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Banking and Finance

Nabard launches Rs 80 bn Dairy Processing and Infra Development Fund

- In a bid to support the modernisation of the dairy sector in the country, the Centre has set up a Dairy Processing and Infrastructure Development Fund (DIDF) at the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard), with a corpus of Rs 80.04 billion.
- According to Nabard, the fund is expected to achieve an investment of Rs 100 billion in the dairy sector by 2019-20.
- The first installment of Rs 4.4 billion was disbursed to the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) by union minister of agriculture and farmers welfare, Radha Mohan Singh.
- The fund would be distributed to six different projects, namely, including Dakshina Kannada Milk Union (Udupi), Kolar-Chikballapur Milk Union (Kolar), Mysore Milk Union (Mysore), Karnataka Milk Federation (Ramnagar), Karnataka Milk Union (Channarayana) and Ropar Milk Union (Ropar).

India, Russia set trade target to \$50 billion by 2025

- India and Russia on Friday discussed ways to increase trade, remove barriers in business and possibilities of working together on projects in third countries during 23rd Inter Governmental Commission (IGC) on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation.
- The IGC meeting was led by External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Borisov following a comprehensive discussion on all bilateral matters.
- Following the meeting, the two sides expressed satisfaction over the present trade and investment situation. With the two-way investments crossing the \$30 billion target, set for 2025, India and Russia have now proposed to enhance this figure to \$50 billion by 2025.

Delhi signs MoU with Seoul on environment, transport

- Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Seoul Metropolitan Government on environment, transport, education, solid waste management, infrastructure, public health among others.
- The MoU was signed in South Korea's capital Seoul, where Kejriwal is on a three-day trip.

Tata Power signs MoU to enter Afghanistan power sector

- The Afghanistan government has brought on board India's utility major Tata Power for distribution, transmission and generation of power in the war-ravaged South-Asian country.

- The Afghanistan government-run power distribution firm, Da Afghanistan Bresha Sherkat (DABS), Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) during the second India-Afghanistan International Trade and Investment show.
- The four-day event, which kick started Wednesday, is aimed at bolstering trade besides showcasing business and investment opportunities in Afghanistan.

BIAL, Siemens ink MoU to co-operate on digital transformation of Kempegowda Airport

- Siemens Postal, Parcel & Airport Logistics (SPPAL) and Bangalore International Airport Ltd (BIAL) - operators of Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru (BLR Airport) - have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to jointly drive the digital transformation of BLR Airport.
- The declaration of intent envisages co-operation in a number of areas, including the digitalisation of existing infrastructure through the use of Internet of Things (IoT) applications.
- The solutions rest on MindSphere, the open cloud-based IoT operating system from Siemens, which will work with BIAL in the simplification of its processes, increase efficiency and continue to improve customer experience. BLR Airport is the third busiest airport in India, having handled over 25 million passengers in 2017.

Assam Government to distribute over 1 lakh pump sets to double farmers' income by 2022

- The Assam government has decided to distribute over 1 lakh pump sets to double the farmers' income by 2022.
- The pump sets will be distributed under NABARD's Rural Infrastructure Development Project. They will include 60 thousand diesel sets, 11 thousand solar and 30 thousand electrical operated pump sets.
- Besides, around 75 to 85 percent subsidy is to be given to the farmers to purchase pump sets. The initiative aims to help the farmers in irrigation facilities.

India and states

Kochi start-up makes India's first commercial underwater drone for DRDO Lab

- Kochi-based start-up IROV Technologies Pvt Ltd (EyeROV) is launching commercial underwater drones by handing over the first vehicle to Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL), a laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- The company, backed by Kerala Start-Up Mission, oil and gas firm BPCL and the Department of Science and Technology, claims the product is the first indigenously-developed commercial underwater drone in the country.
- The EyeROV TUNA is a smart micro-ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle) or underwater drone, at par with global standards, and with operational capabilities in harsh and mission-critical underwater environment. EyeROV is designed to perform visual inspection and surveys of submerged structures as a cost-effective underwater rover that works up to a depth of 100 metres. It can be e-controlled using a laptop or a joystick.

Global Climate Action Summit 2018: Indian cities, states step up climate action plans

- The Global Climate Action Summit 2018 was held during September 12-14, 2018 at San Francisco, California, United States.
- Over 4000 businesses, cities, states and civil society delegates attended the summit and showed their commitments to achieve the goals set by the Paris Agreement.
- The co-chairs of the Summit, Governor of California Edmund G. Brown Jr. and UN's Special Envoy for Climate Action Michael R Bloomberg, unveiled a new report demonstrating how cities, states, and businesses can help the US in achieving its 2025 emissions reduction target.
- At the 2018 Global Climate Action Summit, mayors and government functionaries of Indian cities announced to scale up their actions to combat climate change and to protect people from hazardous climate impacts.

Jharkhand government introduces electric cars for official use

- The state government of Jharkhand on September 12, 2018 introduced electric vehicles for official use. The energy department of the state got 20 such cars for its use. The information was shared by the state's Chief Minister Raghubar Das.
- The state's energy department received 20 cars in the first phase. The cars were procured by the Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), which is a joint venture of the PSUs under the Ministry of Power.
- With the development, Jharkhand has become the fifth state of India and the first state in eastern India to procure the eco-friendly vehicles for government use.

Haryana assembly passes State Commission for SC Bill

- The Haryana Legislative Assembly on September 11, 2018 passed the Haryana State Commission for Scheduled Castes Bill, 2018, for development and safeguarding the interests of people belonging to the community. The bill was passed on the last day of the state assembly's session.
- The Haryana State Commission for Scheduled Castes Bill, 2018, has been passed to set up a commission for scheduled castes in the state for the overall development and welfare of the community and to safeguard their interests.
- The commission would also check and curb the atrocities committed on the people belonging to the scheduled caste community.

Vice President Venkaiah Naidu to embark on 3-nation visit to Serbia, Malta, Romania

- Vice President Venkaiah Naidu will embark on a three-nation visit to Serbia, Malta and Romania on September 14, 2018. During the seven-day visit, Naidu will first reach Serbia where he will meet the leadership of that country.
- Several MoUs including in the field of Agriculture and Tourism are expected to be signed during Vice President's visit to these countries.

- In the second leg of his visit, Naidu will arrive in Malta on September 16, where he will meet the country's leadership and discuss issues of mutual interest. Growing economic linkages between the two sides will figure during the talks.
- In the last leg of his visit, the Vice President will reach Romania on September 18, 2018.

Government approves over Rs 150 crore additional drought relief to UP

- The Union Government has approved an additional assistance of Rs 157.23 crore for Uttar Pradesh and Rs 60.76 crore for Maharashtra.
- The assistance has been approved from National Disaster Response Fund for Uttar Pradesh affected by drought in rabi season during 2017-18 and for Maharashtra which was hit by pest attack and cyclone in 2017.
- The decision was taken at a meeting of High Level Committee chaired by Home Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi.

India's first Tribal Tourism Circuit to be launched in Chhattisgarh

- India's first tribal circuit tourism project under the Swadesh Darshan scheme will be inaugurated at Gangrel in Chhattisgarh on September 14, 2018.
- Union Tourism Minister KJ Alphons will inaugurate the project. It covers 13 sites in Chhattisgarh that include Jashpur, Kunkuri, Mainpat, Kamleshpur, Maheshpur, Kurdar, Sarodadadar, Gangrel, Kondagaon, Nathiya Nawagaon, Jagdalpur, Chitrakoot and Tirthgarh.
- The Swadesh Darshan scheme was launched in 2014-15 and it is one of the flagship schemes of the Ministry of Tourism, for development of thematic circuits in the country in a planned and prioritised manner.

Jammu and Kashmir administration launches e-plant clinics

- The Jammu and Kashmir administration launched e-plant clinics in Udhampur district on September 12, 2018 to make technological innovations and advancement in research in the agriculture sector easily accessible for farmers for enhanced production.
- The e-plant clinics were inaugurated by District Development Commissioner Ravinder Kumar in presence of Chief Agriculture Officer Ashok Verma.
- Around four e-plant clinics have been established by the agriculture department in collaboration with the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI) which will cover the entire district, besides providing guidance to the farmers and staff of the department.

Indo-Bhutan Border centre inaugurated in Assam

- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on September 12, 2018 inaugurated the Indo-Bhutan Border Centre at Darranga in Assam's Baksa district to strengthen bilateral trade with the neighbouring country.

- The inauguration of the trade centre is a spontaneous response of the people of Assam, especially the people residing in the four BTAD districts of Baksa, Udalguri, Chirang and Kokrajhar, to the prevailing peaceful situation in the state.
- On the occasion, Assam CM Sonowal thanked both Bhutan and Bangladesh for opening their consulates at Guwahati which has given renewed thrust to the relations with the neighbouring countries with Assam. He further vowed to strengthen bilateral relation of India with ASEAN and BBIN countries.

Tamil Nadu's ruling party- AIADMK launches its own news channel

- The ruling AIADMK in Tamil Nadu on September 12, 2018 made a soft launch of its own channel 'News J' named after its late supremo J Jayalalithaa.
- The launch comes in the backdrop of Jaya TV, once considered the party's mouthpiece, being in the control of sidelined leader TTV Dhinakaran's relatives.
- The AIADMK had in February launched "Namathu Puratchi Thalaivi Amma", its party organ as "Dr Namadhu MGR" which was founded by Jayalalithaa and previously the its official Tamil daily, is now aligned towards Dhinakaran and V K Sasikala, who is in jail.

Days

National Hindi Divas 2018 observed across India

- National Hindi Divas (Hindi Day) was observed across India on September 14, 2018 to promote Hindi as Matra Bhasha (mother tongue) of India.
- The day was marked by literary festivals, Hindi poetry sessions, Hindi essay writing competitions, Hindi speech contests and other events.
- On this occasion, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu presented the Rajbhasha Awards to chiefs of various departments, Ministries and offices for their outstanding performances in promoting the language.

Appointments

Manipal Hospitals ropes in Rahul Dravid as brand ambassador

- Manipal Hospitals has signed former Indian cricket captain Rahul Dravid as its brand ambassador.
- This association with Dravid comes at a time when the group is set to launch its first hospital in the capital this month, Manipal Hospitals said in a statement.
- Dravid will represent the brand in all national campaigns in a three-year engagement, the statement added.
- Manipal Hospitals operates and manages over 5,200 beds across hospitals.

World

EU Parliament votes to punish Hungary for breaching democratic norms

- The European Union legislators have voted overwhelmingly in favour of launching punitive action against the Hungarian government for flouting democratic rules.
- More than two-thirds of members of the European Parliament backed the censure motion, the first such vote against a member state under EU rules.
- The unprecedented vote in parliament in the French city of Strasbourg could allow Hungary's EU voting rights to be stripped.