

# National Current Affairs

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## **5 states to roll out intra-state e-way Bill from April 15**

The e-way Bill system for intra-state movement of goods will be implemented from April 15 in five states - Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Kerala, Telengana and Uttar Pradesh.

- With the roll-out of e-way Bill system in these states, it is expected that trade and industry will be further facilitated insofar as the transport of goods is concerned.
- This would eventually pave the way for a nationwide single e-way Bill system. Already, e-way Bill system for intra-state movement of goods is operational in Karnataka from April 1, 2018.
- E-way bill provision of the GST is an anti-evasion measure which would help in increasing tax collections by curbing trade that is being undertaken on cash basis.

## **Government sets up committee to review the enforcement of CSR provisions**

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has constituted 12-member committee to review enforcement of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) provisions under Companies Act, 2013. It will be headed by Regional Director (Western Region) Manmohan Juneja.

- Besides, there will be two sub-committees viz. legal and technical that will go into various aspects in relation to compliance with CSR provisions.
- The committee will review functioning of CSR enforcement and recommend uniform approach for its enforcement.
- It will revisit guidelines for enforcement of CSR provisions and basis, including structure of Centralised Scrutiny and Prosecution Mechanism (CSPM).
- It will also look at methodologies for monitoring of compliance by companies with CSR norms for having an effective CSPM.
- It will also revisit Schedule VII of Companies Act, 2013 pertaining to the board list of CSR activities that can be taken up under the Act on basis of references received from various stakeholders.

## **Modi launches India's most powerful electric locomotive in Bihar**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled India's first 12000 horsepower electric locomotive from Bihar's Madhepura locomotive factory.

- This locomotive, which is so far India's most powerful locomotive has been developed at Madhepura's Electric Locomotive Factory and is the first big Make-in-India project completed by Alstom of France.
- It has a hauling capacity of 6000 tonnes and can attain maximum speed of 120 km/hr.
- Railway officials have confirmed that it will be used to transport coal and iron ore.
- Being 100% electric locomotive, it will not only bring down operating costs for the Indian Railways but will also cut down greenhouse gas emissions.
- With the launch of this locomotive, India has joined the league of countries – Russia, China, Germany and Sweden – that have successfully run 12000 horsepower and above capacity electric Locomotives.

### **NITI Forum for North East holds first meeting in Agartala**

First meeting of newly constituted 'NITI Forum for North East' was held in Agartala, Tripura on April 10, 2018.

- First meeting of NITI Forum for North East was chaired by Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog – Rajeev Kumar and the Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Jitendra Singh.
- 5 development missions: They were outlined for promoting sectors like horticulture, tourism and food processing in the region. Other missions will cover bamboo-based handicrafts and medium scale industries with focus on 'Make in North-East'.
- HIRA Development Concept: The focus of development projects in region will be based on the concept of "HIRA" which stands for Highways, Internet ways, Railways and Airways. There will be also emphasis on education, health and skill development in the region.
- 'NITI Forum for North East' was constituted in February 2018 with an aim to ensure sustainable economic growth of the North Eastern Region (NER) of India and review the development status in the North Eastern region at periodic intervals.

### **Logo, Website of 11th World Hindi Conference released**

Education Minister of Mauritius, Leela Devi Dookhun Luchoomun released the logo and website of 11th World Hindi Conference in New Delhi.

- 11th World Hindi Conference is scheduled to be held in Mauritius from 18th to 20th August 2018.
- Education Minister of Mauritius stated that a sub-committee has been formed which will keep collecting information and will update the newly released website.
- World Hindi Conference is a world conference on Hindi language, which brings together Hindi scholars, writers and laureates from different parts of the world.

- 1st World Hindi Conference was held in January 1975 in Nagpur, Maharashtra.

### **PM addresses National Convention of Swachhagrahis, launches development projects in Motihari**

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, addressed the National Convention of Swachhagrahis at Motihari. The event has been organized, as part of the centenary celebrations of the Satyagraha led by Mahatma Gandhi, in Champaran.

- On this occasion, the Prime Minister launched several important development projects as well.
- In the Water Supply and Sanitation sector, he unveiled a plaque to mark the foundation stone of Motijheel Project, the Bettiah Nagar Parishad Water Supply Scheme, and four Ganga Projects, namely: the Saidpur Sewage Network, Patna; the Pahari Sewage Network, Zone 4, Patna; the Pahari Sewage Network, Zone 5, Patna; and the Pahari STP project.
- In the Railways sector, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the doubling of railway lines between Muzaffarpur and Sagauli; and Sagauli and Valmikinagar.
- The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for a road lane of NH-2 in Auranagabad Bihar-Jharkhand border section.
- He also distributed awards to Champion Swachhagrahis.

### **Uttar Pradesh cabinet nod for integrated sugar complex in Pilibhit, Tiger Conserve Foundation in Dudhwa**

The Uttar Pradesh cabinet gave its nod for developing an integrated sugar complex in Pilibhit and setting up a Tiger Conservation Foundation in Dudhwa.

- The state's cabinet presided over by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath decided to develop the sugar mill of Kisan Sahkari sugar mill limited lying closed in Pilibhit since 2011 as an integrated complex.
- In another important decision, the cabinet gave its assent for setting up Dudhwa Tiger Conservation Foundation, as asked by the central government in 2007 which will also develop the concerned forest area.

### **Website of veterinary association launched**

Animal Husbandry Secretary Tarun Shridhar launched a website of Pashu Chikitsak Mahasangh, the apex body of state veterinary associations.

- Shridhar inaugurated the website 'www.pashuchikitsakmahasangh.in' and dedicated it to veterinarians.
- The association works for the welfare of the veterinarian's working in government service sector.
- Tarun Shridhar also addressed a seminar on 'role of veterinarians in doubling farmer's income' organised by Pashu Chikitsak Mahasangh.
- He also agreed to form a committee to study the introduction of combined vaccine of Haemorrhagic Septicemia and Foot and Mouth Disease.

### **World's largest solar park to come up in Gujarat**

Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani approved setting up a 5,000 MW capacity solar park at the Dholera Special Investment Region (SIR), which would be the largest such entity in the world after its completion.

- The proposed solar power generation project would be set up in 11,000 hectares of land with an investment of Rs 25,000 crore.
- The project will contribute significantly in achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's target of producing 175 gigawatt of electricity through renewable energy sources by 2022.

### **Vice President inaugurates "Scientific Convention on World Homoeopathy Day"**

Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the two-day "Scientific Convention on World Homeopathy Day" in New Delhi. The two-day convention has been organized by Union Ministry of AYUSH.

- The inaugural function was presided over by Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH Shripad Yesso.
- Nearly 1500 delegates including homoeopathic researchers, practitioners, scientists from allied sciences, industrialists, students as well as representatives of various homoeopathic associations will be attending this convention.
- The theme of this convention is "Innovate: Evolve; Progress: Exploring Science since 40 years".

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## **International Current Affairs**

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### **India donates \$1 million for Swaziland's National Disaster Management Agency**

India donated US \$1 million to support Swaziland's National Disaster Management Agency as well as food grains.

- India also expressed commitment to developmental partnership to create local capacities Swaziland and across Africa.
- The commitment came after India's President Ram Nath Kovind addressed Swaziland's parliament, becoming first visiting Head of the State to do so.
- India will support Swaziland National Disaster Management Agency by donating US \$1 million as well as food grains.
- India invited Swaziland to join International Solar Alliance (ISA) as partner country.
- India is ready to help Swaziland on issues of public health.
- India will establish Centre of Agricultural Excellence in Swaziland for sharing its experience in the sector.
- India also announced concessional finance for constructing new parliament building in Swaziland.

### **India signs MoU with World EXPO 2020 Dubai**

India and World Expo 2020 Dubai have signed participants contract for India's pavilion in prestigious World Expo 2020 held once in 5 years.

- The contract provides for setting up of India pavilion at Expo 2020 on extra-large plot (about one acre) in Opportunity segment.
- India's pavilion at World Expo 2020 will be developed in public-private partnership mode.
- Leading industries and businesses will work with Central government and State governments to participate in India's pavilion.
- The focus will be given to India's advances in IT, space, pharma, renewable energy, telecom sectors.
- The aim of India's pavilion will also be to connect with priorities of UAE by showcasing India's strength in innovation and startups which are pushing barriers in high technology areas like artificial intelligence, financial technology (fintech), space and green energy

### **India, Vietnam discuss ways to boost ties**

On April 10, 2018, Vice Foreign Minister of Vietnam, Dang Dinh Quy met Union External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj in New Delhi and held discussions on India-Vietnam comprehensive strategic partnership and on ways to further boost ties.

- In 2016, India and Vietnam formally upgraded their relationship status (from Strategic Partnership) to “comprehensive strategic partnership.
- India-Vietnam comprehensive strategic partnership focuses on bilateral trade and Defence cooperation.
- During 2018, so far, there have been two high-level visits to India from the Vietnamese side. Vietnam Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc was one of the chief guests for the Republic Day Parade on January 26, 2018, while Vietnam President Tran Dai Quang also paid a visit to India in March 2018.

### **India, Peru to hold next round of FTA talks this week**

Senior officials of India and Peru will hold next round of negotiations for a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) in the South American nation this week to boost two-way commerce between the countries.

- In an FTA, two countries significantly reduce or eliminate duties on most of the goods traded between them besides relaxing norms and rules to promote trade in services and increase bilateral investments.
- With growing uncertainties in its traditional markets, including the US and Europe, India is looking to enhance its engagements with regions like Africa, South America and Central Asia.
- As per Federation of India Export Organisations (FIEO), Peru holds huge potential for exports and thus having an FTA with Peru would be beneficial for Indian exporters.
- Motor vehicle, cars, iron and steel products, cotton yarn and fabrics are the main items exported from India to Peru, while imports from Peru include bulk minerals and ores, gold, fertilisers crude and zinc.

### **International conference on ‘Water, Environment & Climate Change begins in Kathmandu**

The first international conference on ‘Water, Environment and Climate Change: Knowledge Sharing and Partnership’ has started in Kathmandu. Vice President of Nepal Nanda Bahadur Pun inaugurated the conference.

- The 3 day conference is organised by the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage, Govt of Nepal in association with the Society of Public Health Engineers Nepal and Nepal Engineers Association.
- The basic objective of the conference is to bring together professionals, academicians, researchers, entrepreneurs, government and non government institutions to discuss and deliberate on challenges, opportunities and strategies related to water and environmental issues.

- More than 100 international participants from 20 countries including India participating in the conference.
- An exhibition showcasing various products and technologies related to water security and environment conservation is also organised.

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## Banking & Finance

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### **J&K Bank launches special financing scheme for industrial units**

Jammu and Kashmir Bank has launched a special financing scheme to help the state industry cope with the delay in reimbursement of GST under special tax relief.

- This scheme shall considerably strengthen the business enterprises that are facing stressed liquidity position due to Goods and Services Tax regime.
- Such measures have the capability of creating a suitable environment for business stability and growth thereby benefiting the overall financial position of the state.
- The scheme will be revolving credit facility at most competitive pricing of 9 per cent without the hassle of much documentation.
- The bank has also launched another scheme customised for the Trade and Services sector, which will get enhanced working capital for GST component under the scheme.

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## Business

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### **Tech Mahindra, Balbix launch AI-powered predictive cyber risk platfor**

Tech Mahindra, a digital transformation, consulting and business re-engineering services and solutions provider announced a strategic partnership with the Silicon Valley-based breach avoidance platform provider, Balbix, to launch the security industry's first AI-powered continuous threat assessment and prioritised actionable risk intelligence platform.

- With Balbix, Tech Mahindra's intelligent security operations center (iSOC) offering can now predict and proactively avoid cyber-breaches by continuously monitoring IT inventories for hundreds of breach risk factors and take appropriate mitigating steps.



- The iSOC can prioritise the actionable intelligence for proactive handling of identified critical risks; it also prevents security incidents, and reduces compliance verification cycles from months to minutes.
- Additionally, the iSOC improves reporting by accurately measuring overall breach risk and cyber-resilience.

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## Appointments & Resigns

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### **Balram Bhargava appointed DG of ICMR**

The Union Government has appointed AIIMS professor Balram Bhargava as Director General of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Secretary of the Department of Health Research.

- He will have tenure of three years or until attainment of age of 60 years.
- Bharagava, at present Professor and Senior Consultant Cardiologist at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi.

### **Rajesh Ranjan appointed as DG of CISF**

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) headed by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has appointed senior IPS officer Rajesh Ranjan as Director General of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).

- He will have tenure till November 30, 2020, i.e. the date of his superannuation.
- Prior to this appointment he was Special Director General of Border Security Force (BSF).

### **Rishad Premji appointed Nasscom chairman for 2018-19**

Nasscom (National Association of Software and Services Companies) announced that it has appointed Rishad Premji as its chairman for 2018-19.

- Rishad Premji is Wipro's Chief Strategy Officer and Board member. Premji has been a member of Nasscom's Executive Council. He was the vice chairman of Nasscom for 2017-18.
- Also, Keshav Murugesh, CEO of WNS Group, has been appointed the vice chairman for 2018-19.



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## Awards & Recognition

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### **IGI among world's top 20 busiest airports**

Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport has climbed six positions to enter the club of the top 20 airports across the world, the Airport Council International's preliminary report on airport traffic for 2017 has stated.

- IGI, the country's busiest airport for passenger traffic, grew by 14.1% year over year, pushing it up from the 22nd to the 16th busiest airport in the world.
- The report added that IGI Airport was also the fastest-growing airport among those in the top 20 club, with traffic increasing at the rate of 14.1%.
- In terms of rate of growth it was followed by China's Guangzhou airport at 10.3 % and Indonesia's Jakarta airport at 8.3%.

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## Environment

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### **1,200-year-old Buddha cliff carvings found in Tibet**

Cliff carvings of Buddha that are 1,200 years old have been discovered in eastern Tibet.

- The regional cultural relics protection research institute said that, the Cliff carvings of Buddha were found in Acur township in Chagyab County of the Qamdo City.
- The discoveries date back to the Tibetan Tubo Kingdom era. This era is said to be the most powerful period in Tibet's history.
- The carvings are inscribed on cliffs that are around 10 metres in total. The carvings are said to be made in 9th century, based on their style.

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## Science & Technology

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### **New website and mobile app of National Commission for Safai Karamcharis launched**

The Union Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has launched new website and mobile application of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK). It was launched by Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot in New Delhi.

- The new website is very user-friendly and as per Central Government Guidelines for official websites.
- It is comprehensive website giving complete details about Commission viz. its composition, mandate, manner of filing complaints, details of visits undertaken by its Chairman and Members, etc.
- It also facilitates petitioners to file their grievances and complaints, etc. on-line on website and thereafter track them.
- Simultaneously, petitioner can also lodge their grievances and complaints through their android mobile phones by using NCSK App which can be downloaded from Google Play Store free of cost.

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## Sports

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### **FC Goa, Forca Goa Foundation launch soccer programme for kids**

Professional football franchise FC Goa, in association with the Forca Goa Foundation, is launching a programme for kids. The programme, FC Goa Soccer Schools, will be launched on April 20.

- This specially-curated programme aims to help the development of the sport in Goa and provide opportunity to more children to take up the game.
- The schools will run for a period of one month - from April 20 to May 20 - for children aged between 8 and 14.
- FC Goa Head of Youth Development Derrick Pereira has curated a special coaching plan for the programme which aims to develop the technical ability of children interested in playing the sport.
- Participants will also have the opportunity to interact with players of the FC Goa squad, in addition to taking home FC Goa branded footballs and customised school kits.

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## Important Days

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### **April 11: National Safe Motherhood Day**

The National Safe Motherhood Day (NSMD) is celebrated every year on April 11 to create awareness on proper healthcare and maternity facilities to pregnant and lactating women.

- It also seeks to create awareness about the institutional delivery, reducing anemia among women and better pre and post natal health care are necessary for mothers.
- The theme of 2018 NSMD was 'Respectful Maternity Care'.
- The NSMD is an initiative of White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood, India (WRAI) to ensure that every women has access to during pregnancy, childbirth and postnatal services.

### **The 63rd Railway Week Function of Railway Board was organized on 11th April**

On 11th April 2018, the 63rd Railway Week Function of Railway Board was organized in Rail Bhavan, New Delhi.

- Lohani, Chairman, Railway Board, presided over the function. He presented Merit Certificates and Cash Awards to officials of Railway Board for their outstanding performances during 2017-18.
- He presented the Running Efficiency Shield to ERB-III and TC-I Sections (jointly) of Railway Board selected as "Best Kept Section".
- Also, Merit Certificates and Cash Awards were presented to 2 other well-maintained sections. Merit Certificates and Cash Awards were given to 69 officials of Railway Board for outstanding performance in 2017-18.
- 52 Cash Awards were presented to sportspersons and 10 Cash Awards to Cultural artists along with Appreciation Letters for outstanding performance in the Inter-Ministry and All India Civil Services Tournaments.
- 3 Cash Awards were presented to Horticulture staff of Rail Bhawan for their excellent work.
- Chairman Railway Board Trophy for Best Railway Engineer Regiment (TA) was awarded to Railway Engineer Regiment (TA), Chandigarh.