

Daily Current Affairs 18 July 2018

India

LS Speaker accepts no-confidence motion against ruling government

- The Speaker of Lok Sabha, Sumitra Mahajan admitted a no-confidence motion moved by the opposition against the ruling government on July 18, 2018, on the opening day of the Monsoon session of Parliament.
- The no-confidence motion against the Narendra Modi government brought by the TDP and opposition parties will be taken up for debate on July 20, 2018.
- The discussion will be held for the full day, followed by voting on the issue.
- The Speaker announced that there will be no question hour on the day of the debate.
- The House will also not have any other business on the day except for the discussion on the no-confidence motion.
- During the Zero Hour, the Speaker named all the opposition members who had moved similar no-confidence motion notices and said that TDP's Kesineni Srinivas would move his motion as his party was the first to bring up the matter.

Union Government to set up National Database of Arms Licenses system

- Union Ministry of Home Affairs announced to set up the National Database of Arms Licenses system in April 2019.
- It will include names of all arms licence holders, new or old and they will be issued a unique identification number (UIN).
- The move is aimed at keeping tab on authorised private gun holders, many of whom are often found involved in crimes and celebratory firing leading to loss of lives.
- The decision was taken under Section 44 of Arms Act, 1959 (54 of 1959) by amending the Arms Rules, 2016.
- These rules will be called the Arms (Second Amendment) Rules, 2018.
- Under Section 3 of Arms Act, it is essential to obtain arms possession licence issued by competent licensing authority, by any person for acquisition, possession or carrying any firearms or ammunition.

IIT-Madras unveils world's first remotely operable LEAP microscope

- The IIT-Madras has commissioned remotely operable Local Electrode Atom Probe (LEAP) microscope.
- It is claimed to be world's first remotely operable LEAP microscope, as it can be remotely operated through special terminal by researchers divided geographically.
- LEAP is high-performance microscope that can provide a precise atom-by-atom view of materials.

- The remotely operable LEAP microscope has been developed in a collaborative exercise involving eight top research institutions in country, spearheaded by IIT-M.

All India Institute of Ayurveda signs MoU with IIT Delhi to give scientific validation to Ayurveda

- All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) and IIT-Delhi have signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance research in the field of Ayurveda.
- The MoU was signed on sidelines of two-day conference on 'Raising towards Excellence' held at New Delhi.
- As of part of MoU, AIIA will invite technological experts from IIT Delhi for research in ancient Indian medicine.

Supreme Court passes a slew of directions to deal with Mob Lynching

- The Supreme Court on July 17, 2018 condemned mob lynching incidents across the country and urged the Parliament to enact a law to deal with the crime that threatens rule of law and the country's social fabric.
- The Bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra, Justice AM Khanwilkar and Justice DY Chandrachud ruled that a special law in this field would instil a sense of fear for law amongst the people who involve themselves in such kinds of activities.
- The bench ruled that "Horrendous acts of mobocracy cannot be allowed to become a new norm and has to be curbed with iron hands." The apex court also asserted that it is States' duty to prevent any sort of mob vigilantism, be it Cow vigilantism or any other vigilantism of any perception.

8th India-Oman Joint Commission meeting held in Muscat

- The eighth session of India-Oman Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) was held in Muscat, Oman on July 16, 2018.
- The session was co-chaired by the Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu along with the Minister of Industry, Investment, Trade and Digital Economy of Oman, Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy.
- Speaking on the occasion, Suresh Prabhu extended an invite to Omani companies to build on their success in India and make investments to benefit from 'Make in India' and 'Invest India' programmes, which are aimed at encouraging manufacturing.
- The Minister said that the Indian Government has launched several investment friendly programmes such as 'Make in India' with a trillion dollar business opportunity in the country.

President Ram Nath Kovind approves Assam's Anti-Witch Hunting Bill

- President Ram Nath on July 17, 2018 approved the Assam Witch Hunting (Prohibition, Prevention and Protection) Bill, 2015, thus, converting it to an Act. The Bill was unanimously passed by the Assam assembly in 2015.
- The Bill seeks to fight the menace of superstitious practice of witch hunting that has already claimed several lives in the last decade.

- The bill recognises all cases of witch-hunting as non-bailable, cognizable and non-compoundable.
- It prohibits any person from identifying, calling or defaming any other person as witch by words, conducts, signs or indications.
- It imposes maximum imprisonment up to seven years and maximum fine up to Rs 500000 for branding someone as witch.

Banking

Jana Small Finance Bank launches commercial operations

- Jana Small Finance Bank on Wednesday announced the commercial launch of its banking operations, the last microfinance company to convert itself into a small finance bank (SFB), three years after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) gave its in-principle approval.
- The Bengaluru-based small finance bank, which was earlier called Janalakshmi Financial Services and weathered huge losses on account of demonetization, said it is confident of turning profitable before the end of fiscal year 2019.
- Jana was the worst affected during demonetization when it saw its asset quality slip, leading to capital erosion. The MFI had reported losses to the tune of ₹3,400 crore at the end of March 2018.
- Even as it received its final licence in April last year, Kanwal said it waited to complete the ₹2,000 crore capital infusion before it started commercial operations. The bank's capital adequacy ratio at the end of March 2018 stood at 35%.

Lists

Udaipur ranked 3rd among world's best cities for second successive year

- The city of Udaipur has once again in 2018 been ranked among the World's Best Cities by Travel + Leisure. Udaipur, the heritage-city built by the Maharanas of Mewar in the 16th century, is on the third place among the 15 of the world's best cities.
- The top 2 cities are both in Mexico: San Miguel de Allende and Oaxaca.
- In 2017, Udaipur had received this distinction by Travel + Leisure, has beaten scores of other international tourist hotspots to be crowned among one of the world's top 15 cities in a new poll.
- As part of the World's Best Awards survey, readers of Travel and Leisure magazine were asked to rank their favourite urban destinations based on sights and landmarks, culture, cuisine, friendliness, shopping, and overall value.
- Udaipur is once again the only Indian city to make the final cut, ahead of other major tourist destinations including Mumbai and Delhi. Its inclusion in 2018 follows past success in 2009 when Udaipur topped the same poll and was voted as the 'best city in the world to visit'.

Forbes list of 'Highest-Paid Celebrities' includes Akshay Kumar and Salman Khan

- Forbes list of Highest-Paid Celebrities' for 2018 is out and the Bollywood superstars marking their presence on the list this year are Akshay Kumar and Salman Khan. However, Indian Superstar Shahrukh Khan who was a regular on the list has gone missing this year.
- American Boxer Floyd Mayweather with net earnings of 285 million US dollars has climbed at the top of the list, followed by George Clooney who amassed a 239 million dollars worth.
- The third place belongs to the youngest member of the Kardashian-Jenner clan, Kylie Jenner, who is also the owner of the business -- Kylie Cosmetics.
- Talking of Bollywood, 'Toilet- Ek Prem Katha' actor Akshay Kumar captured the 76th position with 40.5 million-dollar earnings while Salman Khan who earned a 37.7 Million dollars was ranked at number 82.
- Salman, who has recently been acquitted in the black buck poaching case by a Jodhpur Court has been setting cash registers ringing in Bollywood by starring in and producing movies like 'Tiger Zinda Hai'.
- The shocker of the year for the Hindi film industry is the exclusion of Shah Rukh Khan who was there in the 2017 list at number 65.

World

European Union and Japan sign biggest free trade deal

- The European Union and Japan have signed one of the world's biggest free trade deals, covering nearly a third of the world's GDP.
- The agreement shows the unshaken political will of Japan and the EU to lead the world as the champions of free trade at a time when protectionism has spread.
- The move contrasts sharply with actions by the US Trump administration, which has introduced steep import tariffs.
- Under the agreement, Japan will scrap almost all its tariffs on EU goods, particularly dairy items like cheese.

UNEP partners with Google for monitoring impact of human activity on global ecosystem

- UN Environment Programme (UNEP) partnered with Google to monitor impacts of human activity on global ecosystems by using sophisticated online tools.
- The partnership was launched during High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development at United Nations (UN) headquarters in New York.
- The aim of the partnership is to develop platform to enable governments, NGO's and public to track specific environment-related development targets with user-friendly Google front-end.
- Its initial focus will be on freshwater ecosystems including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.

Sports

Neeraj Chopra clinches gold at French Athletics meet

- India's star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra won the gold medal at the Sotteville Athletics meet in France on July 17, 2018.
- Chopra with a throw of 85.17m was way ahead of his competitors, including Moldova's Andrian Mardare (81.48m) and Lithuania's Edis Matusevicius (79.31m), who took the silver and bronze medal respectively.
- The competitive field also included the 2012 London Olympics gold-medallist Keshorn Walcott of Trinidad and Tobago, who could only manage to throw 78.26m, finishing at the fifth position

Days

Nelson Mandela International Day observed

- The Nelson Mandela International Day was observed globally on July 18, 2018. The international day marks the 100th birth anniversary of Mandela, the anti-apartheid revolutionary.
- 2018 Theme: Take Action! Inspire Change!

World Emoji Day observed

- World Emoji Day was observed on 17 July, 2018.
- The symbol of World Emoji Day can be found in Google's Calendar emoji.