

Banking

RBI divests its entire stake in NABARD and NHB

- Based on the recommendation of second Narasimham Committee, **the Reserve Bank has divested its entire stake in National Housing Bank (NHB) and the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).**
- In a press release issued from Mumbai on Wednesday, RBI has said that it sold the entire stake worth twenty crore rupees in NABARD and 1,450 crore rupees in NHB in the last quarter of 2018-19, adding that the government is now cent percent holder of both these institutions.

Appointments

Former Dena Bank MD Karnam Sekar appointed as IOB's new MD & CEO

- **Former Dena Bank MD Karnam Sekar is set to take over as the new Managing Director and CEO of Indian Overseas Bank from July 1, 2019.** He will take over from R Subramaniakumar, who was instrumental in taking measures to turn around the bank, which has been reporting losses due to high NPA.
- **Prior to joining as officer on Special Duty and Whole Time Director of IOB in April 2019, Sekar was the MD & CEO of Dena Bank till March 31, 2019.** Earlier he was the Deputy Managing Director and Chief Credit Officer in State Bank of India heading its highest Credit Committee. In SBI, he was also responsible for formulating loan policy of the bank.
- Before SBI, he was working as Chief General Managing in Lucknow circle of SBI.

Mini Ipe is LIC's first woman zonal manager

- **Mini Ipe took charge as zonal manager of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), South Central Zone, on Wednesday.**
- **She is the first woman zonal manager (in-charge) of the corporation,** a press release said. LIC's South Central Zone comprises the States of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.
- Prior to the present assignment, she was executive director (International Operations) looking after the foreign operations of LIC's subsidiaries, joint ventures and branches.

India and states

Indian Coast Guard Vessel C-441 commissioned

- **The Indian Coast Guard Vessel C-441 was commissioned on April 24, 2019** by Kerala Chief Secretary, Sri Tom Jose under the aegis of Regional Commander Western Region, Inspector General Vijay D. Chafekar at Vizhinjam harbour, Thiruvananthapuram.
- The commissioning of vessel was witnessed by senior officers from Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, BSF, Police, Airport Authority, Central & State Authorities and National Cadet Corps.
- The commissioning was conducted with full ceremony of parading the guard and band.

SC constitutes three-judge panel to probe case against CJI

- **The Supreme Court on April 23, 2019 constituted a three-judge panel headed by Justice SA Bobde, the senior-most judge in apex court after the Chief Justice of India (CJI), to inquire into the sexual harassment complaint by a former junior court assistant against CJI Ranjan Gogoi.**
- Besides Justice SA Bobde, the inquiry panel comprises Justice NV Ramana, the next senior most judge, and Justice Indira Banerjee, who was elevated to the Supreme Court on August 7, 2018.

Government extends ban on import of milk products from China

- **The Union Government on April 23, 2019 extended the ban on import of milk and its products, including chocolates, from China till laboratories at ports for testing the presence of toxic chemical melamine are upgraded.**
- The Directorate General of Foreign Trade said in a notification that the prohibition on import of milk, milk products including chocolates, chocolate products, candies, confectionary and food preparations with milk or milk solids as an ingredient from China is extended until the capacity of all laboratories at ports of entry have been suitably upgraded for testing melamine.

World

UN, EU sign joint framework to strengthen partnership in counter-terrorism efforts

- **The United Nations and the European Union (EU) have signed a joint framework aimed at strengthening partnership in counter-terrorism efforts.**
- The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism said in a statement that the framework was enacted on the occasion of the second EU-UN high-level political dialogue on Counter-Terrorism that was held in New York.
- According to the statement, the UN-EU initiative will focus on terrorism and violent extremism prevention in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, as well as support victims and promote the reintegration of terrorism offenders.

Waivers for Iran oil imports end on May 2, won't impact Chabahar Port Project

- **The US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo on April 23, 2019 announced that the sanction waivers that it had granted to some countries still buying oil from Iran will terminate on May 2, 2019.**
- With this announcement, five countries namely, **India, China, Japan, South Korea and Turkey will no longer be exempted from the US sanctions**, if they continue to import Iranian oil after their waivers end on May 2. There will be no grace period for these five economies to comply with the decision.
- The United States had in November 2018 granted waivers to eight economies including China, India, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, Italy and Greece while imposing sanctions on exports of Iranian oil.

UAE's Mars probe 'Hope' 85 percent complete

- **The UAE Space Agency and Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) have announced 85 percent completion of the gulf nation's 'Hope Probe' project.** The probe is an ambitious dream project of the UAE to send a mission to Mars.

- The two space organizations confirmed in a joint statement that most of the main parts of the project have been completed and are currently undergoing intensive testing to ensure every aspect of the Probe is ready for activation a few months before the launch date.

Kazakhstan sets up coordinating council to attract Indian investments

- **Kazakhstan has set up Coordinating Council for attracting foreign investments including from India.** The Kazakh government on April 22, 2019 held a session to discuss the issues of attracting investments under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Askar Mamin.
- In order to coordinate and efficiently interact with investors, as well as provide solutions to current problems, it was decided to lay the functions of Investment Ombudsman under the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan.
- Also, a Coordinating Council for attracting foreign investment will be created and chaired by the head of government.

China to build moon station in 'about 10 years'

- **China plans to send a manned mission to the moon and to build a research station there within the next decade.** The announcement was made by the head of China's National Space Administration, Zhang Kejian during his speech marking 'Space Day'.
- Kejian revealed that the nation plans to build a scientific research station on the moon's South Pole within the next 10 years.

About 20 Madagascar species under threat: Report

- **International Union for Conservation of Nature(IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species said that of the 111 lemur species, 24 are currently listed as Critically Endangered, 49 are Endangered and 20 are Vulnerable.** Among the species under threat, the majority belongs to the primate group.
- **The group contains all the species commonly related to lemurs, monkey, apes, and humans.**
- Lemurs are among the unique to Madagascar. Indri, the largest of all lemurs and a species with such symbolic value for Madagascar that it is often compared to the giant panda in China, is among the species of lemurs that would be up-listed from endangered to critically endangered.

Days

International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace 2019 observed

- **The first ever official 'International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace' was observed by the United Nations (UN) on April 24, 2019.**
- The UN General Assembly convened a one-day high-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the day.