

India and states related news

15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to be held in Varanasi

- The 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be held in the holy city of Varanasi in January 2019, giving a chance to the Indian diaspora to participate in Kumbha Snan and attend the Republic Day parade in New Delhi.
- The announcement was made the Indian Embassy's Minister of Community Affairs Anurag Kumar while addressing a gathering of eminent Indian-American community leaders from in and around Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia.

GOBAR-DHAN Scheme launched under Swachh Bharat Mission to promote wealth and energy from waste

- Union Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation, Uma Bharti, on April 30, 2018 launched the GOBAR - DHAN (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Fund) Scheme at the National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) Auditorium, Karnal.
- On the same occasion, the guidelines of GOBAR-DHAN scheme were also launched, detailing about the implementation arrangements, financing provisions and roles and responsibilities of the Centre, State governments, districts and other stakeholders involved in implementation of the scheme.
- The launch was attended by sarpanches from the project villages, implementing agencies, officers from 14 states and district officers.
- Under GOBAR-DHAN scheme, solid waste of dung and fields will be changed into compost and fuels such as biogas and bio-CNG.

National workshop for creating disaster risk reduction database begins in Delhi

- The National Workshop on Data Requirements for Disaster Risk Reduction Database began in New Delhi on May 2, 2018.
- The workshop is being organised by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in collaboration with the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR).
- The main aim of the two-day workshop is to develop a uniform and credible national-level disaster database.

President Ram Nath Kovind to preside over PM-headed panel on Gandhi's 150th birth Anniversary

- President Ram Nath Kovind on May 2, 2018 presided over the first meeting of the national committee set up for commemoration of 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in 2019.
- The 114-member committee, comprising Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, former Prime Ministers and Chief Justice of India, will discuss the policies, plans and preparatory activities for commemoration of the birth anniversary.
- The birth anniversary of the Mahatma Gandhi will be commemorated from October 2, 2019 to October 2, 2020.

Telecom Commission approves in-flight mobile connectivity in Indian airspace

- The high-powered inter-ministerial Telecom Commission, headed by Telecom Secretary Aruna Sundararajan, approved in-flight mobile connectivity in Indian airspace on May 1, 2018, thus, allowing people to make phone calls and use internet services in flights over Indian airspace, with certain riders.
- Telecom Commission's approval comes months after the telecom regulator TRAI recommended for in-flight mobile telephony and internet services.
- The Internet and Mobile Communication on Aircraft (MCA) service will be permitted as In-Flight Connectivity (IFC) in the Indian airspace.

Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana approved beyond 12th Five Year Plan

- The Union Cabinet on May 2, 2018 approved the continuation of Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) beyond the 12th Five Year Plan for a period of three year from 2017-18 to 2019-20 with the financial outlay of Rs 14832 crores.
- The Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana was initially approved in March 2006 with an aim to correct the imbalances in the availability of affordable healthcare facilities across the country and augmenting facilities for quality medical education in the under-served States, in particular.
- PMSSY has two components - setting up of AIIMS in various states and upgradation of existing Government Medical Colleges (GMC).
- PMSSY will lead to development of apex level medical education and nursing education and connected research facilities.

India begins first organised census to estimate population of Indus dolphin

- The Punjab government along with WWF-India would be conducting the first organised census of Indus Dolphins, one of the world's rarest mammals.
- The move is aimed at conservation of the species. The dolphins are found only in India and Pakistan, confined to the 185 km stretch between Talwara and Harike Barrage in India's Beas River in Punjab.
- It is the first organised census and would be conducted over a period of five days. Previously, the researchers had merely spotted the dolphins.

North Eastern cultural and information centre to be set up in Delhi

- The Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (I/C), Dr. Jitendra Singh announced on May 3, 2018 that a North Eastern Cultural and Information Centre would soon come up in Delhi.
- The announcement was made by the Minister after chairing the review meeting of the 'roadmap for implementation of cabinet approval of schemes for North East Council'. The meeting reviewed the progress of various on-going projects in the North East.

India doing extremely well on electrification: World Bank

- The World Bank on May 4, 2018 said that India is doing extremely well on electrification with nearly 85 percent of the country's population having access to electricity.
- In the latest report, the World Bank said that India provided electricity to 30 million people each year between 2010 and 2016.

India and France conduct final phase of Varuna naval exercise near Reunion Island

- Indian and French navies conducted final and third phase of Varuna naval exercise 2018 near Reunion Island in Indian Ocean region (IOR).
- In the final phase, both navies simulated different possible scenarios such as asymmetric warfare and tested their air defence capabilities.
- 2018 Varuna naval exercise between Indian and French Navy was conducted in three phases and included anti-submarine, air defence and asymmetric engagement exercises.

India, US hold round 3 of Maritime Security Dialogue in Goa

- India and United States held the third round of the India-US Maritime Security Dialogue in Goa focussing on cooperation and developments in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Both the sides discussed the developments in maritime domain in Indo-Pacific Region and exchanged views on ways to further strengthen bilateral maritime security cooperation.
- They also reviewed implementation of decisions taken during the previous Maritime Security Dialogues.

National Conference of 244 selected Districts under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) held in New Delhi

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development organized National Conference with the Nodal Officers of 244 Districts, State Nodal Officers and Senior Officers.
- Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, the Union Minister for Women and Child Development inaugurated the event and interacted with 244 new districts with low Child Sex Ratio(CSR), from 25 States/ UTs. Addressing the Conference, the WCD Minister highlighted the need to involve various stakeholders and join hands for achieving the goals of BBBP.
- The Minister suggested several initiatives such as celebrating the birth of Girl Child, engaging Sarpanches and make them aware about various aspects of the scheme and issues of girl child.
- The Minister said that positive environment must be created for Girls. The Minister highlighted need for training of women sarpanches in every district for achieving goals of BBBP.
- Under the BBBP scheme, several local level innovative initiatives focusing on advocacy and community engagements have been undertaken by the Districts across the country. The Minister interacted with DCs/DMs/Nodal officers who shared various initiatives taken by them in their districts.

Union Government announces project to strengthen Namami Gange Programme through GIS Technology

- The 11th Executive Committee meeting of National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) recently approved the project encompassing the use of GIS technology for Namami Gange programme with a total budget of Rs 86.84 crore.
- In order to facilitate the Ganga rejuvenation task through the Geographic Information System (GIS) technology, the National Mission for Clean Ganga has tied-up with the Survey of India, the oldest scientific department in the country set up in 1767.
- The project includes use of Digital Elevation Model (DEM) technology which ensures accurate data collection, an important aspect for river basin management planning.

HRD Ministry launches online professional development programme for faculty

- The Union Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched a major and unique initiative of online professional development of 1.5 million higher education faculty using the MOOCs platform SWAYAM.
- In the first phase of the initiative, 75 discipline-specific National Resource Centres (NRC) have been identified.

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.

Ola launches My Ride, My Cause initiative for social causes

- Leading ride-sharing company, Ola, in May 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).

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.

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.

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"

First Apex Conference for the CEOs of Smart Cities inaugurated in Bhopal

- India's First Apex Conference for the CEOs of Smart Cities was inaugurated in Bhopal by Hardeep Puri , MoS(I/C) Housing and Urban Affairs.
- The two day Apex Conference is being organized with an objective to provide momentum to the cities and also a platform for cross-learning, sharing and disseminating the experience gained over the past two and a half years.
- The exhibition and presentations by the CEOs will provide useful insights for accelerating project implementation and enable cross learning among Smart Cities. Such knowledge sharing will help the cities to convert ideas into concrete actions as the outcome of the conference.

First integrated smart cities control centre launched in MP

- In a major step towards realising the Centre's smart city mission (SCM), the Madhya Pradesh government in May launched the country's first Integrated Control and Command Centre (ICCC) for all seven smart cities of the state in Bhopal.
- The ICCC, installed in a building in Barkheda area of the state capital, would enable the authorities to monitor the status of various smart civic amenities in real-time through the sensors connected to it.
- Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Satna, and Sagar are the seven smart cities under SCM in Madhya Pradesh.

Google launches Android Things for IoT platform

- Alphabet Inc's Google launched Android Things (codenamed Brillo), a variant of Android operating system for Internet of Things (IoT) devices such as smart home appliances and other smart machines.
- Its goal is to enable IoT machines developers to be built faster, cheaper and more secure.
- It is Android-based embedded operating system (OS) platform that is aimed to be used with low-power and memory constrained Internet of Things (IoT) devices.

Government to set up additional 100 One Stop Centres for women safety

- The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) approved setting up of additional 100 One Stop Centres (OSCs) for women affected by violence.
- These OSCs will be set up in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.
- The initiative will be funded from Nirbhaya Fund.

Third edition of UNPCAP inaugurated in New Delhi

- The third edition of the United Nations Peacekeeping Course for African Partners (UNPCAP) was inaugurated in New Delhi on May 7, 2018.

- The course, which will be held from May 7- 25, is being conducted by the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping in India (CUNPK) in partnership with the United States. The first and second editions of the course were held in New Delhi in 2016 and 2017 respectively.
- The main aim of the course is to build and enhance the capacity of the African Troop Contributing Countries to the UN and to further train the trainers from these countries.

India, Guatemala agree to support each other for non-permanent membership of UNSC

- India and Guatemala have agreed to support each other's candidature for Non-Permanent Membership in the United Nations Security Council. Guatemala will support India's candidature for UNSC membership for 2021-22 while India will do so for Guatemala for 2031-32.
- Naidu's visit is the highest level delegation visit from either side since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries in 1972.

Ravi Shankar Prasad launches website of Digital India Internship Scheme

- Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad launched the website of Digital India Internship Scheme in New Delhi on May 9, 2018.
- Under the scheme, 25 interns will be inducted for a period of three months.
- Speaking at the launch, the minister said that the interns will be paid a stipend of Rs 10 thousand per month.
- The Minister appealed to the youth to apply to the internship programme saying that Digital India is important in the scheme of things.

Guj-Poland sign MoU on organising independence centenary

- The department of youth and cultural affairs of the Gujarat government will be co-organisers for the centenary celebrations to mark independence of Poland in Delhi and other parts of the world.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in this regard in May between the Gujarat government and the Poland government.
- The MoU was signed by Polish ambassador to India Adam Burakowski and principal secretary of youth and cultural affairs department V P Patel in presence of Chief Minister Vijay Rupani, as per an official release.

Union Government approves green licence plates for private electric vehicles

- The Union Government on May 10, 2018 approved green licence plates bearing numbers in white fonts for private electric-vehicles and yellow font for taxis.
- The objective behind distinctive number plates for e-vehicles is their easy identification for preferential treatment in parking, free entry in congested zones besides other proposed benefits like concessional toll.
- The electric vehicles will bring down vehicular pollution.
- The government also announced its plan to allow youth of 16-18 years to drive electric scooters. As per the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, those in the age group of 16-18 years can be granted with licence for below 50 CC gearless scooters.

Haryana to start 31 government colleges for girls

- Haryana government decided to start 31 government colleges for girls from July 2018.
- Till the construction of college buildings gets completed, these colleges would run in vacant buildings of government schools or other organizations.
- The initiative is aimed at promoting education for girls in the state.

Operation Insaniyat: India sends second relief consignment to Bangladesh for displaced Rohingyas

- India sent its second relief consignment under Operation Insaniyat to help tens of thousands of displaced Rohingya Muslims in Bangladesh who fled Myanmar following military crackdown in Rakhine state.

- The second consignment mainly contained 104 tonnes of milk powder, 102 tonnes of dried fish, 61 tonnes of baby food, 50000 raincoats and 50000 pairs of gum boots.
- Indian Navy Ship INS Airavat carried the 373-tonne relief consignment and sailed from Vishakhapatnam.

Vijay Prahar exercise of Indian Army concludes in Rajasthan

- Indian Army's month long Vijay Prahar exercise, conducted by South Western Command of Indian Army, concluded in Suratgarh, Rajasthan.
- The month-long exercise was aimed to orchestrate wide spectrum of threats including Nuclear, Chemical or Biological (NCB) attack.

Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission approves modern animal-free testing for drugs

- Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) approved modern, animal-free tests for drug manufacturers with an aim to spare animals from suffering due to drug experiments.
- It provided guidelines on tests of drugs manufactured and marketed in India.

India, Panama sign agreement on visa exemption for diplomatic passport holders

- India and Panama on May 9, 2018 signed an agreement on the exemption of visas for the holders of diplomatic and official passports. The two nations also signed an agreement on strengthening cooperation in the field of agriculture.
- The agreements were signed in the presence of Panama's President Juan Carlos Varela Rodrigues and Vice President and Foreign Minister Isabel de Saint Malo and Indian Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu during his visit to the nation.

India, Myanmar sign seven agreements as Swaraj meets Suu Kyi

India and Myanmar in May signed seven agreements including one on land border crossing as External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj discussed with the top leadership here issues related to peace and security and developments in the Rakhine State from where thousands of Rohingya Muslims had fled to Bangladesh after violence last year.

Seven agreements/MoUs were signed during the visit These included agreement on land border crossing,

- an MoU on restoration and preservation of earthquake damaged pagodas in Bagan,
- an MoU on assistance to the joint ceasefire monitoring committee,
- an MoU on training of Myanmar foreign service officers.
- An MoU on setting up Industrial Training Centre (ITC) at Monywa, an MoU on ITC at Thaton and Exchange of Letters on extending a maintenance contract for ITC Myingyan were also signed.
- The agreement on land border crossing is a landmark in bilateral relations as it will enable people from both countries to cross the land border with passport and visa, including for accessing health and education services, pilgrimage and tourism, the statement said.
- The MoU on restoration of pagodas at Bagan underlines the enduring cultural and historical links between the two countries.
- The other MoUs on technical assistance and capacity building reflect India's continuing support to Myanmar in accordance with this country's own development plans and priorities.

Swaraj also reiterated India's readiness and commitment to helping the Government of Myanmar in addressing issues related to Rakhine State.

Narendra Modi announces Rs 100 Cr aid for development of Janakpur in Nepal

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi in May visited the Janaki temple in this Nepalese town and announced an assistance of Rs 100 crore for the development of Janakpur, believed to be the birthplace of Sita.
- Mr Modi's visit to Nepal is seen as an attempt by both the countries to bring back normalcy in their ties after a spell of uneasiness as it comes little over a month after his Nepalese counterpart Mr. Oli visited India.

- This is the third visit of Prime Minister Modi to Nepal and the first high-level visit from India since the formation of the new Government in Nepal this year.

UGC approves setting up of nation's 1st Railway University

- Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar in May announced signing of a Letter of Intent for the country's first railway university.
- To support the unprecedented growth, the Ministry of Railways has mandated setting up a world class university, the National Rail & Transportation Institute (NRTI) to serve the additional manpower and training and development needs of India's transportation sector.

SC directs all HC Chief Justices to form anti-sexual harassment panels in all courts

- The Supreme Court on May 11, 2018 directed Chief Justices or acting Chief Justices of all high courts to set up anti-sexual harassment committees in courts across the country within two months in accordance with a 2013 law.
- The top court also requested Gita Mittal, the Acting Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court to constitute the panel in the high court and in all district courts in the national capital within a week.
- The ruling was made by a three-judge bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud.

Kerala Government to provide free internet

- The Kerala Government will set up a Joint Venture company 'Kerala Fibre Optic Network Limited' to launch its new optic fibre network.
- The company will implement the Kerala Fibre Optic Network (K-FON) project.
- The K-FON initiative will provide speedy internet connectivity to government offices and educational institutions and to the public at an affordable rate.

India, Ethiopia hold bilateral talks

- India and Ethiopia vowed to strengthen cooperation in key areas such as defence, counter-terrorism, trade and investment during the 2nd Joint Committee Meeting on May 9, 2018.
- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Dr Gebeyehu led their respective delegations in the meeting.

Naval Commander's Conference concludes

- The first biannual Naval Commander's Conference of 2018 concluded on May 11, 2018 after four days of intense deliberations on a wide range of issues.
- The conference was inaugurated by Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who set the tone for the deliberations stating that the Indian Navy is a force to reckon with in the Indo-Pacific region.

India Day held at 71st Cannes International Film Festival in France

- India Day was held at the 71st Cannes International Film Festival in France on May 11, 2018 to bring together the French and Indian film industries.
- It is being organised by French Embassy in India and UniFrance, promoter of French films abroad at Terrasse UniFrance in Cannes.
- Among celebrities present at 'India Day' will be actor-director Nandita Das for her biopic "Manto"; Ken Scott with actor Dhanush, for "The Extraordinary Journey of the Fakir"; Michelin-star chef Vikas Khanna for his directorial debut "The Last Color" and Antara Rao for her short film "Asthi".

Indian Railways to Introduce Smart Coaches With Black Boxes Soon

- The Indian railways has unveiled the first batch of smart rail coaches in Rae Bareilly city of Uttar Pradesh. The smart coaches will have black boxes just like aircraft and this technology is being adopted to bring down the incidents of train accidents.
- Talking more about the new technology, an official from Indian railways said that black boxes used in the train are better from the ones used in planes and will also make traveling safer. These boxes will prevent mishaps like derailments. The boxes will also monitor the train on several parameters. And if there is any case of deviation, the surveillance unit would be alerted immediately.
- Besides this, smart coaches will have other features such as smart CCTV cameras, passenger information system, infotainment software and wi-fi access.

Indian and Malaysian Armies conclude Exercise Harimau Shakti 2018

- Indian and Malaysian Armies on May 11, 2018 concluded the Exercise Harimau Shakti 2018 at the tropical rainforests of Hulu Langat, Malaysia.
- The grand finale of the Exercise was a tactical operation on conduct of attack on the enemy camp.
- During the exercise, both the contingents showcased extremely high standards of their professional acumen, operational abilities, battle drills and physical endurance, an apt reflection of the level of interoperability achieved by them during the Exercise.
- This was the first time when the exercise was organised on the Malaysian land.

President unveils India's first Lithium-Ion charger

- President Ram Nath Kovind unveiled India's first, indigenous lithium-ion battery charger, developed by Ampere Vehicles here in May.
- The unveiling event took place on the occasion of National Technology Day.
- The event was dedicated to recognise the indigenous technologies, with this year's theme being - 'Commercialising Indigenous Technologies: Journey from Benchside to Business'.
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Science and Technology, was also present during the event, amidst nearly 1000 scientists, technocrats, academicians, students and industry persons.

India, Nepal flag-off Janakpur-Ayodhya bus service under Ramayan Circuit

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Nepalese counterpart KP Sharma Oli on May 11, 2018 jointly flagged-off a direct bus service between the two sacred cities Janakpur and Ayodhya, as part of the 'Ramayan Circuit'.
- The bus service was launched during PM Narendra Modi's visit to Nepal during May 11-12, 2018. This was the third visit of PM Modi to Nepal and the first high-level visit from India since the formation of the new Government in Nepal in 2018.
- The bus service seeks to promote religious tourism in Nepal and India.
- As per mythological story 'Ramayana', Ayodhya is Lord Rama's birthplace, while, Janakpur is the birthplace of goddess Sita.

Odisha government launches Sudakshya to improve enrolment of girls in Government ITIs

- The State Government has recently launched a new scheme 'Sudakshya' to improve the enrolment of girls in Government ITIs from the existing 7 to 30 per cent. The scheme envisages financial assistance for mobilisation of girls, support for training and placement.
- Official sources said the Government has sanctioned 71 ITIs out of which 49 are operational with total intake capacity of 17,699 seats. The remaining 22 ITIs are expected to be completed in 2018-19. All the 49 Government ITIs are affiliated to National Council on Vocational Training (NCVT).
- Besides, a special ITI for PwD has been set up at Jatni for mainstreaming differently abled youths into productive workforce.

India, Peru sign agreement in field of Renewable Energy

- India and Peru have signed an agreement in the field of Renewable Energy at Lima, Peru.

- The pact was signed in the presence of Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu and the Prime Minister Cesar Villanueva Arevalo.
- Vice President's visit comes at a time when India is celebrating the 55th anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic Relations with Peru.

Three public welfare schemes launched in Rajasthan

- President Ram Nath Kovind during his maiden two-day visit as head of the state to Rajasthan on May 13, 2018 launched three public welfare schemes.
- The President launched Sundar Singh Bhandari EBC Swarozgar Yojana, Bhairon Singh Shekhawat Antyodaya Swarozgar Yojana and loan and interest waiver scheme for SCs/STs/OBCs, sanitation workers, and the physically challenged at a function held at the Birla Auditorium in Jaipur.
- The schemes were announced by the Rajasthan state government during its 2018-19 budget presentation.

1. Sundar Singh Bhandari EBC Swarozgar Yojana

- Under the scheme, the government will provide loans of up to Rs 50000 to members of economically backward classes (EBC) from around 50,000 families at 4 per cent interest rate.
- This scheme will help poor sections of the society to generate self-employment.

2. Bhairon Singh Shekhawat Antyodaya Swarozgar Yojana

- Under the scheme, the state government would provide loans worth up to Rs 50000 at 4 per cent interest rate to about 50,000 families from the scheduled castes and tribes and other backward classes for self-employment.

3. Loan waiver scheme

- Under the scheme, the Rajasthan state government would be providing Rs 2 lakh worth interest-free loans to people belonging to SC/ ST community and other backward classes for the purpose of skill development and to create resources for employment.
- Besides this, the President distributed cheques to a few beneficiaries under the three new schemes.

UNDP to set up skill development centre in Hyderabad

- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) would soon be setting up a skill development centre at 'Bharosa,' an integrated support centre for distressed women and children in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- The centre would be aimed at empowering vulnerable and marginalised women by imparting skills training.
- 'Bharosa,' is a state-of-the-art centre set up by the Hyderabad City Police to support women and children who are victims of violence.

Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant to inaugurate AI startup conclave at Bennett University

- Niti Aayog chief executive Amitabh Kant will inaugurate an AI Startup Conclave on May 26 at Bennett University, which is hosting the event as part of a nationwide initiative for AI skilling and research.
- Bennett University is spearheading the leadingindia.ai initiative, which has created a network of 100 academic institutions and industries to fulfil the gap in quality workforce and trained manpower in AI technologies. It aims to skilling a million people.

President Kovind inaugurates Global Exhibition on Services-2018

- President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the 4th edition of Global Exhibition on services in Mumbai on May 15, 2018.
- The President also released the logo for Services and launched the portal.

- The exhibition is expected to witness participation from around 25 Indian states and about 100 countries with 625 exhibitors and 500 overseas delegates.

Government to install e-Gates at airports

- From January 2019, low-risk foreign travelers will not have to wait in long queues at airport immigration counters.
- The Indian government plans to install special automated kiosks — e-Gates — for speedy document and identity verification.

Suresh Prabhu launches Intellectual Property mascot – IP Nani

- The Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Suresh Prabhu launched the Intellectual Property (IP) mascot – IP Nani – at the conference on National Intellectual Property Rights Policy in New Delhi in May. An anti-piracy video featuring Mr. Amitabh Bachchan was also launched by the Minister at the event.
- Mascot IP Nani is a tech-savvy grandmother who helps the government and enforcement agencies in combating IP crimes with the help of her grandson “Chhotu” aka Aditya. The IP mascot will spread awareness about the importance of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) among people, especially children, in an interesting manner.

VK Singh visits North Korea, first high-level visit from India in 20 years

- In first high-level visit to North Korea from India in two decades, Minister of State for External Affairs General V K Singh was in Pyongyang in May where he held talks with several leaders including Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho on key issues and raised New Delhi’s concerns over nuclear proliferation .
- The two-day visit came less than a month before the proposed summit between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, and is seen as an effort to reach out to Pyongyang.

India's First all-woman Post Office Passport Seva Kendra starts operations in Phagwara, Punjab

- The Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) run by an all-woman team began its operations in Phagwara, Punjab.
- This kendra was 192nd POPSK in the country and first one to be operated by an all-woman team.
- It will cater needs of people from Kapurthala, Nawandhar and Jalandhar rural districts.

Cabinet approves setting up of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation in Bhopal

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR) in Bhopal as a society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 under the aegis of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.
- The estimated cumulative cost of the project is Rs 179.54 crore in the first three years. This includes non-recurring expenditure of Rs 128.54 crore and recurring expenditure of Rs 51 crore.

Cabinet approves setting up of a central university in Andhra Pradesh

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its in-principle approval for the establishment of a Central University with the name –‘Central University of Andhra Pradesh’ in Jantalu Village of Ananthapur District, Andhra Pradesh.
- A provision of funds worth Rs 450 crore has been approved for meeting the first phase expenditure towards establishment of the university.

Cabinet approves setting up of a new AIIMS in Deoghar, Jharkhand

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved setting up of a new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Deoghar, Jharkhand.

- A provision of funds worth Rs. 1103 crore has been approved for the project and the AIIMS will be set up under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).

4th meeting of SAWEN held in Kolkata, India

- The fourth meeting of South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN), an inter-governmental wildlife law enforcement agency, was held in Kolkata, West Bengal (India) from May 8-10, 2018.
- It was the first meeting of SAWEN in India since its inception in 2011.
- The two-day conference was attended by representatives of seven (excluding Pakistan) out of eight member countries - Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives.

4 states, 1 UT sign MoUs for implementation of Ayushman Bharat scheme

- Four states and one union territory signed MoU with the National Health Mission of the Union Government for implementing Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Swasthya Suraksha Mission (PMRSSM).
- These states and UTs are Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Chandigarh (UT).

Union Environment Ministry launches Green Skill Development Programme

- The Union Environment Ministry on May 15, 2018 launched the Green Skill Development Programme (GSDP) with an aim to train over 5.5 lakh workers in environment and forest sectors in the country.
- Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan also launched a related mobile app 'GSDP-ENVIS' to boost employability and entrepreneurship of the youth in the country.
- The app can be used for information and for applying to the courses.
- The GSDP-ENVIS app can be downloaded on android mobile phones without any hassle.
- The Green Skill Development Programme was initially launched in 2017 as a pilot project in 10 districts only wherein 154 youths, mainly school dropouts, were trained as parataxonomists and biodiversity conservationists.

Guwahati becomes India's first fully solar powered railway station

- Guwahati now has India's first railway station run by solar power. The project of installing solar panels was commissioned last year in April 2017.
- Around 2352 solar modules with a capacity of generating 700 kwpc has been set up over the roof of the Guwahati railway station. Solar panels have been installed at the roof-top solar power plant.
- The solar-powered station is aimed at reducing carbon-footprint as well as cut down power costs drastically.

Indian Railways to protect female train passengers with panic button, CCTV

- With a view to strengthen security of women passengers in trains, the North Eastern Railway plans to deploy women police personnel on trains during night hours as well as install 'panic buttons' in coaches.
- In a country where crime against women and children is 'rampant', the Indian Railways is taking steps to ensure that women feel secure while travelling in trains. Now, women won't have to depend on helpline numbers or chain-pulling. The national carrier has planned to deploy women police personnel on trains during night hours, and install 'panic buttons' in coaches.

Meeting of stakeholders on Samarth scheme held in Delhi

- A meeting of stakeholders on Samarth – Scheme for capacity building in textile sector under the Skill India Mission was held in New Delhi on May 14, 2018.
- The meeting, chaired by Union Minister of Textiles- Smriti Zubin Irani, was aimed at familiarising the stakeholders about the scheme and its guidelines.
- The concerns of the stakeholders and challenges faced by them during implementation of the previous scheme were discussed during the meeting.

Punjab to set up panel to check security expenditure

- The Punjab government stated on May 16, 2018 that it would be setting up a committee to streamline the system of providing security to officials and non-officials, taking cognizance of reports claiming the state lacked a rational policy.
- The decision was taken after Chief Minister Amarinder Singh took cognizance of media reports claiming that absence of prudent norms was causing avoidable financial loss to the state.
- The committee will be headed by additional chief secretary (home), with director general (intelligence) and additional director general of police (security).

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates Zojila tunnel project in Leh

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 19, 2018 unveiled a plaque to mark the commencement of work on the Zojila Tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir's Leh district.
- The project, worth Rs 6,809 crore, will be India's longest and Asia's longest and strategic bi-directional tunnel, which will provide all-weather connectivity between Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar, Kargil and Leh districts. It will be finished within five years.
- Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that he has asked the concerned Ministry to look into ways to reduce the time for the completion of the project. He added saying that the strategically important tunnel will lead to an all-round economic and socio-cultural integration of these regions.
- The tunnel aims to provide safe, fast and cheap connectivity. It will reduce the travel time between Srinagar and Leh to 15 minutes from the current 3.5 hours.
- It will provide all-weather connectivity to the region. The project has strategic and socio-economic importance and shall be an instrument for the development of the economically backward districts in Jammu and Kashmir.

Gujarat Government to launch free treatment scheme for road accident victims

- The state government of Gujarat would be launching free treatment scheme for the road accident victims on May 18, 2018.
- The announcement for the same was made last week by Gujarat's Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel, who also handles Health portfolio.
- Under the scheme, the state government will bear medical expenses of up to 50,000 rupees for each victim of a road accident in the state for the first 48 hours.

IISER develops device to detect and remove arsenic from water

- Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) in collaboration with private company has developed a new device 'Arsenic Sensor and Removal Media' to detect and remove arsenic content from water and make it safe and usable by households.
- The device is easy to use, very cost effective and anyone can use it to detect arsenic easily.

Delhi to become the most populous city: UN estimates

- According to the United Nations estimates, Delhi is projected to become the most populous city in the world around 2028.
- Tokyo is the world's largest city with population of 37 million inhabitants, followed by New Delhi with 29 million and Shanghai with 26 million.
- The projected population size of New Delhi in 2028 is about 37.2 million.

Force Motors to build Light Strike Vehicles for Indian Army

- Force Motors has bagged an order to supply the Indian Army with new Light Strike Vehicles.
- The Light Strike Vehicle has been designed and developed according to the requirements of the military. The design allows for quick ingress and egress. The vehicles can be airlifted and deployed as an advanced fast strike vehicle and have been designed for quick ingress and egress. They are equipped with run flat tyres and have provisions to mount machine guns and a rocket launcher.

- The Light Strike Vehicle employs engines and transmissions from Force Motors' existing line up. They come with all-wheel drive and differential locks for all wheels. Prototypes of the Light Strike Vehicle have been tested over 2 years on tough terrain with temperatures ranging from -30 to 50 degrees Celsius.
- Besides the new Light Strike Vehicle, the Indian Army is also testing Force Motors' engines on the new generation Dhanush Gun, which is expected to replace the Bofors Gun.

India decides to include Artificial Intelligence in its defence forces

- After US, Russia and China, India has decided to include Artificial Intelligence in its defence forces with an aim to enhance the operational preparedness of the armed forces.
- A task force has been set up under the chairmanship of N Chandrasekaran to finalise the specifics and framework of the project.

Home Minister commissions anti-Naxal 'Bastariya' battalion

- Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on May 21, 2018 commissioned into service the 'Bastariya' battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), in Raipur.
- The anti-Naxal battalion, created for the first-time with more than 534 tribal youth from Chhattisgarh, has 33 per cent representation of women combatants with 189 women constables.
- The Passing out Parade will be held at a training centre at Ambikapur, a city in Surguja district of Chhattisgarh.

Hyderabad's Metro Rail To Be India's First To Setup E-Vehicle Charging Stations

- Hyderabad Metro Rail is planning to soon provide electric vehicle (EV) charging facility at metro stations in partnership with PowerGrid Corporation of India Ltd. With this, Hyderabad Metro will be the first metro rail in the country to provide the facility. The EV charging stations will be monitored and operated remotely by PowerGrid.
- Interestingly, with the involvement of PowerGrid, The upcoming EV charging stations will have vehicle-to-grid (V2G) concept in which EVs can also help in stabilization of the grid. A V2G system enables the flow of power between an electric system or grid and electric drive vehicles such as electric cars (BEV), plug-in hybrids (PHEV) or hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles (FCEV).

India successfully test-fires BrahMos supersonic cruise

- India on May 21, 2018 successfully test-fired the Indo-Russian joint venture BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from a test range along the coast of Odisha.
- The missile was test-fired from a mobile launcher stationed at Launch pad 3 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur.
- The trial was conducted to validate its life extension technologies developed for the first time in India by DRDO and team BrahMos.

First commercial flight lands in Arunachal Pradesh since Independence

- In what is being considered as a landmark in the Indian civil aviation history, the first fixed-wing commercial aircraft that took off from the Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi Airport in Guwahati landed at the Pasighat Airport in Arunachal Pradesh in May.
- Out of the eight northeastern states, Arunachal Pradesh, now has become the last to be on the country commercial flight service map. Though the state of Arunachal Pradesh had air-transport facility from the pre-independence, it was mainly for the use of armed forces.
- The flight took 1.5 hours to cover the distance of 650km from the Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi Airport in Guwahati to Arunachal Pradesh's Pasighat airport.

Chhattisgarh to get specialised combat unit 'Black Panther'

- The state of Chhattisgarh would soon be getting a specialised anti-Naxal combat force called the 'Black Panther'.

- The announcement was made by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on May 21, 2018.
- The force would be set up on the lines of Greyhounds unit, a special force in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh that is dedicated to anti-insurgency operations against Naxalites and Maoists.

Union Government announces compensation of not less than Rs 1 crore to paramilitary jawan who dies in action

- Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on May 22, 2018 announced that it is the duty of the Border Security Force (BSF) to protect the boundary of the nation, but their duty have no boundaries.
- Addressing the BSF investiture ceremony in New Delhi, Singh said that the first bullet should not be fired upon the neighbours but if the BSF receives a bullet, no one will ask them why they fired.
- He also commended the work done by BSF, saying that it is not just the first line of defence but the first wall of defence.
- The Home Minister also announced that the family of each paramilitary jawan who dies in action will not be given a compensation less than Rs one crore.

Assam government to provide pension to 16 lakh senior citizens

- The Assam government will provide pension to 16 lakh senior citizens of the state.
- Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has directed the Panchayat and Rural Development department to take necessary step in this direction in a bid to empower the senior citizens.

India to hold first joint naval exercise with Vietnam

- India is preparing to hold a naval exercise with the Southeast Asian nation Vietnam.
- For the same, three Indian warships– INS Sahyadri, INS Shakti & INS Kamorta entered the Tien Sa Port in Vietnam on May 21.

Haryana to launch Chatra Parivahan Suraksha Yojana

- Haryana government is going to launch Chatra Parivahan Suraksha Yojana for safety of girls in the state.
- Under the scheme, all the girl students will get free travel facility from their home to their educational institutions.

Railways to use AI to control air circulation

- In a first, the Indian Railways would use artificial intelligence to control air circulation, to issue emergency alerts and also for supervision and maintenance work in a 10.28-km-long tunnel in Imphal.
- It will also alert the passenger in case of fire and help in quick evacuation in case of an issue.

INSV Tarini returns to base after successful circumnavigation of the globe

- Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Tarini with its all women crew successfully completed its circumnavigation of the globe and returned to Goa on May 21.
- Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who had flagged off the crew on September 10, 2017, was present to welcome them back home along with other naval officers.
- This is the first ever circumnavigation of the globe by an all-women Indian crew.

Government to set up national registry of crimes against women

- The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) is in the process of creating a national registry of crimes against women.
- The announcement was made by the NCRB Chief Ish Kumar on May 21, 2018 at a seminar organised by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) in New Delhi.
- The move comes when there is a growing concern over incidents of sexual assaults.
- The records will be sourced from the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS).
- The Crime Bureau is in the process of hiring an agency to prepare the whole database.

National Convention on Rejuvenation of Krishna River held

- The 'National Convention on Rejuvenation of the Krishna River' was held on May 22, 2018 in Hyderabad, Telangana. The convention was organised by the Indian Water Council (IWC).
- During the convention, experts in water conservation from across the country deliberated on the ways to rejuvenate the Krishna River.
- The inaugural session was addressed by Telangana Irrigation Minister T Harish Rao.
- The convention was IWC's first event which saw the participation of over 300 delegates of government organisations including Rajendra Singh, the 'Waterman of India'.

Madhya Pradesh launches 'My MP Rojgar Portal'

- The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shivraj Singh Chouhan has launched 'My MP Rojgar Portal' to provide jobs to youths as per their educational qualification, skills and interest and ensure availability of able candidates to employers as per the need of their business.
- The portal was launched as a part of the 'Ham Chhu Lenge Asman' Mukhyamantri Career Counselling programme 'Pahal' in Model School of Bhopal. It was prepared by the Madhya Pradesh Skill Development and Employment Generation Board under youth empowerment mission.
- The youth will be able to open their employment account on the portal by registering their profile as per their qualification.

DAC approves measures to simplify Defence Procurement Procedure

- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved various measures to simplify Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP).
- The changes include devolution of powers within Ministry of Defence and Service Headquarters, deletion of repetitive processes, concurrent running of acquisition process instead of sequential stage clearance, aligning of various documents with revised financial guidelines, amongst others.
- DAC is Defence Ministry's highest decision-making body on capital procurement of Indian Armed Forces (Army, Navy and Air Force).

Election Commission to launch App to help voters to share malpractice proof

- Election Commission of India (ECI) will launch multi-lingual mobile application called Model Code of Conduct Violation Reporting App ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.
- The app aims at empowering people across the country to share evidence of malpractice by political parties, their candidates and activists directly with ECI.
- The app will be launched across the country as part of steps taken by ECI to prevent abuse of money and muscle power.

Rajasthan Government launches software for disease monitoring

- Rajasthan Government launched new software called Nidaan for disease monitoring and strengthening tele-medicine services in the government hospitals.
- The software will provide presumptive diagnosis and monitor seasonal and non-communicable diseases as well as trends of ailments found in specific areas.
- Nidaan Software will facilitate online entries for monitoring of as many as 46 diseases and healthcare services available for their treatment in different institutions.

Uttar Pradesh cabinet approved the introduction of NCERT textbooks in Madarasa Board

- The Uttar Pradesh cabinet approved the introduction of National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) textbooks in the Madrasa Board.

- NCERT books in Urdu, Hindi and English languages will be introduced to give students a better training and enhanced skill set in madrasas.

Sushant Singh Rajput to promote BHIM app, Women Entrepreneurship Platform

- Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput would be promoting two major initiatives of NITI Aayog - BHIM app and the Women Entrepreneurship Platform.
- The agreement will be signed soon by the actor with NITI Aayog.
- In an official statement, the NITI Aayog said, as part of its larger mandate to promote digital payments across the country, it has been successfully driving the digital payments campaign in the country.

Prakash Javadekar launches Samagra Shiksha scheme for school education

- The Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar on May 24, 2018 launched Samagra Shiksha scheme for school education from pre-school to senior secondary levels.
- The scheme will mainly focus on improving quality of education, enhancing the learning outcomes and using technology to empower children and teachers.
- The scheme will be focused on digital education and it will enhance use of digital technology in education through smart classroom and digital boards.
- The scheme will provide holistic education for holistic development.
- It would help improve the quality of education by focusing on teachers and technology.
- An annual grant of Rs 5000- 20,000 will be provided for strengthening of libraries in the schools.
- It is an integrated scheme for school education from pre-school to senior secondary levels.
- The scheme is an integration of three already existing schemes--Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE).

Chhattisgarh ties up with Dabur to provide herbs for ayurvedic products

- Dabur India Limited, one of country's leading FMCG companies, would be using medicinal plants and herbs produced in Chhattisgarh in its herbal and ayurvedic products.
- The company, a world leader in ayurveda with a portfolio of over 250 herbal and ayurvedic products, inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the state-run Chhattisgarh medicinal plants board. Under the agreement, the board would provide the medicinal plants and herbs to Dabur.

India-Nepal militaries to conduct joint battalion level exercise SURYA KIRAN-XIII

- Joint military exercise SURYA KIRAN-XIII will be conducted between India and Nepal at Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand from May 30 to June 12, 2018.
- This will be the thirteenth edition of the military exercise between India and Nepal.
- The joint military exercise will enhance the level of defence cooperation which will further strengthen the bilateral relations between the two nations.

IRCTC introduces VIKALP scheme

- Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation has introduced VIKALP scheme for passengers in wait-listing to provide berth in another train.
- Under the scheme, passengers from all classes & trains would be able to select 5 trains. However, the scheme does not guarantee a confirmed berth.
- The passengers would also need to be prepared, as they could be shifted to another train leaving even 12 hours prior to the booked one.

Odisha to launch mobile app for advance info on lightning

- The Odisha government has decided to introduce a special mobile application to provide advance information on lightning which has claimed at least 61 lives between April and May 2018.

- The mobile application will be developed to alert smartphone users if they are in a lightning zone. The people using smart phone will get information regarding possible lightning in their areas at least one hour ahead of the calamity.

Railways to spend Rs 350cr to train drivers on simulators

- The Indian Railways will spend around Rs 350 crore to train 1.5 lakh drivers and assistant drivers through virtual reality techniques to bridge the gap between theoretical and practical learning.
- The training will be conducted in 47 centres across zones and the national transporter will soon float a global tender to acquire about 40 simulators for the purpose.

World's Largest Bird Sculpture 'Jatayu' to be inaugurated in Kerala

- Kerala will soon inaugurate the world's largest bird sculpture, Jatayu Earth's Centre in Thiruvananthapuram.
- The replica of bird 'Jatayu', a character in the Ramayana is 65 feet tall & is positioned right at the top of a rock situated 1000 feet above sea level.
- The rock 'Jatayupara' where the structure is based, is the place where Jatayu fell after its wings were cut by Ravana.

Indian Navy conducts Prasthan exercise

- Indian Navy conducted an exercise called Prasthan in the Western Offshore Development area in Mumbai.
- The exercise is held once in every 6 months and aims at integrating maritime stakeholders including, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force, ONGC, Customs & Port Trust.
- The drills were focused on fire on an oil platform, Oil spill, search and rescue for crashed helicopters, etc.

India to attend SCO anti-terror talks in Pak

- India will be attending the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation-Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure Legal Experts meeting which will be held in Islamabad, Pakistan.
- This will be Pakistan's first SCO meeting, as the country along with India became a member of the organisation in June 2017.

Indian Navy commissions fourth ship of Landing Craft Utility MK-IV

- The Indian Navy on May 25, 2018 commissioned the IN LCU L54, the fourth ship of Landing Craft Utility MK-IV, into its fleet at Port Blair.
- The ship was commissioned by Vice Admiral GS Pabby, AVSM, VSM and Chief of Materiel. The Commissioning of L-54 is in line with the Union Government's Make in India initiative.
- IN LCU L54 is the fourth Landing Craft Utility (LCU) Mk-IV class to be inducted into the Indian Navy.

PM Modi inaugurates 1st phase India's first Smart & Green Highway, Delhi-Meerut expressway

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi in May inaugurated the first phase of Delhi-Meerut expressway here.
- Stretching from Nizamuddin Bridge in Delhi to Delhi UP Border, the 14-lane highway will reduce the travel time between the two cities to only 45 minutes from the present about four to five hours.
- Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari was also present at the inauguration event.
- Soon after the inaugural ceremony, Prime Minister Modi held a roadshow in an open jeep on the expressway. People in big numbers gathered to get a glimpse of him during the roadshow.
- This project will provide faster and safer connectivity between Delhi and Meerut. People from the NCR, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand will particularly benefit from this project.
- Later in the day, the Prime Minister will also inaugurate the country's first smart and green highway, the Eastern Peripheral Expressway at Baghpat in Uttar Pradesh.
- The 135-km expressway is built at a cost of Rs. 11,000 crore.

AIIMS gets green nod for developing Rs 2,163 crore super-speciality blocks in Delhi

- All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) has received green nod for developing super-speciality blocks at Jai Prakash Narayan Apex Trauma Centre (JPNATC) in the national capital at a cost of Rs 2,163 crore.
- State-owned NBCC will be implementing the proposed project that will come up in an area of 60,500 square metre in the JPNATC campus-II at Safdarjung Enclave.
- The construction work is expected to be completed in four years.

Inter-State Council Standing Committee completes deliberations on Punchhi Commission report

- The Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council (ISC) headed by the Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on May 25, 2018 completed its deliberations on all the 273 recommendations of the Punchhi Commission.
- The announcement was made during the 13th meeting of the Standing Committee of the ISC.
- These recommendations will now be placed before the Inter-State Council for decision. With this, the work on Punchhi Commission Report, which had been pending for the last eight years, has been completed. Notably, the ISC meeting in 2016 was held after a gap of 10 years.

Mumbai to install UAV surveillance, panic buttons to ensure women's safety

- The Mumbai police are planning to use Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) for surveillance and install 'panic buttons' in order to enhance the safety of women in the city.
- The measures are part of Rs 252-crore Safe City Project, which will be implemented fully in three years. This would be the first time that UAVs would be used in the country for this purpose.
- After the shocking Nirbhaya gang-rape incident of 2012, the Union Home Ministry had invited proposals from police departments of big cities to provide more security to women.
- The Union Government had also allocated funds for such projects.

Ramdev's Patanjali ties up with BSNL, launches Swadeshi Samridhi SIM cards

- After becoming India's most trusted Fast Moving Consumer Goods brand, Yoga guru Baba Ramdev's Patanjali in May entered the telecom sector.
- At an event, Baba Ramdev launched Swadeshi Samridhi SIM cards, in alliance with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL).
- Initially, only the employees and office bearers of Patanjali will be able to avail the benefits of the SIM card.
- After its full-fledged launch, people will get discount of 10 per cent on Patanjali products with this card.

Telangana government enhances retirement age limit for teaching professors

- The Telangana government has enhanced the retirement age limit for teaching professors of state health department from 58 to 65. This decision was taken in a Cabinet meeting held on May 27, 2018.
- The Cabinet has also approved the proposed farmer's insurance scheme under which every farmer in the age group of 18 to 60 years will be provided with life insurance coverage of five lakh rupees.

IGI Airport Delhi to Get India's First AI Robot 'RADA' to Assist Flyers, Courtesy Vistara

- Vistara has come up with a unique robot using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology that can assist customers, address their queries and entertain them. Named 'RADA', the robot is aimed at helping the airline offer an enhanced on-ground service to its customers.
- During its initial stage, RADA will be placed at Vistara's Signature Lounge at Delhi Airport's Terminal 3 from July 5, 2018, to assist customers using the lounge before they board their flights.
- Vistara states that 'RADA' will be further developed over a period of time in terms of functionality and features for future use cases, after gauging customer feedback.

UP govt signs MoU to fast-track work on Jewar international airport

- The Uttar Pradesh government in May signed a pact with Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA), Noida and Greater Noida Industrial Development Authorities to monitor and fast-track the work on the much awaited greenfield Jewar International Airport.
- The signing of the MoU will kick off the process of land acquisition, officials of the state government said. At present, the public hearing for land acquisition is being monitored by the sub divisional magistrate of Jewar.

Archaeological Survey of India signs MoU with Yatra and BookMyShow

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), an organisation under the Ministry of Culture for archaeological researches and protection of cultural heritage has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Yatra.com and BookMyShow.
- This MoU is aimed at enabling overseas and domestic tourists and visitors to book their tickets online for 141 historical monuments, museums and sites in India, such as Taj Mahal, Qutub Minar, Ajanta and Ellora caves, Red Fort, Sun Temple, which fall under the purview of ASI.

IPS Officer Krishna Prakash, India's First Civil Servant To Become An 'Ultraman'

- The Maharashtra cadre IPS officer becomes India's first and only uniformed service officer in Military, Naval, Air-Force and para-military forces to win the 'Ultraman World Championship' title at Australia in May 2018.
- Triathlon is a three-day 515 km (320 mile) multisport race held in Australia every year.

DAC approves procurement of equipment for Defence Forces

- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved the procurement of equipment for the Defence Forces valued at over Rs 6900 crore.
- DAC approved procurement of Thermal Imaging (TI) Night Sights for the Rocket Launcher (RL) used by the Army and the Air Force under 'BUY(Indian) IDDM' category through established Indian Vendors.

4th International Yoga Day's main event to be organised in Dehradun

- The main event of 4th International Yoga Day celebrations (IDY-2018) will be held on June 21, 2018 at Dehradun in Uttarakhand.
- Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary of Ministry of AYUSH, is in Dehradun to initiate the preparations regarding this mega event.

Akshay launches ad campaign for Swachh Bharat Mission

- Akshay Kumar launched an advertisement campaign for the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) at a Collectors Convention for Toilet Technology.
- The campaign focuses on promoting the twin pit toilet technology in rural India.
- The advertisement campaign is supported by the World Bank.

Sangeeta Bahl: Oldest Indian woman to scale Mount Everest

- Sangeeta Bahl, at the age of 53, has become the oldest Indian woman to scale the Mount Everest.
- She scaled the peak on May 19, 2018, with the help of 2 Sherpas.
- She carried a banner to the peak advocating early detection of breast cancer in women & funding for the same.

Himachal Pradesh Government to promote Organic Farming

- The Himachal Pradesh government recently launched the 'Prakritik Kheti Khushhaal Kisaan Yojana' (PKKKY) to promote organic farming.
- The government will undertake an integrated approach for promoting organic and zero budget natural farming system.
- PKKKY will enhance agricultural income through the adoption of low-cost climate-resilient farming system.

Tripura Government to phase out plastic carry bags

- The Tripura government has set August 15 as the deadline to phase out plastic carry bags completely from the state, as part of the 'Himalayan Cleanup' programme.
- The government urged people to replace their plastic bags with biodegradable ones.
- The Himalayan Cleanup campaign was launched in 12 mountain states in the country to end plastic pollution in the hilly areas.

Netherlands PM launches 'Clean Air India Initiative'

- Netherlands Prime Minister Mark Rutte launched the 'Clean Air India Initiative' in Delhi.
- The Clean Air India Initiative is a project between 'Get In The Ring', a platform for start-ups, the Government of the Netherlands, Start-up India and INDUS Forum.
- The campaign aims to curb air pollution in Indian cities by promoting partnerships between Indian start-ups and Dutch companies.

Now, IRCTC will predict your waitlisted tickets will get confirmed or not

- The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) on May 28, 2018 launched its refurbished website that will let passengers know the probability of confirmation of wait-listed tickets.
- Though passengers may not get confirmed berths while booking train ticket every time, but, they can now find out whether their ticket stands a chance of being confirmed.
- The prediction regarding the confirmation of tickets will be based on a new algorithm developed by the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS).

WHO adopts Resolution on Digital Health initiated by India: JP Nadda

- Union Health and Family Welfare Minister JP Nadda on May 29, 2018 announced that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has adopted the resolution on Digital Health, brought out by India, during the 71st World Health Assembly.
- The 71st World Health Assembly was held in Geneva and was attended by delegations from all WHO member states.
- The resolution recognises that Digital health technology has a huge potential for supporting Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and improving accessibility, quality and affordability of health services.

Andhra Pradesh gets its own symbols post split, black buck is state animal

- Neem and black buck have been declared as the state tree and animal respectively of Andhra Pradesh.
- Rose-ringed parakeet will be the state bird while jasmine the flower, Principal Secretary of Environment and Forests G Anantha Ramu said in an order in May.

Baba Ramdev's Patanjali launches Kimbho app to compete with WhatsApp

- Yoga guru Baba Ramdev's Patanjali in May launched a new swadeshi messaging application called Kimbho to compete with WhatsApp, ANI reported.
- "Now Bharat will speak. After launching SIM cards, Baba Ramdev has launched a new messaging application called Kimbho. Now Whats App will be given competition. Our own #SwadeshiMessagingplatform. Download it directly from Google Play store," Patanjali's spokesperson SK Tijarawala tweeted.
- Kimbho caters to private and group chats with free phone and video calling. The application has dozens of features to share text, audio, photos, videos, stickers, quickies, location, GIFs, and doodle, according to its brief on the Google Play Store. The tagline of Kimbho says "Ab Bharat Bolega".

Union Tribal Affairs Ministry launches exhibition cum sale event 'Pankha'

- Union Tribal Affairs Minister, Jual Oram on May 29, 2018 launched an exhibition cum sale event 'The Pankha' (Hand-fans) at the TRIBES India Showroom in New Delhi. Noted artist Jatin Das also graced the occasion.

- These Pankhas are on display at Indira Gandhi National Auditorium (IGNA), New Delhi from May 26, 2018 to June 24, 2018.

Gaj Yatra launched in Garo Hills of Meghalaya

- Meghalaya's Home Minister James P K Sangma on May 29, 2018 flagged off the Gaj Yatra in Garo Hills of Meghalaya with an aim to raise awareness about the shrinking space for wild elephants in the country and particularly in the state.
- The Gaj Yatra was launched in the presence of Bollywood actor Dia Mirza, the Brand Ambassador of Wildlife Trust of India and other distinguished dignitaries at SMELC Building Dakopgre, Tura.

Centre plans OFC connectivity push on Indo-China border: Nirmala Sitharaman

- Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on May 29, 2018 announced that the Centre is planning to lay Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) in all the areas bordering China to mitigate connectivity problems being faced by both defence personnel and the civilian population.
- The announcement was made by Sitharaman while she was speaking of the achievements of the four-year-old Narendra Modi government. The Union Cabinet had already discussed the issue of laying OFC and sanctioned the additional fund for the process.

India releases Rs 33.10 crore to Nepal for 2 road projects

- India has released Rs 33.10 crore to Nepal for two road packages of Birgunj-Thori Road that are being implemented under Postal Highway Projects in Nepal with grant assistance from the Indian Government.
- The Indian Government has so far released a total of Rs 117.63 crore to the Nepal Government for the implementation of 14 packages of the Postal Highway Projects.

Madhya Pradesh government to regularise 2, 37,000 contractual teachers

- The Madhya Pradesh state government has decided to regularise 2, 37,000 contractual teachers in the state.
- The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on May 29, 2018.
- The cabinet also decided that no contractual employee in other government departments will be retrenched.

Railway Minister seeks passenger cooperation over late running of trains

- The Union Railway Minister, Piyush Goyal has sought the cooperation of passengers over late running of trains, saying that the delay was caused due to track upgradation work.
- The Minister stated in a tweet that the track upgradation work was being carried out for passenger safety on mission mode.

Madras HC directs CBSE to ensure no school prescribes non-NCERT textbooks

- The Madras High Court on May 29, 2018 issued a direction to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to ensure that even private schools affiliated to it, follow only NCERT textbooks and not those of private publishers.
- The court passed interim orders on a writ petition filed by advocate M Purushothaman, who accused private schools of dumping too many subjects and books on children.

UP government to go the e-Office way

- The Uttar Pradesh cabinet has decided to bring all state government offices under the e-Office system by August 15 to minimise the use of paper.
- The decision, aimed at converting government departments into less paper offices, was taken at a cabinet meeting presided over by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on May 30.

Defence Minister inaugurates IAF Commanders' Conference

- Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on May 31, 2018 inaugurated the first biannual IAF Commanders' Conference of 2018 at Air Headquarters.
- During the inauguration, the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa briefed the Defence Minister regarding the current status of the IAF and on Exercise 'Gagan Shakti', which was conducted in April 2018.

1.5 lakh affordable houses sanctioned for urban poor under PMAY (urban)

- The Union Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has approved the construction of another 1.5 lakh affordable houses for the benefit of urban poor under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) with an investment of Rs.7,227cr with central assistance of Rs.2,209 cr.
- The approval was given in the 34th meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee, held in Delhi on May 30, 2018.

Indian Railways revises passenger reservation form

- The Union Ministry of Railways has revised its passenger reservation form to benefit the passengers booking tickets through reservation windows across the nation.
- Now, the VIKALP scheme option will also be available on booking made through reservation windows and not just through online bookings.
- If the option of VIKALP is availed by passengers, he/she would have to mark his/her choice of alternate train departing within 12 hours, 24 hours, 48 hours.

Tourism Minister to launch first ever guidelines by government on Adventure Tourism

- The Union Government would soon be issuing first-ever guidelines for Adventure Tourism in India.
- The guidelines on Safety and Quality Norms for Adventure Tourism in India have been formulated along with the Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI).

CRY receives USD 100,000 grant from Oracle

- The non-governmental child rights organisation, Child Rights and You (CRY) announced on May 30, 2018 that it has received a USD 100,000 grant from global technology major Oracle for a digitally enhanced monitoring system that would potentially improve lives of underprivileged children across 19 states.
- The USD 100,000 grant aims to harness the power of state-of-the-art digital technology in reaching out to underprivileged children of India.

GSK Consumer Healthcare launches Horlicks Mission Poshan with Amitabh Bachchan

- Horlicks, the iconic brand from GSK Consumer Healthcare in May announced the launch of "Horlicks Mission Poshan" with legendary actor Amitabh Bachchan as the campaign ambassador.
- Supporting the Government's Rashtriya Poshan Abhiyaan, Horlicks Mission Poshan will focus on the first 1000 days of a child with the objective of addressing malnutrition, stunting and infant mortality. Amitabh Bachchan will be part of many activities planned all-round the year including a 12-hour live Telethon and awareness camps across schools and villages.