

National Current Affairs

NITI Aayog launches National Nutrition Strategy

The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog launched National Nutrition Strategy aimed at Kuposhan Mukht Bharat. It intends at bringing nutrition to centre-stage of National Development Agenda. It lays down roadmap for targeted action to address India's nutritional needs.

Need

- In India, 20% of children under five years of age suffer from wasting due to acute under-nutrition. It pays an income penalty of 9 to 10% due to workforce that was stunted during their childhood.
- The NFHS-4 results shows decline in overall levels of under nutrition in both women and children. Currently, there is lack of real time measurement of nutritional determinants, which reduces capacity for targeted action among most vulnerable mothers and children.

National Nutrition Strategy

The national nutrition strategy calls for convergence between four proximate determinants of nutrition- uptake of health services, food, drinking water & sanitation and income & livelihoods. It envisages Kuposhan Mukht Bharat – linked to Swachh Bharat and Swasth Bharat. The strategy lays down a roadmap for effective action, among both implementers and practitioners, in achieving our nutrition objectives.

It enables states to make strategic choices, through decentralized planning and local innovation, with accountability for nutrition outcomes. It also gives prominence to demand and community mobilisation as key determinant to address India's nutritional needs to bring behavioural change efforts to generate demand for nutrition services.

NITI Aayog constitutes Expert Task Force on Employment and Export

The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog has constituted Expert Task Force to provide major thrust to job creation by enhancing India's exports. It will be headed by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar.

The task force will give sector-specific recommendations in key employment sectors for policy interventions and suggest measures to enhance trade in services with high employment potential.

Terms of References

- The expert task force will propose comprehensive plan of action to generate employment and alleviate under-employment and low wages by boosting India's exports in key labour-intensive industries.
- It will recommend sector-specific policy interventions in key employment sectors and suggest measures to enhance trade in services with high employment potential.
- It will identify key macroeconomic factors constraining exports and suggesting methods to address these constraints.
- It will assess effectiveness of existing schemes to promote exports. It will also suggest measures to address issues related to logistics, export credits and trade facilitation.

India hands over off-shore patrol vessel Varuna to Sri Lanka

On 5th September 2017, India handed over an off-shore patrol vessel, Varuna, to Sri Lanka as a part of stepping up co-operation between the two coast guards.

Handing over of the off-shore patrol vessel:

- The ship (Varuna) was decommissioned with traditional honours on August 23 to facilitate the handing over at Kochi.
- The ship has been allocated pennant number SLCG-60 by Sri Lanka Coast Guard and will be commanded by Captain Neville Amara Ubayasiri.
- Prior to the ship's departure to Sri Lanka, the Sri Lanka Coast Guard crew will be imparted familiarisation and on the job training by Indian Coast Guard workup team on ship handling, bridge navigation, engine room controls and machineries.
- Rear Admiral SS Ranasinghe, Chief of Staff, Sri Lanka Navy was also present during the ceremony.

Similar hand-overs by India in the past:

- Handing over ships, patrol vessels, interceptor boats to littoral states in the Indian Ocean like the Seychelles, Maldives, Mauritius and helping them in capacity-building has been a vital element of the Indian diplomacy.
- India has earlier handed over two OPVs of the Indian Coast Guard, Varaha in April 2006 and Vighraha in August 2008.

About Srilanka:

- Capitals – Colombo, Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte
- Currency – Sri Lankan rupee
- President – Mr. Maithripala Sirisena
- Official languages – Sinhala, Tamil, English

Gujarat government launches ‘Gyankunj Project ‘in schools

Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani has launched “Gyakunj e-class project” from Shahpur primary school in Gandhinagar.

Key Points:

- Under this initiative, interactive e-class will be launched with smart board.
- In the first phase, 550 schools will be covered under the ‘Gyankunj Project’ and gradually standard 5th to 9th of every schools of the state will cover under the project.
- The objective of the project is to produce world-class students. The project is launched at expenditure of Rs. 222,000/- per school.
- The state govt. has also mentioned that 1609 govt. primary schools are provided laptop, projector, infrared camera, smart board, speaker and with router facilities for 3173 class rooms of standard 7th and 8th.
- It is also noted that 10000 tablets are to be given to standard 7th and 8th students across 100 schools for free.
- Education for all courses in standard 5th to 8th will be given through e-content and internet.

About Gujarat

- Capital: Gandhinagar
- Governor: Om Prakash Kohli
- CM: Vijay Rupani

Odisha CM inaugurates fourth Govt medical college in koraput

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has inaugurated the Saheed Laxman Nayak Medical College and Hospital (SLNMCH) in the tribal-dominated district of southern Odisha on 4th Sept. 2017.

Key Points:

- With its inauguration, it became the fourth State-run medical college and hospital and the total number of MBBS seats in the State has gone up to 850.
- A total number of 100 students have been admitted to the first year MBBS course and the classes for the commencement of its first academic session began from the day of inauguration.
- It will cater to the healthcare needs of the citizens of undivided Koraput and Mayurbhanj districts respectively.
- The MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur was the last government medical college to be set up in the State in 1963.

About Odisha

- Capital: Bhubaneswar
- Governor: S.C. Jamir
- CM: Naveen Patnaik

Assam govt sets up DBT cell for implementation of Direct Benefit Transfer scheme

In Assam, the state govt. has set up a Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Cell for implementation of DBT across schemes in the Country. It helps in coordinating efforts at the State Level in taking the DBT initiative forward with immediate effect.

Key Points:

- The Cell will Coordinate with Central Ministries & circulate the directives to the respective departments in States.
- It will closely monitor & evaluate the progress of various Departments on DBT related indicators.
- The cell will play a key role in finding possibilities of using various technologies in order to provide better service delivery in the state.
- It will also advise the state government and monitor their efficacy.

About Assam

- Capital: Dispur
- Governor: Banwarilal Purohit
- CM: Sarbananda Sonowal

Assam to upgrade employment exchanges to Modern Career Centres

Assam government will upgrade employment exchanges to Modern Career Centres.

Key Points:

- A pilot project of two district employment exchanges in Guwahati and Jorhat will be upgraded as modern career centres.
- All modern facilities including counselling will be provided at the proposed career centres.

About Assam

Kaziranga National Park

It is considered a haven for a wide variety of wild flora, fauna and avifauna. This national park holds about two-third of the total world population of the Great Indian one-horned rhinoceroses.

Digboi Oil Refinery

Asia's first oil refinery, which is the second in world, is in Digboi. The oil town not only has refinery, which is over 100 years old but also has number of tea gardens.

India's first Hyperloop to come up in Andhra Pradesh

India's first Hyperloop project will come up in Andhra Pradesh, connecting its city centres, Vijayawada and Amaravati.

In this regard, Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB) has inked memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Hyperloop Transportation Technologies (HTT) for developing the project.

Key Facts

- The first of its kind project in India will use a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model with funding primarily from private investors.
- In its first phase, HTT will conduct six-month feasibility study, following which it will construct and build HTT's first Hyperloop in India.
- The proposed hyperloop will cover 35 km distance between Vijayawada and Amaravati only in five minutes.

Hyperloop Technology

- Hyperloop Technology is brainchild idea of technology entrepreneur Elon Musk who dubs it as fifth mode of transportation.
- It is system of magnetically levitating capsules (pods) that are sent at high speeds through low-pressure tubes.
- It envisages tube modular transport system that runs free of friction.
- It uses linear Induction motors in it to control speed of pods. It is still in trial stages in different countries and not been implemented for practical use anywhere in world yet.

Advantages

- Hyperloop is two-to-three times faster than fastest high-speed rail and claimed to have speeds even greater than commercial air travel. It has smaller civil engineering footprint, with no direct emissions or noise compared to railways.
- Hyperloop system's capital cost per mile is 60% that of high-speed rail, and is less expensive to operate.

- Furthermore, Hyperloop departures could happen with a low frequency of a pod every 20 seconds which is not possible in railways.

Challenges

- It requires heavy investments and therefore effective public and private sector coordination is prerequisite for implementing it.
- It consumes high-power compared to railways. Technical challenges and accidents may hamper its progress.

TRAI recommends delicensing of some spectrum for M2M services

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recommended delicensing of chunk of spectrum in few bands to facilitate smooth roll-out of machine-to-machine (M2M) communications.

TRAI has suggested that no separate spectrum band will be allocated exclusively for M2M services, rather it will utilise existing license exempt airwaves.

M2M communications

- Unlike person-to-person (P2P) communication, M2M technologies involve communication between two devices. The technology is basis for automated information exchange between machines. It enables wired and wireless devices to talk to each other using sensors. It is also a key component of the emerging Internet of Things (IoT) revolution. TRAI acknowledged its potential in National Telecom Policy 2012.
- Applications of self-communicating machines using M2M communications can be deployed in new-age infrastructure projects and various industry verticals such as smart cities, smart grids, smart homes, smart transportation and smart health sectors.

TRAI Recommendations

- TRAI has suggested to Department of Telecom (DoT) that all existing operators should be allowed to provide connectivity for M2M services. Under this technology, devices will be fitted with SIM or universal integrated circuit card (eUICC).
- TRAI has suggests delicensing of 1 MHz of spectrum from 867-868 MHz frequencies and another six units from the 915-935 MHz range for M2M communication services.
- TRAI has suggested that government, through DoT, should identify critical services in M2M sector and these services should be provided only by connectivity providers using licensed spectrum. It also suggested that companies offering M2M services using unlicensed spectrum should be covered under licence through a new permit to be called Unified Licence (M2M).

Government launches Diksha Portal for teachers

The Union Ministry of Human Resource and Development (HRD) has launched Diksha Portal (diksha.gov.in) for providing digital platform to teacher to make their lifestyle more digital.

It will serve as National Digital Infrastructure for Teachers. Through this portal, all teachers across nation will be equipped with advanced digital technology.

Key facts

- Diksha portal will enable, accelerate and amplify solutions in realm of teacher education. It will aid teachers to learn and train themselves for which assessment resources will be available. It will help teachers to create training content, profile, in-class resources, assessment aids, news and announcement and connect with teacher community.
- The portal will record complete work and accomplishment of teachers in educational institutes from start to end point till their retirement. It will cover entire life cycle of teacher– from time they were enrolled as student teachers in Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) to after they retire as teachers.
- The portal will help teachers boost their teaching skills and create their own separate profile with their skills and knowledge. It will help in improving quality of education with use of latest technologies in education sector. Government, private institutes and NGO's also can participate in the Diksha initiative.

International Current Affairs

India, Myanmar sign 11 MoUs in range of sectors

India and Myanmar have signed 11 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) in range of sectors, including one on maritime security cooperation.

- The MoUs were signed after Prime Minister Narendra Modi held wide-ranging talks with Myanmar's State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi in Nay Pyi Taw.
- It was first bilateral visit of PM Narendra Modi to Myanmar and overall second. The focus of visit was to strengthen cooperation in security and counter-terrorism, trade and investment, infrastructure and energy and culture between both countries.

Signed Agreements are

- MoU on Maritime Security Cooperation

- Cultural Exchange Programme for year 2017-2020
- MoU on Cooperation in Medical Products Regulation
- MoU on cooperation in the field of Health and medicine
- Technical Agreement for providing Coastal Surveillance System
- Exchange of Letter for Extension of MoU on the establishment of MIIT
- MoU for Upgradation of Women's Police Training Centre at Yamethin, Myanmar
- MoU for Sharing White Shipping Information between Indian Navy and Myanmar Navy
- MoU in the field of elections between Election Commission of India and Election Commission of Myanmar
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between Press Council of India and Myanmar Press Council
- Exchange of Letter for Extension of MoU on establishment of India-Myanmar Centre for Enhancement of IT-Skill

India, Japan to step up defence cooperation

India and Japan have agreed to collaborate closely in defence production, including on dual-use technologies. Decision in this regard was taken at the India-Japan annual defence ministerial dialogue held in Tokyo.

The annual defence ministerial dialogue aimed to further strengthen defence and security cooperation under the framework of the 'Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership'.

Background

The decision of both countries to boost defence ties comes amid escalating tension in region in wake of China's growing assertiveness in South China Sea and nuclear test by North Korea. Further during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Japan in November 2016, both sides had decided to ramp up bilateral defence and security cooperation and explore ways to further deepen it.

Key Facts

- Both countries resolved to ramp up overall military engagement under bilateral special strategic framework. They agreed to ramp up counter-terror cooperation, besides deepening engagement among navies, air forces and ground armed forces of two countries.
- They strongly condemned North Korea's latest nuclear test and called upon the country to cease such action which adversely impacts peace and stability of region. They also commended progress made in discussions to identify specific areas of collaboration in field of defence equipment and technology cooperation for

production of various military platforms. They also agreed to commence technical discussions for research collaboration in areas of Unmanned Ground Vehicles and Robotics.

- They also welcomed constructive engagement between India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Japan's Acquisition, Technology and Logistic Agency (ATLA). India is planning to buy the US-2 ShinMaywa aircraft from Japan for its navy.

About Japan:

- Capital – Tokyo
- Currency – Japanese Yen
- Prime minister: Mr.Shinzo Abe
- Defence minister – Mr.Itsunori Onodera
- Official language – Japanese

SLINEX 2017: India-Sri Lanka joint maritime naval exercise

The seventh edition of India-Sri Lanka joint maritime naval exercise SLINEX 2017 was held near Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) in Bay of Bengal. It will be conducted from 7th to 14th September 2017.

The seven days exercise aimed to reinforce strong neighbourly ties between both countries underscored by extensive maritime interaction and improved understanding.

Key Facts

- SLINEX 2017 focused on fleet work, seamanship, communication, replenishment at sea as well as helicopter operations. Sri Lanka Navy's offshore patrol vessels, SLNS Sayura and Sagara had participated in this edition of biennial exercise.
- The exercises were held in both Harbour Phase and Sea Phase. In harbour phase, both participant navies engaged in professional, cultural and social interactions. In Sea Phase, both navies jointly conducted complex operations including anti-piracy exercises, cross-deck helicopter operations, gun firings and anti-surface exercises.

SLINEX

SLINEX series of biennial bilateral maritime exercises between India and Sri Lanka, initiated in 2005. Its mandate is to enable navies of both countries to rehearse and improve their own capabilities and enhance operational effectiveness required to maintain maritime security in region.

UJALA scheme launched in Melaka, Malaysia

India's zero-subsidy UJALA (Unnat Jyoti by Affordable Lighting for All) Scheme was launched in Melaka State of Malaysia by Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), under Union Ministry of Power.

It highlights success of Indian model UJALA scheme to promote efficient lighting, using efficient equipment to reduce electricity bills and preserve environment at global level.

Key Facts

- India's Ujala scheme will be replicated in Malaysia, under which each household in Melaka state will get 10 high quality 9-watt LED bulbs, at subsidised rate almost half price offered in market.
- The initiative is implemented by India's EESL with logistical assistance and facilitation support from Green Growth Asia, a non-profit organisation in Malaysia.
- The EESL is planning to distribute about 1 million 9W LED bulbs, replacing 18W CFLs.
- It will help Melaka promote efficient lighting and conserve the resources, money and environment by reducing 19,000 tonnes carbon emissions per year.

UJALA Scheme

- The main objective of scheme is to promote efficient lighting, enhance awareness on using efficient equipment which reduce electricity bills and preserve environment. It is LED based Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme (DELP). Under it, LED Bulbs are distributed.
- Its purpose is not only to help reduce electricity bills of consumers but also contribute to energy security of India. It is being implemented by EESL, a joint venture of PSUs under Union Ministry of Power. LED bulbs have a very long life, almost 50 times more than ordinary bulbs, and 8-10 times that of CFLs, and therefore provide both energy and cost savings.

About Malaysia

- Capital: Kuala Lumpur
- PM: Najib Razak
- Currency: Ringgit

World University Rankings 2018: IISc ranked highest from India

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) retained top position among Indian Universities in the Times World University Rankings 2018, but its position fell in global rankings compared to its last year position.

Top 10 in Universities in World are Oxford University (1st, UK), Cambridge University (2nd, UK), California Institute of Technology (3rd, US), Stanford University (4th, US), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (5th, US), Harvard University (6th, US), Princeton University (7th, US), Imperial College London (8th, UK), University of Chicago (9th, US), ETH-Zurich (10th, Switzerland).

Rankings of Indian Universities

- A total of 30 Universities in India featured in this edition of the list, but none was in the top 100. 8 feature in top 500 and 3 in top 200 (IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay, and IISc Bangalore).
- In this year's rankings, Indian Universities also slipped down from their previous ranking. IISc slipped from the 201-250 band to the 251-300 one due to drop in its research influence score and research income.
- IIT Delhi and IIT Kanpur, which were among best Indian institutions, slipped down from previous year's position of the 401- 500 club to 501-600 band.
- IIT Bombay was placed in 351-400 club, same as in 2017 ranking and.
- IIT Kharagpur and IIT Roorkee also retained their positions in 501-600 bracket.

Reasons for decline in ranking of Indian Universities

- Indian institutes were lagging behind in research funding and citations and also on internationalisation front. Most of premier institutes in India cater to one particular stream such as engineering or management etc. which reduces volume and variety of research. Government policy strictly limits number of students from abroad who can study in India and prevents international scholars from being hired into long-term faculty positions.
- If India desires to feature at a larger scale in these rankings, Indian Universities along with Indian education system need urgent revamp and there need to focus more on research, research funding and internationalization of Indian campuses.

World University Rankings

- These rankings are only global performance tables that judge research-intensive universities across all their core missions viz. teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook.
- The thirteen point performance indicators calculating rankings are grouped in five areas: Teachings (learning environment; 30% weight), Research (volume, income and reputation; 30%), Citations (research influence; 30%), International outlook (staff, students and research; 7.5%) and Industry income (knowledge transfer; 2.5%).
- Universities that do not teach undergraduates or those whose research output amounted to fewer than 1000 articles between 2012 and 2016, were excluded from the rankings.

Banking & Finance

SBI Launches SBI Intelligent Assistant (SIA) – Chatbot for Customer Care

State Bank of India (SBI) is the latest to get smitten by the Artificial Intelligence and Automation. They have launched their first ever chatbot called SBI Intelligent Assistant or SIA, which would be powered by AI, and designed to assist customers.

- After ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank adopted automation in banking, SBI's move towards AI is seen as a major leap for Indian banking.
- This special chatbot has been created & developed by Allincall, which is a startup from Mumbai, and backed by startup cell of IIT Bombay. As per the details available, Allincall has used machine learning, and bot experience to create an AI powered chatbot, which will respond to customer's query, and provide them solution.

Banks without Aadhaar enrolment centres face Rs.20,000 fine from October

On 5th September 2017, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) CEO Mr. Ajay Bhushan Pandey said that the UIDAI has given banks one more month to open Aadhaar enrolment centres in a stipulated 10 per cent of branches and will impose Rs.20,000 as fine per uncovered branch after 30th September 2017.

Earlier Instructions from UIDAI:

- Aadhaar, the 12-digit biometric identity number, is required for opening of bank accounts and financial transactions of Rs.50,000 and above. Existing bank account holders are also required to furnish the Aadhaar number by December 31, 2017.
- In July, UIDAI had asked private as well as public banks to open Aadhaar enrolment and updation facility in one out of 10 branches by the end of August.

Extension of time provided by UIDAI:

- Extension of one month has now been granted as many banks asked for additional time from the authority for setting up such facility on their premises.
- The PSU and private banks have been informed about the extension. There are 1,20,000 bank branches in the country and with this move, 12,000 Aadhaar enrolment and updation centres will have to be set up in those branches. Many banks are already registrars, but they do not have enrolment centres inside the bank premises today.
- Failure to open the stipulated facility even after expiry of the September 30 deadline would mean that the bank will have to pay a penalty of Rs.20,000 per uncovered

branch in the first month. Similarly, the penalty will be imposed in subsequent months also.

About UIDAI:

- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Dr.Ajay Bhushan Pandey
- Chairman – Mr.J.Satyanarayana

Business

NHAI awards first international project in Myanmar to Punj Lloyd-Varaha

On 6th September 2017, the National Highway Authority of India awarded its first international project in Myanmar to a joint venture of Punj Lloyd-Varaha.

About the Myanmar Project:

Project details:

- Purpose – This project is for the upgradation of the Yagyi–Kalewa section in Myanmar to two lanes with earthen shoulder in the engineering, procurement, and construction mode.
- Project length – 120 km
- Estimated cost – Rs.1,177.02 crore
- Estimated completion time – 36 months
- Punj Lloyd-Varaha's bid was identified as the most competitive among four qualified bidders. It was at Rs.1,177 crore 0.0017 per cent lower than the estimated cost.

About NHAI

- National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) is an autonomous agency of the Government of India, responsible for management of a network of over 70,000 km of National Highways in India.
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Chairman – Mr.Yudhvir Singh Malik

About Myanmar:

- Capital – Naypyidaw
- Currency – Burmese kyat
- President – Htin Kyaw

- Official language: Burmese

Acquisitions & Mergers

HCL acquires UK-based data management platform Datawave

On 5th September 2017, HCL Technologies announced the acquisition of automation-driven data management platform Datawave to accelerate data integration and migration for their clients.

About the acquisition:

- HCL has announced that it has agreed to buy Datawave, a business unit of ETL Factory Limited, a UK-based company.
- Datawave has created an innovative data automation platform which enables enterprise customers to execute large scale, complex data-migration and data-integration projects in a leaner, faster and smarter way.
- Datawave won the Informatica Innovation Award and is also extendable to other platforms, including big data.
- The acquisition of Datawave and its suite of products bolsters HCL's capabilities to collaborate with clients on their mission-critical data transformation projects, incorporating a culture of DevOps and continuous integration. Datawave also brings in significant banking industry expertise.
- Datawave's automation solutions will significantly help clients accelerate their digital journey through a robust data architecture.

About HCL:

- Country's fourth largest software services firm
- Headquarters – Noida
- Founders – Mr. Shiv Nadar and Mr. Arjun Malhotra
- CEO – Mr. C. Vijayakumar
- President and Head of Financial Services – Mr. Rahul Singh
- Corporate Vice President and Head of Digital & Analytics – Mr. Anand Birje

Appointments & Resigns

Sankara Narayanan takes charge as MD and CEO of Vijaya Bank

R A Sankara Narayanan was appointed as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Vijaya Bank.

Key Points:

- He has replaced Kishore Sansi, who retires from Coal India on 31st August 2017.
- He joined Bank of India as a direct recruit officer in 1983 and has headed various branches.

About Vijaya Bank

- Founded: 1931
- Founder: A.B. Shetty.
- HQ: Bengaluru
- Tagline: A friend you can bank on

Gopal Singh is new CMD of Coal India

The Ministry of Coal has appointed Gopal Singh as CMD, Central Coalfields Ltd (CCL), additional charge as CMD of Coal India Ltd.

Key Points:

- Singh has taken charge effective from 1st September 2017.
- He has replaced Sutirtha Bhattacharya on attaining superannuation effective August 31, 2017.

Awards & Recognition

N R Narayana Murthy and Mumbai-born scientist Veena Sahajwalla receives PLuS Alliance Prize.

- Infosys co-founder N R Narayana Murthy and Mumbai-born Scientist Veena Sahajwalla has been granted the PLuS Alliance Prize.
- It is a prestigious honour that recognises Research Innovation, Education Innovation, Global Leadership and Global Innovation.

Key Points:

- The Prize of USD 50,000 was awarded in two categories; Education Innovation and Research Innovation.
- They were recognised for the development and implementation of innovative solutions to significant global issues.
- Murthy was presented the PLoS Alliance Prize for Global Leadership.
- Professor Sahajwalla was awarded the PLoS Alliance Prize for Research Innovation for her project 'The new science of green manufacturing'.

About PLoS Alliance

- The PLoS Alliance is an international collaboration between Arizona State University, King's College London, and UNSW Sydney.
- The ceremony was held at the T-H-E World Academic Summit in London.
- It was launched in February 2016 and enables research-led solutions to global challenges while expanding access to world-class learning.
- The awards were presented to Murthy, Sahajwalla and the other winners by Professor Sir Malcolm Grant, Chairman of NHS England and Chair of the PLoS Alliance Advisory Board.

Science & Technology

Whatsapp launches new tool for business-‘whatsapp business’

WhatsApp is launching a new app to help businesses communicate with their customers.

Key Points:

- WhatsApp Business gives users a verified green checkmark badge next to their names.
- Secondly, businesses will be able to create a company profile with information such as address, business hours, description of product or service offered.
- Thirdly, WhatsApp Business will help to manage consumer chats.
- It is building and testing new tools via a free WhatsApp Business app for small companies and an enterprise solution for bigger companies operating at a large scale with a global base of customers, like airlines, e-commerce sites and banks.
- It will allow customer to communicate with firms via WhatsApp messages instead of email or phone calls.

APEDA develops mobile app for farm registration, certification

According to the Commerce Ministry, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has developed a mobile app “Hortinet” for farmers to facilitate registration, testing and certification of certain fruits and vegetables.

Key Points:

- The app “Hortinet” is an integrated traceability system developed by APEDA for providing internet-based services to the stakeholders.
- The app will facilitate “farm registration, testing and certification of grape, pomegranate and vegetables for export from India to the European Union in compliance with standards.
- The app would also help to assist state horticulture and agriculture departments to capture real time details of farmers, farm location, products and details of inspection.
- It will help to increase the accessibility and reach of the traceability software system among farmers and other stakeholders.
- Through the new technology tool APEDA would help in enrolling larger number of farmers and exporters.

CSIR scientists develop artificial leaf create hydrogen fuel from sunlight, water

CSIR scientists have developed an ultra-thin wireless device that mimics plant leaves to produce energy using water and sunlight. The artificial leaf absorbs sunlight to generate hydrogen fuel from water.

- In advance, this artificial leaf may provide clean energy for powering eco-friendly cars in the future.
- It can serve ultimate solution for our energy and environment problems.

Need for such technology

At present, hydrogen is produced from fossil fuels by steam reforming. In this process large amount of carbon di-oxide (CO₂) – a greenhouse gas is emitted which promotes global warming. So in view of pressing energy and environmental issues, it is important to produce hydrogen from natural resources such as sunlight and water. India is also blessed with plenty of sunlight throughout year that is not exploited significantly to produce energy or hydrogen.

Key Facts

- The artificial leaf or the wireless device consists of semiconductors stacked in manner to simulate natural leaf system. The device has an area of 23 square centimetres. When visible light strikes semiconductors, electrons move in one direction and produce electric current.

- The current almost instantaneously splits water into hydrogen – making it one of the cleanest forms of fuel as its main byproduct is water. It can produce 6 litres of hydrogen fuel per hour.
- To improve light-absorbing efficiency of artificial leaf, researchers had used gold nanoparticles, titanium dioxide and quantum dots. Quantum dots are semiconductor crystals of nanometre dimensions with properties that depend on the size of dots.

Sports

AIBA world boxing championships 2017

On 25th August 2017, the 2017 edition of AIBA world boxing championships started. This event was hosted by Hamburg, Germany. The event lasted till 2nd September 2017. The best 280 boxers in world competed for one of the most decorated boxing titles in the world.

- Gaurav Bidhuri Clinches Bronze Medal at World Boxing Championships:
- On 31st August 2017, 24 year old Indian boxer Gaurav Bidhuri and 19 year old American boxer Duke Ragan fought in the semi-finals of the bantamweight (56 kilogram) category.
- Gaurav Bidhuri lost 0-5 to Duke Ragan and who clinched the Bronze medal.
- Amit Phangal (49kg) and Kavinder Bisht (56kg) had bowed out in the quarterfinal stage
- Shiva Thapa, Manoj Kumar out in first round AIBA
- Ukraine's Oleksandr Khyzhniak wins Best Boxer, Cuba win Best team and USA's Billy Walsh wins Best Coach.

Official song of FIFA U-17 World Cup launched

The official song for the FIFA Under-17 World Cup football tournament was launched by the Local Organising Committee (LOC) and Sony Pictures Networks India (SPN) on 4th of Sept 2017.

Key Points:

- The official song - "Kar Ke Dikhla De Goal". The song has been written by lyricist Amitabh Bhattacharya and composed by Pritam.

- The song features a host of well-known music artists that include Sunidhi Chauhan, Neeti Mohan, Babul Supriyo, Shaan, Papon, Mika along with a rap performance by actor Abhishek Bachchan.
- The colourful music video for the song celebrates diversity and ends with Sachin Tendulkar welcoming all with a Namaste.
- The music video of the song will be broadcasted on SonyPN's on-air and digital platforms across genres.

About FIFA

- The Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) is a private association which describes itself as an international governing body of association football.
- FIFA is responsible for the organization of football's major international tournaments.
- Formation: 21st May 1904
- HQ: Zurich Switzerland
- President: Gianni Infantino

Star India wins IPL media rights for next five years

Star India bagged the IPL media rights for TV and digital broadcast for a consolidated sum of Rs.16,347.5 crore (\$ 2.55 billion) for a period of five years.

Key Points:

- It will start from the 11th edition of IPL 2018 for five years. It pipped Sony to acquire the rights from 2018 to 2022.
- Total of 24 companies had picked up the Invitation To Tender (ITT) to bid for the broadcast and digital rights.
- However, only 14 of the 24 names turned up with their respective bids.
- The bids were invited for seven categories — India television, India digital, US, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and rest of the world.
- Star India was the only company to bid for all markets in the event that took place at the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel in Mumbai.
- Star India, through its wholly owned subsidiary Novi Digital Entertainment Private Limited, owned the digital rights of IPL.
- Until the 2017 edition, Sony held the broadcast rights of the IPL after it paid Rs 8,200 crore for a 10-year deal in 2008.
- Star India chairman and CEO is Uday Shankar.

Lewis Hamilton wins Italian Grand Prix, takes lead title from Sebastian Vettel

Lewis Hamilton wins Italian Grand Prix Lewis Hamilton has won the Italian Grand Prix 2017 to take lead in Formula-1 title race announced on 3rd sept. 2017.

Key Points:

- Hamilton now has 238 points, three more points than Vettel.
- Hamilton finished nearly five seconds ahead of Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas.
- Sebastian Vettel came third in his Ferrari, more than half a minute behind.
- Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo finished fourth in the Formula-1 title race while Kimi Raikkonen crossed fifth.

About Italian Grand Prix

- The 2017 Italian Grand Prix was a Formula One motor race held on 3 September 2017 at the Autodromo Nazionale Monza in Monza, Italy.

Winners List:

- First: Lewis Hamilton Mercedes
- Second: Valtteri Bottas Mercedes
- Third: Sebastian Vettel Ferrari

Obituary

Journalist Gauri Lankesh shot dead in Bengaluru

Senior journalist, editor and activist Gauri Lankesh was shot dead by unidentified mugger at the entrance of her home in Bengaluru West on 5th of Sept. 2017.

Key Points:

- She was shot dead outside her home in Bengaluru last night by attackers who fired seven times at close range.
- Gauri Lankesh was the editor of weekly Kannada tabloid magazine Lankesh Patrike, columnist in newspapers, a panelist on TV channels besides being an activist.