

National Current Affairs

Delhi becomes first city to roll-out Euro VI fuel

With an aim to combat the rising levels of air pollution in Delhi-NCR region, petrol pumps in the capital from April 1st started supplying ultra-clean Bharat Stage VI grade fuel (both petrol and diesel).

- This move makes New Delhi the first city in the country to switch from BS-IV grade fuels to BS-VI (equivalent to fuel meeting Euro-VI emission norms). Other cities like Noida, Ghaziabad, Gurugram and Faridabad along with 13 major cities, including Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Pune, will also switch over to cleaner BS-VI grade fuel from January 1 next year.
- However, BS- VI fuel will be rolled out in rest of the country by April 2020.
- The newly introduced fuel is estimated to reduce the amount of sulphur released by 80 per cent, from 50 parts per million to 10 ppm.

Multi Modal Logistic Park inaugurated at Balli, Goa

Multi Modal Logistics Park at Balli Station near Madgaon in Goa was recently inaugurated. The park is located on Konkan Railway route.

- It has been set as per MoU entered between Konkan Railway & Container Corporation of India Ltd (CONCOR).
- It will benefit trade and industry from economic transport solutions and state of art facilities.
- The facility is initially spread over 81,300 square meters with scope for expansion with traffic growth in future.
- It can handle both domestic and exim container traffic.
- In addition, it can also handle commodities transported by both open and covered wagons.
- It has 5000 square meters of Custom Bonded Warehousing space.
- It will also provide host of value added services like stuffing, repackaging etc.
- The park from its economic transport solutions and state of the art facilities will benefit both trade and industry in Goa.
- It will generate additional source of revenue for Konkan Railway.
- The container depot at park will reduce time required to cover distance between JNPT port (Mumbai) and Goa via road in 30-40 hrs from 16 to 18 hrs.
- Thus, it will save time, along with cost of transportation and relieve congestion on road and fuel.

World-Class tourist amenities unveiled at Konark Sun Temple

A world-class interpretation centre and other tourist facilities for visitors were inaugurated at the Konark Sun Temple, coinciding with Utkal Diwas -- Odisha's foundation day.

- IndianOil Foundation (IOF), a trust formed by Indian Oil Corporation developed the visitor-friendly infrastructure and facilities.
- Sculptor Raghunath Mahapatra recreated the sculptural wealth of Konark Sun Temple at the interpretation centre for the benefit of both national and International visitors.
- The modern amenities developed at the temple complex would attract more tourists in the future.
- Billed as an architectural marvel of eastern India and a remarkable symbol of India's glorious cultural heritage, the Sun Temple is one of the important tourist attractions in the region.

International Current Affairs

US and South Korea begin low-key 'Foal Eagle' military drills

The United States and South Korea kicked off a low-key joint military drill Sunday as a diplomatic thaw over North Korea gathered pace.

- The annual Foal Eagle drill – a series of field training exercises involving some 11,500 American and 290,000 South Korean troops – began early Sunday,
- The drill – which was delayed to avoid clashing with February's Winter Olympics in the South – will be held for a month in April, about half the time it usually lasts.
- This year's drills feature fewer strategic weapons like a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, Seoul army said earlier. The deployment of such powerful weapons at past drills has frequently drawn an angry response from the North.
- The two allies are also set to stage the annual Key Resolve drill – a tabletop exercise using mainly computer-based simulations – for the usual duration of two weeks beginning late April.

Business

E-way Bill comes into effect on Inter-state movement of goods over Rs 50,000

As per previous decision of GST council, the e-way Bill System for Inter-State movement of goods across the country is being introduced from April 1, 2018.

- From this date, the businesses and transporters moving goods worth over Rs. 50,000 from one state to another will have to carry an electronic or e-way bill.
- The e-way bill will apply to inter-state transportation of goods worth over Rs. 50,000 through road, railways, airways and vessels.
- E-way bill is an electric document generated on the GST Portal, which is a common and shared information technology (IT) infrastructure between the Centre and States; and acts as evidence for movement of goods.

Awards & Recognition

India ranks 37th in global startup ecosystem in 2017: Startupblink Report

According to report released by global startup ecosystem map Startupblink, India was ranked 37th out of 125 countries in global startup ecosystem in 2017.

- Startupblink is a global startup ecosystem map with tens of thousands of registered startups, coworking spaces, and accelerators.
- Its report prepared in association with ANSYS Startup Program measures startup ecosystem strength and activity.
- It includes global ranking index of 125 countries and 900 cities, measuring their startup ecosystem strength and activity.
- The rankings of country are based on thousands of data points gathered from various sources, such as incubators and accelerators that appear on StartupBlink global ecosystem.
- Top 5 Countries in Global startup ecosystem in 2017 are United States (1st), United Kingdom (2nd), Canada (3rd), Israel (4th) and Germany (5th). Small nations of less than 10 million inhabitants like Sweden (6th), Denmark (7th), Switzerland (8th), and Singapore (10th) were placed in the top 10.
- In Asia, the list was topped by Singapore (10th) and was closely followed by China (12th), South Korea (17th), and Japan (20th). In Africa, the list was topped by South Africa (38th) followed by Kenya (53rd), Egypt (54th), and Nigeria (57th).

Sports

Kerala beat West Bengal to win sixth Santosh Trophy title

Kerala beat West Bengal 4-2 on penalties to clinch their sixth title in the 72nd Santosh Trophy final at the Vivekananda Yubabharati Krirangan.

- M.S. Jithin drew the first blood for Kerala in the 19th minute as he scored from a through ball by S. Seesan.
- Kerala last lifted the trophy way back in 2005 when they beat Punjab 3-2.

Obituary

Veteran film director CV Rajendran passes away

Veteran film director CV Rajendran passed away in Chennai.

- The director had worked with several big names in the film industry, such as Sivaji Ganesan, Jaishankar, Rajinikanth and Kamal Hassan, among others. His first directorial was in 1967 with the Tamil film Anubavam Pudhumai starring R Muthuraman.
- The veteran director was felicitated in January last year by the Nadigar Thilagam Fans Association for completing 50 years as a filmmaker.

Former Guatemalan dictator Efraín Ríos Montt dies

- Former Guatemalan military dictator Efraín Ríos Montt died at the age of 91 on Sunday, a bitterly divisive figure in the country's long civil war who escaped a 2013 genocide conviction only to face renewed charges last year.

Important Days

SIDBI celebrates its foundation day

The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) celebrated its foundation day this year on April 2, 2018.

- The day was celebrated as day of Sampark (connect), Sanwad (interaction), Suraksha (security) and Sampreshan (disseminate). Several initiatives were launched on this

occasion. They are MSME contact programme; Samridhhi, a virtual assistant; revamped SIDBI website (www.sidbi.in) and Bankability Kit.

- SIDBI is the principal development financial institution for promotion, financing and development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector in India. It was established on April 2, 1990 through an Act of Parliament (thus, it is statutory body). It is headquartered in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
- SIDBI aims to facilitate and strengthen credit flow to MSMEs and address both financial and developmental gaps in MSME eco-system across the country.
- It co-ordinates functions of institutions engaged in similar activities.
- Currently, the shares of SIDBI are held by Central Government and 29 other institutions including public sector banks (PSBs), insurance companies owned and controlled by Central Government.

World Autism Awareness Day - 2nd April

World Autism Awareness Day is an internationally recognised day on 2 April every year, encouraging Member States of the United Nations to take measures to raise awareness about people with autism throughout the world.

- World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) aims to put a spotlight on the hurdles that people with autism – and others living with autism – face every day.
- World Autism Awareness Day goes one step further to celebrate the unique talents of those with autism, while putting a huge focus on the warm embrace and welcome that these skills deserve through community events around the globe.