

National Current Affairs

Northeast election results 2018

Consolidating its position as a dominant force in the Northeast, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) scripted a spectacular victory in the CPI(M)-held Tripura in alliance with Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT).

- The BJP, which was hitherto a marginal player in Tripura politics failing to clinch even one seat in the last assembly elections, won a majority on its own this time around.
- The BJP looks set to form a government in Nagaland. An independent and a JD(U) candidate — who on March 1 issued a letter of support to Nagaland CM Zeliang — said they will back the BJP.
- With the two on its side, the BJP-NDPP alliance has 31 seats, which is the majority mark.
- In Meghalaya, Congress, which had been in power since May 2009 failed to win a majority but emerged as the single largest party with 21 seats.

Week-long International Yoga festival held in Rishikesh

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat on March 1 inaugurated the week-long 29th annual, world-famous International Yoga Festival (IYF) international yoga festival in Rishikesh's Parmarth Niketan.

- The IYF offers daily classes from 4 a.m. until 9:30 p.m. with more than 80 revered saints, yogacharyas, presenters and experts from nearly 20 countries around the world.
- There are also classes in meditation, mudras, Sanskrit chanting, reiki, Indian philosophy and spiritual discourses to be held by revered spiritual leaders from India and abroad.
- Ashtanga Yoga, Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, Iyengar Yoga, Vinyasa Yoga, Bharat Yoga, Ganga Yoga, and Somatics Yoga are just a few of the nearly 200 different offerings throughout the week.

International Current Affairs

India and Vietnam inked 3 agreements

India and Vietnam have signed three agreements including landmark pact on civil nuclear cooperation to boost bilateral relations. Vietnam is one of India's closest strategic partners in the ASEAN region.

- Signed Agreements are:
 - MoU on Economic and Trade Cooperation: Its purpose is to establish a framework for enhancing economic and trade promotion.
 - MoU on Cooperation in the field of atomic energy. Its purpose is to strengthen the technical cooperation in the field of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.
 - Work Plan for years 2018-2022 in Agriculture: Its purpose is to promote cooperation in transfer of technology and exchange of visits of technical experts in the fields of agriculture and allied.

Banking & Finance

Marshall Islands to launch world-first digital legal tender

Marshall Islands in Pacific Ocean is set to become first country in world to recognize cryptocurrency as its legal tender and adopt transparent crypto monetary system. The parliament of island has passed law to create the digital currency called "Sovereign" with symbol SOV to raise some hard cash to pay bills and boost economy.

- The Marshall Islands is partnering with Israeli fintech startup Neema to launch its SOV. It will have equal status with US dollar as form of payment.
- The island country will issue 24 million SOVs in Initial Currency Offering (ICO). It will be circulated as legal tender in the country, alongside its current local currency, US dollar.
- SOV issued by Marshall Islands will be different from other cryptocurrencies including bitcoin because it will be officially recognized by law as legal tender and effectively backed by government.
- SOV is based on permissioned protocol, dubbed "Yokwe" (meaning "hello" in local island language), which requires blockchain users of this digital currency to authenticate and identify themselves, thus avoid anonymity that has kept other cryptocurrencies from gaining support from governments.

Awards & Recognition

Gadchiroli book reading event sets new Guinness world record

On 3rd March 2018, Gadchiroli book reading event created a new Guinness world record breaking the Guinness world record created in Turkey on 18th May 2017.

- Nearly 7,000 people participated in the book reading event conducted at Gadchiroli, Maharashtra. The event was organised by police authorities.
- Representatives from the Guinness Book of World Records witnessed the event. The book reading event in Turkey held on 18th May 2017 had participation from 5,754 people.
- Maheshwar Reddy, Superintendent of Police, Gadchiroli, said that, Gadchiroli is a Naxal dominant region and this event will project a positive image of Gadchiroli to the world.

Science & Technology

Astronomers detect for first time light from very first stars of universe

- A team of astronomers including an Indian graduate student Nivedita Mahesh from Arizona State University have discovered for the first time signals from "cosmic dawn" - the moment when the universe's earliest stars emerged, making a significant breakthrough in our understanding of the evolution of cosmos.
- The discovery, if confirmed, physicists say, could upturn our knowledge of the nature of still elusive 'dark matter'.
- A radio telescope called Experiment to Detect the Global Epoch of Reionization Signature (EDGES), based at the Murchison Radio-astronomy Observatory in the middle of Western Australian desert was used in this research.

JNCASR's novel material to convert waste heat into electricity

A novel compound that exhibits poor thermal conductivity in the 25-425 degree C range but shows good electrical conductivity has been developed by a team of researchers led by Dr Kanishka Biswas from Bengaluru's Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR).

- The compound, silver copper telluride (AgCuTe), shows promise as a thermoelectric material for converting waste heat into electricity.
- Due to the low thermal conductivity of the material developed by JNCASR, one end of the 8 mm-long rod that is contact with waste heat remains hot while the other end maintains cold temperature. The temperature difference is essential for the generation

of electrical voltage. At the same time, the material exhibits good electrical conductivity like metal.

- Significance: The compound shows ideal promise as thermoelectric material for converting waste heat into electricity. Its potential applications as thermoelectric technology are in automobile industry, thermal, chemical and steel power plants where large quantities of heat are wasted.

Sports

Maharashtra women's team wins interstate national tennis championship 2018 in Chhattisgarh

The Maharashtra women's team won the interstate national tennis championship 2018 held in Chhattisgarh on 3rd March 2018.

- The interstate national tennis championship 2018 was organised by the Chhattisgarh State Tennis Association (CSTA) under the guidance of All India Tennis Association (AITA) from 26th February to 3rd March 2018.
- Maharashtra's Mihika Yadav defeated Delhi's Rishika Sunkara 6-2,7-6,(3) in the finals.
- The CSTA awarded Rs 25,000 each to both the finalists as a token of motivation.

ISSF World Cup: Indian shooter Shahzar Rizvi clinches gold; Jitu Rai and Mehuli Ghosh bag bronze

Indian shooter Shahzar Rizvi won gold medal with a world record score and Jitu Rai and Mehuli Ghosh won bronze medals at the ISSF World Cup in Guadalajara, Mexico.

- India's Shahzar Rizvi shot 242.3 making a world record in the finals of the men's 10m air pistol and defeated Germany's Christian Reitz (239.7). Shahzar Rizvi won gold medal in the 10m air pistol event.
- India's Jitu Rai scored 219 in the men's 10m air pistol event and won bronze medal.
- Mehuli Ghosh shot a world junior record 228.4 and won bronze medal in the women's 10m air rifle event.

Obituary

Literateur Prafulla Das passes away

Literateur Prafulla Das died at his home at Rajkanika in Kendrapara district, Odisha on 3rd March 2018.

- Prafulla Das was honoured with the Sarala Award in 2014.
- He had written numerous books on India's freedom struggle and the role of Odisha in it.
- His important works are 'Kalapanira Angisikha', 'Agnujugar Aahwan', 'Bharatara Sasastra Mukti Sangram', 'Sahid Basu Bisnini', 'Kanika Prajaandolan Itihas', 'Netaji Aao feri Nahanti', 'Fashi Manchare Biplabi' etc.

Odia actor Sarat Mohanty passes away

Odia actor Sarat Mohanty died on 3rd March 2018.

- Sarat Mohanty was a comedian. He had acted in several Odia movies.
- He had also acted in various TV serials. His popular works are: Laxmi, Amadabata, Kaa, Stree, Puja Phula, Bhulihuena, Malhajanha, etc.