

Banking and Finance

India replaces Japan to be world's second largest steel producer

- **India has replaced Japan as the world's second-largest steel producing country, only behind China, which is the largest producer of crude steel accounting for more than 51 per cent of production**, as per the latest report by World Steel Association.
- The report noted that India's crude steel production in 2018 was at 106.5 MT, which is up by 4.9 per cent from 101.5 MT in 2017.
- The rise in India's crude steel production in 2018 means that India has replaced Japan as the world's second-largest steel producing country, as Japan produced 104.3 MT in 2018, which is down by 0.3 per cent as compared to 2017.
- On the other hand, China's crude steel output jumped by 6.6 per cent to 928.3 MT in 2018 from 870.9 MT in 2017. China's share also increased from 50.3 per cent in 2017 to 51.3 per cent in 2018.
- The global crude steel production reached 1808.6 MT for the year 2018 from 1729.8 MT in 2017, displaying a rise of 4.6 per cent.

IndusInd Bank launches co-branded credit card with PAYBACK

- **IndusInd Bank has announced the launch of 'IndusInd Bank PAYBACK Credit Card', a co-branded credit card in partnership with PAYBACK - the country's largest multi-brand loyalty program.**
- With the IndusInd Bank PAYBACK Credit Card, the customer will not only earn PAYBACK Points on all transactions on the co-branded credit card, but will also get additional PAYBACK Points on transactions made at over hundred PAYBACK partner brands - both in-store and online.

High Level Committee approves Central assistance of Rs 7,214.03 crore to States affected by natural disasters

- **The High Level Committee, chaired by the Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh, approved the additional Central assistance from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) of Rs 7214.03 crore to 6 States and one Union Territory.**
- The funds allotted to these states are - Rs 317.44 crore to Himachal Pradesh, Rs 191.73 crore to Uttar Pradesh, Rs. 900.40 crore to Andhra Pradesh, Rs. 127.60 crore to Gujarat, Rs. 949.49 crore to Karnataka, Rs. 4,714.28 crore to Maharashtra and Rs. 13.09 crore to UT of Puducherry.
- The meeting of the Committee was held to consider the additional Central Assistance to these six States and one UT affected by floods, landslides, cloudburst & cyclone Gaja and drought (kharif) during 2018-19.

Union Steel Ministry announces to set up Safety Directorate

- **The Union Ministry of Steel on January 28, 2019 announced to set up the 'Safety Directorate'.**
- The decision, regarding the same, was taken during the Consultative Committee Meeting of the Ministry in Goa. The meeting was chaired by Union Minister of Steel, **Chaudhary Birender Singh.**
- During the meeting, the Ministry discussed various issues including mining activities of CPSEs under Steel ministry and safety in steel plants.
- The Safety Directorate will oversee the safety standards in steel industry.

India and states

K J Alphons to inaugurate first Swadesh Darshan Project in Sikkim

- **K.J. Alphons, Union Minister for Tourism will on January 30, 2019 inaugurate the first project under the Swadesh Darshan Project of the Union Ministry of Tourism at the Zero Point, Gangtok, Sikkim.** This project was sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism in June 2015 for Rs. 98.05 crores.
- The project is officially named as **“Development of North East Circuit: Rangpo– Rorathang- Aritar- Phadamchen- Nathang-Sherathang- Tsongmo- Gangtok-Phodong- Mangan- Lachung-Yumthang- Lachen- Thangu-Gurudongmer- Mangan- Gangtok-Tuminlingee- Singtam”.**
- The development of Tourism in North Eastern Region has been prime area of focus for the Ministry of Tourism. In recent times, several initiatives for growth of domestic and international tourism in the region has been taken by the Ministry. '
- The Ministry sanctioned 16 projects for **Rs. 1349.04 crores covering all North Eastern States under its schemes of Swadesh Darshan and PRASHAD.**
- The Ministry has also set up Hotel Managements and Food Craft Institutes for creating skilled manpower in tourism and hospitality sector in the North Eastern Region.

Beating the Retreat ceremony held in Delhi

- **The four-day long celebrations of the 70th Republic Day concluded on January 29, 2019 with 'Beating the Retreat' ceremony, which was held at the historic Vijay Chowk in New Delhi.**
- The Beating Retreat' marks a centuries-old military tradition, when the troops ceased fighting, sheathed their arms and withdrew from the battlefield and returned to the camps at sunset at the sounding of the Retreat. The ceremony began with the arrival of Indian President Ram Nath Kovind guarded by his well decorated bodyguards.
- **This year, Indian tunes were the flavour of 'Beating the Retreat' ceremony.**
- The ceremony witnessed as many as 27 spectacular performances by the bands from the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and the State Police and Central Armed Police Force (CAPF).
- Out of the 27 performances, 19 tunes were composed by Indian musicians, which include Indian Star, Paharon ki Rani, Jai Janam Bhumi, Queen of Satpura, Vijay Bharat, Aakash Ganga, Gangotri, Namaste India, Samudrika, Jai Bharat, Young India, and Veerta Ki Misal.

Prakash Javadekar to inaugurate New Campus for National Museum Institute at Noida

- **Prakash Javadekar, Union Minister for Human Resource Development will inaugurate the new Campus of the National Museum Institute at A-19, Sector 62, NOIDA (Institutional Area).**
- Since its inception, the Institute has been one of the leading centers in the country for training and research in the field of art and cultural heritage.
- It imparts higher education leading to Master of Arts and Ph.D in the field of History of Art, Conservation and Museology.

PM to lay foundation Stone for extension of Terminal Building at Surat Airport; to attend the New India Youth conclave in Surat

- **The Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Surat and Dandi in Gujarat on January 30, 2019.**
- During the visit, **the Prime Minister will lay the Foundation Stone for the extension of Terminal building at Surat Airport.** The Terminal building is being constructed at a cost of Rs.354 crore with an area of over 25,500 square metres.

- In Surat, PM will interact with the youth at the New India Youth conclave. He will also inaugurate Smt. Rasilaben Sevantilal Shah Venus Hospital and visit the facilities there.
- PM's next destination will be Dandi in Navsari district of Gujarat. He will dedicate the National Salt Satyagraha Memorial to the nation on Mahatma Gandhi's death anniversary.

Nari Shakti is Oxford Dictionary's Hindi Word Of The Year 2018

- **Nari Shakti was chosen as the Hindi word of the year 2018 by Oxford Dictionary.**
- The announcement was made during a session at the ongoing Jaipur Literature Festival.
- The March 2018 recorded a large spike in the use of "Nari Shakti" as discussion began around Indian government's Nari Shakti Puraskar given by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- The word was selected by the Oxford Dictionary (India) with help of a panel of language experts.
- **In 2017, Oxford Dictionary had chosen 'Aadhar' as the word of the year.**

Ministry of Statistics, NCAER sign MoU for improving official statistical system of India

- **The Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** on January 29, 2019 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) for improving official statistical system of India.**
- Under the MoU, both the sides will use new data technologies, knowledge generation and knowledge sharing and capacity building in the field of Official Statistics.
- The MoU would strengthen and monitor the data quality and timeliness of various statistical products and services generated by the Ministry.

Awards

India bags the Award of Excellence for 'Best in Show' at New York Times Travel Show 2019

- **India received the Award of Excellence for 'Best in Show' at the recently concluded New York Times Travel Show 2019.**
- **The New York Times Travel Show 2019 is the largest travel show in North America** that was held during January 25-27, 2019 in New York, USA.
- Yogendra Tripathi, Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism received the Award of Excellence
- **The Union Ministry of Tourism participated as the 'Presenting Partner' in the New York Times Travel Show (NYTTS 2019)** organised at Jacob K Javits Centre, New York.
- A high level delegation led by Yogendra Tripathi and a number of stakeholders from India's tourism industry participated in the Show.

Sahitya Akademi Awards 2018 presented to 24 writers; Hindi writer Chitra Mudgal among winners

- **India's national academy of letters, Sahitya Akademi on January 29, 2019 presented the Sahitya Akademi Award 2018 to 24 writers.** The awards were given for 24 different Indian languages.
- **Renowned Hindi writer Chitra Mudgal, Dogri writer Inderjeet Kesar, Kannada writer KG Nagarajappa and Kashmiri story writer Mushtaq Ahmad Mushtaq were among the 24 winners.**
- Sahitya Akademi President, Chandrasekhar Kambar presented these awards at a function in New Delhi during the Festival of Letters, organised by Sahitya Akademi.
- The winners were announced by the Sahitya Akademi on December 6, 2018. Seven books of poetry, six novels, six short stories, three of literary criticism and two of essays won the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2018.

Appointments

Suman Kumari Appointed Pakistan's First Hindu Woman Judge

- **Suman Kumari has become the first Hindu woman in Pakistan to be appointed as a civil judge**, according to a media report.
- Suman, who hails from Qambar-Shahdadkot, will serve in her native district. **She passed her LLB. examination from Hyderabad and did her masters in law from Karachi's Szabist University**, Dawn reported.
- According to Pawan Kumar Bodan, her father, Suman wants to provide free legal assistance to the poor in Qambar-Shahdadkot. "Suman has opted for a challenging profession, but I am sure she will go places through hard work and honesty," the father said.
- Her father is an eye specialist while Suman's elder sister is a software engineer and another sister is a chartered accountant.

Days

Martyr's Day: Nation pays homage to Mahatma Gandhi on his death anniversary

- The nation pays homage to Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi on his 71st death anniversary today.
- **The day is also observed as Martyrs' Day. He was assassinated on this day in 1948.**
- President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra have paid tributes to Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi on his death anniversary today.
- In a tweet, Mr Kovind said, on Martyrs' Day the nation gratefully remembers Mahatma Gandhi and the countless freedom fighters who sacrificed their all for our Independence.