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National

India Re-Elected to International Maritime Organisation Council

i. India has been re-elected to the Council of the International Maritime Organisation under a category that represents nations with the largest interests in international sea borne trade.

ii. India was re-elected to the body **under Category B** at an assembly of the organization at its headquarters. **Indian High Commissioner to the UK Y K Sinha represented India** at the assembly where India secured the second-highest number of votes (144) from member-countries, just after Germany's 146 and ahead of Austral

Important takeaways from above news-

- The **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** is a specialized agency of the United Nations which is responsible for measures to improve the safety and security of international shipping and to prevent pollution from ships.

Headquarters- London, UK.

Sushma Swaraj Attends Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit

i. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit **at Sochi in Russia.** In June 2017, India and Pakistan had become full-fledged members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

ii. The meeting is the first major gathering of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit since the bloc was expanded for the first time to add India and Pakistan as full members in June's Astana summit in Kazakhstan.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Russia Capital-** Moscow, **President-** Vladimir Putin.

Govt Fixes Sovereign Gold Bonds Rate at Rs 2,952/gram

i. The government has fixed **2,952 rupees per gram** as price of new series of **sovereign gold bonds (SGBs)**. The government, in consultation with the Reserve Bank, has decided to offer a discount of Rs 50 per gram to investors applying online and making payments digitally.

ii. The issue price will be Rs 2,902 a gram for investors applying online and the payment through digital mode.

iii. About Sovereign Gold Bond-

Sovereign Gold Bonds are Government securities denominated in multiples of gram(s) of gold. They are substitute for investment in physical gold. To buy the bond, investor has to pay the issue price in cash to an authorised SEBI Broker. **These Bonds are issued by the Reserve Bank of India on behalf of the Government of India** and are traded on stock exchange.

Cyclone Ockhi Hits Southern India

i. Air Force and Coast Guard have launched a massive rescue operation off the **Kerala coast** to save hundreds of fishermen stranded in the rough sea hit by **Cyclone Ockhi.**

ii. The weather department of Kanyakumari stated that the **cyclone has moved to the Arabian sea.** The Navy is using Dornier and Advanced light helicopters with divers while looking for fishermen stranded at sea. The cyclone has now moved beyond Lakshadweep.

Kapu Reservation Bill Passed in Andhra Pradesh

i. The Andhra Pradesh assembly unanimously passed the **Kapu reservation bill** which will provide the community with a **5 percent quota in education and employment in the state.**

ii. However, Kapu quota if issued, one of the ruling Telugu Desam Party's electoral promises in

2014, will take the total quota in the state to 55 percent, which is more than 50 percent limit restricted by the Supreme Court.

Important takeaways from above news-

- In Andhra Pradesh- **25 percent reservation is provided to BCs (A, B, C, D categories), backward Muslim communities BC (E) have 4 percent reservation, SCs- 15 percent and STs- 6 percent** totaling 50 per cent reservations.

UPs Shamli District Included in NCR

i. Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district was included in the National Capital Region (NCR), taking the total number of districts in the NCR to 23.

ii. Cities in the NCR get funds at "attractive" interest rates from the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) for infrastructure development. The decision to include Shamli in the NCR was taken at the 37th meeting of the NCRPB.

India's Largest Floating Solar Power Plant Opens in Kerala

i. The largest-ever floating solar power plant in India inaugurated by state power minister MM Man at the Banasura Sagar dam in Wayanad. The solar power plant that floats on the surface of the water has a capacity of 500 kilowatts.

ii. The solar plant consists of 1,938 solar panels with a capacity of 260 watts, a 500 kilovolt-ampere (KVA) transformer, and 17 inverters.

iii. Constructed by the Thiruvananthapuram-based Ad tech Systems, the plant will generate seven lakh units of power in a year. The total cost of the project is Rs. 9.25 crore.

Amitabh Bachchan Launches Book on Indian Cinema

i. Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan launched a book based on Indian cinema in showbiz capital Mumbai. The book, titled 'Bollywood: The Films! The Songs! The Stars!', is a coffee table book, which provides historical insights, lesser-known facts and behind-the-scenes exclusives of the most iconic movies made in the history of the Indian film industry. ii. The book is co-authored by S.M.M. Ausaja, Karan Bali, Rajesh Devraj and Tanul Thakur, the book on India's tinsel town is published by British multinational publishing company Dorling Kindersley (DK).

International Solar Alliance is Now a Legal Entity

i. In terms of its Framework Agreement, with ratification by Guinea as the 15th country in November 2017, the International Solar Alliance (ISA) has now become a treaty-based international intergovernmental organization. The International Solar Alliance is India's global initiative.

ii. The ISA was jointly launched by the PM Narendra Modi and the president of France in November 2015 in Paris, on the sidelines of COP-21, the UN climate conference. Till date, 46 countries have signed and 19 countries have ratified the framework agreement of the ISA.

Important takeaways from above news-

- The ISA, headquartered in India, has its secretariat located in the campus of National Institute of Solar Energy, Gurgaon, Haryana.

Kerala to Raise Minimum Liquor Drinking Age from 21 to 23

i. The Kerala government lead by the Left Democratic Front (LDF) has decided to raise the legal drinking age from 21 to 23 years. The State Cabinet in a meeting decided to introduce a new ordinance raising the minimum age for liquor consumption from 21 to 23.

ii. The Ordinance will amend the Abkari Act. The previous UDF regime had adopted a policy in favour of prohibition by shutting down bars and closing doors on state-run liquor vending outlets.

MP Assembly Passes Bill Awarding Death for Rape of Girls Aged 12 or less

i. The **Madhya Pradesh Assembly** unanimously passed a Bill awarding **death** to those found guilty of raping girls aged **12 and below**. With this, **Madhya Pradesh becomes the first State** where those convicted of such rapes will face the gallows.

ii. Introduced in the House by **Law and Legislative Affairs Minister Rampal Singh**, the Bill was discussed in detail and then passed by all parties.

UP, First State to Endorse Centre's Triple Talaq Draft Bill

i. **Uttar Pradesh becomes the first state** to endorse the Centre's draft bill that makes instant triple talaq a cognizable and non-bailable offense.

ii. As per the draft law, its three years' imprisonment and a fine to a Muslim man trying to divorce his wife by uttering "talaq" three times. The bill is all set to be introduced in the coming winter session of parliament.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **UP CM- Yogi Adityanath, Governor- Ram Naik.**

Kacheguda Becomes India's First Energy-Efficient Railway Station

i. **Kacheguda Railway Station** in Hyderabad under the **South Central Railway (SCR)** has earned the unique distinction of being the **first Energy Efficient 'A1 Category' Railway Station on Indian Railways**.

ii. The station has achieved 100% energy efficiency by replacing 1,312 conventional lights with light-emitting diode (LED) lighting, among other steps.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Kacheguda Railway Station-** Situated in Hyderabad.
- **Built-in 1916** by the Nizam's Guaranteed State Railway during the reign of Mir Osman Ali Khan, the seventh Nizam.

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Taj Mahal Named Second-Best UNESCO World Heritage Site

i. **The Taj Mahal**, India's iconic ivory-white marble mausoleum in Agra, is **the second best UNESCO world heritage site in the world**, according to a **new survey by online travel portal TripAdvisor**.

ii. The Taj Mahal is rated after **Cambodia's Angkor Wat**. Other popular heritage sites on the survey include **the Great Wall of China (Third)** built by Xu Da of Northern Qi Dynasty in 1368 AD. **Machu Pichu in Peru** in South America has bagged the **fourth spot**.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Taj Mahal** was built by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in the memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal.

Kerala's Alappuzha in Top 5 UN Clean City List

i. The waste management system being implemented in **Kerala's coastal town of Alappuzha** has been recognized by the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** as one of the five models across the world for fighting the pollution menace.

ii. **Alappuzha** has been listed in the UNEP environment report entitled, '**Solid approach to waste: how five cities are beating pollution**' alongside cities like **Osaka in Japan, Ljubljana in Slovenia, Penang in Malaysia and Cajica in Colombia.**

UNESCO Inscribes 'Kumbh Mela' on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

i. UNESCO has inscribed '**Kumbh Mela**' on the **Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**. The decision was taken during the 12th session of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage at Jeju in South Korea.

ii. This inscription is the third in two years following the inscriptions of 'Yoga' and 'Nouroz' on 1st December 2016. **The 'Kumbh Mela' is the largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims on the earth.**

Important takeaways from above news-

- **UNESCO-** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- **France's Audrey Azoulay-** 11th DG of UNESCO, **Headquarters-** Paris, France.

New Delhi to Host Asean-India Connectivity Summit

i. According to the External Affairs Ministry, New Delhi will host the two-day long **Asean-India Connectivity Summit (AICS)** on the theme "**Powering Digital and Physical Linkages for Asia in the 21st Century**".

ii. The event comes ahead of the visit of the leaders of the 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) for the commemorative summit of 25 years of the India-Asean dialogue partnership.

Important takeaways from above news-

- The ASEAN comprises Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Maruti Suzuki Replaces SBI as 6th Most Valuable Indian Firm

i. **India's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki** became **India's sixth most valued firm, crossing India's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI).**

ii. Maruti Suzuki's market capitalization stood at Rs 2.73 trillion, marginally ahead of SBI's market value of Rs 2.70 trillion. **Reliance Industries is the country's most valued company** with a market value of Rs 5.83 trillion, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ITC and Hindustan Unilever.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Maruti 800 was launched in 1983.

Rajasthan, First in India to Offer e-mail IDs in Hindi

i. **Rajasthan has become the first state in the country** to launch **free email addresses in Hindi (in Devanagari script)** for its residents, as per the state IT department Principal Secretary Akhil Arora.

ii. The initiative aims to ensure maximum participation of people towards e-governance and that maximum facilities are available in the vernacular language. The first e-mail ID was created for CM Vasundhara Raje.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Rajasthan Capital-** Jaipur, **CM-** Vasundhara Raje, **Governor-** Kalyan Singh.

India Ranks 100 in Global Prosperity Index

- i. India has upgraded its ranks in ‘**The Legatum Prosperity Index 2017**’ and is **now on 100th position**. At present, the rising trend in India’s prosperity is significant in view of the fact that India registered lower economic growth following demonetization and implementation of the goods and services tax (GST) reform in 2017.
- ii. The index, which offers an insight into how prosperity is forming and changing across the world, ranks India 100th on the list of prosperous countries **among 149 countries**.

India to Host Meeting of WTO Member Countries on Food Security

- i. **India will host a meeting of WTO member countries in February 2018** to muster support for food security and other issues. The announcement was made by Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu in New Delhi.
- ii. The proposed meeting would be in the backdrop of developed nations forming groupings to prepare ground for pushing investment facilitation, preparing rules for e-commerce, promoting gender equality and reducing subsidy on fisheries.

Important takeaways from above news-

- 11th World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference (MC11) took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Goa Celebrates 56th Liberation Day

- i. **Goa has celebrated its 56th Liberation Day**. The state was liberated on **19th December in 1961** from Portuguese control after almost 450 years of colonial rule.
- ii. The main program was organized at the Sports Authority of Goa Ground, Campal in state capital Panaji. Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar unfurled the national flag at the Goa Liberation Day celebrations in Panaji.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Goa CM-** Manohar Parrikar, **Governor-** Mridula Sinha.

Global Innovation Index- India Ranked 60th Most Innovative Country, Switzerland Tops

- i. **India currently ranks 60th out of 127 countries** on the **Global Innovation Index (GII) 2017** as compared to **66th rank on GII 2016**. The list was **topped by Switzerland**. NITI Aayog, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) together launched a mega initiative “**India Innovation Index**”.
- ii. This Index will rank states on Innovations through country’s first online innovation index portal that will capture data on innovation from all Indian states on innovation and regularly update it in real time.

The Top 3 Countries on Global Innovation Index 2017 are-

1. Switzerland,
2. Sweden,
3. Netherlands.

Third World Telugu Conference Begins in Hyderabad

- i. **The third World Telugu Conference** has begun in **Hyderabad** amidst much fanfare. The aim of the Conference is **to promote Telugu and its literature** besides helping the present generation learn more about Telugu language and its rich culture and heritage.
- ii. Telangana Government has put in place elaborate arrangements for the 5-day event for which about eight thousand Telugu speaking delegates from 40 countries all over the globe will be taking part. **Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu** had formally inaugurated the Conference.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Telangana CM-** K Chandrasekhar Rao, **Governor-** E.S Lakshmi Narasimhan (Add. Charge).

PM Dedicates Tuirial Hydropower Project to the Nation

i. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 60-megawatt **Tuirial hydroelectric power project from Aizawl, Mizoram**. Mizoram had **become the third power- surplus state** in the north-east after Sikkim and Tripura.

ii. The Tuirial project was **announced and cleared in 1998** by the then Atal Bihari Vajpayee government. It was the **first major central project to be successfully commissioned in Mizoram**. Prime Minister also inaugurated the Shillong - Nongstoin Rongjeng Tura road.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Mizoram CM-** Lal Thanhawla, **Governor-** Lt. General (Retd.) Nirbhay Sharma

Union Cabinet Clears Bill Criminalising Instant Triple Talaq

i. **The Union Cabinet cleared the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2017, or the Triple Talaq bill**, which makes the practice a non-bailable offense. The bill proposes a three-year jail term for men who practice instant Triple Talaq.

ii. Under the draft law, triple talaq in any form - spoken, in writing or by electronic means such as email, SMS, and WhatsApp - would be banned or illegal.

Indian Diaspora is Largest in the World: World Migration Report 2018

i. **The Indian diaspora is the largest in the world**, with over 15 million migrants from India living abroad, **according to the World Migration Report 2018** published by the International Organisation for Migration, the United Nations migration agency. **World's 3 largest diasporas- India Mexico and Russia.**

ii. India also receives the highest amount in remittances (\$68.91 billion). The largest migration corridor is from India to UAE, where 3.5 million Indians were residing in 2015.

iii. **The United States remained the top destination for migrants in the world in 2015**, with 46.6 million migrants moving to the US in that year.

Andhra Pradesh Cabinet Approves Pension for State's Transgenders

i. **The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approved a scheme to provide a pension of Rs 1500 to transgenders above 18 years of age** in the state.

ii. Under this scheme, the transgenders will be provided ration cards, plots, andscholarships, also skill development for financial stability. **After Kerala and Odisha, Andhra Pradesh becomes the next state** to sanction pension scheme for the transgender community.

Delhi Ranks 7th in Most Expensive Office Locations List: Report

i. **Delhi has emerged as one of the most expensive premium office locations in the world. Ranked 7th in the list**, rent of Delhi's premium office location is higher than San Francisco and Dubai, according to the latest **report by JLL India, a real estate services firm.**

ii. Mumbai is at 16th position in the list. The top spot is again taken by **Hong Kong** and there is the huge margin between the rent rates between Hong Kong and **London (West), which is second in the list.** New York was at the third position.

Cabinet Approves Establishing India's 1st National Rail and Transportation University

i. The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi has approved the **Ministry of Railways' transformative initiative** to set up **India's first ever National Rail and Transport University (NRTU) in Vadodara, Gujarat** to skill its human resources and build capability.

ii. Government is planning to launch the first academic program in July 2018. The funding of the new University/Institute is to entirely come from Ministry of Railways.

MEA Launched SAMEEP to Take Indian Foreign Policy to Students Across Country

- i. With an aim to bring the foreign policy to the masses the **External Affairs Ministry** has come up with an initiative called **SAMEEP - 'Students and MEA Engagement Programme'**. Under this MEA official will talk to students to help them better understand foreign policy.
- ii. The main objective of SAMEEP is to take Indian foreign policy and its global engagements to students across the country. Under this programme, all the ministry officers - under-secretary and above - will be asked to go to their hometowns, particularly their alma maters.

Bengaluru to Host 7th International Coffee Festival

- i. **The seventh edition of the India International Coffee Festival (IICF)** will be held in **Bengaluru** from January 16-19. The four-day IICF 2018, being organized by the **India Coffee Trust** and State-run Coffee Board to promote the Indian coffees globally.
- ii. As per the officials, IICF 2018 would be a precursor to the **International Coffee Organization's World Coffee Conference** being hosted by India in Bengaluru in 2020.

Mumbai Gets India's First Ever AC Local Train

- i. **Mumbai has got India's first ever AC suburban local train** as Christmas gift. The first service of the 12-coach EMU will commence **between Borivali and Churchgate**. The first and 12th coaches from Churchgate end are earmarked as ladies coaches.
- ii. This will be the first train with automatic doors in the suburban system. Out of 12 services of AC Local train, 8 will run fast and will only halt at major stations. The services of AC local train will replace existing 12 Non AC services.

Govt Mint Launches First Home-Grown High Purity Gold Reference Standard

- i. India's first home-grown high purity gold reference standard - the Bharatiya Nirdeshak Dravya (BND-4201) - was launched at the India Government Mint, Mumbai. BND-4201, which is the reference material for gold of '9999' fineness (gold that is 99.99 per cent pure), will be beneficial to the consumers and public at large to ensure purity of gold.
- ii. Gold reference standard is indispensable in gold and jewellery hall marking. This will also be useful for Collection and Purity Testing Centres to certify the purity of gold deposits under the gold monetisation scheme.

Important Takeaways from above news

- The India Government Mint operates four mints in the country for the production of coins. The Mint are in Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, and Noida.

India's First Runway on 'Sea Bridge' in Lakshadweep

- i. **India is all set to get its first runway on a 'sea bridge'**, as the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has been given a nod to extend **Lakshadweep's Agatti Airport**.
- ii. The task will be carried out by building an RCC platform on the beach and shallow area which will allow bigger ATRs to operate on the island. The Project is likely to cost about Rs 1,500 crore.

Bengaluru Becomes First Indian City to have its Own Logo

- i. **Karnataka's capital city Bengaluru** has become the **first Indian city** to have its own logo after the state government launched it. The logo was designed by a design start-up and uses both English and Kannada alphabets.
- ii. The red and black logo is part English and part Kannada. With this, Bengaluru joins a select group of global cities like New York City, Melbourne and Singapore to have a tourism logo of its own.

Important Takeaways from above news

- **Karnataka CM- Siddaramaiah, Governor- Vajubhai Vala.**

Environment Ministry Launches Pilot Project 'Blue Flag' for Beach Clean-up

- i. To enhance standards of cleanliness on beaches, **the environment ministry** has launched a pilot project '**Blue Flag**' for its clean-up and development.
- ii. With the prime objective of enhancing standards of cleanliness, upkeep and basic amenities at beaches, the ministry has launched a pilot project, also striving for the '**Blue Flag**' **certification for such identified beaches**.
- iii. The 'Blue Flag' is a certification by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) that a beach, Marina or sustainable boating tourism operator, meets its stringent standards.

State-Run Banks' NPAs Touched Rs 7.34 Lakh Crore- RBI Data

- i. **Bad loans of Public sector banks (PSBs) stood at Rs 7.34 lakh crore** by the end of second quarter this fiscal, a bulk of which came from corporate defaulters, private sector banks' NPAs were considerably low. Moreover, for the recovery of the bad loans, the network of Debt Recovery Tribunals have been expanded to 39 at present, as compared to 33 in 2016-17, **according to data furnished by the RBI and the government**.
- ii. The gross non-performing assets of the public sector and private sector banks as on September 30, 2017, were Rs 7,33,974 crore and Rs 1,02,808 crore, respectively. Among the major government-owned banks, **State Bank of India had the highest level of NPAs at over Rs 1.86 lakh crore**, followed by Punjab National Bank (Rs 57,630 crore) and Bank of India (Rs 49,307 crore).
- iii. Up to end-September, among private banks, **ICICI Bank had the most amount of NPAs at Rs 44,237 crore**, followed by Axis Bank (Rs 22,136 crore) and HDFC Bank (Rs 7,644 crore).

Book on Gauri Lankesh's Writings Launched

- i. A book containing selected writings by **late journalist Gauri Lankesh** was launched at the Mumbai Press Club, three months after she was gunned down.
- ii. The book, **The Way I See It - a Gauri Lankesh Reader**, has been **edited by writer and sociologist Chandan Gowda**.

Modi to be First PM to Attend World Economic Forum in 20 years

- i. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will become the **first PM in 20 years to attend the World Economic Forum's (WEF) annual jamboree** of the global elite. The meeting will be held in Davos town of **Switzerland**.
- ii. The five-day Davos Annual Meeting of Geneva-based WEF **will begin in January 2018**. Modi will be the first Indian Prime Minister at the Davos summit since 1997 when the then Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda had attended.

Important Takeaways from above news

- **Founder and Executive Chairman of WEF-** Klaus Schwab, Headquarters- Geneva, Switzerland.
- WEF was originally called the **European Management Forum**.

Jai Ram Thakur Took Oath as 6th CM of Himachal Pradesh

- i. **Senior BJP leader Jai Ram Thakur** took oath as the **6th Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh**. The swearing-in ceremony was held at the historic Ridge Ground of Shimla. **He has replaced Virbhadra Singh**.
- ii. A five-time MLA, Mr Thakur **won Siraj Assembly seat** of Mandi district this time. **Governor Acharya Devvrat administered the oath** of office and secrecy to Mr Thakur.

In a First, Commercial Flight Nod for Made-in-India Plane Dornier 228

- i. **The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** has allowed **Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL)- manufactured Dornier 228** to be used for civilian flights. The 19-seater aircraft has, till now,

been used by defence forces and is the first plane to be made in the country for commercial flights.

ii. HAL can sell this plane to airlines in India and it can be used by them for regional flights under the Indian government's ambitious UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik) scheme.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Dornier 228 aircraft is a highly 'versatile multi-purpose light transport aircraft'.
- The plane has a wingspan of 16.97 metres.

India to Overtake UK, France to Become 5th-Largest Economy in 2018

i. India is set to leapfrog Britain and France in 2018 to become the world's fifth-largest economy in dollar terms.

ii. The Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) consultancy's 2018 World Economic League Table painted an upbeat view of the global economy, boosted by cheap energy and technology prices. India is currently in seventh place in the top world economies with \$2 trillion.

Top 3 Economies of the world according to the World Economic Forum are-

1. The USA (\$18 trillion),
2. China (\$11 trillion),
3. Japan (\$4.4 trillion).

Paytm Becomes India's First Payments App to Cross 100 mn Downloads on Play Store

i. India's largest mobile-first financial services platform, Paytm announced that its app has crossed the 100 million milestone on Google Play Store in the second week of December 2017.

ii. This makes Paytm the country's first payments app to cross the 100 million downloads mark.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Vijay Shekhar Sharma is the CEO of Paytm.
- Paytm headquarters in Noida.

Triple Talaq Bill Passed in Lok Sabha

i. The Lok Sabha passed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriages) Bill 2017 making instant triple talaq illegal with up to three years in jail for the husband. The bill was passed by the Minister for Law and Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad.

ii. The bill will now be sent to the Rajya Sabha for passage before it is forwarded to the President for signing it into law.

Important takeaways from above news-

- The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriages) Bill 2017 bill seeks to make instant triple talaq in any form spoken, in writing or by electronic means such as email, SMS and WhatsApp as bad or illegal and void.

Small Savings Schemes' Interest Rates Cut by 20 bps

i. The government slashed interest rates on small savings schemes, including National Savings Certificate (NSC) and Public Provident Fund (PPF), by 0.2 percentage point for the January-March period from the rates applicable in the previous quarter. This will prompt banks to lower deposit rates.

ii. As per the finance ministry notification, rates have been reduced across the board for schemes such as National Savings Certificate (NSC), Sukanya Samridhi Account, Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) and Public Provident Fund (PPF). However, interest on savings deposits has been retained at 4

percent annually.

Pluto Exchange Launches India's First Bitcoin Trading App

i. Cryptocurrency dealer 'Pluto Exchange' announced the launch of India's first mobile application for transacting in virtual currencies.

ii. The Pluto Exchange mobile app offers a solution to the coordination problem between payment processors, financial gateways and banks.

India Hosting 10 Asean Leaders on Republic Day 2018

i. Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that Republic Day celebration in 2018 would be "remembered through the ages" because the government for the first time in India's history would host leaders of 10 Asean countries as chief guests on 26th January 2018.

ii. "The Republic Day will be celebrated with leaders of all 10 (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Asean countries coming to India as chief guests. This time, not one but 10 chief guests would grace the Republic Day.



International

International Conference on Climate Change Begins in Nepal

i. Nepal

President Bidya Devi Bhandari has inaugurated an international conference to draw attention towards the adverse effects of global warming in the **Hindu Kush mountain range**.

ii. The conference '**Resilient Hindu Kush Himalaya: Developing Solutions towards a Sustainable Future for Asia**' is being organized by Nepal's Ministry for Environment in collaboration with International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

iii. The **four-day conference** is attended by more than 300 experts from different countries of Asia including India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, Myanmar. V K Saraswat, member of India's Neeti foundation is leading the Indian delegation in the conference.

Important takeaways from above news-

Nepal PM- Sher Bahadur Deuba, **Capital-** Kathmandu, **Currency-** Nepalese rupee.

First Sikh Woman Elected as Mayor in the US

i. **Preet Didbal** has been elected as the **mayor of Yuba city in California**, becoming the **first Sikh woman to hold the position in the United States**.

ii. Ms. Didbal was appointed by the California city council and will be sworn in on December 5. However, Ms. Didbal is the first Sikh woman to be elected as mayor in the country.

'Populism' Named Cambridge Dictionary's Word of the Year

i. The word '**populism**' has been announced as **Cambridge Dictionary's Word of the Year 2017**. The dictionary defined populism as "**political ideas and activities that are intended to get the support of ordinary people by giving them what they want**".

ii. It said searches for 'populism' rose when Pope Francis made statements warning against its rising tide.

Venezuela Launches New Virtual Currency Named Petro

i. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has announced the creation of a new virtual currency named 'Petro' in a bid to ease the country's economic crisis.

ii. The Petro would be backed by Venezuela's oil, gas, gold and diamond wealth.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Venezuela Capital- Caracas, Currency- Venezuelan bolivar.

USA Now Recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's Capital

i. **President of USA Donald Trump** has announced that the **US now recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital**, overturning decades of official US policy.

ii. The fate of the ancient city is one of the **thorniest issues between Israel and the Palestinians**. Israel called Donald Trump's move "historic" but there has been sharp international criticism. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called Donald Trump's announcement "deplorable".

Important takeaways from above news-

- **USA President-** Donald Trump (45th), **Capital-** Washington D.C.
- **Israel President-** Reuven Rivlin.

Australian Government Passes Marriage Equality Law

- i. Australia's parliament** has legislated for **marriage equality, passing a bill almost unanimously to allow two people, regardless of sex, to marry.**
- ii. The House of Representatives passed a cross-party bill after an unprecedented national postal survey gave unstoppable momentum to legislate the historic social reform. Australia, which changed the law in 2004 to say that marriage is only between a man and a woman, now becomes the 25th country to recognize same-sex marriage.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Australia Capital-** Canberra, **Australian Prime Minister-** Malcolm Turnbull.
- **The Netherlands (April 2001)-** was the First Nation to grant the same-sex couples.

China Starts World's Biggest Floating Solar Project

- i. A unit of China Three Gorges Corp.** is building a **1 billion yuan (\$151 million) floating solar power plant, the world's biggest, in the nation's eastern province of Anhui.** China Three Gorges New Energy Co. started building the 150-megawatt project in July and part of the plant was connected to the grid.
- ii. The project features panels fixed to floats on the surface of a lake that formed after a coal mine collapsed, according to the unit. The entire facility is expected to come online by May 2018.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **China Capital-** Beijing, **Currency-** Renminbi, **President-** Xi Jinping.

2nd UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture Held in Muscat

- i. The second UN World Tourism Organization/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture was held in Muscat,** Capital city of Oman.
- ii. **The Minister of State for Culture (Independent Charge) and Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Dr. Mahesh Sharma** led the Indian delegation. The conference was focused on sustainable development, culture and tourism as a factor of peace and prosperity; tourism development and protection of cultural heritage.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Minister of Tourism of Oman-** Ahmed Bin Naseer Bin Hamad al-Mehrzi.
- **Oman Capital-** Muscat, **Currency-** Omani rial.

Mount Hope Becomes UK's New Highest Mountain

- i. Britain** has a new highest mountain after new satellite data revealed the peak was almost 400 metres taller than previously thought. **Mount Hope, in the British Atlantic Territory,** was recently re-measured and found to be 377 metres taller than previous calculations.
- ii. **This takes it to 3,239 metres,** meaning it **knocks Mount Jackson,** the current title holder at 3,184 metres, **off the top spot.**

Important takeaways from above news-

- **UK PM-** Theresa May, **Capital-** London, **Currency-** Pound sterling.

Saudi Arabia Lifts Ban on Movie Theatres After 35 Years

- i. Saudi Arabia** will have its **first public cinemas in more than 35 years** after the government announced the **lifting of the ban on movie theatres.**
- ii. Minister of Culture and Information Awwad bin Saleh Alawwad stated that opening cinemas will act as a catalyst for economic growth and diversification.

Indian Economy Likely to Grow by 7.2% in 2018, 7.4% in 2019: UN Report

i. Indian economy is likely to grow by 7.2 percent in 2018 and go up further to 7.4 percent in 2019 on the back of strong private consumption, public investment and the ongoing structural reforms, according to a UN report.

ii. The 'World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018' report was unveiled by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). The UN DESA report said the GDP growth is projected to be 6.7 percent in 2017.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **UN Secretary-General:** Antonio Guterres, **Headquarters-** New York, USA.

Time Magazine Names #MeToo 'Silence Breakers' As Person Of The Year

i. "The Silence Breakers", the vanguard of a global movement by millions of women to share their stories of sexual harassment and abuse, was revealed to be **Time magazine's Person of the Year**.

ii. Time Magazine has recognized the women who came forward with sexual assault allegations as its 2017 Person of the Year, calling individuals such as Ashley Judd and Rose McGowan, **"the voices that launched a movement."**

Important takeaways from above news-

TIME magazine founded in- **1923**.

In a First, France Passes Law to Ban all Oil and Gas Production by 2040

i. France's parliament has approved a law banning all exploration and production of oil and natural gas by **2040** within the country and its overseas territories.

ii. Under that law that passed a final vote, existing drilling permits will not be renewed and no new exploration licenses will be granted. **The French government claims the ban is a world first.**

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Capital of France-** Paris, **Currency-** Euro
- **President-** Emmanuel Macron, **Prime Minister-** Edouard Philippe.

Google Opens 1st Machine Learning Research Lab in Asia with 'Google AI China Center'

i. In an apparent move to rebuild its presence in China, Google announced that it will open a research lab focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Beijing, China. It will be its **first such center in Asia**.

ii. The "Google AI China Centre" will join the other AI research groups that the company has in other parts of the world, including in New York, Toronto, London, and Zurich. Focused on basic AI research, the lab will consist of a team of AI researchers in Beijing, supported by the company's engineering teams.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Google CEO-** Sundar Pichai, **Headquarters-** California, USA.

India's First design University Opens in Haryana

i. India's first and only design university, 'World University of Design' opened its campus at Sonapat, Haryana. The University is promoted by Om Parkash Bansal Educational and Social Welfare Trust of Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab.

ii. The university is currently located in a sprawling lush green picturesque campus with the state-of-the-art infrastructure and world-class facilities. WUD is India's first university dedicated to education in the creative domain.

World's Longest Glass Bridge Opens in China

i. The world's longest glass bridge has been opened in China to the public. Though it has a capacity to hold 2000 people, only 500 would be allowed at a time. Located in Shijiazhuang, the

magnificent bridge lies **218 meters** above hanging between the two cliffs in **Hongyagu Scenic Area in Pingshan county**.

ii. The bridge is 488 meters long and two meters wide, with two dragon statues on top that could produce smoke.

India Ranks 5th in List of Countries with Highest NPA Levels

i. India has the highest level of non-performing assets (NPA) among BRICS countries and is **ranked fifth on a list of countries** with the **highest levels of NPAs**, as per the report by **CARE Ratings**.

ii. The only countries ranked higher than India on the list are Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Ireland. All these countries, along with Spain, are commonly referred to as **PIIGS** and have been victims of sovereign debt crises in recent years.

iii. At 9.85 percent, India's NPA ratio is over 400 basis points higher. **Spain is the only PIIGS country** ranked lower than India on the list, with an NPA ratio of 5.28 percent.

Important takeaways from above news-

- PIIGS includes Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece, and Spain.

China Launches World's Largest Human Genome Research Project

i. The world's largest human genome research project of 100,000 people was launched by China to document their genetic makeup for a study that aims to help generate the precision medicines of the future.

ii. It is the country's first large project detecting the genetic links between health and sickness and will involve people from different ethnic backgrounds and regions.



CLATAPULT

CLAT coaching by NLU grads

Defence

i. UAE Armed Forces along with the UK, US and French armies are participating in joint exercises in Abu Dhabi. The drill code is named as “Flag4”.

ii. The two-week long joint exercise aims to increase combat efficiency, gain more field expertise, and work to unify military concepts among participating parties.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **UAE Capital-** Abu Dhabi, **Currency-** UAE dirham.

Akash Missile Successfully Launched

i. The Surface to Air Missile AKASH with indigenous radio frequency seeker against target Banshee has been **successfully launched from the Launch Complex-III at ITR Chandipur, Odisha.**

ii. The Radars, telemetry and electro-optical systems along the coast have tracked and monitored all the health parameters of the missile. This missile is being inducted into Army as Short Range Surface to Air Missile (SRSAM).

Important takeaways from above news-

- AKASH is the first Surface to Air Missile with indigenous seeker that has been test fired.
- It can fly at supersonic speeds ranging from Mach 2.8 to 3.5, and engage aerial targets up to a range of approximately 25km.

Narendra Modi Inducts Scorpene-Class Submarine Kalvari into Indian Navy

i. Prime Minister Narendra Modi commissioned **India's first modern conventional submarine, INS Kalvari, into Navy's fleet** in Mumbai, a first in almost two decades. Kalvari is the first of the six Scorpene-class submarines handed over by shipbuilder Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL).

ii. The Navy last inducted a conventional diesel-electric submarine, INS Sindhusashtra, procured from Russia in July 2000.

Key facts to know about Kalvari Submarine-

1. Dreaded Tiger shark-

Kalvari is named after the dreaded tiger shark, a deadly deep sea predator of the Indian Ocean.

2. French naval defense's design-

The submarines, designed by French naval defense and energy company DCNS, are being built by Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) in Mumbai as part of Project-75 of the Indian Navy.

3. Scorpene class submarine-

The Navy is inducting six Scorpene-class submarines on a 3 billion dollar contract. Construction for the first submarine, designated as MDL Yard 11875 commenced in December 2006.

South Korea, US Launch Largest Air Exercise

i. South Korea and the United States launched their largest-ever joint aerial drills. The annual US-South Korean drill, **called Vigilant Ace**, will run for 5-days, with six F-22 Raptor stealth fighters to be deployed among the more than 230 aircraft taking part.

ii. Around 12,000 US service members, including from the Marines and Navy, have joined South Korean troops.

Indian Navy Conducts Exercise Naseem-Al-Bahr with Oman Navy

i. Indian Naval Ships Trikanth and Teg are deployed to Oman for bilateral exercise ‘**Naseem Al Bahr**’ or ‘**Sea Breeze**’. This exercise is the **11th edition**.

ii. The bilateral relation between **Indian and Oman** were formally established with the signing of a **1953 Indo-Oman Treaty of friendship**, Navigation and Commerce, a first between India and an Arab country. The first exercise of Indian Navy with Royal Navy of Oman was conducted in 1993.

Hamesha Vijayee' Exercise Held in Rajasthan

i. The Indian Army's Southern Command had conducted exercise '**Hamesha Vijayee**' in the deserts of **Rajasthan** to evaluate the capability of the armed forces to strike deep into the enemy territory in an integrated air-land battle.

ii. The military exercise is aimed at fine-tuning surveillance and destruction mechanisms to support precision strikes and maneuvers by network-enabled forces.

Important Takeaways from above news

- **27th Chief of Army Staff of Indian Army**- Bipin Rawat.

India Successfully Test-Fires AAD Supersonic Interceptor Missile

i. India successfully test-fired its **indigenously developed Advanced Air Defence (AAD) supersonic interceptor missile**, capable of destroying any incoming ballistic missile at low altitude, from a test range in **Odisha**.

ii. This was the **third supersonic interceptor test carried out this year** in which an incoming ballistic missile target was successfully intercepted, within a **30km altitude** of the earth's atmosphere by an interceptor. **The interceptor is a 7.5-meter long** single stage solid rocket propelled guided missile equipped with a navigation system.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Abdul Kalam Island** in Odisha was previously known as **Wheeler Island**.

Indo-Maldives Joint Exercise 'Ekuverin' Concludes

i. The two-week long eighth edition of the **Indo-Maldives joint military exercise, 'Ekuverin'**, came to an end at **Belagavi, Karnataka**. 'Ekuverin' means 'friends' in the Maldivian language.

ii. The bilateral annual exercise was joint military training between the Indian Army and the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF). The exercise has been held alternatively in India and Maldives since 2009.

Appointments or Resign/Retired

Dia Mirza Appointed as UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador for India

- i. **Former Miss Asia Pacific Dia Mirza** was appointed as **UN Environment's Goodwill Ambassador for India**. A long-standing supporter of environmental conservation, Dia will take up the role to add more weight to her work on raising awareness of and seeking solutions to environmental issues.
- ii. As a Goodwill Ambassador, Dia will work with the United Nations to further spread the message on priority areas including clean air, clean seas, wildlife protection and climate change.

Infosys Appoints Salil S Parekh as MD & CEO

- i. **Infosys** announced the appointment of **Salil S. Parekh as its new CEO and Managing Director**. Salil was in Capegemini earlier.
- ii. **The Bengaluru-headquartered company** was searching for a new CEO after former CEO Vishal Sikka resigned in August 2017. Cofounder Nandan Nilekani returned to the company as non-executive chairman to steady operations.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Infosys is country's no. 2 software services exporter.

Raj Shah Becomes First Indian-American to Hold Press Gaggle

- i. **Raj Shah** who holds a key position in the White House, gagged with reporters on board US Presidential chopper Air Force One, becoming the **first Indian-American to enjoy the privilege**.
- ii. Thirty-three old, Mr Shah did so in the capacity of the Principal Deputy Press Secretary.

A Surya Prakash Re-Appointed Prasar Bharati Chief

- i. **Veteran journalist A Surya Prakash** has been appointed the chairman of the Prasar Bharati board for a second consecutive term till February 8, 2020.
- ii. Information and broadcasting ministry issued an order after a panel headed by Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu recommended Prakash's name for the post.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Prasar Bharati oversees the functioning of **Doordarshan and All India Radio (AIR)**.

Kenyatta Sworn in as President of Kenya

- i. **Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta** has been sworn in for a **second and final five-year term**, a month after winning a bitterly disputed election rerun marked by delays and boycott.
- ii. Kenyatta, 55, won 98 percent of the votes cast in October's poll, which was boycotted by the main opposition leader, Raila Odinga.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Kenya Capital-** Nairobi, **Currency-** Kenyan shilling.

Ellie Goulding Honored as UN Environment Global Goodwill Ambassador

- i. British singer-songwriter **Ellie Goulding** signed as a **Global Goodwill Ambassador for UN Environment**, joining the fight to save the lives and habitats of people and animals by cleaning up our air and seas, fighting climate change and protecting species.

ii. Ellie is also backing UN Environment's #CleanSeas campaign.

Important takeaways from above news-

- UN Headquarters- New York, United States, UN Secretary-General- Antonio Guterres.

London Mayor Names Deepak Parekh as First International Ambassador

i. The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan has named noted Indian businessman, Deepak Parekh, as 'International Ambassador' who will be tasked with championing the UK capital across the globe.

ii. Parekh, is one of the first of a network of international ambassadors, that would include high-level business and cultural figures based in London or overseas. Parekh is the chairman of India's premier housing finance company HDFC Ltd.

Important takeaways from above news-

- UK Capital- London, Prime Minister- Theresa May.

Uma Shankar Appointed RBI Executive Director

i. Uma Shankar, chief general manager (CGM) in charge of the Reserve Bank of India's financial inclusion and development department has taken over as executive director (ED) in the central bank.

ii. Shankar has been elevated after Meena Hemchandra the executive director in charge of the central bank's supervision department retired recently.

Important takeaways from above news-

- RBI established in- 1935, Headquarters- Mumbai.
- 24th and Current Governor of RBI- Dr. Urjit Patel.

Pradeep Singh Kharola Takes Over as Air India CMD

i. Senior IAS officer Pradeep Singh Kharola took charge as the Chairman and Managing Director of Air India. Kharola assumed charge from Rajiv Bansal.

ii. He was the managing director of Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd since February 2015.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Air India Founded: 15 October 1932 (as Tata Airlines), Headquarters- Delhi

Rahul Gandhi Elected Indian National Congress President

i. The Indian National Congress announced that Rahul Gandhi has been elected as its new President, taking over from his mother Sonia Gandhi. He is the 16th President of Congress since Independence.

ii. Rahul was declared the party President after no other candidate filed a nomination to contest the presidential elections.

Sebastian Pinera Wins Chile's Presidential Election

i. A conservative billionaire and former president, Sebastian Pinera, has won Chile's presidential election run-off.

ii. With nearly all votes counted, Mr Pinera has polled more than 54%. Left-winger Alejandro Guillier was his closest opponent. Sebastian Pinera has replaced Michelle Bachelet.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Chile Capital- Santiago, Currency- Chilean peso.

Justice UD Salvi Appointed Officiating Chief of National Green Tribunal

- i. The government has appointed Justice U D Salvi as officiating chairperson of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) following the superannuation of Justice Swatanter Kumar.**
- ii. Mr. Salvi will remain in the saddle until his retirement on February 13, 2018.**

Important Takeaways from above news

- The tribunal's principal bench is located in New Delhi.
- The NGT was established on October 18, 2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010.

Vijay Rupani Remains Gujarat Chief Minister, Nitin Patel His Deputy

- i. Vijay Rupani will continue as chief minister of Gujarat and Nitin Patel as his deputy chief minister, the Bhartiya Janata Party has made the announcement after a meeting of the party's newly-elected legislators in the state's capital Gandhinagar.**
- ii. The BJP had won 99 seats, only seven more than it needed for a majority to form government and 16 less than it had won last time.**

Lt Gen B S Sahrawat takes over as Director-General of NCC

- i. Lieutenant General B S Sahrawat took over the reins of National Cadet Corps as its Director General. The General Officer is a third generation army officer.**
- ii. He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla and Indian Military Academy, Dehradun. He has been awarded the Sena Medal during the floods of Kosi River in Bihar in 2008.**

Important Takeaways from above news

- The Cadet Corps Committee which was formed on 29 Sep 1946 with Pt HN Kunzru as chairman.
- National Cadet Corps came into existence in 1948.

Jairam Thakur will be Himachal Pradesh's new CM

- i. The Bharatiya Janata Party has named Jairam Thakur as legislature party leader in Himachal Pradesh, effectively making him the state's next chief minister.**
- ii. The BJP's central observer Narendra Singh Tomar announced Thakur's name after a meeting of BJP MLAs was convened, with all unanimously deciding in his favour.**

He will be 14th CM of HP

Abhay Appointed Director General of Narcotics Control Bureau

- i. Senior IPS officer Abhay was appointed Director General of Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). He is at present working in Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).**
- ii. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved his appointment to the post till November 18, 2019. The post was lying vacant after R R Bhatnagar took over as DG of CRPF in April 2017.**

Important takeaways from above news-

- The Government of India constituted the Narcotics Control Bureau on the 17th of March, 1986.

Honours/ Awards

Virat Kohli surpasses Brian Lara for Most Double Centuries as Captain

- i. There is no stopping Virat Kohli. Just a day after becoming the first captain to register a hat-trick of centuries in a three-match series, the Indian skipper scaled yet another milestone when he scored his sixth double century, the highest as a captain. He overtook West Indies great Brian Lara, who held the record previously with five double tons in Tests.
- ii. With a sixth double hundred, Kohli has also tied Sachin Tendulkar and Virender Sehwag for the most 200-plus scores for India in Tests. While Tendulkar had six double centuries, Sehwag had recorded four double and two triple hundreds.

Syrian Boy Wins Children's Peace Prize

- i. Sixteen-year-old **Mohamad Al Jounde** from **Syria** was awarded the **International Children's Peace Prize** for his efforts to ensure the rights of Syrian refugee children.
- ii. Al Jounde, a refugee of the Syrian civil war, set up a school together with his family in a Lebanese refugee camp that currently provides 200 children with education. Al Jounde received the prize from **Malala Yousafzai**, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 for her work for children's rights.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Syria Capital-** Damascus, **Currency-** Syrian pound.

Bengali Poet Joy Goswami to Get 31st Moortidevi Award

- i. Eminent Bengali poet **Joy Goswami** will be given the **31st Moortidevi Award for the year 2017**. The committee, headed by poet and scholar Satya Vrat Shastri, unanimously decided to confer the award upon Goswami **for his poetry collection titled Du Dondo Phowara Matro**.
- ii. It is the **first time the award will be given to a Bengali poet**. The award consists of a Saraswati Statue, a Citation Plaque and cash award of Rupees 4 lakh.

Important takeaways from above news-

The First Moortidevi Award winner was C. K. Nagaraja Rao.

Diddy Tops the List of 2017's Highest-Paid Musicians: Forbes

- i. **Musician Diddy** was on the top of Forbes' annual world's highest-paid musician list shows. He is on top despite not releasing any album in 2017.
- ii. The list is based on pretax income from June 1, 2016, through June 1, 2017. **The Top 3 Musicians on the list are-**
 1. Diddy (\$130 M),
 2. Beyoncé (\$105 M),
 3. Drake (\$94 M),

Vice President Confers 'Yeraringan' Award to M.S. Swaminathan

- i. **The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu** has conferred 'Yeraringan' Award to **Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, in Chennai**.

ii. Prof. M.S. Swaminathan was a transformative leader who has inspired many scientists to focus on the problem of Indian agriculture.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **CM of Tamil Nadu-** Edappadi Palaniswami.

Shree Saini from Washington Crowned Miss India USA 2017

i. **Washington resident Shree Saini** has been crowned **Miss India USA 2017**. While Prachi Singh from Connecticut was declared the first runner-up at the pageant, which was held at the Royal Alberts Palace in Edison, New Jersey.

ii. **Shree Saini** is an anti-bullying activist. At the beauty pageant, cancer surgeon **Kavita Malhotra Pattani from Florida** was declared **Mrs India USA 2017**. **Swapna Mannam, 17**, from New Jersey was crowned with **Miss Teen India USA 2017**.

Vin Diesel, 2017's Top-Grossing Actor- Forbes

i. **Vin Diesel** has been named the **top-grossing actor of 2017 by Forbes**, with \$1.6 billion in global ticketing receipts from his film '**The Fate of the Furious**'.

ii. The second spot was occupied by **Dwayne Johnson 'The Rock'**, with **\$1.5 billion receipts**. 'Wonder Woman' actress **Gal Gadot**, whose films earned \$1.4 billion worldwide, featured in the **third spot** on the list.

Satheesh Reddy Conferred with National Design Award

i. **G. Satheesh Reddy**, Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri and Director General, Missiles and Strategic Systems, has been conferred with the **prestigious National Design Award**.

ii. He has bagged this award for his significant national contribution towards indigenous design and development of diversified missile systems, guided weapons, avionics technologies.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **National Design Research Forum (NDRF)** established by the Institution of Engineers (India), promotes research, design, development, productization, and innovation through collaborative effort since 1969.

Mamang Dai and Ramesh Kuntal Megh Win Sahitya Akademi Award 2017

i. **Authors Mamang Dai and Ramesh Kuntal Megh** have won this year's Sahitya Akademi award for their work **The Black Hill**, a novel, and **Vishw Mithak Sarit Sagar**, a literary criticism, in **English and Hindi** respectively.

ii. The Sahitya Akademi announced its annual Sahitya Akademi Awards 2017 in 24 languages. Seven novels, five collections each of poetry and short stories, five works of literary criticism, a play and a book of essays have won the awards.

iii. The award in the form of a casket containing an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and a cheque of Rs 1 lakh will be presented to the authors at a special function to be held on February 12, 2018.

Salman Khan Tops Forbes India Celebrity List 2017

i. With earnings of **Rs232.83 crore**, actor **Salman Khan** has topped the **Forbes India Celebrity 100 list 2017** for the second consecutive year.

ii. While Shah Rukh Khan featured in the second spot with earnings of Rs170.50 crore, Indian cricket team captain Virat Kohli came third with Rs100.72 crore earnings.

Anushka Sharma is PETA's 'Person of the Year'

i. **Actress Anushka Sharma** has been named **PETA's Person of the Year** by animal rights organisation People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

ii. Anushka is a vegetarian, has nabbed the title for helping to protect dogs from fireworks to advocating for horses who are forced to pull carriages in Mumbai. She was named PETA's Hottest Vegetarian Celebrity in 2015.

Important takeaways from above news-

- PETA is the **largest animal rights organization** in the world.
- **PETA India**, based in Mumbai, was launched in January 2000.

Sports

Shiva Keshavan Wins Gold in Asian Luge Championships

- The sole Indian participant and defending Asian champion Shiva Keshavan** retained his title with a time of **55.60 seconds**.
- India's veteran Winter Olympian Shiva Keshavan won a gold medal at the Asian Luge Championships at Altenberg, Germany.

Prithvi Shaw Named India's Captain for 2018 U-19 World Cup

- Mumbai's 18-year-old batsman Prithvi Shaw** has been named the **captain of the Indian Under-19 team for the 2018 U-19 World Cup**
- The tournament is scheduled to be held in New Zealand starting January 13, 2018. This comes after Shaw slammed three tons and two fifties in five Ranji Trophy matches this season. **Punjab's Shubman Gill** has been named as Shaw's deputy.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **New Zealand Capital-** Wellington, **Currency-** New Zealand Dollar.

Deepika Kumari Wins Bronze at Indoor Archery World Cup

- India's Deepika Kumari** has won **bronze medal at the Indoor Archery World Cup Stage 2** that concluded in Bangkok, Thailand.
- Deepika, seeded third, defeated 13th seeded Sayana Tsyrempilova of Russia 7-3 in the women's recurve bronze play-off.

- The emblems of the **Beijing 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games** have been named "**Winter Dream**" and "**Flight**," respectively.
- The emblem launching ceremony was held at the National Aquatic Center, which staged the swimming events during the Beijing 2008 Games. In 2022, this venue will be transformed into an ice rink for curling games.

Important takeaways from above news-

The XXIII Olympic Winter Games will be held in February 2018 in **PyeongChang, the Republic of Korea**.

Yuvraj Singh Launches UNICEF-ICC's Adolescent Campaign

- Indian cricketer **Yuvraj Singh** will be promoting a **UNICEF** sports initiative for youngsters in South Asia, which will also have the ICC's backing. Yuvraj launched the "**Power of Sports to Shape the Future of Adolescents**" campaign in South Asia.
- Yuvraj was joined by under-19 players from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka who will compete in the ICC under-19 World Cup in New Zealand in January 2018.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **ICC CEO-** David Richardson, **ICC headquarters -** Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

- **UNICEF Headquarter** - New York, United States.

Mujeeb Zadran From Afghanistan Becomes First Cricketer Born in 21st Century

i. **Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Zadran**, the 16-year-old off-spinner, **became the youngest ever from Afghanistan to play International cricket** and overall he is the 9th youngest to make debut in ODI cricket.

ii. He was born in Khost on March 28 in 2001. Zadran has been making the headlines over the last couple of months for his outstanding performances for their Under-19 team.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Afghanistan Capital-** Kabul, **President-** Ashraf Ghani.

Kanchanmala Pande Wins India's 1st World Para Swimming Championship Gold

i. Nagpur's **Kanchanmala Pande** created history as **she became the first Indian to secure pole position at the World Para-Swimming Championship in Mexico.**

ii. The 26-year-old Reserve Bank of India employee won gold in the 200 meter medley event in the S-11 category and was also the only Indian to qualify for the women's category.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Mexico Capital:** Mexico City, **Currency:** Mexican peso

Cristiano Ronaldo Wins Ballon d'Or, Equals Lionel Messi's Record

i. **Cristiano Ronaldo (from Portugal)** has won **the Ballon d'Or for a fifth time** to move level with rival Lionel Messi. The Real Madrid forward was named the **winner of France Football's prestigious award at a ceremony in Paris, France.**

ii. The award caps a year in which Ronaldo has won LaLiga, the Champions League and the Spanish Super Cup with Real Madrid, as well as helping Portugal qualify for the 2018 World Cup. Messi, the only other player to have won the award since 2008, finished second.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Ronaldo previously won the award in 2008, 2013, 2014 and 2016.
- Messi is from Barcelona.

FIFA Lifts Kuwait Football Ban

i. **The international football federation, FIFA, has lifted a two-year suspension against Kuwait's football association** that has prevented the country from participating in international tournaments.

ii. FIFA president Gianni Infantino confirmed the move in a video posted on the Instagram account of Kuwait's minister of trade and industry and acting minister of youth affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Kuwait Capital-** Kuwait City, **Currency-** Kuwaiti dinar.
- **FIFA President-** Gianni Infantino.

India Beat Germany, Win Bronze at Hockey World League Final

i. **India defeated Germany 2-1 in the Hockey World League Final** to grab the **bronze medal** at the event, in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. SV Sunil and Harmanpreet Singh scored for the world number six Indian side.

ii. The world's fifth-ranked side Germany was without any substitutes as seven of their players were unavailable for the match either due to injury or high fever. For India's success, Odisha government presented each player a cheque of Rs 10 lakh.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Germany is **four-time Olympic gold medallists**.
- **Germany Capital-** Berlin, **Currency-** Euro.

India Becomes 1st Ever Team to Register Hundred 300+ ODI Totals

- India has become the first-ever team to register 300+ totals 100 times in ODIs**, after posting 392/4 against Sri Lanka in Mohali.
- This was also the 25th instance of India scoring 350+ in an ODI innings, second-most by a team after South Africa (26). India was driven by captain Rohit Sharma's 208*, his third ODI double hundred which is also a record in ODIs.

India to Host 2021 Champions Trophy, 2023 World Cup

- India is all set to host the 2023 World Cup**, the global cricketing event's 13th edition after the BCCI confirmed the host nation. **India will also host the upcoming Champions Trophy in 2021.**
- The ICC World Cup 2019 will be held in England and Wales. This will be the first time that the event will be held entirely in India: the nation has, on three occasions previously, hosted the World Cup partially (1987, 1996 and 2011).

Important takeaways from above news-

- **India has won two ICC World Cups-** one in 1983, second in 2011.

Saurabh Chaudhary Claims Youth Olympics Games Spot with Gold

- India's Saurabh Chaudhary qualified for the Youth Olympics Games with a gold medal** and a junior world record in 10m air pistol at the ongoing Asia Youth Olympics Games qualification tournament in **Wako City, Japan**.
- He became the third Indian** to bag quota places for the 2018 Youth Olympic Games at the 10th Asian Airgun Championship.

Jitu Rai And Heena Sidhu Win Medals at Asian Championships

- Pistol aces Jitu Rai and Heena Sidhu bagged a bronze each** to continue India's medal charge at the **10th Asian Championship 10m Rifle/Pistol in Wako City, Japan**.
- Jitu won an **individual bronze in the men's 10m Air Pistol**, which also helped the Indian team comprising Shahzar Rizvi and Omkar Singh besides Jitu, to bag the Team gold in the event.
- Heena claimed an individual bronze in the women's 10m Air Pistol**. Her effort, along with teammates Shri Nivetha Paramantham and Harveen Srao, helped the Team clinch a silver.

Messi Beats Ronaldo To La Liga Best Player Award

- Lionel Messi**, the star forward of Barcelona, has received **La Liga's top scorer and best player awards for the 2016-2017 football season**.
- The Argentine beat rival Cristiano Ronaldo, who guided Real Madrid to their first title since 2012 in the recent campaign. Messi scored 37 goals in league action last season to earn his fourth Pichichi award for most goals in La Liga.

Australia Beat Argentina to Win Gold in Hockey World League Final

- Australia beat Argentina 2-1 in the final of the Hockey World League Final (HWLF) to win gold at Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar, Odisha**. Argentina beat India (who won bronze earlier) in the semifinals.
- Blake Govers** scored the winner from a penalty corner with just three minutes left in the game. Earlier, Australia scored first through **Jeremy Hayward** in the 17th minute.

iii. **Australia thus became champions for the second time in a row** and will go down in international hockey history as the last team ever to win Hockey World League Final.

Michael Jordan, World's Highest-Paid Athlete of All Time

i. In the latest list released by Forbes, **Michael Jordan** has been named as the **highest-paid athletes of all time**. The 54-year-old has a whopping \$1.7 billion in the bank.

ii. Former world number one golfer **Tiger Woods** is standing at the **second spot**. Late America golfer **Arnold Palmer** is at **No.3** with incredible \$1.4 billion to his name.

Lucknow's Jitesh Singh Deo Named Mr. India 2017

i. **Jitesh Singh**

Deo from Lucknow was declared the **winner of the 2017 Mr. India pageant** which was held in Mumbai. **Indian footballer Prathamesh Maulingkar** won the title of **Mr. India Supranational** and will compete at Mr. Supranational 2018.

ii. **Abhi Khajuria** was declared the first-runner. Actress **Kangana Ranaut** felicitated the winners. **Jitesh** competed with 15 other contestants to grab the coveted title.

Sushil Kumar Clinches Gold at Commonwealth Wrestling Championships

i. Double Olympic medalist **Sushil Kumar** clinched a **gold medal** at the **Commonwealth Wrestling Championships in South Africa**. **Sushil** defeated **New Zealand's Akash Khullar** via a pinfall in the final of the 74kg freestyle category to clinch the medal.

ii. **Parveen Rana** also won a bronze medal in the same category. Another Olympic medalist, **Sakshi Malik** also clinched a **gold medal** in the championships. **Sakshi** defeated **New Zealand's Tayla Tuahine Ford** in the final of the 62kg women's freestyle category.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Sakshi Malik** won a bronze in the 2016 Rio Games.
- **Sushil Kumar** won the **2010 world title**, a silver medal at the **2012 London Olympics** and a bronze medal at the **2008 Beijing Olympics**.

PV Sindhu Wins Silver at Dubai World Badminton Superseries Finals

i. **Top Indian shuttler P V Sindhu** won the Silver medal in women's singles summit clash of the **Dubai World Super Series Final in Dubai**. She went down **fighting against World No. 2 Akane Yamaguchi** of Japan.

ii. In the prestigious season-ending tournament finale, **Sindhu** lost in three games, to **Yamaguchi** in the final.

2002 World Cup Winner Kaka Retires from Football

i. **Former AC Milan and Real Madrid midfielder Kaka**, who lifted the **2002 World Cup with Brazil**, announced his retirement from football.

ii. **Kaka**, who won the Champions League and the **Ballon d'Or award in 2007** while playing for AC Milan, had become the **most expensive footballer in history** after his then-world record £56 million transfer from Milan to Madrid. He was the last Brazilian to be voted world player of the year in 2007.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Ballon d'Or award winner for 2017 is **Cristiano Ronaldo**.

Mo Farah Wins BBC's Sports Personality of the Year Award

i. **World 10,000m champion Sir Mo Farah** has been voted **BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2017**. The 34-year-old, a four-time Olympic champion, won his third successive world 10,000m gold medal in London in August.

ii. He becomes the **first long-distance runner to win the Sports Personality award** since Paula Radcliffe in 2002.

Real Madrid Presented with the FIFA World Champions Badge

i. **Real Madrid** has earned the honor of being able to wear the **official FIFA World Champions Badge** on their competition jerseys for the duration of 2018 by **defeating Gremio** in the final of the **FIFA Club World Cup UAE 2017**.

ii. Real Madrid will be able to display the emblem all the way up to the next FIFA Club World Cup, which will take place in the **United Arab Emirates in December 2018**.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Madrid had won FIFA World Champions Badges in 2014, 2016, 2017.
- The first team to ever receive the FIFA World Champions Badge was the **Italy men's national team** for their victory at the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

Boxer Vijender Singh retains WBO Oriental and Asia Pacific Super Middleweight titles

i. Vijender Singh defended his WBO Oriental and Asia Pacific super middleweight titles against Ghana's Ernest Amuzu at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur. The 32-year-old Haryana pugilist, who is currently sixth in WBO rankings, fought in the mega show called 'Rajasthan Rumble'.

ii. It wasn't a technical knockout and Vijender Singh had to fight out all 10 rounds to earn the victory. This was his 10th straight win in his pro boxing career

Birmingham to Host Commonwealth Games in 2022

i. **The central English city of Birmingham** will host the **Commonwealth Games in 2022**. The 2022 Commonwealth Games were originally given to Durban in 2015, but the South African city was stripped of the event this year because of financial difficulties.

ii. The multisports event was last in Britain in 2014 when it was held in Glasgow. Before that, Manchester hosted in 2002.

Important Takeaways from above news

Gold Coast, Australia, will host the next Commonwealth Games in 2018

Sushil Becomes PWL's Most Expensive Wrestler at Rs.55 lakh

i. Sushil Kumar was wanted by all the teams ahead of the new season of Pro Wrestling League (PWL) and the bidding war created history in New Delhi. Sold to Delhi Sultans for a whopping amount of Rs 55 lakh, Sushil is now the most expensive player in the history of the tournament.

ii. PWL 3 is slated to begin from January 9, 2018 and the auction is underway as teams fight to pick the best players and set up a strong team. Sakshi Malik, India's 2016 Olympic bronze medalist, was bought by the Mumbai Maharathi side for Rs.39 lakh. World Championship gold medalist Helen Maroulis was bought for Rs.44 lakh by Haryana Hammers.

In a First, Saudi Arabia Hosts World Chess Games

i. **Saudi Arabia** is hosting a **world chess tournament for the first time**, nearly two years after the country's top cleric issued a religious edict against playing the board game.

ii. The tournament has been named as **the King Salman World Rapid and Blitz Chess Championships**. The world's top three chess players from Norway, Armenia and Azerbaijan are participating in the tournament.

Viswanathan Anand Wins World Rapid Chess Championship

i. **India's ace chess player Viswanathan Anand** won the **World Rapid Chess tournament title in Saudi Arabia** by beating **Russia's Vladimir Fedoseev** 2-0 in a two-game tie-break.

ii. Saudi Arabia hosted the world chess tournament for the first time. The women's title was won by **China's Ju Wenjun**. **Dronavalli Harika was the best-placed Indian**, finishing 19th.

Obituaries

Veteran Actor Shashi Kapoor Passes Away

- i. **Veteran actor Shashi Kapoor** died at the age of 79. Kapoor was unwell for quite some time. The actor was admitted to the Kokilaben Hospital in Mumbai.
- ii. **Shashi Kapoor made his Bollywood debut in 1961**, as the lead actor, in the film Dharmputra. Kapoor acted in more than a hundred films, of which he played the solo lead in 61.

Important takeaways from above news-

- Shashi Kapoor was awarded **Padma Bhushan in 2011**.
- He was also awarded the **Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2015**.

Johnny Hallyday, France's 'Elvis Presley' Passes Away

- i. **France's biggest rock star Johnny Hallyday** has died after a battle with lung cancer. **He was 74**. The singer sold about 100 million records and starred in a number of films in a career that began in 1960.
- ii. He was made a Chevalier of the Legion D'Honneur by President Jacques Chirac in 1997.

Pioneer of DNA Fingerprinting Lalji Singh Passes Away

- i. **Lalji Singh, a pioneer of DNA fingerprinting technology** in India and former **Vice-Chancellor of Benares Hindu University, BHU (2011 to 2014)**, passed away at the age of 70.
- ii. Lalji Singh and his team developed the indigenous probe that was first applied to settle paternity disputes in the late 1980s at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) Hyderabad.

Veteran Journalist Sukharanjan Sengupta Passes Away

- i. **Veteran journalist Sukharanjan Sengupta** died due to old age-related health problems. He was 85.
- ii. Sengupta had worked for Bengali dailies **Jugantar and Ananda Bazar Patrika** in his long career spanning over six decades.

Bengali Film Actor Partha Mukhopadhyay Passes Away

- i. **Famed Bengali film actor Partha Mukhopadhyay** had passed away. He was 70. Mukhopadhyay portrayed a number of memorable roles in the 1960s after getting a break as a **child artiste in the film Maa directed by Chitto Basu in 1958**.
- ii. The state government had conferred Mukhopadhyay with a special award for his contribution to Bengali films.

Music Legend Robbie Malinga Passes Away

- i. **Legendary South African musician Robbie Malinga** passed away. The veteran musician suffered from anaemia.
- ii. He announced his retirement as a solo artist in 2016, after more than 20 years in the industry. The musician is known for his hit songs such as, 'Sobabili', 'Mthanda' and 'Baby Please'.

The creator of Bugs Bunny, Bob Givens, Passes Away at 99

i. Bob Givens, one of the animators behind designing the **iconic characters Bugs Bunny** and **Elmer Fudd**, died at the age of 99. **He was from the USA.**

Important Days with theme

World AIDS Day: 1 December

i. World AIDS day is celebrated every year all over the world on **December 1st** to raise the public awareness about **Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome, AIDS**. The theme for **World AIDS day 2017** is '**Right to health**'.

ii. It is a pandemic disease caused due to the infection of **Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)**.

International Day of Disabled Persons: 03rd December

i. The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons (3 December) was proclaimed in 1992, by the United Nations General Assembly. It aims to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

ii. 2017 Theme: "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient society for all".

Indian Navy Day: 4 December

i. The Indian Navy Day is observed on **4th December** every year to celebrate achievements and role of the naval force to the country.

ii. During the India-Pakistan war of 1971, the Indian Navy played a significant role in the bombing of the Karachi harbor and sank Pakistan Naval Ship PNS Ghazi.

Important takeaways from above news-

- **Admiral Sunil Lanba**- Chief of Naval Staff (CNS).
- On 22 April 1958 V Adm RD Katari assumed office as the first Indian Chief of the Naval Staff.

Armed Forces Flag Day- 07 December

i. Armed Forces Flag Day is being observed throughout the country on **7 December** to honor the martyrs and the men in uniform who valiantly fought on our borders to safeguard the country's honor.

ii. The day marks the annual Armed Forces Flag day in India since 1949.

Human Rights Day- 10 December

i. Human Rights Day is observed every year on **10 December**. The day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in **1948**, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

ii. This year, Human Rights Day kicks off a year-long campaign to mark the upcoming **70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, a milestone document. The Campaign is named as **#standup4humanrights**.

27th National Energy Conservation Day- 14 December

i. The National Energy Conservation Day is celebrated annually on **14th December**. The 14th President of India Mr. Ram Nath Kovind was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

ii. The ECD is organized on 14th December each year by **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)**, **under Ministry of Power**. The Day is celebrated with an aim to demonstrate India's achievements in energy efficiency and conservation.

National Mathematics Day- 22nd December

- i. The famed **Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan's birth anniversary on December 22** is celebrated as **National Mathematics Day**. It was in 2012 that then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared December 22 as National Mathematics Day.
- ii. In 1917, Ramanujan was elected to be a member of the London Mathematical Society. In 1918 he also became a Fellow of the Royal Society, becoming the youngest person to achieve the feat. He passed away on April 6, 1920.

Nation Celebrates Kisan Diwas- 23rd December

- i. **Kisan Diwas (Farmer's Day)** is observed every year on **23 December** to celebrate the **birth anniversary of the fifth prime minister of India Chaudhary Charan Singh**.
- ii. He was the PM of India for a very short tenure starting from **28th of July 1979 until 14th January 1980**. A Kisan leader, Late Chaudhary Charan Singh belonged to a peasant family.

Good Governance Day- 25th December

- i. **Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birthday** is being celebrated as **Good Governance Day across the country on 25th December**.
- ii. Good Governance Day was established in 2014 to honour Mr Vajpayee by fostering awareness among the people of accountability in government.

