

National Current Affairs

Karnataka unveils healthcare scheme Arogya Karnataka

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah unveiled a healthcare scheme aimed at benefitting about 1.43 crore households in the state.

- "The 'Arogya Karnataka' (Healthy Karnataka) will provide quality primary, secondary and tertiary treatment to both BPL and APL families in the state.
- It is a step towards a healthier and more productive Karnataka.
- Through the scheme, all below-poverty-line (BPL) households will get free treatment at government hospitals while for above-poverty-line (APL) households, the state will bear about 30 per cent of the treatment cost.
- Nearly 1.05 crore households can get access to healthcare entirely free of cost through the "Universal Health Card" to be linked to Aadhaar card.
- In line with the 'Modicare' of the central government, Siddaramaiah had announced during the Budget presentation last month that Karnataka, too, would soon provide healthcare for all.

Arunachal Express connecting Naharlagun-Anand Vihar flagged off

A new train between Naharlagun in Arunachal Pradesh and Anand Vihar Terminal in the national capital named Arunachal Express was flagged off.

- This is the second direct train for Arunachal Pradesh and overall 14th for North East to connect with the national capital.
- The train will cover 2013 kilometre distance between Naharlagun (Arunachal Pradesh) and Anand Vihar Terminal (New Delhi) in over 38 hours and will have 14 stoppages en-route.
- It has all air-conditioned LHB (Linke Hofmann Busch) coaches. It will offer all comfort and facilities to the passengers.

International Current Affairs

India, Jordan ink 12 agreements

India and Jordan have 12 agreements covering areas as diverse as defence, mass media, health, culture and tourism.

- Jordanian King was on three days visit to India. It was his only second to India, that too after more than a decade.
- Signed Agreements are:
 - MoU on Defence Cooperation
 - Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP)
 - Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement
 - MoU between PrasarBharati and Jordan
 - TV Twinning Agreement between Agra and Petra (Jordan)
 - Visa waiver for diplomatic and official passport holders
 - MoU for long term supply of Rock Phosphate and Fertilizer/NPK
 - MoU for setting up of the next generation Centre of Excellence (COE) in Jordan
 - MoU for cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine between India and Jordan
 - MoU between University of Jordan (UJ) and ICCR regarding setting up of a Hindi Chair at the University
 - Cooperation between Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) and Jordan Media Institute (JMI).

Banking & Finance

RBI lifts per-borrower loan cap for MSMEs

In view of the increasing importance of the services sector and to encourage banks to lend more to this sector, the Reserve Bank of India has decided to do away with the per borrower loan limits to Micro/ Small and Medium Enterprises (Services) for classification under priority sector lending.

- So far, loans to Micro/ Small and Medium Enterprises (Services) up to ₹5 crore and ₹10 crore, respectively, were classified as priority sector lending (PSL).
- Since the per borrower loan limits to Micro/ Small and Medium Enterprises (Services) have been removed, all bank loans to MSMEs engaged in providing or rendering services as defined in terms of investment in equipment under the MSMED Act, 2006, will qualify under priority sector without any credit cap.

Appointments & Resigns

Rangarajan Raghavan appointed managing director of HCL Infosystems

IT major HCL Infosystems Ltd. announced the appointment of Rangarajan Raghavan, the president of the company as its director and managing director, effective April 1.

- Rangarajan started his career with HCL in 1978, and, over the years, has held senior positions in various group companies including as Chief Support Officer of HCL Frontline Ltd. and Head of Global Operations for HCL BPO.
- In the year 2000, he successfully created the company's offshore Tech Support Center. He was the chief architect for transforming HCL BPO into a provider of integrated next-generation business and technical services to marquee Fortune 500 customers across the globe.
- In his present role as president of the Project and Services division in HCL Infosystems, Raghavan is responsible for enterprise services across India, Singapore and the Middle East, along with system integration projects.

Armen Sarkisian elected as President of Armenia

Armenian Parliament elected Armen Sarkisian as country's next president

- Armen Sarkisian is Armenia's former Prime Minister and currently serving as Armenia's ambassador to the United Kingdom.
- In the Presidential vote by Armenia's National Assembly, 90 members voted in favour of Armen Sarkisian, 10 voted against and one abstained.
- This is the first time in Armenia's history, that a president has been elected by the National Assembly instead of popular vote.

Awards & Recognition

Shatrughan Sinha wins lifetime achievement award in UK

Actor-politician Shatrughan Sinha has been honoured with a lifetime achievement award for his contribution to the fields of arts and politics at a ceremony in the UK's Parliament complex.

- The annual 'Political and Public Life Awards' presented by Britain's Asian Voice weekly newspaper, now in its 12th year, recognises individuals who have made a significant impact on public life or made a difference in their local communities.
- Sinha, who started his career as an actor in late 1960s, has to his credit over 225 Hindi feature films besides several in other Indian languages.
- A member of the ruling BJP, he represents Bihar state's Patna Sahib Constituency in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of Parliament.

Science & Technology

Indian Navy sailboat INSV Tarini arrives in Cape Town, South Africa

Indian Navy's sailboat INSV Tarini, led by all-women crew, reached Cape Town, South Africa as part of Navika Sagar Parikrama expedition.

- This stop is last phase of its maiden voyage to circumnavigate globe before it depart Cape Town and return to Goa in April 2018, on completion of the voyage.
- So far the vessel has covered 1,75,00 nautical miles from its start in Goa in September 2017. The expedition was covered all five legs, with stop-overs at Fremantle (Australia), Lyttleton (New Zealand), Port Stanley (Falklands-UK), and Cape Town (South Africa).
- The vessel has passed through Indian, Pacific and Atlantic oceans so far.
- The Navika Sagar Parikrama expedition is the first-ever Indian circumnavigation of the globe by an all-women crew.

CG C-162: Bharati Defence delivers interceptor boat to Coast Guard

Bharati Defence and Infrastructure Ltd (BDIL) delivered high-speed interceptor boat ICG C-162 to Indian Coast Guard (ICG) at BDIL jetty in Mangaluru, Karnataka.

- It is fifth interceptor boat delivered by BDIL's Mangaluru shipyard to ICG.
- The sixth boat will be delivered after three-and-a-half months of the delivery of the fifth boat.
- The vessel will be based at Kochi, Kerala and will be used for patrolling purposes.
- It can accommodate 11 crew members. The vessel was launched in January 2018 and has successfully completed the harbour and sea trials.
- It is 28 metres long with aluminium hull and weighs about 60 DWT.
- It is designed for a speed up to 35 knots.
- It is fitted with new generation of Arneson Surface Drive propulsion system, propelled by two engines of 1650 kW each.

China to build nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Liaoning within 7 years

The China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation (CSIC) has announced to build its first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Liaoning by the middle of the next decade.

- It was announced as part of its list of ambitions hope to achieve in weaponry and technical developments for People's Liberation Army (PLA)-Navy by 2025.
- China has ambition to have four carrier groups operating with PLA-Navy by 2030.
- The Liaoning is currently only carrier in fleet, but its variant Type 001A is expected to go into full service by end of 2018.
- The Type 001A was first aircraft carrier built indigenously by shipyard workers in China. Liaoning is derived from old and unfinished Soviet hull, purchased by China from Ukraine.

NASA launches advanced weather satellite for western U.S

NASA launched GOES-S, another of world's most advanced weather satellites. GOES stands for Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellites.

- GOES-S has been launched to safeguard Western US, by monitoring, forecasting and providing crisp images of hurricanes, wildfires, floods, mudslides and other natural calamities.
- GOES-16, the first spacecraft in the series, has been monitoring the Atlantic and US East Coast for the past year for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of US.
- GOES-S will not only keep a watch over West Coast of US, Alaska and Hawaii, but also over Mexico and Central America.

Sports

Navjot Kaur: First Indian woman to win gold medal at Asian Wrestling Championships

Ace wrestler Navjot Kaur won gold medal in the 65kg freestyle wrestling category of Senior Asian Championships held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

- With this, she created history by becoming first Indian woman wrestler to win gold medal in Senior Asian Championships.
- This was also India's first gold in the ongoing championships. In the final match the women's 65kg freestyle wrestling category, Navjot defeated Japan's Miya Imai by 9-1 score.
- Earlier, Rio Olympics bronze medallist Sakshi Malik had who won the bronze in 62kg freestyle category after defeating Kazakhstan's Ayaulym Kassymova 10-7.
- These two medals have taken India's overall medal tally to six, which consisted one gold, silver and four bronze medals.

India won Snooker Team World Cup

India won the inaugural IBSF Snooker Team World Cup in Doha, Qatar.

- India beat Pakistan by 3-2 in the best-of-five final. In the finals, Indian duo of Pankaj Advani and Manan Chandra staged a remarkable recovery after being 0-2 down.
- In the semi finals, India won against Iran by 3-2, while Pakistan had beaten Hong Kong by 3-2.

Shubhankar Sharma fires 65 for tied 2nd at WGC-Mexico Championship

Rising Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma savoured a dream debut at the World Golf Championships-Mexico Championship as he fired a sizzling six-under 65 to grab the tied second place after the opening round.

- Shubhankar Sharma fired six-under 65 and obtained tied second position after the opening round. Now, he is one shot behind Louis Oosthuizen.
- This is the first WGC tournament for Shubhankar Sharma.

Obituary

Tripura Fisheries Minister Khagendra Jamatia passes away

Khagendra Jamatia, Tripura Fisheries and Cooperation minister, passed away in New Delhi on 2nd March 2018.

- He was CPM candidate from the Krishnapur constituency in the assembly election held on 18th February 2018.
- He joined CPM in 1983. He served as a party MLA for six continuous terms. He was also a minister for two terms.

Former HUL Chairman T Thomas passes away

T Thomas, former Hindustan Unilever (HUL) and Business Standard chairman, passed away on 2nd March 2018.

- He was Chairman of Hindustan Unilever (HUL) from 1973 to 1980.
- He was a visiting scholar at Sloan School, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA.
- He was also non-executive chairman of companies like Glaxo and Lafarge.

Important Days

March 3: World Wildlife Day

The World Wildlife Day is observed every year on 3rd March to celebrate and raise awareness about the world's wild fauna and flora.

- It is celebrated to mark the signing of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on this day in 1973.
- This day aims to create awareness and encourages people across the globe to protect endangered species. It also calls for taking up urgent steps to fight wildlife crime which has wide-ranging environmental, economic and social impacts.
- The theme for this year is 'Big Cats: Predators under Threat'. Big cats are among most widely recognized and admired animals across the globe.
- The theme aims to raise awareness about plight of big cats and galvanize support for many global and national actions that underway to save these iconic species. It also expands definition of big cats being used, which includes not only lion, tiger, leopard and jaguar (4 largest wild cats that can roar) but also cheetah, snow leopard, puma, clouded leopard, etc.

Books & Authors

"Namaste Shalom", a magazine on India-Israel relations launched

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh, launched the social media of "Namaste Shalom", a magazine on India-Israel relations on 2nd March 2018.

- The magazine 'Namaste Shalom' is edited by Tarun Vijay, former MP. Mr. Daniel Carmon, Israeli Ambassador to India, and other officials were also present on the occasion.