

Daily Current Affairs 27-29 October 2018

Current Affairs related to Banking and Finance

SBI, Hitachi form JV to boost digital payments, card acceptance platforms

- Country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) and Japan's Hitachi will enter into a joint venture (JV) for establishing card acceptance and digital payments platform in India.
- Hitachi Payments Services, a unit of Hitachi, will pick up 26 per cent stake in SBI Payment Services, a wholly-owned subsidiary of SBI. Both parties will apply for regulatory approvals, Hitachi said in a statement on Monday.
- Last year in October, SBI had shortlisted three companies — Hitachi, Worldline and First Data Corporation — for a JV in the merchant-acquiring business and had proposed to transfer its business of deploying credit card swipe machines to the new entity.
- SBI has more than 420 million customers and more than 600,000 Point of Sale (PoS) terminals and is today the largest merchant acquirer in the market in terms of terminals through its subsidiary SBI Payment.

India's first container movement on inland waterways with PepsiCo on-board

- In a first, the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) will transport container cargo belonging to the food and beverage giant PepsiCo (India) from Kolkata to Varanasi on river Ganga (National Waterway-1).
- Secretary (Shipping) Gopal Krishna along with Chairman, IWAI Pravir Pandey and other senior Government officials will flag off the vessel carrying the consignment in the presence of PepsiCo representatives. The vessel MV RN Tagore will reach Varanasi in 9-10 days.
- The government is developing NW-1 (River Ganga) under JMVP from Haldia to Varanasi (1390 Km) with the technical and financial assistance of the World Bank at an estimated cost of Rs 5369 crore.

Tech Mahindra signs MoU with Japanese firm to set up 5G labs in Bengaluru, Tokyo

- Tech Mahindra on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Japanese electronic company Rakuten for building next-generation (4G and 5G) software-defined network laboratories in Bengaluru and Tokyo.
- The collaboration is aimed at driving innovation to bring transformation of mobile network technology and enhance customer experience for users in Japan.
- The network labs in Tokyo and Bengaluru will focus on fostering innovation in the telecom space, banking on Tech Mahindra's capabilities in the 5G domain such as mobile networks, IT, Cloud and enterprise applications and Rakuten's vision to create a fully automated 5G-ready network in Japan.
- Tech Mahindra will also provide network integration capabilities to add value to the lab operations.

WhatsApp partners CII to train SMEs, entrepreneurs in biz communication

- WhatsApp Monday said it has partnered with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to train small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs on using the messaging platform to connect with customers and growing their businesses.
- WhatsApp and CII will work to enhance business communication for Indian SMEs through CII's SME Technology Facilitation Centre that was set up in November 2016, a statement said.
- WhatsApp and CII will also develop informative content to be distributed among entrepreneurs both in physical and digital formats, it added.
- Neerja Bhattia, Executive Director at CII, said the centre provides an opportunity to its technology partners to expand their market and reach out to SMEs spread throughout the country with their product and services.

Current Affairs related to India and states

India's first engine-less train unveiled

- The Rs 100-crore indigenously developed high-tech, energy-efficient, self-propelled or engineless train was flagged off by Railway Board Chairman Ashwani Lohani here on Monday.
- Soon after Lohani waved the green flag, the white-coloured train with a dash of blue moved few yards in the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) amid the beating of drums in celebration.
- Officials said India's first trainset -- Train 18 -- will be a game-changer for the Indian Railways.
- The train was developed at nearly half the cost that is normally incurred for such development.
- Speaking to IANS earlier, S. Mani, General Manager, ICF, said the train with a capacity to touch speed of 160 kmph will replace the Shatabdi Express.

Indian Railways is building world's highest railway line in Ladakh

- Indian railways plans to connect New Delhi with Ladakh region through the world's highest railway line that will run along the India-China border. The national transporter plans to build a strategically-important Bilaspur-Manali- Leh line along the Indo-China border.
- The location survey of the first phase is complete. Besides giving quick all-weather access to the armed forces, the railway line will also boost tourism in the scenic Ladakh region that is currently connected by road and air. The Ladakh-Himachal region receives heavy snowfall and road and air connectivity are sometime affected due to bad weather.
- The rail line will have a highest road point of 5,360 metres above mean sea level that is comparable only to the Qinghai-Tibet Railway Line in China, which is at a height of around 2,000 metres.

In a first, SpiceJet starts using TaxiBot for taxiing aircraft to runway

- TaxiBot, a semi-robotic towing tractor, on Monday towed a SpiceJet aircraft to the runway, marking the first-time use of such a machine for a commercial aircraft in the country.
- It would help in saving fuel, reducing CO2 emissions as well as noise levels, according to officials.
- SpiceJet's Boeing 737 aircraft -- that was to fly to Goa -- was towed to the runway at Terminal 2 of the airport here, according to a release.
- TaxiBot is connected to the nose wheel of the aircraft and enables the pilot to move the plane to the runway without switching on the plane's engines.

Union Minister Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the 10th Edition of BIOFACH INDIA

- Hon'ble Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Suresh Prabhu on Thursday inaugurated the 10th Edition of BIOFACH INDIA, the largest show on the "Organic Sector" in India.
- Being organized by NuernbergMesse India and APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, Ministry of Commerce and Industry) and supported by the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce, BIOFACH INDIA is taking place in Hall No. 7 of Pragati Maidan from October 25th till 27th.

Indian Railways plans to use aircraft-like pressurised railway coaches in Leh

- The Indian Railways plans to use aircraft-like pressurised coaches in its trains for the Bilaspur-Manali-Leh line along the India-China border, which will be the world's highest rail track, so that passengers do not have breathing difficulties on board.
- The aircraft cabins are pressurised because the air is very thin at the altitude planes fly. To prevent complications, the cabins of many aircraft are adjusted to near sea-level pressure, which makes breathing almost the same as at sea level.
- At a height of 5,360 metres above the sea level, the 465-km strategically significant line to be built at a cost of Rs 83,360 crore, will see railways' first pressurised coaches which are currently used only in the Quinghay-Tibet Railway Line in China.

JNU to launch community radio station

- People residing close to the JNU campus here might soon get the opportunity to be on air with the university all set to launch a community radio station as part of its "social responsibility".
- The community radio will cater to residents of areas such as Ber Sarai, Munirka, Kishangarh, Hauz Khas Village, Vasant Vihar cluster areas and Mahipalpur.
- The SCDR at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) will ink an agreement with the Indian Institute of Mass Communication to start the community radio service.
- The project is a part of the university's social responsibility. It will involve discussions with the elderly or discussions with local ward councillors, residents of the area to know about the primary issues.

India donates 3 lakh Dollars for peacekeeping initiative at UN

- India has donated three lakh Dollars for a peacekeeping initiative at the UN. The programme will help develop the capacity of future commanders and managers over a period of three years.
- The UN Department of Field Support announced that the Indian government donated the amount for the 'Pipeline to Peacekeeping Command Programme' with a specific focus on issues of conduct and discipline.
- India's Permanent Representative at the UN Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin said India is a strong supporter of the UN's Zero Tolerance Policy on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. He added that the nation remains committed to contributing through all means possible for the cause.

Arunachal Pradesh, British Council sign MoU for cultural, educational cooperation

- The state government of Arunachal Pradesh on October 27, 2018 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the British Council to strengthen educational and cultural cooperation, in order to support the knowledge ambitions and economic growth of the state.
- The agreement aims to enhance the opportunities for the youth of Arunachal Pradesh and connect them to international expertise and ideas. It was signed by Tayek Talom, Director of Higher and Technical Education of Arunachal Pradesh and Alan Gemmell, Director of British Council India, on the sidelines of the Tawang Festival. Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu was also present on the occasion.
- The agreement celebrates the British Council's 70th anniversary in India and seeks to strengthen the relationship for the next 70 years.
- It also celebrates the rich cultural connections that Arunachal Pradesh has had with the UK.

Current Affairs related to Appointments

Justice Bopanna Sworn In As Chief Justice Of Gauhati High Court

- Justice Ajjikuttira Somaiah Bopanna, a judge of the Karnataka High Court, was sworn in as the new Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court today.
- Assam Governor Jagdish Mukhi administered the oath of office to Justice Bopanna at Raj Bhavan. Justice Bopanna, 59, took charge from the acting Chief Justice AK Goswami.
- Born in 1959, Justice Bopanna enrolled as an advocate in November 1984 and practised in civil, constitutional, company, service and labour matters in the Karnataka High Court as well as in the civil and labour courts, according to his profile details on the website of the Karnataka High Court.

Michael D Higgins re-elected as Irish president for second term

- Michael D Higgins has been re-elected as the President of Ireland after receiving 56 per cent of the country's votes in the elections. Businessman Peter Casey came second with 23.1 per cent votes, while none of the other four candidates polled more than 10 per cent.

- Voters also supported the proposal to remove blasphemy as an offence from the Constitution, with 65 per cent voting yes.

Jair Bolsonaro wins Brazil's Presidential election

- Far-right candidate Jair Bolsonaro was on October 28, 2018 declared as the winner of Brazil's 2018 Presidential Elections by a wide margin. Bolsonaro swept the election results with 55.1 per cent of the votes cast, as against 44.8 per cent votes of his opponent, Fernando Haddad from the left-wing Workers' Party (PT).
- Bolsonaro had campaigned on a promise to eradicate corruption and to drive down Brazil's high crime levels. He will be sworn into his new post on January 1, 2019.

Current Affairs related to World

IBM to buy Linux distributor Red Hat for \$34 bn to boost cloud capabilities

- IBM is making a big move to bring more software developers under its wing by acquiring Red Hat, the largest distributor of the popular open-source operating system Linux, for \$34 billion.
- The purchase, announced on Sunday afternoon, is the latest competitive step among large business-software companies seeking an edge in the fast-growing market for cloud computing.
- In June, Microsoft acquired GitHub, a major code-sharing platform for software developers, for \$7.5 billion.

Archaeologists find Bronze Age ruins in China

- A team of archaeologists revealed on October 28, 2018 that they have unearthed Bronze Age ruins including the remains of ancient houses and ash pits along with animal bones, bronze ware and stone tools in China's Jilin province.
- The finds were discovered on a sand dune near Dajinshan village in Shuangliao city, according to the School of Archaeology of Jilin University. The ruins are around 150 metres long and 100 metres wide.

Bangladesh, World Bank sign deal for cash transfer

- The Bangladesh government and the World Bank on October 28, 2018 signed an agreement to improve the transparency and efficiency of its major cash transfer programmes.
- The agreement worth \$300 million was signed by Mahmuda Begum, Additional Secretary of Bangladesh's Economic Relations Division and Qimiao Fan, World Bank country Director for Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal, in Dhaka.

Britain slaps fine worth 500,000 pounds on Facebook

- Britain's Information Commissioner has slapped Facebook with a fine worth 500,000 pounds for its behaviour in the Cambridge Analytica scandal.
- The ICO's investigation found that between 2007 and 2014, Facebook processed the personal information of users unfairly by giving app developers access to their information without informed consent.
- The fine was the maximum allowed under the law at the time the breach occurred.

Current Affairs related to Sports

India, Pakistan declared joint winners of Asian Champions Trophy

- India and Pakistan's men's hockey teams were on October 29, 2018 declared joint winners of the Asian Champions Trophy, which was held in Muscat, Oman.
- The tournament director declared both teams as winners after the summit clash was called off due to heavy rain. Defending champions India, thus, ended the tournament unbeaten.
- Before this edition, both India and Pakistan had won the tournament twice each.

Current Affairs related to Awards

Asma Jahangir wins UN Human Rights Prize posthumously

- Asma Jahangir, late Pakistani human rights activist and lawyer was posthumously announced as one of the winners of the UN Human Rights Prize on October 26, 2018. The announcement was made through the official Twitter account of President of the UN General Assembly Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés.
- Jahangir was chosen for the prize along with three other including Rebeca Gyumi of Tanzania, Brazil's first indigenous lawyer Joenia Wapichana and Ireland's human rights organisation Front Line Defenders,
- Before Jahangir only three Pakistani women, Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan (1978), Benazir Bhutto (2008) and Malala Yousufzai (2013) have been accorded the honour.

Current Affairs related to Observances

Vigilance awareness week to be observed

- The Vigilance Awareness Week will be observed across the country from October 29, 2018 to promote probity in public life and achieve a corruption-free society.
- The theme of the week this year is, 'Eradicate Corruption - Build a New India'.

- The observance of the week will commence with pledge taking by public servants in the Ministries, Departments, PSUs, Banks and all other organisations.
- During the week, several functions will be organised to create awareness against the corrupt practices.

Current Affairs related to Obituaries

Former Delhi CM Madan Lal Khurana passes away

- Madan Lal Khurana, former Delhi Chief Minister, passed away on October 27, 2018 after a prolonged illness. He was 82.
- The veteran BJP leader was suffering from a chest infection and fever since the past few days and was feeling breathless since 27th morning.
- He served as the Chief Minister of Delhi from 1993 to 1996, after which he resigned amid controversy.
- He also served as the Union Minister of Parliamentary affairs and Tourism in the late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government, before resigning in January 1999, owing to a fallout with the senior leadership of the party.