

# National Current Affairs

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## **Punjab Government launches Mahatma Gandhi Sarbat Vikas Yojana**

Punjab Government has launched Mahatma Gandhi Sarbat Vikas Yojna (MGSVY) for the welfare of the downtrodden citizen across the state.

- This scheme is aimed at the inclusive growth of the distressed sections of the society.
- It will be on the line of Antyodaya principles (Antyodaya' means rise of the last person) and will be implemented in the state's rural areas.
- The objective of scheme is to identify poor and distressed households which have been deprived of the benefits of the various welfare schemes launched by state government.
- It will give distressed sections much need socially or economically or psychologically help.
- Its purpose is to benefit 18 marginalized sections living in rural areas of state.
- It will provide benefit of welfare schemes for debt stressed farmers, poor families that have woman sole bread earner, out-of-school children, martyred soldiers, families of AIDS patients, differently-abled, abandoned old persons, drug addicts etc.
- It aims to will give more focus on encouraging voluntary organizations, various civil society organizations, Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and other socially committed persons to contribute to the welfare of the downtrodden.

## **India-Japan Smart Grid Pilot Project inaugurated in Panipat**

India-Japan Smart Grid Pilot Project was inaugurated Panipat, Haryana to solve the various complications faced by the power distribution sector.

- It was inaugurated by State Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar in the presence of Japanese Minister Keniko Sen.
- India-Japan Smart Grid Pilot Project was initiated under intensive relations between Japan and India and Central Government's flagship Make in India Programme. The project aims to make electricity distribution network smarter and disseminate Japanese technologies in India.
- It also seeks to improve capacity of power companies to provide operational know-how concerning power distribution to effectively use smart grid-related technologies to reduce distribution losses and failure rate of distribution transformers.
- It also seeks to improve the frequency of power failures, by providing Japanese operational know-how concerning power distribution systems including mastering those technologies.

- Under this project, smart meters were installed at homes of customers in Panipat to perform data collection as well as monitoring and control through supervisory control system called SCADA.
- Its purpose is to demonstrate peak load reduction technology, distribution grid monitoring and control technology and power distribution loss reduction technology aimed at power meter tampering, power theft, and omission of bill collection.

### **Maharashtra govt comes up with helipad policy**

The Maharashtra government has framed a 'helipad policy'.

- The policy, issued by the aviation department of the General Administration Department, lays down that helipads must be demarcated clearly, and should be preferably close to cities but away from densely populated areas.
- A helicopter should not be started before its VVIP passenger gets on board, it says.
- It also provides for height restrictions for buildings in the area where a helipad is located, and also that there should be no high-tension electricity wires, television wires and other cables.
- A helicopter pilot shall not even start the air-conditioning before the VVIP boards the aircraft, the policy says, said a senior official from the Aviation department of GAD.
- Landing helicopters near densely populated areas will not be allowed

### **Jammu & Kashmir Student Exchange Programme 'Maitreyi Yatra' concludes**

The closing ceremony of Jammu & Kashmir Student Exchange programme 'Maitreyi Yatra' was held at National Bal Bhawan.

- The Student Exchange Programme organized by Ministry of Human Resource development provides a good opportunity for the youth of J&K to be acquainted with culture, language and development story of different parts of the country.
- The objective of this programme was to integrate the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to the rest of the country and to promote brotherhood and harmony.
- Government is making a system that will provide equal opportunity to all the students that can contribute to the development of the country.

### **21st India International Seafood Show opens in Goa on Jan 27**

The 21st India International Seafood (IISS) Show will be held in Goa from Jan 27 - 29.

- India's best marine products will be showcased for buyers from around the world at this show.

- 'Safe & Sustainable Seafood from India' is the focal theme of the three-day biennial exposition, being jointly organised by the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), the nodal agency of the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the Seafood Export Association of India (SEAI).
- A key objective of the event is to highlight the country's commitment towards sustainability in the entire value chain of seafood products such as primary production, processing and transportation

### **10 lakh smart metres to be installed in Haryana**

To solve the various complications faced by the power distribution sector, the Haryana government will install 10 lakh smart meters in the state.

- It said that five lakh meters would be installed this year and five lakh next year.
- The project had been initiated under intensive relations between Japan and India and the Prime Minister's Make in India Programme.
- The Smart Grid Pilot Project, being set up with the assistance of Japan, would ensure uninterrupted power supply to domestic as well as industrial consumers of the city,
- A rebate of 15 per cent in power tariff would be given on power consumption between 10 PM and 5 AM.
- On the urban pattern, all rural areas of Panchkula, Ambala, Faridabad and Gurugram, are being provided 24-hour power supply. Under the scheme, Sirsa, the fifth district, is also being added on the occasion of Republic Day

### **First ever 'Khaadi Haat' inaugurated in Delhi**

Marking the 69th Republic Day celebrations, Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) and New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) have launched the first ever 'Khadi Haat' in the country.

- In this Khadi Haat, entrepreneurs under Prime Minister Employment Generation Program (PMEGP) will get an opportunity to display and sell their exquisite products.
- It will also provide better platform as well as source of earning for the artisans.

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## **International Current Affairs**

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### **IMT Ghaziabad selected as United Nations PRME Champion**

Ghaziabad-based Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) has been selected as one of the champions of the United Nations' initiative on Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME).

- The announcement was made on January 23<sup>rd</sup> at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.
- PRME Champions Group comprises a group of B-Schools engaged as PRME signatories from across the world, committed to making broad-scale implementation of sustainability principles a reality, the release added.
- IMT is now one of the 38 B-schools from various countries that are part of PRME Initiative for the 2018-19 Champions Cycle.
- The aim of the PRME Champions group is to work towards developing and promoting activities which focus on United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### **India to host informal WTO Ministerial gathering in March 2018**

India has announced to host informal Ministerial meeting of World Trade Organisation (WTO) in March 2018 in New Delhi to muster support for issues and also help to multi-lateral process.

- It was announced by Deepak Jagdish Saksena, India's ambassador and permanent representative to WTO during informal WTO ministerial gathering at Davos on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual summit.
- About 40 WTO members from both rich and developing nations are being called by India for this informal meeting to "revitalise" the multi-lateral trade body.
- The objective of meeting is to discuss ways to revitalise WTO to ensure predictable and transparent system of rule-making in the area of international trade.
- The meeting will be taking place after collapse of the WTO 11th Ministerial Conference (MC 11) held in Buenos Aires in December 2017.

### **China to establish international courts to deal with BRI cases**

China has decided to set up three international courts to deal with disputes related to its multi-billion dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), under which it is making massive investments.

- The Chinese Supreme Peoples Court will set up international courts in Beijing, Xian, the capital of Shaanxi Province and Shenzhen.
- The Xian court in Northwest China will handle cases related to the Silk Road and the Shenzhen court in South China with those related to Maritime Silk Road disputes. Beijing will be the headquarters.

- The courts will weigh litigation, arbitration and mediation; providing legal support and solving initiative disputes
- The plan to establish a mechanism to legally resolve trade and investment disputes arising from issues related to the BRI was approved during the second meeting of the Leading Group for Deepening Overall Reform in the Congress of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC).

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## Banking & Finance

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### **Government relaxes norms of Atal Pension Yojana to expand coverage**

The Union Finance Ministry has relaxed norms of Atal Pension Yojana (APY) to allow small finance banks and payment banks to offer APY distribution.

- The move is expected to help expand coverage of the scheme and strengthen existing channels of APY distribution.
- The APY scheme follows same investment pattern as applicable to National Pension Scheme (NPS) contribution of Central government employees.
- During financial year 2016-17, the scheme has earned return of 13.91%.
- There are more than 84 lakh subscribers registered under APY scheme with an asset base of more than Rs. 3,194 crore.
- The Reserve Bank of India had given licence to 11 payments banks and 10 small finance banks. Of these, nine small finance banks — including Ujjivan, Janalakshmi and Equitas — and four payments banks, which include Airtel Payments Bank and Paytm Payments Bank, have already started operations.

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## Business

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### **Alpha Design Technologies wins firing simulator order from India Army**

Alpha Design Technologies Ltd. has signed Rs. 45-crore deal with Ministry of Defence to supply indigenous simulators for gunnery and missile firing from BMP II vehicles to Indian Army.

- Under this deal, as many as 57 simulators will be manufactured at company's Bengaluru facility and will be supplied to Indian Army over two years period.

- The BMP II is a Soviet-origin amphibious infantry fighting vehicle. The simulators will be used to train missile firing personnel.
- Currently, Indian Army firing personnel train fully on actual BMP vehicles.
- The use of simulators will save vehicle wear and tear to large extent.

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## Awards & Recognition

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### **Mehul Garg: Indian-origin boy sets new Mensa record**

Indian-origin boy Mehul Garg (10) in United Kingdom became youngest applicant in decade to achieve highest score in Mensa IQ test, beating geniuses like Albert Einstein and Stephen Hawking.

- He scored maximum score of 162 to become a member of Mensa.
- His score is two points higher than Einstein and Hawking.
- Mehul Garg is from Reading Boys Grammar School in Reading, southern England.
- He can solve Rubik's Cube in 100 seconds. He has been shortlisted for 'Child Genius 2018' show on Channel 4.
- Mensa is the largest and oldest high IQ society in the world.
- Its mission is to identify and foster human intelligence for benefit of humanity, encourage research into nature, characteristics, and uses of intelligence and provide stimulating intellectual and social environment for its members.

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## Appointments & Resigns

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### **World Bank economist Paul Romer quits after Chile comments**

Paul Romer stepped down as the World Bank's chief economist after he came under fire for saying that Chile's rankings in a closely watched "Doing Business" report may have been deliberately skewed under socialist President Michelle Bachelet.

- Chile currently ranks at 55 out of 190 countries on the list, down from 34 in 2014, the year Bachelet took office. In other recent years its rankings were to 41 in 2015, 48 in 2016 and 57 in 2017, the World Bank's reports show.

- Romer told the newspaper that the decline resulted from methodological changes, rather than a deterioration of Chile's business environment, and may have been the result of the World Bank staff's political motivations.

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## Science & Technology

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### **Himachal CM launches women safety helpline 'Gudiya', 'Shakti Button' mobile app**

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched 24X7 'Gudiya' helpline, named after 16-year old rape and murder victim of Kotkhai, for a quick police response on cases of crimes against women.

- Chief Minister also launched 'Shakti Button' - a mobile app linked to police control rooms for ensuring the safety of women in the state.
- Any women at the time of an untoward incident can press the red button on the mobile app and an alert will immediately reach the police response team. Also, the Chief Minister also launched Hoshiyar Singh help line on toll free number 1090.
- Designed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) Himachal Pradesh, with several innovative features, the app will automatically become functional when with a shake-up of a mobile phone in case of girl/woman having a scuffle.
- Even if the phone drops down, the message would be sent to the nearest police control room within 20 seconds.

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## Sports

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### **Delhi beat Team Rajasthan to lift the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy**

With a thumping 41-run win over Team Rajasthan, Delhi claimed the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy 2017-18 at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata.

- After Unmukt Chand's 49-ball 53 helped set Team Rajasthan a competitive 154-run target, the Pradeep Sangwan-led attack bundled out the opponents for 112.
- Pradeep Sangwan of Delhi was declared Man of the Match.



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# Obituary

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## **Veteran Kannada actor Chandrashekhhar passes away**

Veteran Kannada actor Chandrashekhhar passed away in Canada.

- Chandrashekhhar shot to fame with the 1973 film Edakallu Guddada Mele, and it was so popular that 'Edakallu' has been stuck to his name.
- The veteran actor has acted in over 60 films, and was last seen in 3 Gante 30 Dina 30 second, which released this month.

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# Books & Authors

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## **Book by Sheila Dixit “Dilli Meri Dilli: Before and After 1998” released**

The former Chief Minister of Delhi, Sheila Dixit’s pictorial book traces the evolution of Delhi through its images.

- The book titled “Dilli Meri Dilli: Before and After 1998”, beautifully traces the evolution of the Indian capital over the centuries and showcases its tremendous transformation since the beginning of the new millennium.
- The book is published by Palimpsest Publishers. It includes comments by people like Mark Tully, E Sreedharan and Sunita Narain among others.
- The book is replete with pictures on various subjects like heritage, culture, law, gender equality, urban environment, education, sports and transport.

## **Vice President Releases the book ‘Staniya Svasasan Mei Addhi Aabadhi’**

Vice president Venkaiah Naidu released the book ‘Staniya Svasasan Mei Addhi Aabadhi’ in New Delhi. The book has been authored by Dr. Sadhana Pandey.

- The book is an empirical study that captures the voices of the rural women who are occupying positions of authority at the local level.
- It can help the policy makers to understand the perspectives of women representatives and address the key issues of education, health, nutrition, information sharing, economic independence and empowerment.



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# Important Days

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## **International Holocaust Remembrance Day - Jan 27**

January 27 is designated by the United Nations General Assembly as International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

- The purpose of International Holocaust Remembrance Day is two-fold: to serve as a date for official commemoration of the victims of the Nazi regime and to promote Holocaust education throughout the world.
- Since 2010, the UN has designated specific themes for the annual commemorations that focus on topics such as collective experiences and universal human rights.
- In addition to International Holocaust Remembrance Day, many countries hold national commemoration ceremonies on other dates connected to the Holocaust.