

# National Current Affairs

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## **Bengaluru to be first Aadhaar-enabled airport in the country by Dec 2018**

The Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) has planned to make Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) as India's first airport to have complete Aadhaar-enabled entry and biometric boarding system.

- According to the Request For Proposal (RFP) issued by BIAL, the airport is expected to be completely Aadhaar-enabled by December 2018.
- BIAL would use Aadhaar-enabled entry and biometric e-boarding process to confirm personal identity for airport passenger processing and control other things.
- The process would verify a passenger within 5 seconds at every checkpoint, completing the screening process in 10 minutes compared to the average 25 minutes.

## **Andhra Chief Minister inaugurates Blockchain Business Conference in Visakhapatnam**

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu today inaugurated a two-day International Blockchain Business Conference at Visakhapatnam.

- Programmed to record not just financial transactions but virtually everything of value, Blockchain is an incorruptible digital ledger of economic transactions and is the latest technology in the field of cyber space.
- The conference will have sessions on Blockchain in banking, insurance and capital markets.
- The Blockchain technologies will be explored by the Regional and international experts along with the startups, corporates, FSI executives, entrepreneurs, regulators, and policy-makers to witness the impact it will have on the financial services industry.

## **NABARD buys additional 7% stake in SIDBI from IDBI Bank for Rs 900 crore**

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has bought an additional 7 percent stake in Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) for Rs 900 crore from public sector lender IDBI Bank.

- With this, NABARD now owns 10 percent of SIDBI. This is the largest ever investment made by the country's foremost rural financial institution so far.
- Earlier, RBI had invoked prompt corrective action against IDBI Bank due to worsening of financial ratios. Following that, it has been trying to sell its non-core assets, and thereby wanted to sell its entire 16.25% stake in SIDBI since August 2017.

### **Kerala Tourism launches Continuous Tourist Survey 2017-20**

To accelerate the growth of tourism in Kerala, the Department of Tourism has launched a three-year long Continuous Tourist Survey (CTS) from this year.

- The 2017-2020 sample survey is being conducted in collaboration with M/s Datamation Consultants, selected through a transparent tender process
- The Tourism department is regularly collecting month wise statistics of foreign as well as domestic tourists visiting the state, through the Statistical Investigators of Economics and Statistics Department in census method from all accommodation units in the state.
- The survey is intended to study the interest of tourists, their age and demographic details, reasons for visit and nature of tours undertaken.
- It will not only cover tourist destinations, but also hotels, house boats, home stays, ayurveda centers, restaurants and tour operators.

### **Drop 'Muslim' and 'Hindu' from names of BHU, AMU: UGC**

On 9th October 2017, a UGC panel recommended that, words such as 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' in names of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), should be dropped.

- This UGC panel was formed to investigate alleged irregularities in 10 central universities.
- The recommendations made by the UGC panel state that, centrally funded universities are secular institutions, but such words related to religion in their names do not reflect their secular character.
- Hence, the universities can be simply called Aligarh University and Banaras University or be renamed after their founders.

### **Supreme Court bans firecrackers for Diwali in Delhi**

On 9th October 2017, the Supreme Court (SC) imposed a ban on the sale of firecrackers till 31st October 2017, in the National Capital Region (NCR)-Delhi.

- The Supreme Court has banned the sale of firecrackers prior to Diwali.
- The SC had issued a similar ban in the NCR region in 2016. But it did not have the opportunity to observe the impact on pollution levels. Hence the SC has also ordered that a relevant agency should compute the impact of a noise-and smoke-free festival this year.
- The SC suspended all licenses issued by the Delhi Police to shopkeepers that allowed them to sell fireworks. The SC permitted the sale of firecrackers after 1st November 2017.

### **Maharashtra is top Indian tourist source market for Australia**

Maharashtra has emerged as the leading source market for Australia with over 59,000 tourists from the state visiting the land of kangaroos in the year ended June 2017.

- According to the data, Maharashtra contributed to a growth of 18 per cent in tourist footfalls and 41 per cent in spend for the year ended June 2017.
- Maharashtra was followed by Delhi, from where 32,000 holiday-makers travelled to Australia. The capital state was followed by Karnataka (30,000), Tamil Nadu (20,000), Punjab (18,000) and Gujarat (17,000).

### **ICICI Bank commits Rs 10 cr for welfare of armed forces**

As a part of its Corporate Social Responsibility initiative, ICICI Bank has committed a financial assistance of Rs 10 crore to the Indian Armed Forces, which will be utilised for welfare activities and betterment of the families of ex-servicemen who have lost their lives on duty.

- This fund will be used for two programmes. The first will support post-graduation education of the widows of the soldiers and education for their wards. The second programme will provide financial assistance for marriages of the daughters of ex-servicemen.
- Both the programmes will be administered by Kendriya Sainik Board, the apex body that formulates policies for resettlement and welfare of ex-servicemen and their dependents.

### **Jagdish Mukhi sworn in as new Governor of Assam**

Jagdish Mukhi was sworn in as new Governor of Assam.

- Mr. Mukhi succeeded Banwarilal Purohit who has been appointed as the Governor of Tamil Nadu.
- In his previous assignment, he had served as lieutenant governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- Jagdish Mukhi is former member of BJP and RSS.
- He had represented Janak Puri constituency in Delhi Assembly continuously from 1980 and has won seven continuous Vidhan Sabha elections from the same constituency until losing the 2014.
- He has held important ministerial positions including minister of Finance, Planning, Excise and Taxation and Higher Education in Delhi government.
- He also had served as Leader of Opposition for almost 10 years. He was awarded as best planning minister of nation by then Union planning minister Pranab Mukherjee in 1997.

- Two times he was awarded with best MLA award in Delhi Vidhan Sabha.

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## International Current Affairs

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### India ranks 8th in 2017 Valuable Nation Brand List

According to Brand Finance's recently released Nation Brands 2017 report, India was ranked 8th out of 100 countries on a list of most valuable nation brands.

- This year India slipped by one spot compared to 7th rank in 2016 and ceded its previous spot to Canada.
- Top 10 Valuable Nation brands are United States (1st), China (2nd), Germany (3rd), Japan (4th), United Kingdom (5th), France (6th), Canada (7th), India (8th), Italy (9th) and South Korea (10th).
- In terms of valuation, India's National Brand Value in 2017 is \$2.04 trillion, down by 1% from last year's \$2.06 trillion. However, India's brand rating has improved from 'AA-' to 'AA'.
- Despite rating improvement, India has not feature in list of 10 best performing nation brands which is topped by Iceland topped.
- Asian nation brands are seeing a boom as Western countries stagnate. China is fastest growing nation brand and has seen a record rise of \$3.1 trillion.
- However, China's nation brand value is half of that of the United States.
- World's most valuable nation list released as part Nation Brands report by Brand Finance measures strength and value of nation brands of 100 leading countries.
- Its method is based on royalty relief mechanism employed to value the world's largest companies. The valuation is based on 5 year forecasts of sales of all brands in each nation and follows a complex process in which Gross domestic product (GDP) is used as a proxy for total revenues.

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## Appointments & Resigns

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Vinay Mohan Kwatra appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Principality of Monaco

On 9th October 2017, Vinay Mohan Kwatra was appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Principality of Monaco.

- Vinay Mohan Kwatra is an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Officer of the batch 1988. He is presently Ambassador of India to France.
- He has been concurrently appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Principality of Monaco.

### **Vinit Kumar takes over as Kolkata Port Trust chairman**

On 9th October 2017, Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE) officer, Vinit Kumar, took over as full-time Chairman of Kolkata Port Trust.

- For almost 18 months, Vizag Port Trust chairman M T Krishna Babu was in charge of Kolkata Port Trust (KoPT) in an interim arrangement.
- Before taking up his new role, Kumar was Chief Electrical Engineer in Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation Ltd and was looking after the World Bank-funded Mumbai Urban Transport Project.
- Kumar encouraged Kolkata Dock System and Haldia Dock Complex to accept the challenges and opportunities arising in the port and shipping world.

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## **Banking & Finance**

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### **Reliance Commercial Finance Ltd inks agreement with IREDA for Rs.300 crore loan**

Reliance Commercial Finance Ltd has signed an agreement with Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd (IREDA) for Rs.300 crore loan, in Mumbai.

- This amount would be used to lend to renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.
- The Reliance Commercial Finance Ltd is a subsidiary of Reliance Capital. IREDA is a central public sector undertaking under Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

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## **Science and Technology**

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### **SpaceX launches 10 satellites for Iridium mobile network**

On October 9, 2017, 10 more satellites for the Iridium Satellite Constellation were launched by SpaceX from Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, US.

- The 10 French-designed, U.S.- built satellites were launched by SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. All the satellites were successfully deployed in the destined orbit after one hour from the launch.
- This was SpaceX's 14th consecutive successful launch since January 2017.
- These 10 satellites are part of Iridium satellite constellation which provides voice and data coverage to satellite phones, pagers and integrated transceivers over the Earth's entire surface. The Iridium constellation is spread around the globe in six orbital planes, and thereby provides worldwide coverage.
- SpaceX and Iridium have entered into agreements for eight launches on Falcon 9 rockets until the constellation is completed in mid-2018.

### **China launches remote sensing satellite for Venezuela**

On October 9, 2017, China launched a remote sensing VRSS-2 satellite for Venezuela from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Gobi desert.

- VRSS -2 Satellite was launched by China's Long March-2D carrier rocket.
- Venezuela will use this satellite for environmental protection and disaster monitoring, as well as land resources inspection, crop yield estimation and city planning.
- This is the third satellite launched by China for Venezuela. Earlier in 2008 Venesat -1 was launched followed by VRSS – 1 in 2012

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## **Important Days**

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### **World Day against the Death Penalty – October 10**

On 10th October 2017, the World Day against the Death Penalty is observed all over the world.

- The theme for World Day against the Death Penalty 2017 is 'the death penalty and poverty'.

- The World Day against the Death Penalty aims at raising awareness about the reasons why people living in poverty are at a greater risk of being sentenced to death and executed.
- The World Coalition against the Death Penalty is an alliance of NGOs, bar associations, local bodies and unions whose aim is to strengthen the international anti-death penalty movement.
- It established 10 October as the date of the annual World Day Against the Death Penalty in 2003. This is the 15th World Day against the Death Penalty.

### **World Mental Health Day – October 10**

On 10th October 2017, World Mental Health Day is observed all over the world.

- ‘Mental health in the workplace’ is the theme of World Mental Health Day 2017. Its objective is to raise awareness of mental health issues and mobilize efforts in support of better mental health.
- World Mental Health Day was first celebrated in 1992. It is observed on 10 October every year.
- Globally, more than 300 million people suffer from depression, the leading cause of disability. More than 260 million are living with anxiety disorders. Many of these people live with both.

### **World Post Day – October 9, 2017**

World Post Day was celebrated all over the world On 9th October 2017.

- The World Post Day is celebrated to mark the anniversary of the establishment of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in 1874 in the Swiss Capital, Bern. It was declared World Post Day by the UPU Congress held in Tokyo, Japan in 1969.
- The Posts in many countries use this day to introduce or promote new postal products and services. The UPU creates awareness about post by designing and distributing posters for display across the world.
- The World Post Day does not have a particular theme. Most of the countries organize philatelic exhibitions on World Post Day

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## **Sports**

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### **Iceland became smallest country to qualify for 2018 FIFA World Cup**

On 9th October 2017, Iceland became the smallest country ever to qualify for the FIFA World Cup.

- Iceland has qualified to participate in FIFA World Cup 2018 by defeating Kosovo by 2-0 in the finals. Iceland finished the group with 22 points from their 10 games.
- Iceland would participate in its first finals of FIFA World Cup 2018, in Russia. It was a remarkable achievement for a country which has a population of about 3,50,000.
- Iceland team is coached by part-time dentist Heimir Hallgrímsson. Iceland's seven wins in the group included all five of their home matches. It has defeated previous World Cup semi-finalists Croatia and Turkey.

### **BCCI makes yo-yo tests compulsory criterion for Team India selection**

In a bid to make India Cricket team one of the fittest sides in world cricket, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has made it mandatory for cricketers to pass the 'yo-yo' endurance test.

- In a yo-yo test, players have to pace themselves to and fro between two rows of cones kept 20 metres apart. For every round the player has to sync his sprint with the beeps that are played. Duration between beeps progressively shorten as the test proceeds.
- This test is widely used by selection bodies in various sports including hockey, football and cricket. For every sport the performance benchmark in the test may vary.