



WEEKLY CAPSULE  
3<sup>rd</sup> WEEK OF FEBRUARY  
(16<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup>)

## ECONOMY

### **PNB Fraud amounted to 11,400 crore:**

A set of bank officials of Punjab National Bank (PNB) in connivance with jewellery merchant **Nirav Modi** have defrauded around **Rs 11,345 crore** or **\$ 1.8 bn.**

#### **What is the fraud about?**

They used [fake PNB guarantees to secure loan from overseas branches of Indian banks.](#) They claimed showing these guarantees that they needed cash to import pearls.

This fraud started in 2011 when a senior PNB official in Mumbai branch started issuing such fake guarantees or undertakings. They used the SWIFT messages to avoid internal detection. When the employee involved retired in 2017, the scam gradually came to light.

Many **other banks** such as Axis bank and Allahabad banks too **are affected** as they were approached by these fraudsters to get loans in cash.

PNB has filed a case in this regard with CBI and Government too has asked all banks to send reports involving this case or other such incidents latest by the end of this week.

*About PNB:*

- *India's **second largest Public Sector Bank.***
- *Headquarter- **New Delhi** CEO- **Sunil Mehta***

### **WPI for all commodities for Jan 2018 risen by 0.1%:**

- The wholesale inflation measured through monthly **WPI**, stood at **2.84 %** for January 2018.

*About WPI:*

- **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)** is measured by **Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP)** under **Ministry of Commerce**, has **3 components**: Primary articles, fuel and energy, **manufactured products** (highest weight age).



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## **India Signed Second Loan Agreement with New Development Bank:**

- India Signed Second Loan Agreement with **New Development Bank (NDB)** for USD **100 Million** for Rajasthan Water Sector Restructuring Project for Desert Areas.
- **Objective of this Project-** rehabilitate the 678 km long **Indira Gandhi Canal** system built during 1958-63 to prevent seepage, conserve water, and enhance water use efficiency.

*About New Development Bank (NDB):*

- Also known as **BRICS Development Bank**.
- It is a multilateral development bank (like World Bank or Asian Development Bank) established by **BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa)**.
- Headquarter- **Shanghai** President- **V K Kamath**

## **Draft of National Automobile Policy finalized:**

**Department of Heavy Industry** has formulated the final draft of National Automobile Policy for holistic development of automobile sector in India.

### **Salient features:**

- Adopt a long-term roadmap for emission standards beyond **BSVI** (Bharat Stage 6 which will come into effect from 2020)
- Roll out **CAFÉ norms till 2025** and set up incentives/penalties.
- For tax purposes, vehicles should be classified based on length and CO2 emission
- Harmonize AIS (Automotive Industry Standard) and BIS (Bureau of Indian standard) on safety critical parts over next 3 years
- Scale-up of indigenous R&D with commercially viable innovations
- Fast track adoption of Bharat New Vehicle Safety Assessment Program

**What is CAFÉ norm?**



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Corporate Average Fuel **Economy** (CAFE) norms to improve the average fuel efficiency of cars. They were first introduced in USA after the Arab oil embargo of 1973-74.

**What is Bharat Stage norm?**

BS norms or Bharat Stage Emission norms are emission standards adopted by Government of India to regulate pollution from motor vehicles. Based on Euro norms, it was first introduced in 2000 as BS- 1 and progressively more stringent norms have been introduced.

From April, **2017 BS- 4** has been implemented all across India.

*The government has already decided to jump directly to **BS- 6** from BS- 4 from 2020.*

## **NPCI accorded consent to roll out Whatsapp BHIM UPI Beta Launch:**

- **NPCI (National Payment Corporation of India)** has given its consent to roll out **WhatsApp BHIM UPI beta launch**. It is a **payment app by whatsapp**.
- But with a **limited user base of 1 million** and low per-transaction limit. Full feature product will be released once the beta test is successful.
- It will work on **multi-bank model**. Four banks will join the multi-bank BHIM UPI model in phases. It helps **distribution of transaction load** and **integrate popular apps** easily.
- NPCI said it will allow the full-scale public launch of any Unified Payments Interface (UPI)-enabled app only if the app fulfils the principles of interoperability.

**What is NPCI?**

National Payment Corporation of India (**NPCI**) is an umbrella organization for **all retail payment systems** in India set up in **2008** as a **not-for-profit organisation** registered under **section 8 of the Companies Act 2013**.

## **NABARD launched Rs 1,918 cr area development plan for Punjab:**



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- **NABARD** announced area development plans worth **Rs 1,918 crore** for **Punjab** to supplement farmers' income.
- Under this plan, the activities like dairy, vegetable cultivation, bee keeping, and mushroom growing will be promoted.

*About NABARD:*

- *Full form- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development*
- *It is a development financial institution working for expanding credit to agriculture and rural development set up in **1982** under **NABARD act of 1981***
- *Chairman- **Harsh Kumar Bhanwala** Headquarter- **Mumbai***

### **PhonePe partnered with IOCL for deployment of PoS terminals:**

- Digital payments entity **PhonePe**, has partnered with **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)** for adoption of its indigenously-designed Point of Sale (POS) device at IOCL retail outlets.
- Customers can pay using UPI, credit and debit cards, PhonePe wallet and other external wallets like Jio Money & Free charge for their fuel purchases, through the PoS device at 30 IOCL retail outlets in Bangalore. It has a plan to establish a million PoS terminals across 50 cities in India.

### **Bajaj Finserv's Sanjiv Bajaj named EY entrepreneur of the year:**

- Business consultancy firm **EY (Earnest & Young)** has **named Bajaj Finserv's Sanjiv Bajaj as the entrepreneur for 2017**. He will receive the award in a ceremony in **Monte Carlo** in June.
- The company also **conferred E. Sreedharan (metro man of India) with the lifetime achievement award**. He was crucial in Delhi, Kolkata, Lucknow and Kochi rail project.

*About EY:*

- *One of the **Big Four** professional service firms.*
- *Headquarter- **Mumbai** CEO & Chairman- **Mark Weinberger***



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### **Milk basket is 'Start up of the year' 2017:**

- **Milk basket** awarded as the 'Start up of the year' 2017 at the 7th Small Business Award organized by Franchises India Group dedicated to **young SMEs** (Small and Medium Enterprise) aged 7 years or less.
- Launched in early 2015, **Milk basket** is **India's first and largest daily micro-delivery service**.

### **MoS agriculture inaugurated 1st phase of Agri Bazar in South Goa:**

- Union Minister of state for agriculture and farmers' welfare **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** inaugurated the **first phase of Agri Bazar in Goa**.
- Agri Bazar is a multi-facility agricultural complex of the Goa State Agricultural Marketing Board. It is disabled friendly and offers enhanced and modernized facilities for traders, cold storage and enhanced storage for farmers, ripening facility etc., **built under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana**.

### **TCS got listed as World's best employer for 3rd consecutive time:**

- **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** has been recognized as the **world's best employers** by the **Top Employer Institute** for the **consecutive third year**, selected among 1300 companies in 113 countries
- Earlier, TCS was listed as the World's best employer the Forbes 2017 Global 2000 list and featured in the Fortune magazine's Change the World 50.

### **SBI launched global customer service centre for NRIs in Kochi:**



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- State Bank of India (SBI) **launched its Global NRI Centre (GNC) in Kochi**; It is a one-stop customer service point for all NRI banking-related activities.
- To further enhance the service experience for NRIs, the bank also launched other services such as wealth management, SBI Intelligent Assist, free post-box, and remittance facility for US-based customers.

About SBI:

Headquarter- **Mumbai**

Chairman- **Rajnish Kumar**

*It was nationalized in 1955 through State Bank of India Act.*

### **PNB arm, IFC tied up to raise \$800 mn for affordable housing:**

- **PNB Housing Finance Ltd** has tied up with **International Finance Corporation (IFC)** to raise \$800 million for **green and affordable housing** in India.
- **IFC** is an international finance institution and a part of **World Bank Group** which encourages **private investment in developing countries** and PNB Housing Finance Ltd is a **subsidiary of Punjab National Bank (PNB)**.
- Out of **\$ 800 mn**, IFC will bring in \$ 400 mn and the rest will come from IFC.
- PNB Housing will issue Masala Bonds to raise their money.

#### ***What is Masala bond?***

*These are rupee denominated bonds issued outside India to raise capital overseas.*

*When such rupee denominated bonds are **issued in India**, these are called **Maharaja bonds**.*

**IFC was the first** to launch masala bonds in **2014** to raise **1,000 crore** for infrastructure projects in India.

**HDFC became the first Indian company** in **2016** to issue masala bond to raise 3,000 crore.

**NTPC launched first corporate green masala bond** in 2016.

**Cab aggregator Ola launched 'Auto Unnati'** which is a comprehensive benefit programme for auto drivers:



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- It provides them '**Chalo Befikar**' (Move Tension free) insurance scheme, family welfare initiatives and performance based financial benefits.
- The insurance scheme provides a cover of **5, 00, 00 rupees at zero cost** for every Ola auto driver. It is the first such initiative in this industry.

### **No reservation chart on train from 1st March:**

- The Ministry of Railways has instructed all rail zones to discontinue pasting reservation charts on reserved coaches of all trains from 1st March, launched as a pilot project at all A1, A and B category stations (categorized based on revenue).
- Instead digital charts will be displayed where chart plasma system has been installed.
- In 2016, Indian Railways had launched a no-reservation chart concept at Bengaluru City and Yeshwantpur railway stations which helped Railway save 60 lakh rupees.

### **Fairfax to acquire 51% stake in Catholic Syrian Bank:**

- **Fairfax Holdings Ltd** will buy **51% stake** in **Catholic Syrian Bank (CSB)**.
- It is the [first ever takeover of a bank by a foreign institution](#).
- It is a deal of around **Rs 12, 000 crore**.
- Fairfax is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Canadian billionaire Prem Watsa-owned Fairfax Financial Holdings.

About CSB:

Headquarter- **Thrissur**; founded in **1920** and serve mostly in Kerala and Tamil Nadu

CEO- **Anand Krishnamurthy**

Motto- **Support all the way**

### **Nasscom expectED marginally higher IT export revenue growth:**





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- Software industry lobby **Nasscom** projected revenue growth of **7-9%** for the industry in FY19.
- On the sidelines of the ongoing **World IT Congress in Hyderabad** on 20<sup>th</sup> Feb, NASSCOM **President R. Chandrasekhar** said, the digital industry is growing at a fast **pace of 30%**.
- **Start-ups** sector grew by **25-30 %** with 700 more start-ups coming into being.
- **E-commerce** grew by 17 % with focus on sectors like e-travel.

**About NASSCOM:**

*The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) is an association of IT industry. It was established in **1988** as a non-profit organization.*

*Headquarter- **New Delhi***

**Suresh Prabhu said 40% of GDP to come from exports by 2025:**

- Union Commerce Minister **Suresh Prabhu** has said that the government will soon come out with a comprehensive strategy to increase the share of global trade to **40 per cent of GDP**. At present, exports constitute only about **18 %** of India's GDP which currently stands at **2.6 trillion dollars**.
- India aiming to enter the **5 trillion dollar economy** with driving forces being manufacturing, services and agriculture. He lauded **Maharashtra's** effort to become **a \$ 1 trillion economy by 2025**.
- He was speaking at **Global Investor Summit** currently being held in **Mumbai**.

**PM inaugurated World IT Congress 2018:**

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated **World Information Technology Congress 2018 in Hyderabad** through video conference.
- **Theme- "Future Enterprises"**
- Organized by- Telangana Government, NASSCOM, World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA)





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- This is the **first time India is hosting** a World IT Congress and **second time the event is taking place in Asia** after Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) in 2008.
- World IT Congress is a **biennial event** (in every two years) which provides a common platform to all stake holders of the IT industry.

### **IWAI engaged KPMG as consultant for Jal Marg Vikas Project:**

- The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has **engaged KPMG** for **asset management and market development for Jal Marg Vikas Project**. The project is also called **National Water Way-1** providing inland river connectivity in river Ganga.
- The project is implemented with the help of **World Bank**.

### **Cabinet approves auction methodology of coal mines to private players:**

- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** has approved methodology for auction of coal mines to private sector
- It will now allow commercial coal mining by private sector.
- Earlier Coal India Limited (CIL) had a monopoly over coal production and private players could be allotted coal block only for installing integrated power plant (that supplies electricity to their plant) not for commercial production.
- Necessary changes will be brought in the Coal Mines (Special Provision Act) 2015 and Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation Act) 1957.

### **Cabinet approval for India-Morocco Cooperation Agreement in Railway sector:**

- The Union Cabinet has approved a railway cooperation agreement with Morocco National Railway Office (MNRO) to enable technical cooperation, expert mission, exchange of staffs and personnel etc.

*About Morocco:*

*Capital – **Rabat***

*Currency- **Dirham***



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## **Transmission charge waiver to solar and wind energy till 2022:**

- The Union Power Ministry has extended waiver of **Inter-state power transmission charge** for **solar and wind energy** projects commissioned till 31st March, **2022**. The waiver will be available for 25 years from the date of commissioning provided developers sign power purchase agreement with entities.

Background:

*India has an ambitious target of producing **175 GW** renewable energy by **2022**. It comprises of **100 GW solar energy**, **60 GW wind energy**, **10 GW from bio-mass** and **5 GW from small hydro projects**. As per **Paris Pledge**, India has committed to increase the **share of non-fossil fuel** to **40% by 2030**.*

## **RBI's Malegam panel to look into NPA issue and bank fraud:**

- RBI has constituted an **expert panel under former RBI board member Y H Malegam**. Other members- **Bharat Doshi** (member of the RBI board); **S Raman** (former chairman and MD of Canara Bank and former whole-time member of SEBI); and **Nandkumar Saravade**. A K Misra is the member Secretary.
- **Purpose-** **examine the rising incidence of fraud and its remedy, divergence** in asset classification (regarding **bad loans**) as reported by bank and the auditors.
- Background- the **PNB fraud** amounting to **11,400 crore** by misusing the **SWIFT**.

**What is SWIFT?**

*It stands for the **Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications**.*

*It is an **international messaging network** used by financial institutions to securely transmit information and instruction. A **unique code** is assigned to each financial organization consisting of **8 or 11 characters**. First four characters are institute code, next two are country code, and next two are city/location code. Last three are optional but often assigned to branches.*



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### **Capital First got NHB approval for merger with IDFC bank:**

- **National Housing Bank (NHB)** has allowed the **merger of Capital First with IDFC bank**, merger will create a combined entity of **88,000 crore**.
- The share swap ratio for the merger is fixed at 139:10, meaning IDFC Bank will issue 139 shares for every 10 shares of Capital First.
- Currently, private equity firm Warburg Pincus holds 35.97 per cent in Capital First.

#### ***About Capital First:***

*Founded in 2012 by V Vaidyanathan and headquartered in Mumbai.*

#### ***About NHB:***

*Set up in 1988 under the **NHB Act of 1987**.*

*It is the apex housing financing institution in India **fully owned by RBI**.*

*Headquarter- **New Delhi***

### **Agriculture ministry added six new features in e-NAM platform:**

- The agriculture ministry has added **six new features** in the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform to make it more user friendly.
- These are: MIS (Management Information System) dashboard for better analysis, BHIM payment facility by traders, mobile payment facility by traders, enhanced features on mobile app such as gate entry and payment through mobile, integration of farmer's database and eLearning module in e-NAM website.
- e- NAM was launched in 2016 to provide **competitive and better price to farmers** through online competitive bidding of their products. Now real time bidding process, bidding price etc will be visible.

### **Cabinet approval for National Urban Housing Fund:**

- Union Cabinet has approved the creation of **Rs 60,000 crore National Urban Housing Fund (NUHF)** to fund Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (Urban), aims to build **1.2 crore affordable houses in urban areas by 2022**.



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- NUHF will be under Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC). It will facilitate raising capital to plug in shortfall in budget allocation.

*Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (Urban):*

*It is a part of the vision of 'Housing for all by 2022'. It aims at providing houses to all urban poor by constructing 2 crore houses across India. Beneficiaries are: BPL people, Economically Weaker Section (EWS) and Low Income Group (LIG), Middle Income Group (MIG).*

## INTERNATIONAL

- Iranian President **Hassan Rouhani** visited the historic **Qutub Shahi tombs** near **Golconda Fort** in Hyderabad on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb; he was on a three day visit to India, went to world famous **Salarjung Museum** and offered Friday prayers at Mecca Masjid near **Charminar**.
- **Cyril Ramaphosa**, head of ruling African National Congress (ANC) Party, has been **sworn in as South Africa's new President**. He was elected as the new president by the ruling party politicians after the **resignation of Jacob Zuma**.

*ANC is ruling party of South Africa after the end of apartheid and white minority rule in 1994.*

### **About South Africa:**

**Capital- Cape town, Pretoria, Bloemfontein (confused?)**

*Actually the country does not have one specific capital. The three branches of Govt (legislative, executive, judiciary) are governed from three different cities. Pretoria is the executive capital and is considered for all practical purposes.*

**Currency- Rand**

- **Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli** from the **Communist Party of Nepal** (Unified Marxist-Leninist) has been sworn in as the **41st prime minister of Nepal** succeeding **Sher Bahadur Deuba** of Nepali Congress Party



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**Background:** After a **long civil war** till 2006, Nepal ended monarchy and took steps to become a modern democratic nation. After long years finally a **constitution** was framed and **adopted in 2015**. Election as per the new constitution was conducted in December.

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (**SCO**) **2018 summit** will be held in **Qingdao (China)**.

SCO is a Eurasian political, economic and security organization founded in 2001 including **Pakistan, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and India**.

**Last year both India and Pakistan were admitted** simultaneously into this group.

- Prime Minister of Canada, **Justin Trudeau** arrived India on a seven-day State visit on 17<sup>th</sup> Feb.

The last visit of a Canadian Prime Minister to India was in November 2012.

About Canada:

Capital- **Ottawa**

Currency- **Canadian dollar**

Importance of Canada: one of the **largest Indian Diaspora** in Canada; Canada is rich in **uranium**; source of **investment**.

- Finance Minister **Arun Jaitley** visited **Saudi Arabia** on 17<sup>th</sup> Feb to co-chair the **12th India-Saudi Arabia Joint Commission Meeting** held in **Riyadh**. He also opened the **Saudi-Indian Business Council**.

Saudi Arabia capital- **Riyadh**

Currency- Saudi **Riyal**

- A state of emergency has been declared in Ethiopia after the resignation of Prime Minister **Hailemariam Desalegn**, he stepped down from government as Prime Minister and the Head of the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front coalition on 18<sup>th</sup> Feb

About Ethiopia:

Capital – **Addis Ababa**

Currency- **birr**



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- **Women** in Saudi Arabia can now [open their own businesses without the consent of a husband or male relative](#). The kingdom has also opened 140 positions for women at airports and border crossings for the first time in its history.
- Tropical Cyclone **Kelvin** hit the **north coast** of Western Australia and another tropical cyclone **Gita devastated Tonga**, a small island in South Pacific to the East of Australia.
- **54th edition** of annual **Munich Security' Conference** concluded in the **German city of Munich**, began on 16th February and continued till 18th February.

*Discussions on various international security issues were held like Syrian Civil war, North Korean missile crisis etc. and nearly 30 Heads of the states and 100 Cabinet ministers participated in the conference.*

- Saudi Arabia will hold **its first ever Arab Fashion Week** in **Riyadh** in March, from March 26 to March 31, with a second edition already scheduled for October.

*In the past, Arab Fashion Week has been hosted so far exclusively by Dubai. Saudi Arabia has taken several such progressive measures in recent past under the guidance of Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman. Some of them are: **reopening of movie theatres, allowing women to drive, allowing women to open business without permission of male guardians etc.***

- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has warned that Pakistan is home to the highest newborn mortality rates in the world with 45 newborn babies dying out of every 1,000 births in 2016, [Pakistan tops the list in IMR](#).

The report said newborn mortality rate in the Central African Republic was 42 newborn deaths, followed by Afghanistan with 40 and Somalia with 38. [Japan's newborn mortality rate was among the lowest in the world, with 0.9 death for every 1,000 live births.](#)



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About UNICEF:

President- **Tore Hattrem**

Headquarter- **New York**

## POLITY

### Cauvery Water Dispute: SC awarded additional water to Karnataka

- Supreme Court has awarded an **additional 14.75 TMC of Cauvery water to Karnataka** and reduced Tamil Nadu's share, **upheld the 2007 decision of Cauvery Water Tribunal**, while making some amendments
- In its verdict, the apex court has granted the **global status to** Karnataka's capital city of **Bangalore**; hence it will get more Cauvery river water.
- The apex court has kept water share of Puducherry and Kerala unchanged.
- Judgement was pronounced by a bench comprising **Chief Justice Dipak Misra** and Justices Amitava Roy and A M Khanwilkar.

#### ***Cauvery Water Dispute-***

*States involved- **Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry***

*To resolve the dispute, Government of India constituted a **tribunal in 1990** which gave its verdict in 2007. But being unsatisfied with the judgement, all the four states filed review petition with the Supreme Court.*

### Centre to set up 562 more EMRS in tribal areas:

- The Centre will set up **562 more Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) in tribal areas of the country** as announced in the Budget that **by the year 2022, every block** with at least 20 thousand tribal persons, **will have an Eklavya School**.
- EMRS provide boarding and lodging facilities to tribal students and will be brought at par with the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya through high quality education.
- The Tribal Affairs Ministry has been allocated an amount of six thousand crore rupees in this Budget as compared to over 5329 crores rupees in 2017-18.





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### **Candidates must reveal their source of income for contesting election, rules SC**

- The Supreme Court has ordered that candidates contesting elections will have to **declare their sources of income as well as that of spouses and dependents**.
- A bench of Justices J Chelameswar and S Abdul Nazeer issued the direction to make it mandatory for candidates.
- At present the Representation of the People Act, 1951, mandated the declaration of assets by candidates contesting elections but not the source of their income.

### **Sex ratio at birth falls in 17 large states, Gujarat tops list:**

- The **sex ratio at birth (SRB)** saw a decline in 17 out of 21 large states of the country as per a report by NITI Aayog.
- **Gujarat is the worst performing state** with a fall of 53 points in sex ratio at birth. It fell from 907 to 854 females per 1000 males, **followed by Haryana and Rajasthan**.
- This indicates **rampant sex-selective abortion** violating the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (**PCPNDT**) Act, 1994.

### **India Fell 16 Spots On Globalisation Index Over 11 Years:**

- In the **Globalisation Index**, India has fallen **16 spots from 78th to 62nd in 2015 over 11 years** - **second-worst change** among the comparable 16 countries which included BRICS and other emerging economies.
- The Global Connectedness Index 2016 was released in 2016 and was the 4th edition of the report.



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### **Clean Air Campaign to improve air quality in Delhi:**

- The **first week of Clean Air Campaign** (joint effort of **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** and **Delhi Government**) to curb air pollution in Delhi concluded, which began on 10th Feb and continued till 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb.
- **70 small teams** consisting of government officials, experts, activists etc visit random places to check pollution.
- The System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (**SAFAR**) has projected that the Clean Air Campaign has resulted in significant reduction in the level of air pollution.

### **Canadian PM attended Canada-India Business Forum in Mumbai:**

- Canadian Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** visited Mumbai on 20<sup>th</sup> Feb as part of his week-long visit to India and attended Canada - **India Business Forum** and also meet film personalities.

### **Cabinet nod for Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal:**

- Cabinet approved the proposal for constitution of **Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal** on **request from Odisha** to determine water sharing among basin states i.e. Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

#### ***What is the dispute all about?***

**Chhattisgarh** plans to build **13 barrages and seven pick up weirs** (small dams) across Mahanadi river to extract more water. Odisha is opposed to it since it would decrease water supply to the farmers of its own state. Mahanadi is the largest river of Odisha.

**Centre's stand-** As per an **agreement in 1983** between Madhya Pradesh (then Chhattisgarh was part of MP) and Odisha there exists a mechanism to resolve the issue. And concerned states must negotiate among themselves.

**States' stand-** Odisha is strictly opposed to any negotiation and took the matter to Supreme Court in 2016. Since it believes there is nothing to negotiate and an independent tribunal can solve the issue.



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**Court's stand-** In 2017 Supreme Court ordered the centre to form a tribunal under *Inter State River Water Dispute Act of 1956*.

### **Cabinet cleared introduction of Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill:**

- To protect the savings of the investors, the Cabinet has given its approval to introduce two bills in Parliament.
  - 1) The **Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2018** aimed at tackling the menace of illicit deposit-taking activities in the country.
  - 2) **The Chit Funds (Amendment) Bill, 2018** has been approved in order to facilitate the orderly growth of the Chit Funds sector and remove bottlenecks being faced by the Chit Funds industry.

### **Centre constituted committee to study Brahmaputra and flood control measures:**

- **Head of the committee-** **Rajiv Kumar**, NITI Aayog Vice Chairman
- **Purpose-** study the Brahmaputra and flood control measures in Assam and neighbouring states

### **Regional conference of southern states on water resources in Hyderabad:**

- Union Water Resources ministry held a **regional conference of southern states in Hyderabad** to resolve the pending inter-state water issues.
- **Issues to be discussed-** Polavaram project, implementation of supreme court order regarding Cauvery dispute, interlinking of Godavari-Cauvery
- Ministers and Principal Secretaries of Water Resources of Six southern states - Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana attended the meeting.
- **Chaired by-** Minister of State for Water Resources **Arjun Ram Meghwal**



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### **India rank 12th in New Born mortality: UNICEF**

- India **12th worst** among 52 lower middle-income nations for new born as per a UNICEF report with a rate of **25.4** ranks below Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan
- **New Born Mortality rate** refers to the number of deaths per 1,000 live births.
- **Japan tops** the list followed by Iceland and Singapore and **Pakistan is the worst** performing country followed by Central African Republic and Afghanistan

### **Cabinet approved Silkyara Bend-Barkot Tunnel in Uttarakhand:**

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister has **approved the construction of 4.531 km long 2-Lane Bi-Directional Silkyara Bend - Barkot Tunnel** will be built under Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Mode with a cost of **Rs 1383 crore in 4 years**.
- The project will be falling along **NH-134** (old NH-94) in the State of Uttarakhand.
- It is a part of ambitious **Chardham plan** by government providing **all weather connectivity to Yamunotri**

#### ***What is Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) model?***

*It is a type of Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) model. In this the private contractor takes most of the responsibility like design, procurement, construction and then hand over to government.*

### **Parliament to have crèche facility:**

- The Parliament House will soon have a **crèche facility** for women employees as per the provision of **Maternity Benefit (amendment) Act of 2017**.

### **N Gopalaswamy Committee to select 20 'Institute of Eminence':**

- Former chief election commissioner **N Gopalaswamy** has been appointed **chairperson of the empowered expert committee (EEC)**, having the final authority to **select 20 'Institute of Eminence'**.



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- The four member panel includes: Renu khator, R Pritam Singh, Tarun Khanna
- The panel will review the institutes once every three years for adherence to their implementation plan until they achieve the top 100 global ranking slot for two consecutive years.
- And the institutes will have to inform the EEC every year about their progress and may be asked to address deficiencies or face penal action if they fail to deliver

**What is Institute of Eminence?**

- **10 public and 10 private Institutions** to emerge as world class teaching institutions or Institute of Eminence to improve the ranking of Indian universities in world ranking.
- These institutions will have greater autonomy to admit foreign students (up to 30%), foreign faculties (up to 25%), offer online courses (up to 20% of its programs), to enter into academic collaboration with top 500 universities without UGC permission etc.

**‘Swajal Project’ launched in Uttarakhand:**

- Union Drinking Water and Sanitation Minister **Uma Bharti** launched two programmes: **the Gangotri Swachh Iconic Place** and **‘Swajal Project’** in **Uttarakhand Uttarkashi district**.

**Swachh Iconic Place (SIP)** is a drive under the Swachh Bharat Mission and aims to improve the sanitation and cleanliness of **100 most iconic places** in the country. Recently Gangotri has been launched as Swachh Iconic Place (SIP) and ONGC has been selected as its CSR partner.

**Swajal project** aims to clean, provide basic amenities to the people of villages on the banks of the Ganga, and generate employment.

- It is a **community owned drinking water programme** for sustained drinking water supply with budgetary allocation **-32 lakh**
- The minister also announced the **‘Bagori Ganga Gram’** project for the state’s Bagori village, which was declared open defecation free (ODF).

**Government set up the “NITI Forum for Northeast”:**



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- The Union Government has issued order setting up the '**Niti Forum for North-East**', will be **co-chaired** by the **Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog and Minister of State Ministry of Development of North-eastern Region (DoNER)**.
- **Objective-** to identify constraints and recommend suitable interventions for speedy and sustainable growth in NER.

## EVENTS

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, inaugurated the **2018 edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS 2018)** in **New Delhi**, which seeks to bring together on a common platform, global leaders and thinkers in the fields of sustainable development, energy and environment sectors

*WSDS is the flagship forum of **The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)**.*

***Theme-** "Partnerships for a Resilient Planet"*

- India's **biggest Annual Conference** on Pharma Industry and Medical Devices - **India Pharma 2018** and **India Medical Device 2018** began in **Bangalore (16<sup>th</sup> Feb)** inaugurated by- Union Minister of Chemical and Fertilizer **Ananth Kumar**.

He said that '**Namo Care**' has the potential to make India largest Pharma manufacturer in the world and expected \$65 billion Pharma and \$12 billion Medical Devices industry to double in next five years.

- **Prime Minister** interacted with students on '**Pareeksha Par Charcha**' in **New Delhi on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb**. His topic of discussion was focused on dealing with exam related stress during the exam season.

Recently a book authored by him called '**Exam Warriors**' was released which deals with the same issue.

- The **Department of Science and Technology** awarded **Raghubir Singh Khandpur** for his contribution to science on **National Science Day (28<sup>th</sup> Feb)** in New Delhi

*He has made the **science city in Kapurthala (Punjab)** into an international facility.*



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- **'Paschim Lehar', a tri-service maritime exercise** was held off in India's Western coast with objective- to build inter-operability among Indian army, navy, air force and coast guard.
- Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and Natural History Museum (NHM), UK signed a MoU for cooperation in the field of genetic studies, research and training, conservation in India etc.
- **The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW)** organized a **National Conference under the title of "Agriculture 2022 – Doubling Farmers' Income"** in New Delhi with objective to build a consensus around appropriate recommendations that will help achieve the target of doubling farmers' income by 2022.
- **Ram Vilas Paswan**, Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution launched Swachhta Pakhwada in his Ministry, scheduled from 16th to 28th February for an **entire fortnight**.

*The Pakhwada is being organized to create awareness amongst officials as well as the general public on the importance cleanliness and hygiene.*

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the fourth terminal of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) in Mumbai. **JNPT also known as Nhava Sheva is the largest port in India.**
- The two-day **sixth Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)** of India Region held in **Patna on 17<sup>th</sup> Feb** inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker **Sumitra Mahajan**.
- The 12th batch of **Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)** commando contingent comprising 140 members including 4 women personnel to leave for Democratic Republic of **Congo**.





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*They will be on duties for the **United Nations Peace Keeping Mission**.*

- Archaeologist and historian **Arvind P. Jamkhedkar**, next **Chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR)** replacing Prof. K. Sudershan Rao.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated '**Magnetic Maharashtra' convergence summit** in **Mumbai** on 18<sup>th</sup> Feb. He also laid the foundation stone of the new **Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA)** in Navi Mumbai.

*16,700 crore project will have two parallel runways and will handle close to 80 flights an hour and will ease the load of Chhatrapati Shivaji Int Airport which handles 900 flights a day.*

- Vice President **M Venkaiah Naidu** inaugurated the **8th edition of the Theatre Olympics** at Lal Quila in **New Delhi**. For the **first time that India is hosting** the event and more than **25,000 foreign artists** are participating in it.

The **51-day long** nationwide theatre extravaganza will be held in **17 cities**.

**Theme-** "Flag of Friendship"

- Union Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Minister **Radha Mohan Singh** addressed the National Banana Festival 2018 held in **Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**.

*India is the **largest producer of banana** in the world with 29.7 million tonnes. Although India accounts for only 15.5% of area cultivated, its contribution in the world's production is 25.58 %.*

- **Vikas Sathaye**, a Pune-born person has been **honoured with the Scientific and Engineering Academy Award at the Oscars Scientific and Technical Awards 2018**, award ceremony held at **Beverly Hills in Los Angeles, California**.

*Sathaye and his team designed and implemented 'Shotover K1 Camera System'.*



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*The Shotover K1 Camera System is a camera mount that is used in aerial filming. The camera mount gets attached to the base of a helicopter, which carries the camera and lens.*

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended various events held in Shravanabelagola and Mysore in Karnataka:**
  1. Took part in the **88th Mahamastakabhisheka Mahotsav** of Bhagwan Bahubali in **Shravanabelagola**.
  2. Inaugurated newly carved 630 steps on Vindhyagiri hill that takes the disciples to the top of the giant statue for the darshan.
  3. **Palace Queen Humsafar Express** between Mysore and Udaipur.
  4. **Electrification of railway line** between Mysore and Bangalore.
  5. Declared **Naganahalli railway station** as a **satellite terminal station**.
  6. Laid the foundation stone for eight-lining of Mysore -Bangalore highway
- The Union Home Minister **Rajnath Singh** met the youth of Jammu and Kashmir under the Youth Exchange Programme "**Watan Ko Jano**" 2017-18.

**objective** -to give exposure to the youth and children of Jammu and Kashmir about the cultural and socio-economic development taking place in other parts of the country.

- **Prime Minister** Narendra Modi inaugurated **Wadhvani Institute of Artificial Intelligence** in **Mumbai**. The institute is a joint effort of Government of Maharashtra and University of Mumbai on 19<sup>TH</sup> Feb.
- **Shilpa Shetty launched her second book: The Diary of a Domestic Diva**

*The book aims to share quick and hassle-free methods of cooking healthy, nutritious and delicious meals. This book contains 90 of her most special recipes.*

- This year **India will be the host of World Environment Day** which is observed every year on **5th of June** all round the world.

**Theme-** "Beat Plastic Pollution"



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- Union Health Minister **J P Nadda** addressed the **Global Digital Health Partnership Summit** at **Canberra, Australia** and emphasized the **role of ICT** (Information and Communication Technology) to improve healthcare in India.

India's **National health Portal** provides **authentic information about healthcare** to citizens in **6 languages**.

**E-Hospitals** have been developed in more than 173 hospitals.

**Online Registration System (ORS)** is used for scheduling online appointments.

**Mera Aspataal** (My Hospital) System is used to collect patient feedback.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed a **national conference on doubling farmers' income in New Delhi** on 20<sup>th</sup> Feb.

The government aims to formulate a proper roadmap with timelines to achieve the goal of doubling farmers income by 2022 and in the Budget, the government has proposed fixing of the minimum support price of Kharif crops at least 1.5 times over the cost of production.

- The UK- India Joint research projects on Water Quality Research and Energy Demand Reduction in Built Environment were launched in New Delhi on 20<sup>th</sup> feb.

The projects were jointly launched by NITI Aayog member Dr V K Saraswat, Department of Science and Technology Secretary Ashutosh Sharma and Research Councils UK- India Director Daniel Shah.

- **Shah Karim Al Hussaini, the Aga Khan**, arrived India on 20<sup>th</sup> Feb for 11-day visit and conferred Padma Vibhushan for his contributions to social development in India

The Aga Khan is the **founder and chairman** of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), and is the **49th hereditary Imam** (Spiritual Leader) of the **Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims**.

- According a report by Census Directorate, **42 languages of India are endangered and heading towards extinction**. At present in India, there are **22**



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**scheduled** (listed in 8th schedule of Constitution) and **100 non-scheduled languages** which are spoken by more than one lakh people.

*A language is considered endangered when it is spoken by **less than 10,000 people**. The **Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL)** in Mysore is working for the protection of these languages.*

- A Sanskriti Mahotsav “**Swachhagrah – Bapu ko Kaaryaanjali**” is being organized on the 21st and 22nd February, 2018 at the Man Mandir Ghat and Assi Ghat in **Varanasi**.

**Aim-** To celebrate the creative and cultural industries in Varanasi and to focus attention on the need for Swachhta

- **21st February** is observed as **International Mother Language Day (IMLD)** worldwide by **UNESCO** since 1999

**Aim-** to spread awareness about linguistic and cultural diversity and promotion of mother tongue

**Theme-** Linguistic diversity and multilingualism count for sustainable development

- Union Minister of State for Power and New & Renewable energy R K Singh inaugurated the International R&D Conference in New Delhi.

**Organized by-** Central Electrical Authority

**Subject of discussion-** Emerging Opportunities and Challenges of R&D in Indian Power Sector.

- 6th edition of **India-Indonesia Joint Military Exercise ‘Garuda Shakti’** began in Bandung (Indonesia).

**Objective-** strengthens relation between two armies; enhance ability to undertake joint operations



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- An international Military Exercise called “**Cobra Gold 2018**” is being held in Thailand, this is the **37th edition** of the exercise cosponsored by **Royal Thai Armed Forces** and **US Armed Forces**.

**Participating countries** - Thailand, USA, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea and Singapore

**Objective**- improves regional security, maritime security and interoperability between participating countries.

- On 19th February, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** flagged off the **Palace Humsafar Queen Express** at **Mysore railway station** (Karnataka), express connecting **Mysore in Karnataka to Udaipur in Rajasthan** passing through Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

## **SPORTS**

- The World Anti-Doping Agency (**WADA**) has **suspended Romania's drug-testing laboratory** for six months imposing the sanction on the lab in Bucharest due to a number of irregularities.

*WADA is an **agency of International Olympic Committee (IOC)** located in **Montreal, Canada**.*

- **Yuki Bhambri** has become **the first Indian to reach the quarter-finals of the Chennai Open ATP Challenger tournament**. Bhambri seeded second, made it to the last-8 after he defeated compatriot Sidharth Rawat.
- Indian boxers won 10 medals, including 5 gold, at the Asian Games Test event held in Jakarta (Indonesia).

*Manish Koushik, K. Shyam Kumar, Sheikh Salman Anwar and Ashish won gold each in their respective categories.*

- **Tamil Nadu** has won the **Senior Women's National Football Championship** for the **first time**.



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*Tamil Nadu, which was playing its first-ever final, defeated Manipur, 2-1 at the **Barabati Stadium in Cuttack**.*

***Captain Indumathi** has also adjudged the player of the final as well as the tournament.*

- Celebrated badminton coach **Pullela Gopichand** initiated the **country's largest 'train the trainers' programme** inducting **1500 Physical Education (PE) teachers** from across **Gujarat** for advanced training in Ahmadabad.

*This programme is envisioned by ELMS Sports Foundation which is a non-profit organization. Programme is mentored by Gopichand and Olympic gold medalist **Abhinav Bindra**.*

*This is the **largest skill development programme at the grassroots level impacting over 45,000 children every year**.*

*As per plan initially Gopichand and his experts will select about 150 teachers out of 1500 to become master trainers. Once trained, they will impart the training to other teachers across the state.*

- **36 year old Roger Federer** has retrieved his **no 1 position** in tennis after 5 years after defeating Dutchman Robin Haase in the Rotterdam Open quarterfinals, with this he had become the **oldest tennis player to secure the top position**.

*He has beaten the record of **Andre Agassi** who had topped the ranking at the age of 33 in 2003.*

- **Sachin Tendulkar** has been made the brand ambassador of **T20 Mumbai League** scheduled from 11th to 28th March.

*Organized by Sports India Pvt Ltd and sanctioned by Mumbai Cricket Association.*

- **An American athlete Christian Coleman** has set up a world record in **60 metres race**. He ran the distance in 6.34 seconds at the US indoor national championships in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



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- In the ICCI ODI ranking, **Captain Virat Kohli** had become the **first Indian Batsman** to **cross 900 points** (current score is 909 points).

*The **highest ever point** was achieved by West Indies player **Viv Richards**.*

*Late last year, Kohli crossed the 900-point mark **in Tests too** currently at **second** position **after Australian Captain Steve Smith** (947 points).*

***Only four batsmen** have crossed the **900 mark in ODI and test-** Viv Richards, Brain Lara, Hashim Amla and AB de Villiers.*

## **TECHNOLOGY**

### **ISRO planning to launch Chandrayaan-2 mission around April:**

- **Dr Jitendra Singh**, MoS of **Department of Space** said ISRO is planning to launch Chandrayan-2 Mission around April this year.
- **Chandraayan-2** is a challenging mission as for the first time it will carry an orbiter, a lender and a rover to the moon. The total cost of the Chandrayaan 2 mission will be about Rs 800 crore.

### **AOCC inaugurated at Goa airport in Dabolim:**

- The **Airport Operations Control Centre, AOCC**, was inaugurated at Goa airport in Dabolim with this, Goa airport became the **12th AAI-managed airport** with AOCC facility.
- The AOCC would help provide real-time information on flights operating at the airport on flight information displays.

### **ONGC introduced Asia's first large scale CO2 injection technique:**

- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (**ONGC**) introduced Carbon Dioxide (**CO2**) injection technique in its **Gandhar oil field** in Gujarat, **first large scale CO2 injected project in Asia**. It increases extraction of oil.





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- Its purpose is to recover extra 20 mn barrels of crude oil under **Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)** programme aims at recovering up to 20% of residual oil from ageing oil field.

### **Mumbai to have India's first Artificial Intelligence Centre:**

- **Maharashtra Government** will set up **country's first Institute for Artificial Intelligence** in **Mumbai** and Maharashtra is already the **first state to launch a FinTech policy**.
- **CM Devendra Fadnavis unveiled** the plan for the institute during the **Magnetic Maharashtra Summit inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi** on February 18, and at the **Global Economic Conference in Canada** next mon
- The State is already experimenting with AI in the health sector to use AI based X-ray, MRI and CT scan.

### **New antibiotic found in soil to fight superbugs:**

- A team of US scientist have **discovered 'malacidin'** which is a new kind of **anti-biotic capable of killing drug resistant bacteria**.
- With growing use of anti-biotic, many bacteria gradually evolve to develop an immunity towards anti-biotic. This creates hurdle in treatment and enhance mortality.
- This new anti-biotic however works only against certain kind of bacteria known as Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA).

### **India successfully test-fires Agni-II ballistic missile:**

- India's **surface-to-surface Agni-II ballistic missile** was test-fired successfully from the **Abdul Kalam Island, off the Orissa coast**.
- It is a **nuclear capable medium range ballistic missile (MRBM)** developed by **DRDO** (Defence Research and Development Organization) under Integrated Guided Missile Development Program.



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### **SARAS completes second test flight completely:**

- India's **indigenous** (built in India) **light transport aircraft SARAS PT1N** was successfully test flown for a second time. This is the 2nd of the 20 planned test flights. First test was conducted in January.
- Designed and developed by- **National Aerospace Laboratories of CSIR in Bangalore.**
- With more than **70% indigenous content** it will be around **25% cheaper** than imported ones.

### **India 7th most targeted nation for web application attacks:**

- As per a report by Akamai, India was the victim of the **seventh most number (11.5 mn) of web application attacks** in the last quarter of 2017 and also the **source of the seventh most number of web application attacks** in the same quarter.
- In Asia-Pacific, **India was the second** biggest source of web application attacks just behind China.
- Globally, **the top spot for most attacked and source for the most attacks was held by the USA.**
- Netherland, China, Brazil and Russia also figure in top 5 in source of attack.

### **APPOINTMENT**

- **Debashish Mukherjee** and **Murali Ramaswami** have been appointed as new Executive Directors of **Canara Bank** and **Vijaya Bank** respectively.

### **STATES**



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- Madhya Pradesh's **first butterfly park has come up in Raize** district housing **around 65 species of colourful insects**. Apart from providing a congenial atmosphere for breeding of butterflies, nearly 137 plant varieties are also part of the park spread over three hectares.
- **In Gujarat, Air Odisha** launched its maiden flight under the Centre's UDAN scheme, linking **Mundra with Ahmadabad**. Air Odisha is starting services from Ahmadabad to Jamnagar, Mundra and Diu in the first phase of its operation. (Total 400 Airports will be connected under this scheme out of which ten airports are from Gujarat).

**What is UDAN scheme?**

UDAN or **Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik** is a **Regional Connectivity Scheme** that provides **cheaper air transport** and development smaller airports. It is a market based mechanism under which private aircrafts provide quota in seats that are sold at subsidies price. This price is paid back to them by Government.

- Maharashtra Government will roll out **Ashmita Yojna** on International Women's Day (8th March). Under this, girls in **Zill Parishad School** will get **sanitary napkin packet at Rs 5** and rural women can get it at subsidized rate of Rs 24 & 29.

Beneficiaries will be **given Ashmita Cards** and Supply and sale will be entrusted with Self Help Groups (SHG).

- **West Bengal Government** will sell government stock securities for a 10 year period to get an amount of **2,000 crore** through Reserve Bank of India. The proceeds of the loan will be utilised towards meeting the requirement for developmental expenditure of the state.
- **Assam is at the bottom** with regard to **maternal mortality rate (MMR)** with a figure of **300** against the **national average of 167**. It has spent just 13.58% of funding under National Health Mission (NHM).

*The declining rate of MMR in the state, however, is the highest in country.*

*The **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)** too is very high at 44 whereas the national average is 37.*



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- 20<sup>th</sup> Feb was the **32nd state formation day** of the states **Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh**.
- The Telangana government has constituted a **task force on urban mobility**.

**Purpose-** to study the feasibility of the monorail model and other modes of transport for the IT corridor of the city.

**Work of task force-** to suggest new phases of the metro-rail project, feasibility of monorail, tram and e-vehicles, and various methods of funding

- The Delhi Government will launch '**Mission Buniyaad**' from April this year. Under Buniyaad, students will be divided into three categories. Those who perform at par will be taken into the '**Ujjawal**' group; those who score medium-level marks will be placed in '**Utkarsh**' while those who are behind their peers will be placed in '**Udyam**'

**Purpose-** to improve learning levels of students attending primary classes in the state government and municipal schools.

**Target group-** Class 3 to 8 students

- **UP unveils new ambitious tourism policy:**
  1. UP Government announced a new tourism policy to increase tourist arrival and also investment in tourism sector.
  2. The Government envisages the number of foreign tourists by 10 per cent and domestic arrivals by 15 per cent.
  3. State govt aims at attracting investment of 5000 crore every year.
  4. It also aims at 100,000 tourists annually to its national parks and wildlife sanctuaries other than converting 10 heritage buildings to heritage hotels every year.
  5. It provides many fiscal benefits and incentives for making investment within 20 km radius of all tourist sites of the 10 tourist circuits in the state.
  6. These circuits are: Ramayan circuit, Braj circuit, Buddhist circuit, Bundelkhand circuit, Mahabharata circuit, Sufi circuit etc.



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- A centre For Agriculture with the collaboration of Israel will be opened in Mizoram on 7th March, exclusively for processing of citrus fruits set up at a cost of 8-10 crore.

***Collaboration of Govt of Israel, Govt of Mizoram and Ministry of Agriculture of Govt of India.***

*This is the first such centre in North East although there are 22 such centres in India with the first one was established in 2008 in Haryana.*

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated **Uttar Pradesh Investors' Summit 2018** in Lucknow on 20th February. This is the first time such summit is organized in UP to showcase the investment potential of the state and to draw investment.

*Around 1045 agreement worth **Rs 4.28 lakh crore** has been signed in the first day of the summit.*

- The Indian Railways signed a MoU with the Maharashtra government to set up a **metro coach factory in Latur** with an investment of **Rs600 crore** to manufacture metro coaches with a potential of exporting them to the other countries and generation of **15,000 direct jobs** in backward region of Marathwada.
- Kerala Government approved the **draft State Health Policy** to ensure **100% immunization in Kerala**. It has made vaccination certificate mandatory for admission to class-I from the next academic session.

*It has also suggested strict legal action against people trying to discourage parents about vaccinating their children.*

- **Uttar Pradesh's** Khadi and Village Industry Board signed a MoU with **Amazon India** for **online selling of khadi products**. Amazon India will educate and train rural khadi artisans of UP to directly sell their products to Amazon.



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