

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

*For*

## APSC Prelims 2018

(REVISION NOTES)

### ECONOMY & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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## ECONOMY & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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**(REVISION NOTES from Nov 2017 - October 2018)**

### India ranked 108th in the WEF's Global Gender Gap Index 2017

- India slipped 21 places on the index to 108, ranked behind neighbours China (100<sup>th</sup>) and Bangladesh (47<sup>th</sup>), mainly due to less participation of women in economy and low wages.

### Top 10 of the Global Gender Gap Index

1. Iceland
2. Norway
3. Finland
4. Rwanda
5. Sweden
6. Nicaragua
7. Slovenia
8. Ireland
9. New Zealand
10. Philippines

### India Youth Development Index and Report 2017

- developed by Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu
- Global Youth Development Index - India has been ranked 133rd out of 183 countries in the 2016 Global Youth Development Index (YDI)

### 'Safe City' Plan for Women

- In eight metropolitan cities – Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Lucknow and Hyderabad.

### Key Initiatives Taken For Women Safety

- 'Himmat' app, all women patrol van, 'shishtachar' programme of the Delhi police;





- 'Hawkeye' mobile app and 'Bharosa' programme of the Hyderabad police;
- 'Suraksha' app of the Bengaluru police
- Power Angels of Uttar Pradesh police.

### **The India Hypertension Management Initiative (IHMI) Launched**

- Union health ministry has launched The India Hypertension Management Initiative (IHMI) to reduce disability and death related to high blood pressure.
- It is a joint collaboration by ICMR, Health Ministry, State governments and WHO.

### **Manipur Sangai Festival 2017**

- Named after Manipur's state animal, the brow-antlered Sangai deer
- It started in the year 2010. showcases the tourism potential of the state
- Keibul Lamjao, a unique 'floating' reserve situated in Manipur in India's Northeast, which is home to the brow-antlered deer, will also play host to the festival.

### **The Keibul Lamjao National Park**

- an integral part of Loktak Lake, in the Bishnupur district of the state of Manipur in India
- the only floating park in the world

### **YONO App**

- State Bank of India, has launched a unified integrated app called YONO (You Need Only One) that would offer all kinds of financial and lifestyle products.
- is an integrated digital banking platform to enable users to access a variety of financial and other services such as taxi bookings, online shopping, or medical bill payments.

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**India rank 100<sup>th</sup> in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business 2018**

- biggest improvement among all countries
- Top 5 countries - NZ, Singapore, Denmark, South Korea, Hong Kong

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**Tax Accounting Standard 'Income Computation and Disclosure Standards (ICDS)'**

- improved the country's ranking (by the World Bank) over 50 notches in ease of paying taxes as an accounting standard for the purpose of income tax.

**Google Tax**

- An entity which makes a payment exceeding Rs 1 lakh in a financial year to a non resident
- technology company for some Business-to-Business Services (B2B) needs to withhold 6% tax on the gross amount being paid as an equalization levy.
- This tax is applicable to B2B services and goods only and NOT on Business to Consumer goods (B2C) and services. And the tax is applicable to only those companies, which have no permanent establishment in India.

**National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA) to push Companies to pass on GST Benefits to consumers**

- The Union Cabinet approved setting up of the proposed National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA) under the goods and services tax (GST) to ensure consumers get the benefit of lower taxes under the new indirect tax regime.
- sharp reduction in the GST rates of a large number of items of mass consumption.
- NAA will have five members and will act as the final adjudicating authority.



**Decks cleared for first Mega CEZ**

- The government has given the go (CEZ) at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port in Maharashtra.
- The Union Cabinet in 2016 had approved setting up of 14 mega CEZs under the National Perspective Plan of the Sagarmala Programme.

**Moody's upgrade India's rating after 14 years**

- Moody's upgraded India's government debt Baa2 with a stable outlook.
- The last upgrade in 2004 when Moody's had upgraded the rating of India's government debt from speculative grade to Baa3.
- Sovereign ratings give investors insight into the level of risk associated with investing in a particular country including political
- risks.

**Logistics Sector given Infra Status**

- The logistic sector covers cold chain, warehousing facilities and multimodal parks comprising Inland Container Depot (ICD) subject to certain conditions.
- The cost of logistics in India is very high (about 13% of GDP) compared to developed countries

**Cabinet Okays setting up of 15th Finance Commission**

- chairmanship of former expenditure and revenue secretary NK Singh
- to recommend principles of devolution of central tax revenues and grants states and local bodies.
- Members: former economic affairs secretary Shaktikanta Das and Anoop Singh, adjunct professor, Georgetown University. Two part time members are former chief economic adviser Ashok Lahiri and NitiAayog member Ramesh Chand.





**International Day of Persons with Disabilities is observed on December 3**

- The theme for 2017 International Day of People with Disability is "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient society for all".

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***Disabled Population In India***

- The World Bank estimates that 15% of the world's population is affected by one disability or another.
- According to Census 2011, India is home to 26.8 million people with disabilities and that is a huge Underestimation
- India signed the **UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disability** in 2007.
- Term "**divyang**" is being considered in place of "viklang" to change mindset. The term would help in raising self-confidence and subsequent empowerment.
- India is a signatory to **Marrakesh Treaty** to facilitate Access to Published works by Visually Impaired Persons and Persons with Print Disabilities.

**The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016**

- The Act replaces the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995.
- It fulfills the obligations to the United National Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), to which India is a signatory. The Act came into force during December 2016.

**World AIDS Day observed on on 1 December**

- It provides an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV, and to commemorate people who have died.
- **India has the third-highest population of HIV-positive people**
- Among the States/UTs, Manipur has shown the highest estimated adult HIV prevalence of 1.15%, followed by Mizoram (0.80%), Nagaland (0.78%).
- **The Human Immunodeficiency Virus And Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Prevention And Control) Act, 2017** - The Parliament passed the bill in April 2017



**UNAIDS**

- It leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of *zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths*.
- UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—and works closely with global and national partners towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**UNESCO Recognises Kumbh Mela as "Intangible Cultural Heritage"**

- Kumbh Mela, considered the world's largest congregation of religious pilgrims
- The Kumbh Mela, held in Allahabad, Haridwar, Ujjain and Nashik.
- This inscription is the third in two years following the inscriptions of 'Yoga' and 'Norouz' on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016.
- Previous ones includes the **Chhaudance**( Inscribed in 2010), **the Buddhist chanting of Ladakh** (inscribed in 2012), **Sankirtana**—the ritual singing, drumming, and dancing of
- Manipur( inscribed in 2013), the traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab(inscribed in 2014) and **Ramlila**- the traditional performance of the Ramayana ( inscribed in 2008).

**National Trachoma Survey Report**

- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has declared that India is now free from 'infective trachoma', a contagious bacterial infection of the eye.
- India met the goal of trachoma elimination as specified by the WHO under its GET2020 program.

**Trachoma** is a chronic infective disease of the eye and is the leading cause of infective blindness globally.





### Apex Court to Re-Examine Adultery Laws: Section 497 Under Scanner

- The Supreme Court admitted the petition to drop adultery as a criminal offence from the statute book. For this, the apex court is examining *Section 497 of IPC*, which deals with adultery.

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### Hornbill Festival Of Nagaland

- To encourage inter-tribal interaction and to promote cultural heritage of Nagaland, the Government of Nagaland organizes the Hornbill Festival every year in the first week of December.
- The first festival was held in the year 2000. It is also called as the '*Festival of Festivals*'.
- It coincides with the celebration of Nagaland Statehood Day on 1st December.

### GST Council Clears E-way Bill Mechanism

- The GST Council has decided to go for early implementation of e-way bill for interstate movement of goods from February 1 and uniform mandatory roll out from 1st June 2018.
- An e-way bill is required for movement of goods worth over Rs. 50000.

### Quota for Acid Attack Victims in Central Government Jobs

- Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has released an order in which victims of acid attacks have been included under Right of Person with Disability Act, 2016.
- the Acid attack victims will also be entitled to **1 % reservation**.

### Stree Swabhiman Initiative

- The Information Technology and Electronics Ministry has announced to launch the new scheme initiative under StreeSwabhiman Drive.
- The new initiative has been introduced by the Ministry and the Common Service Centres (CSCs) to ensure and maintain perfect health for women and at the same time to maintain health hygiene.





**NHFDC Conference 2018**

- The State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs), Public Sector Banks (PSBs), and Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) of the National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) participated at a National Conference aimed to have better coordination with the NHFDC and the SCAs to achieve smooth and efficient implementation of the NHFDC schemes.

**About NHFDC**

- The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) has been set up by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India in 1997.
- NHFDC functions as an **Apex institution for channelising the funds to persons with disabilities** through the State Channelising Agencies (SCAs) nominated by the State Government(s).

**India ranks 62<sup>nd</sup> in WEF's Inclusive Development Index 2018**

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) has released Inclusive Development Index(IDI) 2018.
- **Lithuania** again tops among the list of emerging economies. The top-five most inclusive emerging economies are Lithuania, Hungary, Azerbaijan, Latvia and Poland.
- BRICS economies - the Russian Federation ranking 19th, followed by China (26), Brazil (37), India (62) and South Africa (69).
- neighbouring countries ranked above India - Sri Lanka (40), Bangladesh (34) and Nepal (22).

**Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA)**

- The PMSMA has reached one crore mark in antenatal check-ups.
- The scheme has been launched, in June 2016, with the objective of boosting the health care facilities for the pregnant women, especially the poor.
- Pregnant ladies will be given free health check-up and required treatment for free on 9th of every month to ensure that every pregnant woman receives at least one checkup in the 2nd/3rd trimester of pregnancy.

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**Steel, Cement lead Core Sector growth to a 13-Month High**

- Activity in the eight core sectors of the economy accelerated to a 13-month high of 6.7% in November, with growth being propelled by the steel and cement sectors.
- The **eight infrastructure sectors** included in the index are coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilizers, steel, cement and electricity.

**National Logistics Index: Gujarat, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh best performing states**

- The new Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) index developed by the Commerce and Industry Ministry and Deloitte ranked states in terms of the logistical support they provided to promote goods trade.
- **Best performing states:** Gujarat, Punjab and Andhra Pradesh are the best performing states in terms of mobility of goods and efficiency of logistics chain
- **Other states:** Karnataka, Maharashtra, Haryana, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Chhattisgarh made up the remaining top 10.
- Assam, Bihar and Jammu & Kashmir featured on the bottom of the list owing to the lack of good transport facilities, scarcity of logistics services and bad track record in timeliness.

**India ranks 30th on WEF Global Manufacturing Index**

- India on the 30th position five places below China, which is continuously striving to develop better avenues of manufacturing by boosting infrastructure.
- **Japan topped the rankings** on the back of developing the best structure of production in the Geneva based WEF's first '**Readiness for the future of production report**' and is followed by South Korea, Germany, Switzerland, China, Czech Republic, USA, Sweden, Austria and Ireland in the top 10.
- India had a total **manufacturing value of over \$420 billion** in 2016
- India's manufacturing sector has grown by over 7 per cent per year on average in the past three decades and accounts for 16-20 per cent of India's GD



**India needs \$4.5 Tn For Infrastructure**

- India will require investments of about \$4.5 trillion by 2040 to develop infrastructure to improve economic growth and community well-being according to the Economic Survey 2017-18.
- The current trend shows that India can meet around \$3.9 trillion infrastructure investment out of \$4.5 trillion.

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**Farm-Sector Reforms: Centre Mulls Shifting Agriculture Marketing To Concurrent List**

- to bring marketing of farm goods under the Constitution's Concurrent List so that it has greater say on the relevant regulations and taxation.
- An amendment to the Constitution requires stipulated majorities in both Houses of Parliament and state Assemblies.
- Many state governments have opposed the move as they feel the amendment will be against the concept of cooperative federalism.

**Ayushman Bharat For A New India -2022**

- As part of Ayushman Bharat programme, the Government has announced two major initiatives in health sector.
- To strengthen primary health care and to offer financial protection from catastrophic expenditure, often encountered once a family member is sick and needs long-term health care.
- Two major initiatives under this scheme are:

**Health and Wellness Centre** - The National Health Policy, 2017 has envisioned Health and Wellness Centres as the foundation of India's health system. 1.5 lakh centres will bring health care system closer to the homes of people. These centres will also provide free essential drugs and diagnostic services.

**National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS)** – will cover over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) providing coverage up to 5 lakh rupees per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.

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This will be the world's largest government funded health care programme.

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### Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE)

- The govt proposed a new initiative called Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE), to be launched in the country with a total investment of Rs 1 lakh crore in the next four years.
- Under it, all centrally-funded institutes (CFIs), including central universities, IITs, IIMs, NITs and IISERs can borrow from a Rs 1,00,000 crore corpus over next 4 years to expand and build new infrastructure.
- It will be financed through suitably structured Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA).

**Higher Education Financing Agency** - The Union cabinet, in 2016, cleared a proposal to set up a higher education financing agency (HEFA) that will raise Rs20,000 crore from loans and bond sales to fund infrastructure development at central educational institutions.

### Education Impact Bond for India

- Britain's Prince Charles has launched a new 10-million-dollar Development Impact Bond (DIB) to help improve education for over 200,000 children in India.
- The DIB, the largest bond of its type in South Asia, is the latest fundraising initiative by the British Asian Trust (BAT), set up by the royal 10 years ago to fight poverty in South Asia.

### Govt to create National Urban Housing Fund

- The Union Cabinet has given approval for creation of National Urban Housing Fund (NUHF) for Rs.60,000 crores.
- NUHF will finance the government's Housing for All programme, which aims to build 12 million affordable housing units in urban areas by 2022.

### Fiscal Glide Path Pushed Back To 2021

- The government has missed the fiscal deficit target of 3.2% for 2017-18.
- The fiscal deficit target for next financial year would be 3.3% and 3.1% for the year after and then 3% for 2020-21.
- The budget also proposed to accept key recommendations of the Fiscal Reform and Budget Management Committee relating to adoption of the Debt Rule and to bring down Central Government's Debt to GDP ratio to 40%.







Long Term Capital Gains tax makes a comeback

- Union Budget re-introduced LTCG tax on stocks and now Investors will have to pay 10% tax on profit exceeding 1 lakh made from the sale of shares or equity mutual fund schemes held for over one year.

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### Commercial Coal Mining opened for Private Sector

- The cabinet committee on economic affairs approved the methodology for auctioning coal blocks for commercial mining by the private sector.
- Private sector will soon be able to mine coal and sell it to power plants, steel mills and other users ending the decades-old monopoly of state-run Coal India Ltd (CIL) and its affiliates.
- The coal sector was nationalized in 1973 and the non-state coal mining had thus far been allowed only for captive use.
- The key reform will virtually upend the Coal Mines (Nationalization) Act, 1973, which has kept the sector largely a preserve of public-sector monolith Coal India (CIL).

### Draft Bill On Human Trafficking

- The Union Cabinet has approved the draft Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018.
- Trafficking in human beings is the 3rd largest organized crime violating human rights in the country.
- India is a destination for human trafficking. In the year 2016 alone, 8132 human trafficking cases have been reported in India.
- The states where the cases reported high are West Bengal, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.
- The main purposes for human trafficking given in the NCRB report are Sexual exploitation, Forced Marriage, Forced Labour and Domestic servitude.
- **Article 23 (1) of the Constitution prohibits trafficking in Human Beings or Persons**
- The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA) is the premier legislation for prevention of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation.
- Protection of Children from Sexual offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 is a special law to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation.





**Pan-India Expansion of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Programme (BBBPP)**

- BBBPP was scaled up to cover all 640 districts country-wide following the success of its 1st phase in improving child sex ratio from 914 to 919 (according to NFHS-4) which covered 161 districts.
- **Drop in Sex-Ratio at Birth:** NITI Aayog in its report stated that sex-ratio at birth nationwide had dropped from 906 in 2012-2014 to 900 in 2013-2015.

**The Delhi End TB Summit : TB-free India**

- In a landmark event 'The Delhi End TB Summit', India has launched TB Free India Campaign.
- India has committed to *eliminate Tuberculosis by 2025* which is ahead of the world target set under Sustainable Development Goal Framework which is 2030.

**SC Upholds Passive Euthanasia**

- Supreme Court has upheld the phenomenon of passive euthanasia together with allowing the right of every individual to draft a 'Living will' that gives her/him the right of self-determination with regards to medical treatment in case of terminal illness or permanent vegetative state.

**Passive Euthanasia** - the act of withdrawing or withholding medical support to a dying patient with a terminal illness with no hope for revival or cure. Active euthanasia, on the other hand is defined as the intentional act of causing the death of a patient.

**World Happiness Report 2018 - India ranks 133rd**

- India ranked behind majority of SAARC nations, except the war-ravaged Afghanistan, which stood at 145. Bhutan has been placed at 97th rank. While Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are at 115 and 116 positions, respectively, China stands at 86. Myanmar is placed at 130th position.
- The World Happiness Report published by *Sustainable Development Solutions Network for the United Nations*.

**Top 10 countries**

1. Finland
2. Norway





3. Denmark
4. Iceland
5. Switzerland
6. Netherlands
7. Canada
8. New Zealand
9. Sweden
10. Australia

### Karnataka Govt approves Minority Religion tag for Lingayats

- The Karnataka government approved the recommendation to accord separate religious minority status for the dominant Lingayat community.
- In August 2017, through a massive rally in Bidar, Karnataka the Lingayats demanded a minority status for their community similar to Sikhism or Buddhism as they believe they are distinct from Hindu religion.

**Lingayats** - the followers of Basavanna, a 12th century socio-religious reformer who rejected discrimination based on Caste and Gender.

### Union Cabinet Clears The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill 2016

- The Union cabinet has cleared the deck for Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill 2016 that seeks to regulate altruistic surrogacy in India and putting **blanket ban on commercial surrogacy**.

Surrogacy is the process of carrying and delivering of the child of another. Surrogacy is of two types:

- **Gestational surrogacy** -the genetic mother provides the egg, which is fertilized, and another woman (the surrogate mother) carries the foetus and gives birth to the child.
- **Traditional surrogacy** - the woman provides her own egg, which is fertilized by artificial insemination, and carries the foetus and gives birth to a child for another person



**Ministry for Tribal Affairs launched E-Tribes: Tribes India portal**

- 'e-Tribes: Tribes India', e-commerce portal, and M-commerce, android app 'Tribes India', a window for national and international market for tribal artisans.
- Nearly 55,000 tribal people are connected with TRIFED. With this digital platform, they can associate not only with local people but also can get access to international markets.

**Atal Innovation Mission Ties Up With SAP To Foster Innovation**

- SAP India has tied up with NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) to set up 100 Atal Tinkering Laboratories to promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education among secondary school children across India.

**Foreign Banks with 20 Branches also to follow Priority Sector Lending norm**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has brought foreign banks with at least 20 branches in India under the ambit of compulsory targeted lending to small farmers and micro-enterprises.

**Priority Sector Lending - Categories under Priority Sector**

- Agriculture
- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
- Export Credit
- Education
- Housing
- Social Infrastructure
- Renewable Energy
- Others

**Targets and Sub-targets for banks under priority sector**

- 40 percent of Adjusted Net Bank Credit or Credit Equivalent Amount of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure, whichever is higher, for Domestic Scheduled Commercial Banks
- **Agriculture** 18 percent of ANBC or Credit Equivalent Amount of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure, whichever is higher.
- **Micro Enterprises** 7.5 percent of ANBC or Credit Equivalent Amount of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure.





- **Advances to Weaker Sections** - 10 percent of ANBC or Credit Equivalent Amount of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure, whichever is higher.

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**Draft Policy Seeks Stable Regime for Agriculture Exports**

- The commerce ministry has drafted National Agriculture Trade Policy to help India realise the government's goal of doubling farmer's income by 2022.
- India's total agri-exports \$30 billion annually, which is around 2.2% of global agri-markets.

The aims of India's agri export policy

- to become one of the top ten exporters of agricultural produce
- to strive to double India's share in the global exports of agri produce from the present figure of over \$30 billion to over \$60 billion by 2022.

**SEBI Oks Kotak Panel Proposals to Boost Corporate Governance**

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) approved sweeping changes proposed by the Uday Kotak panel on improving corporate governance standards such as splitting the post of chairman and managing director, tighter rules for independent directors and mandatory secretarial audits for listed entities.

**Cabinet approves the Protection of Human Rights (Amendments) Bill, 2018**

- The Union Cabinet has given its approval to the Protection of Human Rights (Amendments) Bill, 2018 to make NHRC and SHRCs more compliant with the Paris Principles.
- In 2018, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) had accorded 'A' status to NHRC indicating its compliance with Paris Principles.

**Paris Principles** Adopted in 1993 by the United Nations General Assembly, require Human rights institutions of various countries to meet certain minimum criteria to protect and promote human rights.





**Van Dhan Scheme launched to help Increase Tribal Income through Value Addition**

- First model Van DhanVikas Kendra was launched under the Van Dhan Scheme of Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED at Bijapur, Chattisgarh.
- aims at economic development of tribals involved in collection of Minor Food Produces (MFPs) by helping them in optimum utilization of natural resources and provide them sustainable livelihood.

**The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) came into existence in 1987**

- a national-level apex organization functioning under the administrative control of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India
- institutionalizing the trade of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and Surplus Agriculture Produce (SAP) collected/cultivated by tribals as tribals are heavily dependent on these natural products for their livelihood.

**India to soon have its first Gas Trading Exchange**

- to prepare for a surge in supply from India's east coast and a slew of liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals.
- The first gas trading exchange will work on the lines of online platforms that trade in power
- India produces close to 90 mscmd of gas and imports another 70 mscmd as LNG according to government figures for 2016-17.
- India has laid out a plan to increase the share of gas in India's energy mix to 15 percent by 2030 from below 6.5 percent now

**Angel tax**

- angel tax under Section 56(2)(viib) of the Income Tax Act, 1961
- to tax any capital raised by a closely held company, which is above its fair market value as income from other sources.

**India World's Second Largest Unbanked Population, 19 Crore People Without Accounts**

- At least 19 crore Indian adults do not have bank accounts making the country the second largest in terms of unbanked population according to a report by World Bank.







**Jan dhanYojana:** a national mission to ensure financial access in an affordable manner for the poorer sections of the society

- The country's adult population with bank accounts increased more than two-fold to 80 per cent since 2011.
- China has an unbanked population of 225 million adults followed by India, Pakistan and Indonesia.

### India remain Top Remittance Destination of Migrants

- Remittances to India from abroad touched \$69 billion in 2017 and outflows of remittances from India rise reaching \$5.7 billion, according to World Bank's report 'Migration and Remittance Outlook'.
- **World's largest diaspora population:** Indians constitute the world's largest diaspora population, making it the largest source of labour for the world market.
- In 2017 there were **16.4 million Indians living abroad.**
- Of the 131 countries from where India received remittances **UAE contributed the highest i.e. \$13.8 billion or about 20% of India's total receipts,** followed by the US, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UK.

### TCS now in \$100 Billion Market Capitalization Club

- Tata Consultancy Services became only the second Indian company to cross the \$100 billion mark in market capitalization
- TCS follows Reliance Industries Ltd., which touched the milestone in 2007.
- Global \$100 Billion club: Though much larger than TCS, the global \$100 billion club includes Apple Inc., Microsoft Corp., Alphabet Inc., Amazon, Facebook, ExxonMobil, Walmart Inc. and Samsung.

### Constitutional Protection may be extended to denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes

- In line with the recommendation of National Commission for Denotified Nomadic (DN) and SemiNomadic Tribes (SNT) under BhikuRamjil, the Union government is considering a move to grant Constitutional protection to Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes, thus creating a third category separate from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.





- These communities, also called as Vimuktajatis, are all those communities notified under the Criminal Tribes Acts enforced during British Rule
- The entire communities were branded as criminals by birth under the colonial rule through enforcement of the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871. In 1952, the Act was repealed and the communities were de-notified.

### **India rank 145 in Healthcare Access and Quality Index 2016**

- The index is created by the Global Burden of Disease study, based on 32 causes of death considered preventable with effective medical care.
- India has improved its ranking on a global healthcare access and quality (HAQ) index from 153 in 1990 to 145 in 2016, yet ranks lower than neighbouring Bangladesh and even sub-Saharan Sudan and Equatorial Guinea.
- India lags way behind its BRICS peers Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa on the HAQ index, but matches China in the disparity in healthcare access and quality between states.
- Within India, the best performers, Goa and Kerala, scored more than 60 points on the HAQ index in 2016, whereas the worst performers, Assam and Uttar Pradesh, scored below 40.

### **World Health Statistics 2018**

- The World Health Statistics series is WHO's annual snapshot of the state of the world's health.
- It also links to the three SDG-aligned strategic priorities of the WHO's 13th General Programme of Work: achieving universal health coverage, addressing health emergencies and promoting healthier populations.
- India saw an estimated 211 cases of tuberculosis per 1,00,000 people in 2016, India has pledged to eradicate tuberculosis by 2025, five years ahead of the global target set by WHO.
- Maternal mortality ratio (MMR) in India was 174 per 1,00,000 births in 2015. The Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 is to lower MMR for all countries to less than 70 per 1,00,000 births.
- Per capita health expenditure in India was around USD 63 in 2015, way lower than China (USD 426), while in Pakistan it was \$38.



**GSTN to be Made a Government Company**

- The Goods and Services Tax Council approved a new comprehensive return-generation system and full government ownership of GST Network (GSTN) the IT backbone for GST.
- Ownership of GSTN: The council also approved a proposal for the Centre and states to jointly (and equally) acquire the entire 51% of equity held by the non-governmental institutions in GSTN amounting to Rs 5.1 crore.
- Currently the Centre and states jointly own 49% in GSTN (24.5% each), while the rest is held by five other entities, including LIC Housing Finance, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank.

**Indian Rupee Rout**

- The Indian currency sunk to a closing low of 68.07 against the U.S. dollar i.e. its lowest level in 16 months. The rupee already one of the worst performing Asian currencies has now weakened 6.2% in 2018.

**Reason behind Rupee Depreciation**

- Rise in crude oil prices:
- High CAD
- Tightening of USA monetary policy

**Impact Of Fall Of Rupee**

- Impact importers: Importers will be hit as the cost of getting goods or equipment into India will increase.
- Impact on oil sector:
- Impact on exporters: Exporters especially software exporters stand to benefit as they get more rupees while converting dollar export earnings into Indian currency.
- Increase inflationary pressure: Crude prices are expected to rise further this year and imports are expected to grow by at least 14%.
- Increase in remittances:



**India's ranking fell three places to 11th in FDI Confidence Index 2018**

- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Confidence Index 2018 released by global consultancy firm A T Kearney. It was created in 1998.
- Last year, India was ranked eighth. Its position was pushed out of the top 10 for the first time since 2015.
- Top 10 Countries in the Index - United States (1st), Canada (2nd), Germany (3rd), United Kingdom (4th), China (5th), Japan (6th), France (7th), Australia (8th), Switzerland (9th) and Italy (10th)

**Walmart to buy control of Flipkart**

- US based retail giant Walmart said it will invest \$16 billion to acquire a 77 per cent stake in Indian e-commerce major Flipkart a deal that is the biggest M&A (merger and acquisition) in India so far higher than the \$12.9 billion acquisition of Essar Oil by a consortium led by Russia's Rosneft in 2016.

**First Crude Oil Cargo from Abu Dhabi for India's Strategic Crude Oil Reserve**

- The historic first cargo of crude oil from the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), destined for the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd (ISPRL) has been loaded and is en-route to India.
- ISPRL is mandated to store crude oil for strategic needs, to locate 5.86 million barrels of ADNOC crude oil at the Karnataka facility in the Indian city of Mangalore.

**Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve**

- is an emergency fuel store of total 5 MMT (million metric tons) of strategic crude oil enough to provide 10 days of consumption.
- The reserves are maintained by the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited.
- India's strategic crude oil storages are located at Vizag (1.33 million tonnes), Mangalore (1.5 million tonnes) and Padur (2.5 million tonnes)
- The 2017-18 budget, announced that two more such caverns will be set up Chandikhole in Jajpur district of Odisha and Bikaner in Rajasthan as part of the second phase.





**All Indian Villages now have access to power supply**

- Manipur's Leisang village became the last non-electrified inhabited village to join India's mainline supply network an important milestone in the country's journey towards universal electricity access.
- All 597464 inhabited villages in the country now have access to power.
- The seeds of 100 per cent village electrification were sowed with the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJUY).

**Pasighat airport** - The first commercial flight of Arunachal Pradesh under UDAN scheme landed at Pasighat airport.

World's first floating nuclear plant - Russia unveiled world's first floating nuclear power station at port city of Murmansk.

**Zojila tunnel** - PM Modi inaugurated construction of Rs 6,809 crore Zojila tunnel project in Jammu and Kashmir's Leh. It will be **India's and Asia's longest and strategic bi-directional road tunnel**.

BSE became first Indian exchange to be designated as Designated Offshore Securities Market (DOSM) by United States Securities and Exchange Commission (US-SEC).

**HDFC Bank became the first bank in the country to introduce a humanoid for customer service.**

- HDFC Bank launched IRA 2.0, its interactive humanoid. IRA will interact with customers, answer bank-related queries, frequently asked questions, and guide them inside the branch with voice-based navigation

**India no longer a nation with world's largest poor population**

- Think tank Brookings 'The Start Of A New Poverty Narrative' report highlighted that with persistent decline in poverty, India is no longer a nation having largest number of poor people in world.
- The study defines poverty as living on less than \$1.9 a day.
- **Nigeria has largest number of extreme poor** in early 2018, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo could soon take over the number 2 spot.







- extreme poverty in Nigeria is growing by six people every minute, while poverty in India continues to fall.
- about 725 million people were in extreme poverty at the beginning of 2016

### India's first Advanced Forensic Lab dedicated to women related cases

- Ministry of Women and Child Development laid the foundation of **Sakhi Suraksha** Advanced DNA Forensic Laboratory in Central Forensic Science Lab (CFSL), Chandigarh.
- It will be funded from the Nirbhaya Fund.

### India among 90 countries without Paid Paternity Leaves

- India and Nigeria, which have high infant populations, are among 92 countries that do not have national policies in place that ensure new fathers get adequate paid time off with their newborn babies.

**Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017** has increased the duration of **paid maternity leave** available for women employees from the existing 12 weeks to 26 weeks.

### Suvidha Bio-Degradable low-cost sanitary napkins

- In a move to improve menstrual hygiene practices in India, the government will offer fully biodegradable low-cost sanitary napkins called Suvidha at all of its Pradhan Mantri Janaushadi Pariyojana stores.
- It was released by the Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI), in association with the department of pharmaceuticals, on the occasion of World Environment Day.

### Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)

- It is a campaign launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses. PMBJP stores have been set up to provide generic drugs, which are not only affordable but are equivalent in quality and efficacy as expensive branded drugs.
- Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI) is the implementation agency for PMBJP



**Ban on growth drug Oxytocin**

- Major curbs on the production and sale of growth hormone oxytocin will come into effect from July 1 with the government determined to end its misuse.
- All private manufacturing of oxytocin will end from July 1 and its production for domestic use will be restricted to only one public sector company, Karnataka Antibiotics and Pharmaceuticals Limited (KAPL).
- rural health workers in some areas used oxytocin injections to induce child birth among women during home deliveries.
- Excessive use of oxytocin in cattle by farmers to improve milk production leading to reduction in the animal's lifespan was also documented.
- Humans consuming oxytocin-infested milk can suffer hormonal imbalances.

**Oxytocin**

- is a neurotransmitter and a hormone produced in the hypothalamus, it is transported to and secreted by the pituitary gland at the base of the brain.
- It plays a role in the female reproductive functions from sexual activity to childbirth and breast feeding.

**India launches first National Healthcare Facility Registry**

- It will be the first ever registry in the country which will facilitate registry of authentic, standardised and updated geo-spatial data of all public and private healthcare.
- ISRO is the project technology partner for providing data security•

**Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) to replace UGC**

- The Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry has released the draft Higher Education Commission of India (Repeal of University Grants Commission Act) Bill 2018.  
HECI will be the new, apex regulator for university and higher education in India.



**UN has released Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018**

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a global blueprint for dignity, peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and in the future.
- A fast-changing climate, conflict, inequality, persistent pockets of poverty and hunger and rapid urbanization are challenging countries' efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- No. of hungry people in the world, rising from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million in 2016

**RBI to set up Public Credit Registry (PCR) on All Borrowers**

- The PCR will be the single point of mandatory reporting for all material events for each loan notwithstanding any threshold in the loan amount or type of borrower.
- It will serve as a registry of all credit contracts duly verified by reporting institutions for all lending in India and any lending by an Indian institution to a company incorporated in India.
- The RBI considered the recommendations of YM Deosthalee headed High Level Task Force and decided to set up a PCR.

**GST Council meet may take up inclusion of Natural Gas**

- Next item for consideration of inclusion in the GST regime could be aviation turbine fuel (ATF), which is among the five petroleum products proposed to be brought in under the GST ambit.
- Petroleum is a considerably larger source for revenues not only for Centre but States also and on natural gas front there is some consensus for bringing it into GST ambit and therefore, it could be first petroleum product that could come in well within GST network.
- Five petroleum products i.e. crude oil, diesel, petrol, natural gas, aviation turbine fuel (ATF) are still out of the GST ambit.



### **NBFCs to meet RBI on IndAS Implementation**

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- RBI has deferred the implementation of Indian Accounting Standards (IndAS) for banks by a year, while it is applicable for NBFCs from April 1, 2018.
- According to the initial plan, Ministry Of Corporate Affairs was to implement IndAS for banks, insurance companies, and NBFCs from 1 April 2018 onwards.
- Also IndAS implementation date has been deferred for insurance companies by two years.
- IndAS is a global accounting practice that NBFCs are mandated to adopt, which may lead to initial credit losses. The practice is at par with the International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS).

### **FSDC Reconstituted to include more members**

- The government has reconstituted the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC), the apex body of financial sector regulators and made it more broad-based.
- **The FSDC** was set up to create an institutional structure and mechanism for financial stability, financial sector development and inter-regulatory coordination.
- It is charged with financial literacy, financial inclusion and macro prudential supervision of the economy including the functioning of large financial conglomerates.

### **India started importing LNG from Russia**

- India has begun importing liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Russia at Dahej import terminal as part of its strategy to diversify its supply sources and cater to the rapidly rising local energy needs.
- Russia is the latest country to begin supplying long-term LNG to India after US, Australia, and Qatar.
- Russian rate is \$1.5 per one million British Thermal Units (mmBTU) less than the price at which Qatar, India's oldest supplier, delivered liquefied natural gas (LNG).





**Importance of LNG Import**

- India is the 3rd largest energy consumer and 4th largest LNG importer in the world. Russia is the largest crude oil and second-largest gas producer in the world.
- India imports 45% of the total amount of natural gas it consumes.
- Indian govt plan to raise the share of natural gas in the country's energy mix to 15% by 2030 from about 6.5% now, import of LNG is expected to rise.

**Canada Legalises Marijuana**

- Canada has legalised recreational marijuana across the country this week, making it the first G7 country to do so.
- Under guidelines from Canada's public health agency, marijuana products will be sold in plain packaging with limited branding.
- Uruguay became the first country to legalise the sale of cannabis for recreational use in December 2013, Canada became the second country.

**11th World Hindi Conference in Mauritius**

- Aim of this conference will be to increase the popularity of Hindi globally.
- The Ministry of External Affairs also aims to promote Hindi at the United Nations and in this regard, a lot of work is being done and the disclosures would be made at the World Hindi Conference.
- The World Hindi Secretariat (WHS) supported by India, is located in Mauritius.

**SAARC Fund to Launch Social Enterprise Programme in India**

- Thimpu-based SAARC Development Fund (SDF) will soon be launching a social enterprise development programme (SEDP) to fund 80 entities annually across the 8- member states including India.
- SDF was established in April 2010, succeeding South Asian Development Fund (SADF), which was launched in 1996 by merging SAARC Fund for Regional Projects (SFRP) and SAARC Regional Fund.
- SDF has already committed USD 73.74 million for social window projects







### International Conference on ICT at Kathmandu

- Federation of Computer Association Nepal (CAN Federation) has organized the 18th edition of International ICT Conference 2018, from June 17 to 18 at Kathmandu, Nepal. The Theme of the conference was "Sustainable Development Goals for Smart Society".

### Assam Bill Against Witch-Hunt

- Indian President Ram Nath Kovind gave assent to the Assam Witch Hunting (Prohibition, Prevention and Protection) Bill, 2015
- President's assent is required when an act passed by a state Assembly contravenes central law.
- It makes every offence under the Act "cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable." The Act prescribes a prison term of up to 7 years and up to ₹5 lakh in fine for calling a person a witch.
- Branding people, mostly women, as witch and killing them is a very old problem across Assam. Such phenomenon affected states like Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand also.

**Project Prahari** The earliest concerted move to fight the practice launched by police officer Kuladhar Saikia, the current DGP of Assam. Back in 2001, launched as a model of community development that brought together various sections of the rural society to combat witch-hunting by focusing on alternative livelihood skills.

**Mission Birubala** forefront of Assam's anti-witch-hunt campaign since 2011.

Birubala Rabha, a tribal villager from Goalpara, who in 2005 singlehandedly started raising her voice against the practice after being branded a witch herself.



**World Population Day observed on July 11**

- July 11 was established as World Population Day in 1989 by the United Nations, to spread information of population-related issues across the globe.
- Theme for 2018: "Family Planning is a Human right"

**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** began operations in 1969 as the United Nations Fund for Population Activities under the United Nations Development Fund.

**Debate on Section 377 Of IPC**

- Supreme court Constitutional bench is hearing petitions challenging the constitutionality of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code.
- Section 377 refers to 'unnatural offences' and says whoever voluntarily has carnal inter course against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal shall be punished with imprisonment for life or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to 10 years and shall also be liable to pay a fine.

**Bru Community of Mizoram**

- Less than a fortnight after Union Home Minister announced the signing of an agreement that would repatriate displaced Bru families living in Tripura since 1997 to Mizoram before September 30, the Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Forum (MBDPF) withdrew from the deal, saying the terms agreed upon between the governments of Mizoram, Tripura and Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) were not acceptable to the Bru community.

**The Bru community**, once spread across Mamit and Kolasib districts of Mizoram, were forced to flee their native land in 1997 after animosity between the Bru and the Mizos turned violent.



**All India Survey on Higher Education Report (AISHE) 2017-18**

- The top 8 States in terms of highest number of colleges in India are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.
- College density i.e. the number of colleges per lakh eligible population (population in the agegroup 18-23 years) varies from 7 in Bihar to 51 in Karnataka and Telangana as compared to All India average of 28.
- 60.48% colleges are located in rural area and 11.04% colleges are exclusively for women.
- Total enrolment in higher education has been estimated to be 36.6 million with 19.2 million boys and 17.4 million girls. Girls constitute 47.6% of the total enrolment.
- Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher education in India is 25.8%, which is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. GER for male population is 26.3% and for females, it is 25.4%.

**The authorized share capital of Higher Education Financing Agency increased to Rs. 10,000 crore**

- CCEA has approved increasing the authorized share capital from the current sum of Rs. 2000 crore and approved infusing additional government equity of Rs. 5,000 crore (in addition to Rs.10,000 crore already provided) in HEFA.

HEFA has been set up on May 31, 2017 as a Non Profit, Non Banking Financing Company (NBFC) for mobilising extra-budgetary resources for building crucial infrastructure in the higher educational institutions under Central Govt.

It will also push institutions to become financially self-sustaining and not depend on the government for all their growth requirements.

**APSC Prelims TEST SERIES 2018**

GS Paper | Polity Paper | History Paper | Education Paper



**LIC Buys IDBI Bank**

- The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has obtained the approval of Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) to buy upto 51 % in debt-ridden IDBI Bank from the current 10.82%.

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**Andhra Pradesh and Telangana topped the Ease of Doing Business Ranking**

- The DIPP and World Bank has released the Ease of doing Business ranking in which Andhra Pradesh has topped the list, followed by Telangana and Haryana.
- Others in the top-10 states are Jharkhand (4), Gujarat (5), Chhattisgarh (6), Madhya Pradesh (7), Karnataka (8), Rajasthan (9) and West Bengal (10).
- DIPP, in collaboration with the World Bank conducts this annual reform exercise for all states and Union territories under the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP).

**India becomes World's Sixth Largest Economy**

- World Bank figures for 2017 say India has become the world's sixth-biggest economy, pushing France behind.
- India's GDP amounted to \$2.597 trillion at the end of last year, against \$2.582 trillion for France.
- India is poised to become the world's most populous nation by 2030. India's per capita GDP continues to amount to just a fraction of that of France which is still roughly 20 times higher.
- **World's top economy** - The US, China, Japan and Germany

**India slips to 11<sup>th</sup> in FDI ranking**

- India has fallen out of top 10 destinations for Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) in terms of its attractiveness according to 2018 Kearney FDI Confidence Index
- India was at 8th in 2017 and 9th in 2016.

**India joins European Bank for Reconstruction and Development**

- As it's 69th shareholder.







India's GM Crops area fifth largest in world, USA has the highest area under GM crops.

Page | 32 Samsung inaugurated world's largest mobile phone factory in Noida.

**HDFC Group has crossed the Rs. 10 lakh crore market capitalization milestone**

- only the country's second corporate entity to do so after the Tata Group.
- HDFC Bank is the country's third most valued firm after Tata Consultancy Services and Reliance Industries

**Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act**

- mandatory for companies to disclose whether they have constituted an Internal Complaints committee (ICC) to probe allegations of sexual harassment at workplace.
- the Annual Reports of Private companies will have to contain a statement about status of Internal Complaints Committee (ICC).
- mandatory for any organisation with 10 or more employees to constitute an ICC.

**Begging Decriminalized in Delhi**

- The Delhi High Court has decriminalized begging in the national capital on the ground that the penal provisions in the law were unconstitutional.
- Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959 was extended to Delhi by a Central government amendment in 1960.
- Currently, there is no central law on begging and destitution and most states have adopted the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act 1959, or have modelled their laws on it.

**World Breastfeeding Week from August 1 to 7**

- World Breastfeeding Week is a worldwide celebration held annually from August 1st to 7th and is dedicated to nursing mothers & to raise awareness about significance of breast milk in infant's life.



**Three Northeastern States Emerge As New HIV Hotspots**

- Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura have emerged as the new hotspots for HIV. However, there has been a steady decline in the number of HIV cases in India.
- The reason for the rise in the three northeastern States to the high-risk behaviour of Injecting Drug Users (IDUs), and unsafe sexual practices.

**Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)**

- a life-threatening disease caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
- It makes difficult for the body to fight infections

**WORLD AIDS DAY** is held on 1st December each year.

**117 Aspirational Districts - Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)**

- NITI Aayog has identified 117 districts as Aspirational Districts, selected on the basis of composite index includes published data of deprivation enumerated under Socio-Economic Caste Census, health & nutrition, education and basic infrastructure.
- central assistance is provided for opening of new Model Degree Colleges (MDCs) in Aspirational Districts and in unserved & underserved districts in North Eastern and Himalayan States.

**Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)** aim is to improve access, equity and quality in higher education through planned development of higher education at the state level.

- Creating new academic institutions, expanding and upgrading the existing ones, developing institutions that are self-reliant in terms of quality education, professionally managed and characterised by greater inclination towards research and provide students with relevant education.

**IMPRINT 2**

- MoHRD has approved 122 new research projects at a cost of Rs.112 crore under IMPRINT-2.





- IMPRINT-2 has been approved with a revised strategy under which the initiative will be jointly funded and steered by MoHRD and Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- For the second phase, the govt has sanctioned a fund of Rs. 1000 crore for research in Science and Technology over the course of next two years.

### India rank 57<sup>th</sup> in Global Innovation Index (GII) 2018

- GI is published by Cornell University, INSEAD, and the World Intellectual Property Organisation, in partnership with other organisations and institutions.
- Switzerland continued its long run of being at the top. It has been at the top of the list since 2011.
- Other countries in the top 5 are Netherlands, Sweden, UK and Singapore.
- China, at 17, broke into the world's top 20 most-innovative economies for the first time. India's Performance
- India's rank on the GI has improved from 60th in 2017 to 57th in 2018.

### Delhi Police gets India's first All-Women SWAT Team

- Delhi Police is the first police force in the country to have an all-women Special Weapons And Tactics (SWAT) team.

### Pune topped the Ease of Living Index

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has released the Ease of Living Index, to assess cities' 'liveability' with regards to global and national benchmarks and encourage in urban planning and management.
- The index covers 111 cities that are smart city contenders, capital cities, and cities with population of 1 million plus. It is a government initiative
- The list was led by Pune, Navi Mumbai, and Greater Mumbai while the cities of Patna and Rampur were at the bottom.





- **Top 10 cities include:** 1. Pune 2. Navi Mumbai 3. Greater Mumbai 4. Tirupati 5. Chandigarh 6. Thane 7. Raipur 8. Indore 9. Vijayawada 10. Bhopal •
- **Bottom 10 cities include:** 102. Silvassa 103. Saharanpur 104. Kavaratti 105. Pasighat 106. Itanagar 107. Bhagalpur 108. Bihar Sharif 109. Patna 110. Kohima 111. Rampu

### **Vienna is the best city to live, as per Global Liveability Index 2018**

- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), of the magazine 'The Economist', has released the Global Liveability Index
- It assigns scores on five broad parameters — stability, healthcare, culture/environment, education, and infrastructure using 30 indicators.
- Top 10 liveable cities are – 1. Vienna (Austria) 2. Melbourne (Australia) 3. Osaka (Japan) 4. Calgary (Canada) 5. Sydney (Australia) 6. Vancouver (Canada) 7. Tokyo (Japan) 8. Toronto (Canada) 9. Copenhagen (Denmark) 10. Adelaide (Australia)
- South Asian countries including India have fared poorly in the ranking of the world's most liveable cities. From India, only New Delhi (112) and Mumbai (117) could make it to the list.
- Top 10 least liveable cities in the world are - Senegal's Dakar at 131, Algeria's Algiers at 132, Cameroon's Douala at 133, Libya's Tripoli at 134, Zimbabwe's Harare at 135, Papua New Guinea's Port Moresby at 136, Karachi at 137, Nigeria's Lagos at 138, Dhaka at 139, Damascus at 140.

### **Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) to be created**

- The GST Council has approved creation of the tribunal with a national bench in Delhi and three regional benches in Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai
- The new body replaces the Central Excise and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal.

### **Need for review of Deposit Insurance Cover**

- In India, deposit insurance covers all commercial banks, local area banks, regional rural banks and co-operative banks.







- The Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) insures amount to the depositor, limited is restricted to just Rs. 1 lakh per depositor per bank.
- Due to Poor health of banks, the maximum deposited amount insured must be increased.
- Less than a third of bank deposits in value terms are insured by the DICGC, which is too low compared to the International standards, Most of the countries cover 60-70 per cent of total deposits.
- Indonesia has a deposit-insurance cover of \$1,47,000, Brazil \$76,700, and Malaysia \$55,700. Mexico too has insurance coverage of over \$100,000. Canada, Switzerland and France provide cover upwards of \$70,000 per depositor. In the US, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation offers an insurance coverage of \$250,000. While, in India, the deposit insurance is just \$1,543.

#### NABARD's All India Rural Financial Inclusion Survey 2016-17 survey

- Average monthly rural income after deducting expenses incurred in the course of economic activity was Rs. 8059.

#### New Industrial Policy to be formulated

- new industrial policy that aims to speed up regulatory reforms to make businesses more competitive and create more jobs.
- The comprehensive industrial policy is envisaged as a follow up to initiatives such as Make in India and Startup India, aimed at boosting domestic manufacturing and entrepreneurship.
- India's industrial sector has a 29% share in GDP at current prices, well below 44% for China.

#### MSME Development (Amendment) Bill, 2018

- Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) will soon be defined based on their annual turnover, if a new Bill is cleared.
- Amendment Bill- Any business with a turnover of up to Rs. 5 crore will be considered a micro enterprise. The other slabs are Rs. 5-75 crore for small enterprise and Rs. 75-250 crore for medium enterprise.





- At present, it is decided based on the investment made in plant and machinery/equipment. There are two sets of definitions, depending on whether the units produce goods or services. Under the goods category, the slabs are up to Rs. 25 lakh for micro, Rs. 25 lakh to Rs. 5 crore for small and Rs. 5-10 crore for medium. In the case of services, the slabs are: up to Rs.10 lakh, Rs. 10 lakh to RS. 2 crore and Rs. 2-5 crore.

**World Bank launches Bond-I, world's first blockchain bond.**

**Sikkim's first airport at Pakyong inaugurated**

**Indo-Bangla Friendship Pipeline**

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina jointly inaugurated the construction of a friendship pipeline project
- The 130-kilometre India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project will connect Siliguri in West Bengal in India and Parbatipur in Dinajpur district of Bangladesh.
- The project will help fulfil energy needs of Bangladesh at cheaper rates.

**Indian ranked 130<sup>th</sup> in 2018 Human Development Report**

- UNDP indicated a glaring inequality in the country though "millions have been lifted out of poverty".
- Top countries - Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Ireland and Germany
- Niger, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Chad and Burundi have the lowest scores.
- out of the 189 countries for which the HDI is calculated, 59 countries are today in the very high human development group and only 38 countries fall in the low HDI group.
- **South Asia experienced the fastest HDI growth** among developing regions with a 45.3 % increase since 1990.
- South Asia has the widest gap between men and women in HDI at 16.3%.
- **India's HDI value is 0.640**, which put the country in the **medium human development category**.



**Human Development Index (HDI)**

- composite measure of every country's attainment in three basic dimensions:
  - (1) standard of living measured by the gross national income (GNI) per capita,
  - (2) health measured by the life expectancy at birth, and
  - (3) education levels calculated by mean years of education among the adult population and the expected years of schooling for children.

**India ranked 158<sup>th</sup> in Human Capital Rankings**

- study published in the Lancet journal, measures Human Capital of 195 countries during the 1990-2016 period.
- Parameters: Human capital is computed using four key parameters: (1) Life Expectancy, (2) Functional Health, (3) Years of Schooling and (4) Learning.
- Finland is ranked first with 28 years of expected human capital, followed by Iceland, Denmark, Netherlands
- Niger, South Sudan and Chad were ranked lowest with 2 years of expected human capital.

**MOVE: India's First Global Mobility Summit 2018** organised by Niti Aayog in New Delhi

**Section 377 Struck Down**

- The Supreme Court, in Navtej Johar vs Union of India, has decriminalised same sex relations between consenting adults in private under Section 377.
- However, the "unnatural" sexual acts like bestiality and sexual act without consent continues to be a crime under Section 377.

**Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)**

- The HRD Ministry to rank education institutions on innovation related indicators.
- It is an annual ranking of higher educational institutions based on how they fare in terms of innovation.





- ARIIA and NIRF: ARIIA, which focuses on innovation, will work parallel to the ranking of institutions captured by the annual National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) which focuses on research.

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**Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)**

- Union HRD Ministry has decided to participate in PISA– an international assessment of student ability – in 2021 after a gap of 10 years.
- Coordinated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), India has participated only once in PISA in 2009.

**Mauritius Tops India's FDI Chart**

- Mauritius remained the top source of foreign direct investment (FDI) into India in 2017-18 followed by Singapore, whereas total FDI stood at \$37.36 billion
- **Country wise FDI:**
  1. FDI from Mauritius totalled \$13.41 billion
  2. Singapore \$9.27 billion
  3. Netherlands \$2.67 billion

**China has opened the world's longest sea bridge to general traffic.**

- The bridge spans 42.4km (26.3 miles) to connect the eastern coastal city of Qingdao to the suburb of Huangdao,

**India ranked 103 in the Global Hunger Index 2018**

- publication released annually by Welthungerhilfe and Concern Worldwide
- The 2018 scores reflect data from 2013-2017.
- India has GHI of 31.1 making the country fall in the 'serious' category.
- The best-performing countries have a GHI score as low as 5 (Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia etc).

**Wage Compensation Scheme for pregnant women in Assam**

- Assam has recently launched a wage compensation scheme for pregnant women in tea gardens of the state.
- each woman will get Rs 12,000 so that she can look after herself and her unborn baby without affecting the livelihood of her family.
- The tea-producing belt of upper Assam, comprising Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Sivasagar and Tinsukia, has one of the country's worst maternal mortality rates (MMR) due to anaemia and other diseases







- The Annual Health Survey of 2012-13 puts MMR at 404 in the tea gardens, whereas the state's average is 301. India's average during 2014-16 was 130.

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**WHO's First Global Conference On Air Pollution And Health at Geneva.**

- The first Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health was recently held at in Geneva.
- 14 out of the 20 most polluted cities in the world are in India

**IIT Bombay Tops in QS India University Rankings**

- The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay has emerged on top in the first-ever standalone QS rankings for Indian institutions of higher education.
- The India University Rankings is the second country-specific rankings done by QS, after it released one for China.
- Seven out of the top ten positions were occupied by IITs in these rankings as IIT Madras, IIT Delhi and IIT Kharagpur bagged the third, fourth and fifth slots respectively. IISc bagged the second spot on the list.

**Global Rankings**

- The QS world rank list released has ranked 1011 institutes in 85 countries.
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is the world's best university, IIT Bombay has been placed 162 rank followed by the foremost research institute of India IISc at 170.

**IMPRESS and SPARC**

- The Union HRD Minister launched web portals of two schemes IMPRESS and SPARC, with an aim to build a research ecosystem in educational institutions.
- **Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS)** is to identify and fund research proposals in social sciences with maximum impact on the governance and society.

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- The Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) aims at building the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian and foreign institutions.

**MoU Towards Sittwe Port Operationalisation**

- India and Myanmar have signed MoU towards operationalisation of Sittwe port.
- appointment of a private Port Operator for the Operation and Maintenance of Sittwe Port, Paletwa Inland Water Terminal and associated facilities included in the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project.

**Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport**

- is a project that will connect the eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata with Sittwe seaport in Rakhine State, Myanmar by sea.
- In Myanmar, it will then link Sittwe seaport to Paletwa, Chin State via the Kaladan river boat route, and then from Paletwa by road to Mizoram state in Northeast India

**Trade Deal USMCA to Replace NAFTA**

- The US and Canada have reached a new trade deal, along with Mexico, to replace the current North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).
- The new deal has been named as the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)

**IORA Countries Adopt The Delhi Declaration**

- 21 countries in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) have adopted the Delhi Declaration on Renewable Energy in the Indian Ocean Region.
- Adoption of the declaration took place at 2nd IORA Renewable Energy Ministerial Meeting held at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Re-Invest India-ISA Partnership Renewable Energy Investor's Meet & Expo in Greater Noida.





### India ranked 58<sup>th</sup> in the WEF's Competitiveness Index for 2018

- India has improved its ranking by five places the largest gain among all G20 countries, with an overall score of 62.
- Top 10 countries - USA (1st), Singapore (2nd), Germany (3rd), Switzerland (4th), Japan (5th), Netherlands (6th), Hong Kong (7th), United Kingdom (8th), Sweden (9th) and Denmark (10th)
- BRICS Ranking – Brazil (72), Russia (43), India (58), China (28), South Africa (67)

### Direct Tax Base widens sharply over 4 Years

- growth of more than 80% in the number of returns filed in the last four financial years from 3.79 crore in financial year (FY) 2013-14 to 6.85 crore in FY 2017-18.
- the **Direct Tax-to-GDP ratio rose to 5.98%** in FY 2017-18, the highest it has been in the last 10 years.

### Kalyani Panel Suggests Delinking SEZs From Exports

- A committee on special economic zones (SEZs) led by Baba Kalyani has suggested delinking the enclaves from exports and allowing payments to be made in rupee when they deal with areas outside the zone.
- India's export-linked incentive schemes including SEZs being disputed by the US in the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- Exports from SEZs grew 15% to 5.52 lakh crore in 2017-18.

### National Digital Communications Policy 2018

- The Union Cabinet approved the new The National Digital Communications Policy 2018
- aims to create four million jobs, draw \$100 billion of investments into the telecom industry by 2022, boost **sectoral contribution to 8% of GDP from 6% in 2017**, besides backing the principles of net neutrality.





Axis Bank-e first to introduce iris authentication for Aadhaar-based transactions.

WEF launches Centre for Fourth Industrial Revolution in India.

BSE - first stock exchange to launch commodity derivative contracts.

Mahila Mall, the first mall in the country with an all-women crew will come up in Kozhikode in the month of November.

### Appointment/Awards

- Sudha Balakrishnan appointed the first Chief Financial Officer of RBI
- National Statistics Day: June 29 15.
- International Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day: June 27
- Vishwas Patel appointed as Chairman of Payments Council of India.
- Justice Manjula Chellur taken oath as Chairperson of Appellate Tribunal for Electricity
- R S Sharma re-appointed TRAI chairperson till 2020.
- Ashish Kumar Bhutani appointed CEO of PM Fasal Bima Yojana.
- Bhanu Pratap Sharma as new Banks Board Bureau Chairman
- Sunil Mehta elected as new Chairman of Indian Bank's Association for 2018-19.
- Government sets up Injeti Srinivas High Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility.
- 2018 Nobel Peace in Economics - William Nordhaus & Paul Romer
- 2018 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to campaigners against rape in warfare - Nadia Murad and Denis Mukwege. Nadia Murad is the first Iraqi to win the award and was also named the UN's first goodwill ambassador for survivors of human trafficking.

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