

## My Notes....

### NATIONAL

#### NEW 'MEGHALAYAN AGE' DISCOVERED

Geologists have classified the last 4,200 years as being a distinct Earth age and are calling it a new chapter — the “Meghalayan Age” — the onset of which was marked by a mega-drought that crushed a number of civilisations worldwide. They divide up the 4.6-billion-year Earth existence into slices of time. Each slice corresponding to significant happenings — such as the break-up of continents, dramatic shifts in climate, and even the emergence of particular types of animals and plant life.

What

1. The current age in which we live is called the Holocene Epoch, which reflects everything that has happened over the past 11,700 years — since a dramatic warming kicked us out of the last ice age. But the Holocene itself can be subdivided, according to the International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS).
2. The ICS is the official keeper of geologic time and it proposed three stages be introduced to **denote the epoch's upper, middle and lower phases**. These all record major climate events.
3. The Meghalayan, the youngest stage, runs from 4,200 years ago to 1950. It began with a destructive drought, whose effects lasted two centuries, and severely disrupted civilisations in Egypt, Greece, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, and the Yangtze River Valley.
4. This was spread across the planet in the debris scattered by the asteroid that wiped out the dinosaurs.
5. The Meghalayan Age is unique among the many intervals of the geologic timescale. Its beginning coincides with a global cultural event produced by a global climatic event.
6. The middle phase of the Holocene will be referred to as the Northgrippian, and runs from 8,300 years ago up to the start of the Meghalayan.
7. The onset for this age was an abrupt cooling, attributed to vast volumes of freshwater from melting glaciers in Canada running into the North Atlantic and disrupting ocean currents.
8. The oldest phase of the Holocene — the exit from the ice age — will be known as the Greenlandian. The International Chronostratigraphic Chart, the famous diagram **depicting the timeline for Earth's history will be updated.**

#### Flashback

1. Meghalayan Age is named after cave in Indian state of Meghalaya.
2. It has helped to define climatic events 4,200 years ago, marking beginning of phase that continues till today.
3. The lower boundary of this stage is defined at specific level in stalagmite from cave in northeastern Indian state.
4. Meghalayan Age was part of longer period known as Epoch, which reflects everything that has happened over past 11,700 years.
5. It began with mega global drought that devastated ancient agricultural civilisations from Egypt to China.
6. This age is unique because it is first **interval in Earth's geological history** that coincided with major cultural event, as agricultural societies struggled to recover from shift in climate.

#### PUBLIC AFFAIRS INDEX 2018

Kerala stands as the best-governed state in the country followed by Tamil Nadu, according to the Public Affairs Index 2018 released by the think tank Public Affairs Centre (PAC). While Telangana, Karnataka and Gujarat are ranked third, fourth and fifth among the top five states delivering good governance, according to the report, Madhya

Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar ranked the lowest on the PAI, indicating higher social and economic inequalities in the states.

What

1. Kerala has topped the Public Affairs Index (PAI) for 2018 as the best-governed state for the third consecutive year since 2016 among large states, said Bengaluru-based PAC to release its third annual PAI.
2. Founded in 1994 by renowned Indian economist and scholar late Samuel Paul, the think tank works to mobilise a demand for better governance in the country.
3. Among smaller states (with population less than two crore), Himachal Pradesh topped the list, followed by Goa, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura which figured among the top five states with good governance. Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya were ranked at the bottom of the index among small states.
4. A total of 30 focus subjects and 100 indicators were measured to derive the PAI, relying solely upon government data.
5. **This year's** PAI also included a separate index on the children of India, giving a measure of how child-friendly each of the states is.
6. Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Mizoram topped the index on being the states to provide better living conditions for all children.

#### Flashback

1. The index is released since in 2016 by Bengaluru base Public Affairs Centre (PAC).
2. It is a not for profit think tank which aims to improve governance in India.
3. It is based on 10 themes, 30 focus subjects and 100 indicators, relying solely upon government data.
4. It covers wide range of themes such as support to human development, social protection, essential infrastructure, women and children, crime, law and order, delivery of justice, transparency and accountability, environment, fiscal management and economic freedom.

## DATA PROTECTION REPORT SUBMITTED

The high-level panel on data protection framework on 27 July 2018 submitted its report to the government, suggesting steps for safeguarding personal information, defining obligations of data processors as also rights of individuals, and mooted penalties for violation. Headed by Justice B N Srikrishna, the panel handed the report to IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, wrapping up nearly one year of deliberations that touched upon sensitive and controversial issues.

What

1. In report, the areas covered included consent, what comprises personal data including sensitive personal data, exemptions which can be granted, grounds for processing data, storage restrictions for personal data, individual rights and right to be forgotten?
2. Justice Srikrishna said privacy has become a burning issue and



**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Personal data shall be processed only for purposes that are clear, specific and lawful
- Individuals will have the right to withdraw consent
- All firms and agencies will have to appoint data protection officers
- Firms will have to ensure at least one copy of personal data to be stored in India
- They will also act as point of contact for the individuals for raising grievances
- 'Critical' personal data shall only be processed in a server or data centre located in India
- Exemptions have been provided for processing of personal data for journalistic purpose, or for a purely personal or domestic purpose
- Penalties range from 2-4% of a company's worldwide turnover, or fines between ₹5 crore and ₹15 crore, whichever is higher
- The Centre shall notify Data Protection Authority of India
- A data protection fund and a data protection awareness fund to be set up through proceeds from the penalties and the fines

**Existing Acts such as Right to Information, Aadhaar and Information Technology will have to be amended**

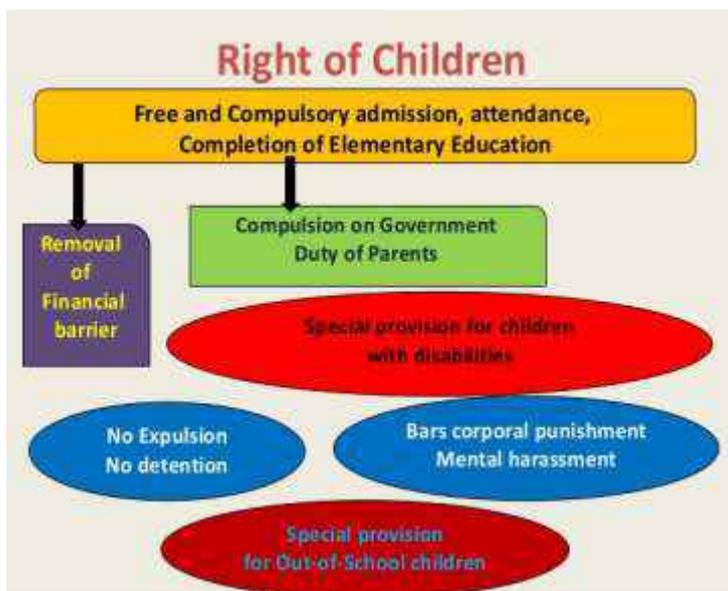
- therefore, every effort has to be made to protect data at any cost.
3. This report is the first step and as technology changes, it may become necessary to fine tune the law keeping with the changes.
  4. The report touches on variety of issues including consent, rights of children, data protection authority and right to recall data.
  5. As far as data storage is concerned, the report identifies circumstances under which data has to be mandatorily stored in India and cases where it can be stored with mirroring provisions. The report asserts that critical data has to be stored in India.
  6. The government had constituted the 10-member committee in July 2017 to recommend a framework for securing personal data in the increasingly digitised economy as also to address privacy concerns and build safeguards against data breaches.
  7. The Srikrishna committee held its last and final meeting earlier this week on July 25, where one of the members said on conditions of anonymity that the data protection framework, would spur amendments in a slew of existing legislations in areas like Aadhaar, RTI and health.

## A BILL TO SCRAP 'NO DETENTION' RULE PASSED

The Lok Sabha passed a bill to end the 'no detention' policy in schools for students of classes 5 to 8. It was to rebuild the education system of India, and that the presence of 'no detention' policy was leading to a poor education system.

What

1. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act or Right to Education Act (RTE) passed in the year 2009 makes education a fundamental right of every child between the ages of 6 to 14 under Article 21A.
2. Right to Education, RTE The original Act, as stipulated in Chapter II of The Right to Free and Compulsory education, states, "Every child of the age of six to fourteen years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school till completion of elementary education."
3. The essence of this policy is primarily to see that children should not be failed and detained up to Class 8.
4. But key amendments will now enable schools to fail children/students if he/she fails to attain the qualified marks and can even withhold their promotion to the next standard.
5. As reported by many schools in states and Union Territories, the need to scrap the Act was felt after observing 'poor marks' from the students. The Act now gives discretionary powers to the state whether to continue with 'no detention' policy.



## INDUSTRIES MAKE 27 SATELLITES

In the first big contract since its inception, the Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) has allowed three industries—two private and one government-run firm—to build as many as 27 satellites in the next three years, indicating industry readiness and

paving way for the next chapter in Indian space programme. In all these years of space-faring, only two satellites have been assembled by the industry, the IRNSS-1H and IRNSS-1I, that took on a select-basis, only late last year and early this year. The two satellites were assembled by Bengaluru-headquartered consortium led by Alpha Design Technologies.

What

1. **Now, Isro's contract for satellites will see the Alpha Design consortium that includes six SMEs— Newtech; Aidin; Aniara; DCX; Vinyas and Exseed Space—defence PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), and, Tata Advanced systems Limited make three satellites each per annum for the next three years.**
2. All three firms will integrate satellites with the help and guidance of Isro by procuring sub-systems from the Isro supply chain.
3. The contract, signed by the UR Rao Satellite Centre (URSC) on behalf of Isro, was done in a closed room, with no media. Isro has not made an official statement about the deal and has issued gag orders on the discussion of the financial details even to the companies.
4. The contract is for each of the three to make nine 1.6 tonne to 2-3 tonne satellites, **based on requirement, which means they'll make a total of nine every year, and 27 by the end of three years.**
5. The satellites will be a combination of communication, imaging and meteorological (for disaster management) and the contract has the option of extending the same for another two years, which means 18 additional satellites.
6. All three firms will be working at the new facility created for private industry at Isite (Isro Spacecraft Integration Test Establishment) in Bengaluru.

## SPC PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh launched the Student Police Cadet (SPC) programme for nationwide implementation at a ceremony in Gurugram, Haryana on 21 July 2018. The SPC would lead to a silent revolution over the years by focusing on character building by imparting moral values to budding minds.

What

1. The SPC programme would help in making students responsible citizens by inculcating values of respect to the elderly, discipline, social responsibility and through police-student interaction.
2. The SPC programme will provide a healthy interface between schools and police peace and inculcate in the students aspects of public safety, discipline, patience, tolerance, empathy, respect of senior citizens, social harmony, traffic sense and a corruption-free environment.
3. The youth of tomorrow who emerge out of such programme would bear ethical values of social commitment and be aware of social evils such as drugs, alcohol abuse, intolerance and vandalism.
4. The SPC project will also help the police assess their image in the public eye and strive for improving confidence and winning trust of the people. SPC initially will be launched as pilot programme in all States and Union Territories.
5. Earlier the Home Minister launched the theme song and training manual of SPC prepared by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D). He also presented cash awards to winners of Logo and motto competition. He also handed over the SPC flag to Haryana Platoon Commander.
6. The SPC programme focuses on students of Classes 8 & 9 and special care has been taken to ensure that it does not lead to increase in the workload of the students.
7. The programme does not have any prescribed textbook nor is any exam envisaged. Only one class in a month is proposed. The programme seeks to cover broadly two kinds of topics, - crime prevention and control; and values and ethics.

8. Under the first part, the topics covered are – Community Policing, Road Safety, Fight against Social Evils, Safety of Women & Children, Fight against Corruption and Disaster Management.
9. The topics covered under the second part are – Values & Ethics, Respect for Elders, Empathy & Sympathy, Tolerance, Patience, Attitude, Team Spirit and Discipline.
10. The programme shall be steered by a State level committee to be headed by the Principal Secretary, Home Department with the Principal Secretary, Education and Director General of Police as members.
11. There shall be a similar committee at the district level headed by the District Magistrate with the District Inspector of Schools and Superintendent of Police as members.
12. The Programme shall be at first implemented in Government schools in both urban and rural areas.

### NOD TO PANEL FOR DNT, SNT AND NT

The NITI Aayog has backed a proposal by a panel constituted by the Ministry of Social justice and Empowerment to set up a permanent commission for Denotified (DNT), Semi Nomadic (SNT), and Nomadic Tribes (NT). NITI Aayog has also offered to set up a working group to come up with policy suggestions on many issues of the communities **found by the ministry panel to be the “most deprived”**.

What

1. In May this year, the ministry had written to the NITI Aayog, asking for its stand on the report of the Bhiku Ramji Idate Commission on DNT, SNT, and NT communities.
2. In response, the NITI Aayog has agreed with the recommendation to set up a permanent commission for the communities on the lines of similar commissions for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes.
3. In its report submitted to the social justice ministry in January 2018, the Idate Commission said such a permanent commission should have a prominent community leader as its chairperson, and a senior Union government bureaucrat, an anthropologist, and a sociologist as members.
4. The ministry had also written to the NITI Aayog, asking whether it would set up a Working Group for framing Vision 2030 for development of these communities as per the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
5. The DNT, NT, SNT communities have been identified as the most marginalised by several commissions set up since Independence.
6. The community has for long not been enumerated in the Census data. The Renke Commission report of 2008 had arrived at a rough estimate of their population being between 10-12 crore but none of its recommendations were implemented.
7. Following the Idate Commission report, Social Justice Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot wrote to 22 ministries for their response to the panel report as it includes 20 proposed policy changes across all spheres.

#### Flashback

1. Denotified tribes are those that were labelled as criminals through legislation by British government and were denotified post-independence.
2. The Nomadic tribes maintain constant geographical mobility
3. Semi-nomads are those who are on the move but return to a fixed habitations once a year, mainly for occupational reasons.

## AMENDMENTS TO ANTI-CORRUPTION LAW PASSED

Parliament on 24 July 2018 passed a Bill to amend the 1988 anti-graft law by seeking to punish bribe-givers for the first time along with the bribe-takers, with the Lok Sabha giving its nod to the move. The Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill aim was to enhance transparency and accountability of the government and also to make the provisions under the law stringent.

What

1. The Bill, which got the Rajya Sabha's nod last week with 43 amendments, seeks to set a timeframe within which a court would decide on corruption issues, the verdicts in such cases has to be given "ordinarily" in two years.
2. Immunity from arrest would be available to all levels of officers, as against the existing provision of joint secretary and above.
3. The Bill had many provisions to ensure speedy trial of corruption cases, besides providing protection to bureaucrats, even after their retirement, from malicious complaints.
4. For the bribe takers, the Bill proposes to increase the punishment to a minimum of three years of imprisonment, which may extend to seven years, besides fine.
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## MONUMENTS AMENDMENT BILL SENT TO SELECT PANEL

The Rajya Sabha on 26 July 2018 sent a bill to allow construction of public works within the 'prohibited area' of protected monuments to a select committee. A 'prohibited area' is 100 metres around a protected monument. Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Vijay Goyal proposed in the House that the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment) Bill should be sent to the select committee, which was approved by the House.

What

1. The committee has been asked to submit its report on the bill by August 8.
2. The members of the select committee include Ambika Soni, Jairam Ramesh, Vinay Sahasrabudhe, Jaya Bachchan, K Ramesh, Madhusudan Mistry, Saroj Pandey, Sanjay Raut, S C Misra, Naresh Gujral and Kahkashan Perween.
3. As per the Bill, the relevant central government department, that seeks to carry out construction for public purposes in a prohibited area, should make an application to the competent authority.
4. It empowers the National Monuments Authority to consider an impact assessment of the proposed public works in a prohibited area, including its archaeological impact, visual impact and heritage impact.

### Key Features of Bill

1. The Bill amends provision related **construction in 'prohibited areas'** in the parent bill to permit construction of public works in 'prohibited areas' for public purposes.
2. **It introduces definition for 'public works', which includes construction of any infrastructure that is financed and carried out by central government for public purposes.**
3. The Bill empowers central government to allow public works based on recommendation of National Monuments Authority (NMA) on application forwarded by relevant central government department, that seeks to carry out construction for public purposes in a prohibited area.
4. The Bill empowers NMA to consider an impact assessment of proposed public works in prohibited area, including its archaeological impact, visual impact and heritage impact.

## INDIA'S FIRST UMS

US-based Edtech Company Campus Management Corporation has partnered with the Maharashtra government to roll out a cloud-based centralised structure to manage and track admission process. The project, reportedly the first of its kind initiative in India, will digitalise the administrative and academic processes of all the 14 non-technical universities in the state.

What

1. The University Management System (UMS), which will be kicked off next week, will drive the admission process of about 8 million students for non-technical courses in Maharashtra from next year. US-based IT services provider UST Global is also a part of the project.
2. UMS will look at all the criteria, including academic scores and reservation category of the candidates, before assigning them colleges.
3. It will then track the academic performance, grades and attendance of the students through its cloud-based software. As the academic cycle gets over, UMS will connect the industry with the students' base for employment opportunities.
4. The whole system has been built by the Bengaluru team of the company on the Microsoft Azure cloud platform, which is one of the oldest partners of the US-based edtech firm.
5. Among its major clients in India, the National Skill Development Corporation is already using Campus Management Corporation's platform. Last year, Maharashtra's Directorate of Vocational Education and Training project came on the Campus Management Corporation platform.
6. The company also provides software across the full student life cycle to 30 colleges in India, including IIM Udaipur.
7. Campus Management Corporation has already set up operations in five new countries in the past two months, including South Africa, Nigeria, Spain, Portugal, and Denmark.

### Flashback

1. Campus Management Corp. is a private company that provides software and services to colleges, universities, foundations, and other companies.
2. Headquartered in Boca Raton, Florida, Campus Management began in 1988 as a consultancy for customizing accounting software.
3. Founder David Meek acquired the firm and re-branded it into a specialized provider of administrative software systems to proprietary postsecondary schools.

## UN'S E-GOVERNMENT INDEX 2018

India has marked a great success on **United Nation's E-Government Index**, jumping 22 ranks in last four years and 11 ranks in last two years. India, which was ranked 118 in 2014, is now at 96th rank on the index, which maps how digital **technologies and innovations are impacting the public sector and changing people's** everyday lives. The survey, released by the United Nations every two years, noted that India has scored 100% in the first stage of the E-Participation sub-index, followed by 95.65% in the second stage and 90.91% in the third stage.

What

1. The overall score of 0.9551 on the E-Participation sub-index has put India among top 15 countries in the list of 193 countries surveyed.
2. In this category, India has emerged as sub-region leader. Denmark is the world leader, both on E-Government index and E-Participation sub-index.
3. India breaks into top 100 again! After Ease of Doing Business, it is UN's e-government index Credit: United Nations
4. While India scores well on Online Services sub-index as well with a score of 0.9514, it ranks poorly on Telecommunication Infrastructure Index with a mere score of 0.20091.

5. On Human Capital Index as well, India is far below the world average of 0.6627. **India's score on this index is just 0.5484, barely touching the regional index.**
6. Nevertheless, an improvement of 22 ranks is indeed a big shot in the arm of Prime Minister who has been extremely vocal about digitising India.
7. **In October 2017, India's leapfrog jump on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business** also helped the country to gain significance on world platforms, as a result of which rating agency **Moody's upgraded sovereign rating Baa2 from Baa3 after a gap of 14 years.**

## THE CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL PASSED

The Criminal Law Amendment Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on 30 July 2018, clearing the way to award death penalty to convicts of child rapes in the country. This bill reflects the concern of the nation. The bill was initiated after outrage over the gruesome Kathua rape and murder case in which an eight-year-old nomadic girl was sedated and raped multiple times. The bill seeks to replace the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance promulgated on April 21. The bill received support from all the political parties unanimously, however, there were certain objections to the government taking the route of an ordinance for the same.

What

1. The bill stipulates harsh punishment for perpetrators of rape, particularly of girls below 12 years.
2. The death sentence has been provided for rapists of girls under 12 years and the minimum punishment in cases of rape of women has been increased from the rigorous imprisonment of seven years to 10 years, extendable to life imprisonment.
3. According to the bill, in case of rape of a girl under 16 years, the minimum punishment has been increased from 1 to 20 years, extendable to imprisonment for rest of life which means jail **term till the convict's "natural life"**
4. The punishment for gangrape of a girl below 16 years will invariably be imprisonment for the rest of life of the convict.
5. With the implementation of the bill, the deadline for the trial of rape cases will be two months.
6. A six-month time limit for the disposal of appeals in rape cases has also been prescribed in the bill, adding that there will also be no provision for anticipatory bail for a person accused of rape or gangrape of a girl under 16 years.

## BRAHMOS SUCCESSFULLY TESTED

**The world's fastest supersonic cruise missile Brahmos** was 16 July 2018 successfully test-fired from a military base at Balasore in Odisha. The missile was **test-fired from a "mobile autonomous launcher" as part of its service life extension programme** and it will be in the armoury of the Army.

What

1. Brahmos has a strike range of around 290 km and is described as the **world's fastest supersonic cruise missile**, which can be fired from land, sea and air.
2. The missile is a strategic asset for India as it provides the country deterrence against any possible threat from China and Pakistan.
3. Brahmos, the supersonic cruise missile was successfully test-fired from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Balasore.
4. The precision strike missile followed the designated trajectory and its key components functioned perfectly during the trial.
5. BrahMos has proved again its all-weather capability flying in sea-state 7 with waves **as high as nine meters, the ministry said adding the missile's capability to operate in the most severe weather condition has also been validated during the test-firing.**

6. **Today's test launch comes close on the heels of two trials of Brahmos missile** conducted on May 21 and 22 this year in which the major sub-systems manufactured indigenously under the 'Make in India' campaign were tested.
7. Brahmos is a joint venture between Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the NPOM of Russia.

#### FIRST MADE-IN-INDIA NOTE

The Reserve Bank of India has released a new Rs 100 denomination banknote in the Mahatma Gandhi series with a Swachh Bharat logo in lavender colour. This is the first note made of entirely domestic materials. This note is designed in India, printed on currency paper made in India. The ink is made in India and even the security features have been made by Indian companies.

What

1. The new Rs 100 note was designed in the Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran (BRBNM) Design Studio in Mysore.
2. The new note will have a different dimension from the existing Rs 100 note, which means that it will not be available in ATMs until the machines are recalibrated.
3. The new banknote, bearing the signature of RBI governor Urjit R Patel, has a motif of **Gujarat's 'Rani Ki Vav' on the reverse, depicting the country's cultural heritage.**
4. The base colour of the note is lavender and it contains other designs and geometric patterns, aligning with the overall colour scheme, both on the obverse and reverse.

#### ASSAM NRC FINAL DRAFT OUT

The much-anticipated second and final draft of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) was published on 30 July 2018 with 29 million names out of the total 32.9 million applicants in Assam, Registrar General of India Sailesh said. The names of 4 million applicants did not find a place in the historic document, touted to be a proof of Assamese identity.

What

1. The first draft of the NRC was published during the intervening night of December 31 and January 1 this year, containing 19 million names. This is a historic day for India and Assam. The exercise is unparalleled in size. It is a legal process done under the direct supervision of the Supreme Court.
2. The NRC will include the names of all Indian citizens who have been residing in Assam before March 25, 1971.
3. The application process for the NRC started in May 2015 and a total of 6.5 crore documents were received from 68.27 lakh families across Assam.

#### What is the NRC?

1. The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is the list of Indian citizens of Assam.
2. It was prepared in 1951, following the census of 1951.
3. The process of NRC update was taken up in Assam as per a Supreme Court order in 2013.
4. In order to wean out cases of illegal migration from Bangladesh and other adjoining areas, NRC updation was carried out under The Citizenship Act, 1955, and according to rules framed in the Assam Accord.
5. The updating process started in May 2015 and ended on 31 August 2015. A total of 3.29 crore people applied through 68.31 lakh applications.
6. The process of verification involved house-to-house field verification, determination of authenticity of documents, family tree investigations in order to rule out bogus claims of parenthood and linkages and separate hearings for married women.

## SOI SIGNS FOR ASPIRATIONAL DISTRICTS

A Statement of Intent (Sol) was signed on 23 July 2018 between NITI Aayog and Lupin Foundation to collaborate in Aspirational Districts Programme. For this programme, the NITI Aayog and Lupin Foundation are collaborating to improve indicators in education, health & nutrition, financial inclusion and skill development, agriculture and water resources and basic infrastructure in Aspirational Districts of India.

### What

1. As per the terms of the Sol, Lupin Foundation, with the NITI Aayog, will work in three states - Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan - to facilitate the creation of an ideal template to develop economic strength, technological viability and moral leadership across three districts in these states as part of Phase I of the cooperation.
2. Phase I of this cooperation with NITI Aayog will focus on the districts of Dholpur in Rajasthan, Nandurbar in Maharashtra and Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh, and help develop a comprehensive district-level action plan with integrates various initiatives and interventions.
3. Lupin Foundation will work towards three main pillars of ensuring integrated developmental policy in the model states – social development, which will include initiatives for health, education and women empowerment; economic empowerment, focussing interventions in spheres of agriculture, animal husbandry and skill enhancement; and infrastructure development, where Lupin will loop to establish durable infra in the form of internal roads, school buildings and water resources.

### About Aspirational District Programme

1. **Launched by the Hon'ble PM in January this year, the 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts' programme** aims to quickly and effectively transform some of the most underdeveloped districts of the country.
2. The broad contours of the programme are Convergence (of Central & State Schemes), Collaboration (of Central, **State level 'Prabhari' Officers** & District Collectors), and Competition among districts driven by a Mass Movement or a Jan Andolan.
3. The Government is committed to raising the living standards of its citizens and ensuring inclusive growth for all – Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas.
4. To enable optimum utilization of their potential, this program focuses closely **on improving people's ability to** participate fully in the burgeoning economy.
5. Health & Nutrition, Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development, and **Basic Infrastructure are this programme's core areas of focus.**
6. After several rounds of consultations with various stakeholders, 49 key performance indicators have been chosen to measure progress of the districts.
7. Districts are prodded and encouraged to first catch-up with the best district within their state, and subsequently aspire to become one of the best in the country, by competing with, and learning from others in the spirit of competitive & cooperative federalism.

#### About Lupin and Lupin Foundation

1. Lupin is an innovation-led pharmaceutical company with a global footprint and known for its generic medicines.
2. Lupin Foundation is a trust, NGO, independent body promoted by Lupin Ltd.
3. Formed in 1988, decades before CSR became mandatory, showing its commitment beyond just compliance.
4. The Foundation works towards creating an alternative model of rural development which is sustainable, replicable and ever evolving essentially empowering under privileged and marginalized sections of society and providing basic infrastructure and balanced ecological base to the villages.

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING BILL PASSED

Lok Sabha passed a comprehensive law to contain human trafficking with WCD minister Maneka Gandhi assuring the House that the legislation did not intend to harass sex workers and was "victim centric". The bill covers "aggravated" forms of trafficking for forced labour, child bearing, begging and marriage and lays down stringent punishment for those found guilty. The punishment for such crimes will not be less than 10 years imprisonment and may extend to life in jail and a fine of not less than Rs 1 lakh. Repeat offenders will face jail for the rest of their life and a minimum fine of Rs 2 lakh.

- What
1. In a first, the bill rates offences like administration of hormones for early sexual maturity, exposing a person to life threatening illness like HIV and abetting a person to illegally migrate as "aggravated trafficking offences".
  2. The Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018 provided for attachment and confiscation of illicit assets born out of trafficking crimes.
  3. The bill provides for confidentiality of victims, witnesses and complainants, time-bound trials and repatriation of victims. The law envisages setting up of a 'National Anti-Trafficking Bureau' under the home ministry to deal with all forms of human trafficking.
  4. This bill is not intended to harass those sex workers who are voluntarily in the profession. This is a bill that has a compassionate view of people who have been victims of sex racket.

## “MISSION SATYANISHTHA” LAUNCHED

In first of its kind event held by any government organization, the Indian Railways organized a programme on Ethics in Public Governance and Launched “Mission Satyanishtha” at a daylong event held at National Rail Museum, New Delhi on 27.07.2018. Sh. Piyush Goyal, Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, Railways & Coal, administered the oath to the officers and supervisors at the programme.

What

1. The issues of Ethics, Integrity and probity in public life have been a matter of concern all over the government sector.
2. In this context it is also extremely important that all railway servants adhere to impeccable conduct and integrity at all times.
3. “Mission Satyanishtha” launched on 27th July 2018 aims at sensitizing all railway employees about the need to adhere to good ethics and to maintain high standards of integrity at work. Talks and Lectures on the subject are being organised all over the Indian Railways today for this purpose.

The objectives of the Mission are:

1. To train every employee to understand the need and value of ethics in Personal and Public life.
2. To deal with ethical dilemmas in life and Public Governance.
3. To help understand the policies of Indian Railways on ethics and integrity and the employee's role in upholding the same.
4. To develop inner governance through tapping inner resources.

## 'MADE-IN-INDIA' MULTI-FUEL WAR TANK

Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman handed over two categories of indigenised multi-fuel engines for powering main battle tanks to the Vice Chief of Army Staff on 28 July 2018. The engines were developed at the Engine Factory Avadi (EFA), Chennai, a unit of Ordnance Factory Board under the Department of Defence Production. The engines have been fully indigenised for the first time under the Make-in-India Programme.

What

1. The first engine with 1,000 HP, named V92S2, powers T-90 Bhisma Tank and the second, named V-46-6, powers T-72 Ajeya Tank and its variants.

2. Though these engines are manufactured based on Russian design, EFA has worked **tirelessly to make critical assemblies under “Make in India” programme and has emerged successful** in its efforts.
3. These assemblies, which include Turbo Charger, Super Charger, and Fuel Injection Pumps, were sourced from Russia earlier.
4. EFA will be manufacturing the two engines with 100 per cent Indian made parts.
5. At the end of the visit, a handing-over ceremony was held, during which the Minister handed over indigenously manufactured engines for T-90 tank and T-72 tank to VCOAS.
6. Anil Kumar, GM/EFA assured that EFA will also complete full indigenisation of the engine, UTD-20, this fiscal year.
7. EFA's indigenisation efforts have not only resulted in savings to the exchequer to the tune of Rs 3.3 million for each T-90 engine and Rs 975,000 for each T-72 engine, but also the exhibits self-reliance of OFB in manufacturing these engines in India without any import support.
8. EFA has manufactured more than 12,000 engines since inception in 1987 for Indian Army and has established a production capacity of more than 800 engines per annum. During 2018-19, EFA is geared up to cross the 800-engine mark for armoured vehicles.
9. EFA has also undertaken R&D project for upgradation of 300 HP engine for BMP, Design & Development of New power pack for 650 HP for FICV and to upgrade the existing 1,000 HP T-90 engine.

#### Flashback

1. **‘Make in India’** was launched in September 2014 with aims to encourage industrialists to setup their manufacturing units in India through Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in order to transform India into a globally credible manufacturing ground.
2. **‘Made in India’ is a common phrase** often seen on the tags of various products that a consumer purchases.
3. It establishes an identity of the **product’s having been manufactured in India** and gives consumers abroad a **means to identify the product’s Indian origins**.
4. A program to promote domestic manufacturers to produce goods in India could be a plausible solution to the **problems in ‘Make in India’ discussed earlier**.

## GOVT ALLOWS MAKING B-MOLASSES

The government has notified a decision to allow sugar mills to manufacture ethanol directly from sugarcane juice or intermediate product called B-molasses. The sugarcane control order of 1966 has been amended in this regard and the same has been notified by the Union Food Ministry. The move would help mills divert cane juice for ethanol manufacturing during surplus years.

What

1. When a sugar factory produces ethanol directly from sugarcane juice or B-molasses, the recovery rate in case of such factory shall be determined by considering every 600 litres so produced as equivalent to one tonne of production of sugar, the notification said.
2. So far, mills were allowed to manufacture ethanol from by-product called C-molasses, after sugar was taken out while processing raw cane juice.
3. Molasses is also used for manufacturing spirit and alcohol among other products.
4. Last month, the government for the first time also fixed the price of ethanol produced from intermediary or B-molasses at Rs 47.49 per litre for the marketing year starting December 2018.
5. The price of ethanol produced from C-molasses has been raised by Rs 3 per litre to Rs 43.70 per litre.

6. India, which is over 80 per cent dependent on imports to meet its oil needs, has mandated blending of up to 10 per cent ethanol in petrol but inadequate availability has restricted this to under 4 per cent.
7. Mills have contracted for the supply of 1.58 billion litres of ethanol to oil marketing companies (OMCs) during the marketing year starting December 2018, higher than 786 million litres listed by OMCs last year, as per the industry data.
8. OMCs procure ethanol from sugar mills for blending with petrol. Mills are expecting revenue realisation of over Rs 50 billion from the sale of ethanol to OMCs during the 2017-18 sugar season (October-September).
9. Sugar mills are incurring losses as prices of sugar have fallen below production cost on account of record output of 32 million tonnes in 2017-18 seasons as against the annual domestic demand of 25 million tonnes.

## A BILL TO REVAMP HOMOEOPATHY COUNCIL PASSED

The Homoeopathy Central Council (Amendment) Bill 2018 seeking to replace the Central Council of Homoeopathy (CCH) with a board of governors and aimed at bringing accountability and quality in homeopathy education system was passed by the Lok Sabha on 30 July 2018.

What

1. The Bill, which seeks to replace an Ordinance promulgated by the President in May, was approved by a voice vote after the House rejected several unofficial amendments. It will reconstitute the CCH within a year and restore the democratic process.
2. As per the bill, the members of the board of governor will replace the existing functionaries of the CCH and comprise seven eminent homeopathy practitioners and administrators who will be appointed by the government.

### About the Ministry

1. The Ministry of AYUSH was formed on 9th November 2014 to ensure the optimal development and propagation of AYUSH systems of health care.
2. Earlier it was known as the Department of Indian System of Medicine and Homeopathy (ISM&H) which was created in March 1995 and renamed as Department of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) in November 2003, with focused attention for development of Education and Research in Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy.

## INTERNATIONAL

### MYANMAR JOINS ISA

Myanmar has joined India-initiated International Solar Alliance (ISA), making it 68th signatory to Framework Agreement of ISA. ISA is action-oriented organization that aims brings together countries with rich solar potential to aggregate global demand, thereby reducing prices through bulk purchase, facilitating deployment of existing solar technologies at scale and promoting collaborative solar R&D and capacity building.

What

1. ISA was jointly launched by India and France in November 2015 at Paris on side lines of COP21 UN Climate Change Conference.
2. Its Framework Agreement came into force in December 2017.

### ISA's 4 ongoing programmes

1. Scaling Solar Mini Grids
2. Affordable Finance at Scale
3. Scaling Solar Applications for Agricultural Use
4. Scaling Solar Rooftop catering to the needs of solar energy in specific areas

3. It celebrated its founding day on 11th March, 2018.
4. It is headquartered at campus of National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), Gurugram, Harayana, making it first international intergovernmental treaty based organization to be headquartered in India.

## DIVISIVE JEWISH NATION-STATE LAW

Israel passed a law on 19 July 2018 to declare that only Jews have the right of self-determination in the country, something members of the Arab minority called racist and verging on apartheid. The "nation-state" law backed by the right-wing government and passed by parliament after months of political argument. This is a defining moment in the annals of Zionism and the history of the state of Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told.

What

1. Largely symbolic, the law was enacted just after the 70th anniversary of the birth of the state of Israel. It stipulates that "Israel is the historic homeland of the Jewish people and they have an exclusive right to national self-determination in it".
2. The bill also strips Arabic of its designation as an official language alongside Hebrew, downgrading it to a "special status" that enables its continued use within Israeli institutions. Israel's Arabs number some 1.8 million, about 20 percent of the 9 million populations.
3. Early drafts of the legislation went further in what critics at home and abroad saw as discrimination towards Israel's Arabs, who have long said they are treated as second-class citizens.
4. Israel's Arab population is comprised mainly of descendants of the Palestinians who remained on their land during the conflict between Arabs and Jews that culminated in the war of 1948 surrounding the creation of the modern state of Israel. Hundreds of thousands were forced to leave their homes or fled.
5. Those who remained have full equal rights under the law but say they face constant discrimination, citing inferior services and unfair allocations for education, health and housing.

## UK SELECTS SCOTTISH SITE FOR FIRST SPACEPORT

UK Space Agency has selected site at **Sutherland on A'Mhoine peninsula** on north coast of Scotland for its first spaceport to launch rockets vertically and put satellites in orbit. For development of this spaceport, UK Government is going to provide \$3.3 million funding and will be built with help of consortium of companies.

What

1. **A'Mhoine Peninsula in Sutherland** was chosen as most suitable place from which to launch rockets vertically.
2. The first rocket launches from this spaceport are planned for early 2020s.
3. The site was selected in part due to its beneficial geography.
4. Rockets can take direct path from tip of Scottish peninsula to above Arctic Circle.
5. This is suitable for launching small satellites particularly, which are often placed in polar orbits, circling Earth and passing over Arctic and Antarctic.
6. It is located on coast in sparsely populated area, thus in case of failures rocket will harmlessly fall into the ocean or empty land.
7. The spaceport will help UK to grab slice of growing market for small satellite launches.

## A DEAL SIGNED TO DEFY PROTECTIONISM

Japan and the European Union signed a wide-ranging free trade deal on 17 July 2018 that both sides hope will act as a counterweight to the protectionist forces unleashed by US President Donald Trump. The ambitious trade pact, which

creates the **world's largest open economic area**, comes amid fears that a trade war between the United States and China will diminish the role of free trade in the global economic order.

What

1. Japan and the EU account for about a third of global GDP and their trade relationship has room to grow, the deal to boost the EU economy by 0.8 per cent and Japan's by 0.3 per cent over the long term.
2. The United States this month imposed 25 per cent tariffs on \$34 billion of Chinese goods to lower the US trade deficit, and China quickly retaliated with an increase in tariffs on US goods.
3. The Japan-EU trade deal is also a sign of shifting global ties as Trump distances the US from long-time allies like the EU, Nato and Canada.
4. The deal removes EU tariffs of 10 per cent on Japanese cars and 3 per cent on most car parts. It would also scrap Japanese duties of some 30 per cent or more on EU cheese and 15 per cent on wines, and secure access to large public tenders in Japan.
5. **Europe's food sector is one of the biggest winners from the deal**, which should allow it to capitalise on Japanese demand for high-quality cheese, chocolates, meats and pasta.
6. Japanese car and car parts makers are also expected to increase their sales to Europe, where they have lagged behind European rivals.
7. Both Japan and the EU, having seen Trump pull back from free trade relationships, are keen to show they remain committed to removing barriers they say hamper growth.
8. EU accords with Singapore and with Vietnam were at the ratification stage, while deals with Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand were being negotiated.
9. A China-EU summit ended on 16 July 2018 with a communique affirming the commitment of both sides to the multilateral trading system.

#### Flashback

1. The European Union is a unified trade and monetary body of 28 member countries. It eliminates all border controls between members. That allows the free flow of goods and people, except for random spot checks for crime and drugs.
2. The EU transmits state-of-the-art technologies to its members. The areas that benefit are environmental protection, research and development, and energy.
3. Three bodies run the EU. The EU Council represents national governments. The Parliament is elected by the people. The European Commission is the EU staff.
4. The euro is the common currency for the EU area. It is the second most commonly held currency in the world, after the U.S. dollar. It replaced the Italian lira, the French franc, and the German deutschmark, among others.

## UN FOR FIRST TIME FINALIZES AGREEMENT ON MIGRATION

United Nations for first time has finalized Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to better manage international migration, address its challenges, strengthen migrant rights and contribute to sustainable development. This is for first time UN Member countries came together to negotiate agreement covering all dimensions of international migration.

## What

1. The compact is the first intergovernmental agreement to cover wide-ranging dimensions of international migration in holistic and comprehensive manner, agreed upon by all the UN member states minus the United States.
2. It is not legally binding. It sets out 23 objectives to deal issues ranging from factors that compel people to move, legal channels for migration, combating trafficking and smuggling, harnessing the economic benefits of migration and return of the migrants.

## Flashback

1. Currently, over 250 million migrants worldwide account for **3% of the world's** entire population, but contribute 10% of the global gross domestic production (GDP).
2. **Migrant's remittance is huge contributor to their home countries' development.**
3. The process of developing compact was started in early 2017 as implementation of decision by UN member states as adopted New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in September 2016.
4. **UN member states' another decision** pledged in the declaration is to develop a Global Compact on Refugees.

## UN TO SUPPORT AID IN SYRIA

The **United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs** (OCHA) in Syria said it was ready to provide support to a Franco-Russian initiative to deliver medical aid to government-controlled eastern Ghouta after earlier saying it would not. France had said the cargo would be distributed under the independent supervision of a UN team so it could guarantee where and when it would go. A French diplomatic source said it was "not entrusting the aid with the Red Crescent".

## What

1. The 50 tonnes of aid, including blankets, clothes and tents, arrived on a Russian plane to **Russia's Hmeimim** military base in northwestern Syria from France and came after an agreement reached between President Emmanuel Macron and Russian leader Vladimir Putin in Moscow following talks since May.
2. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) will be distributing the aid and there is no UN supervision of the operation, contrary to previous reports.
3. OCHA Syria welcomes the recent French-Russian initiative to deliver humanitarian aid to Eastern Ghouta.
4. OCHA stands ready to provide whatever support is needed to ensure this important humanitarian operation is a success. OCHA officials did not immediately respond to requests for clarification.
5. The remarks reported by OCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) office in Damascus are not in line with the agreement reached with the Russians and the United Nations

## Flashback

1. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is a United Nations (UN) body formed in December 1991 by General Assembly Resolution.
2. The resolution was designed to strengthen the UN's response to complex emergencies and natural disasters.
3. Earlier UN organizations with similar tasks were the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), and its predecessor, the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO).
4. In 1998, due to reorganization, DHA merged into OCHA and was designed to be the UN focal point on major disasters.
5. It is a sitting observer of the United Nations Development Group.

6. Russia was also not supposed to take part in its distribution because Paris wanted the initiative to not be derailed for political purposes.
7. France, which has backed opponents to Assad in the seven-year civil war, cut off diplomatic ties with Damascus in 2011.

## INVEST INDIA AND UAE SIGN MOU

Invest India and the UAE Minister for Artificial Intelligence (AI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for India - UAE Artificial Intelligence Bridge on 27 July 2018 in New Delhi. This partnership will generate an estimated USD 20 billion in economic benefits during the next decade for both countries. The MoU will spur development across areas like Blockchain, AI and Analytics as data and processing will be a catalyst for innovation and business growth and serve as the backbone of more effective and efficient service delivery systems. By 2035 AI can potentially add USD 957 billion to the Indian economy.

What

1. The UAE-India collaboration will seek to evaluate the dynamic nature of innovation and technology by convening a UAE-India AI Working Group (TWG) between the UAE Ministry for Artificial Intelligence, Invest India and Startup India
2. The TWG will meet once a year with the mandate to increase investment in AI startups and research activities in partnership with the private sector.
3. India and UAE share a bond that extends beyond business as Indians make-up the largest expat community in the UAE at 27% and the **UAE is India's** third largest trading partner.
4. The UAE has invested over USD 5.3 billion in India and infrastructure is one of the top 5 focus sections of UAE-India bilateral trade.
5. The UAE has committed USD 75 billion towards infrastructure development in India.
6. The Government of India is launching multiple initiatives to create an environment for digital growth through which the potential of AI can be realized in the areas of agriculture supply, healthcare and disaster management services.

### Flashback

1. **'Invest India' is India's official** agency dedicated to investment promotion and facilitation.
2. It is a not-for-profit, single window facilitator, set up in 2010 for prospective overseas investors and to those aspiring Indian investors desiring to invest in foreign locations, and acts as a structured mechanism to attract investment. Invest India is essentially an Investment Promotion Agency in India.
3. Invest India is set up as a joint venture company between the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce & Industry (35% equity), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) (51% equity), and State Governments of India (0.5% each).

## ECONOMY

### GOVT TO DROPS FRDI BILL

The government has decided to drop the controversial Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance (FRDI) Bill, thus allowing bank customers to breathe easy. The Union Cabinet decided to drop this Bill. This means the present system of insurance deposits **will continue and customers will not have to worry about the 'bail-in' provision** in the proposed Bill. Since introduction and any change thereafter in the Bill would have required Cabinet approval, dropping the Bill also required it.

## What

1. The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 10, 2017, and then sent to the Joint Committee of the Parliament, which is yet to submit its report. There were two controversial clauses in the Bill: a bail-in provision and insurance on deposits.
2. The bail-in provision stipulated that if a bank fails, depositors will have to bear part of the liability. Technically, this provision says, “It amounts to liabilities’ holders bearing a part of the cost of resolution by reduction in their claims.”
3. Currently, deposits are insured up to 1 lakh. The Bill proposed to delete the legal provision for the present insurance system and defined this protection in a new way.
4. Under the provisions of the FRDI Bill, in case of liquidation of a bank, the claims of uninsured depositors will be higher than those of unsecured creditors **and government dues**. Therefore, “the rights of uninsured depositors will be better protected... in the FRDI Bill.
5. Arguing for the provision, the Finance Ministry had said that there was no comprehensive and integrated legal framework for resolution, including liquidation, of financial firms in India. The power to restructure public sector banks, and regional rural banks was with the Centre.

## Resolution regime

1. The current resolution regime is especially inappropriate for private sector financial firms in the light of significant expansion and many of these acquiring systemically important statuses in India.
2. With the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016, a comprehensive resolution regime for non-financial firms mainly has come in, but there is no such mechanism for financial firms.
3. This Bill intended to provide a comprehensive resolution regime that would help ensure that, in the event of failure of a financial service provider, there is quick, orderly and efficient resolution in favour of depositors.

## SIT REVISES CAP ON CASH

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) on black money has recommended the central government to cap the cash holding limit at Rs 10 million instead of its earlier suggestion of Rs 2 million. The SIT has also recommended that the entire amount found in seizures crossing that limit should go to the government treasury; Justice (retired) M B Shah, who heads the SIT on black money, said on 19 July 2018. The latest recommendations come after the earlier suggested limits of Rs 1.5 million and Rs 2 million were found to be too low.

## What

1. According to the existing rules, an offender can retrieve seized cash by paying 40 per cent income tax and penalty.
2. The recommendations have come after huge amounts of cash were seized in recent search operations by tax authorities in the country.
3. The Income Tax sleuths had on July 16 searched over 20 premises of a firm engaged in highway construction and its associate companies in Tamil Nadu and seized Rs 1.6 billion cash and 100 kg of gold.
4. The amount of money being seized is so high that now we are of the opinion that Rs 2 million limits will not do.
5. Justice Shah had earlier suggested the cash holding limit to be at Rs 1.5 million. However, later he had recommended raising the limit to Rs 2 million.
6. The SIT was formed by the central government in 2014 on directions of Supreme Court.
7. The panel has been continuously suggesting anti-black money measures to the government.

## FUGITIVE ECONOMIC OFFENDER'S BILL PASSED

The Lok Sabha on 19 July 2018 passed a bill that seeks to bring back fugitives who have committed white collar crimes to face trial in India even as the government faced criticism from opposition parties for its failure to prevent the outward flight of these offenders during its tenure. The bill, when it becomes a law, will give powers to the government to confiscate assets both locally and overseas of offenders like Vijay Mallya and Nirav Modi, who have not returned to India to face prosecution proceedings even after arrest warrants were issued.

What

1. The Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill, 2018, seeks to target fugitives for offences where the monetary value exceeds Rs 100 crore.
2. The bill will extend to not only loan defaulters and fraudsters but also to those individuals who violate laws governing taxes, black money, benami properties, financial sector and corruption.
3. According to the provisions of the bill, all individuals attempting to elude the Indian legal process from the date of the enactment of the law will be covered.
4. The confiscation of property will not be limited to those acquired through the proceeds or profits of the crime. The bill also provides for confiscation of benami properties.
5. The enforcement directorate will be the apex agency that will implement the provisions of the bill. The government has also inserted a clause to protect itself and officials from any legal action.

## NOT TO RENEW PACT WITH FPSB INDIA

US-based Financial Planning Standards Board (FPSB), the authority for providing financial planning education worldwide, has decided not to renew its licensing agreement with FPSB India, putting a question mark over the future of hundreds of certified financial planners (CFPs) in India. FPSB has found evidence of financial impropriety with FPSB India and was not happy with the way the CFP certification was promoted in India over the years. The agreement between FPSB and FPSB India expires on March 31, 2020.

What

1. FPSB enters into licensing and affiliation agreements with non-profit organisations, or their equivalent around the world, authorising them to administer the CFP certification programme on behalf of FPSB.
2. At present, FPSB has member organisations in 26 territories with more than 175,000 CFPs. The countries include India, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Singapore, South Africa and Thailand.
3. FPSB India is promoted by 44 financial services organisations and is the licensing authority for CFP marks.
4. FPSB suspects irregularities in the financial accounts of its Indian affiliate and is unhappy with the way the CFP certification has been promoted in the country.
5. India had 2,036 CFP holders at the end of calendar year 2017, compared with 17,523 in China, 4,766 in South Africa and 3,409 in Brazil.
6. While admitting the termination of its licensing agreement, FPSB India insisted that it remained a professionally managed body with high standards of corporate governance.
7. FPSB remains committed to building the financial planning profession and CFP certification programme so that consumers in India can access financial advice and financial planning from competent and ethical professionals.

## GST RATE ON SERVICES

The GST Council in its 28th meeting held in Delhi on 21 July 2018 under the Chairmanship of Shri Piyush Goyal took decisions relating to exemptions / changes in GST rates / ITC eligibility criteria, rationalization of rates / exemptions and clarification on

levy of GST on services. Conceding a year-long demand, sanitary pads were exempted from the goods and services tax as the GST Council reduced rates on an array of appliances and products of daily use. The next GST Council meeting will be held on 4 August.

Key takeaways:

1. Sanitary napkins exempted from GST
2. GST Council cuts tax rate on an array of products; small handicrafts exempted
3. Rakhis exempted from GST, tax on ethanol cut to 5 per cent
4. Footwear up to Rs 1,000 will now attract 5 per cent GST
5. GST on mixer grinder, perfumes, cosmetics, shavers, water heaters, vacuum cleaner reduced from 28 per cent to 18 per cent
6. Businesses with turnover of up to Rs 50 million can file quarterly returns; this will benefit 93 per cent taxpayers
7. Reverse charge mechanism deferred by a year to September 30, 2019
8. New tax rates will be effective from July 27

## LIC BOARD APPROVES IDBI BANK STAKE PURCHASE

Life Insurance Corporation of India's (LIC's) board has approved acquiring up to 51 per cent stake in state-run IDBI Bank, Economic Affairs Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg told on 16 July 2018. Garg, who is on the board of state-run LIC, said the additional stake buy would be most likely through a preferential shares issue, enabling injection of funds to IDBI Bank. Now LIC will approach markets regulator Sebi. Insurance regulator Irdai has already given its approval to the insurer for the stake purchase.

What

1. LIC owned about 8 per cent of IDBI Bank as of end-June, while the federal government owned 86 per cent.
2. LIC stake buy will help the debt-ridden state-owned bank get a capital support of Rs 100-130 billion.
3. LIC has been looking to enter the banking space by acquiring a majority stake in IDBI Bank as the deal is expected to provide business synergies despite the lender's stressed balance sheet.
4. It will get about 2,000 branches through which it can sell its products, while the bank would get massive funds of LIC.
5. The bank would also get accounts of about 22 crore policyholders and subsequent flow of fund.

### Flashback

1. The Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) was established in 1964 under an Act of Parliament as a wholly owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India.
2. In 1976, the ownership of IDBI was transferred to the Government of India and it was made the principal financial institution for coordinating the activities of institutions engaged in financing, promoting and developing industry in India.
3. IDBI provided financial assistance, both in rupee and foreign currencies, for green-field projects as also for expansion, modernisation and diversification purposes.
4. On 26 September 2017, IDBI Bank announced the launch of Project Nishchay in partnership with The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to accelerate its turnaround programme and improve financial performance. The project will be led by senior management at IDBI Bank along with BCG.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### SCIENTIFIC VALIDATION TO AYURVEDA

An agreement was signed between IIT Delhi and the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) under which projects would be launched that would aim to give "scientific validation" to the ancient medical science and integrate it with technology.

What

1. Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the faculties of IIT Delhi and AIIA will work together in the projects to look at ways to integrate technology with Ayurveda.
2. Ayurveda is often associated with religion, where in reality, they have nothing to do with it. Ayurveda is a science and the agreement signed with IIT Delhi is an attempt to integrate it with technology.
3. Ayush Minister Shripad Yesso Naik underlined the need to work towards promoting the benefits of Ayurveda to a worldwide audience.
4. The agreement was signed at a conference of the heads of National Ayush Institutes who would brainstorm on ways to induce modernity in Ayurveda.
5. Representatives of IIT and IIM Ahmedabad and AIIMS would also look at ways to improve the Ayurveda education.

#### Flashback

1. The proposal of establishment of AIIA at New Delhi has emanated from the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's declaration to set up a state-of-the-art National Ayurveda Hospital at the ceremonial function of Vaidya Ram Narayan Sharma Memorial Award Distribution organized on 5 May 2000 under the aegis of All India Ayurveda Congress.
2. The foundation stone of the institute was laid in 2007 consequent upon grant of in-principle approval of the Finance Ministry in 2003, the **Hon'ble Vice President of India** Shri. Bhairon Singh Shekhawat laid down the foundation stone on 14 February 2004.
3. During 2014 the Government of India established the Ministry of Ayush with the **need of Ayurveda as country's traditional health care system** to be promoted and Govt. of India established AIIA Delhi, an autonomous institute under the Ministry of AYUSH.
4. Formal dedication to the nation on 17 October 2017 with PG courses and research activities has been taken over by the Institute in full swing.

### WORD'S FIRST REMOTELY OPERABLE LEAP MICROSCOPE

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Madras has commissioned remotely operable Local Electrode Atom Probe (LEAP) microscope. **It is claimed to be world's first** remotely operable LEAP microscope, as it can be remotely operated through special terminal by researchers divided geographically.

What

1. LEAP is high-performance microscope that can provide a precise atom-by-atom view of materials.
2. It provides atomic-scale insights into metallic, which will influence wide spectrum of industries ranging from steel to automobiles and energy to transportation sector.
3. It will also give major thrust to research in nanotechnology, among other fields
4. The remotely operable LEAP microscope has been developed in a collaborative exercise involving eight top research institutions in country, spearheaded by IIT-M.
5. Other partner institutions are IITs of Bombay, Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur and Ropar, International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI) and Board of Research in Nuclear Sciences (BRNS).

## ORNAMENTAL FISH BREEDING LAUNCHED

In a major effort to develop the ornamental fish industry, an all India network project on ornamental fish breeding and culture, a collaborative research project involving seven fisheries research institutes has been launched in Kochhi. The joint research initiative is mainly aimed at developing adequate technologies in breeding, seed production and culture of freshwater and marine ornamental species and helping maintain the sustainability of the industry.

What

1. The network research project would address the issues being faced by the ornamental fish industry.
2. Though the potential for the development of ornamental fish trade in India is immense, proper mechanism is yet to be established to boost both the overseas and domestic trade of the varieties.
3. The Government has identified this sector as one of the thrust areas for development to augment exports.
4. In India, marine ornamental fish species diversity is rich in the reef area of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep Islands, Gulf of Mannar and Gulf of Kutch.
5. The freshwater ornamental fish resources are rich in the rivers and streams of the Western Ghats and North East India.
6. The project envisages scores of objectives including the development of ornamental fish villages with strong marketing ties.
7. The Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA) in Bhubaneshwar, Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI) in Barrackpore; National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR); Lucknow, Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA), Chennai; Central Institute of Fisheries Education (CIFE); Mumbai and Directorate of Coldwater Fishery Research (DCFR) in Bhimtal, Uttarakhand are the other research institutes involved in the network project.

### Flashback

1. The ornamental species are categorized into indigenous and exotic. Availability of a vast number of native species has contributed significantly to the development of ornamental fish industry in the country.
2. North-eastern states, West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu are blessed with potential indigenous species.
3. About 90% of native species (85% are from northeast India) are collected and reared to meet export demand.
4. Presently, nearly about 100 native species are reared as aquarium fish. There is also a great demand for exotic species due to its colour, shape and appearance.
5. More than 300 exotic species are covered in the ornamental fish trade, but a greater demand for this exists.
6. About 200 species are bred in India. 90% of India exports go from Kolkata followed by 8% from Mumbai and 2% from Chennai.

## TESS BEGINS OPERATIONS

**NASA's latest planet hunting probe** – the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) – has started its search for new worlds around nearby stars, the US Space agency said. TESS is expected to transmit its first series of science data back to Earth in August, and thereafter periodically every 13.5 days, once per orbit, as the spacecraft makes its closest approach to Earth. The TESS Science Team will begin searching the data for new planets immediately after the first series arrives.

What

1. NASA wants to smash a satellite into an asteroid, and it's all in the name of saving Earth from future catastrophic space rock collisions.
2. The mission will spend the next two years monitoring the nearest and brightest stars for periodic dips in their light.

3. These events, called transits, suggest that a planet may be passing in front of its star.
4. TESS is expected to find thousands of planets using this method, some of which could potentially support life.

#### Flashback

1. The Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) is the next step in the search for planets outside of our solar system, including those that could support life.
2. The mission will find exoplanets that periodically block part of the light from their host stars, events called transits.
3. TESS will survey 200,000 of the brightest stars near the sun to search for transiting exoplanets.
4. TESS launched on April 18, 2018, aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket.
5. TESS will survey the entire sky over the course of two years by breaking it up into 26 different sectors, each 24 degrees by 96 degrees across.
6. The powerful cameras on the spacecraft will stare at each sector for at least 27 days, looking at the brightest stars at a two-minute cadence.
7. From Earth, the moon occupies half a degree, which is less than 1/9,000th the size of the TESS tiles.

## INDIA STA-1 STATUS

The **US administration's decision to place India** in the Strategic Trade Authorisation-1 list of countries, that eases export of high-tech items, acknowledges the security as well as economic relationship between the two largest democracies of the world, and boosts the defence partnership in a big way, **India's top diplomat said**. It is a sign of trust not only in the relationship but also on **India's capabilities** an economy and as security partner, because it also presupposes that India has the multilateral export control regime in place, which would allow the transfer of more sensitive defence technologies and dual use technologies to India and without the risk of any proliferation.

What

1. This is an acknowledgment of the security as well as the economic relationship between India and the United States. This is a logical step of India being designated as a major defence partner.
2. At the start of the first-ever Indo-Pacific Business Forum, the Trump administration has granted to India strategic trade authorisation status STA-1.
3. Currently, 36 countries, mostly all NATO nations, have this status, **so it's a very elevated status** from an export control point of view.
4. It is because India has partnered with us to improve its own export control regimes, and has met most of the multilateral export rules that we think are useful. It finally **reflects India's status as a major defence partner of the US**.
5. STA-1 provides India greater supply chain efficiency, both for defence and for other high-tech products, that will increase activity with US systems, the interoperability of the systems, and it will reduce time and resources needed to get licensing approved.
6. STA Tier 1 treatment, comparable to NATO allies, will expand the scope of exports subject to the Export Administration Regulations (EAR) that can be made to India without individual licenses. This regulatory change will enhance the bilateral defence trade relationship and result in a greater volume of US exports to India.

## SATELLITE TO SEARCH MISSING MATTER

A tiny NASA satellite has been deployed from the International Space Station (ISS) that will help scientists **search for the universe's missing matter by studying X-**

**rays from the ‘halo’ of hot gas surrounding our Milky Way galaxy.** Astronomers keep coming up short when they survey “normal” matter, the material that makes up galaxies, stars and planets. To look for this missing matter, a NASA-sponsored CubeSat mission called HaloSat was deployed from the ISS on July 13. The cosmic microwave background (CMB) is the oldest light in the universe, radiation from when it was 400,000 years old.

What

1. Calculations based on CMB observations indicate the universe contains five per cent normal matter protons, neutrons and other subatomic particles, 25 per cent dark matter – a substance that remains unknown – and 70 per cent dark energy, a negative pressure accelerating the expansion of the universe.
2. As the universe expanded and cooled, normal matter coalesced into gas, dust, planets, stars and galaxies. However, when astronomers tally the estimated masses of these objects, they account for only about half of what cosmologists say should be present.
3. Researchers think the missing matter may be in hot gas located either in the space between galaxies or in galactic halos, extended components surrounding individual galaxies.
4. **HaloSat will study gas in the Milky Way’s halo that runs about 2 million degrees Celsius.** At such high temperatures, oxygen sheds most of its eight electrons and produces the X-rays HaloSat will measure.
5. Other X-ray telescopes, like **NASA’s Neutron star Interior Composition Explorer** and the Chandra X-ray Observatory, study individual sources by looking at small patches of the sky.
6. HaloSat will look at the whole sky, 100 square degrees at a time, which will help determine if the diffuse galactic halo is shaped more like a fried egg or a sphere.
7. **The halo’s shape will determine its mass,** which will help scientists understand if **the universe’s missing matter, is in galactic halos or elsewhere.**
8. HaloSat will collect most of its data over 45 minutes on the nighttime half of its 90-minute orbit around Earth. On the daytime side, the satellite will recharge using its solar panels and transmit data to NASA’s Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia, which relays the data to the mission’s operations control centre at Blue Canyon Technologies in Colorado.
9. HaloSat measures about 10x20x30 centimetres and weighs about 12 kilogrammes.

## PARK NANOSCIENCE LAB

Indian Institute of Science (IISC) Bangalore India and Park Systems, a leader in Atomic Force Microscopes (AFM) **to open ‘Park Nanoscience Lab’ at Centre for Nano Science and Engineering (CeNSE) in Bengaluru.** The Nanoscience Lab will be equipped with Park NX20 AFM at the Centre for Nano Science and Engineering (CeNSE) and will hold workshops and symposiums on the latest advancements in nanometrology and offer researchers a chance to experience the latest in AFM technology.

What

1. The researchers at CeNSE are to benefit from the AFM, in characterizing nanomaterials and nanodevices.
2. In addition, Park Systems will have the opportunity to showcase the capabilities of its tool to a large number of researchers across the country, though the national network programs anchored at CeNSE.
3. The partnership with Park Systems and their Atomic Force Microscope technology strengthens our academic and scientific community by bringing an exciting new research tool to a shared access location, supporting the growing demand for nanotechnology in India.
4. The Park Nanoscience Lab will showcase advanced atomic force microscopy systems, demonstrate a wide variety of applications ranging from materials, to chemical and biological to semiconductor and devices, and provide hands on experience, training and service, all the year-round.

5. Increasingly, AFM is being selected for nanotechnology research over other metrology techniques due to its non-destructive measurement and sub-nanometer accuracy.
6. The new Park Nanoscience Lab at Indian Institute is a tremendous step forward for researchers in India who work in the advancing fields of nano science and technology.

### “INNOVATE INDIA PLATFORM” LAUNCHED

Shri. R Ramanan, Mission Director, Atal Innovation Mission and Shri. Arvind Gupta CEO, MyGov on 26 July 2018 launched the “#InnovateIndia Platform”, collaboration between the Atal Innovation Mission and MyGov, a citizen centric platform of the Government of India. The #InnovateIndia portal will serve as the common point for all the innovation happening across the nation. Launching the platform, Mission Director, Atal Innovation Mission said that the #InnovateIndia MyGov-AIM portal creates the much-needed innovations platform for registering both grassroots and deep-tech innovators at a national level. Those searching for a critical innovation can leverage the portal advantageously for the benefit of the economy as well as national social needs.”

Some of the features of this platform are:

1. The platform is open to all Indian citizens
2. The users can View, comment, share, and rate the innovations crowdsourced on the #InnovateIndia platform
3. View the leaderboard which is calculated based on the votes on each innovation.
4. **Citizens can share their/organizations/someone else’s innovation on the platform by login to the MyGov website**
5. These innovations can also be shared on various social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter
6. **“India has been a very innovation-oriented society, but our challenge has been a structured approach to innovation, capturing them and building an ecosystem to take them global. The current government initiative to capture and support innovation from ground up, is aimed at creating a structured ecosystem to encourage, enhance and develop India’s innovative character”, said Shri Arvind Gupta, CEO MyGov.**

### PARACHUTES FOR ORION SPACECRAFT

**The parachutes for NASA’s next crew vehicle**, the Orion capsule, intended to carry humans to deep space, has successfully passed a drop test, the US space agency said. **Orion’s** full parachute system includes 11 parachutes three forward-bay cover parachutes, two drogue parachutes, three pilot parachutes, and three main parachutes. These are designed **to reduce the capsule’s speed during its descent back to Earth**, supporting a safe landing in the ocean.

What

1. **The parachute system were** “deployed as planned after being dropped from an altitude of 6.6 miles [10.6 kilometers) on July 12, at the US Army Proving Ground in **Yuma, Arizona**”.
2. **Data from, the seventh of eight total tests, “will help NASA engineers certify Orion’s parachutes for missions with astronauts” to moon and Mars. The test evaluated parachute deployment under conditions that exceeded the requirements for a system carrying crew.**
3. Engineers dropped the dart-shaped test article from an altitude that allowed it to generate enough speed to simulate almost twice as much force on the main chutes as would be expected under normal conditions.
4. **Each of Orion’s three main parachutes expands to 116 feet in diameter and contains enough fabric to cover 80 yards of a football field, but is carried aboard Orion in containers the size of a large suitcase.**
5. For storage, the parachutes are compacted with hydraulic presses at forces of up to 80,000 pounds, baked for two days and vacuumed sealed.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARD 2018

Two Indians Bharat Vatwani and Sonam Wangchuk are among six who have been declared winners of Ramon Magsaysay Award 2018. The award often referred to as Asian version of the Nobel Prize. Others are are Youk Chhang (Cambodia), Maria de Lourdes Martins Cruz (East Timor), Howard Dee (Philippines) and Vo Thi Hoang Yen (Vietnam). They will be conferred with award during formal presentation ceremony at Cultural Centre in Philippines in August 2018.

What

1. Bharat Vatwani: He is a psychiatrist who works for mentally-ill people living on the streets in Mumbai.
2. Sonam Wangchuk: He is educational reformer from Ladakh. In 1988, he had founded **Students' Education and Cultural Movement of Ladakh** to coach poor Ladakhi students. He is widely regarded as inspiration for Aamir Khan's character, Phunsuk Wangdu in the film '3 Idiots'.

Flashback

1. **It is Asia's highest honour** and is often regarded as the region's equivalent of the Nobel Prize.
2. It was established in 1957 by trustees of the New York City based Rockefeller Brothers Fund and Philippine government in the memory of **Philippines' third President** Ramon Magsaysay who had died in air disaster in March 1957.
3. It is awarded annually to individuals or organizations from Asia region for their altruistic and philanthropic service.
4. It carries Medallion bearing the likeness of the late President Ramon Magsaysay, cash prize and a certificate.

### FRANCE WINS 2018 FIFA WORLD CUP

France has won 2018 FIFA World Cup Football by defeating Croatia in the final match held at the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow, Russia. It was **France's second World Cup** crown after it had won it in 1998 (by defeating Brazil) on home soil. With this, victory France joins Uruguay and Argentina in winning World Cup for a second time. It was **Croatia's first World Cup final appearance and smallest country ever to reach final in the modern era.**

What

1. FIFA World Cup is an international association football competition contested by **senior men's national teams of members of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the sport's global governing body.**
2. It is held every four years since the inaugural tournament held in 1930.
3. The total 21 World Cup tournaments played so far have been won by eight national teams.
4. Brazil has won for recode five times and it is only team that has played in every World Cup.

### INDIA BECOMES VICE CHAIR OF THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION OF WCO

India became Vice-Chair or regional head of Asia Pacific Region of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) for two years from July 2018 to June 2020. By becoming Vice Chair, India will be able to take up leadership role at the WCO.

What

1. To mark assumption of Vice Chair, an event will be organised in New Delhi by Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
2. The event was attended by Customs delegations of 33 countries of Asia-Pacific Region, Customs officers from different Ports in India, Partner Government Agencies and representatives from the trade among others.

#### ABOUT WCO

1. WCO is an independent intergovernmental body whose mission is to enhance effectiveness and efficiency of Customs administrations.
2. It was established in 1952 as Customs Co-operation Council (CCC).
3. It is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters and is considered as voice of international Customs community.
4. WCO represents 182 Customs administrations across the globe that collectively process approximately 98% of world trade.
5. It is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.
6. It plays leading role in discussion, development, promotion and implementation of modern customs systems and procedures.

#### PATA GOLD AWARD 2018

India Heritage Walk Festival, a joint collaboration of Sahapedia and YES Arts & Culture (a division of YES Global Institute-YES BANK), has been awarded the prestigious PATA Gold Award 2018 for its recently concluded pan-India event, giving a major boost to the **digital archive's endeavours of making India's heritage more popular** and accessible.

What

1. The award, announced by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) in Bangkok, has been presented to Sahapedia **under the 'Heritage-Culture'** category.
2. Sponsored by the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), the PATA Awards this year recognised achievements of 27 organisations and individuals in the field of travel and tourism.
3. The PATA Awards 2018, which received 200 submissions from 87 organisations and individuals worldwide, will be presented to the winners on September 14 during the PATA Travel Mart in Malaysia.
4. Sahapedia had organised IHWF 2018 in collaboration with YES Arts & Culture, the cultural division of YES Global Institute, a practising think tank of YES BANK, to encourage citizens to explore the tangible and intangible heritage of their cities and towns.
5. In addition to the 38 partners spread across India, the first edition was also supported by Incredible India, a government of India initiative.
6. The month-long, multi-city **'India Heritage Walk Festival' (IHWF 2018)** was organised in February this year.
7. Some highlights of the festival included heritage walks with differently abled people in **Jaipur and Mumbai, and reaching out to people in India's tier-II and tier-III cities** such as Patna, Itanagar, Varanasi, Udaipur and Jodhpur.
8. An online film festival of documentaries based on cultural themes, talks (Baithaks) and **Instameets** were also organised as part of the festival's more than 70 events.

#### Flashback

1. The IHWF 2018 generated a pan-India momentum, bringing heritage spaces alive for larger audiences. We aim to continue the momentum for exploring new partnerships and avenues in the future editions.
2. The objective is to create authentic, credible, and exhaustive content on our rich heritage and culture, and develop a stronger network of cultural practitioners across the country with every edition.

## KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS

The 19th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas was celebrated across India on 26 July 2018 to commemorate the success of Operation Vijay and remember brave sacrifice of Indian soldiers during 1999 India-Pakistan Kargil War.

What

1. The war took place between May and July of 1999 in Kargil district of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. It had begun with infiltration of both Pakistani troops and terrorists deep inside Indian Territory in strategic positions that overlooked the only road link between Srinagar and Leh.
3. **Indian Air Force's operation** Safed Sagar was a major part of the Kargil war.
4. It had used for the first time air power at height of 32,000 feet. Since then day has been celebrated annually as Vijay Diwas.

## FOUR INDIAN-ORIGINS IN FORTUNE'S INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE

Four persons of India-origin, including three women, have been named by Fortune among 40 of the most influential and inspiring young people in business under the age of 40. Instagram Cofounder and CEO Kevin Systrom and Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, both 34, are tied for first place on the Fortune '40 Under 40' list.

What

1. Chief Finance Officer of the US' largest automaker, General Motors Dhivya Suryadevara comes in at the 4th spot, followed by Vimeo CEO Anjali Sud (14), Cofounder and Co-CEO of Robinhood Baiju Bhatt (24) and Female Founders Fund founding partner Anu Duggal (32).
2. For the first time ever, Fortune also assembled a supplementary honour roll of the most impressive, young superstars who are transforming business at the leading edge of finance and technology.
3. The Ledger '40 Under 40' supplementary honour roll list shines a light on the pioneers building some of the world's fastest-growing businesses.
4. This list includes Senior Vice President of Product at real-time currency exchange and remittance network Ripple, 39-year old Asheesh Birla, digital currency wallet and platform Coinbase's Chief technology officer Balaji Srinivasan, Director of MIT Digital Currency Initiative Neha Narula and Coinbase's Vice President of operations Tina Bhatnagar.

## MONITORING COMMITTEE FOR CLEAN YAMUNA

The National Green Tribunal on 26 July 2018 formed a monitoring committee on the cleaning of the Yamuna and directed it to submit an action plan on the issue. A bench headed by National Green Tribunal (NGT) Chairperson A K Goel appointed retired expert member B S Sajwan and former Delhi chief secretary Shailaja Chandra as members of the committee while directing them to submit an action plan by September and a detailed report in the matter by December 31.

What

1. The green panel asked the Haryana and Uttar Pradesh governments to assist the committee on Yamna rejuvenation.
2. The Tribunal directed the authorities to take strict action against encroachments on the Yamuna floodplains.
3. It also directed the Delhi Development Authority and the Delhi Jal Board to hold a meeting on July 30 for identifying land for setting up of a sewage treatment plant on a drain which falls under phase-II of the Yamuna cleaning programme.
4. The NGT had earlier rapped the Delhi Jal Board over cleaning of the Yamuna and **had said there has been no "meaningful progress" on the ground in the last three years.**

5. The green panel had noted that the work on 14 sewage treatment plants (STPs) had not even begun. These were supposed to be completed by **March 2017 as per the court's** January 13, 2015 judgment. The STPs would treat the effluents and ensure no pollutants enter the river.
6. The bench, also comprising Justice S P Wangdi and Expert Member Nagin Nanda, had directed Haryana to file an affidavit on the steps taken to ensure that no untreated effluents flow into the Yamuna.
7. The Phase-I of the clean Yamuna project aims to lower the pollution levels in the Najafgarh and Delhi Gate drains, while Phase-II deals with Shahdara, Barapullah, and other drains.
8. The DJB informed the tribunal that with regard to Phase-II, 11 drains have been trapped and effluents were being treated.

#### Flashback

1. The National Green Tribunal has been established on 18.10.2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010 for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources including enforcement of any legal right relating to environment and giving relief and compensation for damages to persons and property and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
2. It is a specialized body equipped with the necessary expertise to handle environmental disputes involving multi-disciplinary issues.
3. The Tribunal shall not be bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, but shall be guided by principles of natural justice.

## BACTERIA TOO CAN BECOME EXTINCT

Bacteria do become extinct at substantial rates, finds a new study, contradicting widely held scientific thinking that the microbes rarely die because of their very large population. For the study, published in Nature Ecology and Evolution, the team used massive DNA sequencing and big data analysis to create the first evolutionary tree encompassing a large fraction of **Earth's bacteria** over the past billion years.

What

1. Bacteria rarely fossilise, so we know very little about how the microbial landscape has evolved over time, said lead author Stilianos Louca, from University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada.
2. Sequencing and math helped us fill in the bacterial family tree, map how they have diversified over time, and uncover their extinctions.
3. Despite the frequent, steady extinction of individual species, the study shows that overall bacteria have been diversifying exponentially without interruption.
4. The team estimated 1.4-1.9 million bacterial lineages exist on Earth today. However, 45,000 to 95,000 extinctions occurred in the last million years.
5. While modern bacterial diversity is undoubtedly high, **it's only a tiny snapshot of the diversity that evolution has generated over Earth's history.**
6. The researchers suspected that competition between bacterial species drive the high rate of microbial extinctions, leaving them less prone to sudden mass, multi-species extinctions.

#### Flashback

1. Bacteria are a type of biological cell. They constitute a large domain of prokaryotic microorganisms.
2. Typically a few micrometers in length, bacteria have a number of shapes, ranging from spheres to rods and spirals.
3. Bacteria were among the first life forms to appear on Earth, and are present in most of its habitats.

## STARTUP INDIA YATRA

The Startup India Yatra was launched on July 30th in Raipur. Students queued up in large numbers to register for the first boot camp at Raipur. Today, 31st July, the yatra will travel to Bilaspur for the second boot camp at the Government Engineering College in Bilaspur. The Startup India van will also travel to other cities of Chhattisgarh like Korba, Korja, Surguja, Jashpur, Raigarh, Balodabazar, Durg, Rajnandgaon, Balod, Dhamtari, Kanker, Kondagaon, Jagdalpur and Dantewada and hold boot camps in the Government Engineering colleges and Polytechnic Institutes.

### What

1. Startup India Yatra van is equipped with facilities for individuals and startups to pitch their ideas. The boot camps will include presentations on Startup India and Chhattisgarh Startup Policy followed by extensive ideation workshops.
2. An idea pitching session will be held to select the foremost ideas and Startups. Aspiring entrepreneurs will have to register at [www.startupindiahub.org.in](http://www.startupindiahub.org.in) to participate in the Yatra.
3. Startup India Yatra has already been held in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh and now it begins in Chhattisgarh.
4. To promote job creation in tier 2 and tier 3 towns and cities, Startup India organizes the Startup India Yatra in one state every month.
5. The Yatra conducts boot camps where students are taught lessons in business planning followed by a pitch fest where ideas are invited. Shortlisted business ideas get incubated in State run incubators.
6. A total of 19,000 students across 40 districts have benefitted from the Yatra through the boot camps, with over 90 received grants or incubation offers from the State governments.
7. The Startup India initiative of the Government of India envisages building a robust startup ecosystem in the country for nurturing innovation and providing opportunities to budding entrepreneurs.
8. In tandem with this mission, the program has been able to gather registration of 10,999 startups, generating employment to 1, 09, 869 people.

### Startup means

1. Upto a period of seven years from the date of incorporation/registration or upto ten years in case of Startups in Biotechnology sector
2. As a private limited company or registered as a partnership firm or a limited liability partnership
3. With an annual turnover not exceeding Rs. 25 crore for any of the financial years since incorporation/registration
4. Working towards innovation, development or improvement of products or processes or services, or if it is a scalable business model with a high potential of employment generation or wealth creation