

National Current Affairs

MHA to set up Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre in New Delhi

The Union Home Ministry will set up Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), an apex coordination centre in New Delhi to deal with cybercrimes.

- It also has asked States to establish similar mechanism in every district and released funds for setting up of cyber-forensic training laboratory-cum-training centre for police officials in each State.
- It also has released funds to Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children Scheme.
- Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) will be apex coordination centre to deal with cybercrimes based in New Delhi.
- It will coordinate with State governments/UTs and closely monitor cyberspace and social media with due emphasis on vernacular content.
- It will also block those websites which flout Indian laws and circulate child pornography and communally and racially sensitive content.
- It will also maintain list of suspects and leads generated during investigations in cybercrime cases and will be shared with law enforcement agencies through secured internal network.
- Under this framework, state governments will set up State cybercrime coordination cell at headquarter-level and also establish district cybercrime cells.

Parliamentary Group to confer Outstanding Parliamentarian Awards to five MPs

The Parliamentary Group has decided to confer Outstanding Parliamentarian Awards to five Members of Parliament.

- They are:
 - Dr Najma Heptulla: She is former Rajya Sabha MP and was selected for this award for the year 2013.
 - Hukumdev Narayan Yadav: He is Lok Sabha MP and was selected for this award for the year for 2014.
 - Ghulam Nabi Azad: He is Rajya Sabha and was selected for this award for the year for 2015.
 - Dinesh Trivedi: He is Lok Sabha MP and was selected for 2016.
 - Bhartruhari Mahatab: He is Lok Sabha MP and was selected for 2017.
- The Outstanding Parliamentarian Award was established in 1992 by Shivraj Patil who was then the Speaker of Lok Sabha.

Acid attack victims to get quota in Central Government jobs

The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has issued notification to provide quota to people with autism, mental illnesses, intellectual disability and victims of acid attacks in Central government jobs.

- In case of direct recruitment, 4% of the total number of vacancies, up from existing 3%, in groups A, B and C will be reserved for people with Benchmark disability i.e. person with not less than 40% of a specified disability.
- The additional 1 % reservation to existing 3% reservation is as per the provision Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
- As per the notification, 1% of each posts will be reserved for people with blindness and low vision, deaf and hard of hearing, locomotor disability including cerebral palsy, leprosy cured, dwarfism, acid attack victims and muscular dystrophy.
- Besides, 1% posts each shall be also reserved for people suffering from autism, intellectual disability, specific learning disability and mental illness.
- Moreover, all government organisations will have to appoint 'grievance redressal officers' to look into complaints.

Khelo India Pledge Launched at Khelo India School Games Carnival

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has launched Pledge for Khelo India at Khelo India School Games Carnival in Delhi.

- The pledge resonates with vision of Khelo India programme and is aimed at inspiring youngsters to build mass participation and excellence in sports.
- It also is promise to participant and encourages sportsmanship spirit.
- Khelo India School Games was launched under Khelo India Programme.
- It was held at multiple venues across Delhi from January 31 to February 8, 2018.
- It encompassed 16 sports disciplines under which overall 199 gold medals, 199 silver medals, 275 bronze medals were awarded.
- It aimed at creating platform to showcase hidden talent, fostering young sports prodigies and creating awareness and cognizance about physical fitness as well as good health amongst youngsters.

2018 Republic Day parade: Maharashtra wins best tableau prize

Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman gave away Republic Day Parade 2018 best tableau award to Maharashtra and best marching contingent award to Punjab Regiment Contingent.

- The ceremonial Republic Day Parade 2018 was held on 26 January 2018 at Rajpath to celebrate 69th Republic Day.
- It was presided over by President Ram Nath Kovind and 10 leaders of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) were guests of honour.
- India's military might was fully displayed during the annual celebrations.
- Total of 23 tableaux (14 from States & Union Territories, 2 from Ministry of External Affairs and rest of the tableaux from other Ministries/Departments participated in this year's Republic Day Parade.
- Ministry of External Affairs 2 tableaux depicted long socio-cultural, religious, educational & trade relations between India and 10 ASEAN countries.

Assam Governor releases stamp on footballer

Assam Governor Jagdish Mukhi released a postage stamp on legendary footballer Dr Talimeren Ao during his birth centenary.

- Ao was instrumental in popularising football in Assam. He was captain of the Indian football team in their first official match in the 1948 London Olympics.
- Ao promoted and popularised football in India, particularly in Assam.

VINBAX: Indian, Vietnam hold first military exercise in Jabalpur

The India-Vietnam Bilateral Army Exercise (VINBAX-2018) was conducted at Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh. It is the first military exercise between the two countries.

- The six day-long military exercise (from January 29 to February 3, 2018) was conducted as part of joint training undertaken with friendly foreign countries by Indian Army.
- VINBAX-2018 was Table Top Exercise to carry out training for Peace Keeping Operations under United Nations (UN) mandate.
- It was jointly undertaken between 15 officers each from Indian Army and Vietnam People's Army.
- The joint exercise was especially designed to enable and train officers from Vietnam in United Nations Peace Keeping Operations.
- The joint exercise was of mutual interaction and shared experiences amongst both armies.
- It also further strengthened cultural and historical ties between both nations and took bilateral relations forward to greater heights.

India cheapest country to live in after South Africa: Survey

India is ranked second only to South Africa as the cheapest country to live or retire, according to a recent survey of 112 countries.

- The survey by GoBankingRates ranked nations on the bases of four key affordability metrics provided by online pricing database Numbeo. The metrics are: Local purchasing power index, rent index, Groceries index, and Consumer price index.
- With the second lowest rent index among the 50 cheapest countries (after neighbour Nepal), living in India can be cheaper compared to most of the countries.
- The survey says that India, home to 1.25 billion residents, is the most populous among the 50 cheapest countries.
- Indias local purchasing power is 20.9 per cent lower, rent is 95.2 per cent cheaper, groceries are 74.4 per cent cheaper, local goods and services are 74.9 per cent cheaper, the survey said.

International Current Affairs

ISB, IIM-Ahmedabad slips in global MBA rankings

The Indian School of Business ranking has been slipped to 28 while IIM-Ahmedabad, which was at 29th position last year, is at 31 in this year's Financial Times London's Global MBA Ranking 2018. ISB's post graduate programme has been featured as the best from India.

- However, IIM-Bangalore has massively improved its position and climbed to 35th from 49th.
- Similarly, the IIM-Calcutta too considerably improved its position to 78th this year from 95th, sharing the honours with McGill University Desautels, Canada.
- The top rank has been grabbed by the Stanford Graduate School of Business, US while France's INSEAD is at the second position.
- Factors which determined its rank includes percentage salary increase, placement and alumni recommendation.

Banking & Finance

India's GDP to grow 7-7.5 % in 2018-19, says Economic Survey

The Economic Survey 2017-18 tabled in Parliament by the Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Arun Jaitley predicts India's GDP to grow 7 - 7.5 percent in 2018-19, an increase from its prediction of 6.75 percent growth this fiscal.

- The survey underlines the role of the newly introduced Goods and Services Tax (GST), the new Indian Bankruptcy Code, the implementation of the recapitalization package to strengthen the public sector banks, further liberalization of FDI and the export uplift from the global recovery, in contributing to the economic growth this year.
- The survey points out that as per the quarterly estimates; there was a reversal of the declining trend of GDP growth in the second quarter of 2017-18, led by the industry sector.
- The Gross Value Added (GVA) at constant basic prices is expected to grow at the rate of 6.1 per cent in 2017-18 as compared to 6.6 per cent in 2016-17. Similarly, Agriculture, industry and services sectors are expected to grow at the rate of 2.1 per cent, 4.4 per cent, and 8.3 per cent respectively in 2017-18.

Awards & Recognition

Grammy 2018 Winners: Full List

60th Annual Grammy Awards ceremony for honouring the best recordings, compositions and artists was held on Jan 28th 2018 at Madison Square Garden in New York City, US.

- The ceremony was hosted by famous television host James Corden.
- Jay-Z was credited with maximum nominations (in 8 categories), while Bruno Mars won maximum award.
- Bruno Mars swept the top categories, winning album, record and song of the year.
- Kendrick Lamar dominated the rap categories and Alessia Cara won best new artist.

ITBP bags marching contingent award on R-Day

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) won the best marching contingent award for the sixth time -- highest in the last two decades achieved by any paramilitary or auxiliary force -- on Republic Day.

- The 148-member Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) contingent was led by assistant commandant Akshay Deshmukh.

- The force, raised in 1962 and which is mandated to guard the 3,448 km India-China frontier, participated in the parade after a two-year gap.
- The best part of the contingent is that it represented all formations of the force comprising members from almost all its units.

Appointments & Resigns

Finland elections: President Sauli Niinisto reelected with huge majority

Finnish President Sauli Niinisto clinched an overwhelming victory in the first round of elections.

- Niinisto, a former finance minister and parliamentary speaker, won 62.7 percent of the votes cast. His closest rival, Pekka Haavisto of the Greens, got 12.4 percent.
- None of the other six candidates received more than 7 percent of the vote.
- Riding on his massive popularity, Niinisto comfortably avoided the need for a runoff, a first since Finland introduced a two-round presidential election by popular vote in 1994.

Science & Technology

NASA interested in India-made thermal spray coating technology

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is interested in new India-made thermal spray coating technology used for gas turbine engine in spacecraft.

- It has been developed by Dr. Satish Tailor, Rajasthan-based researcher working with Jodhpur-based Metallizing Equipment Company (MEC).
- The technology is called controlled segmented Yttria-Stabilised Zirconia (YSZ)-Plasma sprayed coating technology.
- It has potential to reduce thermal spray coating cost by almost 50%.
- It develops vertical cracks (segmentation) in coating, beneficial for gas turbine engine application used in spacecraft.
- The new technology has advantage over current, costly techniques such as SPS or EB-PVD deposited coatings.

- The YSZ thermal barrier coatings produced by atmospheric plasma sprayed (APS) technique has potential of wider industrial and strategic acceptability.
- It can be industrially adopted to make a strain-tolerant coating more economical.

Google forays into hyperlocal news through 'Bulletin' app

Google has launched "Bulletin" app that allows anyone to submit stories related to their local communities.

- Bulletin is a free app. It has been launched as a pilot project in Nashville, Tennessee and Oakland, California.
- Using this app users in the respective areas can sign up and contribute their stories with photos, videos and text.
- Users can do this easily with their phone and it will be published straight away in the web.
- Google has not mentioned how it will verify the authenticity of the content.

Sports

Australian open 2018 review

Australian Open 2018 tournament recently concluded on 28th January 2018 in Melbourne, Australia. It is one of four grand slam tournaments played annually.

S.No	Category	Winner	Runner Up
1	Men's Singles	Roger Federer (Switzerland)	Marin Cilic (Croatia)
2	Women's Singles	Caroline Wozniacki (Denmark)	Simona Halep (Romania)
3	Men's Doubles	Oliver Marach (Austria) & Mate Pavic (Croatia)	Robert Farah (Colombia) & J. Cabal (Colombia)
4	Women's Doubles	Kristina Mladenovic (France) & Tímea Babos (Hungary)	Elena Vesnina (Russia) & Ekaterina Makarova (Russia)
5	Mixed Doubles	Gabriela Dabrowski (Canada) & Mate Pavic (Croatia)	Rohan Bopanna (India) & Timea Babos (Hungary)

Leander Paes wins 25th Challenger doubles title at Newport Beach

Veteran Indian tennis star Leander Paes won his 25th ATP Challenger level doubles title with partner James Cerretani after beating Denis Kudla and Treat Huey in the final of the Newport Beach event.

- The second-seeded Indo-American pair defeated the American-Filipino combine 6-4 7-5 in the summit clash of the USD 150,000 hard court tournament.
- Paes, world No 61, has won crucial 125 points with this win as he is striving to move up the rankings ladder.
- Paes, winner of 11 singles titles on the Challenger Tour, had ended the 2017 season with consecutive trophies in Champaign and Knoxville with Raja.

Saina Nehwal loses to Tai Tzu Ying in Final

Indian shuttler Saina Nehwal suffered her seventh straight defeat to world no.1 and old nemesis Tai Tzu Ying, going down in the summit clash of the USD 350,000 Indonesia Masters.

- Playing the final of an international tournament after a year, Saina, who is coming back from an ankle injury, failed to lift the veil of deception put by Tai Tzu and went down 9-21 13-21 in 27 minutes in a completely lop-sided final.
- Tai Tzu has now defeated the former world No.1 Indian nine times in their last 10 meetings.

Obituary

Senior journalist Daya Nath Singh passes away

Senior journalist Daya Nath Singh died at a city hospital.

- Singh was associated with various newspapers, including NewsStar, NewsFront and NortheastDaily. He contributed articles to media outlets like Eastern Panorama, Merinews and Assam Times.
- The senior journalist also held the position of office secretary at Guwahati Press Club for over 15 years.

Former Chhattisgarh and Tripura Governor D N Sahay passes away

Former governor of Chhattisgarh and Tripura Devesh Nandan Sahay died here after prolonged illness.

- Sahay began his career with the Indian Police Service and rose to the position of the DGP of Bihar.
- After retirement, he had joined the Samata Party and became the first Governor of Chhattisgarh after the state was carved out of Madhya Pradesh in 2000.
- In 2003, Sahay took over as the Governor of Tripura and held the post till 2009.

Ottanthullal artist Kalamandalam Geethanandan passes away

On 28th January 2018, Kalamandalam Geethanandan, famous Ottanthullal artist, died while he was performing at a temple in Irinjalakkuda, Kerala.

- He has performed in nearly 5,000 stages all over India. He was also a tutor of Ottanthullal at Kerala Kalamandalam.
- He has received Sangeet Nataka Academy Award, Kalamandalam award etc. He has also acted in more than 30 Malayalam films. He was the first artist to perform thullal at Paris.