

Banking and Finance

Yes Bank partners with Maharashtra government for electronic PDS

- Private sector lender **Yes Bank has partnered with Government of Maharashtra to onboard PDS** shops which are popularly referred to as ration shops onto the electronic PDS initiative through which they can become agents of the bank.
- Under the partnership, **Yes Bank will empower more than 20,000 ration shops which can offer last mile basic banking services to more than seven lakh beneficiaries.** The bank will cover almost 40% of all the PDS shops across locations like Palghar, thane, Kolhapur, Latur, Pune and others.
- Customers at these shops will be able to make payments using Aadhaar Pay, small value cash deposit or withdraw cash using AePS (Aadhaar enabled Payment Systems), bill payments recharges and even undertake remittance activities across different bank branches.

IBBI organises Insolvency and Bankruptcy Awareness Programme at Vadodara

- **The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India**, in association with the three Insolvency Professional Agencies -- the **Indian Institute of Insolvency Professionals of ICAI (lead partner)**, the ICSI Institute of Insolvency Professionals, and the Insolvency Professional Agency of Institute of Cost Accountants of India -- **organised an Insolvency and Bankruptcy Awareness Programme at Vadodara in Gujarat recently.**
- A large number of stakeholders, including students, professionals, bankers, and business persons participated in the programme.
- Inaugurating the programme, National Company Law Tribunal(NCLT) Member (Judicial) H P Chaturvedi, Ahmedabad detailed the role of the Adjudicating Authority in respect of Corporate Insolvency Resolution and Liquidation Processes under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (Code).

India signs 11 MoUs worth \$9.5 million with Afghanistan

- **India has signed 11 Mo-U's worth \$ 9.5 million with the Afghan government this week.**
- The MoUs were for **infrastructure, public services such as health clinics and governance-related projects.**
- These projects include construction of classrooms, orphanages, health clinics, canal protection walls and enhancing economic opportunities for women for seven provinces of Afghanistan-- Balkh, Ghor, Herat, Kabul, Bamyan, Badghis and Kapisa. "The projects will help local communities in education, employment and livelihood generation and capacity building," an official here said.
- These projects are part of the 577 development projects funded by India for 2005-2021 worth \$120 million.

4th Edition of 'India Steel 2019' Expo to be Held on January 22-24 in Mumbai

- **The 4th edition of 'India Steel 2019 - Exhibition & Conference'** is being organised by the Ministry of Steel, Government of India along with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in **Mumbai on January 22- 24, 2019.**
- The annual steel exhibition and conference aims at developing a road map for the growth of the industry.
- With the theme '**Balancing Steel Demand & Supply Dynamics: Building a New India'**, the event will highlight the current trends, developments, challenges and prospects of the steel industry.

Nitin Gadkari inaugurates 39 National Highways Projects in Andhra Pradesh

- Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shipping, Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, **Nitin Gadkari inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 39 National Highways Projects in Andhra Pradesh.**
- These include construction of eleven ROBs **under Setu Bhartam programme.**
- These projects have a length of **1384 kms, and involve investment of Rs 16,878 crore.**
- The length of National Highways in Andhra Pradesh before May 2014 was 4193 Km which has now increased to 7246 Km (including In-principle NHs).
- Total likely investment in Andhra Pradesh is Rs 1,00,000 crore for development of National Highways.
- Under Bharatmala, about 2,520 Km of roads amounting to Rs 44,000 crore have been envisaged.
- Under SethuBhartam, 31 ROBs have been approved with cost of about Rs 2,500 crore.

Raghubar Das tables Jharkhand Budget 2019-20 worth Rs 85,429 crore

- Jharkhand Chief Minister, **Raghubar Das who also holds the finance portfolio, on January 22, 2019 tabled the annual budget for the state for the year 2019-20 worth Rs 85,429 crore.**
- Out of the Rs 85,429 crore, the state government has set aside Rs 65,803 crore while the institutional expenditure has been pegged at Rs 19,626 crore.
- Compared to the previous fiscal, the plan size has been increased by more than Rs 5200 crore.
- In 2018-19, the government had tabled a budget worth Rs 80,200 crore.

India and states

National Women's Party launched in Mumbai

- **The National Women's Party (NWP), which has been formed with the motto of women empowerment, was launched in Mumbai, Maharashtra on January 21, 2019.**
- The party has been founded by **Dr Swetha Shetty**, a medical practitioner-cum- activist from Hyderabad, who would also serve as its President.
- Announcing its formation, Shetty said that apart from ensuring empowerment of women, issues like getting 50 per cent reservation for women in the parliament and state assemblies and the betterment of soldiers and farmers, would be among their top priorities.
- The National Women's Party would be contesting in 283 Lok Sabha seats, which is half of the total number of seats, in the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections.

Government constitutes NITI Aayog-led Committee to monitor pricing of drugs

- The Government on January 21, 2019 constituted a **Standing Committee headed by NITI Aayog to oversee the drug pricing regime.**
- The constitution of the Committee is seen as a move that would curb the powers of the National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA) when it comes to regulating the prices of medicines in the country.
- **The Standing Committee on Affordable Medicines and Health Products will be headed by NITI Aayog Member (Health).**
- The members of the Committee will be Chief Economic Adviser, Secretary of Department of health research, Director General of Health Services, Vice-Chairperson of National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) and Joint Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas in Varanasi

- **The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi inaugurated the 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas on January 22, 2019 in his parliamentary constituency, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.** In the history of Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas, the event is being held for the first time in Varanasi, the cultural and spiritual capital of India.
- **For the first time, the three-day-long Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas convention is being organised from January 21 to 23** instead of January 9 to 11 to allow the NRIs to visit the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj and attend the Republic Day parade in New Delhi.
- **The convention was inaugurated in the presence of Mauritian Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth, the Chief Guest of the event.** Around 6,000 non-resident Indians (NRIs) are expected to take part in the three-day event.

Assam to give 10% quota to economically weaker sections in general category

- The Assam Government has **decided to give 10 percent quota in Government jobs and educational institutes to economically weaker sections in general category.**
- The decision was taken in the cabinet meeting held under the **Chairmanship of Chief Minister Sarbanand Sonowal in Guwahati.**
- The cabinet also approved guidelines for disbursement of Rs 5000 each to 5 lakh farmers of the state under the Mukhya Mantri Krishi Sa Sajuli Yojna for purchasing of tools and equipments.

Kinnar Akhara, the new feature at Kumbh Mela 2019

- **Kinnar Akhara**, a group of transgender saints pursuing religious activities, emerged as a very significant feature at **Kumbh Mela 2019 at Prayagraj.**
- **Akhara has provided a forum to transgenders to pursue a dignified life with religious rituals.**
- **Juna Akhara**, a traditional powerful Akhara of Sanyasi saints and seers, has given the recognition to Kinnar Akhara and has allowed to be part of Shahi Snan procession.
- Kinnar Akhara has set up a huge camp in sector 12 at Prayagraj Kumbh and it attracts hundreds of thousand devotees on daily basis.
- Visitors seeks blessings from the Akhara members.

Ministry of Culture to organise auction of Mementos received by the Prime Minister

- National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, under the aegis of Ministry of Culture, **will organise an auction of prestigious memorable gifts presented to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi from all across India.**
- The amount raised in lieu of auction will be used for the **Project 'Namami Gange'.**
- The physical auction will be conducted on January 27-28, 2019 at National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi.
- The e-auction will take place subsequently from January 29-31, 2019 for remaining items left after physical auction, on the portal www.pmmementos.gov.in.

Awards

Noted Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashashchandra awarded Saraswati Samman 2017

- **Noted Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashashchandra has been awarded Saraswati Samman,2017**, for his poetry collection in Gujarati named "**Vakhar**".

- This is the 27th edition of the prestigious award instituted by K.K.Birla foundation given every year to an outstanding work of an Indian citizen published during the last 10 years in any of the languages mentioned in Schedule 8 of the constitution.
- The award comprises of a citation and a plaque apart from award money of 15 lakh rupees. **Noted film director and author Gulzar gave away the award at a solemn function at National museum auditorium in New Delhi this evening.**
- Mr. Yashashchandra, recipient of the Padmashri in 2006, is known for seamlessly blending history with poetry. He has explored politics of the times, the larger and more immediate human conditions in his award winning work "Vakhar".

President Ram Nath Kovind confers Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019

- The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind on January 22, 2019 **conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019.**
- **The awards were presented to 26 shortlisted awardees including one joint award for National Child Award (now renamed as Bal Shakti Puraskar)** under the category of innovation, scholastic, sports, art and culture, social service and bravery.
- **Under National Child Welfare Awards category (now renamed as Bal Kalyan Puraskar),** 2 individuals and 3 institutions were awarded.

Vice President presents Chhatra Vishwakarma, Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana awards

- **Indian Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu presented the second Chhatra Vishwakarma Awards to students and their mentors and Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) awards to institutions** at an event organised by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) on January 21, 2019 at New Delhi.
- The awards challenge young students to come up with novel ideas that have a great potential to impact life in villages through technological interventions at the grass root level.
- Expressing his agreement with Mahatma Gandhi's statement that 'the future of India lies in its villages', the Vice President said that the development of villages is an essential precondition to the development of the nation.

Sports

Virat Kohli named ICC Test, ODI Player and Cricketer of the year 2018

- **Indian skipper Virat Kohli on January 22, 2019 became the first cricketer to win all the top three ICC individual awards including the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, the ICC Men's Test Player of the Year and the ICC ODI Player of the Year for his performances in 2018.**
- The Indian captain, who recently led India to its historic series win down under, was also named the captain of the ICC Test Team and the ODI Team of the year 2018, the line-ups of which were dominated by Indian players.
- Kohli, who accumulated a total of 1322 runs from 13 Tests, 1202 from 14 ODIs and 211 from 10 T20Is, became the first player to win all three awards together.
- **This is the second consecutive time that he has won the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year.** This was also his second successive ODI Player of the Year award.
- **Besides, Indian wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant claimed the ICC's Emerging Cricketer of the Year award.**

BCCI announces bonus of Rs 20 lakh each for senior selection committee members

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) **announced a bonus of Rs 20 lakh each for the senior selection committee members following India's maiden Test series win in Australia.**
- The selection committee comprises ***Chairman MSK Prasad, Devang Gandhi, Jatin Paranjpe, Gagan Khoda and Sandeep Singh.***
- Virat Kohli led India to a historic 2-1 win in the four-Test series before capping the Australian tour with a maiden 2-1 triumph in the ODI series.
- **The Chairman of the Committee Of Administrator (CoA), Vinod Rai** lauded the selectors for picking a balanced Indian squad during the Test and ODI series in Australia.