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WEEKLY CAPSULE

3rd WEEK OF MARCH

(16th – 22nd)

## Economy

### **India ranked 133 in World Happiness Report:**

- **India ranked 133rd in the recently released World Happiness Report 2017.** Last year ranking was 128<sup>th</sup>.
- Finland topped the list followed by Norway and Denmark. Burundi is at the bottom. India is behind its neighbours like Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- The report is prepared by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).
- **20th March is celebrated as International Day of Happiness.**
- In happiness rankings for immigrants, India was ranked at 91. Finland again tops in this category.

*The results are based on six key factors found to support wellbeing - income, healthy life expectancy, social support, freedom, trust, and generosity.*

### **GST one of the most complex, and second highest tax rate in world: World Bank**

- GST is one of the most complex with the second highest tax rate in the world among a sample of 115 countries which have a similar indirect tax system, it is as per the bi-annual India Development Update released by World Bank
- As many as 49 countries around the world have a single slab of GST, while 28 countries use two slabs, and only five countries, including India, use four non-zero slabs.
- GST has also increased tax compliance burden on firms and locked up working capital.

### **Pune topped Quality Governance Survey:**

- **Pune came on top in the fifth edition of the Annual Survey of India's City-Systems (ASICS).** Thiruvananthapuram has dropped to 3rd position which had topped the survey for last two years. Kolkata is at 2nd spot.
- Bengaluru is at the bottom among 23 cities surveyed across 20 states.



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- The survey done by urban governance watchdog Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy.
- Half of the 23 ASICS 2017 cities, which comprise a fifth of India's urban population, do not generate enough revenue internally to even pay the salary of municipal staff.

### **Chennai topped in broadband speed:**

- At 32.67 Megabits per second (Mbps), **Chennai has the highest fixed broadband download speed among cities** according to a study titled 'India's digital divide: how broadband speed splits the nation' by Ookla. (Of the 20 cities in India, Chennai's download speed of over 32.67 Mbps for fixed broadband is 57.7% faster than the average for the rest of the country.)
- Chennai is followed by Bengaluru and Hyderabad and Patna has the slowest speed.
- Globally, India is ranked 67th with an average speed of 20.72 Mbps.
- Among states, Karnataka has the fastest broadband followed by Tamil Nadu and Mizoram has the slowest.

### **CII set up multi-skill centre in Darjeeling:**

- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) will set up a multi-skill centre in Darjeeling in partnership with the Gorkha Territorial Administration (GTA) announced during the two-day (13-14<sup>th</sup> march) Darjeeling Business Summit.
- This multi-skill centre will initially deliver training in hospitality, beauty and wellness and healthcare

#### ***About CII:***

***President- Shobana Kamineni  
Banerjee***

***Located in New Delhi***

***Director General- Chandrajit***

***set up in 1895.***



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## **RBI issued PCA framework to maintain sound financial health of banks:**

- RBI has issued a Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework to maintain sound financial health of banks.
- RBI has placed 11 Public Sector Banks including Bank of India, Dena Bank, Central Bank of India, UCO Bank, IDBI Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Corporation Bank and Allahabad Bank under the PCA framework.

### ***What is Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) Framework?***

PCA framework is a way of early detection of bad performing bank and taking pre-emptive steps to improve the financial condition. Basically it is based on few parameters like NPA, RoA etc. when bank's performance goes below these specified values, RBI initiates corrective action.

***This policy was first announced in 2014 and later revised in 2017.***

## **India ranked 78th on WEF energy transition index:**

- India has been ranked at 78th among 114 countries on the World Economic Forum's (WEF) energy transition index, list is topped by Sweden followed by Norway and Switzerland.
- The report titled Fostering Effective Energy Transition, ranks countries on how well they are able to balance energy security and access with environmental sustainability and affordability.
- Among other emerging markets Brazil stood at the 38th place, Russia at 70th and China at 76th place.

**Note-**

***India has the largest government-mandated renewable energy programme, with a target of 175GW renewable energy capacity by 2022.***

***It announced plans to shift completely to electric vehicles by 2030.***



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*India has a target of achieving 100% village electrification by 2018 and 100% household electrification by 2019.*

### **Muthoot Finance tied up with Global IME bank for money transfer to Nepal:**

- Muthoot Finance Ltd. tied up with Global IME bank to expand its money remittance service to Nepal. In Nepal, there are about 193 branches and more than 7,000 pay out centre of IME bank will act as remittance receiving points
- Nepali immigrants in India can now transfer remittance instantly from the branches of Muthoot Finance by paying a nominal fees.
- There are about 3-4 million Nepali immigrants in India.

### **India, ADB inked \$120mn loan agreement to improve rail infrastructure:**

- The **Centre and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)** signed a loan agreement to the tune of **USD 120 million** for railway infrastructure, it will be used for the completion of works for double-tracking and electrification of railway tracks along high-density corridors.
- The investment program is targeting busy freight and passenger routes in the states of Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, including the "Golden Quadrilateral" corridor that connects Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai and New Delhi.
- This is the part of the \$ 500 mn multi-tranche financing facility for railway sector agreed in 2011.

***About ADB:***

***Headquarter- Manila (Philippines)***

***Motto- Fighting poverty in the Asia-Pacific***

***President- Takehiko Nakao***



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### **India is world's biggest arms importer:**

- India is the **world's biggest importer of weapons**, accounting for **12 per cent** of global purchases during the past five years according to the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**.
- Meanwhile Pakistan's arms import has declined by 36% due to drastic fall in import from USA. China is Pakistan's biggest arms supplier.
- **Russia is India's top arms supplier** followed by USA, Israel and France.
- Russia had a **62 per cent share** of India's arms imports during the past five years, down from 79 percent in 2008-12.

### **Two-day ministerial meeting of WTO held in New Delhi:**

- Representatives from 50 countries joined the informal World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in New Delhi. (19-20<sup>th</sup> march) (The official 11th Ministerial Conference, held last December in Buenos Aires (Argentina), had ended in deadlock.)
- This is the second WTO mini-ministerial meeting being hosted by India, after the first in 2009.
- The meeting strived to find a permanent solution to the food stock-holding by WTO member countries. Under WTO norms, a member country's food subsidy bill should not exceed 10 per cent of the value of production. India has been seeking the amendment to this formula.

#### ***About WTO:***

*Founding treaty- Marrakesh Agreement (1995)*

*Headquarter- Geneva (Switzerland)*

*Director General- Roberto Azvedo*

### **Anti-dumping duty imposed on Ofloxacin import from China:**



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- India has imposed anti-dumping duty on import of Chinese pharma product 'Ofloxacin', imposed following the recommendations of the Directorate General of Anti-Dumping and Allied Duties (DGAD).

**Ofloxacin** is used to treat certain infections including bronchitis, pneumonia and infections of the skin, bladder, urinary tract, reproductive organs, and prostate (a male reproductive gland).

- The duty on import will be in the range of USD 2.58 to USD 9.48 per kilogram for three years

***What are anti-dumping duties?***

*It is an import duty imposed by government on imported products which are sold by exporting countries unfairly at prices less than their normal market values or domestic price.*

### **South Asia's first ever coworking & coplay space launched in Gurugram:**

- **Monkey Business launched South Asia's first coworking & coplay space in Gurugram (Haryana).**
- The atmosphere is such that young parents can work while their children play and learn. It has on-site childcare facility which allows working parents to work.

*Monkey Business is managed by a group of working moms with diverse backgrounds spanning the corporate world and early education.*

### **Singapore: World's most expensive city**

- Singapore has been declared the most expensive city on Earth for the fifth time in a row followed by Paris, Zurich, Hong Kong etc.
- The cheapest cities are: Damascus (Syria) followed by Caracas (Venezuela), Almaty (Kazakhstan).
- Among cheapest cities, Bengaluru (5th), Chennai (8th) and New Delhi is at 10th spot. (What a joke !!)





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- The Economist Intelligence Unit's Worldwide Cost of Living Survey has ranked 133 cities according to the price of more than 150 items.

### **Axis Bank opened new representative office in Sharjah:**

- The private sector bank **AXIS bank** has announced to open a **new representative office in Sarjah** (UAE). It is its **3rd such office** in United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- Since there are **3 million NRIs in UAE**, it makes a good business opportunity through remittance transfer.

*About AXIS bank:*

*Headquarter- Mumbai*

*CEO- Shikha Sharma*

*Tagline- Badhti Ka Naam Zindagi*

### **Bhel commissioned 1st unit of Kishanganga hydro project in J&K:**

- Public sector **Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL)** commissioned **first unit of 110 MW** of the **Kishenganga hydro-electric project (HEP)** in **Jammu and Kashmir** located on **river Kishenganga, a tributary of Jhelum**, in Bandipora district.
- All the three units when completed, will generate **340 MW** of electricity.
- In J&K, Bhel has so far commissioned 31 Hydro sets with a cumulative capacity of 1,257 MW.

*About BHEL:*

*It is a Maharatna PSU.*

*Headquarter- New Delhi*

### **F-16 jet production unit to be set up in India:**

- **Lockheed Martin** has the plan to set up a F-16 jet production unit in India. The F-16 remains the backbone of the US Air Force, the world's most capable air force. But this is no more purchased by US Air Force.



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- The aerospace and defence major has offered to relocate its entire production line to India.
- Structural and avionics upgrades to the US F-16 fleet will extend service life to 2045. But the company did not say anything about sell of F-22 or F-35.

### **G-20 Ministers meet in Argentina:**

- The **G-20 meeting of Finance Ministers and Central bank Governors** was held in **Buenos Aires (Argentina)** under the **Presidency of Argentina**. It is the first of five such meetings to be held before Argentina hosts the G-20 summit in November this year.
- The discussion was mainly about infrastructure development, future of digital world and recent decision by USA to impose tariff on steel and aluminum.

#### ***What is G-20?***

*It is an international forum of **20 countries** (actually 19 countries + EU) to discuss promotion of international financial stability.*

*It started in **1999** but its summit meeting started in 2008 after global financial crisis.*

**20 members:** Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Republic of Korea (South Korea), the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.

### **US banned use of Venezuela's new petro currency:**

- US President Donald Trump signed an executive order making it illegal for Americans to purchase any cryptocurrency issued by Venezuela.
- The order prohibits US entities from engaging in any financial transactions involving the Venezuelan state digital currency, the Petro.





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### **IRCTC tied up with Ola to allow cab booking on its site:**

- Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (**IRCTC**) has **tied up with Ola** which will enable passengers to book an Ola on the IRCTC website and app.
- Passengers will also be able to avail the Ola booking facility as a part of tourism packages, and travel itineraries. Additionally, you can also book cabs via Ola's self-serving kiosks at IRCTC outlets present in railway stations.

### **India signed Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement with Hong Kong:**

- **India and Hong Kong** signed a **double taxation avoidance agreement (DTAA)** to improve transparency in tax matter and prevent tax evasion, signed by Indian Ambassador to China Gautam Bambawale and Hong Kong Finance Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po in Hong Kong.
- The agreement will stimulate flow of investment, technology and personnel from India to HKSAR (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) and vice versa.

#### ***What is Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA)?***

*It is a tax treaty between two or more countries so that tax-payers can avoid paying tax twice on the same income. It is helpful for those who reside in one country but their income comes from another (partially or fully).*

*India has DTAAAs with more than 80 countries.*

*President- Reuven Rivlin*

*Related CA- USA recently shifted its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.*

### **Vienna again topped in the Quality of Living Survey by Mercer:**



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- As per 20th annual **Quality of Living Survey** by Mercer, **Vienna (Austria's capital)** has **topped the list** for ninth consecutive time.
- Vienna is **followed by Zurich** (Switzerland), **Auckland** (New Zealand) and **Munich** (Germany). The last two have occupied joint third place.
- **Among Asian cities, Singapore has topped** the list (25th) for four consecutive years.
- **In India, Hyderabad and Pune** have the joint best ranking (142nd) followed by Bengaluru and Chennai.
- Honolulu (capital of Hawaii) has topped the inaugural City Sanitation Ranking.

### **Swiggy partnered With ICICI Bank to launch UPI based payment service:**

- **Swiggy**, online food ordering and delivery platform has **partnered with ICICI Bank** to roll out **two innovative digital solutions** to facilitate fund transfer.
  - One is Unified Payment Interface (UPI) based solution for instant fund transfers.
  - Another is an option for facilitating cash deposits at automated Cash Deposit Machines (CDM) available at ICICI Bank branches and ATM locations.

#### ***About ICICI:***

*Headquarter- Mumbai*

*CEO & MD- Chanda Kochhar*

*Tag line- Hum hai na, Khayal Aap ka*

### **IOC started doorstep delivery of diesel on pilot basis:**

- The PSU, **Indian Oil Corporation (IOC)** started doorstep delivery of diesel on a pilot basis in Pune, the **first company in India** to provide such service.



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- Other oil PSUs like HPCL (Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd) and BPCL (Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd.) have also got the approval for such service delivery.

*Related CA- Recently IOC flagged off India's first fuel cell powered bus in collaboration with TATA Motors.*

### **US imposed anti-dumping duty on steel wire imported from India, China:**

- The US has decided to slap **anti-dumping duty on stainless steel flanges** imported from **India and China** due to the finding of a preliminary probe that both countries provide subsidies to exporters.
- US has already imposed **tariff on import of steel and aluminum** under Trump Administration's protectionist policy.

*In 2016, imports of stainless steel flanges from China and India were valued at an estimated USD16.3 million and USD32.1 million, respectively.*

### **International**

- Member-countries of the World Health Organisation (WHO) South-East Asia Region, including India committed to eradicate tuberculosis by 2030, announced during 'End TB Summit' recently concluded in New Delhi, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

*In this summit Prime Minister Narendra Modi had expressed his vision of ending TB in India by 2025 5 years ahead of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of 2030.*

*This South-East Asia region accounts for 46% of global TB burden.*

*In this event, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) was awarded International Kochan Prize 2017 for contribution to the National Programme in Tuberculosis.*

- Qatar has announced a 50 million Dollars donation to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), donation

was made during the extraordinary ministerial meeting of UNRWA held in Rome, Italy.

*Qatar is facing a nine-month boycott by its Gulf allies, which accused Doha of supporting extremist political movements in the Middle East, including Hezbollah, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Hamas.*

- **Sierra Leone** became the **first country to hold blockchain supported election** in its recently concluded Presidential election.
- It used blockchain to tally the votes in the country's most populous district – Agora. By using blockchain as a means to immutably record ballots and results which can not be tempered with at any stage.

*Pilot projects of similar exercise have already been conducted in Denmark and Estonia.*



- **Philippines** has notified **International Criminal Court (ICC)** about its withdrawal from the body. This is after a preliminary investigation started by the court regarding Crimes against Humanity committed by the Government during its war on drug mafias.

*Philippines had ratified the Rome Statute (which led to the foundation of ICC) in 2011.*



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### ***About ICC:***

*It is an international organization of tribunal to prosecute individuals for international crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.*

*The **Rome Statute** is its founding treaty which was adopted in **1998** but entered into force in **2002**. At present it has **123 members**. (India is not its member)*

- The United Nations has issued an appeal for **951 million Dollars** to meet the needs of nearly **900,000 Rohingya refugees** in Bangladesh. So far, the emergency response from September 2017 to February 2018 has received 321 million Dollars of the 434 million required.

*UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi launched the 2018 Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya humanitarian crisis.*

**Background-** Rohingyans are an ethnic (Bangladeshi origin) and religious minorities (muslims) living in the Rakhine province of Myanmar. Myanmar does not consider them as their citizens and often discriminate the population. Recently Myanmar government launched a crackdown on Rohingya insurgents and within few days around 4,00,000 (out of 1 million) Rohingyans fled their home to nearby Bangladesh (some to India as well) as refugees.

### ***About UN High Commissioner for Refugees:***

*Headquarter- Geneva, Switzerland*

*head- **Filippo Grandi***

*Founded in **1850**.*

- Xi Jinping **re-elected as president of China** for a second five-year tenure by the Parliament of the country. (which works mostly as a rubber stamp to give formal approval to the decision of the ruling party).

*Recently the Parliament had scrapped the two-term rule for the presidency and allowed him to have a life-long tenure.*



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*Xi's loyalist and close confidant Wang Qishan has been elected as vice president, who like Xi is set for a lifelong tenure.*

- Vladimir Putin won the Presidential election in Russia to become President for the 4th time granting him another 6 years of Presidentship.

*As per the preliminary result of the poll he was well ahead of his nearest rival Communist Party candidate Pavel Grudinin. About 107 million Russians were eligible to cast ballots and turnout was 60 %*

- Mauritius President **Ameena Gurib-Fakim** (Africa's only female head of the state) resigned from her post over the allegations of misuse of credit card provided by an NGO which was not related to work.

*She was associated with an NGO named Planet Earth Institute (PEI) to promote science, technology and innovation in Arica. (she is a renowned biologist herself).*

**Related CA- Recently Indian President visited Mauritius and inaugurated World Hindi Secretariat in Port Louis. The World Hindi Conference this year will be held in Mauritius.**

- India's Department of Space and the European Commission signed a cooperation agreement related to sharing of earth observation satellite data.
- The pact was inked in Bengaluru by Philippe Brunet, Director for Space Policy, Copernicus and Defence, on behalf of the European Commission and by PG Diwakar, scientific secretary.
- Under the pact, the European Commission intends to provide India with free, full and open access to the data from the Copernicus Sentinel family of satellites.
- Reciprocally India will provide the Copernicus programme and its participating states with a free, full and open access to the data from ISRO's earth observation satellites, including historical data sets.





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## **Polity**

### **HRD ministry set up ‘Innovation Cell’ to promote education:**

- The Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry has decided to create an innovation cell headed by a scientist to brainstorm new ideas about promoting innovation in the country.
- India ranks 60th in Global Innovation Index 2017 which was an improvement over 66th rank in 2016, index is published by Cornell University, INSEAD and the World Intellectual Property Organization.

### **Lok Sabha passed bill on damages for breach of contract**

- The lower house Lok Sabha passed The Specific Relief (Amendment) Bill 2018 by a voice vote which gives a party the right to seek damages from other party in case of a breach of business contract.

*The present law provides for a certain kind of specific relief.*

- The Act is a remedy which aimed at the exact fulfilment of an obligation or specific performance of the contract rather than grant of a general relief or damages or compensation. It also seeks to reduce the discretion of the court which will enhance the ease of doing business of the country.

### **LaQshya program to improve maternal healthcare:**

- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has launched a program ‘LaQshya’ aimed at improving quality of care in labour room and maternity Operation Theatre (OT).

*The Program aims at implementing ‘fast-track’ interventions for achieving tangible results within 18 months.*



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- It will benefit every pregnant woman and new-born delivering in public health institutions.
- It is implemented at all Medical College Hospitals, District Hospitals and First Referral Unit (FRU) and Community Health Center (CHCs).
- The Quality Improvement in labour room and maternity OT will be assessed through NQAS (National Quality Assurance Standards). Every facility achieving 70% score on NQAS will be certified as LaQshya certified facility. Facilities scoring more than 90%, 80% and 70% will be given Platinum, Gold and Silver badge accordingly.

**Lok Sabha passed Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill, 2017:**

- It empowers central government to notify period of maternity leave and the amount of tax-free gratuity amount by an executive order.
- Under the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961, 12 weeks of maternity leaves were granted. But now this has been raised to maximum 26 weeks by Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017.
- Under the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 the existing ceiling of gratuity amount for an employee was Rs 10 lakh. Now this ceiling has been removed. And this ceiling may be notified by the central government by an executive order.

**NITI Aayog released SATH-E project:**

- NITI Aayog released comprehensive roadmaps for Sustainable Action for Transforming Human Capital in Education (SATH-E) project in New Delhi.
- Introduced system-wide governance transformation in School Education.
- The roadmaps will operate between 2018 to 2020.
- Made intervention in three states- Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha- aiming to become role model states in school education.



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### **Indian Army inked MoUs with HPCL and NIEDO:**

- The Indian Army under the aegis of Chinara Corps has signed MoU with Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and training partner National Integrity and Educational Development Organisation (NIEDO)

*This partnership will work for securing better future for Kashmiri youths.*

- Kanpur based NIEDO will provide quality faculty for professional coaching of Kashmiri youth.

### **UGC has given full autonomy to 60 higher educational institutions:**

- University Grant Commission (UGC) in a historic decision has **granted autonomy to 60 higher education institutions**, which have maintained high academic standards. Out of 60 institutions, five are Central Universities, 21 State Universities, 24 deemed, two Private Universities and eight colleges.
- These universities will remain within the ambit of the UGC but will have the freedom to start new courses, off-campus centers, skill development courses, research parks and any other new academic programs.
- They will also have the freedom to hire foreign faculty, enroll foreign students, give incentive based emoluments to the faculty, enter into academic collaborations and run open distance learning programmes.
- These Central Universities are Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Delhi, University of Hyderabad, Banaras Hindu University, Aligarh Muslim University and the English and Foreign Languages University in Telangana.

### **Union Cabinet approved launch of Ayushman Bharat-National Health Protection Mission:**



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- The Union Cabinet has approved the launch of **Ayushman Bharat - National Health Protection mission** to provide health insurance of Rs 5 lakh per annum per family.
- It will cover **10 crore** poor and vulnerable families and benefits of the scheme are portable across country.
- The scheme will subsume the ongoing centrally sponsored schemes- Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana and senior citizen health insurance scheme.

### **Cabinet approved inclusion of Parivara & Talawara communities in list of STs in Karnataka:**

- Union Cabinet has given in principle approval to the inclusion of two communities, **Parivara and Talawara in Karnataka** in the list of **Scheduled Tribes**. These two will be the synonyms of “Nayaka” in the list of STs in Karnataka.
- Cabinet also approved the second and final extension of the term of the Commission constituted to examine the issue of Sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes in the Central List.
- The term of the Commission has been extended beyond 27th of March this year for a period of twelve weeks to 20th June.

### **List of other Cabinet approvals:**

- The continuation of **the National Health Mission (NHM)** with effect from 1st April 2017 to 31st of March 2020. Centre will contribute **85,000 crore rupees** over this period.
- Official **amendments in the Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2016**- seeks to regulate surrogacy by establishing National Surrogacy Board at the central level and State Surrogacy Boards at state level. It prohibits commercial surrogacy and allows only altruistic surrogacy.
- Continuation of the **Prime Minister’s Development Package for Jammu and Kashmir 2015**- it will be used in infrastructure creation in district hospitals, sub-district hospitals and primary health centres with budgetary support of **Rs 625 crore**.



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- Govt. approved **North East Industrial Development Scheme (NEIDS) 2017** with financial outlay of 3,000 crore rupees up to March, 2020. MSME sector will be the focus to generate more employment.
- **Revision of double taxation avoidance agreement between India and Qatar.** The existing Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) with Qatar was signed on April 7, 1999, and came into force on January 15, 2000. The revised DTAA updates the provisions for exchange of information to latest standard, includes Limitation of Benefits provision to prevent treaty shopping (using various treaties to reduce tax liabilities) and aligns other provisions with India's recent treaties.
- It approved the opening of **18 new Indian Missions in Africa over a four year** period from 2018 to 2021. With this, the number of Resident Indian Missions in Africa will go up from 29 to 47.
- Approved a scheme called **Integrated Scheme for Development of Silk Industry** from 2017-18 to 2019-20 at a cost of over **2,161 crore rupees**. The scheme will promote Women Empowerment and livelihood opportunities to SC, ST and other weaker sections of the society.
- **Continuation** of Centrally Sponsored Scheme of **Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)** from 1st of April 2017 to 31st of March 2020. The Abhiyan seeks to increase the gross enrollment ratio of the country to 30 per cent by 2020. It also seeks to increase the spending on higher education by the State governments. The scheme, in its 2nd phase, aims at creating 70 new model degree colleges and 8 new professional colleges.

### **NITI Aayog, Piramal Foundation tied up to transform 115 'aspirational districts':**

- **NITI Aayog and Piramal Foundation** signed State of Interest (SoI) to work for transformation of 115 'aspirational districts'. Aspirational districts are **115 most backward districts of India** which are lagging in social and economic parameters.



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- The Government aims to bring rapid transformation in these areas within 5 years i.e. by 2022.
- **NITI Aayog will rank these districts** based on 10 socio-economic indicators **by April** this year.

## Events

- **PM Modi delivered inaugural address at Indian Science Congress in Imphal:**
  - Prime Minister Narendra Modi will deliver the inaugural address at the 105th session of the Indian Science Congress, at Manipur University in Imphal, Manipur.
  - The five-day Science Congress is an annual congregation of science professionals from across the globe.

**Theme-** Reaching the Unreached through Science and Technology.

- He will also lay the foundation stone of the National Sports University, 1000 Anganwadi Centres, 19 residential complexes for teachers, doctors and nurses, and other development projects.
- He will also inaugurate the Luwangpokpa Multi Sports Complex, Rani Gaidinliu Park, and other development projects.
- **Photography exhibition on India held in Egypt:**
  - A photo exhibition about India showcasing pictures captured by an Egyptian photographer has been held in Egypt.
  - It was titled “Indian images: People and Places” and was inaugurated by India’s Ambassador to Egypt Sanjay Bhattacharyya.
  - This exhibition was on the sideline of annual cultural festival ‘India by the Nile’.
- Union minister Nitin Gadkari on Friday inaugurated the 5th Nadi Mahotsava at Bandrabhan of Hoshangabad District of Madhya Pradesh, event started by Late Union Minister Anail Madhav Dave.





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**WEEKLY CAPSULE**

**3rd WEEK OF MARCH**

**(16th – 22nd)**

*The two day mahotsava with various sessions of discussion is taking place for the conservation of Narmada river.*

- Well known Malayalam writer M Sukumaran passed away in Thiruvananthapuram tonight at the age of 76. He was the recipient of the Kendra Sahitya Akademi and Kerala Sahitya awards in 2006 and 1976. His short stories 'Sangaganam' and Unarthupattu' have been made into films.

- **A day of festival: 18<sup>th</sup> march**

**18th March** is observed as various festivals in different parts of India-

**Chaitra Sukladi**- new year in traditional hindu calender- first day of Hindu era Vikram Sambat

**Ugadi**- Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka

**Gudi Padava**- Maharashtra

**Cheti chand**- by Sindhis

**Navreh**- Kashmir

**Sajibu Cheiroba**- Manipur

*All these festivals mark the beginning of traditional new year in different parts of the country.*

- **President of India inaugurated Festival of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (FINE):**
  - The President of India, **Ram Nath Kovind**, inaugurated a **Festival of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (FINE)** at Rashtrapati Bhavan on March 19, 2018.

*FINE, an initiative to recognise and reward innovations and to foster a supportive ecosystem for innovators.*



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- He also presented Gandhian Young Technological Innovation awards instituted by Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies and Institutions [SRISTI].

*This is being organised by Rashtrapati Bhavan in association with the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India and the National Innovation Foundation-India.*

- **PM addressed Rashtriya Jan Jagriti Dharam Sammelan at Srisailem:**
- **The Prime Minister**, Narendra Modi, addressed the **Rashtriya Jan Jagriti Dharam Sammelan at Srisailem** (Andhra Pradesh) via video conference.

**Note-**

*Srisailem dam is constructed on Krishna river. It is the 2nd largest hydro-electric power station (in terms of power production capacity) of India.*

*Nagarjunsagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve is the largest tiger reserve in India .*

- **PM addressed the Rising India Summit 2018:**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered the key note address in the **first edition of Rising India Summit 2018** organized in **New Delhi** by Media Group Network 18 (claims to be India's largest news network).
- Nobel Laureate Economist, Paul Krugman, was the Guest of Honour.

*The Rising India Summit is a culmination of a series of 'Rising Series' of Network18 that had taken place in various states across the country.*

- **NSD to host 8th Theatre Olympics in Mumbai:**
- The **National School of Drama (NSD)** will host the **8th Theatre Olympics' in Mumbai** from 24th March to 8th April.
- The festival is being held in 17 cities with Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Bhubaneswar already having staged the show with over 25,000 artists performing in 450 shows.



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**WEEKLY CAPSULE**

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**(16th – 22nd)**

**Theme-** Flag of Friendship

*The Theatre Olympics was established in 1993 in Greece, followed by Japan (1999), Russia (2001), Turkey (2006), South Korea (2010), China (2014), Poland (2016).*

**About NSD:**

*Set up in 1959 by Sangeet Natak Akaemy in New Delhi.*

- Uttarakhand inaugurated the Garhwal rifle war memorial hostel for boys and girls at Daanda Lakhaund, Dehradun to provide education with hostel facility to the children of soldiers in Garhwal rifle
- 7th Women Science Congress was inaugurated in Imphal on the sideline of 105th session of Indian Science Congress inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi.

*The first Women Science Congress was held in 2012.*

**Theme -** Reaching the Unreached Through Science and Technology

- The Ministry of Mines organized 3rd National Conclave on Mines and Minerals in New Delhi.

*The 1st edition was organized in Raipur and 2nd was in New Delhi.*

**Objective-** same generic thing like how we can overcome challenges to develop mining industry in sustainable manner

- President Ram Nath Kovind released Rs 1,000 and Rs 10 commemorative coins on the occasion of Nabakalebar festival in Puri (Odisha), festival is associated to the creation of deities of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra – three deities in Jagannath temple (Puri).



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**WEEKLY CAPSULE**

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- Recycling associations across the globe observed the first **Global Recycling Day on 18th March** which coincides with the 70th anniversary of Bureau of International Recycling (BIR).
- The **Krishi Vigyan Kendra in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district** has been recognised as the best agri science centre in the country for integrated farming model. This is because of its initiatives like developing nutrition gardens and promoting integrated farming techniques.

*Dr S K Patil, the vice chancellor of Raipur-based Indira Gandhi Krishi Vishwavidyalaya (IGKV), and Kanker Krishi Vigyan Kendra's coordinator Birbal Sahu received the 'Pt Deendayal Upadhyay Krishi Vigyan Protsahan Award-2017' at the hands of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.*

*This award was presented during 'Krishi Unnati Mela' held in New Delhi.*

- Flying officer **Bhawana Kanth** became the second woman pilot of the **Indian Air Force (IAF)** to fly a fighter aircraft solo (alone).
- She flew **MiG-21 Bison** from **Ambala Air Force Station**. The "Bison" has virtually the highest landing and take-off speed in the world - 340 kmph.
- Last month, flying officer **Avani Chaturvedi** made history by becoming the first Indian woman to fly a fighter aircraft solo. She had flown from Jamnagar base.

*Avani Charurvedi, Bhawana Kanth and Mohana Singh were the first women to undergo fighter pilot training in IAF.*

- The first phase of **Indo-French joint naval exercise Varuna 2018** started at the **Mormugao Port Trust (MPT) in Vasco, Goa**.
- French submarine and frigate Jean de Vienne and Indian destroyer INS Mumbai and frigate Trikand with their integral helicopters, Indian



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submarine Kalvari, P8-1 and Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft and a Mig 29K fighter aircraft are participating in the exercise.

*The next two phases would be held off the Chennai coast next month and in La Reunion Island in May.*

*Indian and French navies have been conducting bilateral maritime exercises since May 1993.*

- The **AYUSH Ministry** is organising **the International Yoga Fest**, this will be a curtain raiser for International Yoga Day celebrated on 21st June.

*The aim of the fest is to promote classical yoga based on scientific studies.*

- 11th Science Communicators' meet was **inaugurated in Imphal** on the sideline of 105th Indian Science Congress.
  - They are the persons who communicate science and technology to common people and enable its adoption among masses.
  - **The "Book of Abstracts"** on the Science Communicators' Meet was released on this occasion.
- The Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog, **Dr. Rajiv Kumar inaugurated the First India-Japan Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in New Delhi.**
  - The two-day workshop is being jointly organised by the Ministry of Home Affairs, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Government of Japan.
  - Experts from Japan and India discussed DRR with particular emphasis on earthquake safety
- Jnanpith awardee and renowned Hindi poet Kedarnath Singh passed away in New Delhi at the age of 84. Kedarnath won the Sahitya Akademi



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**(16th – 22nd)**

Award in Hindi in 1989 for his poetry collection ‘Akaal Mein Saras’ and the Jnanpith Award in 2013.

- The **106th edition of the Indian Science Congress** will be held next year from 3rd to 7th January at **the Barkatullah University in Bhopal**.
- The theme of the meet will be **'Future India: Science & Technology'**.
- On the conclusion of **105th Indian Science Congress in Imphal**, various awards were given. Ex- **'Young Scientist Awards 2017-18'** to 14 awardees, **'Best Poster Award'** to 20 awardees, **'Best Science Model'** to five awardees and **'Pride of Indian Exhibition Awards'**
  - The President of India presented the **Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri Awards** on 20th March at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- **Padma Vibhushan Awardee- Ilaiyaraja** (music), **Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan** (Hindustani Classical Music), **P. Rameshwaran** (RSS ideologue from Kerala).
- **Padma Bhushan- Pandit Arvind Parekh** (Hindustani Classical Music and Sitar player), **Prof. Ved Prakash Nanda** (Law expert and educator), **Dr. Ramachandran Nagaswamy** (historian), **Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom Mar Thoma Valiya Metropolitan** (spiritualism), **Pankaj Advani** (snooker), **M S Dhoni**, **Laxman Pai** (Painter), **Alexander Kakadin** (public affair), **Sharda Sinha** (music).
- **Padma Sri- Anwar Jalalpuri**, **Rani Beg**, **Dr Abhay Bang**, **Mohan Swarup Bhatiya**, **Narayan Das**, **Somdev Kishore Devvarman**, **Yeshi Dhonden**, **Arvind Kumar Gupta**, **Prof Digambar Hansda**, **Malti Joshi**, **Kidambi Srikanth**, **Pravakar Maharana**, **Joyashree Goswami Mohanta**, etc. (total 36 persons)
- **General Bipin Rawat**, Chief of the Army Staff released a book on Paramveer Chakra Awardees - **'Paramveer Parwane'** on 20 March 2018, illustrating the bravery of Paramveer Chakra Awardees from





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**WEEKLY CAPSULE**

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**(16th – 22nd)**

1947 to 1965, written by **Dr Prabhakaran Jain** published by Medha Books.

*Note- **Paramveer Chakra** is India's highest war-time gallantry award conferred on defense personnel. Till today 21 persons have received the award.*

- The '**Gulf Shield 1**' military exercise was held in the Eastern region of Saudi Arabia organized by **Saudi Arabia's Defense Ministry** from 18th March.
- Military forces of **23 other countries** are participating in the exercise.
- This is the **largest military drill** of the region.

**Objective-** to enhance cooperation, coordination, joint preparedness of armies.

- Union Minister **Nitin Gadkari** inaugurated the Inland ferry services in the port city of Vasco in Goa. He is in charge of Ministries of Road Transport and Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.
- **20th March** was observed as International Day of Happiness all over the world, observed by United Nations

**Theme-** Share happiness

- **National Cultural Audio visual Archives (NCAA)** project has been certified as the world's first Trusted Digital Repository as per ISO 16363:2012 standard.

**objective** of NCAA to identify and preserve India's cultural heritage in audio-visual form and make it available to people.

- It is a project under Ministry of Culture and implemented by **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)**.



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**WEEKLY CAPSULE**

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**(16th – 22nd)**

- It has the plan for the next phase to integrate about three lakh hours of audiovisuals materials from 25 cities over next five years.
- India Post paid tribute to theoretical physicist and cosmologist Stephen Hawking (world renowned scientist Stephen Hawking passed away on 14th March in UK) by issuing a special cover on him.
- Chief Post Master General (CPMG) of Maharashtra and Goa Circle H C Agrawal and Director of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) Dr Sandip Trivedi jointly issued the special cover at an event.
- **World's last Northern White Male Rhino died in Kenya:**
  - Recently world's **last surviving while male rhino named 'Sudan'** died at the age of 45 in **Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya.**
  - His death leaves **only two females** - his daughter and granddaughter - of the subspecies alive in the world.
  - Rhinoceroses - of which there are five species - are the **second-largest land mammal after elephants.**
  - The white rhinoceros consists of **two sub-species: the southern white rhino** and the much rarer and critically endangered **northern white rhino.**
  - The subspecies' population in Uganda, Central African Republic, Sudan and Chad was largely wiped out during the poaching crisis of the 1970s and 1980s.
- 22nd March is observed as World water Day throughout the world.  
**Theme** - Nature for Water

**Sustainable Development Goal 6** – ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030

- **21st March:**



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## WEEKLY CAPSULE

3rd WEEK OF MARCH

(16th – 22nd)

- **International Day of Forest**; theme- **Forest and Sustainable Cities**
- **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**;  
commemorates Sharpeville massacre of 1960 in South Africa in which 69 peacefully protesting blacks were killed by racist government of South Africa.  
**Theme-** Promoting tolerance, inclusion, unity and respect for diversity in the context of combating racial discrimination.
- **World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD)**
- **21st March** is the **102nd birth anniversary of noted sehnai** (a musical instrument) **player and Bharat Ratna awardee** Ustad Bismillah Khan.
  - He performed at the Red Fort on India's Independence Day and also on the first Republic Day ceremony on January 26, 1950
  - He was the third classical musician after M S Subbulakshmi and Ravi Shankar to receive the Bharat Ratna.

## Sports

- FIFA has lifted its three-decade ban on Iraq hosting international football, allowed the cities of **Arbil, Basra and Karbala** to host international football matches.
- Iraq will host Qatar and Syria for a friendly tournament starting on March 21 in Basra.
- Iraq has not played full internationals on home turf since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The ban, covering all but domestic matches, stayed in place after the US-led invasion of 2003 toppled dictator Saddam Hussein.
- It was briefly lifted in 2012, but a power outage during an Iraq-Jordan match in the Iraqi Kurdish capital Arbil led FIFA to promptly reinstate it.



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**WEEKLY CAPSULE**

**3rd WEEK OF MARCH**

**(16th – 22nd)**

- **Nepal became the latest nation** to join the One-Day International (ODI) club, securing their **50-overs status for the first time** at the ongoing **ICC World Cup Qualifiers in Zimbabwe**.
  - Here Nepal **defeated Papua New Guinea** to secure this place in ODI.
  - In addition to **Nepal, Scotland, Netherland and UAE** have got the temporary status which will last **till 2022**.
- **KL Rahul has been named the 'Cricketer of the year'** in the 6th edition of Wisden India Almanack recently.

Many others like Deepti Sharma, Hasan Ali and Tamim Iqbal have been named as the cricketer of the year.

- The **closing ceremony of Winter paraolympics at PyeongChang Olympic Stadium, titled "We Move the World,"**
  - During the ceremony, New Zealand's para-alpine skier Adam Hall and Finland's para-Nordic skier Sini Pyy were honoured with the Whang Youn Dai Achievement Award.
  - The Paralympic flag was handed over to **Beijing, the next host** of the Winter Paralympics in 2022.
  - Then the Paralympic Flame was extinguished at the end of a dance performance called "Dosalpuri,"
- **India beat Bangladesh** by four wickets to win the Nidahas Cricket Trophy final in **Colombo**, eighth victory of India against Bangladesh in a T-20 format.

*Nidahas Trophy was a tri-series tournament among India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.*



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**WEEKLY CAPSULE**

**3rd WEEK OF MARCH**

**(16th – 22nd)**

- **Current Ranji Trophy champion Vidarbha has won the Irani Trophy for the first time after defeating the rest of India by a huge margin in Nagpur.**

***About Irani Cup:***

- *The Z. R. Irani Cup (earlier called Irani Trophy) is played between incumbent Ranji trophy champion and rest of India team*
- *It started in 1959-60 to mark the completion of 25 years of Ranji Trophy.*
- *It was named after the late Z. R. Irani, who was associated with the BCCI from its inception in 1928, till his death in 1970.*

- **India's Purva Barve has won the Women's Singles (Under-19) title at the Israel Junior 2018 held in Rishon LeZion, Israel.**
- Purva defeated 3rd seeded and top ranked Russian Anastasiia Pustinskaia.
- The title is her first in 2018 and third overall.

***Earlier she won the Israel Junior 2017, Italian Junior International 2017 apart from a bronze at the Russian Junior White Nights 2017.***

- **Chennaiyan Football Club or Chennaiyan FC won the Hero India Super League 2017-18 by defeating Bengaluru FC final held at Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru.**
- Bengaluru FC captain **Sunil Chetri won the 'Hero' of the Indian Super League** award.
- **Ferran Corominas of Goa FC has won the 'Golden Boot'** with highest number of goals (18).
- **Kerala Blasters FC's 23-year-old Mizo defender Lalruatthara won the ISL Emerging Player of the Season Award.**
- **The Argentinian player Juan Martin Del Potro won his first title by defeating World No 1 Roger Federer in Indian Well Masters final in California.**

**Note -**



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(16th – 22nd)

- **Federer, the 20-time Grand Slam champion**, was looking for a record sixth title in California.
- Del Potro also became the first player to beat Federer this year.
- Women's Singles winner- **Naomi Osaka** (Japan)
- Men's Double winner- John Isner (USA), Jack Sock (USA)
- Women's Doubles- Hsieh Su-Wei (Taiwan), Barbora Strycova (Czech Republic)

Related CA- **Roger Federer had become the oldest player to be ranked No 1 in tennis ranking.**

- **USA topped the medal tally in the recently concluded 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Paralympics in South Korea**, won **total 36 medals** comprising 13 golds, 15 silvers and 8 bronzes .USA was followed by NPA (Neutral Paralympic Athlete), Canada and France.

*NPA team consisted of Russian athletes. Since Russia was banned from participating in the tournament due to systematic doping by its government, clean athletes were allowed to participate under NPA team.*

## Technology

- **A cloned Assamese buffalo male calf named 'Sach-Gaurav' was born for the first time in Hisar (Haryana)** by the effort of The Central Institute for Research on Buffalos (CIRB).
- The calf was born to a Murrah buffalo. It was also the first to be born in the field, 100 kms from the cloning laboratory at Hi Tech Sach Dairy Farm in Hisar.
- The Ministry of Environment and Forest has given environmental clearance to India based Neutrino Observatory (INO), to be set up in Bodi West Hills in Theni district of Tamil Nadu jointly supported by Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Science and Technology
- **The project aims at** building a world-class underground laboratory at a depth of 1200 meter. It will conduct basic research on the elementary





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(16th – 22nd)

particle called neutrino. It is located underground to provide shielding from cosmic radiation.

- The Indian Coast Guard ship C-437 was commissioned at Porbandar (Gujarat), it will strengthen our coastal security by augmenting patrolling and preventing illicit activities like infiltration, smuggling etc.
- ICGS C-437 shall be based at Jakhau under administrative and operational control of commander Coast Guard Region (North West).
- Greece launched its first own space agency called '**Hellenic Space Organization**'.

*Greece is also a member of European Space Agency (ESA) since 2006.*

*Greece does not intend to start its own space exploration programme, but it will supplement its effort in ESA.*

*Dr. Tom Krimigis has been named as the head of the space agency.*

## Appointment

- **Ravindra Rao** has been appointed as the new CEO of Reliance Asset Construction Company.
- **Ki Keqiang** was recently re-elected as the Premier of China for the 2nd term for five more years.

*Premier is the Number 2 in Chinese Government after the all-powerful President Xi Jinping.*

- Xu Qiliang and Zhang Youxia were elected as Vice Chairman of Central Military Commission.



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(16th – 22nd)

- **Aamir Khan** is the new brand **ambassador of Vivo India**. He replaced Ranveer Singh.
- **Rakesh Makkar** has been appointed as the CEO of Fullerton India Home Finance.
- **Atul M Gotsurve** has been appointed as the new ambassador of India to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea).
- The Governor of Odisha, **S C Jamir's tenure came to an end** on 20th March 2018. So until new appointment by the centre, **Governor of Bihar Satyapal Malik** has been given the additional charge as the Governor of Odisha.
- **Katrina Kaif** joined the internationally acclaimed organization '**Educate Girls**' - non-profit organization to tackle the issue of gender inequality in India's education system, founded by **Safeena Hussain in 2007**.

## States

- Haryana Assembly has passed a bill proposing death penalty or rigorous imprisonment of not less than 14 years (extendable to life imprisonment) for rape or gang rape of girls below 12 years.
- The Criminal Law (Haryana Amendment) Bill, 2018 also proposes punishment not less than 2 years and upto 7 years in case of assault with intent to outrage the modesty of a girl.
- There is also punishment for stalking.

*Madhya Pradesh was the first state to pass such a bill providing death penalty for convicts accused of raping girls below 12. Rajasthan has also decided to follow the suit.*



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**WEEKLY CAPSULE**

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**(16th – 22nd)**

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu released the Andhra Pradesh Multidimensional Poverty (MPI) Index Report 2017 in which Andhra Pradesh ranks 51st (global equivalent) whereas India ranks 66th.
- Within the district East Godavari district topped the ranking and Vizianagaram is at the bottom.
- The study was conducted by the Vision Management Unit (VMU) of the Planning Department in collaboration with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) of the University of Oxford, UK.
- Assam Government has proposed an insurance scheme for journalists and their families in the budget for 2018-19.
- The state budget has earmarked 63 crore in the budget to implement various schemes for journalists.
- A media fellowship scheme has been launched to select 20 media persons at the cost of Rs 50,000 each.
- The Pension Scheme for Journalists has been introduced to provide retirement benefits (Rs 8,000/month) to journalists working for more than 20 years in Assam.

***Recently Assam presented its first e-budget in the assembly.***

- Arunachal Pradesh Assembly passed Panchayati Raj (Amendment) Bill 2018 to do away with Anchal Samiti in line with the 73rd amendment of the Constitution which allows states not to have an intermediate level

*Anchal Samiti is the intermediate level of three-tier Panchayati Raj system. Now the state will have a two-tier system*

- The Maharashtra government has decided to **ban the use of plastic from "Gudi Padva"**. The ban would cover the production, use, storage, sale, distribution, import and transportation of plastic.
- Violating the ban would be **fined Rs 25,000** and could also **face a three-year jail** term.



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**WEEKLY CAPSULE**

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**(16th – 22nd)**

- Plastic used to cover medicines, forest and horticulture products, solid waste, tree saplings and the use of plastic in special economic zones for export purposes would be exempt from the ban.
- Plastic milk pouches would have to be above 50 microns and it should be recyclable
- Bihar Deputy Chief Minister **Sushil Modi inaugurated state's first Start-up India hub in Patna**. Work station and office space equipped with free of cost "plug and play" facility would be made available for 31 startup companies.
- The Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) will collaborate with Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) to strengthen its ability and quality of prediction of hazards.

*RIMES, an inter-governmental body registered under the United Nations, is owned and managed by 45 collaborating countries in Asia Pacific and African Region.*

- Himachal Pradesh CM Jai Ram Thakur released a **handbook on women safety** called '**Mahila Surakshya**'.
- Brought out by the Shimla administration, the booklet talks about measures required for personal safety and safeguards regarding crimes, including sexual harassment at workplace.
- It also contains important telephone and helpline numbers.
- Karnataka Government has recommended religious **minority status to Lingayat community**. So the Lingayat community would be a minority religion distinct from Hinduism.
- The government also decided to extend the minority status to any of the **Veerashaiva community** (believers in Hindu gods) who express faith in the philosophy of **Lingayat leader Basaveshwara (Basavanna)**.

**Note -**



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**(16th – 22nd)**

**Veerashaiva was a religious movement** started in around 12th century which preached equality of all, discarded caste distinction, disregarded priests and rituals and wore ishtalingas.

- It has decided to accept the recommendation of Karnataka State Minority Commission to grant religious minority status to the community under Karnataka State Minorities Act.
- The state Minorities Commission had formed a seven-member experts committee headed by retired High Court Judge H N Nagamohan Das on the issue.
- To give a **platform to aspiring singers and dancers in the city**, the Delhi government launched a mobile application named '**Delhi's Date with Democracy**', it would allow deserving applicants down to the ward-level to showcase their talent on a big stage.
- The app would be used to help select candidates online first and then competitions would be held at various venues, from ward-level to the grand finale at the city level.
- There is no age limit and interested candidates can start sending their entries in both categories -- singing and dancing.
- The grand finale would be held at the Central Park in Connaught Place where the winning candidates would get a chance to sing and dance with famous singers and dancers.
- Bihar celebrated its **106th foundation day**, on this day in 1912 the state was **carved out of United Bengal**.

**The theme for this year's Bihar Diwas celebrations is** "Centenary of Champaran Satyagraha and Elimination of Dowry and Child Marriage."

The Vice President also released four **books-** 'Ek Tha Mohan', 'Bapu Ki Chiththi', 'Champaran Ki Kahani' and 'Neel Ke Dhabbe' on this occasion.



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- **Union Chemical and Fertilizer Minister Ananth Kumar** has announced setting up of a plastic park in Deoghar district of Jharkhand.
- It will be in an area of **150 acre** at a cost of **Rs 120 crore**.
- Also **one plastic recycling unit at a cost of Rs 3.5 crore** will be set up in Jharkhand.

The Minister asked the state to provide land and infrastructure for the Central Institute for Plastic Engineering and Technology (CIPET) to train man power in this area.

*The polymer consumption in India is expected to double from current 10 million metric tonnes to 20 million metric tonnes by 2022.*

- Telangana Government will make Telugu mandatory in **all Government and Private educational institutions up to 10th standard** from next academic year. The Government will bring in a law to make it a compulsory subject in school.

*Tamil Nadu already has such provision of mandatory Tamil learning in school.*

### **About Telugu language:**

- *It has 3rd largest speaker in India after Hindi and Bengali.*
- *It is one of the 22 scheduled languages of our Constitution.*
- *It is one of the 6 classical languages of India (others are Sanskrit, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Odia).*

**Related CA- In December 2017, World Telugu Conference was held in Hyderabad.**

- Punjab decided to impose a **permanent ban on hookah bars** following the foot step of Gujarat aimed to reduce the consumption of tobacco especially among youngsters.
- As per available data, an hour's average of hookah smoking contains 20-200 puffs, which can deliver 50 litres of smoke.
- Government will bring in an amendment in the relevant act to bring legal sanctity to it.





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**WEEKLY CAPSULE**

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**(16th – 22nd)**

***Related CA-** Punjab has made super straw management mandatory to check air pollution due to stubble burning.*

- Jammu & Kashmir Cabinet approved adoption of **Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS)** for horticulture crops like apple and saffron.
- The RWBCIS uses weather parameters as "proxy" for crop yields in compensating the cultivators for deemed crop losses.
- It will provide insurance coverage for any notified crop which gets damaged due to adverse weather condition.

***Related CA-** the state constituted Urdu Council to promote the language.*