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Finance & Economy

India signs up for USD 200-million loan from World Bank for nutrition mission

- India signed an agreement with the World Bank today for a USD 200-million loan for the National Nutrition Mission (POSHAN Abhiyaan) to achieve its goal of reducing stunting in children aged 0-6 years from 38.4 per cent to 25 per cent by 2022.
- The loan will support the first phase of scaling up of interventions in 315 districts across all states and union territories, according to an official statement.
- POSHAN Abhiyaan was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 8 in Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan.
- A large component of POSHAN Abhiyaan involves gradual scaling-up of the interventions supported by the ongoing World Bank-assisted Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Systems Strengthening and Nutrition Improvement Project (ISSNIP) to all districts in the country over a three-year period.

NITI Aayog and Google sign Sol to help grow AI ecosystem in India

- NITI Aayog and Google on May 7, 2018 signed a Statement of Intent (Sol) to work on a range of initiatives to help build the Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) ecosystem across the country.
- The Sol was signed by Anna Roy, Advisor, NITI Aayog and Rajan Anandan, Vice President of Google India and South East Asia.
- Google will train and incubate Indian AI startups in an accelerator program. These startups will be mentored and coached by Google and its affiliates.
- Google will be funding Indian researchers, scholars and university faculty for conducting AI-based research.
- Google will also bring its online training courses on AI to students, graduates and engineers in numerous cities across India.
- Google, through the NITI Aayog, will conduct hands-on training programs that aim to sensitise policymakers and technical experts in governments about relevant AI tools, and how they can be used.

India

ISRO develops atomic clock for the indigenous navigation satellites

- Indian Space Research Organization has developed an atomic clock to be used in navigation satellites. It is supposed to measure precise location data.
- At present, ISRO imports atomic clocks from European aerospace manufacturer Astrium for its navigation satellites. With the development of indigenous atomic clocks, the space agency sure gets a mark of technological advancement.
- All of the seven navigation satellites of India as part of Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) or NavIC have three imported Rubidium atomic clocks each.

Ola launches My Ride, My Cause initiative for social causes

- Leading ride-sharing company, Ola, on Monday launched 'My Ride. My Cause.' on its platform to crowdsource funds and support social causes by leveraging its vast network of millions of customers across India.
- Ola has rolled out this special initiative through a unique partnership with Tata Trusts' Alamelu Charitable Foundation (ACF).
- As a part of this initiative, Ola customers will have the option to contribute a sum of Re. 1 per ride. This sum will be crowdsourced and utilised towards lending support to improve cancer care in the country.
- There is a huge burden of cancer in India with 14.5 lakh new cases reported in 2016 alone.

Odisha govt, Tata Trusts sign MoU to set up cancer hospital

- The Odisha government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Tata Trusts to set up a cancer treatment and research hospital here, a senior state government official said.
- The MoU was signed in the presence of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and Tata Trusts Chairman Ratan Tata here yesterday.
- As part of the MoU, the Tata Trusts will set up and manage the state-of-the-art cancer treatment and research hospital in the state capital while the Odisha government will facilitate in setting up the centre by providing land to the extent of 25 acres, free of cost, the official said.

Social Justice Ministry organises 'Cochlear Implant Awareness Programme'

- The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) under Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment organised a 'Cochlear Implant Awareness Programme' on May 6, 2018 at Huda Convention Centre in Faridabad, Haryana.
- The programme was organised by DEPwD in association with Indian Red Cross Society and Sarvodaya Hospital & Research Centre. The Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment, Krishan Pal Gurjar was the Chief Guest in the programme.
- Speaking on the occasion, Krishan Pal Gurjar said that under the Assistance to Disabled persons (ADIP) scheme of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), there is a provision for Cochlear Implant surgeries of hearing impaired children up to the age of 5 years at the cost of Rs 6.00 Lakhs per unit.

- He added that after successful Cochlear implant surgeries, the child is able to hear and speak like normal children.
- The event named Swar Swagtam was of great importance to create awareness among the public about the Cochlear Implant Programme under the Assistance to Disabled persons (ADIP) scheme of the Department.

India to host 15th Asia Media Summit

- India would be hosting the 15th Asia Media Summit (AMS-2018) in New Delhi from May 10-12, 2018.
- The annual summit will be organised by Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) in collaboration with its partners and international organisations.
- Summit's theme: "Telling our Stories Asia and More"
- Objective: The summit mainly aims to provide a unique opportunity to the broadcasters in Asia to share their thoughts on broadcasting and information.

Awards

Jacqueline Fernandez becomes first recipient of PETA India's Digital Activism Award

- For using her massive star power and far-reaching digital presence to advocate for the protection of all animals, Judwaa 2 actor and long-time animal rights proponent Jacqueline Fernandez has won People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India's Digital Activism Award in the lead-up to National Technology Day on 11 May.
- Her actions for animals online include using social media to ask her fans to support PETA India's #FreeGajraj campaign – an effort that ultimately helped free an elephant used by a temple who had been kept in chains for over 50 years.
- Her work for the group includes writing a letter to the Municipal Commissioner of Mumbai asking him to bring relief to the horses used for joyrides in the city.
- She appeared in a print campaign urging the public to avoid horse-drawn carriages and even met the Mayor of Mumbai to discuss the suffering of these horses.
- Fernandez also teamed up with PETA India and Lakmé Fashion Week to promote the adoption of dogs who are languishing in animal shelters or living on the streets.

Appointments

Vladimir Putin sworn in as Russian President for fourth time

- Vladimir Putin was on May 7, 2018 sworn in as the President of Russia for fourth time in the Grand Kremlin Palace, Moscow.
- With this, Putin will now be serving the office of President for another six years. However, the Russian constitution bars him from running again for the elections after the end of his new term in 2024.
- Now, Putin has the right to appoint his preferred candidate for the post of Prime Minister.

World

Lebanon conducts first general election in nine years

- The polling stations opened in Lebanon on May 6, 2018 for the country's first parliamentary election in nine years, a period marked by stretches of political paralysis and war in neighbouring Syria.
- The unofficial results are expected to start coming in and a formal tally is expected to be announced in the coming days.
- The election law makes it illegal to publish forecasts of how the parties will perform.

12th informal meeting of SAARC Finance Ministers held in Manila

- The 12th informal meeting of SAARC Finance Ministers was held on May 4, 2018 in Manila, the capital of Philippines on Friday on the sidelines of the 51st Annual Meeting of Asian Development Bank (ADB).
- The meeting was attended by the Finance Ministers/Heads of Delegations from all SAARC member states and was chaired by Nepal's Finance Minister Yuba Raj Khatiwada.
- According to a press statement issued by the SAARC Secretariat, Khatiwada underscored the need of concerted efforts to attain the objective of South Asian Economic Union as desired by the leaders of SAARC.
- The Finance Ministers/Heads of Delegation briefed the meeting about the current status of economic progress achieved by their countries. They also appreciated ADB for its contribution in economic growth of SAARC countries.

Sports

India finishes on top in South Asian Junior Athletics Championships in Colombo

- India on May 6, 2018 finished at the top in the South Asian Junior Athletics Championships in Colombo with 20 gold, 22 silver and 8 bronze medals. The Indian junior athletes also registered five new meet records.
- In girls' triple jump, Priyadarshini Suresh grabbed the gold medal with a record of 12.90 metres, while in girls' javelin throw Sanjana Choudhary bagged the top honours with a record of 48.08.
- In boys' shot put, Ashish Bhalothia set a new record and won the gold medal with an effort of 18.53 metres.
- Triple jumper Kamalraj Kanagaraj also contributed to India's gold medal tally with a record jump of 15.96 metres.
- While hosts Sri Lanka finished second behind India, Pakistan finished third. Overall, athletes from seven nations took part in the event.
- The Indian juniors will next represent the nation at the 18th Asian Junior Athletics Championships to be held in Gifu, Japan from June 7.

Gagan Narang, Pooja Ghatkar win silver medal in 10m air rifle event

- Olympic medalist Gagan Narang made a fine comeback to the 10m air rifle event as he along with Pooja Ghatkar won the mixed team silver medal in the Grand Prix of Liberation international shooting competition in Pilsen, Czech Republic on May 6, 2018.
- The Indian pair, having topped the qualification with 833.2 points, with Pooja shooting 413.5 and Gagan 419.7, came close to overtaking Jurate Cesynaite and Karolis Girulis for the gold, before missing the target by 1.3 point.
- Nivetha and Amanpreet Singh claimed the mixed air pistol silver after having topped qualification with a score of 775.
- Earlier in the tournament, Mihika Poore bagged the women's air rifle gold while a day before that, Nivetha Paramanatham clinched the gold medal in the women's air pistol after topping the qualification.