

# National Current Affairs

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## **Centre releases Rs 734.7 crore for 26 irrigation projects**

The Union Water Resources Ministry has released central assistance amounting to Rs 734.7 crore for 26 irrigation projects.

- The ministry last week released central assistance of Rs 246.9 crore for nine prioritised projects under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) for Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) works.
- It also released Rs 487.80 crore for Command Area Development (CAD) works for 17 projects.
- During the 2017-18 fiscal till now, central assistance amounting to Rs 1,152.52 crore has been released for 26 priority projects under the AIBP.
- Plus, Rs 3,318.85 crore has been released as state share from National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) for 24 priority projects under the AIBP.
- For CAD works, assistance amounting to Rs 524.90 crore for 22 priority projects and Rs 71.52 crore as state share has been released through the NABARD.

## **UP Cabinet approves 'one district, one product' scheme**

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet has approved 'one district, one product' scheme to promote products indigenous to every district.

- Under this, one product indigenous to every district would be showcased at the three-day UP Diwas event.
- Implementation of the One District, One Product will boost economic development of the state, and also help in generation of five lakh new jobs annually.
- The Cabinet also gave its assent to setting up a Vedic Science Centre (Vaidik Vigyan Kendra) on the premises of Kashi Hindu University.

## **Japan's Official Development Loan Assistance to India**

The Government of Japan has committed JICA Official Development Assistance loan for an amount of Yen 45 billion (=Rs.2587 crore approx.) for Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Project (Phase 3) (I).

- This Project will provide residents of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike (BBMP) area especially in 110 villages with safe and stable water supply and sewerage

services by carrying-out construction of water treatment plant and sewage treatment plants thereby improving living conditions of the residents as well as the investment environment in the concerned areas in BBMP in the State of Karnataka.

- This partnership will consolidate and strengthen the Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan.

### **India Ranked 177 in Environmental Performance Index (EPI)**

India has been ranked 177 among 180 countries in the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) – 2018.

- This index has been developed by Yale University and Columbia University in collaboration with the World Economic Forum and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission.
- This report has been released on 23 January, 2018 on the sidelines of World Economic Forum meet in Davos.
- Top 5 countries are Switzerland, France, Denmark, Malta and Sweden.
- To bottom countries are Nepal, India, Congo, Bangladesh, Burundi.
- Environmental Performance Index (EPI) is calculated on the basis of data gathered from 24 individual metrics of environmental performance.

### **India fifth most attractive market for investments: CEOs survey**

According to a survey of CEOs by global consultancy PwC, India has emerged as the fifth most attractive market for investments and the optimism over global economic growth is at a record level.

- The findings come as a big booster for Prime Minister Narendra Modi who will meet international investors in a bid to get more investment into the country, especially in the manufacturing sector, which has remained sluggish and is crucial to job creation.
- Aided by opening up of several key sectors over the last few years, foreign direct investment in India surged 17 per cent to over \$25 billion during the first half of the current financial year, even as private investment has remained muted due to excess capacity and high financial stress.
- It had for the first time topped \$60 billion in 2016-17, but remains less than half of China's \$137 billion in 2017, which was an increase of around 8%.
- Around 46 per cent of global CEOs consider the US as one of the three most important countries for growth, followed by China (33 per cent) and Germany (20 per cent) at second and third places, respectively. At the fourth spot is the UK (15 per cent).
- India (9 per cent) bumps Japan (8 per cent) as the fifth most attractive market in 2018.

### **Bharat Parv to be held at Red Fort on Republic Day**

Cultural extravaganza Bharat Parv will be held at the Red Fort in Delhi as part of the Republic Day celebrations.

- The prime objective of the event is to promote rich cultural diversity of country, generate a patriotic mood and to ensure wider participation of general public.
- The Bharat Parv event includes display of Republic Day Parade Tableaux, Performances by Armed Forces Bands, Cultural Performances from different regions of country, Multi-Cuisine Food Court, Craft Mela and Photo Exhibition by Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP).
- It will also include cultural performances choreographed in Folk and Tribal Dances and Music arranged through North Zonal Cultural Centre as well as performances by cultural troupes from different States and Union Territories.

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## **International Current Affairs**

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### **48th World Economic Forum annual meeting to be held in Davos**

The annual meeting of World Economic Forum (WEF) is being held in Davos, Switzerland from 23rd – 26<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

- This year's theme is "Creating a Shared Future in a Fractured World".
- Shahrukh Khan received Crystal award for raising awareness about human rights issues and his work for acid attack victims.
- For the first time in the 48-year history of the World Economic Forum (WEF), this month's summit in Davos, Switzerland will be chaired entirely by women.

### **Sri Lanka bans import of non-airbag equipped vehicles from July 1**

Sri Lanka restricted the import of the vehicles which do not carry Air bags for driver and front seat passenger, Anti-Locking Breaking System standards (ABS) and three-point seat belts for driver and passengers travelling front and rear seats.

- Sri Lankan Ministry of Finance has decided to postpone the implementation of the budget proposal on introduction of emission standards and safety measures from 1st July, 2018.

- The Ministry has taken this decision after considering the representations made by motor vehicle importers and manufacturers for a lead time to make required adjustments to comply with the proposed emission standards and safety measures.
- Accordingly, the importation of motor vehicles, which are below emission standards of the Euro IV or its equivalent and not complied with the following safety standards, will totally be prohibited effective from 1st July, 2018.

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## Banking & Finance

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### **IOB, NHB tie up for rural housing push**

Indian Overseas Bank has signed an MoU with National Housing Bank for the Rural Housing Interest Subsidy Scheme (RHIS) of the Ministry of Rural Development.

- The aim of the RHIS is to provide subsidy for housing loans taken by those living in rural areas for construction and modifications of their dwelling units.
- The interest subsidy under the scheme is 3 per cent for a loan amount of ₹2 lakh for 20-year tenure.
- IOB will be able to extend the benefit of RHIS to its rural home loan customers of its 923 rural branches spread across India.

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## Awards & Recognition

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### **Tamil Nadu CM Edappadi K Palanichamy receives UNESCO Award**

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palanichamy received UNESCO Award of Merit awarded to the iconic Srirangam Ranganathaswamy temple in Tiruchirapal.

- The award of merit was awarded by UNESCO Asia Pacific region for the reconstruction activities undertaken in temple without in least affecting its traditional splendour and Vedic rituals.
- Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple is considered as one of the most important of the 108 main Vishnu temples (Divyadesams).
- It is Vaishnava temple built in Tamil or Dravidian style of architecture.
- It is located on an islet formed by twin rivers: Coleroon and Cauvery.
- The temple complex is situated in sprawling ground of more than 156 acres.

- The UNESCO Asia-Pacific awards for cultural heritage conservation programme is aimed at acknowledging efforts taken to restore and conserve historical structures without affecting their heritage value.

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## Appointments & Resigns

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### **Hemant Kumar appointed as Jammu's new Divisional Commissioner**

Hemant Kumar Sharma, a 2002-batch IAS officer, has been appointed as the Divisional Commissioner of Jammu. He was also holding additional charge of the post of administrative secretary, science and technology department, is transferred.

- The order also noted that IAS officer M Raju, secretary to the government, Public Health Engineering, Irrigation and Flood Control department, would now hold the additional charge of the posts of administrative secretary, transport and science and technology department, till further orders.
- Bhandari was appointed as private secretary to the union minister for human resource development in the higher education department at the level of director for a period of five years.
- The state government has also transferred programme officer, Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) Suriya Jabeen (KAS) and posted her as the additional district development commissioner Jammu against an available vacancy.

### **Rajesh Agarwal appointed Ambassador to the Republic of Niger**

- Rajesh Agarwal appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Niger. He is presently the Counsellor, High Commission of India, Port Moresby.

### **Rachel Morrison Becomes First Woman Nominated for a Cinematography Oscar**

Rachel Morrison became the first woman to receive an Oscar nomination for cinematography.

- She was nominated for her work on Dee Rees' Mudbound for Netflix.
- Earlier this month, she also became the first woman to collect at American Society of Cinematographers Award in its feature competition

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# Sports

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## **West Indies to host 2018 Women's World T20**

The 2018 edition of the Women's World T20 will be hosted by Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana and St Lucia from November 9-24.

- The three venues were selected by Cricket West Indies through a bidding process and have been ratified by the ICC.
- The hosts will be joined by Australia, world champions England, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, South Africa and Sri Lanka who have all achieved qualification.
- The November event in the Caribbean will be the first stand-alone ICC Women's World Twenty20 after the past five events were played alongside the men's event.

## **Lifter Rakhi Halder creates new national record**

Rakhi Halder of RSPB created a new national record in clean and jerk en route to a gold medal in the 63kg women's category in the 33rd Women Senior National Weightlifting Championships.

- Rakhi lifted 128kgs in the clean and jerk for a total of 230kgs to create a new national record, bettering Karnam Malleswari's feat (127kg) created in Athens in 1999.
- The silver in this category went to S Thasana Chanu of Karnataka (202kg) while the bronze was clinched by AIPSCB's Amandeep Kaur (191kg).
- The day concluded with a gold medal for RV Rahul of RSPB in 85kg men's division of the 70th Men National Weightlifting Championships.
- Rahul won the gold with a total lift of 335kg, while the silver and the bronze were bagged by Harshad Wadekar of Maharashtra (325kg) and K Ravi Kumar (323kg).

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# Obituary

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## **Noted Entrepreneur Honsen Lyngdoh Passes Away**

Noted entrepreneur Honsen Lyngdoh passed away on Tuesday morning at a city hospital.

- He started his carrier as a workshop owner but with self-acquired experience and expertise and with

modern vision was solely responsible for setting up of the road construction firm 'Honsen Lyngdoh Earth Moving & Hauling Services', and made the firm where it is today.

- With enormous understanding of machinery along with hard dedication became one of the most respected businessmen of the state.

### **Veteran Communist leader Yashwant Chavan dies at 97**

Veteran Communist leader and noted trade unionist Yashwant Chavan passed away at a private hospital in Pune.

- Mr. Chavan was the last of the Marxist luminaries in the heyday of the Indian Communist Party (CPI) in the late 1930s and 40s, which included such legendary firebrands as S.K. Limaye and Shripad Amrut Dange - both of whom served as his ideological mentors.
- In 1965, he founded the 'Lal Nishan Party' (Red Flag Party) following the major schism within the Communist Party ranks in 1964 brought on by Sino-Soviet tensions.
- Mr. Chavan based the Lal Nishan Party on the doctrines of Vladimir Lenin, with the party's trade union arm called the 'Sarva Shramik Sangh'.

### **Legendary musician Hugh Masekela has died**

Legendary South African trumpeter and anti-apartheid movement figure, Hugh Masekela passed away.

- Often described as the "father of South African jazz", Masekela was an icon of South Africa's Sophiatown, the political and cultural enclave of Johannesburg that was razed by apartheid police but remains a symbol of black freedom.
- Bra Hugh's music was inspired by the turmoil that South Africa went through during apartheid and he said it was used as a weapon to spread political change.

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## **Important Days**

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### **National Girl Child Day observed**

National girl child day is celebrated every year on 24<sup>th</sup> of January as a national observance day for the girl child.

- This celebration was started to offer more supports and new opportunities to the girls in the country.
- It is celebrated to increase the awareness among people about all the inequalities faced by the girl child in the society.
- National girl child day has been started as a national girls development mission by the Government of India.
- This mission raises the awareness among people all over the country about the importance of girl's promotion.
- It enhances the meaningful contribution of the girls in decision making processes through the active support of the parents and other community members.

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