provide an innovation promotion platform involving academics, researchers and entrepreneurs, drawing upon national and international experiences to foster a culture of innovation in India. It will also promote a network of

world-class innovation hubs, Start-up businesses and other selfemployment activities, particularly in technology driven areas.

NITI Aayog

- NITI Aayog is the premier policy ‘Think Tank’ of the Union Government, providing both directional and policy inputs.
- It is essentially an advisory body that seeks to provide critical directional and strategic inputs across spectrum of key elements of policy to the centre.

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports establish National Sports Museum in New Delhi

The Union Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs is going to establish National Sports Museum at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi. It will be first of its kind sports museum in India

The aim of the sports museum is to popularise the sports as a way of life within the country. It will showcase the India’s achievements in sports and also focus on the traditional sports within the country.

Key Facts

- The proposed Museum will display achievements of the Indian greats in sports and also act as an educational hub and offer opportunity for the young to delve into some sporting activity. It will be interactive venue of interest for all age groups, going beyond the classical approach of a collection of memorabilia.
- The museum will also have audio-visual display of rules and legacy events pertaining to various sports as part of education for the budding sportspersons. It will also have a well-equipped library of sports and physical fitness, painting gallery and amphitheater for screening of legacy matches, games.
- All past and present sports persons and members of public can contribute any sports memorabilia held by them for permanent display in the museum. The activities planned in museum in various segments will include sporting activities, sports related computer games and kiosks selling sports memorabilia and sports equipment.

International Current Affairs

Canada allows entry of Indian pomegranate, banana & okra

Indian bananas, pomegranate, custard apple and okra will soon be available in Canada as the North American country has allowed their import for the first time.

Key Points:

- Canada has allowed import of these fruits and vegetables from India subject to certain conditions:
 - The consignment should be free from soil, pests, leaves and other plant debris.
 - The origin of the material must be clearly identified on shipping documents
 - In 2016-17, India's agro food exports to Canada were \$125.5 million, of which fresh mangoes, grapes and other fruit were \$2.2 million.

About Canada

- Capital: Ottawa
- Currency: Canadian Dollar
- PM: Justin Trudeau

Severe Typhoon Hato hits Hong Kong

Typhoon Hato smashed into Hong Kong on 23rd of Aug 2017 with hurricane force winds and heavy rains in the worst storm the city has seen for five years. This led to cancellation of hundreds of flights and shutting down of the stock market.

Key Points:

- The storm passed as close as 60 kilometres to Hong Kong and made landfall at noon (0930 IST) in the southern mainland Chinese city of Zhuhai.
- Gusts of up to 207 kilometres per hour brought flying debris, tearing down trees and scaffolding and breaking construction cranes.
- Water supply was also limited and 50 flights cancelled from its international airport.
- The government had said 34 people had gone to hospital seeking medical treatment related to the typhoon. Around 280 people were taking refuge in temporary shelters.
- The city saw its strongest storm in 1962 when the eye of typhoon Wanda passed over and gusts of 284 kilometres per hour were recorded.
- It killed 130 people and destroyed thousands of residential huts, leaving 72,000 people homeless.
- The last time the Typhoon 10 signal was raised in Hong Kong was for Typhoon Vicente in 2012.

Mark Wahlberg named world's highest-paid actor, Shahruk khan India's highest : Forbes

Forbes has released its list of the world's 20 highest paid actors of 2017. Mark Wahlberg soared to the top of the world's highest paid actors on an annual Forbes magazine list.

Key Points:

- Wahlberg earned an estimated \$68 million in 2017.
- As per the Forbes list the 10 highest-paid leading men earned a combined \$488.5 million before tax in its June 2016-June 2017.
- It is nearly three times more than the \$172.5 million earned by the top 10 scoring women.
- Three of Bollywood's biggest stars – Shah Rukh Khan (\$38 million), Salman Khan (\$37 million) and Akshay Kumar (\$35.5 million) – took the 8th, 9th and 10th places on the Forbes list, respectively.
- Wahlberg replaced last year's top-ranked star, Dwayne Johnson, who comes in at the second spot with \$65 million earnings.
- On the third spot is The Fate of the Furious star Vin Diesel with \$54.5 million earnings.
- Rounding out the top five is Adam Sandler at the number four position with \$50.5 million and Jackie Chan on number five with \$49 million.

Banking & Finance

Asia Index launches S&P BSE Bharat 22

Asia Index Private Ltd has announced the launch of S&P BSE Bharat 22 Index. It has been launched to track the performance of state-run companies in which the central government has divested its stake.

Key Points:

- The index, as benchmark for “Bharat 22” disinvestment program of the government.
- It comprises of 22 select bluechip companies of which:
 - 16 are Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSE).
 - 3 are from Specified Undertaking of the Unit Trust of India (SUUTI)
 - 3 are PSU Banks, and are listed on the BSE.
- S&P BSE Bharat 22 has been licensed to ICICI Prudential AMC for development of an exchange traded fund (ETF) based on the index.
- It covers six sectors namely industrials, finance, utilities, energy, FMCG, basic materials and telecom.
- The index is represented largely (nearly 89%) by companies from the S&P BSE LargeCap index.

- It will be used as vehicle to help support the disinvestment process as well as increasing the passive investing footprint in India.

Business

Qatar Airways has interline partnership with Vistara

Airline Vistara and Persian Gulf carrier Qatar Airways have entered into an interline partnership. Under this partnership they will provide “through check-in” facility to customers for seamless travel.

Key Points:

- Qatar Airways currently operates to 13 cities in India from its Doha hub, while the Tata-SIA run joint venture airline Vistara operates to 19 domestic destinations.
- The partnership is effective from 22nd of August 2017.
- Under the partnership, passengers of Qatar Airways can travel seamlessly on Vistaras domestic flights to and from the Persian Gulf carrier’s global network.
- An interline arrangement refers to a pact to issue and accept tickets for flights that are operated by the partner airline.
- When selling an interline ticket, the operating airlines own flight numbers are used.
- The two airlines will provide the through check-in facility and enabling customers to get their boarding passes at the first point of departure for all the travel sectors, both domestic and international, and have their baggage checked-in through to their final destination.
- Through the partnership, a seamless flying experience and international luggage allowance would be offered for joint customers from various Indian cities to and from over 150 destinations worldwide on a single ticket.

India grants Pfizer patent on pneumonia vaccine “Prevenar 13”

India has granted US drug giant Pfizer a patent for its Prevenar 13. It is a vaccine that helps prevent cases of pneumonia, one of the leading causes of deaths of children under five years of age. The company said the patent is valid in India until 2026.

Key Points:

- According to the World Health Organisation, Pneumonia killed nearly a million children under the age of five years in 2015 alone.

- Prevenar 13 helps prevent pneumococcal pneumonia and infections caused by 13 strains of streptococcus pneumonia bacteria.
- According to the 2016 Pneumonia and diarrhoea Progress Report by John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, India has seven pneumonia related deaths per 1,000 live births.
- This vaccine and GlaxoSmithKline's Synflorix are the only two pneumococcal conjugate vaccines (PCV) available in the country.
- In the private market, Prevenar 13 is priced at Rs 3,800 per dose and Synflorix at Rs 1,800 per dose. Three doses are required for each child.
- Each dose of Prevenar 13 requires 400 different raw materials, 580 manufacturing steps, 678 quality tests and 2.5 years to produce.
- According to Pfizer's 2016 annual report Prevenar 13 has captured 18% of the Indian vaccine market.
- Panacea and Serum Institute, which has been working on a PCV 10 vaccine, reportedly expected to price their vaccines for as low as \$6 (nearly Rs 400) for all three doses.
- Synflorix has captured approximately 65% of India's private PCV vaccines market and 35% of the overall private Indian vaccines market. It is priced almost 2.5 times lower than competing vaccines
- Around five states (approximately 5.15 million babies) are expected to be covered in the first phase.

Appointments & Resigns

Government appoints Ashwani Lohani as New Chairman of Railway Board

The Union Government has appointed Ashwani Lohani as the new Chairman of the Railway Board (Ministry of Railways). Prior to this appointment, he was serving as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Air India.

His appointment comes after A.K. Mital resigned from post, owing moral responsibility of Puri-Haridwar Utkal Express derailment in Uttar Pradesh due to several lapses in track maintenance work.

About Ashwani Lohani

- Mr. Lohani is an Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineering (IRSME) cadre. Earlier he had served as DRM, Delhi Division; Chief Administrative Officer, Rail Alternate Fuel and Director, National Rail Museum. He holds the Guinness Record

for successfully running the 'Fairy Queen Express', the world's oldest working steam locomotive.

- He holds four engineering degrees, has authored two books (one on steam engines and the other on management). He is credited with the turnaround of the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (MPTDC) and the India Tourism Development Corporation.

Railway Board

- It is the apex body of the Indian Railways. It reports to the Parliament through the Ministry of Railways headed by the Union Railway Minister.
- The Chairman of the Board with the status of a Secretary to Government in the Ministry of Railways is responsible for decisions on technical and policy matters of Indian Railways.

Science & Technology

Indian student develops Nano Missile for Indian Army

A student of Chennai's SRM University, Dacharla Panduranga Rohith developed a Nano Missile on 21 August 2017 recognised by World Records of India.

Key Points:

- The basic prototype of the missile was tested in the presence of Assistant Commissioner of Police Ramapuram in Chennai.
- The video was submitted to World Records of India for recognition in July 2017.
- He developed the missile for the Indian Army and local police in fighting terrorism.
- The missile was developed for launch through a robot.
- This 1 cm nano missile can fly by burning the red phosphorus, and hit the target of three metres distance.
- Rohith is now working on the changing the fuel to give more thrust and reduces the weight of the missile so that it can be targeted at longer distances.
- Once the project is completed, he will hand over the missile to the DRDO for tests and inclusion in the weaponry of the armed forces.
- His interest in flight technologies and missiles led him to serve as a flying cadet in the aero show organised by the Indian Air Force in Vijayawada a few years ago.

Microsoft launches Project Brainwave for real-time Artificial Intelligence

Software giant Microsoft has launched Project Brainwave, a deep learning acceleration platform for real-time artificial intelligence (AI).

Its launch is important as the real-time AI has increasingly become important as cloud infrastructures process live data streams, whether they be videos, sensor streams, search queries or interactions with users

Key facts

- The 'Project Brainwave' uses the massive field-programmable gate array (FPGA) infrastructure which has been deployed by Microsoft over the past few years. It can process requests as fast as it receives them with the help of ultra-low latency.
- The Project Brainwave system architecture reduces latency, since its Central Processing Unit (CPU) does not need to process incoming requests. It also allows very high throughput, with the FPGA processing requests as fast as the network can stream them.
- The system has been architected to yield high actual performance across a wide range of complex models, with batch-free execution. It can handle complex, memory-intensive models such as Long Short Term Memories (LSTM), without using batching to increase throughput.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence is a branch of computer science concerned with making computers behave like humans. In contrast to normal hardware and software, AI enables a machine to perceive and respond to its changing environment.

Environment

Nasikabatrachus bhupathi: New frog species with pig face discovered

Indian scientists have discovered *Nasikabatrachus bhupathi*, a new species of frog that has a snout-shaped nose, just like a pig in the Western Ghats. It has been named after the Indian herpetologist S. Bhupathy.

Nasikabatrachus bhupathi species show comparisons with the Purple frog (*Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis*) which was discovered in 2003 in Seychelles.

Nasikabatrachus bhupathi

- *Nasikabatrachus bhupathi* is a soil-dwelling species of purple frog. It inhabits the eastern slopes of the Western Ghats, near the Srivilliputhur Grizzled Giant Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu.

- It differs from the Purple frog morphologically and acoustically. It is dark brown in colour and each of its calls consists of four distinct pulses while the Purple frog pauses once between its three-pulse-call.

Significance of Discovery

- The discovery is significant as it constitutes additional evidence in favour of the continental drift theory.
- The Purple frog inhabitant of Seychelles, and discovery of *Nasikabatrachus bhupathi* in India suggests that Indian subcontinent was part of ancient landmass of Gondwana before splitting from Seychelles 65 million years ago.

Sports

International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Junior World Cup Shotgun 2017

A total of 220 athletes from 33 countries will take part in the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Junior World Cup Shotgun event at Porpetto in Italy. A 23-member Indian squad will take part in the competition.

- On August 20, 2017 Shapath Bharadwaj from India won a bronze medal in the double trap event while Lakshay Sheoran and Manisha Keer combined to win a bronze in the mixed team trap competition at the ISSF Junior Shotgun World Cup.
- Lakshay Sheoran and Manisha Keer from India won the bronze medal in the mixed team trap competition of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Junior World Cup for shotgun.
- India's Akash Saharan has completed sixth in the final round of the men's trap event at the ISSF Junior Shotgun World Cup.

24th Abu Dhabi International Chess Festival 2017

Abu Dhabi Chess Festival Committee has conducted the 24th chess annual event, which consists of numerous FIDE registered tournaments. It was conducted in Abu Dhabi, the capital city of the UAE from 13th to 23rd of August, 2017.

GM Amin Bassem of Egypt is the winner, Briton GM Nigel Short was runner-up and GM Aryan Chopra from India finished third in Masters Tournament.

Tournaments

- Masters Tournament

- Open Tournament
- Juniors Tournament (under 16 years)
- Blitz tournament
- Simultaneous exhibition
- Homeland protector's tournament
- Family Team Tournament

India's GM Harika Dronavalli finished a disastrous 29th, even as 15-year-old GM Aryan Chopra finished a creditable third at the 24th Abu Dhabi International Chess Festival on August 22nd, 2017.

Important Days

International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition

The International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition was observed across the world on 23rd August 2017.

Key Points:

- International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition was proclaimed by UNESCO Executive Board through its Resolution 29 C/40.
- The Day was first celebrated in a number of countries, particularly in Haiti on 23 August 1998 and at Goree in Senegal in 23 August 1999.
- The Day marks the anniversary of the 1791 revolt of enslaved men and women in the western part of the island of Santo Domingo, which is now known as Haiti.
- This Haitian Revolution led to their freedom and independence in 1804.
- This revolt was a turning point in human history.

Obituary

Former Manipur CM Rishang Keishing passes away

Former Manipur Chief Minister and Veteran Congress leader Rishang Keishing passed away in Imphal following a brief illness. He was 96.

He was freedom fighter and member of India's first parliament (1952-57). He had served as the Chief Minister of Manipur for four terms from 1980 to 1988 and 1994 to 1997.

About Rishang Keishing

- Rishang Keishing was born 25 October 1920 and hailed from Bungpa village in Ukhrul district of Manipur. He was the last surviving member of India's first post-1947 Parliament. He had started his career as a teacher before entering into active politics.
- He was elected to the Lok Sabha in the first parliamentary elections held in 1952. He had won Lok Sabha elections as a Socialist Party candidate from Manipur Outer constituency in 1957 and 1962. Later in 1964, he joined Congress party at the invitation of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. He retired from the Rajya Sabha as its oldest member in 2014 after serving two terms since being elected in 2002.

New Zealand's oldest cricketer Tom Pritchard dies aged 100

Tom Pritchard the former fast bowler from New Zealand has died aged 100 on 22nd August 2017.

Key Points:

- He hailed from New Zealand. Pritchard had played 200 first-class matches, picking 818 wickets.
- He was considered to be one of the finest fast bowlers, precisely known for his right-arm outswingers.
- He played most of his first-class cricket in England.
- Pritchard was a genuinely fast right-arm bowler and a useful lower order right-handed batsman who played in several matches for Wellington before the Second World War.

Science fiction author Brian Aldiss dies aged 92

Brian Aldiss, the "grand old man" of science fiction has died at the age of 92. He was from United Kingdom.

Key Points:

- Aldiss served in India and Burma with the British Army during World War II.
- He later became a bookseller, publishing his first stories in a trade magazine.