

# WEEKLY CAPSULE

## GENERAL AWARENESS

Week : 08 – 14' July 2019



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## **Economy**

### **NHAI Signs MoU with NIIF for funding highway projects**

**National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** signed an MoU with **National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)** for funding highway projects.

#### **Bodies involved:**

NIIF is an **investor-owned fund manager**, anchored by the Government of India (GoI) in collaboration with leading global and domestic institutional investors.

The **Indian government has 49 % stake in NIIF** with the rest held by **marquee foreign and domestic investors**.

NIIF was **set up as an alternative investment fund (AIF)** in December 2016 with a **planned corpus of ₹40,000 crore**.

**Headquarters: Mumbai.**

Its objective is **to provide long-term capital to the country's infrastructure sector**.

NIIF currently **manages three funds** each with its distinctive investment mandate namely (1) **Master fund**, (2) **Fund Of Funds** and (3) **Strategic Fund**.

The funds are **registered as Alternative Investment Fund (AIF)** with the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**.

### **Skill development ministry launches Kaushal Yuva Samwaad**

The **Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship** has announced launch of **"Kaushal Yuva Samwaad"** (A Youth Dialogue).

**Kaushal Yuva Samwaad** is aimed at **creating an open dialogue with the youth across all skill training centres** to hear their views which could help the Ministry in improving overall efficiency of its projects.

It will be **organized between 8th and 10th July 2019**.

It is being **organized across all Skill India training centres**, namely, **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras (PMKK)**, **Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)**, **Polytechnics**, **Institutes under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)**, **Jan Shikshan Sansthan**s, **DDU-GKY Centres** and other fee-based training centres across the country.

### **Production of Vande Bharat Express comes to a grinding halt**

The production of Vande Bharat Express has come to a halt at the Integral Coach Factory.

Vande Bharat Express, earlier named as Train 18, is India's fastest indigenous train which has been built by the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai under the Government's Make in India.

It was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi between New Delhi and Varanasi on February 15, 2019 and is running with no reported issues in the last six months.

It is India's first semi-high-speed train which will run from Delhi to Varanasi, with halts at Kanpur and Allahabad, at a maximum speed of 160 kmph by covering the distance in 8 hours.

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It is equipped with world class passenger amenities like On-board wifi entertainment, GPS based passenger information system, CCTVs, bio-vacuum toilets, rotating chairs in executive class, etc.

The express will have two travel classes: executive and chair car, similar to the Shatabdi.

Further, it has intelligent braking system with power regeneration for better energy efficiency thereby making it cost, energy and environment efficient.

It is also the first locomotive-less train in the country.

### Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IM-PDS)

The **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution** has launched a **new central sector scheme- Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IMPDS)**. It will be implemented during 2018-19 and 2019-20.

The IMPDS system is already **operational in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana and Tripura**, wherein a beneficiary can avail his share of food grain from any district in the state.

#### Key Objectives

- Implementation of **nation-wide portability of ration cards** to lift food grains from any fair price shop (FPS) across the country, moving towards **'one nation one ration card'**.
- Creation of **national level data repository**- for de-duplication of beneficiary data (Aadhaar based).
- **Use of advanced data analytics techniques** to bring about continuous improvements.

#### Significance

- It will bring **more transparency and efficiency in the distribution of food grains**.
- It will **improve the mechanism to identify fake/duplicate ration cards** and provide the **option to PDS beneficiaries to lift their entitled food grains** from the Fair Price Shops of their choice at the national level.
- The scheme will **ensure food security of migrant labourers** who move to other states to seek better job opportunities.

### Nearly half of global wages received by top 10%, survey finds

**International Labour Organisation** in its **Labour Income Share and Distribution dataset** has revealed that **top 10% earners in India made over 69% of the country's labour income** in 2017, in **contrast to 0.25% made by the bottom 10% earners**.

**Labour Income Share and Distribution dataset** developed by ILO offers two new indicators for major trends in the world of work, at national, regional and global levels:

- One provides the **first internationally comparable figures of the share of Gross Domestic Product** that goes to workers rather than capital through wages and earnings.
- The second looks at **how labour income is distributed**.

The **share of national income going to workers is declining**, from **53.7% in 2004 to 51.4% in 2017**.

Worldwide, the **income share of the middle 60% workers grew to 30.2% in 2017 from 23.6% in 2004**, while the share of the richest **20% of workers came down by 6.8 percentage points**.

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### Income Inequality in India

**Pay inequality has remained consistent** in India since 2004, although it has reduced at the global workplace in the last 13 years.

ILO report has found that **between 2000 and 2017, income inequality rose six times.**

**India's richest 10% own as much as 80.7% of the country's total wealth**, while 90% own only 19.3% of its total wealth.

### Launch of Phase-II of DBT in Fertilizer Subsidy

**Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers** launched the **Phase-II of the Direct Benefit Transfer of Fertilizer Subsidy (DBT 2.0).**

The **Department of Fertilizers (DoF)** has implemented the **Phase-I of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system** in fertilizer subsidy pan-India in Fertilizers **w.e.f. March 2018.**

DBT in fertilizer subsidy is **a step towards bringing ease of living in the lives of farmers** through **use of modern technology and plugging leakages**, pilferages and black marketing.

Phase-I DBT system in Fertilizers (DBT 1.0) envisaged **the release of 100% subsidy on various fertilizer grades to the fertilizer companies** on the basis of **actual sales made by the retailer to the beneficiaries.**

**A Project Monitoring Cell was set up at DoF** to oversee implementation of DBT exclusively.

The new initiatives of DBT 2.0 are as under:

**DBT Dashboards:** These dashboards provide various **reports regarding the Fertilizer Stock position at ports**, plants, in States, at District levels. The reports would facilitate real-time monitoring of the availability and sale of fertilizers within each State/UT.

**PoS 3.0 Software:** The **Multi-lingual facility would provide Aadhar virtual ID option for registration**, login and sale activity in DBT software.

**Desktop PoS Version:** Keeping in view the **various operational challenges viz. limited Point-of-Sale (POS) vendors**, rush of sales due to peak season etc. the department has developed a multilingual desktop version of PoS software as an alternative or added facility to PoS devices.

### Boost to Rural Road Connectivity

The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs** has approved the launch of the **third phase of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-III).**

Under the **PMGSY-III Scheme**, it is proposed to consolidate **1,25,000 Km road length in the States.**

PMGSY-III involves **consolidation of through routes and major rural links connecting habitations to Gramin Agricultural markets (GrAMs)**, higher secondary schools and hospitals.

It will **entail an estimated cost of Rs 80,250 crore.** The funds would be shared in the ratio of **60:40 between the Centre and State** for all States except for 8 North Eastern and 3 Himalayan States for which it is 90:10.

**Implementation period: 2019-20 to 2024-25.**

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### Centre issues fresh bid document for strategic disinvestment in Pawan Hans

Centre issued a **fresh bid document** for **strategic disinvestment in Pawan Hans**.

The **government holds 51 per cent stake in Pawan Hans**, which has a fleet of 43 helicopters. The remaining **49 per cent stake is with Oil and Natural gas Corporation (ONGC)**.

This is the third time in last 16 months; the government has sought to **attract a buyer for Pawan Hans**, which is estimated to have posted the loss to the tune of 72.42 crore rupees in the previous fiscal.

The **last date for submission of Expression of Interest (Eoi) is 22nd August** and intimation to the short-listed bidder is 12<sup>th</sup> August.

### Draft tenancy law fixes rent agreement rules on rent increase, security deposit

Recently, the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** has drafted a **'Model Tenancy Act' (MTA), 2019**.

The Tenancy law is a 'model act', because **land is a state subject and states will have the option to adopt or reject it**.

It envisages to **balance the interest and rights of both the owner and tenant** and to create an **accountable and transparent ecosystem** for renting the premises in disciplined and efficient manner.

#### Salient features of the draft:

- MTA stipulates a **robust grievance redressal mechanism** comprising of **Rent Authority, Rent Court and Rent Tribunal**.
- **Landlords will also be able to charge rents** that are to be decided by the respective state governments, on par with market rates.
- Also, It has been proposed to **cap the security deposit** equal to a maximum of two month's rent in case of residential properties and, a minimum of one month's rent in case of non-residential property.
- After coming into force of this Act, **no person shall let or take on rent any premises** except by an agreement in writing.
- **The Model Act provides for its applicability for the whole of the State** i.e. urban as well as rural areas in the State.
- It will be **mandatory for both the landlord** and the tenant to inform the rent authority after getting into an agreement.
- This will ensure that **a landlord does not arbitrarily increase the rent** in variance with what has been agreed to in the agreement.
- A **digital platform will be set up in the local vernacular language** of the State for submitting tenancy agreement and other documents.

### Government launches new scheme for Silk Sector

The Government of India has **allocated Rs. 2161.68 crore for three years i.e. 2017-2020** to its **Central Sector Scheme "Silk Samagra"** for the development of sericulture in the country.

The scheme is **being implemented by the Central Silk Board (CSB)**.

It focuses on **improving the quality and productivity of domestic silk** thereby **reducing the country's dependence on imported silk**.

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It comprises the following **four components**:

- Research & Development, Training, Transfer of Technology and I.T. Initiatives
- Seed Organizations
- Coordination and Market Development, and
- Quality Certification Systems (QCS)/Export Brand Promotion and Technology Up-gradation.

While the **R&D units develop technology packages**, impart training on improved technology programmes to stakeholders and **transfer the technology to the field through front line demonstration**, the seed production units produce basic and commercial seed of the improved Silkworm breeds developed by the Research Institutes.

### **Housing affordability has worsened over the past 4 years: RBI survey**

**Reserve Bank of India's** quarterly residential asset price monitoring survey (RAPMS) on housing loans has shown that **housing affordability has worsened over the past four years** as the **House Price to Income (HPTI) ratio** increased from **56.1 to 61.5 (from 2015 to 2019)**.

The RBI has been conducting a **quarterly Residential Asset Price Monitoring Survey (RAPMS)** since **July 2010 on housing loans disbursed by select banks** and housing finance companies (HFCs) across 13 cities.

**Mumbai (with a HPTI of 74.4)** remains the least affordable city in India, while **Bhubaneswar (54.3)** remains the most affordable city.

The **concept of price-to-income ratio is used by lenders** to measure affordability of residential property, essentially as a measure of purchasing power for home buyers.

The **LTV (loan to value) ratio** moved from **67.7% to 69.6% (2015 to 2019)** showing that **banks are getting more risk-tolerant in housing loans** and are willing to offer higher loans against the value.

**LTV is the amount of loan a lender is willing to give** and is calculated in terms of the percentage of the property value.

The **loan to income (LTI) ratio** also confirms **worsening housing affordability** (3 in March 2015 to 3.4 in March 2019).

### **MSME Schemes: Technology upgradation through the International Cooperation Scheme**

The **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)** is implementing **International Cooperation (IC) Scheme** with the **objective of enhancing the competency of MSMEs**, capturing new markets for their products, exploring new technologies for improving manufacturing capacity, etc.

The **Scheme was started during the Ninth Five Year Plan (under implementation since 1996)**.

The **latest guidelines related to the scheme were released in the year 2018**.

It is a **demand driven scheme under which financial assistance is provided on a reimbursement basis** to the eligible State/Central Government Organisations and Registered Industry Associations, societies /trusts associated with promotion and development of MSME sector.

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As per the existing guidelines, **the eligible organizations are facilitated for visit /participation of MSMEs** in international exhibitions /trade fairs/buyer-seller meet etc. abroad and also holding International conferences/seminars/ workshops in India, for technology infusion, exploring business opportunities, joint ventures etc.

### **For the first time ever, an Indian waterway is being used for transport of cargo between two countries**

For the first time ever, **an Indian waterway is being used for transport of cargo** between Bhutan and Bangladesh, using India for transit.

In a first ever movement of its kind, Minister for Shipping flagged-off a ship of the **Inland Waterways Authority of India**, carrying stone from Bhutan to be delivered in Bangladesh.

The ship - **MV AAI** - has set sail from **Dhubri in Assam** and will travel to **Narayanganj in Bangladesh**, over river Brahmaputra and the **Indo Bangladesh Protocol Route**.

This is the first time an Indian waterway is being used as a channel for transport of cargo between two countries, using India for transit.

### **Continuous rain damaged Asia's largest solar Power project in Rewa**

In Madhya Pradesh, **continuous rain has damaged Asia's largest solar Power project in Rewa**. The damage was caused after heavy rain triggered a mudslide.

Rewa Ultra Mega Solar is a **solar park in the Gurh tehsil of Rewa district** of Madhya Pradesh.

The project was **commissioned with 750 MW capacity in July 2018**.

Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Limited (RUMSL), **the implementing agency of the project**, is a joint venture between the **Madhya Pradesh Urja Vikash Nigam Limited (MPUVNL)** and the **Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI)**.

It is the first project **to get funding from Clean Technology Fund (CTF) in India**.

It is also the **first solar park in India to get World Bank funding**.

## **Finance & banking**

### **SEBI gets teeth to probe new-age cases**

The Finance Bill, 2019 has given the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** new powers **to act against entities that tamper or destroy electronic databases** or fail to furnish information.

A new **section (15HAA)** has been inserted in the SEBI Act, which states that **if a person tampers with information to obstruct or influence an investigation**, destroys regulatory data or tries to access data in an unauthorised manner then **the entity could be penalised up to ₹10 crore or three times** the unlawful gains, whichever is higher.

Though it is not yet clear whether **'regulatory data' and 'database' as mentioned in the section refers only to SEBI data** or even those maintained by exchanges, depositories and clearing corporations.

SEBI can now also **impose penalties of up to ₹1 crore on brokers** if they fail to issue a contract note to clients in the format as laid down by the exchanges. Earlier, only the lower limit of ₹1 lakh was prescribed.

These new powers assume significance as it is already probing the leak of sensitive data through WhatsApp and also recently passed fresh orders on the **National Stock Exchange (NSE) co-location matter**.

### **RBI board finalises 'Utkarsh 2022'**

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has finalised a **three-year roadmap**, named **Utkarsh 2022 to improve regulation and supervision**, among other functions of the central bank.

Utkarsh 2022 is a **medium term strategy in line with the global central banks' plan** to strengthen the regulatory and supervisory mechanism.

This specifically **includes central bank's proactive role** to avoid any other IL&FS debt default issue in future.

Earlier, **an internal committee of RBI was formed under former Deputy Governor Viral Acharya**, to identify issues that needed to be addressed over the next three years.

The RBI board also approved the **RBI's budget for the July 2019—June 2020 period**.

### **Airtel Payments Bank to sell Bharti AXA Life's term insurance**

Airtel Payments Bank has partnered with Bharti AXA Life Insurance to offer a life term insurance plan.

The product, Bharti AXA Life (Point of Sale) Saral Jeevan Bima Yojana, is a pure life term insurance plan which is aimed at the under insured and uninsured segments in India.

### **Vasool So-Ft' launched to digitize NPA recovery process**

Karnataka Bank Ltd has launched the web tool 'Vasool So-Ft' (Vasool So-Fast) for digitalising the Non-Performing Asset recovery process of the bank.

The digital tool for the recovery of stressed assets will provide an end to end digital solution. It will enable easy and faster processing, real time information and immediate decision making in the recovery area.

### **Punjab & Sind Bank sets up Cen-MARG**

Punjab & Sind Bank has set up a centralised hub "Centralised MSME & Retail Group". It will process retail and MSME loans for the better efficiency of branches in business acquisition.

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The Cen-MARG has been envisioned to ensure qualitative improvement in credit appraisal, improved turnaround time, uniform documentation, and efficient monitoring.

### Large exposures framework: Basel committee lauds RBI on strict rules

According to a **regulatory consistency assessment programme (RCAP)** conducted by the **Basel committee on banking supervision**, the **Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) rules on large exposures framework (LEF)** are stricter than those recommended by the Basel committee.

The assessment focused on the **completeness and consistency of the domestic regulations** in force on 7 June 2019, as applied to commercial banks in India.

**Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS)** is the **primary global standard setter for the prudential regulation of banks**. It has **45 members**, comprising central banks and bank supervisors from 28 jurisdictions.

The RBI implemented the **large exposures framework in December 2016** through a **circular modified in June 2019**. Most of the requirements came into effect on April 1, 2019.

The **requirements apply to all scheduled commercial banks** with the exception of regional rural banks.

### Deposits in Jan Dhan Yojana accounts crosses Rs 1 lakh crore

Deposits in **bank accounts opened under Jan Dhan scheme** have crossed the **Rs 1 lakh crore mark**.

As per the latest finance ministry data, the **total balance in over 36.06 crore Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana** accounts was at **Rs 1,00,495.94 crore** as on July 3.

The **PMJDY** was **launched on August 28, 2014**, with an aim to provide universal access to banking facilities to the people in the country.

### Reserve Bank working group recommends extension of market hours

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** released the draft report of the **Internal Working Group on "Comprehensive Review of Market Timings"**. Comments on the draft report are invited by July 31, 2019.

The RBI has, from time to time, been receiving requests for **extension of timings for certain markets** such as **currency futures** and **Over-the-Counter (OTC) foreign exchange market**.

Accordingly, in August, 2018, it announced **setting up an Internal Working Group (IWG)** – comprising officials of Departments of the Reserve Bank – **to review the timings of various markets** and the **associated payment and settlement infrastructure**.

#### Recommendations:

**Forex market:** It has suggested **calibrated extension of currency market hours**, from **9 am to 9 pm for both over-the counter and exchange traded**. Presently, the markets close at 5 pm.

The extension of market timings is expected **to provide benefits such as better pricing of post market hours information/data**, improved onshore price discovery, and possible shift of offshore volumes to onshore.

However, there is a view that it may entail higher costs to stakeholders.

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**Money market:** Call market timings may be extended till 6:00 pm, **co-terminus with RTGS customer window**, to facilitate liquidity management by banks.

**G-sec market:** The current market timings for G-sec markets may be retained, on account of lack of demand from participants.

### Govt to look at applicability of 20% tax on ongoing share buyback issues

The Finance Ministry has said that it will **look into the applicability of 20% tax proposed** in the 2019-20 Budget on the current share buybacks by listed companies.

A buyback is a scheme by which a **company repurchases a certain amount of its outstanding shares**. Once taken back, these shares are **extinguished by the company**.

It can be done **to improve the earnings per share** for continuing shareholders.

It can also be done **if promoters want to hike their stake in the company**, sometimes **to avoid any takeover threats**.

**To escape dividend distribution tax**, listed companies resort to buybacks.

A dividend is **a return given by a company to its shareholders out of the profits** earned by the company in a particular year. A tax called the Dividend Distribution Tax (DDT) is levied on the company paying the dividend.

Presently, the **effective rate is 20.3576%**.

To plug the differential tax treatment between buybacks and dividend payouts, the government has proposed that 20 % tax will be levied on the difference between the issue price and the buyback price of the share.

## **Social Issues**

### **Parliament passes Aadhaar and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill**

Parliament has passed the **Aadhaar and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019** with the Rajya Sabha approving it. The Lok Sabha had already passed the bill.

The bill envisages **strengthening of the Aadhaar Act as per the directions of the Supreme Court** and recommendations of Justice **B.N.Srikrishna(Retd) Amendments to Aadhaar** and other laws were necessitated after the Supreme Court's ruling on privacy.

The bill **seeks to amend Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016** and to further **amend the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885** and the **Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002**.

#### **The salient features of the amendments:**

No individual will be **compelled to provide proof of possession of Aadhaar number** or undergo **authentication for the purpose of establishing his identity** unless it is so provided by a law made by Parliament.

For the convenience of the general public in the opening of bank accounts, **it will allow the use of Aadhaar number for authentication on a voluntary basis** as an acceptable KYC document under the **Telegraph Act, 1885** and the **Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002**.

It gives **an option to children who are Aadhaar number holders** to cancel their Aadhaar number on attaining the age of eighteen years.

It prevents denial of services for refusing to, or being unable to, undergo authentication.

It provides for **establishment of Unique Identification Authority of India Fund**.

It provides for civil penalties, its adjudication, appeal thereof in regard to violations of Aadhaar Act and provisions by entities in the Aadhaar ecosystem.

### **Centre asks all Urban Local bodies to set up cell for monitoring Rain Water Harvesting**

Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry has released its Guidelines for urban water conservation.

The guidelines have been issued as part of the first phase of Jal Shakti Abhiyan which began on 1st of this month and will continue till 15th of September this year.

Key features of guidelines released:

All Urban Local Bodies across the country have been asked to set up a cell for monitoring of Rain Water Harvesting and revival of at least one water body in their areas.

The cell should monitor the extent of groundwater extraction and groundwater aquifer recharge. This information should be displayed at prominent locations for public awareness.

### **Reliance Jio ties up with Facebook for 'Digital Udaan'**

Reliance Jio ties up with Facebook for digital literacy initiative 'Digital Udaan'.

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The initiative will have audio-visual training in 10 regional languages. The initiative is announced for the first-time Internet users in the country.

The programme is being launched in nearly 200 different locations across 13 states.

### **RPF launched “Operation Thirst”, an All India Drive to crack down selling of unauthorised Packaged Drinking Water**

**Railway Protection Force (RPF)** launched “Operation Thirst”, an All India Drive to crack down selling of unauthorised Packaged Drinking Water.

To curb the menace of unauthorised Packaged Drinking Water (PDW) in Railway premises, an all India drive named “Operation Thirst” was launched on 08th & 09th July 2019 on the direction of DG/RPF, Railway Board, New Delhi.

During this, all the Zonal Principal Chief Security Commissioners (PCSCs) were asked to crackdown these unauthorised activities. Almost all major stations over Indian Railway were covered during this operation.

During the drive, 1371 persons were arrested for selling of packaged drinking water of unauthorised brands under different sections i.e. 144 & 153 of Rly. Act.

The special drive will be followed by continuous action by concerned PCSCs on this issue.

### **India lifted 271 million people out of poverty in 10 years: UN**

**Global Multidimensional Poverty Index - 2019 (MPI)**, released by the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) has revealed that there are vast inequalities across countries, and among the poorer segments of societies.

MPI-2019 edition is a revised version of MPI-2018.

The MPI captures both the incidence and intensity of poverty and tracks 101 countries on deprivations across ten indicators in health, education, and standard of living.

Index is developed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

As per report a single measure is not a sufficient guide to both inequality and multidimensional poverty, and studies such as the MPI, Human Development Index, and the Gini coefficient (which measures countries wealth- income distribution), can contribute important and distinctive information for policy action to effectively reduce poverty.

#### **Key Findings**

As per Index 1.3 billion people in the world are still multidimensionally poor.

Multidimensionally poor means that poverty is defined not simply by income, but by a number of indicators, including poor health, poor quality of work and the threat of violence.

Level of Inequality and poverty is very high in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

One in every three children (under the age of 10) and every second child below the age of 18 years is multidimensionally poor in the world.

India lifted 271 million people out of poverty between 2006 and 2016, (reduced from 0.283 in 2005-06 to 0.123 in 2015-16) recording the fastest reductions in the multidimensional

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**poverty index values** during the period with strong improvements in areas such as assets, cooking fuel, sanitation and nutrition.

**Jharkhand has reduced the incidence of poverty at a faster pace** than other regions (**reduced the incidence of multidimensional poverty from 74.9% in 2005-06 to 46.5% in 2015-16**).

### Health Dept officials inspect Women & Children Hospital

Recently, the Union **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** has launched “**LaQshya**” (**Labour room Quality Improvement Initiative**) to improve the **quality of care in the labour room and maternity operation theatres** in public health facilities.

Aim of the LaQshya program is **to reduce preventable maternal and newborn mortality, morbidity** and stillbirths associated with the care around delivery in the **Labour Room and Maternity Operation Theatre (OT)** and ensure respectful maternity care.

#### Implementation

The LaQshya program will be **implemented by all Medical College Hospitals, District Hospitals and First Referral Unit (FRU), and Community Health Centres (CHCs)** and will benefit every pregnant woman and new-born delivering in public health institutions.

Under the initiative, a **multi-pronged strategy** has been adopted such as **improving infrastructure up-gradation, ensuring the availability of essential equipment**, providing adequate human resources, **capacity building of health care workers** and improving quality processes in the labour room.

The Quality Improvement in the labour room and maternity OT will be assessed through NQAS (**National Quality Assurance Standards**).

### 88 manual scavenging deaths in 3 years

According to the **Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry**, despite a ban on manual scavenging from 1993, **620 cases of deaths of sanitation workers (while cleaning septic tanks and sewers) have been reported**, of which **88 occurred in the past three years**.

#### Manual scavenging

Manual scavenging refers to the **practice of manually cleaning, carrying, disposing or handling in any manner, human excreta from dry latrines and sewers**.

The practise of manual scavenging is **linked to India's caste system** where **so-called lower castes were expected to perform this job**.

Manual scavengers are **amongst the poorest and most disadvantaged communities in India**.

Frequent deaths occur as manual scavengers **don't even have adequate tools and protective gear to clean the manhole**. It often involves using the most basic of tools such as buckets, brooms and baskets.

## International News

### Iran breaches uranium enrichment cap set by troubled 2015 nuclear deal

Iran has **breached a uranium enrichment cap** set by a **2015 nuclear deal** and **warned Europe against taking retaliatory measures**.

Iran **surpassed the cap and reached 4.5 % enrichment**.

This was announced by the **country's atomic energy organisation spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi** who said that this level of purity completely satisfies the power plant fuel requirements of the country.

He hinted that **Iran might stick to this level of enrichment for the time being**, which is well below the more than 90 % level required for a nuclear warhead.

The UN nuclear watchdog, the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**, confirmed that Iran had enriched uranium to a level above the deal's cap.

The move came more than a year after United States pulled out of the landmark accord between world powers and Iran, which says it has lost patience with perceived inaction by the remaining European partners.

### UN nuclear agency to verify Iran enrichment announcement

The United Nations' nuclear watchdog, International Atomic Energy Agency, has said that it will verify Iran enrichment announcement that it will break the 2015 nuclear deal's limit on uranium enrichment.

IAEA is widely known as the world's "Atoms for Peace and Development" organization within the United Nations family.

It is the world's central intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical cooperation in the nuclear field. It works for the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology.

Though established as an autonomous organisation, independently of the United Nations through its own international treaty, the IAEA Statute, the IAEA reports to both the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council.

Headquarters: Vienna, Austria.

The IAEA has 171 member states. Most UN members and the Holy See are Member States of the IAEA.

The IAEA and its former Director General, Mohamed ElBaradei, were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005.

### Five Eyes security rift over Huawei

The U.S. has threatened to cut off intelligence sharing between the so-called Five Eyes unless its members ban 5G equipment from Huawei, fearing it could be a vehicle for Chinese spy operations.

The Five Eyes name refers to the security classification of intelligence documents: "SECRET – AUS/CAN/N.Z./U.K./U.S. EYES ONLY" or "FVEY."

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It is an anglophone intelligence alliance comprising Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

It began in 1946 when the United States and the United Kingdom agreed to an open exchange of intelligence on the communications of foreign nations.

It was expanded when Canada joined the alliance in 1948, followed by Australia and New Zealand in 1956.

Five Eyes allowed the national agencies to share monitoring infrastructure, and to track nuclear-armed Soviet submarines during the Cold War. The surveillance partnership strengthened following the 9/11 attacks on the United States, and monitoring of internet communications has since expanded exponentially.

### WHO declares Sri Lanka 'measles-free' nation

The **World Health Organization (WHO)**, has declared Sri Lanka, a measles-free country.

Sri Lanka is the **fifth country in the WHO Southeast Asia region to eliminate measles.**

The elimination of a disease means that there have been **zero new cases of the disease in the last three years.**

The country reported its **last case of measles in May 2016.**

The other countries in the region which have **eliminated measles in their geographical area are Bhutan, Maldives, DPR Korea and Timor-Leste.**

According to the latest Global Measles and Rubella Update, **India had 56,399 confirmed measles cases and 1,066 confirmed rubella cases** in the year 2018, thus quite far from eliminating the diseases in its boundary.

### Turkey receives first shipment of Russian missile system

Turkey has received its **first shipment of an advanced Russian air defence system**, setting the **stage for the escalation of a dispute with the US.**

The **S-400 includes advanced radar designed** to detect stealth fighters like the F-35.

Turkey is **set to deploy the system along the border** it shares with war-torn Syria.

S-400 Triumph is **one of the world's most advanced air defence systems** that can simultaneously track numerous incoming objects — all kinds of aircraft, missiles and UAVs — in a radius of a few hundred kilometres and **launch appropriate missiles to neutralise them.**

The **United States had warned Turkey it will face economic sanctions** if it goes ahead with the purchase of a Russian missile defense system.

The US told the Turkish government that it **cannot invest in both the Russian S-400 system and the ongoing F-35 fighter jet programme.**

### Goyal to attend India Day Conclave in London on July 16

The Union **Minister of Commerce & Industry** will address **India–UK Joint Economic Trade Committee (JETCO)** meeting in London.

The key issues that will be addressed at JETCO process include:

- Future of the UK-India Financial Services Relationship.

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- Opportunities in India's growing economy.
- Innovation in financial services (FinTech).
- Investing in stressed assets.
- Opportunities in green infrastructure financing.
- Investing in innovation (private equity/venture capital) and the future of insurance.

JETCO provides a forum to **United Kingdom companies to enhance their links and develop new partnerships with India business** and decision-makers.

**Government to Government negotiations**, which address issues of market liberalization and market access, are conducted through the JETCO process.

## **National News**

### **India's first Design Development Centre launched in Gujarat**

India's first Design Development Center 'Fashionova' was launched in the Textile city Surat.

The centre will promote the city in the field of the fashion design sector.

It will also fulfil the business needs from co-working space, technicians, expert advises to cognitive workshops and exposure to the industry. India ranked 86th in the Henley Passport Index 2019

The Henley Passport Index 2019 have ranked the Indian passport on the 86th position with a mobility score of 58.

The score points out that Indian passport holders can access 58 countries around the world without a prior visa. Japan and Singapore holds the top spot with a score of 189.

The index includes 199 passports and 227 travel destinations including micro-states and territories.

### **Honour for 'Plan Bee' that helped save jumbos**

**Plan Bee**, a unique strategy adopted by Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) to keep wild elephants away from railway tracks, has won the **best innovation award by Indian Railways**.

Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR)'s **Plan Bee**, involves **setting up of devices (an amplifying system imitating the buzz of a swarm of honey bees) near tracks**, which emit the **'buzzing' sound of swarming bees**, considered as a **natural repellent of elephants** (elephants have a natural fear of the perilous stings of the insects).

First one was **installed near the Guwahati railway station**.

The sound is **audible to elephants 600-700 meters away** and thus helps them in keeping away from the tracks.

According to wildlife experts, **India has the highest number of train accidents** involving elephants in the world.

### **10k monthly allowance to Padma Shri awardees by Odisha govt**

Odisha government has decided to give **monthly allowance of Rs 10,000 to Padma award winners** of the state facing financial problems.

The decision has been taken **on the basis of the Culture Department's report on the economic conditions of the Padma award winners** of the state.

### **Malware 'Agent Smith' has infected 15 million mobile devices in India**

A study by Check point research (a cybersecurity services provider) has revealed that **"Agent Smith", a new variant of smartphone malware**, has infected around **25 million Android devices globally**, including **15 million mobile devices in India**.

Agent smith malware **exploits known android vulnerabilities** and **automatically replaces installed apps** with **malicious versions without the user's knowledge or interaction**.

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Malware currently uses its broad **access to the resources of the mobile device to show fraudulent ads for financial gain**, and could easily be used for far more intrusive and harmful cyber-attacks such as banking credential theft and eavesdropping.

Check Point Research notes that the activity of Agent Smith resembles how other malware like **CopyCat, Gooligan, and HummingBad have operated in the past**.

“**Agent Smith**” was originally downloaded from the **widely used third-party app store**, 9Apps and **targeted mostly Hindi, Arabic, Russian and Indonesian-speaking users**.

### Setting up of Neutrino Observatory

The **Union Minister of Atomic Energy and Space** informed Rajya Sabha about the **India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO)**.

The Government of India has **approved a project to build the India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) at Pottipuram in the Theni District of Tamil Nadu**.

The project aims **to set up a 51000 ton Iron Calorimeter (ICAL) detector** to observe **naturally occurring atmospheric neutrinos** in a cavern at the end of an approximately 2 km long tunnel in a mountain.

This will help **to reduce the noise from cosmic rays** that is ever present over-ground and which would **outnumber the rare neutrino interactions** even in a detector as large as ICAL.

According to India, The **INO project does not disturb the ecosystem** around the site and does not release any radiation, as it does not have any radioactive substance. It measures cosmic rays.

## **Environment & Ecology & Agricultural News**

### **Plan for district eco-panels draws fire**

State-level officers tasked have objected to the creation of District-Level Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (DEIAA) as these authorities may have a conflict of interest and may not be technically competent.

The proposed Environment Impact Assessment Notification (EIA) 2019 aims to be an update of the EIA 2006.

The EIA 2019 makes the District Magistrate (DM) the chairperson of an expert authority, or the District Environment Impact Assessment Authority (DEIAA), that will accord environment clearance for “minor” mining projects.

However, State-level authorities called the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) have objected that making District Magistrate (DM) the chairman (of the DEIAA) would be self-serving for grant of environmental clearance. Also, the DM doesn't have technical expertise in matters of environment and ecology.

### **Madhya Pradesh to produce its own seeds soon**

**In Madhya Pradesh**, along with distribution and marketing of certified and **high quality seeds to farmers**, the **Madhya Pradesh State Cooperative Seed Federation** will produce seeds too.

The brand name of seeds will be '**Sah-Beej**'.

A plan has been made by **Madhya Pradesh State Cooperative Seed Federation** to produce **seeds from the next Rabi season**.

**A large number of seed committees present in the state** will be linked to the **seed federation** and these committees will help in the marketing of seeds.

## **Defence & Security**

### **BSF launches operation 'Sudarshan' to fortify Pakistan border in Punjab and Jammu**

The Border Security Force (BSF) has launched a massive exercise, code named 'Sudarshan', to fortify the 'anti-infiltration grid' along the Pakistan border in Punjab and Jammu.

The exercise will see the entire BSF's senior field brass, thousands of troops and machinery being deployed in these forward areas.

The operation was launched on July 1 and will cover the entire over the 1,000-km length of the India-Pakistan International Border. While Jammu shares about 485-km of the border with Pakistan, about 553-km of the front is in Punjab. It further runs down towards Rajasthan and Gujarat on India's western flank.

### **DRDO gets clearance for missile test facility in A.P.**

The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** has granted **environmental and Coastal Regulatory Zone** clearances for **setting up Missile Testing Launch Facility** on the **Bay of Bengal coast** and **Technical Facility at Gullalamoda village in Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh.**

Earlier, the **DRDO** had proposed to set up this project in the **Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh.**

Since this project is a **strategic requirement and of national importance** and cannot be located anywhere else. It is thus **exempted from the public hearing as per EIA notification 2016.**

#### **Other missile testing range in India:**

The **Integrated Test Range missile testing facility** is located on **Dr Abdul Kalam Island, formerly known as Wheeler Island, an island off the coast of Odisha.**

Missiles like Agni, Prithvi, Brahmos, Astra, Nirbhay etc are tested here.

### **Automated facial recognition: what NCRB proposes, what are the concerns**

**National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** has released a request **proposal for an Automated Facial Recognition System (AFRS)** to be **used by police officers across the country.**

Automated Facial Recognition System can **play a very vital role in crime prevention and criminal identification and verification (identifying criminals, missing people, and unidentified dead bodies)** by facilitating easy recording, analysis, retrieval and sharing of information between different organizations.

#### **Automated Facial Recognition System (AFRS)**

AFRS will be a **mobile and web application hosted in NCRB's** (which manages data for police) data centre in Delhi but **used by all police stations in the country.**

AFRS works by **comparing the new image of an unidentified person** often taken from CCTV footage with the existing database (AFRS maintains a database with photos and videos of people's faces) to find a match and identify the person.

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The artificial intelligence technology used for **pattern-finding and matching** is called “**neural networks**”.

### India successfully tests a new version of Brahmos missile

India has **successfully tested the vertical steep dive version of the Brahmos supersonic cruise missile**.

Made in India '**Brahmos Aerospace**' is also ready with a **longer 500 km range version of the Brahmos missile** that can be **fired from Sukhoi 30 fighter jets**.

**BrahMos Aerospace** is a joint venture company owned by the **governments of India and Russia** and its missiles are produced in India.

### Cabinet approves Grant of Organized Group 'A' Status to RPF

The Union Cabinet has approved **Grant of Organised Group 'A' status to Indian Railway Protection Force (RPF)**.

Grant of status of Organized Group 'A' service to RPF will **end stagnation, improve career progression of the officers and keep up their motivational level**.

In 2012, **High Court of Delhi directed Railways to grant Group 'A' Service status to RPF**. Same was upheld by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in 2019. Accordingly, Railway Board had proposed for grant of Organised Group 'A' Service status to RPF.

### About Railway Protection Force (RPF)

The **Railway Security Force (RSF) was established in The Railway Protection Force Act, 1957** renamed RSF to Railway Protection Force (RPF) and expanded the force's legal powers (**thus it's a statutory body**).

In **1980s** it was transformed into an '**Armed Force of the Union**' by giving enhanced powers.

### Defence Ministry signs MoU with IPFC and NRDC

In a major boost to **Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti**, a MOU was signed between the **Intellectual Property Facilitation Cell (IPFC), Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence** and **National Research Development Corporation (NRDC), Ministry of Science and Technology**.

The partnership between IPFC and NRDC is **expected to bridge the capacity shortfall and promote a culture of Innovation and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in Indian Defence industry**.

It may be recalled that **Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti** was launched with the aim to **inculcate IP culture in Indian defence manufacturing ecosystem**.

Under this mission, an **Intellectual Property Facilitation Cell (IPFC)** has been established under the aegis of **Directorate General Quality Assurance (DGQA)** which has trained more than 12,000 personnel on IPR and facilitating filing of more than 1000 new IPR applications.

The **Action Plan 2019-20 of MRGS** has also been approved by **Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh**, which includes training of additional **20,000 personnel from Public / Private Sector Industry and Armed Forces on relevance of IP Culture** to Indian Defence manufacturing industry and instituting a framework which enables full utilization of new ideas and innovation towards achieving self-reliance in defence sector.

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### What is Sikhs for Justice, pro-Khalistan group banned by Indian govt?

The Government of India **banned a separatist group, Sikhs for Justice (SFJ)**, on grounds of **secessionism**.

**Sikhs for Justice (SFJ)**, formed in 2007, is a **United States-based group seeking a separate homeland for Sikhs** — a “Khalistan” in Punjab.

**Gurpatwant Singh Pannun**, a law graduate from Panjab University and currently an attorney at law in the US, is the face of SFJ and its legal adviser.

SFJ has been **banned by the Home Ministry under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act**.

The secessionist campaign, called ‘**Referendum 2020**’, seeks to “**liberate Punjab from Indian occupation**” by holding the **first ever non-binding referendum** among the **global Sikh community** on the question of establishing Punjab as an independent country.

## Facts of the Week

### Events

#### **Giving indigenous India a voice through the visual medium**

**International Indigenous Film Festival of Kuching, Malaysia is showcasing films on indigenous Indian communities.**

Four Indian films showcased at International Indigenous film festival (held in Kuching, Malaysia) are:

- Dibi Durga by Niranjan Kujur.
- Niyamgiri-The Mountain of Law by Surya Shankar Dash (Odisha).
- Shot Awake by Anungla Zoe (Nagaland).
- Strength in Diversity by Chentei (Nagaland).

Festival showcases **films made by indigenous filmmakers in collaboration with the indigenous communities** with the intent to shed a light on and celebrate the huge and diverse native tribes and indigenous cultures, their issues and concerns and the problems afflicting them.

The festival aims to be **a platform for indigenous communities** from the world over to share, have a dialogue, and collaborate and to use cinema as a mode of united assertion, resistance, and activism against exploitative forces.

**India's first international indigenous film festival** was held in **Bhubneswar, Odisha in february 2019.**

#### **FIDIC ASPAC Conference 2019**

The **FIDIC ASPAC 2019 International Conference for Engineering Services** is taking place in **New Delhi, India from 7th to 9th July 2019.** It has been organized by the **Consulting Engineers Association of India (CEAI).**

The theme of the Conference is **“Quality Infrastructure for Clean and Sustainable Development”.**

#### **Focus Areas:**

- Infrastructure industry revolution
- Urban Mobility
- Coastal & Marine Development
- Energy and Quality of Life
- Business Opportunities with Regional Cooperation
- Young Professionals Open Forum
- Technological Developments

#### **Avoid politicisation of Parkash Purab: Minister**

The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) delegation invited PM Modi to attend a function to mark the **550th ‘Parkash Purab’ of Guru Nanak Dev on November 12 at Sultanpur Lodhi in Punjab.**

Prakash Purab is also known as Guru Nanak Gurburab, Guru Nanak's Prakash Utsav and Guru Nanak Jayanti.

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This is one of the most sacred festivals in Sikhism and celebrates the birth of the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak Dev.

Sikhs have been celebrating Guru Nanak's Gurburab on the Full Moon Day (Pooranmashi or Purnima) of the Lunar Month Kartik which falls around November.

### Kerala Startup Mission to host Women Startup Summit in Kochi on August 1

The **Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM)** is to host the **Women Startup Summit** in association with the **Indian Women Network of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)**.

The **'Women Startup Summit 2019'**, a one-day event aims at **encouraging aspiring women professionals** to take up their entrepreneurial journey and developing an inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystem in the State.

Theme of the Summit is **"Developing an Inclusive Entrepreneurship Ecosystem"**.

About **20 women startups** shortlisted from the **"She Loves Tech"** national grand challenge will be showcased in the summit.

She Loves Tech is a **global competition which was launched in 2015** to provide a **platform for women entrepreneurs and startups** dedicated to improving the lives of women globally.

**2019 Global Startup Competition** is the world's largest **startup competition focused on women and technology**.

For the first time She Loves Tech competition will be held in India in association with Kerala Startup Mission, the **nodal government organization for promoting the startups in Kerala**.

### Bonalu festival kicks off in Telangana

The annual **Bonalu festival** kicked off at the **Jagadamba temple in historic Golconda Fort, Telangana**.

**Bonalu is celebrated every year in the state during the first month of the monsoon season.** Bonalu is the **"state festival"** of Telangana.

### PM greets people on Kharchi Pooja

The **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** greeted the **people of Tripura** on the start of the auspicious **Kharchi Pooja**.

**Kharchi Puja** is **one of the most popular festivals in Tripura**. It is celebrated at **Agartala (Puran Agartala)** in the temple premises of **fourteen gods**.

It's a **week-long royal Puja** which falls in the month of July on the eighth day of the new moon.

The word **Kharchi** is derived from the word **Khya** which means **earth**. **Kharchi Puja** is basically done **to clean the post menstrual phase of mother earth's menstruation**.

On the day of the Puja, **the fourteen gods are carried to river Saidra** by the members of chantai. The gods are **bathed in the holy water** and are brought back to the temple.

**Animal sacrifice** is also an important part of this festival.

### 2nd India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue begins

The **2nd India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue** begins in **New Delhi**.

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It was held under the chairmanship of NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar and Deputy Minister of the Economic Development of Russia, Timur Maksimov. The first Dialogue was held in **St. Petersburg in November 2018**.

### Films Division to have fortnightly public screenings of acclaimed documentary films

A documentary film club "KSHITIJ" is being launched at Films Division.

KSHITIJ is a documentary film club at **New Museum Building, Films Division Complex, Mumbai**.

It is being launched by **Films Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India**, in association with **Indian Documentary Producer's Association (IDPA)**.

The public screenings will be organized on the 2nd and 4th Friday of every month during 5:00 pm - 6:30pm at **Films Division Complex**, followed by a short interaction of audience with the director / curator of the film.

The acclaimed documentary film "Secret Life of Frogs" by **Ajay & Vijay Bedi** will be screened as the inaugural film.

### 36th Meeting of the Central Apprenticeship Council (CAC)

The **Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship** organised the 36th meeting of the **Central Apprenticeship Council (CAC)** in **New Delhi**.

The 36th CAC meet under the chairmanship of **Minister of MSDE**, aims to meet the aspirations of the Indian youth who strive to gain on-the-job training and secure better opportunities for employment.

## Appointments

### Nalin Shinghal appointed CMD of BHEL

**Nalin Shinghal** has been appointed as the chairman and managing director of **Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited**.

He will replace **Atul Sobti** as the chairman and managing director of **BHEL**.

### Harideesh Kumar appointed as Director of IBPS

**B Harideesh Kumar** has been appointed as director of **Institute of Banking Personnel Selection** for a period of three years. Earlier, he was the **Executive Director of Canara Bank**.

### Kyriakos Mitsotakis becomes Greece's new PM

**Kyriakos Mitsotakis** was sworn in as the prime minister of **Greece**.

Mitsotakis is the son of former **Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis**, one of the country's longest serving parliamentarians.

### Shailesh Tinaikar assumes charge as Force Commander of UN mission

**Lieutenant General Shailesh Tinaikar** of India assumes charge as **Force Commander of United Nations Mission in South Sudan**.

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Shailesh Tinaikar has been awarded the Sena Medal and the Vishisht Seva Medal for Distinguished Service.

### Rahul Dravid appointed NCA's Head of Cricket

BCCI has formally appointed Rahul Dravid as the National Cricket Academy's Head of Cricket.

Dravid will oversee all cricket related activities at NCA and will be involved in mentoring, coaching, training and motivating players, coaches and support staff at the NCA.

### Arun Kumar appointed as DGCA chief

Arun Kumar has been appointed as the Director General of aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation. He will replace BS Bhullar.

### MN Rao appointed DG of Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guard

The Central government appointed M Nageswar Rao, as the Director General of Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guard. Rao will replace former CBI Chief Alok Verma.

### LinkedIn appoints Ashutosh Gupta as country manager for India

LinkedIn has appointed Ashutosh Gupta as the new country manager for India operations. Gupta will replace Mahesh Narayanan, who was the country manager for India for period from January-June 2019.

### SBI's Anshula Kant appointed as MD and CFO of World Bank

India's Anshula Kant has been appointed as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the World Bank.

Anshula Kant will be the first woman Chief Financial Officer of the World Bank.

As Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer, she will be responsible for:

- Financial and risk management of the World Bank Group.
- Oversight of financial reporting.
- Working closely with the World Bank Chief Executive Officer on the mobilization of financial resources.

### Vikas Swarup appointed as Secretary of Overseas Indian Affairs

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Shri Vikas Swarup, High Commissioner in Ottawa as Secretary (Consular, Passport, Visa and Overseas Indian affairs) in the Ministry of External Affairs with effect from 01.08.2019.

## Awards

### Tezpur University bags GYTI Award for third consecutive year

SRISTI (Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies and Institutions) celebrates the creativity and innovation of young technological students by recognising their outstanding projects with Gandhian Young Technological Innovation (GYTI) Awards.

These Awards celebrate the spirit of student innovation in all the fields of engineering, science, technology and design through extremely affordable/frugal solution or the ones pushing the technological edge.

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Tezpur University accomplished a rare hat-trick of different sorts by bagging the prestigious Gandhian Young Technological Innovation (GYTI) Awards for the third consecutive year.

The Vice President of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu presented the student trio of Saurav Jyoti Sarma, Abhijit Nath and Chanddeep S. Gogoi of Tezpur University the award for the year 2019

### Ajay Banga, Azim Premji to receive excellence awards from USISPF

The US-India Strategic Partnership Forum has announced that Mastercard CEO and President Ajay Banga and Wipro Chairman Azim Premji will receive the 2019 Global Excellence Awards.

This is the Second Annual Leadership Summit of USISPF.

They have been honoured with the awards for their significant contribution to strengthening economic ties between the US and India.

### Gully Boy' wins NETPAC award in Bucheon film festival

Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar's directorial 'Gully Boy' has won the Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema (NETPAC) Award at the 23rd Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival (BIFAN) in South Korea.

## Sports

### Arjen Robben announces retirement from football

Dutch winger Arjen Robben has announced his retirement from football at the age of 35 after a 10-year spell with German giants Bayern Munich.

He has played 96 international matches for the Netherlands, scoring 37 goals, and starred in the team which reached the 2010 World Cup final.

### 21st Commonwealth Table Tennis C'ship to be hosted in Odisha

Odisha will host the 21st Commonwealth Table Tennis Championship in Cuttack, from July 17 to 22.

The tournament has received entries from 14 associations, consisting of India, Singapore, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, England, Scotland, Wales, Jersey, Australia, Cyprus, South Africa, Nigeria, Pakistan.

### U.S. wins FIFA Women's World Cup 2019

United States wins FIFA Women's World Cup 2019 held in Lyon, France.

They defeated the Netherlands with a score of 2-0. This is the 4th world cup title for the US's women football team.

### Copa America 2019: Brazil wins Title on home soil

Ten-man Brazil held on to win the Copa America on home soil despite Gabriel Jesus's dismissal with a 3-1 victory over Peru.

Jesus scored the decisive goal after a penalty from Peru captain Paolo Guerrero cancelled out Everton's opener for hosts Brazil at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana stadium.

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A last-minute penalty from substitute Richarlison sealed a win for Brazil which handed the South American giants their ninth Copa triumph and first since 2007.

### World Youth Cup: Arinjeeta Dey wins silver medal

**Arinjeeta Dey**, a 10-year-old girl, has won a silver medal in the World Youth Cup held in Umag, Croatia.

The tournament was organised by World Karate Federation affiliated to the International Olympic Association.

### Vinesh, Divya wins gold at Wrestling Grand Prix of Spain

Wrestler **Vinesh Phogat** has won a gold medal in the 53kg category, while **Divya Kakran** has won the gold medal in the 68kg category at the Grand Prix of Spain.

**Pooja Dhanda (57kg)** has won a silver after losing the title clash to Russia's Veronika Chumikova.

### Dutee Chand wins gold in Summer University Games

**Dutee Chand** from Odisha has won the gold medal in the women's 100 metre sprint at the 30th Summer University Games in Naples, Italy.

This is the first time an Indian has won a 100-metre gold at this global event.

### Gold medals for India in Commonwealth Championships

**Rakhi Halder** and **Davinder Kaur** has won a gold medal each in the senior women's section of weightlifting in the Commonwealth Championships.

**Davinder Kaur** has won the gold medal in women's 59kg event. While **Rakhi Halder** has won the gold medal in the 64kg category. The Championship is taking place in Apia, Samoa.

### Mexico wins CONCACAF Gold Cup final

**Mexico** defeated **USA** to claim their eighth CONCACAF Gold Cup title. **Jonathan Dos Santos** scored the winning goal in 73rd min for Mexico in the thrilling final.

## Important Days

### International Day of Cooperatives: 6 July

The United Nations observes first Saturday of July every year as International Day of Cooperatives.

The day is celebrated to increase the awareness of cooperatives. The event underscores the contributions of the cooperative movement in resolving the major problems addressed by the United Nations.

**Theme for 2019: COOPS 4 DECENT WORK.**

### World Population Day 2019

**World Population Day** is observed on **July 11** every year.

The day is aimed to shift the focus towards the urgency and the significance of issues related to population.

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World Population Day was **established by the United Nations Development Programme in 1989**. World Population Day, which is being celebrated for over three decades, is meant to **raise awareness about solutions** related to the issues of growing population.

**UN Council every year decides the theme of World Population Day** but in **2019 specific theme is not decided** and calls for global attention to the unfinished business of the 1994 **International Conference on Population and Development**.

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