



"A Leading Coaching Institute For  
Bank PO/ Clerk, SSC, Railway, CAT, MAT, CLAT"

2nd Floor, Prahar Building, Opp. Mamtara Brothers, Danish Road, Panbazar, Guwahati-781001  
**Phone :** 76700 26262, 98640 93327, **email:-** careerflite@gmail.com, **website:-** www.careerflite.com

# Monthly GK Mania

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

### **The festivity of the 65th National Film Awards**

On April 13, 2018, the jury headed by noted filmmaker Shekhar Kapur announced the 65th National Film Awards for year 2017. Amit V Masurkar's 'Newton' movie lured the Best Hindi language film award, Ganesh Acharya received the Best Choreography award for the song 'Goli Tu Lath maar' in 'Toilet Ek Prem Katha', SS Rajamouli's 'Baahubali: The Conclusion' magnetized the Best Action Direction award, Best Popular Film award for Providing Wholesome Entertainment and the Best Special Effects award. The Best Actress (posthumously) award went to late Sridevi for her movie 'Mom'. Dada Saheb Phalke Award chose late veteran actor Vinod Khanna. Best Feature Film award went to Village Rockstar (Assamese), Indira Gandhi Award for Best Debut Film of a Director went to Sinjar, Best Film on social issue award sailed to Aalorukkam, Best Children's Film award leaped at Mhorkya, Best Director award took direction of Jayaraj for Bhayanakam, Best Actor award went to Riddhi Sen for Nagarkirtan, Best Supporting Actor award chose to support Fahad Faasil for ThondimuthalumDriksakshiyum, Best Supporting Actress award went to Divya Dutta for Irada, Best Child Artist award chose Neeta Das for Village Rockstar, Best Male Playback Singer award heard Yesudas, Best Regional Film award looked at Ladhakh, Best Jasari Film award went to Sinjar, Best Tulu Film award made way to Paddayi, Best Tamil Film award went to To Let, Best Gujarati Film award chose Dhh, Best Telugu Film award mirrored Ghazi, Best Marathi Film award went to Kaccha Limbu, Best Malayalam Film award chose ThondimuthalumDriksakshiyum, Best Kannada Film award selected HebbettuRamakka, Best Bengal Film award went to Mayurakshi, Best Assamese Film award was presented to Ishu, Best Music Direction reached AR Rahman for KaatruVeliyidai, Best Film on Environment Conservation/ Preservation went to Irada and Nargis Dutt Award for Best Feature Film on National Integration went to Dhappa.

### **13th of April: Foundation day of Punjab National Bank**

Punjab National Bank (PNB) launched new products viz. pre-approved credit card and UPI solution to mark its 124th foundation day on 13th of April 2018. In addition to this, the bank also announced its UPI partnership with the expense management app WALNUT which is well-equipped with features like bill reminders, bill-split and instant paperless loans. On this occasion, MD and CEO of the bank, Sunil Mehta inaugurated blood donation at the lenders head office. Besides this, 200 blood donation centres in 76 circle offices covering over 6,500 branches across all states and union territories also witnessed blood donation camps

### **The second edition of IMC is on the other side of horizon**

On April 13, 2018, Union Communications Minister Manoj Sinha announced that the second edition of India Mobile Congress (IMC) will take place from October 25-27, 2018 in New Delhi during the curtain raiser ceremony of IMC. The Union Department of Telecommunications and the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) will host this event that will witness participation of ASEAN and BIMSTEC members; 200,000 professionals from several sectors of the telecom industry including 5G, Internet of Things (IoT), Startup ecosystem, Big Data, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Smart Cities and allied industry sectors. The event will play role of an ideal platform for policy makers, industry and regulators to involve in meaningful deliberations to drive the future direction of the communications sector. The first edition of IMC took place in September 2017 that saw attendance of around 2,000 delegates, 32,000 visitors, 152 speakers, 100 exhibitors and 100 start-ups.

### **“Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: VyaktiNahin Sankalp” grabbed book shelves**

On 14th of April, 2018, The Vice President of India, Venkaiah Naidu handed over the first copy of the book titled “Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: VyaktiNahin Sankalp” to the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi. The book was released to celebrate Dr B.R. Ambedkar's 127th birth

anniversary. The book covers inspirational life of Dr Ambedkar and several aspects of his ideas and personality. Shri Kishor Makwana edited the book. The Lok Sabha speaker, Smt. Sumitra Mahajan and the Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Thaawar Chand Gehlot and many other renowned personalities were present on the occasion. Our father of constitution inspired the Dalit Buddhist movement and campaigned against social discrimination against Untouchables (Dalits). Besides this, he also penned a book 'Annihilation of Caste' on 15 May 1936. It is worth remembering here that Dr. B R Ambedkar was the first Indian to pursue a doctorate in economics abroad. He was Independent India's first law minister from 15 August 1947 – September 1951 who posthumously received the highest civilian award, Bharat Ratna in the year 1990.

### **Ministers of paradise paid for supporting Satan!**

On 16th of April, governor of Jammu & Kashmir, N N Vohra accepted resignations of two BJP ministers, Industry and Commerce Minister, Chander Prakash Ganga and Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Lal Singh. The duo gave their resignations in wake of controversy arisen out of Kathua rape cum murder case. They had participated in a rally in support of the people arrested in connection with the rape-and-murder of an eight-year-old girl in Kathua district. It is being said that in order to terrify the nomadic community and drive it out of the village, the nephew of a caretaker of a 'Devasthan' (temple) kidnapped the girl on January 10 and she was raped for multiple times and was finally crushed to death. Her body was found on January 17. With these resignations, now the number of ministers in the state government has dropped to 22, that includes nine from the BJP.

### **7th edition of Home Expo India 2018 saw conclusion**

The three day 7th edition of Home Expo India 2018 that began on 16th of April at India Expo Centre and Mart in Greater Noida got concluded today. Textiles and Information and Broadcasting Minister, Smriti Irani inaugurated this event in which the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts exhibited three segmented categories viz. Housewares, Textiles and Furniture under one roof, making it a One-Stop Expo for every visitor. The event was a big display of the finest artistic elements and craftsmanship in harmony with innovative designs and latest products. It was one of leading business-to-business exhibitions where wide range of tableware, kitchenware, houseware, home textiles and bathroom accessories were showcased. International buyers, leading manufacturers and exporters exchanged ideas related to the industry.

### **Raj Kapoor Lifetime Achievement award travelled to Dharmendra**

Eighty-two-year-old Veteran Bollywood actor Dharmendra has been chosen for this year's prestigious Raj Kapoor Lifetime Achievement award. He gave more than 100 box office hits like Bandini, Mamta, Anupama, Satyakam, Seeta Aur Geeta, Sholay, Chupke Chupke, Yaadon Ki Baarat etc in his six decade film career. Besides him, filmmaker Rajkumar Hirani has been selected for Raj Kapoor Special Contribution award. This celebrated filmmaker of Hindi cinema has made critically-acclaimed and commercially-successful films like "Munna Bhai MBBS", "3 Idiots" and "PK". Apart from them, Veteran Marathi stage actor Vijay Chavhan has been chosen for V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement award. He is best known for his role of Mavshi in the famous Marathi stage drama "Moruchi Mavshi". And actor-director Mrinal Kulkarni has been chosen for V Shantaram Special Contribution awards. Kulkarni is best known for her role in the television show "Son Pari". The lady also directed "Prem Mhanje Prem Asta" and the Marathi historical drama "Rama Madhav". Maharashtra Culture Minister Vinod Tawde broke this news on twitter.

### **Veteran Journalist S Nihal Singh signed off journal of life**

On 16th of April, 2018, renowned Journalist Surendra Nihal Singh died of kidney ailment at the age of 89 at National Heart Institute, New Delhi. The deceased was the founding editor of 'The Indian Post' in year 1987 and had served leading newspapers viz.

'The Indian Express' as its editor-in-chief, 'The Statesman' as chief editor and 'Khaleej Times' as editor. Apart from this, he had also worked in capacities of foreign correspondent in Moscow, London, the United States and Indonesia. It is worth knowing that he was the first correspondent who was permitted to represent an Indian newspaper in Pakistan after the 1965 war. He had also authored books like "The Rocky Road to Indian Democracy: Nehru to Narasimha Rao", "The Yogi and the Bear: Story of Indo-Soviet Relations" and "The Gang and 900 million: A China Diary". He was acknowledged with prestigious International Editor of the Year Award in New York for opposing the Emergency imposed by former prime minister Indira Gandhi.

### **India wooed UN's NGO committee**

On 16th of April, 2018, India won crucial election to UN's Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations in the Asia Pacific States category. In these elections India succeeded in winning the highest number of votes i.e. 46, followed by Pakistan 43, Bahrain 40 and China 39. Now India is all set to serve a four-year term in the committee along with few other nations from January 1, 2019. It is worth knowing here that this committee is a standing committee of UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) that aims at advancing the three dimensions of sustainable development- economic, social and environmental. In addition to this, India was elected by acclamation to other subsidiary UN bodies in five separate polls that included the Commission on Population and Development for a four-year term, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for a three-year term, Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) for three-year term beginning from January, 2019.

### **QR code, the new fence for Aadhaar fortification !**

Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) introduced QR code for offline verification in April 2018. 'QR code' holds non-sensitive details viz. name, address, photo and date of birth. According to UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey, the offline QR code is a landmark development which will allow everyone to establish their identity via offline verification without revelation of the 12-digit ID number. Aadhaar holders can download and print their biometric ID with the QR code from the website of UIDAI or its mobile app. In connection to the security of Aadhaar, it has been said that Google, Facebook and Twitter are not comparable to Aadhaar as they vary in nature of the information and algorithms used.

### **Advent of "Study in India programme"**

External affairs minister Sushma Swaraj started 'Study in India programme' across 160 premier universities and institutions including IITs and IIMs for 2018-19 academic year. The programme will lure foreign students from 30 nations viz. Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, Nigeria, Rwanda, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, Iran, etc. for 15,000 seats. According to HRD Ministry 55% of the 15,000 seats are eligible for fee waivers. The number of fee waiver schemes under this programme includes a complete fee waiver to the top 25% meritorious aspirants, 50% fee waiver to the next 25% and 25% fee waiver to the rest of foreign students. The government aims to attract around 2,00,000 international students through the programme from the current 45,000 or 1% of the global student mobility. Study in India will spend Rs 150 crore for upcoming two years to make India a top destination for higher education and funnel demand in the direction of the supernumerary seats.

### **Maharashtra acquired stature of ODF**

On 18th of April, 2018, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnavis proclaimed the state as the Open Defecation Free (ODF). It is worth learning that urban areas of the state were already open defecation free and now around 60.41 lakh rural households have also got toilets in three-and-a-half years. As per the prescribed guidelines of the Centre, an area is declared ODF only when 95% of the population has a toilet or access to it within 100 meters from the household.

### **BCCL chairman won lifetime contribution to media award**

On April 18, 2018 AIMA Managing India Awards jury chairman, Sanjiv Goenka conferred 'Lifetime contribution to media award' upon Indu Jain, chairman of Bennett Coleman and Co. Ltd. (BCCL). It is worth knowing that BCCL is India's largest media house that publishes newspapers and magazines, including The Times of India. This award is bestowed to recognise achievers who have made a fundamental difference to society. In year 2000 Indu Jain established Times Foundation to run community services, research foundation, and relief funds. The foundation has done a lot for implementation of government schemes. Recently it has started 'National Citizens Forum' that consists of civil servants, politicians, corporates, and other dignified members of society. This group will work in unison with the government and will ensure the success of the schemes by weeding out the policy hurdles that slow down the process. Prior to this award, Jain also received the Padma Bhushan in year 2016.

### **Demise of journalist T V R Shenoy**

In April 2018, seasoned journalist and columnist T V R Shenoy breathed last in Karnataka. The deceased will be remembered for his deeper analysis and narrative style of writing. The newsman in his 50 year long career, contributed to many national and international newspapers, magazines on a wide range of issues via his writing. He contributed regularly to The Indian Express, Mathrubhumi, Gulf News and many others. He had also served in capacity of editor of The Week and was an executive member of Prasar Bharati. He has done freelance journalism for more than 20 years. In year 2003 he was awarded the prestigious Padma Bhushan

### **April 21: Civil Services Day**

Nation celebrated Civil Services Day on 21st of April, 2018 to commemorate Sardar Patel's vision of moving from 'Swarajya' to 'Surajya' or good governance. Four months before India got Independence, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who was the first home minister of the country as well as the great architect of political integration of the nation, addressed the first batch of IAS officers at Metcalfe House, Delhi, encapsulating the vision of a civil service for independent India. He laid foundation for Surajya by outlining four salient aspects viz. 'empathy', 'efficiency', 'impartiality' and 'incorruptibility' for good governance. He did so to bring change in the civil services which were established by the British. The credit of Indian growth story goes to passion, competence and commitment of our civil servants.

### **Health & Physical education can't be bypassed!**

Classes 9th to 12th will now have compulsory health & physical education classes daily as per the new prescribed norms of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). In addition to this, health & physical education will be a qualifying subject for which grades will be granted for the 2018-19 session and it will be a compulsory eligibility criterion for appearing in Class X and XII board exams. The board has prepared a 150-page manual breaking details of sports guidelines and methodologies. Schools will choose what kind of activities they would like to introduce during this period. The students will be free to perform any physical activity listed in the manual and will be graded on the same. For classes X and XII, the Physical Education (PE) will continue to remain an academic elective.

### **Poet-composer Balantrapu Rajanikantha signed off poetry of life**

On 22nd of April renowned Telugu poet-composer, musicologist and artist BalantrapuRajanikantha Rao died at the age of 98 in Vijayawada. He had worked for decades in All India Radio (AIR) and headed its Vijayawada division as the Director. He wrote and composed a song 'MaadiSwatantraDesam – Maadi Swatantra Jaathi,' sung by T Suryakumari that Akashvani broadcasted on the first Independence Day (August 15, 1947). The deceased had made valuable contributions to the Telugu literature. He penned VaggeyakaraCharitra which serves as a guide for the music scholars for which he was acknowledged with the first award from Central Sahitya Academy in year 1961.

### **RBI revises its KYC guidelines**

In April 2018, the Reserve Bank of India has revised its "Know Your Customer" guidelines under government's decision of June 2017 for updation of the 'Prevention of Money Laundering' rules. As per Doordarshan reporting, in the circular issued in Mumbai, RBI made linking of national biometric ID Aadhaar to bank accounts mandatory. So far, 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 requisite KYC documents but now as per 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.

### **Restructured Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan Scheme approved**

On 21st of April, 2018, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the restructured centrally sponsored scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA). The scheme will be executed during the period from 1st of April, 2018 to 31st of March, 2022 at the total cost of Rs 7255.50 crore. Of the total cost, the Central share will be Rs 4500 crore and the State share will be Rs 2755.50 crore. The scheme will be now extended to all the States, Union Territories (UTs) and in all the institutions of rural local government in non-Part IX areas, where Panchayats do not exist. The restructured scheme will have both Central and State Component. The Central component includes national level activities such as 'National Plan of Technical Assistance', 'Mission Mode project on e-Panchayat', 'Incentivisation of Panchayats'; while the State component includes 'Capacity Building of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)'. The scheme will be implemented with the main aim of achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the main thrust on Panchayats identified under Mission Antyodaya and 115 Aspirational districts as identified by NITI Aayog.

### **Rain of Dadasaheb Phalke Excellence Awards 2018**

On April 24, 2018, Dadasaheb Phalke Excellence Awards 2018 were given to the individuals from the entertainment industry for their remarkable contribution in the growth and development of cinema and/or television. The list of awardees include names of Shahid Kapoor (Best actor (male)), Ranveer Singh (Best actor people's choice award), Kartik Aryan (Entertainer of the year), Aditi Rao Hydari (Best actress (critics)), Simi Garewal (Lifetime achievement award), Sanjay Dutt (Pride of Indian cinema), Anushka Sharma and Karnesh Sharma (Path-breaking producer of the year), Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari (Best director), Raj Kumar Rao and Rana Daggubati (Outstanding performance male), Tamannah Bhatia and Kriti Sanon (Outstanding performance female), Aahana Kumra (Promising face of the year), Vaibhav Tatwawadi (Best actor (male) Marathi), Marathi Pooja Sawant (Best actor (female)), Sanjukta Dutta (Best fashion designer of the year), Rani Mukherjee (Socially conscious performance of the year), Tusshar Kapoor (Best comic role), Hina Khan (Entertaining performance in reality show Bigg Boss), Jennifer Winget (Best actress drama award), Television actor Karan Patel (Best actor (male)), Shilpa Shetty (Best reality show judge), Karan Johar (Best talk show host), Manoj Muntashir (Best lyricist), Divya Khosla Kumar (Best performance in a short film), Hans Raj Hans (Iconic contribution towards music), Sumona Chakraborty (Comic performer of the year), Rani Hazarika (Versatile singer) and Jaya Misra (Social and business entrepreneur of the year).

### **24 April came as National Panchayati Raj Day**

The National Panchayati Raj Diwas got celebrated on April 24 across the nation. Ministry of Panchayati Raj organises National Conference on 24th of April every year to commemorate the National Panchayati Raj Diwas. This year Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Rashtriya Gramin Swaraj Abhiyan, at a public meeting while addressing Panchayati Raj representatives across the country on Panchayati Raj Diwas. The

date marks a defining moment in the history of decentralization of political power to the grassroots level. It is worth knowing that 73rd Amendment Act came into effect from 24th of April 1993 to institutionalize Panchayati Raj through the village, Intermediate and District level Panchayats. The Amendment Act has altered power equations in rural India.

### **The 29th National Road Safety Week began**

Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the 29th National Road Safety Week on April 23, 2018 for ensuring safety of road users in the nation. The annual week celebration of this year focuses on schools and commercial drivers with 'Sadak Suraksha - Jeevan Raksha' theme. Several activities are going on for school and college students, drivers and all road users in this week. In the inaugural ceremony, the Ministry proclaimed that India is exploring the prospects of inking a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with South Korea for introduction of Highways Information System in the nation. Besides this, Nitin Gadkari released a paper on road safety produced by Indian Road Safety Campaign (IRSC). The standards of buses have been upgraded, air bags and speed alert devices have been made compulsory for all cars, and every two-wheeler will have ABS to avoid skidding. In addition to this, the Ministry has determined to implement the 4E principles of Education, Enforcement, Engineering and Emergency care to address the problem of road safety.

### **Section 377 of the IPC has again become talk of the town!**

On April 23, 2018, the apex court sought a response from the Central Government on pleas challenging the Indian Penal Code's Section 377 that criminalises homosexuality. Section 377 says that whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal commits an unnatural offence. It has long been a topic of debate. Flash back reveals that it all started when Sangeet Natak Akademi awardee Bharatnatyam dancer Navtej Singh Johar, celebrity chef Ritu Dalmia and others filed a petition saying Section 377 was "violative of fundamental rights under Article 21 (right to life)". On July 2, 2009, Delhi High Court gave verdict that decriminalized consensual sex among adult homosexual men condemning section 377 as unconstitutional. In 2013 the apex court overturned Delhi High Court's verdict saying homosexuality or unnatural sex between two consenting adults under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code is illegal and will continue to be an offence. Along with this the apex court also stated that a competent legislature shall be free to consider the desirability and propriety of deleting Section 377 from the statute book or amend it. The next verdict on the issue came on January 8, 2018 in which the apex court promised to re-examine its 2013 verdict. Now a 3-judge bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra, Justice A M Khanwilkar and Justice D Y Chandrachud has asked Central government's opinion on the issue in response to plea filed by hotelier and LGBT activist Kesav Suri.

### **Tales from North Eastern states**

On April 25, 2018, the Union Home Ministry relaxed the 60 year old Protected Area Permit regime from the north-eastern states of Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur for a period of five years. With this decision, the foreign tourists, except those from Pakistan, China and Afghanistan, will be able to visit the states without having a special permit. Prior to this decision, the foreigners required a Protected Area Permit (PAP) along with Indian visa to pay visit to the protected/restricted areas in India which was valid for 10 days and was subject to extension of 7 more days. Apart from this, April 2018, witnessed removal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) from Meghalaya and some areas of Arunachal Pradesh. However, AFSPA has been confined to eight police stations of Arunachal Pradesh bordering Assam and three districts adjoining Myanmar namely Tirap, Longding and Changlang. The Ministry of Home Affairs did so after observing 85% drop in insurgency incidents that reduced from 1963 in year 2000 to 308 in year 2017.

### **“Adi Shankaracharya: Hinduism’s greatest thinker” will soon meet the bookshelves**

In April 2018, author Shri Pavan Varma handed over the first copy of his book titled, “Adi Shankaracharya: Hinduism’s greatest thinker” to President Ram Nath Kovind. Dr Murli Manohar Joshi and Shri D P Tripathi along with other dignitaries graced the occasion with their presence at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Adi Shankaracharya, who was born more than 1,200 years ago in Kerala was among the most influential personalities in history of our country. He was a great Vedantic philosopher, a spiritual leader, a monk, a scholar and an explorer who made remarkable contributions in spiritual sphere and established four peethas in the north, south, east and west. According to the President, the scholar was well aware of the modern technology that expands our knowledge of the universe and the ancient wisdom that helps us to reconcile our very existence with today’s cutting-edge inventions and discoveries. That is the reason, why 21st century India is a synthesis of both the Upanishads and the Internet. Both are significant for the Indian soul.

### **Indu Malhotra, first woman lawyer on apex court bench**

On April 27, 2018, The Union Law Ministry appointed senior advocate Indu Malhotra as Supreme Court Judge. With this appointment, she has become the first woman lawyer to get directly appointed from the Bar as a Judge in the Apex Court. The lady is a well known arbitration expert who made appearance in several domestic and international commercial arbitrations. In year 2007, Malhotra had become the only second woman to get appointed as a senior advocate by the apex court, 3 years after Leila Seth achieved the feat. In December 2016, she became a member of the High-Level Committee (HLC) in the Ministry of Law and Justice for reviewing Institutionalization of Arbitration Mechanism in India. She has also penned an exhaustive and illuminating commentary on the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 which was published by Thomson Reuters. It should be noted that only six women judges have got appointed to the Supreme Court since independence. Among them, Fathima Beevi was the first one to become judge of the Supreme Court in year 1989 and Justice Sujatha Manohar, Justice Ruma Pal, Justice Gyan Sudha Misra and Justice Ranjana Desai were others who secured berth in the Apex court. Now Indu Malhotra has become the first woman advocate to occupy Supreme Court bench after a very long period of time.

### **CSIR : National Intellectual Property Award 2018 winner**

On April 26, 2018, Union Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu conferred the National Intellectual Property Award, 2018 upon Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for being the top research and development organisation at a function organised by the Indian Intellectual Property Office and Confederation of Indian Chambers of Commerce (CII) in New Delhi. 26th of April was the World Intellectual Property Day. It is good to learn that established in 1942, CSIR is known as the pioneer of India’s intellectual property movement. It holds 9th rank in the world amongst 1207 government institutions and stands on 75th position in overall globally ranked 5250 institutions. It has 38 laboratories and 39 field stations across the nation, with a collective staff of over 12,000 scientists and scientific and technical personnel. Girish Sahni is the Director-General of CSIR. It has research facility domain ranges from the environment to health and drinking water, from food, housing, energy to specialty chemicals & petrochemicals, glass & ceramics to mining, metals & minerals, medicinal plants, leather to machinery, instrumentation and strategic sectors, including aerospace. Apart from this, the organization shows active participation in missions like Swachh Bharat, Swasth Bharat, Samarth Bharat, Make in India, Innovate for India, Startup India and Skill India. Although it is being funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology, yet it operates as an autonomous body by virtue of the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

### **National Bamboo Mission is in for a makeover**

On April 25, 2018, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) gave nod to restructuring of the centrally sponsored scheme ‘National Bamboo Mission’ (NBM) under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) for the remaining period of Fourteenth Finance Commission (2018-19 & 2019-20). The

government sanctioned Rs 1290 crore for implementation of the mission. The scheme will fetch one lakh hectares area under bamboo plantation, which will directly benefit over one lakh farmers. Besides them, local artisans and associated personnel engaged in bamboo sector including associated industries will also be the beneficiaries of the scheme. The Mission will cover North Eastern region and States including Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Along with this, CCEA has also said yes for the empowerment of Executive Committee for formulation and altering the guidelines of the National Bamboo Mission.

### **IATA gave a warm welcome to Vistara**

On April 26, 2018, after Air India and Jet Airways, Vistara became the third Indian carrier to become a member of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), a trade association of more than 280 airlines that provides a perfect travel experience via an extended global network to travellers to and from India. IATA also lays standards to simplify process and increase passenger convenience, and helps airlines to operate safely, efficiently and economically. With this membership, the full-service carrier, Vistara, which is a joint venture between Tata Sons Limited (51% shares) and Singapore Airlines Limited (SIA) (49% shares), will now be able to begin its international operations. It will collaborate with other international member airlines for codeshare and interline agreements. It is worth knowing in this context, on April 4, 2018, Vistara received its 20th aircraft in form of an Airbus A320neo and with that it fulfilled an important criteria to fly on international routes as per the new aviation rules. Over this most coveted membership, Vistara's chief executive officer Leslie Thng said, "Vistara has set new benchmarks for air travel in India."

### **Assam cabinet saw expansion**

On April 26, 2018, seven new ministers took oath in Assam cabinet and Governor Prof. Jagdish Mukhi administered the oath at Raj Bhawan in Guwahati. Among them, four Ministers are of Cabinet rank and three are in the post of Ministers of State. Siddhartha Bhattacharyya, Bhabesh Kalita, Sum Ronghang, Tapan Gogoi and Pijush Hazarika of the BJP, Phani Bhushan Choudhury of the AGP and Chandan Brahma of the BPF are ministers who took oath. It is worth noting at this point that Assam has capacity of 19 Ministers, including the Chief Minister. So, even after the induction of these seven new ministers, one more position remains vacant.

### **2017 Saraswati Samman sung Sitanshu Yashaschandra's name**

On April 28, 2018, eminent Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashaschandra got selected for prestigious 27th edition of Saraswati Samman for his collection of verses (poetry) titled 'Vakhar', about human condition that was published in 2009. A high level Selection Committee under former secretary general of Lok Sabha Subhash C Kashyap chose Sitanshu for this award. Besides Vakhar, the awardee also has other collections viz. Odysseusnu Halesuand Jatayu as well as 10 books of plays and 3 books of criticism to his credit. Past fetched him many awards among which Sahitya Akademi Award, Kabir Samman and Padma Shri award brought him in limelight.

### **Deen Dayal Upadhyay Scholarship knocked at IIMC New Delhi**

On 27th of April, 2018, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting announced a scholarship worth Rs. 25000/- in commemoration of Deen Dayal Upadhyay for people of Indian Origin who did exemplary work in development journalism at Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi in 69th Valedictory session of Development Journalism Course. In addition to this, Smriti Zubin Irani inaugurated National Media Faculty Development Center as well as launched ECHO Newsletter, Samachar Madhyam and Communicator magazines in IIMC Campus. The event witnessed journalists from 16 countries. It is worth recalling here that Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) and the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan (SCAAP) programmes of the Ministry of External Affairs organizes four month Diploma Course in

Development Journalism twice a year from January to April and from August to December for mid-career journalists from Non-aligned and Developing Countries to make them conversant on development and economic issues. Asia's oldest media research unit, IIMC, New Delhi has so far trained 1,322 people from 127 different nations.

### **April 30 brought festivity of Buddha Jayanti**

Nepal celebrated Buddha Jayanti on 30th of April. Hundreds of devotees visited birth place of Gautama Buddha, Lumbini and offered prayers at Maya Devi temple in Lumbini where Queen Maya Devi gave birth to Siddhartha Gautama in 563 BC. An International two-day Buddhist Conference was also organised in Lumbini to mark the 2562nd Buddha Jayanti celebrations which was attended by participants from more than 20 nations including India.

### **Discrimination against Leprosy patients is strictly prohibited**

In April 2018, the apex court ordained elimination of all the provisions that discriminate against Leprosy patients. It has directed the Centre and all the States to remove all the provisions that refer to leprosy as a disability from statute books to prevent the patients from being victims of social stigma as their dis-ease is completely curable. The Supreme Court bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra, Justice D. Y. Chandrachud and Justice A. M. Khanwilkar gave this verdict on a PIL petition filed by Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy to repeal 119 Central and State laws that have been in practice since 1950s, discriminating against leprosy patients, stigmatising and isolating them despite the fact that the disease can be completely cured. The petitioner requested the fundamental right to equality, dignity and equal opportunity of persons affected by leprosy. It is worth knowing that Leprosy or Hansen's disease (HD), is a chronic infection caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium leprae* and *Mycobacterium lepromatosis* that affects the skin and peripheral nerves. Lack of ability to feel pain, weakness and poor eyesight are symptoms of the disease which are caused by development of granulomas of the nerves, respiratory tract, skin and eyes. Timely diagnosis and treatment, before nerve damage, can lead to complete cure of the disease.

### **Tribal income will climb through Van Dhan Scheme ladder**

In April 2018, Prime Minister Modi started Van Dhan Scheme to raise tribal income at a function in Bijapur, Chhattisgarh. The scheme worth Rs 43.38 lakhs has led to the constitution of 10 Self Help Groups of 30 Tribal gatherers who will be trained by the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) to market their products, by working under the leadership of collector, not only within the states but also outside the states. The scheme will also manifest around 30,000 centres for providing skill upgradation and capacity building training and setting up of primary processing and value addition facility. The first model of the centre is slated to appear in Bijapur. The centre will initially start with a processing facility for Tamarind brick making, Mahua flower storage facility and chironjee cleaning and packaging. Van Dhan scheme will run along Jan Dhan and Gobar-Dhan schemes to transform the tribal-rural economic system.

### **KavinderGupta : New Deputy Chief Minister of J&K**

Speaker of Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, Kavinder Gupta got appointed as Deputy Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir in April 2018. Governor NN Vohra administered his oath. He has succeeded his BJP colleague Nirmal Singh. Besides this, J&K's PDP-BJP government headed by Mehbooba Mufti witnessed reshuffle that led to induction of four new faces viz. Satpal Sharma from Kathua and Sambha MLAs Rajiv Jasrotia and Devinder Kumar Manyal and Shakti Raj Parihar as State Unit Chief. In addition to this, BJP elevated Minister of State for Transport Sunil Sharma to the rank of a Cabinet minister. On the other hand, BJP withdrew three ministers viz. Nirmal Singh, Bali Bhagat and Priya Sethi and the PDP pulled down its Law and Rural Development Minister Abdul Haq Khan from the cabinet. And Pulwama MLA Mohd Khalil Band and Sonwar MLA Mohd Ashraf Mir became cabinet ministers.

### **‘My Journey from Marxism-Leninism to Nehruvian Socialism’ is in bookstores**

In April 2018, Former PM Manmohan Singh launched economist C H Hanumantha Rao's book titled ‘My Journey from Marxism-Leninism to Nehruvian Socialism’. While releasing the book the former Prime Minister acknowledged C H Hanumantha Rao as the most creative thinker and distinguished economist. And while commenting on the book he said, “A period, on which Professor Rao does not comment on much, that is the period of Emergency. But it is quite clear from his writings, and more so from this book that he was not very happy with Emergency and the suspension of human rights and civil rights in our country.”

### **New board for non-English schools**

On 30th of April 2018 Maharashtra education minister, Vinod Tawde announced establishment of an education board for the non-English medium schools in the state. In order to compete with CBSE and ICSE, the proposed Maharashtra International Education Board (MIEB) will prepare the syllabus for non-English medium schools. In the first phase, 13 Marathi schools will be selected for the purpose which will function in accordance to the new syllabus of international standard and every state district will soon have at least one school affiliated to the international board. This MIEB will be the second board in the state after the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education.

### **Maharashtra celebrated its 58th Anniversary**

Maharashtra celebrated 58 years of its formation on 1st of May, 2018. It was formed on 1st of May, 1960. On this occasion, State Reserve Police Force (SRPF) paraded at Shivaji Park in Dadar where the Governor of Maharashtra C. Vidyasagar Rao delivered a speech. The day began with homage to Martyrs at Hutatma Smarak which was followed by several cultural events and ceremonies showcasing the rich and splendid culture and traditions of Maharashtra that included traditional Lavani performance, folk songs and narration of poetries of popular Marathi saints.

### **Hide & Seek of breast cancer**

As per 13th of April, 2018 report of World Health Organisation (WHO), Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Ropar proposed a technique called Infrared Thermography (IRT) for detection of hidden tumor in breast, irrespective of the breast type for women of all ages, including pregnant or nursing women. Infrared Thermography is about mapping the temperature distribution or thermal profile over the area of a body which is measured when body emits infrared radiations at some temperature through which we can get the information about the temperature distribution of the surface. The tumour's location on the breast will have a higher temperature as compared to the surrounding normal tissue and this temperature difference will help in identification of a tumour. This Infrared Thermography is superior to Mammography in terms of safety, to Ultrasound in terms of time-consumption and to MRI in terms of comfort. As per the Global Health Estimates, WHO 2013, more than 50,80,00 women died of breast cancer across the globe in 2011.

### **POCSO Act cases sought special surveillance**

On May 1, 2018, the apex court issued directions to all the High Courts regarding speedy trial in sexual assault cases involving children under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 in wake of high rate of pendency of child sexual assault cases. The bench, headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra, comprising Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and D.Y. Chandrachud gave the directions that included deployment of special task forces by the State police for investigation of cases; creation of child friendly atmosphere in courts; speedy and efficient trials of POCSO cases without adjournments; ensuring proper medical care of the victim at AIIMS and award of Rs 10 lakh as interim compensation. The directions came in reply to a PIL filed by Srivastava in a case regarding the brutal rape of 8-month-old child by her 28-year-old cousin on January 28, 2018 in a locality near Netaji Subhash Place in north-west Delhi.

### **Dolphins will be in count**

May 3, 2018, broke news of first organised census of Indus Dolphins, which are considered as one of the world's rarest mammals. Punjab government along with WWF-India would carry out this census to estimate population of Indus dolphins. This move will lead to conservation of the species which are found only in India and Pakistan, confined to the 185 km stretch between Talwara and Harike Barrage in India's Beas River in Punjab. As per the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the population size of the Indus river dolphins has reduced by more than 50 % since 1944. It is interesting to learn here that dolphins are prime indicators of a river's health as a healthy river accommodates maximum number of dolphins. Presently, around 1,816 dolphins exist in the lower parts of the Indus River.

### **The aim of 20 more AIIMS**

In May 2018, Union Cabinet approved the establishment of 20 All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) across the country and upgradation of 73 medical colleges. The decision came as part of the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY), which witnessed extension by two years till 2020 with a financial outlay of 14,832 crores. The proposed AIIMS will not only transform health education and training but will also address the shortfall of healthcare professionals in the region. The Central government funded new AIIMS which will lead to employment generation for nearly 3,000 people in various faculty and non-faculty posts in each of the AIIMS.

### **Celebration of 157th Birth Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore**

India is organising a 5-day cultural festival in Egypt to commemorate the 157th birth anniversary of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore from 3rd of May, 2018. He was born on 7th of May, 1861. The festival is being organised by the Maulana Azad Centre for Indian Culture (MACIC), the cultural wing of the Indian Embassy in Cairo. An exhibition on the paintings of Tagore titled 'Rabindranath Tagore: Rhythm in Colours' will be held at the Museum of Ahmed Shawky at Giza. During the festival, a music concert and a lecture will also be organised.

### **India's Neeraj Goyat honoured with 'WBC Asia Boxer of the Year Award'**

On 4th of May, 2018, Indian pugilist Neeraj Goyat has been honoured with the 'WBC Asia Boxer of the Year Award'. He is the current WBC Asia champion in welterweight category. Since turning pro in 2011, he has won nine fights including two knockouts. NeeravTomar, promoter of IOS Boxing Promotions, which manages Neeraj and Vijender Singh, was awarded 'WBC Asia honorary Promoter of the year 2017 Award' by the Asian Boxing Council at WBC Asia.

### **Radhakrishnan Nair: New Independent Director of ICICI Bank**

On 3rd of May, 2018, ICICI Bank's board has appointed Radhakrishnan Nair, the former IRDAI member as the new Independent Director of the bank for the period of five years. The appointment is subject to the approval of shareholders. He is also an Independent Director of three subsidiaries of the bank - ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company, ICICI Prudential Trust and ICICI Securities Primary Dealership. Nair has around 40 years of experience in the banking industry and in the field of securities and insurance regulation. Besides him, the Board of Directors of ICICI Bank Limited (IBN) has also appointed Tushaar Shah as a non-executive Director of the bank.

### **Dakota re-buzzed in IAF**

On 4th May 2018, Dakota aircraft 'DC-3 VP 905' has rejoined the Indian Air Force (IAF) after 40 years at a grand ceremony held at Hindon Air Base in Uttar Pradesh. The aircraft underwent restoration in Britain and

has flown back to India from UK by a joint crew of IAF and ReflightAirworks. The aircraft flew a total of 9750 km and made en-route halts in France, Italy, Greece, Jordan, Bahrain and Oman during this flight. The historic flight across seven nations was a commemoration of the service provided by the venerable aircraft to the nation. Popularly known as the Gooney Bird, it was the first major transport aircraft inducted.

### **PMSSY surpassed the 12th Five Year Plan**

In May 2018, the Union Cabinet approved the extension of the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) beyond the 12th Five Year Plan for a period of three years from 2017-18 to 2019-20 with the financial outlay of Rs 14832 crores. PMSSY came into existence in March 2006 with an aim to rectify the imbalances in the availability of affordable healthcare facilities across the nation and augmenting facilities for quality medical education especially in the under-served states. PMSSY has been leading to establishment of AIIMS in various states and upgradation of existing Government Medical Colleges (GMC).

### **Mission to Mars to be empowered**

In May 2018, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) along with the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) demonstrated together the Kilopower portable nuclear fission reactor's ability to power crewed missions to the Moon, Mars and destinations beyond. Through this Kilopower Reactor Using Stirling Technology (KRUSTY) experiment, the team successfully proved that the system can create electricity with fission power. The reactor has a small, lightweight fission power system capable of providing 10 kilowatts of electrical power continuously for at least 10 years. It employs a solid uranium-235 reactor core, which is about the size of a paper towel roll. The passive sodium heat pipes transfer the reactor heat to high-efficiency Stirling engines, which converts the heat into electricity.

### **Cochlear Implant Awareness Programme**

On May 6, 2018 the Indian Red Cross Society, Sarvodaya Hospital & Research Centre and Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) under aegis of the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment conducted a 'Cochlear Implant Awareness Programme' at Huda Convention Centre in Faridabad, Haryana. Cochlear (inner ear) implant (CI) is a surgically implanted electronic device that provides a sense of sound to a person who is severely deaf in both ears. The Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment, Krishan Pal Gurjar was the Guest of Honor in the programme. The programme rode on 'SwarSwagatam' event under the Assistance to Disabled persons (ADIP) scheme of the Department. The ADIP scheme of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), lays provision for Cochlear Implant surgeries of hearing impaired children up to the age of 5 years at the cost of Rs 6.00 Lakhs per unit.

### **Apex Court approves live in relationships!**

On May 6, 2018 Supreme Court of India approved live in relationship of adult couple without marriage in its historic ruling. A bench of Justices Dipak Misra and Prafulla C Pant of Apex Court acknowledged live-in relationships by saying, "In modern times, live-in relationship has become an acceptable norm. It is not a crime." It is worth knowing here in this context that on March 8, 2015, the Delhi High Court denied to keep live-in relationships outside the purview of rape under the IPC. The high court had said that doing so would amount to giving them the status of matrimony, which the legislature has chosen "not to do". In November 28, 2013 judgment, the Apex Court had asked Parliament to formulate a law for the protection of women in such relationships and the children born out of it. Moreover, in April 13, 2015, the Court had ruled that if an unmarried couple is living together as husband and wife, then they would be presumed to be legally married and the woman would be eligible to inherit the property after the death of her partner.

### **India & Guatemala intimacy has reasons**

On May 7, 2018, India and Guatemala promised to support each other's candidature for Non-Permanent Membership in the United Nations Security Council. Guatemala will support India's candidature for UNSC membership for 2021-22 and India will do so for Guatemala for 2031-32. In addition to this, the two nations entered into a three year contract regarding education sector. They inked a Letter of Intent for training Guatemalan English Teachers in India. The decision came after high-level talks between Indian Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu and Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales, Vice President Dr, Jateth Cabrera Franco and Parliamentary Speaker Alvaro Arzu Escobar in capital Guatemala City. They discussed trade, cultural diversity and economic growth in core sectors like pharmaceutical, tourism, automobiles, cooperation in education, technology, conservation of wildlife and yoga etc. Apart from this, for the first time India received invitation for Conference of Ibero America which is slated in Guatemala City in November 2018.

### **Atomic clock will tick for Navigation satellites**

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has developed an atomic clock for navigation satellites to measure precise location data. Ahmedabad-based Space Applications Centre (SAC) has built the atomic clock for ISRO. It is worth knowing here that all seven navigation satellites that were launched earlier as part of the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) or Navigation with Indian Constellation (NaVIC), have three imported Rubidium atomic clocks each. The time difference between the atomic clocks of different satellites stationed at different orbits are employed to measure the accurate positioning of a navigation receiver or an object on the Earth. The development of atomic clock will end nation's dependency for the same on the European aerospace manufacturer Astrium.

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **Syrian sky witnessing air strikes**

On April 14, 2018, US, Britain and France launched combined military air strikes against Syria in wake of alleged chemical attack in Douma, a Syrian town near Damascus. The joint action was for discouraging the production, spread and use of chemical weapons. Israel, Turkey, Netherlands and Germany supported the strikes. While Iran termed the attack as a crime and Russia warned of consequences and urged an emergency session of UN Security Council over the issue. According to the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford, the precision strikes targeted a chemical weapons' research facility near Damascus, a storage site near Homs and a nearby command post.

### **Amnesty report on death sentences**

In April 2018, Amnesty International issued a global report 'Death Sentences and Executions' for year 2017. The report revealed that China held the top spot for awarding maximum number of capital punishments which counted in thousands. Iran followed it with 507 executions, Saudi Arabia with 146, Iraq with 125 executions, India with 109 executions, Pakistan with more than 60 executions, the United States carried out 23 death penalties whereas Belarus in Europe carried out only 2 executions in 2017. In context to India, it is worth knowing that although Indian courts ordered 109 death sentences in the year yet no executions were carried out. In India, the last carried out execution was in year 2015 when Yakub Memon was hanged after being found guilty in the 1993 Mumbai terrorist bombings that killed 257 people.

### **Solar-thermal conversion is on China's mind**

According to a study which was published in April 2018 in an English journal affiliated with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, 'National Science Review', China developed 3D conic device, 'Artificial Transpiration' to increase solar-thermal conversion. Seeking inspiration from transpiration process of plants, a team of Chinese scientists led by Zhu Jia have developed cone structured device for collection of maximum possible sunlight permitting only 10 to 15% diffusion of sunlight. The device is well-equipped with a special 1D water path which can reduce the energy loss in conduction. The device is meant to enhance the solar-thermal conversion rate to 85% which is much higher than the common devices that enhance conversion rate to only 40%. Besides this, the device is capable of recovering clean water and recycling heavy metals such as copper and cadmium.

### **CO2 got trapped in mountain erosion!**

According to a publication of a study in the journal Science, a group of researchers from Harvard University and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in the United States discovered a new source of carbon dioxide gas. As per the findings, mountain erosion leads to release of carbon dioxide back into atmosphere at much faster rate in comparison to absorption of the gas into the newly exposed rock. Microbes in the mountain soil feed on ancient sources of organic carbon that are trapped in the rock and discharge carbon dioxide. Most erosion-prone mountain chains in the world are in the central range of Taiwan. It is worth registering here that the new finding runs in contradiction to the long-standing hypothesis that more mountains mean more erosion and weathering, which means an added reduction of CO2.

### **April 17 came as World Haemophilia Day**

Globe observed 28th World Haemophilia Day on 17th of April, 2018 on 'Sharing knowledge makes us stronger' theme. On this occasion, Australia turned the color of lighting of all its important monuments and landmarks red. In Year 1989, World Federation of Haemophilia(WFH) instituted 17th of April as World Haemophilia Day in honour of WFH founder Frank Schnabel's birthday. The day was notified for increasing awareness of haemophilia and other inherited bleeding disorders.

### **The pull of 2018 Pulitzer Prize**

On 16th of April, 2018, announcements of the 2018 Pulitzer Prizes were made at Columbia University in New York City. In Public Service category, The New York Times for reporting by Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey and The New Yorker for reporting by Ronan Farrow won prizes for exposing powerful and wealthy sexual predators like Harvey Weinstein. In Breaking News Reporting category, Staff of The Press Democrat, Santa Rosa, California won prize for coverage of historic wildfires that destroyed Santa Rosa and Sonoma County. In Investigative Reporting category, Staff of The Washington Post won prize for unveiling a candidate's alleged past sexual harassment of teenage girls that changed the course of a Senate race in Alabama. In Explanatory Reporting category, Staffs of The Arizona Republic and USA Today Network won prize for reporting the troubles and results of fulfilling President Trump's pledge to construct a wall along the US border with Mexico through text, video, podcasts and virtual reality.

In local reporting category, Staff of The Cincinnati Enquirer won for a story and a video that documented seven days of Cincinnati's drug epidemic that devastated families and communities. In National Reporting category, Staffs of The New York Times and The Washington Post won for a reporting that facilitated comprehension of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and its connections to the Trump campaign. In International Reporting category, Reuters staff - Clare Baldwin, Andrew R.C. Marshall and Manuel Mogato won prize for bringing in light brutal killing campaign behind Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs. In Feature Writing category, Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah, freelance reporter GQ won the prize for portrayal of murderer Dylann Roof who murdered nine people inside Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, S.C. In Commentary category, John Archibald of Alabama Media Group, Birmingham won the prize for a commentary rooted in Alabama that brought corrupt politicians in light, championing the rights of women and calling out hypocrisy. In Criticism category, Jerry Saltz of New York magazine won the prize for conveying a daring perspective on visual art in America. In Editorial Writing category, Andie Dominick of The Des Moines Register won prize for examining the dangers for poor Iowa residents of privatising the administration of Medicaid.

In Editorial Cartooning category, freelance writer Jake Halpern and freelance cartoonist Michael Sloan at The New York Times won the prize for recording the daily struggles of a real-life family of refugees and its fear of exile. In Breaking News Photography category, Ryan Kelly of The Daily Progress, Charlottesville won prize for a frightening image that captured the moment of impact of a car attack during a racially charged protest in Charlottesville. In Feature Photography category, Photography Staff of Reuters for photographs that showed violence faced by Rohingya refugees in fleeing Myanmar. In Fiction category, Andrew Sean Greer won the prize for 'Less'. In Drama category, Martyna Majok won the prize for 'Cost of Living'. In History category, Jack E. Davis won prize for 'The Gulf: The Making of an American Sea'. In Biography category, Caroline Fraser won prize for 'Prairie Fires: The American Dreams of Laura Ingalls Wilder'. In Poetry category, Frank Bidart won the prize for 'Half-light: Collected Poems 1965-2016'. In General Nonfiction category, James Forman Jr. won the prize for 'Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America'. In Music category, Kendrick Lamar won the prize for 'DAMN'.

### **Predators of Plastics have popped up!**

According to findings published on April 16, 2018 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, researchers of Britain's University of Portsmouth and the US Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) discovered a plastic-eating enzyme, "Ideonellakaisensis 201-F6" to solve world's biggest pollution problem. The group was examining the structure of a natural enzyme that was found in a waste recycling centre a few years ago in Japan with an aim to study its structure and employ it in protein engineering, however, they accidentally engineered an enzyme that was even better at breaking down polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastics. In addition to this, the enzyme can also degrade a bio-based

substitute for PET plastics called polyethylene furandicarboxylate (PEF), which is not biodegradable and it is used as replacement for glass beer bottles. The discovery crossed their way when globe is struggling with millions of tonnes of plastic. The discovery could become a recycling solution for the huge pile of trash in the Pacific Ocean, known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch that is multiplying faster than expected and is now three times the size of France, more than double the size of Texas in the United States.

### **Cyber-security Tech Accord met global seal**

In April 2018, world's top 34 Global IT companies inked a "Cyber-security Tech Accord" conforming the watershed agreement for defending people from malicious attacks by cybercriminals and nation-states. ABB, ARM, Avast, Bitdefender, BT, CA Technologies, CISCO, Cloudflare, Datastax, DELL, Docusign, Facebook, Fastly, FireEye, F-Secure, GitHub, Guardtime, HP Inc., Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Intuit, Juniper Networks, LinkedIn, Microsoft, Nielsen Holdings, Nokia, Oracle, RSA Cryptosystem, SAP, Stripe, Symantec, Telefonica, Tenable, Trendmicro, VMware were the signatories of the agreement. With this agreement, the companies will take a principled path towards more effective steps to provide protection against tampering or exploitation of their products and services through every stage of technology development, design and distribution. They together will develop capacity building and collective action.

### **US Supreme Court restricted deportation of convicted immigrants**

On April 17, 2018, US Supreme Court has put a stay on deportation of convicted immigrants on a plea filed by convicted California burglar James Garcia Dimaya. Dimaya had come to the United States from the Philippines as a legal permanent resident in year 1992 at the age of 13. He resided in the San Francisco Bay area. When he was convicted in two California home burglaries in 2007 and 2009, the US Federal authorities ordered the deportation of Dimaya. However, neither of the two burglaries involved violence so the apex court has restricted deportation of immigrant felons by ruling that the US Immigration and Nationality Act requiring the deportation of immigrants convicted of certain crimes of violence is unconstitutionally vague.

### **April 2018 World Economic Outlook at a glance !**

On 19 April 2018 International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) World Economic Outlook (WEO) released database for April 2018 in which United States, China, Japan, Germany and United Kingdom emerged as top 5 economies of the world. India displaced France to become the world's sixth largest economy. It is a landmark development for India. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of India is \$2.6 trillion It is worth knowing that the International Monetary Fund kept its forecast of India's growth at 7.4% in 2018 and 7.8% in 2019 intact. Further forecast reveals that India is likely to cross the \$3 trillion mark to overtake Britain as the fifth largest economy.

### **April 19: World Liver Day (WLD)**

Globe observed 19th of April, 2018 as World Liver Day on 'Riding New Waves in Liver Diagnosis, Staging & Treatment' theme to create awareness and understanding about importance of liver and cure of its ailments. The liver is the second largest organ and plays important role in digestive system. It is a unique organ in human body with exceptional power of regeneration. It has been observed that around 75% of liver can be safely removed without any untoward consequences because of its capacity of regeneration. Liver combats infections, removes toxins, controls cholesterol, regulates blood sugar, makes proteins and releases bile which helps in digestion. The liver diseases are the 10th most common cause of death in India according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). It is advisable to consume a balanced diet full of grains, proteins, dairy products, fruits, vegetables, and fats to keep liver in best shape.

### **Cuba greeted its new President, Miguel Díaz-Canel**

On 19th of April, 2018, Vice President of Cuba, Miguel Díaz-Canel became President of Cuba. It is worth registering here that it's the first time in nearly six decades that Cuba is being led by a man not named Castro. He has succeeded Raúl Castro who served for two five-year terms as President after his brother, Fidel Castro, in year 2006 and Fidel was country's President from December 1976 to February 2008. Miguel Díaz-Canel was the Minister of higher education before becoming the first Vice President of the country.

### **Swaziland shall be known as 'Kingdom of eSwatini' hereafter**

On 19 of April, 2018, Africa's last absolute monarch, King Mswati III of Swaziland gifted the nation its old name 'Kingdom of eSwatini' on occasion of the 50th anniversary of Swazi's independence from British colonial rule. Swaziland is a landlocked nation in the southern Africa that got independence in 1968. It is a member of the Commonwealth and its historic name of eSwatini, a Swazi language name stands for 'place of the Swazi'. It has been done to comply with old African trend of switching back to ancient names after gaining independence. Now this change of name is likely to lead re-registration of the new name with the international bodies like the United Nation, the Commonwealth, African Union and World Trade Organization; redrafting of the country's constitution as well as modification of country's currency as all of the country's notes and coins bear the name of the 'Central Bank of Swaziland'. It will also spell changes for the Royal Swaziland Police Force, the Swaziland Defence Force and the University of Swaziland. Here it is worth knowing little bit of King Mswati III who was earlier known as Prince Makhosetive and had succeeded his long-serving father King Sobhuza II in the year 1986, when he was just 18. He rules by decree in a country of 1.3 million people, which is widely seen as Africa's last absolute monarchy. The occasion of 50th Independence day of the nation coincided with his 50th birthday. Other African countries that reverted to their ancient names on getting independence were Nyasaland that became Malawi, Rhodesia that became Zimbabwe and Bechuanaland that became Botswana.

### **Jim Bridenstine, the new NASA Administrator**

On April 20, 2018, the US Senate elected Jim Bridenstine as the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the US space agency via 50-49 votes in favour of Bridenstine. With this, Bridenstine became the 13th Chief of NASA. He has succeeded Charles Bolden who resigned in January 2017. Since then, Robert M Lightfoot was playing role of the interim Administrator of NASA. Bridenstine is a pilot in the US Navy Reserve and has earlier served in the House Armed Services Committee; the Science, Space and Technology Committee ; Tulsa Air and Space Museum and Planetarium. Apart from this, the appointee has a rich business experience in real estate, ranching, aerospace, and defense contracting.

### **22 April rocked as World Earth Day**

22nd of April, 2018 was celebrated worldwide as World Earth Day (WED) with an aim to spread awareness of the need for conservation and protection of the environment. The theme of celebration of this so called largest secular world event for this year was 'End Plastic Pollution'. This day was celebrated for the first time on April 22, 1970. It is worth knowing that more than 1 billion people across 192 nations participate every year in this global event. It is considered as the largest civic-focused day of action across the globe. People celebrate this day by signing petitions, organizing meetings with their elected officials, planting trees and cleaning up their towns and roads. In addition to this, corporations and governments make pledges and announce sustainability measures.

### **Six nations marched out of UNASUR**

On 21st of April, 2018, six countries viz. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay and Peru announced temporary one year suspension of their memberships from the Union of South American Nations. UNASUR

is a South American bloc that came into existence 10 years ago to counter US influence in the region. These nations stepped out of the bloc over election of a general secretary for UNASUR. It is worth knowing that late Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez promoted UNASUR. Presently the bloc is left with Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Surinam, Uruguay and Venezuela as its members.

### **France approves Controversial Immigration Law**

On 22nd of April, 2018, the National Assembly of France has passed a controversial immigration law. The controversial law, which was approved with 228 votes in favour, 139 against and 24 abstentions. The National assembly of the French Parliament was supposed to vote on the bill on 20th of April but the debate stretched into the weekend due to more than 1,000 amendments proposed by deputies. More than 200 changes were suggested by LREM members as they openly challenged Macron's plans to double the maximum time migrants can be held in detention for 90 days. The new law aims for better-controlled immigration, as it reduces the waiting time for asylum applications by almost half to six months and also makes it easier to deport those turned down as "economic" migrants.

### **23rd of April: World Book And Copyright Day**

The World Book and Copyright Day was celebrated globally on 23rd of April, 2018 to highlight the power of books and to promote United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s vision of knowledge societies that are inclusive, pluralistic, equitable, open and participatory for all citizens. The day paid tribute to books and authors by encouraging everyone to discover the pleasure of reading. The World Book Capital for 2018 is Athens, Greece. Every year, UNESCO along with the international organisations representing the three major sectors of the book industry- publishers, booksellers and libraries, select the World Book Capital for the period of one year with effect from 23rd of April each year. 23rd of April is considered as a symbolic date for world literature. On this date legendary writers viz. Cervantes, William Shakespeare and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega took exit from life. In 1995, the UNESCO announced 23rd of April as the World Book and Copyright Day.

### **Jailed photographer lured Freedom Prize!**

Jailed Egyptian photographer Mahmoud Abu Zeid, popularly known as Shawkan won the 2018 Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on April 23, 2018. Abu Zeid covered deadly demonstration between the security forces and supporters of expelled Islamist president Mohammed Morsi at Rabaa Al-Adawiya Square in Cairo, Egypt. He was one among the 700 defendants who faced charges of killing police and damaging property during the clashes. He was barred in August 2013. Colombia based Cano Foundation and Finland based HelsinginSanomat Foundation together present this award worth USD 45000 in honour of Guillermo Cano Isaza, a Colombian journalist, who was assassinated on December 17, 1986 in Bogota for documenting the effects of the Colombian drug trade.

### **Story of ISSF World Cup**

In the ongoing International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF)'s World Cup, Russia's Artem Chernousov won gold medal in 10 meter air pistol event at Changwon, South Korea. World record holder Shahzar Rizvi of India missed the gold by 0.2 points and won silver medal, while Samuil Donkov of Bulgaria won the Bronze at the event. With Rizvi's silver, India gets eight more finals left to play over the next five competition days. Besides this, Commonwealth Games' stars viz. Jitu Rai and Om Prakash Mitharwal failed to qualify for the final. This men's 10m air pistol event witnessed many big names falling apart in the 87-strong qualification field.

### **Deepika Padukone & Virat Kohli in TIME's 100 Most Influential People**

Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone and Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli along with Ola co-founder Bhavish Aggarwal and Microsoft's CEO Satya Nadella succeeded in grabbing place in TIME Magazine's 100 Most Influential People List of year 2018. Besides them, US President Donald Trump, North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un, Canadian PM Justin Trudeau, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Ireland's Prime Minister Leo Varadkar and Bangladesh's Prime Minister Shiekh Hasina, activist Tarana Burke, founder of the Me Too movement against the sexual predators, snowboarding champion Chloe Kim, the youngest designer and actor Millie Bobby Brown, Astronaut Peggy Whitson who recently completed her 665th cumulative day in space, which is more than any other American and many more prominent personalities occupied the list.

### **'HARIMAU SHAKTI 2018': Indo-Malaysian joint defence exercise**

April 30, 2018 will roll joint military exercise 'HARIMAU SHAKTI 2018' of India and Malaysia. The fourteen day exercise will continue till May 13, 2018 in the dense forests of SengaiPerdik, Hulu Langat, Malaysia. The exercise will encourage cooperation and coordination between the armed forces of both the countries. '4 Grenadiers' which is considered as one of the oldest infantry battalions having rich operational experience in conventional and counter insurgency warfare will represent the Indian contingent and soldiers from 1 Royal Ranjer Regiment and the Royal Malay Regiment will represent the Malaysian squad in this first joint training exercise of the two nations.

### **Mike Pompeo became US Secretary of State**

On April 27, 2018, the former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) director, Mike Pompeo became America's 70th Secretary of State, after getting consent of the US Senate via 57-42 votes. He has succeeded Rex Tillerson, who was sacked by President Donald Trump last month. The new Secretary will soon meet NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and will participate in the NATO Foreign Ministerial for discussions regarding preparations for July's NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government meeting. After this, he is slated to meet Saudi, Israeli, and Jordanian leaders for holding discussions related to critical regional and bilateral issues.

### **The release of 2018 World Press Freedom Index**

On April 25, 2018, the Reporters Without Borders (RSF) released the World Press Freedom Index 2018, reflecting the level of media freedom in 180 countries. In this index qualitative analysis is combined with quantitative data on abuses and acts of violence against journalists during the period of evaluation. Norway (global score 7.63), Sweden (global score 8.31), Netherlands (global score 10.01), Finland (global score 10.26), Switzerland (global score 11.27), Jamaica (global score 11.33), Belgium (global score 13.16), New Zealand (global score 13.62), Denmark (global score 13.99) and Costa Rica (global score 14.01) emerged as the top 10 countries in the 2018 World Press Freedom Index. The report reveals that more and more democratically-elected leaders are refusing to recognize media as part of democracy and are condemning it as their rival. South Korea grabbed 43rd rank, US held 45th rank, Pakistan got 139th rank, Afghanistan was spotted at 118th spot, Russia was at 148th rank and China captured 176th rank. India's rank dropped down to 138th this year from 136th in 2017 on account of PM Narendra Modi's "troll army" for sharing and intensifying hate speeches targeting journalists on social networks. Moreover, the country also saw 'physical violence' against journalists this year including the murder of journalist Gauri Lankesh last year.

### **Presidency of Paraguay laid red carpet for Mario Abdo Benítez**

In April 2018, Conservative former senator Mario Abdo Benítez won presidential elections of Paraguay. He won 46.46% of the votes as compared to his closest rival Efraín Alegre from the liberal opposition alliance,

who got 42.73% votes. Mario's victory will continue to maintain the right-wing Colorado Party's dominance, which has been in power for decades. He has succeeded Horacio Cartes. 46 year old Benítez will work to retain low tax policies and boost agricultural exports. Mario Abdo Benítez is the son of a close associate of former military dictator General Alfredo Stroessner, who ruled the nation from 1954 to 1989.

### **28 April hailed as World Day for Safety and Health at Work**

Globe observed World Day for Safety and Health at Work on 'Occupational safety health (OSH) vulnerability of young workers' theme. The day coincided with the World Day against Child Labour which led to a joint campaign to improve the safety and health of young workers and end child labour. Besides this, the campaign gave impetus to action for achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 8.8 of safe and secure working environments for all workers by 2030 and SDG target 8.7 of ending all forms of child labour by 2025. International Labour Organization (ILO) observes this day since 2003 to promote the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally.

### **Rafael Nadal lures 11th Barcelona Open tennis title**

On 30th of April, 2018, world number one tennis star Rafael Nadal got edge over Stefanos Tsitsipas by 6-2, 6-1 to win his 11th Barcelona Open tennis title. World number 63 Tsitsipas, playing the Spaniard for the first time, surrendered in 77 minutes, as 31 year old Nadal won his 400th clay-court match to secure a place in the final. He claimed two rapid breaks to take the first set in 40 minutes against the 19-year-old. It is worth learning that Nadal has conquered 19 successive matches, and 46 consecutive sets on clay so far.

### **North Korea agreed for denuclearisation !**

On April 27, 2018, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in inked a landmark peace agreement, 'Panmunjeom Declaration' for the "complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula" during an Inter-Korean Summit in southern side of the Demilitarised Zone. The two leaders pledged a 'new era of peace' via this joint declaration in which both the sides agreed to proceed with reunion programmes for the separated families on the occasion of the National Liberation Day on August 15, 2018. They also agreed for joint participation in the international sports events like 2018 Asian Games. This event was historic as this was the first time, a North Korean leader had crossed over the southern side of the Demilitarised Zone to enter South Korea, since the end of the Korean War in 1953.

### **Lunar Orbital 'Gateway' is under manifestation**

In April 2018, NASA announced construction of a Lunar Orbital Platform-Gateway for studies of the moon to determine whether water near the surface could be used to produce propellant for deep-space missions. Besides this, the platform will also serve as a gateway space station for Astronauts travelling to and from Mars. It should be noted that moon's gravity has potential of helping spacecraft lessen the blistering speeds used for six-month voyages back-and-forth to Mars, thus facilitating its re-entry to Earth's atmosphere. For this project NASA chose five companies to study a high-power, solar-electric propulsion system to use in deep-space missions that will aboard Orion, a spacecraft of American global aerospace company Lockheed Martin, with the service module supplied by the European Space Agency. The Orion's first unmanned flight is scheduled for 2019. The platform is likely to orbit the moon in 2025.

### **May 1 : International Labour Day**

International labour associations observed International Labour Day which is also known as International Worker's Day or May Day on 1st of May, 2018. Globe paid tribute to workers' sacrifices in achieving economic and social rights across the globe. The day marked the victory of workers' movement for eight hours of work. In India several Trade Union Organisations organised Rallies, symposiums, seminars for welfare of labourers. Water Resources Minister Nitin Gadkari was the chief guest on the occasion of International Labour Day programme in New Delhi.

### **India-Japan Energy Dialogue**

2nd of May, 2018 energised the 9th India-Japan Energy Dialogue for cooperation in energy security, energy access and climate change issues in New Delhi. Minister of State(IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, Shri R.K Singh, and Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Hiroshige Seko inked an agreement for promotion of well-functioning transparent and diversified Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) energy markets. The duo agreed to implement Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under umbrella of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). They acknowledged the significance of development and deployment of next generation technologies including hydrogen to realize de-carbonization. They initiated the discussion about development of Electric Vehicles (EVs) conforming "Policy dialogue on next generation/Zero emission vehicles". It is worth learning here that Japan and India are the third and the seventh largest economies of present world respectively.

### **Gabon's National Assembly got dissolved**

On 30th of April, 2018, oil rich Central African nation Gabon's Constitutional Court ordered the dissolution of the National Assembly spelling an end of President Ali Bongo-led government. A statement from the President of the Constitutional Court of Gabon, Marie Magdeleine Mborantsuo read as "the mandate of all lawmakers in the lower chamber of parliament had been terminated because the government had failed to hold elections to replace them". Besides this, the court also demanded Prime Minister Emmanuel Issoze-Ngondet's resignation. Now the upper chamber (Senate) will look into work of the dissolved chamber till appointment of a new Prime Minister, leader of government. It is worth knowing here that Bongo appointed Issoze-Ngondet as prime minister after a narrow victory in a 2016 election.

### **May 3 came as World Press Freedom Day**

Globe observed World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2018 on 'Keeping Power in Check: Media, Justice and The Rule of Law' theme to celebrate the fundamental principles of press freedom, defend the media from attacks and pay tribute to journalists who sacrificed their lives while being on duty. On this occasion, Reporters Without Borders (RWB) released World Press Freedom Index Report 2018 measuring the level of media freedom across 180 countries. It also reflected level of pluralism, media independence, environment and self-censorship, transparency, legal framework and quality of the infrastructure that supports the production of news and information. In this index, Norway topped the list followed by Sweden at the second spot. Other nations were Bhutan (94), Nepal (106), Maldives (120), Sri Lanka (131), Myanmar (137), India (138) Pakistan (139), China (176), Syria (177) and North Korea secured the last spot at 180. UN General Assembly instituted this day in December 1993 on the recommendation of UNESCO's General Conference to mark the anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration. This Declaration was a statement of press freedom principles put together by African newspaper journalists that was produced at a UNESCO seminar from 29 April to 3 May 1991.

### **Toronto closed its India Tourism office**

On May 1, 2018, Toronto punctuated its India Tourism office with a full stop after 58 years of operation. The closed office served as a bridge between Canada and India. With this all the functions that promoted India as a destination for Canadians also got terminated. The news was a shock wave to those involved in the travel and hospitality business. Indian Tourism has had a presence in Canada since 1960 but with this exit, that will come to an end. The functions of the India Tourism office in Toronto will now move to New York, which will serve as the North American hub. In this context, the Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Meenakshi Sharma said, "It's a part of our restructuring exercise. We feel that our office in New York will cater to our needs in Toronto."

### **UK's first drug-free university**

In April 2018, University of Buckingham has pledged to become the “first drug-free university” of United Kingdom. For this, the students of the varsity will sign a contract pledging not to take drug on university property, nor be under their influence when on university business. And if they are found guilty of violating the contract then they would be expelled from the university. The decision came in wake of the National Union of Students’ report that requested universities not to report students to the police for possession of drugs. In this context The Sunday Times revealed a 42 % hike in the number of students being disciplined by universities for drug use over two years.

### **Langer breezed in Cricket Australia**

On May 3, 2018 former Australian opener, Justin Langer got appointed as new head coach of Australian Cricket team for all three formats of the game. He has succeeded Darren Lehmann. Starting from May 22, 2018, Langer will serve as coach for a four-year term. The term is likely to witness two Ashes series, a World Cup and a World Twenty20 tournament. Langer has played 105 Tests for Australia, scoring 7,696 runs including 23 centuries. In his 20 year long playing career, he played 360 first-class matches, scoring more than 28,000 first-class runs. Earlier, he has also served as coach in charge of Western Australia and the Perth Scorchers since November 2012.

### **Curtains down on Cambridge Analytica**

In May 2018, the UK-based data analytics company, Cambridge Analytica announced its closure after being proven guilty of massive data-harvesting scandal on Facebook. The controversy has driven away all of its customers. The company had illegally harvested data of more than 87 million Facebook users and employed it to manipulate voter behavior in the 2016 US Presidential elections. Cambridge Analytica’s board has applied to appoint UK accountancy firm and insolvency practitioner Crowe Clark Whitehill to act as the independent administrator for the company.

### **WhatsApp CEO left the group**

On 1st of May, 2018, WhatsApp co-founder and CEO Jan Koum decided to leave Facebook over repeated clashes with Facebook executives regarding privacy and weakening of encryption on WhatsApp’s messaging app. WhatsApp relies on Signal’s protocol for its end-to-end encryption. It is worth remembering here that WhatsApp was purchased by Facebook in year 2014 for nearly \$19 billion, which proved to be the social media network’s most expensive acquisition ever.

### **Mohamed Salah clamps Writers' Footballer Of The Year award**

On 3rd of May, 2018, Liverpool forward Mohamed Salah from Egypt has been named as the Football Writers’ Association Footballer of the Year for 2017/18. Manchester City midfielder Kevin de Bruyne came second with Tottenham striker Harry Kane third. 25-year-old Salah has scored 31 goals in 34 league appearances for Liverpool this season. With this, Salah has become the first African to be given the accolade after edging out Manchester City midfielder Kevin De Bruyne by less than 20 votes in a ballot of more than 400 FWA members. Apart from this, he also became the first Egyptian player to win the Professional Footballers’ Association (PFA) player of the year award in April 2018.

### **Google grants \$ 3 million for E-Learning**

On 4th of May, 2018, Google.org, the philanthropic arm of Google has announced additional grants of \$3 million to two Indian non-profit organisations- Central Square Foundation and The Teacher App. The grants are a part of Google.org’s mission to provide quality education access and learning for all. With a \$1 million grant to ‘The Teacher App’ in India, Google.org aims to provide teachers with training and resources on the

concepts of math, science, language, and pedagogy. The funds are expected to scale the platform to reach 500,000 teachers in two years. With online video emerging as a popular medium of learning, Google.org will provide a \$2 million grant and technical assistance from the YouTube Learning team to Central Square Foundation, a policy think tank focused on improving the quality of school education.

### **Death that revealed mystery of life**

Scientists have discovered world's oldest 43-year-old arachnid (spider) the *GiausVillosus* trapdoor matriarch that died recently in Australia. It had outlived the earlier world record of a 28-year old tarantula that is found in Mexico. According to PhD student Leanda Mason at Curtin University in Australia, "the extensive life span of the trapdoor spider is due to their life-history traits, including how they live in uncleared, native bushland, their sedentary nature and low metabolisms." In year 1974 Barbara York Main started this research project with monitoring of the long-term spider population for more than 42 years in the Central Wheatbelt region of Western Australia that helped in revealing the spider's age and cause of death.

### **No Nobel in literature**

As per May 2018 announcement of the Swedish Academy, there will be no Nobel Prize in Literature for this year on account of sex-abuse allegations involving Jean-Claude Arnault, who is a major cultural figure in Sweden and other issues within its ranks that have tainted the body's reputation and reduced public confidence in the Academy. Although in past on seven occasions the Nobel prize for literature preferred to stay with the Swedish Academy as no literature candidate was deemed worthy of the prize, yet this will be the first time since wartime 1943 that the prestigious award will miss the award ceremony for a different reason. Last year, Japanese-born British novelist Kazuo Ishiguro won the prize. But the award is sure to witness 2019 Nobel awards ceremony.

### **It is Putin again on Russian throne**

On May 7, 2018 Vladimir Putin sworn in as Russian President for the fourth time in the Grand Kremlin Palace, Moscow. Presidency of Russia welcomed him for another six year term till year 2024. In March 2018, presidential elections he got 76% of votes and his rivals Communist Party candidate Pavel Grudinin received 11.8 % of votes, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy of the LDPR got 5.66 % of the votes, TV presenter Ksenia Sobchak received 1.67 % votes and GrigoryYavlinsky got just over 1 % of the votes. Now, President Putin will appoint his preferred candidate for the post of Prime Minister. It is worth knowing that he is a former agent for the Russian spy agency KGB who had also served as Russian Prime Minister in the past. When his stint as Prime Minister during 2008-2012 is counted, he emerges as Russia's longest-ruling leader since Soviet dictator Josef Stalin, who was in power for 31 years.

### **India Tops South Asian Junior Athletics Championships**

6th May 2018 saw the conclusion of South Asian Junior Athletics Championships in Colombo. India topped the championships with 20 Gold, 22 Silver and 8 Bronze medals. In addition to this, Indian junior athletes also registered new records as in Girls' Triple Jump, Priyadarshini Suresh won the gold medal with a record of 12.90 metres; in the Girls' Javelin Throw, Sanjana Choudhary claimed the top honours with a record of 48.08; in Boys Shot Put, Ashish Bhalothia made a new record and won the Gold medal with an effort of 18.53 metres. Triple jumper KamalrajKanagaraj also coined gold for India with a record jump of 15.96 metres. Sri Lanka stood second and Pakistan was spotted third in the Championships. Now Indian juniors are all set to make appearance at the 18th Asian Junior Athletics Championships which will take place in Gifu, Japan from the 7th of June 2018.

### **Kidney research attracts \$1.6 million grant**

In May 2018, the National Institutes of Health granted \$1.6 million to an Indian-American professor of Pharmacology, Tahir Hussain, at the University of Houston for examining a kidney cell that could prevent damage from inflammation caused by obesity. The targeted cells are said to possess a protein called the angiotensin type 2 receptor, that recently featured anti-inflammatory and renoprotective actions. Dr Hussain, an alumnus of the Aligarh Muslim University, will now study the impact of inflammation in kidneys with active AT2R as well as those with no AT2R.

### **6th May celebrated as World Laughter Day**

World Laughter Day was celebrated on the first Sunday of May to promote thousands of community groups worldwide, commonly known as Laughter Clubs that regularly practice simple intentional laughter techniques for wellness and overall well-being. This annual event spreads healing benefits of laughter. Humor enhances retention of information in academic or professional settings because of the higher number of mental connections between the information and emotional responses in terms of laughter. Laughter relaxes the body, encourages the immune system, helps in release of endorphins, keeps the heart healthy, burns calories, lightens anger's heavy load and promotes longevity of life.

### **Climate summit will commence in September 2019**

On May 8, 2018, UN Chief Antonio Guterres aired the announcement about the upcoming September 2019 climate summit in New York at the opening ceremony of the 37th session of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. The summit will lead to the review of the commitments of the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change. This Paris Climate Agreement is about greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance starting in the year 2020. In UN Chief's opinion, new plans based on investments in resilient development with low carbon emissions will be the right measure to evaporate the climate change problem. In March 2018, Guterres appointed Michael Bloomberg as his Special Envoy for Climate Action to assist the United Nations (UN) in its climate strategy and in organising the 2019 summit.

### **\$200 million loan from World Bank**

In May 2018, India inked 200-million dollar loan agreement with the World Bank for the National Nutrition Mission (POSHAN Abhiyan) for 315 districts across all states and union territories. The abhiyan is all about improving the coverage and quality of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) nutrition services to pregnant and lactating women and children under 3 years of age. Besides this, the project foresees investments in upgrading the skills and capacities of ICDS staff and community nutrition workers, starting mechanisms of community mobilization and management of services for better outreach to beneficiaries for nutrition impact.

## Sports News

### India concluded the CWG 2018 campaign in third spot with 26 Gold Medals

The eleven day 21st Commonwealth games event got concluded on 15th of April 2018 in which Australia stood first in the medal tally with 198 medals comprising 80 Gold, 59 Silver and 59 Bronze. It was followed by England's 136 medals comprising 45 Gold, 45 Silver and 46 Bronze and India's 66 medals including 26 Gold, 20 Silver and 20 Bronze medals. The story of Indian victory reveals that India won 1 gold, 1 silver and 1 bronze in Athletics; 2 gold, 3 silver and 1 bronze in Badminton; 3 gold, 3 silver and 3 bronze in Boxing; 1 bronze medal in para powerlifting; 7 gold, 4 silver and 5 bronze in shooting; 2 silver in squash; 3 gold, 2 silver and 3 bronze in Table Tennis; 5 gold, 2 silver and 2 bronze in Weightlifting and 5 gold, 3 silver and 4 bronze in Wrestling. According to the quint reporting, in Athletics, Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian javelin thrower to claim a gold with season's best effort of 86.47m in the final at Gold Coast. Silver medal in Discus throw came via Seema Punia with a best effort of 60.41m, while Dhillon won her maiden bronze medal with her final Discus throw of 57.43m.

In Badminton, Saina claimed the gold medal in women's singles and mixed team events, PV Sindhu coined silver medal in women's singles, Kidambi Srikanth chased the silver in men's singles, Chirag Chandrashekhhar Shetty and Satwik Ranikreddy also won silver in men's doubles. N Sikki Reddy and Ashwini Ponnappagot bronze.

In Boxing, MaryKom (48kg), Vikas Krishan (75kg), Gaurav Solanki (52kg) won gold medals. Satish Kumar (91kg), Amit Panghal (49kg) and Manish Kaushik (60kg) coined silver medals. Mohammed Husammuddin (56kg), Naman Tanwar (91kg) and Manoj Kumar (69kg) all conquered bronze medals.

In shooting, Anish Bhanwala became India's youngest-ever gold medallist at the Commonwealth Games, Manu Bhaker won gold in women's 10m air pistol, Jitu Rai also claimed the gold in men's 10m air pistol event, Sanjeev Rajput won gold medal in men's 50m rifle shooting, Tejaswini Sawant won gold in women's 50m rifle event, Shreyasi Singh won gold in double trap shooting, while Heena Sidhu won a gold medal in 25m pistol shooting and a silver medal in 10m air rifle event. Mehuli Ghosh won a silver in women's 10m air rifle event, Anjum Moudgil won silver in women's 50m rifle event and Tejaswini Sawant won silver in 50m rifle prone event. Om Mithralval won bronze in men's 10m air pistol as well as 50m pistol shooting; Ravi Kumar won bronze in 10m air rifle; Ankur Mittal won bronze in Men's double trap shooting and Apuvi Chandel got bronze in women's 10m air rifle event.

In Squash, Joshna Chinappa and Dipika Pallikal won silver in doubles title and another silver came via Dipika and Saurav Ghosal in the mixed doubles event

In Table Tennis, besides Manika Batra's gold medal in women's singles, Indians won gold in both men's and women's team events. Sharath Achanta and Sathiyar Gnanasekaran coined silver in men's doubles, Manika Batra and Mouma Das conquered silver in women's doubles, Sarath Achanta won bronze in men's singles, Manika Batra and Sathiyar Gnanasekaran won bronze in mixed doubles while Harmeet Desai and Sanil Shankar Shetty won bronze in men's doubles.

In weightlifting, P Gururaja opened India's medal account with a silver in the men's 56kg category. World champion weightlifter Mirabai Chanu (48 kg) went on a record-smashing spree, claiming three of them in a power-packed performance, to secure India's first gold medal at the 21st Commonwealth Games. Weightlifter Sanjita Chanu won her second successive Commonwealth Games gold medal in a higher 53kg category. Deepak Lather became the youngest Indian weightlifter to claim a Commonwealth Games medal by winning a bronze in the men's 69kg category. Sathish Kumar Sivalingam won gold medal in a total of 317 kg which included 144 kg in snatch and 173 kg in clean and jerk. Venkat Rahul Ragala also won a gold medal. Punam Yadav won gold to the tally with a top finish in the 69kg category. Vikas Thakur won bronze in the 94kg category. Pradeep Singh also won a silver medal in Men's 105kg category.

In Wrestling, Sumit Malik won gold in men's 125 kilogram freestyle title while Vinesh Phogat won gold in women's 50 kg wrestling event. Somveer won bronze in the men's 86kg division. Double-Olympic medallist Sushil Kumar (74kg) and event debutant Rahul Aware (57kg) provided the gold on the opening day of the 21st Commonwealth Games' wrestling competitions. Olympic bronze-medallist Sakshi Malik (62kg) managed to grab the third place in the Commonwealth Games.

### **Yuki Bhambri climbed back in top-100 Tennis rankings**

On 16th of April, 2018, Tennis star Yuki Bhambri succeeded in getting place in top 100 tennis rankings since February 2016. He grabbed the 83rd rank on account of his title-winning performance at the Taipei Challenger. It is commendable that this is the best rank an Indian has achieved in ATP singles chart, since Somdev Devvarman touched a career-high 62 in July 2011. If Yuki succeeds in maintaining the top-hundred place then he will book direct entry into the Grand Slams and the ATP 1000 series Masters event. Besides him, Rohan Bopanna is leading the doubles chart for India at number 19. Sania Mirza's ranking remained unchanged at number 24. Divij Sharan grabbed 41st rank and Leander Paes held 49th position. Ramkumar Ramanathan was spotted on 116th position, Ankita Raina got 194th rank and Karman Kaur Thandi got 268th spot.

### **India clinches South Judo Championship 2018**

On 23rd of April, 2018, India has clinched the 8th South Asian Judo Championship. On the concluding day of the championship, Indian women and men won team events. In the final of team events, Indian women's team defeated Nepal's team by 5-0. On the other hand, Indian men's team also won the team championship. They defeated Pakistan by 3-2 in the final. Prior to this, Indian women grabbed all 7 gold medals in the individual category while men bagged 3 gold and 3 bronze medals. India topped the medal tally by winning 10 Gold and 3 Bronze medals in the individual category. Nepal remained second and Pakistan got third place. Total 102 players from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participated in the 3-day championship.

### **Lewis Hamilton topped the Azerbaijan Grand Prix**

In April 2018, Lewis Hamilton emerged as winner followed by Kimi Räikkönen at 2nd and Sergio Perez at 3rd place on the podium during the award ceremony at Azerbaijan Formula 1 Grand Prix in Baku, Azerbaijan. It is worth knowing here that this Azerbaijan Grand Prix was arguably one of the most chaotic in years, despite it resulting in a somewhat familiar winner. It now interprets that there are just two drivers without a point in the standings, as the season heads to Europe for the Spanish Grand Prix in two weeks' time.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

- In April 2018, who has been elected as the new International President of Vishwa Hindu Parishad?

(a) Neeraj Kumar (b) Vishnu Sadashiv Kokje  
(c) Amrita Kaur (d) Raghava Reddy (e) None of these
- Which badminton player has won gold medal in the women's singles event at the Commonwealth Games 2018?

(a) Saina Nehwal (b) PV Sindhu (c) Michelle Li  
(d) Kirsty Gilmour (e) None of above
- India has won how many gold medals at the Commonwealth Games 2018?

(a) 20 (b) 24 (c) 25  
(d) 26 (e) 27
- Which among the following have won the Pulitzer Prize 2018 for Public Service category?

(a) The Guardian and The New York Times  
(b) Washington Post and The Financial Express  
(c) The New York Times and The New Yorker  
(d) The Financial Express and The Guardian  
(e) The Guardian and The New Yorker
- Lieutenant General P.P. Malhotra has been appointed as the new \_\_\_\_\_ of National Cadet Corps (NCC).

(a) Director General (b) Brigadier (c) Major General  
(d) Colonel (e) Lieutenant Colonel
- The World Haemophilia day is observed every year on \_\_\_\_\_.

(a) 14th of April (b) 15th of April (c) 16th of April  
(d) 17th of April (e) 18th of April
- According to the latest World Bank's South Asia Economic Focus Report 2018, What is the growth rate of India for 2019-20?

(a) 7.3% (b) 7.4% (c) 7.5%  
(d) 7.6% (e) 7.8%
- In April 2018, NASA has launched which mission to study matter between stars?

(a) BLUE (b) CHESS (c) TISS  
(d) DISTANT (e) None of these
- Dilip Chenoy has been appointed as the new \_\_\_\_\_ of FICCI.

(a) Secretary (b) Director General (c) President  
(d) Secretary General (e) None of these
- In April 2018, which among the following banks has allowed the cash withdrawal through PoS machines?

(a) ICICI Bank (b) State Bank of India  
(c) Punjab National Bank (d) Bank of India (e) Bank of Baroda

11. International Labour Day is observed every year on \_\_\_\_\_  
 (a) 30th of April (b) 1st of May (c) 29th of April  
 (d) 2nd of May (e) 28th of April
12. Who has been honored with the P C Chandra Puraskaar 2018?  
 (a) Sharmila Tagore (b) Lata Mangeshkar  
 (c) Sonu Nigam (d) Shreya Ghoshal (e) Asha Bhosle
13. In April 2018, Sitanshu Kar has been appointed as the new Principal \_\_\_\_\_ of the Press Information Bureau (PIB).  
 (a) Director (b) Chairman (c) Vice-Chairman  
 (d) Managing Director (e) Director General
14. Which bollywood actor has won the best actor award in the Dadasaheb Phalke Awards 2018?  
 (a) Akshay Kumar (b) Salman Khan (c) Shah Rukh Khan  
 (d) Ajay Devgan (e) Ranbir Kapoor
15. In the latest ISSF World ranking, who has become the world number one shooter in the men's 10-metre air pistol category?  
 (a) Jitu Rai (b) Gagan Narang  
 (c) Tomoyuki Matsuda (d) Shahzar Rizvi (e) Artem Chernousov
16. Mallikarjun Kharge has been re-appointed as the \_\_\_\_\_ of Public Accounts Committee (PAC).  
 (a) Managing Director (b) Director (c) Vice-Chairman  
 (d) Chairman (e) None of these
17. According to the latest report of World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), what is the India's rank in the list of doping violations?  
 (a) 5<sup>th</sup> (b) 6<sup>th</sup> (c) 7<sup>th</sup>  
 (d) 8<sup>th</sup> (e) 9<sup>th</sup>
18. Ashok Mitra, the famous \_\_\_\_\_ has passed away in May 2018.  
 (a) Mathematician (b) Scientist (c) Actor  
 (d) Politician (e) Economist
19. In April 2018, who became the India's longest serving Chief Minister of India?  
 (a) Shivraj Singh Chauhan (b) Pawan Chamling  
 (c) Naveen Patnaik (d) Raman Singh (e) Manohar Parrikar
20. Who among the following wrote the book 'My Journey from Marxism-Leninism to Nehruvian Socialism'?  
 (a) C. H. Hanumantha Rao (b) Raghuram Rajan  
 (c) Jagdish Bhagwati (d) Kaushik Basu (e) None of these

## ANSWERS

- 1.(b)** Vishnu Sadashiv Kokje, the former governor of Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh High Court judge has been elected as the new International President of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). In the voting, Kokje got 131 votes and defeated incumbent G Raghava Reddy who could muster 60 votes. Prior to this, he was the International Vice-President of the VHP. He also worked as the President of the India Development Council of RSS.
- 2.(a)** Famous Indian Shuttler, Saina Nehwal has won gold medal in the women's singles event at the Commonwealth Games 2018. In the final, she defeated PV Sindhu by 21-18, 23-21 points. Nehwal is the only Indian female badminton player to win singles gold in Commonwealth Games history.
- 3.(d)** India finished third in the medals tally at the Commonwealth Games 2018 with 66 medals (26 Gold, 20 Silver and 20 Bronze). Australia with 198 medals (80 Gold, 59 Silver and 59 Bronze) topped the chart and England with 136 Medals (45 Gold, 45 Silver and 46 Bronze) stood second.
- 4.(c)** The New York Times and The New Yorker have jointly won the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service category for explosive reporting that brought down Harvey Weinstein and spawned a cultural watershed on the issue of sexual harassment. Apart from this, The Washington Post won the investigative reporting prize for revealing decades-old allegations of sexual misconduct against Senate candidate Roy Moore of Alabama. Each winner will receive a certificate and a \$15,000 cash award
- 5.(a)** Lieutenant General P.P. Malhotra has been appointed as the new Director General of National Cadet Corps (NCC). Prior to this, he was the Chief Engineer of the Army's premier Northern Command. NCC is the largest uniformed youth organisation in the world.
- 6.(d)** The World Haemophilia day is observed every year on 17th of April to increase awareness of haemophilia and other inherited bleeding disorders. The theme for the year 2018 is 'Sharing Knowledge Makes Us Stronger'. World Haemophilia day was started in 1989 by the World Federation of Hemophilia (WFH).
- 7.(c)** The World Bank has projected India's growth rate at 7.3% for 2019 and 7.5% for 2020. In its report, the World Bank said that India should try to accelerate investment and exports to take advantage of global reforms
- 8.(b)** The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has successfully launched CHESSE mission to study the interstellar medium, the matter between stars. The space between distant stars is not empty. It contains drifts of vast clouds of neutral atoms and molecules, as well as charged plasma particles called the interstellar medium, which may, over millions of years, evolve into new stars and even planets
- 9.(d)** Dilip Chenoy has been appointed as the new Secretary General of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). He succeeded Sanjaya Baru.
- 10.(b)** Amid the ongoing difficulties of cash crunch being faced in several states of India, State Bank of India (SBI) has come up with an alternate and convenient method of cash withdrawal for its customers. The bank is now providing facilities of cash through 'Cash@POS' initiative. Under this, the debit card holders of SBI and all other banks can withdraw cash from PoS machines installed by SBI across various merchant locations.

- 11.(b)** International Labour Day is observed every year on 1st of May. It is also known as International Worker's Day. The main aim to celebrate this day is to promote and encourage the international labour associations. The theme of day for the year 2018 is "Uniting Workers for Social and Economic Advancement".
- 12.(e)** Singing legend Asha Bhosle has been honoured with the P C Chandra Puraskaar 2018. The award is a tribute to the founding father of the P. C. Chandra Group, the late Shri Purna Chandra Chandra. It carries an honorarium of Rs 10 lakh.
- 13.(e)** Sitanshu Kar, a 1983-batch Indian Information Service (IIS) officer has been appointed as the new Principal Director General of the Press Information Bureau (PIB). He succeeded Frank Noronha. Prior to this, he was serving as the AIR's News Services Division (NSD) director general.
- 14.(a)** Famous bollywood actor, Akshay Kumar has won the best actor award in the Dadasaheb Phalke Awards 2018 for his great role in 'Padman (Jury)' and for 'Toilet: Ek Prem Katha'. Besides this, Bhumi Pednekar has won the best actress award for her work in Toilet:Ek Prem Katha. Manisha Koirala won the 'Most Versatile Actress' award. Whereas, veteran actor-director Rakesh Roshan was given the lifetime achievement award for his contribution to the industry as an actor, producer and a director.
- 15.(d)** Famous Indian shooter Shahzar Rizvi has become the world number one shooter in the men's 10-meter air pistol category after having a silver medal at the recently concluded shooting World Cup in South Korea. The other Indian shooter in the world top-10 rankings is Jitu Rai, who is placed sixth. Apart from this, Manu Bhaker was the only Indian woman in the top-10 of the women's 10m air pistol rankings.
- 16.(d)** Mallikarjun Kharge, an MP from Gulbarga (Karnataka) has been re-appointed as the Chairman of the 22-member Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament for its fresh term that started on May 1, 2018. He is the leader of Indian National Congress party in Lok Sabha
- 17.(b)** According to the latest report of World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), India has been ranked 6th in the list of doping violations. India improved its position to sixth after being joint-third for three consecutive years from 2013 to 2015. Italy topped the rankings of drug cases in 2018, followed by France (86), United States (76), Australia (75), Belgium (73).
- 18.(e)** Ashok Mitra, the famous Economist has passed away in May 2018 at the age of 90 years. He was the first Finance Minister in the Left Front government in West Bengal. Besides serving the State Government, he also worked with the Central Government as the Chief Economic Adviser and was a member of Rajya Sabha.
- 19.(b)** Pawan Chamling, Chief Minister of Sikkim has created history by becoming the longest serving chief minister in India. He surpassed the record of former communist ruler of West Bengal, Late Jyoti Basu. Chamling became the Chief Minister of Sikkim on 12th of December 1994 and has ruled the tiny Himalayan state ever since.
- 20.(a)** Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has released a book titled 'My Journey from Marxism-Leninism to Nehruvian Socialism' written by former Planning Commission and Finance Commission member C.H. Hanumantha Rao. Rao is presently one of the most creative thinkers, social activist, and distinguished economist in India.