APRIL 21, 2018 – APRIL 26, 2018
NATIONAL NEWS

➢ Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the two-day Civil Services Day event in New Delhi (12th Edition)
  - The Day focuses on the topic ‘Evolving Strategies for Transforming Aspirational Districts’
  - A new book was released 'Emulating Excellence- Takeaways for Replication'
  - The day is celebrated for the civil servants to rededicate themselves to the cause of citizen and renew their commitments to public service and excellence in work

➢ The new office of Central Project Monitoring Unit for the e-Vidhan project of the Government was inaugurated at the Parliament House Annexe.
  - e-Vidhan is a part of the broader Digital India Programme of the Government and is likely to contribute to the cleanliness and environment by reducing the use of papers to a great extent.

➢ The Union Cabinet approved the promulgation of the Fugitive Economic Offenders Ordinance 2018, which would empower the government to seize the domestic assets of those deemed by a relevant court to be fugitive economic offenders.
  - The Ordinance has a provision for a ‘Special Court’ under the Prevention of Money-laundering Act, 2002 to declare a person as a Fugitive Economic Offender.

➢ SJVN Limited has signed an MoU with Ministry of Power for the year 2018-19
  - SJVN shall strive to achieve 9200 Million Units generation during the year under ‘Excellent’ category.
  - Further, SJVN will have Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) target of Rs. 900 crore and Turnover target of Rs. 2175 crore under the Excellent category.
SJVN is the joint venture between govt of India and govt of Himachal Pradesh.

➢ Sushma Swaraj on 4-Day Visit to China to attend the meeting of the foreign ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)
  o She will hold talks with her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi. This will be Ms Swaraj’s first meeting with Wang after he was elevated to be the state councilor

➢ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved a restructured Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan scheme aimed at making rural local bodies self-sustainable, financially stable and more efficient.
  o PM Narendra Modi will launch Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan scheme in Mandla in Madhya Pradesh on the occasion of National Panchayati Raj Day (April 24)
  o PM Modi first inaugurated Aadi Mahotsava, a three-day program on the conservation of ancient Tribal culture and heritage.

➢ Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) has been completely revoked from Meghalaya while diluting it in other regions of Arunachal Pradesh
  o Until September 2017, 40% of Meghalaya was under AFSPA
  o AFSPA gives armed forces the power to maintain public order in “disturbed areas”. They have the authority to prohibit a gathering of five or more persons in an area, can use force or even open fire after giving due warning if they feel a person is in contravention of the law.
  o It is effective in the whole of Nagaland, Assam, Manipur (excluding seven assembly constituencies of Imphal) and parts of Arunachal Pradesh
  o Tripura withdrew the AFSPA in 2015. Jammu and Kashmir too has a similar Act
➢ **Tata Consultancy Services** has created history as the **market capitalisation** of the company has hit the **100 billion dollar mark**, making it the **first Indian IT company** to achieve the mark
   - Market Capitalization rose to **Rs. 6,64,918 crore**.
   - TCS ranks 97th among the most valued organizations

➢ **29th Road Safety Week** inaugurated at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.
   - A book named **"Have a Safe Journey"** was released.
     - India will sign a pact with South Korea for enhancing road safety measures.

➢ **Diu Smart City** has become the **first city in India**, that runs on **100% renewable energy during daytime** setting a new benchmark for other cities to become clean and green.
   - Diu offers its residents a subsidy of Rs10,000-50,000 for installing 1-5KW rooftop solar panels.

➢ **West Bengal government** has given its approval to State Forest Department to apply for coveted **Ramsar Site recognition under Ramsar Convention to Sunderban Reserve Forest**.
   - Now, State Forest Department through Central Government will apply to Ramsar Convention Secretariat.
   - Once it is conferred Ramsar site status, Sundarbans Reserve Forest will be **largest protected wetland in the country**.
   - There are currently **26 sites in India** recognized as Ramsar wetland sites of international importance.

➢ **India and the World Bank** signed a $210 million loan agreement for the **Madhya Pradesh Rural Connectivity Project**.
The Project is expected to improve the durability, resilience and safety of the gravel surfaced rural roads and enhance the capacity of the state to manage its rural roads network.

- **The Madras High Court** became the first court in south India and overall eighth in the country to introduce e-court fee payment facility. It was jointly launched by Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami and Chief Justice Indira Banerjee.

- **Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** and **External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj** have attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation’s (SCO) defence ministers’ and Foreign Ministers meeting in Beijing, China, respectively.

- **India has retained its position** as the top remittances receiving country with its diaspora sending about $69 billion back home in 2017, according to the report of the World Bank.
  - Remittances to India picked up sharply by 9.9% to $69 billion in 2017, reversing the previous year’s dip.
  - Followed by **China ($64 billion)** and the **Philippines ($33 billion)**.

- **Cabinet Approvals**
  - Declaration of Scheduled Areas in respect of Rajasthan under Fifth Schedule to the Constitution of India.
  - **Restructured National Bamboo Mission**- An outlay of Rs.1290 crore (with Rs. 950 crore as Central share) is provisioned for implementation of the Mission during the remaining period of 14th Finance Commission (2018-19 and 2019-20).
  - **Minimum Support Prices for Raw Jute for 2018-19 season**- The Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) of Raw Jute has been
increased to Rs.3700/- per quintal for 2018-19 season from Rs. 3500/- per quintal in the 2017-18 season.

- Cabinet approves MoU on cooperation in the field of regulation of medical products for human use amongst the medicine regulatory agencies of the BRICS countries
- Cabinet approves Long Term Agreements for supply of iron ore to Japan and South Korea through Minerals Trading Corporation of India (MMTC) Limited

➢ The Ministry of Human Resource Development, HRD launched the second edition of the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan under which students from 750 higher educational institutions from across the country will adopt villages and visit them to get acquainted with the lifestyle of people there and the problems faced by them.

➢ As part of ongoing Indo-Malaysian defence cooperation, a joint training exercise Harimau Shakti will be conducted in the dense forests of Sengai Perdik, Hulu Langat, Malaysia.

➢ Exercise ‘Sagar Kavach’ is being conducted to strengthen and assess the loopholes in the coastal security mechanism along Kerala shores.

- Along with Coastal Police and Marine Enforcement wing, Indian Coast Guard and Indian Navy is also participating

➢ 48th Foundation Day of Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) celebrated.

➢ An MoU on technical knowledge sharing for establishing a nationwide Time Stamping & Time Synchronization network and traceability of Time signal to UTC NPL Time was signed between Council of Scientific and Industrial Research -
National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL) and Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications.

➢ Prime Minister Narendra Modi left on a three-day visit to China

➢ According to the 2018 World Press Freedom Index compiled by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), India has ranked 138th (falling 2 positions down from 136th in 2017)

  o The list has been topped by Norway followed by Sweden and The Netherlands.
  o North Korea was at the bottom-most position (180th) in the list.
  o The index ranks the level of freedom available to journalists.

➢ Third edition of the Annual 5G India Congress 2018 was held on April 20, 2018 in New Delhi.

  o Indian government is planning to roll out 5G by 2020
  o It was organised by Nexgen Conferences, one of India’s leading conferences and B2B event organizers and was supported by well known brands and industry bodies including Huawei, Nokia, Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) and 5G India Forum.

➢ A Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted by the Union Road Transport and Highways Ministry, has recommended a uniform structure of road tax for vehicles across state, in a meeting held in Assam, Guwahati.

  o If this recommendation is accepted, transfer of vehicles from one state to another will be allowed without levying road tax.
  o Other key recommendations of GoM include national passenger vehicles permit for passenger cars and levying tax based on invoice price of the vehicles.
For levying tax based on invoice price of the vehicles, GoM has recommended three slabs viz. 8 percent tax on vehicles below 10 lakhs, 10 percent for vehicles costing between 10-20 lakh, and 12 percent for vehicles above 20 lakh.

Under this structure, diesel vehicles may have to pay 2 percent extra taxes, while electric vehicles will be given a two percent discount.

Nagaland launched “Saubhagya, Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana”, aimed at electrifying over 90000 households across the state by March 31, 2019.

Under this programme, electricity will be provided to 66766 rural households and 24,566 urban households in Nagaland.

The Four day first International SME (Small, Medium Enterprises) convention 2018 is being held in New Delhi

150 participants from 31 countries and 400 entrepreneurs from India

The main focus of this convention is on inclusion of MSMEs in the Make in India program & empowering women entrepreneurs.

‘Integrated initiative for prevention & control of viral hepatitis’ will be roll out with a budget of Rs 517.39 crore for three year.

This initiative for prevention and control of viral hepatitis has roll out under National Health Mission (NHM)

Under the initiative, the ministry has decided to establish a state coordination unit under the state NHM for efficient rollout of the programme in 26 large and four small states.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat launched a campaign called “Devbhoomi dialogue”, calling upon youth to look for self-employment opportunities in their chosen fields to help check the perennial problem of migration from the remote hill areas.
Uttarakhand State Government had successfully conducted a similar feedback oriented programme called ‘Apki Rai, Apka Budget’ to seek suggestions from public before introducing State’s annual budget in March 2018.

➢ Manipur’s Karang honoured with the first cashless island of the country, and implementing the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and other priority initiatives of the Centre.
  o Other Honours-
    ▪ Assam’s Dhemaji and Telangana’s Karimnagar – best implementation of ‘Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushal Yojana’
    ▪ Himachal Pradesh’s Kangra and Madhya Pradesh’s Neemuch – implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin) aimed at providing pucca houses with basic amenities to all homeless people.

➢ Union Cabinet stated that India will now maintain a database of sexual offenders to monitor and track those individuals convicted of such crimes.
  o In India, the sexual offender database will be maintained by National Crime Records Bureau.
  o Across the world, only eight countries viz. US, Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom have sexual offender database.

➢ The central government approved an ordinance to amend the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act to provide death penalty for the rape of children below the age of 12 years.
- **Rape of women**: Minimum punishment has been increased from imprisonment of 7 years to 10 years, extendable to life imprisonment.
- **Rape of a girl under 16 years of age**: minimum punishment has been increased from 10 years to 20 years, extendable to imprisonment for rest of life.
- **Gang rape of a girl under 16 years of age**: imprisonment for rest of life of the convict.
- **Rape of a girl under 12 years**: minimum 20 years of imprisonment or imprisonment for rest of life or with death.
- **Gang rape of a girl below 12 years**: punishment will be imprisonment for rest of life or death sentence.

➢ Mahindra Electric and cab service Meru announced a joint electric vehicle (EV) **pilot project in Hyderabad**, which will be introduced soon in other cities also.
- Meru will deploy Mahindra’s eVeritos all-electric sedans.
- The services will be offered at the same price as provided by the Telangana government’s radio taxi fares for sedans.

➢ The **four-day Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)** inaugurated in New Delhi.

➢ Two craft forms from Telangana – **Adilabad Dokra, an ancient bell metal craft popular in the tribal regions of Adilabad district in Telangana and Warangal Dhurries, a popular cotton rug** – have been issued the Geographical Indication (GI) Registration Certificate by the GI Registry, Chennai.
- The speciality of Adilabad Dokra is that no two pieces are alike in shape as well as in size thus making it impossible to replicate.
- **Warangal Dhurries’** are famous across the world due to the high degree of craftsmanship involved in its creation.
- GI tag is a name or sign given to certain products which correspond to a specific geographical location or origin.
➢ Two day Secure India Conclave, organised by Global Counter Terrorism Council began in New Delhi on April 24, 2018.
  o Sessions on Internal security will be held.
  o The conclave has been organised keeping in view, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of ‘New India : Secure India 2018”.

➢ Prototype of an intelligent traffic management solution is currently being tested by Bengaluru Smart City jointly with the Electronics City Township Authority (ELCITA), to enhance traffic management.
  o The intelligent traffic management solution will offer traffic information that is unavailable at present

➢ Andhra Pradesh Cyber Security Operations Center (APCSOC) inaugurated in Amaravati.
  o APCSOC is an initiative taken by Andhra Pradesh Information Technology, Electronics and Communications (IT and E&C) ministry.
  o Andhra Pradesh has involved Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) as cyber security consultants to the Government to help framing and adopting best practices and frameworks in this domain.
  o Tech Mahindra has been chosen to operate the APSCOC.

➢ In a bid to boost defence cooperation, Indian Government is planning to gift obsolete military equipment to friendly countries.
  o Indian Government is expecting that this strategy may help in creating a base to expand export of newer defence platforms, which have been made in India.

➢ In September 2018, ISRO will launch Gsat-7A, for the Indian Air Force (IAF).
  o Gsat-7A will be launched onboard GSLV Mk II rocket and will enable the IAF to interlink different ground radar stations, airbases and Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft.
  o Risat-2A will be launched by the end of 2018 onboard PSLV rocket.
- It is an advanced remote sensing satellite and will boost India’s surveillance capabilities.

- **The e-Way Bill system for Intra-State movement of goods** is implemented from 25th April 2018 in Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Sikkim and Puducherry.

- The 23rd meeting of the Western Zonal Council consisting of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Daman & Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli will be held at **Gandhinagar, Gujarat**.

- The **Meghalaya government** has launched ‘**Mission Lakadong**’ to achieve a five-fold increase in the production of Lakadong turmeric, an organic variety of turmeric grown in Meghalaya, to at least 50,000 metric tonne per year in the next 5 years.
  - Objective of ‘**Mission Lakadong**’ is to improve the livelihood and income of farmers involved in Lakadong turmeric cultivation.

- **A MOU was signed between the Indian Culinary Institute (ICI), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Tourism, and Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (IGNTU), Amarkantak** for introducing collaborative degree programmes including research in culinary arts.

- **The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) under the NITI Aayog will launch the Atal New India Challenge on 26th April 2018.**

- **India is tying up with the United States and Finland** to create a pollution-forecast system that will enable anticipation of particulate matter (PM) levels at least two days in advance with a better resolution.

- **On 23rd April 2018, SAIL (Steel Authority of India Ltd) said that, it has signed a MoU with Airports Authority of India (AAI) for utilisation of airstrips at Rourkela, Bokaro and Burnpur under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) – UDAN.**
AAI will operate and manage airport operations for Burnpur, Rourkela and Bokaro airport on behalf of SAIL for three years.

➢ Indus Towers and Bharti Infratel Ltd announced that, they have agreed to combine operations in a deal that will create the world’s second-largest mobile masts company measured by numbers of towers.

➢ National Kharif Conference 2018 was held in New Delhi

   o Central Government is working towards making agriculture policy and programs ‘income-oriented’ rather than ‘production-oriented’.

➢ J P Nadda ordered the officials for launching aggressive IEC (Information Education and Communication) campaigns to create awareness on prevention and control of vectors borne diseases like kalaazar, dengue, malaria and chickungunya in India

➢ Union Tourism Minister K J Alphons awarded Letters of Intent (LoI) to 9 agencies for 22 monuments under ‘Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan’ project

   o Adopt a Heritage Scheme was launched on World Tourism Day i.e. September, 27 2017
   o Under this scheme, Ministry of Tourism invited private and public sector entities to adopt as many as 116 ASI-protected monuments/sites and to take up the responsibility for its maintenance, conservation and development.

➢ A Cancer Screening Mela was organized in Mizoram by the Health Department of Mizoram jointly with Public Foundation of India and National Health Mission under the initiative of Swasth Uttar Purv.

   o The Cancer Screening Mela was funded by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) at Kolasib District, Diakkawn YMA Hall in Mizoram.

   o Theme of the mela was: ‘Come on Mizoram, together let’s beat Cancer’.
➢ A commemorative postage stamp on former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Late Shri Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna was released.

![Stamp Image]

➢ Kerala CM launched Pravasi Pension Scheme
   - The Pravasi Pension Scheme offers people hailing from Kerala but living outside the state or country, a pension of Rs 2,000 a month.
   - The scheme is not applicable for state and central government employees.
   - People aged over 60 years are eligible for this scheme.

➢ Council of Scientific and Industrial Research - National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL) and Department of Telecommunications (DoT) under Union Ministry of Communications have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on technical knowledge sharing for establishing a nationwide Time Stamping & Time Synchronization network.
   - As per the terms of the MoU, DoT will be setting up Nationwide, Time Stamping & Time Synchronization network consisting of 22 Time Synchronization Centers (TSC's) with technical assistance from CSIR-NPL.
   - This network will provide synchronizing pulse in Indian Standard Time (IST) to all Telecom & Internet Service providers across India.

➢ On 25th April 2018, the third ship of the Landing Craft Utility (LCU) Mk-IV project was inducted into the Indian Navy at Port Blair.
The ship was commissioned as INLCU L53 by Vice Admiral Bimal Verma, AVSM, ADC, Commander-in-Chief A&N Command.

It was designed and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.

National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) conducted a mock exercise on earthquake preparedness in three North Eastern States – Tripura, Nagaland and Mizoram.

Conducting such mock exercise was required as these three states fall under seismic vulnerability zone V.

“Harimau Shakti”, a joint training exercise between India and Malaysia will be conducted in the forests of Sengai Perdik, Hulu Langat, Malaysia from 30 April 2018 to 13 May 2018.


National Biopharmaceutical Mission is the first ever Industry-Academia mission to accelerate biopharmaceutical development in India. This programme has been named Innovate in India (i3).

It is a $250 million dollar initiative that includes a $125 million loan from the World Bank.

The mission will be implemented by Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), a Public Sector Undertaking of Department of Biotechnology, Union Ministry of Science & Technology.
INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Britain’s Prince Charles will succeed his mother Queen Elizabeth II as the Head of the Commonwealth after the heads of government agreed on his succession.

The Commonwealth countries have unanimously agreed to take action on cybersecurity by 2020.

In a landmark declaration at the end of Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in London, the leaders of 53 countries agreed to work closely to evaluate and strengthen their cybersecurity frameworks and response mechanisms.

Bolivian Foreign Minister Fernando Huanacuni has announced that Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay and Peru had decided to temporarily leave the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), given differences over choosing the secretary general of the group.

A South American bloc created a decade ago to counter US influence in the region has temporarily lost half its members after six countries suspended their memberships amid differences over who should lead the group.

Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors from G20, the Group of 20 economies, have agreed to aim for economic growth by promoting trade in their two day meeting at Washington.

Iran has banned the use of bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies by its banks and financial institutions to avoid money laundering and terrorism financing.
➢ **Canada and the European Union** will host the **world’s first 2-Day female foreign ministers’ meeting** in September 2018 in **Canada**. The announcement was made by the **Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland**.

➢ **The European Union and the United Nations** co-chaired a **two-day international conference** in **Brussels, Belgium** aiming to **pump financial aid for Syrians** and garner political support for UN-led intra-Syrian talks.

   o The conference will bring together participants from more than 85 countries and organisations at the ministerial level, as well as those from over 200 non-governmental organisations.
   o It is the **second conference of its kind since 2017**.

➢ **The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** is tying up with the **US and Finland** to develop new pollution-forecast system that will help anticipate particulate matter (PM) levels at least two days in advance and at greater resolution.

   o The new system will jointly develop with expertise from Finnish Meteorological Institute and US **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)**.

➢ **Syria** has returned to **France** the prestigious **Légion d’honneur** presented to its **President Bashar al-Assad**.

➢ **Kyrgyzstan** forms new government headed by president **Sooronbay Jeenbekov**.

➢ **PM Modi’s Visit to Germany**

   o **Germany is India’s largest trade partner in the European Union**.

➢ **North Korea** halts missile and nuclear tests, a pledge made by leader **Kim Jong-un** ahead of a meeting with Donald Trump.
➢ India and Finland have reached an agreement on the dispute between Indian Income Tax Department and Finnish Telecom firm Nokia, under the **Mutual Agreement Procedure (MAP)**.
   o Mutual Agreement Procedure (MAP) is an alternate dispute settlement mechanism aimed at resolving outstanding disputes between multi-national companies and local tax authorities arising out of differential pricing treatment.

➢ The World Bank Group approved **USD 13 billion** increase in paid-in capital, as part of a series of internal reforms.
   o The package approved by the Development Committee of the Board of Governors consists of **USD 7.5 billion paid-in capital for International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)** and **USD 5.5 billion paid-in capital for International Finance Commission (IFC)**, through both general and selective capital increases.
   o It also includes a **USD 52.6 billion callable capital increase for the IBRD**.

➢ The **Island Development Agency** reviewed the work done for preparation of Development Plans for identified Islands (4 in Andaman and Nicobar Islands – Smith, Ross, Long, Avis and five in Lakshadweep – Minicoy, Bangaram, Thinnakara, Cheriym, Suheli) and the meeting for the same was held in **New Delhi**
   o For these Islands, Final Site Suitability Reports have been made, Carrying Capacity measured and Environmental zoning performed to ensure sustainable development.
   o **After implementation of these projects, investment of Rs. 650 crore is expected from private sector.**
BANKING AND ECONOMY

➢ The Reserve Bank of India has revised "Know Your Customer" or the KYC guidelines

  o The KYC norms have been revised following the government's decision to update the 'Prevention of Money Laundering' rules in June 2017.
  o The RBI made linking of national biometric ID Aadhaar to bank accounts mandatory. However, it said this will be subject to the final decision of the Supreme Court on making Aadhaar mandatory
  o Till now, an Officially Valid Document for address proof together with Permanent Account Number issued by the Income Tax department and a recent passport size photograph were the key KYC documents.
  o But in the amended Customer Due Diligence procedure, the Aadhaar number, the PAN or Form No. 60 need to be obtained from an individual who is eligible for applying for the biometric ID.

➢ Indian Overseas Bank (IOB), State-run Bank of India (BoI) entered into an agreement for information utility services with the National E-Governance Services Limited (NeSL).

  o the IOB branches will be able to provide high-quality, authenticated information about debts and defaults
  o The NeSL became India's first information utility (IU) for bankruptcy cases under the 'Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) 2016' in October 2017.

➢ India is poised to remain the fastest growing large economy in the world, and its GDP is expected to reach $5 trillion by 2025, Economic Affairs Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg has told the World Bank in the 97th meeting of the Development Committee of the World Bank in Washington, USA.
➢ **Paytm Payments Bank** now has over **100 million KYC wallets**, against the constant campaigning done by the bank about the benefits of the **Know Your Customer (KYC)** system.

   o The bank has introduced several options that include **Paytm KYC centres and 'Paytm-Ka-ATM' outlets** to offer more localised support.

➢ **The Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has agreed in principle to give an aid of **1,700 crore rupees** to **Uttarakhand for infrastructure development** and creation of sewerage treatment facilities in urban areas.

➢ **A Loan Agreement for IBRD credit of US$ 125 (equivalent)** for the “**Innovate in India for Inclusiveness Project**” was signed with the World Bank in New Delhi.

   o The Objectives of the project is to nurture indigenous innovation, foster local product development and accelerate commercialization process

➢ **Suresh Prabhu**, the commerce and industry minister, held the **first e-commerce think tank meeting** in New Delhi.

➢ **A Mobile App (m-Awas)** was launched for allotment of Government accommodations in **General Pool Residential Accommodation (GPRA)** in Delhi under the control of the Directorate of Estates.

   o The application has been developed by **NIC**

➢ **The Home Ministry** has decided to relax the **six-decade-old Protected Area Permit regime** from **Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur** for five years

   o Foreign tourists, except those from Pakistan, China and Afghanistan, will now be allowed to visit some of the most pristine locations of the country which, so far, were out of bounds for them without a special permit.

   o **Under the Foreigners (Protected Areas) Order, 1958**, all areas falling between the Inner line and the International Border of some states were declared as protected areas.
➢ **National Stock Exchange of India (NSE)** has announced the launch of its "e-Gsec" platform for facilitating the non-competitive bidding in **Government of India Dated Securities (G-Sec) and Treasury Bills (T-Bills).**

  o This will allow retail investors to invest in Government Securities and hold them in existing demat accounts.

  o The non-competitive bidding facility was introduced by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** to encourage retail participation in the primary market for Government Securities.

➢ **According to the Development bank NABARD**, it has provided an assistance of **Rs 10,012 crore** to Uttar Pradesh during 2017-18 to facilitate overall development with special focus on agricultural credit.

➢ India’s largest private sector bank **ICICI Bank** has introduced a ‘digital form’ which will help open current accounts in a few hours.

  o Through ‘digital form’, ICICI Bank officials would be able to capture information about the customer and the business digitally and verify KYC documents in real-time, at the premise of the customer.

  o It is first of its kind service by any bank

➢ **Telecom giant Vodafone** announced the rollout of **Voice-over LTE (VoLTE) Services** in Chennai, Tamilnadu and confirmed it would expand the service across the State over the next few months.

  o By using the **VoLTE** services, 4G customers in Chennai can make calls and can access Vodafone VoLTE for no additional charges and all calls would be billed as per existing plan

  o This service has been launched successfully in Maharashtra, Goa, Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Haryana among others.
➢ India’s second largest public sector bank, **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** has stated that Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has confiscated passports of **150 wilful defaulters** based on its complaints.

➢ **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** Governor Urjit Patel has stated that India’s **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** is expected to **grow at 7.4%** in 2018-19.
   - Gross fiscal deficit (GFD) of the Central Government is budgeted at 3.3 per cent in 2018-19.

➢ According to Union Finance Ministry data, total deposits in Jan Dhan accounts **crossed Rs. 80000 crore mark** as on April 11, 2018.
   - Even the **Global Findex Report, 2017 released by the World Bank** has acknowledged that rapid increase in financial inclusion has taken place in India in recent years due to Indian Government’s Jan Dhan Yojana.
   - As per the Global Findex Report, adult bank account holders in India increased to **80 per cent in 2017 as compared to 53 per cent in 2014 and 35 per cent in 2011**
   - The Slogan of Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana is **“Mera Khata – Bhagya Vidhaata.”**

➢ **In the 3rd phase of sale, State Bank of India (SBI) has been authorised to issue and encash Electoral Bonds through its 11 Authorised Branches with effect from 01.05.2018 to 10.05.2018.**
   - Electoral Bond Scheme 2018 states that, Electoral Bonds can be purchased by a person, who is a citizen of India or incorporated or established in India.
   - Electoral Bonds are valid for fifteen days from the date of issue.
   - Electoral Bond deposited by an eligible Political Party in its account will be credited on the same day.
➢ As per data released by Commerce Ministry, India’s global trade in 2017-18 stood at $767.9 billion.
APPOINTMENTS

➢ **Mario Abdo Benitez** elected as the new President of **Paraguay**

➢ **Jim Bridenstine**, a Republican congressman from Oklahoma became 13th Administrator for the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration**

➢ The Cuban government has selected the country’s **57-year-old first vice-president**, **Miguel Díaz-Canel**, as the country’s President, replacing Raúl Castro.
  - He is the first leader outside the Castro dynasty

➢ **Taniya Sanyal** from Kolkata has become the first woman firefighter appointed by Airports Authority of India (AAI).

➢ **Suresh Kumar** took the additional charge as chairman and managing director of **Coal India Ltd**

➢ Former Indian Foreign Secretary **S. Jaishankar** was appointed as the new president of **Tata Sons’ global corporate affairs**.

➢ The government has cleared the appointment of senior advocate **Indu Malhotra** as a judge of the Supreme Court, making her the first woman lawyer to become Supreme Court judge.
➢ IMPORTANT DAYS

➢ The World Earth Day (WED) is celebrated on 22nd April
  o Theme – End Plastic Pollution

➢ World Book and Copyright Day is celebrated globally this year on 23 April to provide
  the people with many ideas and plans to make them aware of the situation and
  condition in the World.
  o The 2018 edition of World Book and Copyright Day is entitled: “READING, it’s
    my right!”
  o The World Book Capital for 2018 is Athens, Greece.

➢ World English Language Day – April 23

➢ National Panchayati Raj Diwas – 24th April

➢ World Malaria Day – April 25
  o The theme for this year’s Malaria Day is ‘Ready to beat Malaria’.

➢ World Creativity and Innovation Day – 21 April
  o This day will be observed six days after Leonardo da Vinci’s birthday and one
    day before International Mother Earth Day.

➢ Secretaries Day also known as Administrative professionals Day or Admin Day –
  April 21

➢ Civil Services Day – April 21
As part of Civil Servant Day, **Prime Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Public Administration** are presented to Districts/Implementing Units for implementation of Priority programme and innovation categories.

➢ **On 24th April 2018, World Lab Animals Day** was observed

➢ **Khongjom Day was observed in Manipur by** paying floral tributes to the martyrs of 1891 at the historic Khongjom War memorial site at Kheba hillock.

➢ **On 26th April 2018, World Intellectual Property Day** was observed all over the world.

   o The theme for WIPD 2018 is *Powering change: Women in innovation and creativity*. 
AWARDS

➢ Lalit Kala Akademi, organised the award ceremony of the ‘1st Print Biennale India 2018 (PBI)’ in New Delhi.
  o Arup Kumar Kuity (Andhra Pradesh), Satya Narayana Gavara (Andhra Pradesh), Preya Bhagat (Uttar Pradesh), Purvi Parmar (Gujarat) and Sonal Varshneya (Uttar Pradesh) were given the award in the 1st PBI.

➢ West Bengal has once again topped in the country with Digambarpur Gram Panchayat (GP) bagging the Centre’s award for the best Gram Panchayat in the country.


➢ Dadasaheb Phalke Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best actor (male)</td>
<td>Shahid Kapoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best actress (critics)</td>
<td>Aditi Rao Hydari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime achievement award</td>
<td>Simi Garewal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best director</td>
<td>Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari</td>
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</table>

➢ Technology giant Microsoft India has been declared the most attractive employer brand, followed by e-commerce giant Amazon India. The winners were named by HR service provider Randstad's Employer Brand Research (REBR) 2018.
- Sector-wise, **Tata Consultancy Services** is most favoured in IT, while Larsen & Toubro tops Infrastructure & Construction and Hindustan Unilever emerges the winner in FMCG.

- **The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind**, received the **first copy of the book** “Adi Shankaracharya: Hinduism’s Greatest Thinker”, from the author Shri Pavan Varma, at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

- **President and Supreme Commander of the Indian Armed Forces Ram Nath Kovind** conferred Gallantry and Distinguished Service Awards at an event at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, in New Delhi.

  - 2 **Kirti Chakras** and 2 **Shaurya Chakras were awarded posthumously**. The President also conferred 13 **Param Vishisht Seva Medals**, 2 **UttamYudhSeva Medals**, 2 **Bar to Ati Vishisht Seva Medals** and 26 **Ati Vishisht Seva Medals** to senior officers of the Armed Forces for distinguished service of an exceptional order.
SPORTS NEWS

➢ The 16th Federation Cup Junior National athletics championship has begun in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.
➢ The meet will serve as the selections trials for the 18th Asian Junior Athletic Meet to be held at Gifu, Japan, in June.
➢ The 8th South Asian Judo Championship has begun in Lalitpur, Nepal
   o Besides host Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participating in a three-day championship.
   o India won all 7 Gold Medals in women's section.
   o India topped the medal tally winning 10 Gold and 3 Bronze medals in the individual category. Host Nepal remained second and Pakistan got third place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L. Sushila Devi</td>
<td></td>
<td>Minus 48Kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalpana Devi Thoudam</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>Minus 52Kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Anita Chanu</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>Minus 57Kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Sunibala Devi</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>Minus 63Kg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

➢ Rafael Nadal of Spain has won the 11th Monte Carlo Masters title by defeating Japan's Kei Nishikori in final to retain the world number one ranking.
   o He has become the first male tennis player in the Open Era to win the same title 11 times in his career with his 76th ATP Tour title.

➢ Liverpool forward Mohamed Salah has become the first Egyptian player to be named Professional Footballers' Association player of the year
➢ The **Mumbai Football Arena**, the new hub of Indian football, will play host to the inaugural edition of the four-nation Intercontinental Cup, which is slated to be held from June 1 to June 10, 2018.

  - In this tournament the Indian national team will compete with South Africa, New Zealand and Chinese Taipei.
  - The **Intercontinental Cup** has been planned to be an annual event and will thus have representation from the **CAF** (Confederation of African Football) region in the form of South Africa, New Zealand from the Oceania, and Chinese Taipei from the AFC.

➢ Differently-abled Indian arm wrestler **Shrimant Jha** won a bronze medal at the **Asian Armwrestling Championship**, which is being held from April 16 to April 22 in Kazakhstan.

  - He also secured a silver medal in **Para-Arm Wrestling World Cup in Poland** under 80 kg category.

➢ International Olympic Committee (IOC) president **Thomas Bach** presented a memento to Indian Olympic medallist shooter **Abhinav Bindra and boxer Vijender Singh**.

➢ The **Birmingham Organising Committee** has decided to exclude shooting from the 2022 Games.

  - **National Rifle Association of India (NRAI)** president **Raninder Singh** had called for the 2022 Games’ boycott if shooting was not reinstated at the next CWG.

➢ **Barcelona** won its fourth straight and 30th overall **Copa del Rey title** at the **Wanda Metropolitano, Madrid**.
➢ German tennis player Alexander Zverev improved to the third spot in the latest ATP men’s singles rankings released on 23rd April 2018.

➢ India’s Jeremy Lalrinnunga (56 kg) won a silver and a bronze medal and broke two national records at the Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championship at Urgench, Uzbekistan.
MISCELLANEOUS

➢ The TIME Magazine released the 100 Most Influential People List of 2018 designating individuals whose time is now

- The 2018 list features the names of four self-made Indians- Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone, Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli, Ola co-founder Bhavish Aggarwal and Microsoft’s CEO Satya Nadella.

➢ Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar released three books based on Mahatma Gandhi’s Champaran movement of 1917.

- Mister M K Gandhi Ki Champaran Diary' - By Arvind Mohan,
- Champaran Andolan 1917' - Edited by Ashutosh Partheshwar
- 'Pir Muhammad Munis: Kalam Ka Satyagrahi' collected and edited by Srikant.

➢ The world’s oldest person, a 117-year-old Japanese woman named Nabi Tajima had passed away

- She became the world’s oldest person after the death of Violet Brown of Jamaica, also at the age of 117
- According to the U.S.-based Gerontology Research Group, another Japanese woman, Chiyo Miyako, is now the world’s oldest person.

➢ Richest Indian Mukesh Ambani (24th Rank) and human rights lawyer Indira Jaising (20th Rank) have been named by Fortune magazine as the World’s Greatest Leaders of 2018.

- This year’s list is topped by 'The Students' of Marjory Stoneman Douglas and other schools of US that witnessed gun violence.
This year’s list has the #MeToo Movement, which described the pervasiveness of sexual abuse, at No.3 behind Bill and Melinda Gates (2nd Rank).

- South Sudan confirmed that its military chief General James Ajongo has died during a visit to Egypt.
- Swedish DJ Avicii, one of the world’s biggest dance music stars, has died.
  - The Grammy-nominated DJ and producer, born Tim Bergling, was best known for “Levels” and “Wake Me Up.”
- Researchers from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee have discovered a small molecule named “Pep-I” that exhibits good antiviral activity against chikungunya virus.
- Scientists have successfully removed sulphur from fossil fuels such as petroleum and coal using novel bacterial strains.
  - They used four bacterial strains: Rhodococcus rhodochrous, Arthrobacter sulfureou, Gordonia rubropertinita and Rhodococcus erythropolis.
- Indian researchers have discovered world’s smallest land fern in the Ahwa forests of the Western Ghats in Gujarat’s Dang district.
- Chinese entomologists have discovered a giant mosquito belonging to Holorusia Mikado species, with a wing size of 11.15 cm in Sichuan province of China.
  - Holorusia mikado also known as the crane fly
- Tony Daniel, the technical committee chairman of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) and the executive vice-president of Kerala State Athletics Association (KSAA), passed away in Kochi, Kerala.
COMMITTEE

➢ Committee headed by Justice Rajesh Bindal, Judge, High Court of Punjab & Haryana, Chandigarh, submitted its report on legal issues related to inter country removal & retention of children to Minister for Women and Child Development, Maneka Gandhi.

   ○ Recommendations of Rajesh Bindal committee

   ▪ The Government should establish an ‘Inter Country Parental Child Removal Disputes Resolution Authority’, which will function as a one window solution in cases of inter country removal and retention of Children.

   ▪ The committee has recommended that ‘Inter Country Parental Child Removal Disputes Resolution Authority’ should be chaired by a retired High Court Judge and should have Members from Legal and Social sector background along with representatives from key Ministries.

   ▪ It has been recommended that the proposed authority should keep cultural context, merit of the case, and the best interest of the Child at the forefront while examining the cases.