

# National Current Affairs

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## **Cabinet approves implementation of the scheme “Dairy Processing & Infrastructure Development Fund”**

On September 12, 2017, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved a “Dairy Processing & Infrastructure Development Fund” (DIDF) with an outlay of Rs10,881 crore during the period from 2017-18 to 2028-29. This fund will give new impetus to the dairy industry and to people relying on it. The project will be implemented by National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and National Dairy Development Cooperation (NCDC).

### **The objective of the fund:**

- Building an efficient milk procurement system by setting up of cold storage infrastructure.
- Installation of electronic milk adulteration testing equipment.
- Creation/modernization/expansion of processing infrastructure and manufacturing faculties for Value Added Products for the Milk Unions/ Milk Producer Companies.

## **Ministry of Railways permits m-Aadhar as one of the prescribed proofs of Identity for Rail Travel Purpose**

On September 13, 2017, Railway Ministry has decided to permit m-Aadhar as one of the prescribed proofs of Identity for Rail Travel purpose in any reserved class.

### **m-Aadhar:**

- It is a mobile application launched by UIDAI in which a person can download his/her Aadhar Card.
- It can be done only on the mobile number to which Aadhar has been linked.
- For showing Aadhar, the person has to open the app and enter his/ her password to show the Aadhar Card.
- This should be accepted as proof of identity in any reserved class over Indian Railways.

## **Rs 600-cr rail training centre for bullet train to come up in Vadodara**

On September 13, 2017, Managing Director of National High-Speed Rail Corporation (NHSRC) Achal Khare informed that high-speed rail training centre worth 600 crore for the first bullet train project will be set up in Vadodara.

- This centre will come up on the five hectares of land inside the National Academy of Indian Railways (NAIR).
- The training centre will have a sample track fitted with the overhead electrical systems to enable testing of bullet trains that will run on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad route.
- This centre is expected to become operational by December 2020.

### **Kerala to open India's first transgender-exclusive clinics**

On September 12, 2017 Kerala's Health minister K.K. Shylaja announced that Kerala is planning to open India's first transgender-exclusive clinics at government medical colleges across the state.

- As a part of the state's Transgender Policy 2015, this move has been undertaken by the state's Health and Social Justice departments, in collaboration with Legal Services Society with an aim to make the state's health sector transgender-friendly.
- The first clinic will be set up at the government medical college of Kottayam within the next two months and will be one of the two clinics to provide the sex-change surgery.

### **Sachin Tendulkar launches Mission 24 to develop the poorest ward in Mumbai**

On 12th September 2017, Indian cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar launched Mission 24 to improve the quality of life in one of Mumbai's poorest wards, in Mumbai.

#### **Mission-24:**

- The project is carried out by NGO Apnalaya and Mumbai's Municipal body – BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation).
- They would work for the next 24 months on M-East, Mumbai's poorest ward. It has the maximum of the slum population in Mumbai.
- BMC Commissioner Mr. Ajoy Mehta said that apart from improving the standard of schools in the slum areas, initiatives would be taken to improve the overall quality of education.
- BMC has already set its priorities for the next 2 years for various wards in Mumbai.

### **Karnataka Cabinet clears Electric Vehicle & Energy Storage Policy**

Karnataka Cabinet has cleared Karnataka Electric Vehicle & Energy Storage Policy 2017 with a clear plan to make Bengaluru the electric vehicle capital of India.

### **Key Points:**

- The main aim of the policy is to reduce pollution. The policy was formulated by the Major and Medium Industries Department after consulting the stakeholders, including vehicle manufacturing industries.
- The key objective of the Policy is to maintain the lead share of Karnataka as a preferred destination for attracting investments in manufacture of Electric Vehicle and to attract investments of Rs 31,000 crore and create 55,000 jobs.
- Amendments will be made to building by-laws for providing mandatory charging infrastructure in all high-rise buildings.
- A special purpose vehicle (SPV) will be created to set up charging centres across the Bengaluru city.
- 'Karnataka Electric Mobility Research & Innovation Centre' will be set up to extend the necessary support.

### **USTDA signs MoU with AAI to develop Kolkata, Lucknow airports**

The US Trade and Development Agency has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Airports Authority of India announced on 13th of Sept. 2017.

### **Key Points:**

- The MoU has been signed to support a 20-year master plan aimed at expansion of operational capacities of the Kolkata and Lucknow international airports.
- Airports Authority of India (AAI) has selected Cincinnati-based Landrum & Brown (L&B) company to conduct the master planning.
- It will help in incorporating sustainable and environment-friendly ways to accommodate the anticipated increase in demand at two of the fastest growing airports in AAI's network.
- This project will advance India's priorities of expanding capacity at two of the busiest airports in the country.

### **About USTDA**

USTDA is a Virginia-based company and is an independent agency of the US government. It was established in 1961, the agency promotes economic development and US commercial interests in developing and middle income countries.

### **Government launches nationwide Swachhta Hi Seva Campaign**

The Union Government has launched Swachhta Hi Seva' (cleanliness is service), a nation-wide fortnight-long sanitation campaign to highlight the government's flagship cleanliness initiative Swachh Bharat Mission.

It was launched by President Ram Nath Kovind from Ishworiganj village in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh. It will run from September 15 to October 2, 2017.

### **Swachhta Hi Seva campaign**

- The campaign is being coordinated by Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, convening Ministry for the Swachh Bharat Mission. Its objective is to mobilise people and reinforce jan aandolan (mass movement) for sanitation to contribute to Mahatma Gandhi's dream of a Clean India.
- The main agenda of the campaign will be to reach out to the poor and marginalised and provide them with sustainable sanitation services.

### **IAF successfully conducts development trials of Astra missile**

The Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully conducted developmental trials of indigenously developed Astra beyond visual range air-to-air missile (BVRAAM) over the Bay of Bengal, off the coast of Chandipur in Odisha.

Total of seven trials of Astra BVRAAM were conducted in various missions and two of them were against Pilotless Target Aircrafts (PTA) successfully fired from Sukhoi-30 MKI aircraft. They were final development flight trials of the missile, paving way for its early induction into IAF.

### **Astra Missile**

- Astra is air to air beyond visual range air-to-air indigenously developed by DRDO. It is one of the smallest weapon system developed by DRDO, having length of 3.8-metre and weighing 154kg. It is single stage solid fuelled missile and has payload capacity of 15 kg conventional explosives.
- It can be launched from different altitudes and is capable of engaging targets at varying range and altitudes at both short-range targets (up to 20 km) in tail-chase mode and long-range targets (up to 80 km) in head-on mode. It is radar homing supersonic missile having maximum speed of Mach 4 (four times speed of sound).
- It possesses high Single Shot Kill Probability (SSKP) making it highly reliable. It is all-weather missile with active radar terminal guidance, excellent electronic counter-counter measure (ECCM) features, smokeless propulsion and process improved effectiveness in multi-target scenario.
- It has advance on-board electronic counter-measures that jam radar signals from enemy radar, making tracking of the missile difficult. It is fitted with terminal active

radar-seeker and an updated mid-course internal guidance system that helps missile to locate and track targets.

- The missile can be integrated with all fighter aircraft of IAF including Sukhoi-30 MKI, Mirage-2000, MiG-29, Jaguar and the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA).

### **Ministry of Corporate Affairs, CBDT ink MoU for Automatic and Regular Exchange of Information**

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) and Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) have signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for automatic and regular exchange of tax information.

The purpose of the MoU is to curb the menace of shell companies, money laundering and black money in the country and prevent misuse of corporate structure by shell companies for various illegal purposes,

#### **Key Facts**

- The MoU will facilitate sharing of data and information between MCA and CBDT on automatic and regular basis. It will enable sharing of specific information such as Permanent Account Number (PAN) data of corporates, financial statements filed with Registrar by corporates, Income Tax returns (ITRs) of corporates, returns of share allotments, audit reports and statements of financial transactions (SFT) received from banks relating to corporates.
- The MoU will ensure that both MCA and CBDT have seamless PAN-DIN (Director Identity Number) and PAN-CIN (Corporate Identity Number) linkage for regulatory purposes. The information shared will pertain to both Indian corporates as well as foreign corporates operating in India.
- In addition to regular exchange of data, CBDT and MCA will also exchange with any information available in their respective databases with each other, on request, for purpose of carrying out scrutiny, inspection, investigation and prosecution.
- Under the MoU, Data Exchange Steering Group also has been constituted for initiative, which will meet periodically to review data exchange status and take steps to further improve effectiveness of CBDT and MCA.

### **Government to grant citizenship to Chakma, Hajong refugees**

The Union Home Ministry will soon grant citizenship to nearly one lakh Chakma and Hajong refugees, who came from erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) five decades ago and are living in northeast.

Government's decision comes in line with Supreme Court order in 2015 in this regard. The apex court had directed Union government to grant citizenship to these refugees, mostly staying in Arunachal Pradesh.

## **Chakmas,Hajongs**

Chakmas and Hajongs were originally residents of Chittagong Hill Tracts in erstwhile East Pakistan. They had fled their homeland after it was submerged by Kaptai dam project in 1960s. Chakmas are Buddhists by faith and Hajongs are Hindus. They had faced religious persecution in East Pakistan and entered India through the then Lushai Hills district of Assam (now in Mizoram). Later, Union Government had shifted majority of them to North East Frontier Agency (NEFA), which is now Arunachal Pradesh. Since then, their numbers have gone up from about 5,000 in 1964-69 to 1 lakh. At present, they don't have citizenship and land owning rights but are provided basic amenities by Arunachal Pradesh Government.

## **Supreme Court Order**

In 2015, the Supreme Court had given deadline to Union Government to confer citizenship to these refugees within three months. Later, Arunachal Pradesh Government moved to top court against the order. However, the apex court rejected Arunachal Pradesh Government's plea. Since then state and the Centre began consultations on the issue.

## **Opposition to citizenship**

Several organisations and civil society in Arunachal Pradesh are opposing granting citizenship to refugees saying it would change demography of state and would reduce indigenous tribal communities to minority and deprive them of opportunities. The Union Government is trying to find workable solution by proposing that these refugees will not be given rights to own land, which are exclusively enjoyed by Scheduled Tribes in Arunachal Pradesh. However, Government may be given Inner Line permits (required for non-locals to travel and work in three states Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland).

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# **International Current Affairs**

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## **India-Japan ink open sky agreement**

India and Japan have agreed to ink open sky arrangement to allow airlines from both countries to operate unlimited number of flights.

In this regard, both countries exchanged RoD (Record of Discussions) on civil aviation cooperation with respect to open sky.

## **Key Facts**

The open sky agreement will be signed in accordance with the National Civil Aviation Policy (NACP), 2016. It will not only help to encourage connectivity and passenger travel between two countries, but also result in reduction in airfares on the air routes between two countries.

### **NACP 2016**

The NACP allows government to enter into 'open sky' air services agreement on reciprocal basis with SAARC nations as well as countries with territory located entirely beyond a 5,000 kilometre radius from New Delhi. So far, India signed open sky agreement with Greece, Jamaica, Guyana, Czech Republic, Finland, Spain and Sri Lanka. India and US had signed bilateral open sky agreement in 2005. India also had signed open sky agreement with the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2003.

### **Government signs \$76 Million loan deal with JICA to Upgrade Alang-Sosiya Shipyards**

The Union Government signed \$76 million loan deal with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for starting upgradation project related to environment management plan at Alang-Sosiya ship recycling shipyards in Gujarat.

The project will be executed by Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) and is likely to be completed by 2022.

### **Benefits of the project**

- This project will help Alang-Sosia ship-recycling yards to comply with international safety & environmental regulations. This will attract more business at recycling facilities at Alang, thereby further consolidate India's share in global ship-recycling industry.
- It will also help in safeguarding marine and coastal environment. The use of advanced decontamination technology will rule out possibility of fire accidents in oil and chemical tankers, thereby ensuring workers safety.

### **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)**

- The JICA is governmental agency that coordinates official development assistance (ODA) for government of Japan.
- Its mandate is assisting economic and social growth in developing countries, and promotion of international cooperation.

### **India, China unlikely to be growth poles for global economy: UNCTAD Report**

According to UNCTAD's recently released Trade and Development Report (TDR) 2017, India and China at their current levels of growth will not serve as "growth polls" for global economy in near future.

TDR is flagship report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and is treated as a barometer for assessing the global economic climate.

### **Key Highlights of report**

**Global Economy:** The world economy in 2017 is picking up but not lifting off. The global growth is expected to reach 2.6%, well below pre 2008 financial crisis average of 3.2%. Unregulated finance remains at heart of present hyper-globalised world and failure to tame it and address deep-seated inequalities, generated by it threatens efforts to build inclusive economies.

The report calls for serious examination of market power, rent-seeking behaviour and winner-take-most rules of the economic game, which have generated exclusionary outcomes. It outlines global new deal to build more inclusive and caring economies by combining economic recovery with regulatory reforms and redistribution policies with high speed and requisite scale.

**India and China:** At current levels of growth, both Asian countries are unlikely to serve as "growth polls" for the global economy in near future.

**India's Growth:** It is likely to slow down to 6.7% in 2017 from 7% in 2016. India's growth performance depends on reforms to its banking sector to a large extent, which is burdened with large volumes of stressed and non-performing assets.

The informal sector, which still accounts for at least one-third of India's GDP and more than four-fifths of employment, was badly affected by the government's 'demonetisation'. It may be further affected by rollout of Goods and Services Tax (GST) from July 2017,

**China's Growth:** It has been retained at 6.7%, same as in 2016. Gradual slowdown of China is expected to continue as it moves ahead with rebalancing its economy, towards domestic markets. China's estimated debt-to-GDP ratio is 249%. China needs to introduce measures to contain its rising debt as domestic demand could be squeezed, with adverse consequences.

**Advanced and Developing economies:** The main obstacle to robust recovery in advanced countries is fiscal austerity, which remains default macroeconomic option. Capital inflows to developing countries have remain negative, albeit less so than in recent years. Unforeseen events also can knock recovering economies off balance.

### **UNCTAD**

UNCTAD is principal organ of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) dealing with trade, investment, and development issues. Its goals are to: "maximize the trade, investment and development opportunities of developing countries." It organizes World Investment

Forum. It publishes reports like World Investment Report, Technology and Innovation Report.

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## Banking & Finance

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### **World Bank allocates \$8 billion for China's Silk Road project**

On 12th September 2017, World Bank President Mr. Jim Yong Kim announced that World Bank has allocated \$8 billion for infrastructure projects under China's Silk Road initiative, Beijing.

#### **Silk Road Project:**

- In 2013, Chinese President Mr. Xi Jinping formulated this Silk Road initiative.
- The purpose of Silk Road initiative is to create an economic corridor connecting China with Asia, Europe and the rest of the world.
- The Silk Road project has two components – Silk Road Economic Belt (land-based connectivity) and Maritime Silk Road (ocean based connectivity).
- The Silk Road Economic Belt consists of 6 corridors which connect to five central Asian countries, Iran, Persian Gulf, Transcaucasia, Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

#### **About World Bank:**

- Motto – Working for a World Free of Poverty
- Headquarters – Washington D.C.
- President – Mr. Jim Yong Kim

### **India's GDP growth for Fiscal Year 2018 is likely at 7.1%: Nomura**

On 13th September 2017, a report by Japanese financial services company Nomura said that India's GDP growth is expected to be around 7.1 % this fiscal year (2017 – 2018).

#### **Details of the report:**

- India is predicted to have a 7.1 % GDP growth this fiscal year (2017 – 2018) and that would be followed by a pickup in industrial production.
- This has been predicted since firms would start restocking after GST (Goods & Services Tax) and festive season is also ahead.
- Before GST the demand for consumer products reduced heavily since people postponed purchases. Now, the situation has turned normal and people would go for

bulk purchases as the festive season is arriving. Merchants would start restocking now.

- Also, remonetisation would have a positive impact on the country's industrial growth.

#### **About Nomura:**

- Type – financial services company
- Headquarters – Japan
- Group CEO – Koji Nagai
- Chairman – Nobuyuki Koga

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## **Business**

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### **London retains top in 2017 Global Financial Centres Index; Mumbai ranked at 60th position**

On 11th September 2017, Global Financial Centres Index 2017 was released, in which London has retained its 1<sup>st</sup> rank despite major issues regarding Brexit. Mumbai has managed to get 60th rank in the list.

#### **Global Financial Centres Index 2017:**

- This is the 22nd edition of Global Financial Centres Index.
- The Global Financial Centres Index provides ranking of competitiveness for the major financial centres around the world.
- The Global Financial Centres Index is compiled by China Development Institute (CDI) in Shenzhen and Z/Yen Partners in London.
- The first GFCI was released in March 2007. GFCI is updated twice a year in March and September.
- London is followed by New York in the second position and Hong Kong in the third.

### **Mindtree opens first global Digital Pumpkin innovation hub in U.S.**

On 12th September 2017, Mindtree, a Bengaluru based multinational company inaugurated its first international Digital Pumpkin innovation hub at Warren, New Jersey, in US.

#### **First global Digital Pumpkin innovation hub:**

- After the success of Digital Pumpkin in Bengaluru Mindtree has set up its first global Digital Pumpkin in US.

- The Digital Pumpkin provides solutions for Internet of Things, artificial Intelligence, cognitive solutions, virtual and augmented reality, machine learning, conversational cloud and big data.
- The Digital pumpkin at US would provide an interactive space where various teams can co-ordinate, design and create digital experiences to its US clients.

#### **About Mindtree:**

- Type – Indian Multinational Information Technology & Outsourcing Company
- Headquarters – Bengaluru
- Non-executive director – Subroto Bagchi
- Chairman – Krishnakumar Natarajan

#### **Hindustan Shipyard Ltd, Hyundai to join hands in ship building**

Hindustan Shipyard Ltd will ink a partnership with Hyundai Heavy Industries Co Ltd of South Korea for construction of fleet support ships (FSS) for the Navy in both the countries.

#### **Key Points:**

- An MoU is likely to be signed next year on this. At present, talks are in progress between the Ministry of Defence and South Korea.
- The first ship is expected to roll out in October, 2022, from the Hyundai facility in South Korea.
- The construction of another FSS would start at HSL with the guidance of Hyundai. The cost of five FSS would be around Rs.9,500 crore.
- The HSL was planning to roll out one FSS every 10 months after the delivery of the first vessel from Hyundai.

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## **Appointments & Resigns**

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#### **WhatsApp co-founder Brian Acton Leaves Company to start a non-profit venture**

Brian Acton, the co-founder of WhatsApp has announced to resign from the company to start a non-profit venture of his own.

#### **Key Points:**

- Acton spent eight years with WhatsApp, which Facebook bought in 2014 for \$19 billion in cash and stock.

- A Stanford alumnus, Acton co-founded WhatsApp with Ukrainian immigrant Jan Koum in 2009. They both worked at Yahoo before starting WhatsApp.
- He has decided to start a non-profit venture and focused at the intersection of nonprofit, technology and communications

### **Mahendra Pratap Mall appointed as CMD of IRCTC**

Mahendra Pratap Mall has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC).

#### **Key Points:**

- He is currently Director (Finance) in the same organisation.
- He will serve for a period of 5 years an order issued by Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

### **Nagaraja Sharma appointed new CMD of United India Insurance**

The Union Government has appointed M Nagaraja Sharma as the Chairman and Managing director of United India Insurance (UII) announced on 13th of Sept. 2017.

#### **Key Points:**

- Sharma is currently the director and general manager of UII.
- The post of chairman and MD was vacant after the retirement of Milind Kharat a few months ago.

#### **Important facts:**

- United India Insurance Company Limited is headquartered in Chennai.
- It was incorporated on 18 February 1938 as a company.
- In 1972 General Insurance Business was nationalized in India.

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## **Acquisitions & Mergers**

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### **Zomato acquires Runnr**

On 13th September 2017, restaurant discovery and food delivery firm Zomato acquired logistics startup Runnr.

### **About the acquisition:**

- The deal for acquisition was signed between Zomato CEO, Mr. Deepinder Goyal and Runnr CEO Mr. Mohit Kumar.
- Zomato currently delivers 30 lakh orders per month. Out of which only 10 % (3 lakh) is fulfilled by Runnr. This acquisition would enable Zomato fulfil around 50 % of the orders through its own logistics.
- Apart from this, Zomato would continue to utilise the restaurant's own logistics which it considers to be a cost effective method.
- This acquisition would help Zomato compete stronger with its rival Swiggy, a food delivery service provider.

### **About Zomato:**

- Type – Restaurant discovery & food delivery service provider
- Headquarters – Gurgaon, Haryana
- CEO – Mr. Deepinder Goyal

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## **Science and Technology**

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### **Scientists create first global map of water on Moon**

Scientists from Brown University in US have created first map of water trapped in uppermost layer of Moon's soil. This was built using NASA's Moon Mineralogy Mapper onboard of India's Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft.

The map builds on initial discovery of water and related molecule — hydroxyl (consists of one atom each of hydrogen and oxygen) in lunar soil in 2009. It may prove useful to future lunar explorers.

### **Water Presence on Moon**

- The signature of water is present nearly everywhere on lunar surface and not limited to polar regions as it was previously reported. The distribution of water on moon is largely uniform rather than splotchy. The way in which it is distributed across Moon gives clues about its source.
- The amount of water on moon increases toward poles and does not show significant difference among distinct compositional terrains. It reaches a maximum average of around 500 to 750 parts per million (ppm) in higher latitudes, less than what is found in sands of Earth's driest deserts.

- However, its concentrations gradually decrease toward equator. This pattern is consistent with implantation via solar wind from Sun, which can form hydroxyl (OH) and molecular water once emplaced.
- The concentration of water also changes over course of lunar day at latitudes lower than 60 degrees, going from wetter in early morning and evening to nearly bone dry around lunar noon. The fluctuation can be as much as 200 ppm.

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## Sports

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### Goa to host 36th National Games

On 13th September 2017, Goa's Sports Minister Mr. Manohar Ajaonkar said that Goa would host the 36th National Games, in Goa.

#### **36th National Games:**

- The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has given the official rights to Goa to host the 36th National Games. The event would be held in November, 2017.
- Mr. Manohar Ajaonkar said that improvement in infrastructure and other facilities would be done to provide a great experience in the National Games.
- The responsibility of arranging protocol, ceremonies, accommodation, games village, hospitality and co-ordination, transportation etc. are given to the host city.

#### **About Goa:**

- Capital – Panaji
- Official language – Konkani
- Governor – Ms. Mridula Sinha
- Chief Minister – Mr. Manohar Parrikar

### Maharashtra wins Chief Minister's cup at National kickboxing championship

Maharashtra has won the Chief Minister's cup at National kickboxing championship. It has 45 gold medals.

#### **Key Points:**

- The National kickboxing championship is being held in Raipur.
- Chhattisgarh secured second position with 27 gold and Haryana secured third position with 15 gold medals.

- About two thousand players from 27 states participated in the four-day event.

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# Obituary

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## Constitutional law expert and Senior Advocate PP Rao passed away

On September 13, 2017, Senior Supreme Court Lawyer and Constitutional expert PP Rao passed away at New Delhi due to cardiac arrest.

- He was awarded the Padma Bhushan.
- In 2014, President of India Pranab Mukherjee approved Rao's selection as jurist member of the selection committee of the Lokpal.
- He was enrolled as an Advocate with Bar Council of Delhi in 1967 and shifted his practice to the Supreme Court. He was designated as a Senior Advocate in 1976.
- He was elected the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association in 1991, and in 2006.

### **The famous cases that involves him:**

- He represented the State of Andhra Pradesh as Advocate on Record in 'Kesavananda Bharati'
- Assisted Attorney-General Niring De in 'ADM Jabalpur'.
- A.R. Antulay v R.S. Naik,
- S.R. Bommai v Union of India,
- P.V. Narasimha Rao v State
- Ashok Kumar Thakur v Union of India
- M.S. Gill v Chief Election Commissioner.