

National Current Affairs

Foundation for Poverty-Free India to be laid by 2022: NITI Aayog

NITI Aayog has said in a presentation that, the foundation for freedom from six problems namely poverty, dirt, corruption, terrorism, casteism and communalism will be laid by 2022 when India celebrates 75 years of Independence.

- The presentation was published on NITI Aayog website. The presentation was made by NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar at Conference of Governors in October 2017.
- It talked about connecting all villages with habitations over 500 with all-weather roads by 2019 under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).
- It said that, India should have 20 world class higher education institutions by 2022. It also visualised that, all villages selected under Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) should attain model village status by 2022.

First Heli Expo India & International Civil Helicopter Conclave in New Delhi

On 4th and 5th November 2017, the 1st Heli Expo India and International Civil Helicopter Conclave-2017 was held at the Pawan Hans Heliport, Rohini, New Delhi.

- First Heli Expo India & International Civil Helicopter Conclave in New Delhi 1st Heli Expo India and International Civil Helicopter Conclave-2017:
- The theme of this conclave was 'Enhancing Connectivity'. It was organised by Pawan Hans Limited in association with PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- Experts from Industry and Defence Forces and representatives from ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) and SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries attended the conclave.
- The first issue of Pawan Hans Magazine 'Aviation Today' was also unveiled by the chief guests on this occasion. On the second day people were allowed to pre-book the Delhi Darshan joy rides by Helicopter.

Two-day Sagar Kavach exercise starts on November 8 in Goa

The two-day Coastal Security Exercise 'Sagar Kavach' is to be held on 8th and 9th November, 2017.

- The Sagar Kavach exercise is conducted to provide smooth seaward cover along the Goa Coast jointly by all security agencies from coastal belt area line to the limit of territorial water (12 nautical miles).
- The Sagar Kavach exercise is being conducted and coordinated by Indian Coast Guard, District Headquarter at Goa.
- Various agencies like Indian Coast Guard, Indian Navy, Goa Police, Goa Coastal Security Intelligence Agencies, Ports Administration Department, Customs etc. will take part in this exercise.
- This exercise provides opportunity to fine tune standard operating procedure and test new operation concepts for coastal security.

Telangana Government Unveils Food Processing Policy

On November 4, 2017, the second day of 'World Food India' 2017 event in New Delhi, Telangana State Government launched its 'Food Processing Policy'.

- The aim of this policy is to attract Rs 20000 crore investment in the food processing sector in Telangana.
- This investment will consequentially generate about 1.25 lakh direct employment opportunities in next five years.
- The new policy seeks to interlink the food processing sector with agriculture and allied fields with an objective to improve farmers' income.
- Under this policy, food processing clusters and parks will be developed across Telangana.

Assam CM Sonowal launches 647 schemes for development of Majuli

On November 4, 2017, Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched 647 schemes with a total financial outlay of Rs. 24.57 crore to boost Majuli's development.

- Majuli is a river island in the Brahmaputra River, Assam. It is India's first island district and world's largest river island.
- Out of the 647 schemes, 448 schemes are under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme which entails an investment of Rs. 21.90 crore.
- Other 199 schemes are to be executed with grants of Rs 2.67 awarded by 14th Finance Commission.
- In Assam, 26000 gaon sabhas will be held in all villages under Amar Gaon, Amar Achoni plan. Through these gaon sabhas, the villagers will be involved in monitoring various development programmes being executed in their villages.
- Assam State Government has also decided to strengthen the embankment of Majuli to save the villages from the onslaught of floods and erosion.

Sikkim to launch second phase of organic movement: Chamling

Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling on 05th Nov 2017 announced about a plan to launch a second phase of organic movement in the state. Sikkim became a fully organic state on 2016.

- The second phase of organic movement will be launched to increase large scale production of various produces and create value for the producers by setting up a global supply chain by strengthening an export mechanism
- The chief minister strongly encourage the youth of Sikkim to come forward to make a token contribution for a better future of this world by engaging in organic farming as a 'life saving' profession so that a message goes across the world that organic way of life can undo damage done by consumption of chemical-laced food.
- Chamling also highlighted a number of green initiatives taken by the state government for protection and conservation of the environment and said that the decision to convert the Himalayan state into an organic state was a natural progression of its commitment to environmental friendly development agenda.

Army launches joint training node in Meghalaya

The Indian Army today launched an independent and fully-integrated Joint Training Node (JTN) at Umroi cantonment, Meghalaya.

- The JTN is the first of its kind in eastern command and is different from other joint training centres in Belgaum, Varangte and Bakloh.
- The Army has chosen the Umroi cantonment for the JTN keeping mind its proximity to Guwahati and the Shillong airports.
- All infrastructure is eco-friendly and confirms to the highest standards maintaining the fragile ecosystem of Umroi Cantonment.
- This Joint Training Node will pave away for projecting the States of Meghalaya and Assam on the World map of Foreign Armies and adds an another feather in the cap of the Indian Army".
- The Indian Army has other joint training centres in Belgaum, Varangte and Baklohbut Umroi is Eastern Command's first of its kind independent & fully integrated Joint Training Node for Foreign Armies.

International Current Affairs

ISA, EBRD ink pact on solar energy

The International Solar Alliance (ISA) and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) have signed Joint Financial Partnership Declaration for cooperation on renewable energy projects around the world.

- The collaboration between the ISA and the EBRD would also help funding of solar projects both in African and other countries.

Five-ship Indian naval training flotilla on visit to Colombo

A five-ship Indian naval training flotilla (a small fleet of ships or boats), is on a visit to Colombo, Sri Lanka to expose the trainees to the conduct of warship in foreign waters and strengthen the bridges of friendship between India and Sri Lanka.

- The five ships in this flotilla includes INS Tir, INS Sujata, INS Sudarshini, INS Shardul and Coast Guard vessel ICGS Sarathi.
- All these ships belong to the First Training Squadron of the Indian Navy and are functioning under the Southern Naval Command (SNC) headquartered in Kochi, Kerala.
- Captain D J Revar, Senior Officer of the First Training Squadron and also the commanding officer of INS Tir is heading this flotilla.

Col Rajyavardhan Rathore to attend World Youth Forum at Sharam El Shiekh, Egypt

The Minister of State (Independent Charge) Youth Affairs and Sports Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore has left to attend World Youth Forum, scheduled to be held at Sharam El Shiekh, Egypt.

- This 5 day forum will be inaugurated by the President of Egypt Mr Abdelfateh El Sisi on 06th of Nov.
- The Summit segment is expected to be attended by the Heads of State/Government, Ministers of youth from 14 countries and Representatives of UN, Arab League and African Union.
- The Forum aims to provide a platform to the youth from all over the globe to engage with the key global policy makers.
- The forum will cover the role of youth in the business and innovation, challenges and making of future leaders, gender equity and women empowerment.

Banking & Finance

ICICI Bank teams with Apple to launch voice-based international remittance service for NRIs

ICICI Bank launched of India's first voice-based international remittance service to enable non-resident Indians (NRIs) to send money to any bank in India.

- A Non-Resident Indian (NRI) customer of ICICI Bank to send money to any bank in India via just a simple voice command to Apple's virtual voice assistant, Siri on Apple iPhone/iPad.
- A first-of-its-kind cross border remittance service by a bank in the country, it improves customer's convenience significantly as it replaces a five step process, which was required to initiate a remittance to India earlier. The customer needs to simply speak out the 'nickname' of the registered payee in the Money2India (M2I) app to whom he/she wants to send money.
- For example, the customer can initiate the process by simply saying "Send USD 100 to dad with Money2India." Based on this voice instruction, Siri will convert the voice command to text using Natural Language Processing (NLP) and populate an interface for confirmation with the details.
- The customer is no longer required to enter the payee name or amount to be transferred since he/she would be using a voice command to provide instructions to Siri.
- ICICI Bank is the first bank in the country to leverage on Apple's virtual voice assistant to enable cross border remittances.

Business

Rs 10,000 crore MoU signed between Government of India & Patanjali

On 3rd November 2017, a Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU) of Rs 10, 000 Crore was signed between the Government of India and Patanjali at the World Food India 2017.

- The MoU was signed by Managing Director of Patanjali, Acharya Balkrishna and Harsimrat Kaur Badal, the Union Cabinet Minister of Food Processing at the World Food India 2017.
- Patanjali Ayurved Ltd has given a great competition to established packaged goods companies over the past few years. Earlier in October 2017, Patanjali climbed from 45th place last year to 19th this year, in the Forbes magazine's Annual India Rich List 2017.

Awards & Recognition

India sets Guinness Record for cooking 918 kgs of Khichdi

On November 4, 2017, India set a Guinness world record by cooking 918 kg khichdi at 'World Food India' 2017 event in New Delhi.

- Khichdi is a traditional Indian multi-grain dish that is relished equally by rich as well poor people across India.
- This feat of cooking 918 kg khichdi was accomplished by a team of 50 people led by celebrity chef Sanjeev Kapoor and NGO Akshaya Patra. Other renowned chefs including Imtiaz Qureshi, Ranveer Brar, Sudhir Sibal, Rakesh Sethi, Akshay Nayyar, Satish Gowda too helped in the cooking of the dish. The final 'tadka' was put by yoga guru Baba Ramdev.
- The minimum requirement to create a world-record was 500 kg. The khichdi was thereafter distributed to orphans by Akshaya Patra Foundation and Gurudwara to about 60,000 people.

Appointments & Resigns

Madhu Azad becomes Gurgaon's first woman mayor

On 3rd November 2017, Madhu Azad of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Councillor for Ward 7, bagged the post of Gurgaon Mayor, becoming the first ever female mayor of Gurgaon.

- Madhu Azad's husband, Ashok Azad, has been associated with BJP for several years. She won the post unopposed. The post of mayor for this year, had been reserved for a woman from a scheduled caste.
- The position of deputy mayor was won by Sunita Yadav, who is the councilor for ward 33. She was also chosen unanimously. The Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) elections were held on 25th September 2017.

Delhi PWD Secretary Ashwani Kumar to be new Chief Secretary of Puducherry

Ashwani Kumar, Principal Secretary in the Delhi Public Works Department (PWD), has been appointed as Chief Secretary for Puducherry.

- The current Puducherry Chief Secretary, Manjo Kumar Parida, who has in the past worked in the Delhi government will return to Delhi.
- The new postings become effective immediately. Also, Delhi's urban development secretary Renu Sharma has also been given charge of PWD.
- Finance secretary S N Sahai has been given additional charge of home. Another senior IAS officer, G Narendra Kumar, has been transferred to Delhi from Puducherry.

Poonguzhali becomes first woman Senior DDG appointed in TERM, DoT

N Poonguzhali has become the first woman to be appointed as senior Deputy Director General (DDG), Tamil Nadu, Telecom Enforcement Resource Monitoring, Department of Telecommunications (DoT). N Poonguzhali – Senior DDG of TERM, Tamil Nadu:

- N Poonguzhali is an Indian telecom service officer of the 1979 batch. She is an alumnus of IIT Madras, from where she graduated in Electronics and also completed her Masters in Business Administration.
- Her new role is in Telecom Enforcement Resource Monitoring (TERM) under the Department of Telecommunications (DoT). She has 36 years of experience in the Department of Telecommunication and at Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd in various responsibilities.
- She also bagged the distinguished woman engineers award by the Institute of Engineers. Earlier, she served BSNL as Chief General Manager, Tamil Nadu Circle.

Science & Technology

Scientists discover universe's most ancient spiral galaxy

Scientists have discovered most ancient spiral galaxy known as A1689B11, recorded so far in the universe.

- It was detected using powerful technique that combines gravitational lensing with Near-infrared Integral Field Spectrograph (NIFS) on Gemini North telescope in Hawaii. Gravitational lenses are nature's largest telescopes, created by massive clusters composed of thousands of galaxies and dark matter.

- The A1689B11 galaxy was born 11 billion years ago and existed just 2.6 billion years after Big Bang, when universe was only one-fifth of its present age.
- Studying ancient spirals like A1689B11 can provide insights into early cosmos. It will help in unlocking mystery of how and when Hubble sequence emerges.
- Spiral galaxies are exceptionally rare in early universe and this discovery opens door to investigating how galaxies transition from highly chaotic, turbulent discs to tranquil, thin discs like those of our own Milky Way galaxy.

Sports

Aditi wins in Abu Dhabi for her third LET title

On November 4, 2017, Indian golfer Aditi Ashok won the Fatima Bint Mubarak Ladies Open in Abu Dhabi, UAE and has thereby won her third Ladies European Tour (LET) title in less than twelve months.

- Aditi Ashok becomes first female Indian golfer to record 3 consecutive top 10 European Tour finishes. Aditi Ashok won the title by outperforming Cheyenne Woods (US), Georgia Hall (England) and Camilla Lennarth (Sweden).
- Including Fatima Bint Mubarak Ladies Open title, Aditi has won Hero Indian Open and Qatar Ladies Open in last twelve months.
- Aditi's next tournament is Indian Open, which is slated to begin on November 10, 2017 in Gurgaon, Haryana.

TT Super League in Chennai from Nov 24

Chennai will host the inaugural edition of Table Tennis Super League-Tamil Nadu from 24th – 26th November, 2017.

- This tournament will be organised by Indusports, under the auspices of Tamil Nadu Table Tennis Association and 11Even Sports.
- Competition will take place among eight teams and each would have six members from different categories viz. men, women, junior boys, junior girls, cadet boys and veterans.
- Teams have been formed through players' auction, during which 60 players were bought by teams.
- Among men table tennis players, E Prabhakaran emerged the highest paid player, going for Rs 52500.

- Among women players, T Reeth Rishya emerged as the highest paid player receiving Rs 40500.

India's Sharath Kamal & Sathiyan bag bronze in Belgium Open

Indian table tennis players Achantan Sharath Kamal and Sathiyan Gnanasekaran have won bronze medal in the men's doubles category of the 2017 Challenge Belgium Open.

- Sharath Kamal & Sathiyan lost in the semi-finals to the German pair of Patrick Franziska and Ricardo Walther.
- On their way to semi-finals, Sharath Kamal – Sathiyan pair first beat the Belgian pair of Thibaut Darcis and Lauric Jean and out performed Sweden's Harald Andersson and Simon Arvidsson.
- In men's singles category, India's Sanil Shetty performed well and reached quarterfinals by defeating better-ranked players than him. In quarter final he lost against Germany's Ricardo Walther.
- In women's doubles category, Indian pair of Manika Batra and Mouma Das too performed well and reached quarter finals. In quarter finals they lost to Taiwan's Hsien-Tzu Cheng and Hsing-Yin Liu.

Satbir, Manorama win in Elite category at Cyclothon

Satbir Singh and T Manorama Devi emerged victorious in the Elite Men's and Elite Women's events at 'Saksham Pedal Delhi' Cyclothon held in New Delhi on November 5, 2017.

- More Information about 'Saksham Pedal Delhi' Cyclothon:
- This event was organised by Petroleum Conservation & Research Association (PCRA) under technical guidance from Cycling Federation of India.
- The event was supported by many Oil companies including IOCL, BPCL, HPCL and ONGC.
- The Cyclothon had four categories viz. Elite (Men – 45 km/women – 27 km), Amateur (27 km), Open and the popular Green Ride.
- Besides cycling professionals and amateurs, participants from all walks of life including officials from various ministries and sports personalities took part in this Cyclothon. Bollywood actor Farhan Akhtar too participated in this event.

Important Days

World Tsunami Awareness Day – November 5

On 5th November 2017, World Tsunami Awareness Day was observed all over the world.

- In December 2015, the UN General Assembly designated 5 November as World Tsunami Awareness Day. The first Tsunami Awareness Day was observed in 2016.
- The focus of World Tsunami Awareness Day 2017 will be at reducing the number of affected people globally by disasters.
- November 5 was chosen as World Tsunami Awareness Day in honour of the Japanese story of “Inamura-no-hi”, meaning the “burning of the rice sheaves”. In 1854 a farmer set fire to his entire harvest to warn villagers of tsunami.
- For the second consecutive year, the World Tsunami Awareness Day aligned with the International Day for Disaster Reduction and the “Sendai Seven Campaign”.

World Food India 2017 held in New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated World Food India 2017 (WFI) on 3rd November 2017 at the India Gate Lawns in New Delhi.

- The three day event was organized by Ministry of Food Processing Industries.
- The theme of WFI 2017 is ‘Transforming the Food Economy’.
- Germany, Japan and Denmark are Partner Countries to World Food India.
- The purpose of WFI 2017 is to transform food economy and realize vision of doubling of farmers’ income by establishing India as a preferred investment destination and sourcing hub for the global food processing industry.
- This is first time India is hosting such an event for the Food processing sector.
- It is said to be biggest ever congregation of global investors, companies, business delegations and CEOs of major food companies, as well as CEOs of all leading domestic food processing companies, and representatives of 28 States in India.
- Government aims to attract \$10 billion investment in food processing sector and to generate 1 million jobs in the next 3 years in India. WFI 2017 aims to provide platform to strengthen India’s position as Global Food Factory and is positive step towards making Country Food Secure.
- Special focus is given on Farmer Producer Organizations & Women Entrepreneurs to connect them to corporates for increasing opportunities for sourcing & business.