

Current Affairs Weekly PDF - February 2019 Fourth Week (23-28)

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

Overview of Argentina's President Mauricio Macri 3-Day Visit To India

Argentina's President Mauricio Macri was on 3 days visit to India. He inked Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) with India, becoming the 72nd country to do this. Read full details of his visit here: <https://www.affairscloud.com/overview-of-argentinas-president-mauricio-macri-3-day-visit-to-india/>

Changes in the Indian Stamp Act, 1899 approved by President Ram Nath Kovind

President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the amendments to the Indian Stamp Act, 1899, which were introduced in the Parliament as part of the Finance Act 2019. These amendments have been introduced to regularise the system of levying stamp duty and to help in curbing tax evasion.

Commerce Minister addressed India-Russia Forum on SMEs

An Interactive Forum between Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) of India and Russia was held in Bengaluru and was addressed by Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu for working to address and resolve trade and investment issues to facilitate and increase private sector cooperation.

National Conference on Logistics Policy held in New Delhi

The "National Conference on Logistics Policy: Context, Issues & The Way Forward" was held in New Delhi. On this occasion, SAFAR Mobile App was launched to gauge the actual issues faced by transporters on the road.

Regional Maritime Safety Conference 2019 held in Mumbai

The 2-day long Regional Maritime Safety Conference 2019 was held in Mumbai to discuss maritime safety in the India-ASEAN sub-region. It was organized by India for the first time, by the National Maritime Foundation (NMF), in coordination with Ministry of Shipping and Ministry of External Affairs.

Union Minister of State Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti inaugurated first Mega Food Park of Tripura

Union Minister of State for Food Processing Industries, Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti, inaugurated Tripura's first mega food park named Sikaria Mega Food Park Pvt Ltd at Village Tulakona in Agartala. The cost of project is Rs 87.45 crore.

UP CM Yogi Adityanath Launches Scheme for Adolescent Girls

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Yogi Adityanath launched a scheme for adolescent girls aged between 11 to 14 years, who have left their education and will take steps to provide them proper nutrition and special care.

Overview of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman's First Visit To India

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, paid his first visit to India from 19-20 February 2019. Saudi Arabia became the 73rd country to sign the framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA). Read full details of his visit here: <https://www.affairscloud.com/overview-of-saudi-crown-prince-mohammed-bin-salmans-first-visit-to-india/>

NITI Aayog co-hosted Conference on The Future of Indian Banking

"The Future of Indian Banking" conference was co-hosted by NITI Aayog along with the Foundation for Economic Growth and Welfare (EGROW Foundation) at the Civil Services Officers' Institute (CSOI) in New Delhi. Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, inaugurated the event.

PM Modi addressed the Global Business Summit in New Delhi

He highlighted that India would be a 10 trillion-dollar economy- the third largest in the world. The government would provide conducive environment for start-ups and promote renewable sources of energy.

Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated Waste to Wonder Park in Delhi

Waste to Wonder Park houses the replicas of Seven Wonders of the World made from scrap material at Sarai Kale Khan, Delhi. It was built by the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC).

Union minister Smriti Irani launched the Integrated Large Scale Eri Farming in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh

5 districts of the state, namely, Papumpare, East Kameng, Siang, East Siang and West Siang, will be covered by the project initially. The cost of project is Rs 37.25cr with GoI share of Rs 35.65cr.

Textiles Minister Smriti Irani inaugurates two silk projects in Udalguri, Assam

She has inaugurated the Integrated Soil to Silk Project, which was set up at a cost of Rs 55 crores while Eri Spun Silk Mill is expected to provide a turnover of Rs 10 crores.

Odisha approved Rs 466 Crore Sanitary Napkin Scheme for adolescent girls

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik, approved Khusi scheme aimed at improving menstrual hygiene among adolescent girl students of Class 6 to 9 studying in government and non-government aided schools in the state, with an outlay of Rs 466.08 crore over a period of 5 years.

Telangana CM presented Rs 1.82 lakh cr interim budget for 2019-20

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Rao presented a Vote-on-Account Budget for the year 2019-20. The total expenditure is valued to be Rs 1,82,017 crore which is 4 percent higher than the previous year- out of which there is a revenue expenditure of Rs 1,31,629 crore and a capital expenditure of Rs.32,815 crore. A sum of Rs 1810 crore has been allocated in the Budget to fund an unemployment allowance of Rs 3,016 per month to the eligible youth.

TN Becomes First State in mainland to get 2 Coast Guard Districts

Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit inaugurated the second Coast Guard district headquarters at Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu is the first state in India to get a second Coast Guard district headquarters. The first district headquarters is Chennai.

Government decided to stop share of Indus water to Pakistan

On the lines of Pulwama terror attack, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari announced that India has decided to stop the flow of its share of water to Pakistan. Under the Indus Waters Treaty, India shares water of the Beas and Sutlej rivers with Pakistan.

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated 3rd Edition of VIVID 2019

3rd Edition of "VIVID-Vision Insight and Voices as India goes Digital"- the District Informatics Officer (DIO) meet, was organised by National Informatics Centre (NIC) from 21st to 22nd February, 2019, as an initiative to interact with the DIO's and to share their experiences as well as contribution, as digital change-makers at the grass-root level in the States.

CBIC Constituted 3 Working Groups to study and recommend measures to facilitate trade, promote exports and improve compliance

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) groups will consult the stakeholders extensively, including the Export Promotion Councils and relevant wings of the Ministry of Commerce and industry and submit their report within a period of 2 months.

3 Day International Conference and Exhibition on Energy and Environment inaugurated by President Ram Nath Kovind in New Delhi

The conference has been organized by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) aimed to identify the research and development needs of new innovations.

4th India-ASEAN Expo and Summit held in New Delhi

Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, inaugurated the 4th India-ASEAN Expo and Summit in New Delhi. The flagship event of Department of Commerce was organised with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) to carry forward the momentum and to further strengthen India-ASEAN relations under the Act-East Policy.

14th Agricultural Science Congress held at New Delhi

The 14th Agricultural Science Congress was organized by National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS) in collaboration with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Indian Agricultural Research Institute at National Agricultural Science Complex (NASC) in New Delhi. The theme of the event was "Innovations for Agricultural Transformation".

Bihar becomes the 1st state to deploy dog squad to check liquor smuggling

Bihar has become the first state to deploy specially-trained dogs to check smuggling of liquor which continues to take place inspite of total ban imposed in the state for the last 3 years. 20 liquor-tracker dogs were trained rigorously for nine months in Hyderabad, Telangana.

Uttarakhand CM Trivendra Singh Rawat launched helpline for quick redressal of public complaints

The helpline number for lodging complaints is 1905. Citizens can contact any govt department as the step has been taken to ensure speedy functioning of the government departments and step up transparency in their work.

Odisha launched boat ambulance service for remote areas

It would be used to transport patients to hospitals in remote areas. The cost of the project is Rs 5.40 crore. The ambulance service can be availed by dialling '108'.

44th Global Summit of International Advertising Association held in Kochi

The 44th IAA World Congress was organised in Kochi International Advertising Association (IAA), Kerala. The highlight of the event was a robot trying to answer theme-based question- "Brand Dharma, What's coming next?"

Overview of the 12th Aero-India 2019 held in Bangalore

Defence Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the 12th biennial edition of International Aerospace and Defence Exhibition, the Aero India 2019 on 24th February 2019 at the Air Force Station Yelahanka in Bengaluru. The theme of the event was "Runway to a Billion Opportunities". Read full details of show here: <https://www.affairscloud.com/overview-of-the-12th-aero-india-2019-held-in-bangalore/>

PM Modi launched Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh

The scheme will provide Rs 6,000 per year to small and marginal farmer families having combined land holding/ownership of upto 2 hectares.

33rd GST Council meeting chaired by Union Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley in New Delhi

The meet was attended by the Finance Ministers of various States and Union Territories. In order to boost the residential segment of the real estate sector, following recommendations were made regarding GST rate:

- GST shall be levied at effective GST rate of 5% without Input Tax Credit (ITC) on residential properties outside affordable segment.
- GST shall be levied at effective GST of 1% without ITC on affordable housing properties.

Ashwini Kumar Choubey launched National Programme to Eliminate Viral Hepatitis

Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Ashwini Kumar Choubey in the presence of Amitabh Bachchan, the goodwill ambassador for hepatitis, WHO South-East Asia Region, launched the "National Action Plan – Viral Hepatitis" in Mumbai.

Madhya Pradesh Government launched 100-day employment scheme for youths

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath launched the State Government's flagship scheme 'Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana' that guarantees 100 days of employment every year to urban youth from economically weaker sections. Under the scheme, Rs 4,000 stipend per month during 100 days of period, would be given to the youth, whose family's annual income is less than Rs 2 lakh.

Tamil Nadu CM launched the Virtual learning portal for rural students

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami launched a virtual learning portal (www.tamilnaducareerservices.gov.in) to offer guidance to rural students preparing for competitive exams.

National War Memorial dedicated to the nation by PM Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the National War Memorial (NWM) near India Gate in New Delhi which commemorates the soldiers who participated and made the supreme sacrifice in Peacekeeping Missions and Counter Insurgency Operations. The outlay of the memorial is Rs 176 crore and is constructed by NCC (Nagarjuna Construction Company) Limited.

4th Global Digital Health Partnership Summit was hosted by India

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Shri J P Nadda, inaugurated the '4th Global Digital Health Partnership Summit', the global intergovernmental meeting on digital health, hosted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO) and the Global Digital Health Partnership (GDHP). The summit held in New Delhi.

EVM is 'information' under Right to Information Act, rule Central Information Commission

The Central Information Commission (CIC) has announced that an electronic voting machine (EVM) is "information" under Section 2(f) and 2(i) of Right to Information Act and it can be demanded by a citizen from the Election Commission (EC) by paying Rs. 10.

Rising India Summit 2019 held in New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed News18 Rising India Summit held in New Delhi and laid out his vision for a 'New India'. The summit was hosted by Network 18 group in collaboration with Ebix Inc. as a presenting partner. It was powered by Yono SBI. The theme of the summit was, "Beyond Politics: Defining National Priorities".

3-day fest on Gandhian philosophy held in New Delhi

The 3rd edition of the 3-day festival "Words in the Garden" based on the life and ideology of Mahatma Gandhi was held at India International Centre (IIC), New Delhi. The festival was organized by the Sanatan Sangeet Sanskriti and curated by renowned Hindi poet Ashok Vajpeyi. This year's title of the event was "Bapu Ki Dilli".

5,60,695 Houses Sanctioned Under PMAY(U) in the 43rd CSMC meeting

The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs approved the construction of another 5,60,695 more affordable houses for the benefit of urban poor under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) at the 43rd Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee meeting.

"Aviation Conclave 2019" inaugurated by Civil Aviation Ministry

Civil Aviation Ministry has organized "Aviation Conclave 2019" in association with Airport Authority of India (AAI), Airport Authority of India - Cargo Logistics & Allied Services Company Limited (AAICLAS) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The theme of the Aviation Conclave 2019 was "Flying for all".

CIPET centre inaugurated by Sadananda Gowda inaugurates in Tripura

Union Minister for Statistics and Programme Implementation, D V Sadananda Gowda, inaugurated a centre of the Central Institute of Plastic Engineering and Technology (CIPET) at Bodhjungnagar in Tripura. The institute will produce 1500 skilled workers per annum.

Skill Saathi Youth Conclave inaugurated by Dharmendra Pradhan in Odisha

Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, inaugurated the first-ever, Nua Odisha - Dharmapada Samvaad - Skill Saathi Youth Conclave at Rail Auditorium in Bhubaneswar which was aired live across 427 locations in Odisha.

2 new NIDs inaugurated at Bhopal and Jorhat by Suresh Prabhu

National Institutes of Design (NID) at Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh and Jorhat in Assam were inaugurated by Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, through video conference from New Delhi. They are autonomous institutions and under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Titanwala Museum has been inaugurated by Smriti Irani at Bagru, Rajasthan

“Titanwala Museum” showcases the Chhipa community’s art of traditional hand-block printing at Bagru, Rajasthan. The initiative of setting up the museum was taken up by Suraj Narayan Titanwala.

20th India-Italy JCEC session held in New Delhi

The 2-day long session of the 20th India-Italy Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation (JCEC) was held in New Delhi and co-chaired by the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Suresh Prabhu and the Deputy Minister of Economic Development (Italy), Mr. Michele Geraci.

800-kg “Astounding Bhagavad Gita” unveiled by Narendra Modi in Delhi

Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has unveiled a 800-kg “Astounding Bhagavad Gita” at ISKCON temple in Delhi. This book is the world’s largest sacred book. The book measured around 2.8m by 2 meters, weighed over 800 kg, contains 670 pages and has the original 700 Sanskrit verses of Bhagavad Gita.

PRANAM Commission launched by Sarbananda Sonowal

Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched the Parents Responsibility and Norms for Accountability and Monitoring (PRANAM) Commission, a panel set up to look after the issues with respect to the PRANAM Bill brought in for protection of parents of state government employees at Guwahati, Assam.

BioAsia 2019-Asia’s largest Life-sciences and healthcare forum held in Hyderabad

The 16th edition of BioAsia 2019 -Asia’s largest biotechnology and life-sciences forum was conducted in Hyderabad, Telangana. It was inaugurated by the Governor of Telangana –E.S.L Narasimhan .The theme of the conference was “Life Sciences 4.0 – Disrupt the Disruption”. BioAsia is an annual event organised by the Government of Telangana.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

India, Sri Lanka ink MoU to establish business centre for ICT incubators in Jaffna

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by India and Sri Lanka for the establishment of a business centre for ICT incubators in Jaffna, Sri Lanka through grant of 25 crore Sri Lankan rupees from India.

European Union agrees on greenhouse gas emission cut for trucks

The European Union (EU) and the Council agreed on reducing carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from new trucks and buses by 30 percent by 2030. This reduction shall be in comparison to the 2019 levels.

Overview of External Affairs Minister’s Visit To Bulgaria, Morocco And Spain

External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj undertook a 4-day visit to Bulgaria, Morocco and Spain from 16th to 19th February 2019 as part of India’s efforts to strengthen ties with these countries and expand avenues of cooperation. Read full details of her visit here: <https://www.affairscloud.com/overview-of-external-affairs-ministers-visit-to-bulgaria-morocco-and-spain/>

FATF remained Pak in “Grey” list for failing to stop terror financing

Financial Action Task Force (FATF)condemned the Pulwama terror attack in Kashmir,which led to death of 40 CRPF jawans and decided to keep Pakistan in the ‘grey’ list owing to continued funding of terrorist groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jamat-ud-Dawa.

3-day navy drill from Gulf to Indian Ocean announced by Iran

Iran announced that it will be launching a 3-day annual navy drill named “Velayat 97” in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean. It will be held in the waters of Strait of Hormuz, Makran coast, Oman Sea and the north of the Indian ocean and will cover an area of 2 million square kilometres.

President Bashir declares year-long state of emergency in Sudan

A state of emergency was declared in Sudan by its President Omar al-Bashir. It was due to continuous protests by the general public since 19 December who were furious by the mismanagement of the nation’s economy and wanted the leader to step down.

Cobra Gold, one of world’s largest multinational military exercises, held in Thailand

Thailand and the United States hosted the annual Cobra Gold military exercise, the biggest activity of its type in the Asia-Pacific region with 29 nations took part as participants or observers. The Indian Army participated in the military training exercise with a 14-member contingent.

Donald Trump signs SPD-4 to create US Space Force

US President Donald Trump signed Space Policy Directive-4 (SPD-4), ordering the Pentagon to establish the Space Force as the 6th branch of the United States military, to go along with the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard, in order to secure and extend American dominance of the space domain.

150 Sri Lankan students awarded Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship

150 (Advanced Level) AL students from all 25 districts of Sri Lanka were awarded the Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship for Study in India. Awardees received Rs. 30,000 annually during their two years of Advanced Level studies.

Month-long ‘Festival of India’ begins in Nepal

A month-long ‘Festival of India’ began was inaugurated in Kathmandu, Nepal on 19th February 2019 by Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Rabindra Adhikari and Indian Ambassador to Nepal Manjeev Singh Puri. It is being organised by the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Embassy of India.

Overview Of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Two Day Visit To South Korea

Prime Minister Narendra Modi embarked on a 2-day visit to South Korea or Republic of Korea (ROK) on the invitation of President Moon Jae-in. He was conferred with Seoul peace prize in the 14th Edition of Seoul Peace Prize Ceremony. Read full details of his visit here: <https://www.affairsccloud.com/overview-of-prime-minister-narendra-modis-two-day-visit-to-south-korea/>

Indian passport improved its ranking on global index by jumping 10 ranks in 5 years

The Passport Index of 2019, which ranks almost 199 countries in the world based on their Visa-Free Scores and their ranking according to the UNDP human development index, showed that Indian passport has steadily strengthened in a period of 5 years from rank 77 in 2015 to 67 in 2019.

Afghanistan opens new export route to India through Iran’s Chabahar port

Afghanistan began exporting to India through the Chabahar port in Iran, for the first time by bypassing the Pakistan route.

India ranked 47th in the “inclusive internet index 2019”

India has ranked 47th in the ‘Inclusive Internet Index 2019’, prepared by ‘Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) for Facebook. The index was expanded to include 100 countries representing 94% of the world’s population and 96% of global GDP. Sweden topped the index followed by Singapore and USA.

BANKING & FINANCE

Srei Equipment, Syndicate Bank to jointly provide equipment financing under co-lending arrangement

Srei Equipment Finance, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Srei Infrastructure Finance, has collaborated with Syndicate Bank to provide equipment financing under co-lending arrangement for various equipment categories like construction, mining, material handling, commercial vehicles, medical and farm equipment.

MoU signed between IIFL Home Finance and Maharashtra government for building houses under PMAY

A MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) was signed between IIFL Home Finance and the Maharashtra government for building affordable houses through credit-linked subsidy scheme (CLSS) under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).

Merger of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with BoB (Bank of Baroda) to be effective from April 1

According to a statement by Bank of Baroda, its merger with Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank shall come into force from 1st April 2019. This scheme has been named as 'Amalgamation of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda Scheme, 2019'.

RBI bundles NBFCs into a single type to offer operational flexibility

Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in accordance with an announcement made during the last bi-monthly policy, decided to create a single category for the NBFCs (non-banking financial companies) by bundling their present three-tier structure. It was also decided that exposures to all NBFCs, excluding core investment companies, will be risk weighted as per credit ratings.

Zimbabwe Starts Trading New Currency RTGS dollar

Zimbabwe's central bank announced the discontinuation of its official currency; quasi-currency bond note officially pegged at parity with the U.S. dollar and launched a new currency called RTGS dollars, to resolve a long-term monetary crisis. The currency was launched at an initial rate of 2.5 RTGS dollars per US dollar.

RBI formalised USD 75-billion swap pact with Bank of Japan

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Bank of Japan formalised the USD 75- billion swap agreement, which would act as a cushion against any sharp swings in the local currency whenever the international financial markets turn volatile.

Rs 300 crore Women's Livelihood Bond launched by World Bank, UN and SIDBI

World Bank, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) launched new social impact bonds exclusively for women, called Women's Livelihood Bonds (WLBs), with an initial corpus of Rs 300 crore to provide funds at an annual interest rate of around 13% to 14% annual interest rate of around 13% to 14%.

BoB joined hands with German KfW for USD 130m to refinance solar units

State-run Bank of Baroda has tied up with Germany's KfW Development Bank to refinance solar projects at a cost of 113 million USD. The tie-up is part of an Indo-German Solar Energy Partnership signed in 2015.

RBI extends KYC deadline for digital wallets by six months

The Reserve Bank of India extended the deadline for prepaid payment instrument (PPI) issuers to complete their Know Your Customer (KYC) norms by six months.

Corporation bank, Allahabad Bank and Dhanlaxmi bank are out of PCA framework

The Board for Financial Supervision (BFS) of the Reserve Bank of India has removed 2 public sector banks- Corporation Bank and Allahabad Bank and 1 private sector bank – Dhanlaxmi Bank from PCA (Prompt Corrective Action) framework.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

CBDT set up panel to help bring down tax litigation

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) formed a 4-member committee, headed by income tax commissioner Sanjeev Sharma, to look into the matter of taxation related pain points and submit its final report and recommendations by mid-March.

HAL places order with Thales for 2.75-inch rocket launchers to equip Indian armed forces

HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited) has signed a contract with Thales, a French aerospace and defence company for supplying “135 2.75-inch (70-mm) rocket launchers, to improve the tactical capabilities of the Indian armed forces.

Jio Saavn only Indian company to make it to ‘50 Most Innovative Companies’ list

Jio Saavn– an India-based global audio and music scored 1st rank among Indian companies and 28th rank globally in the 2019 list of “50 Most Innovative Companies”.

Government released draft e-commerce policy

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) released a new 41-page "Draft National e-Commerce Policy-India's Data for India's Development" that provides setting up a legal and technological framework for restrictions on cross-border data flow.

Iran buys Indian raw sugar for the first time in five years

For the first time in 5 years, Indian traders will export raw sugar to Iran. It'll be exported in March and April. The delivery is happening after so many years owing to Iran's struggles to secure food supplies due to sanctions imposed by the United States.

FAGMIL inked MoU with Himachal Pradesh to launch Rs 605 cr White cement Plant Project

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Smt. Alka Tiwari, CMD, FAGMIL and Shri Manoj Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Govt of Himachal Pradesh for ensuring completion of the project to establish a white cement plant near village NohraDhar in Sirmour district of Himachal Pradesh in a time bound manner. FCI Aravali Gypsum and Minerals India Limited (FAGMIL) has taken up a project, at a cost of approximately Rs. 605 crores.

MoU inked between Inland Waterways authority of India and Indian Oil on fuel needs for national waterways

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) for development of infrastructure for fuels, lubricating oil, LPG, Natural Gas and any other related fuel and gas for meeting the requirement of National Waterways.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Divya Karnad became First Indian Woman to receive Future of Nature Award

33-year-old Ashoka University teacher and Wipro Sustainable Fellow, Divya Karnad became the First Indian Woman to be honoured with the “Global Future of Nature Award” for her work on marine conservation. She is the second Indian to receive this award after Dr. Charudutt Mishra.

Overview of “Digital India Awards 2018”

The Digital India Awards are aimed at encouraging Government entities, which have made significant contributions towards the implementation of e-Governance and shown an exemplary & innovative approach to achieve administrative efficiency and transparency. Union Minister of Electronics & IT, Law & Justice, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, conferred 35 “Digital India Awards 2018” under different categories. Read full details of awards

here <https://www.affairscloud.com/overview-of-the-digital-india-awards-2018/>

JSPL won the FICCI CSR Award for Women Empowerment

Jindal Steel and Power Ltd (JSPL) was conferred with the prestigious ‘FICCI CSR Award’ for Women Empowerment for its innovative and high impact women empowerment programmes, implemented by the company's CSR Arm – JSPL Foundation, across its operational areas in India.

Kareena Kapoor Khan named brand ambassador of Swasth Immunised India

Bollywood actress, Kareena Kapoor Khan is named as the brand ambassador of Swasth Immunised India, a year-long campaign initiated by Network18 and Serum Institute of India which promotes immunisation of babies under two years of age.

ONGC Rajahmundry wins environmental excellence award

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation(ONGC)'s Rajahmundry unit won the Energy and Environment Foundation Global Clean Awards-2019 for sustained efforts in pursuit of Swachh Bharat Mission as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at a function in New Delhi.

Harmanpreet Singh named as Player of the Year and Lalremsiami as Rising Player of The Year by the Asian Hockey Federation

Harmanpreet Singh was awarded the 2018 Player of the Year award while women's team striker Lalremsiami as the Rising Player of The Year, by the Asian Hockey Federation. The Indian men's team was awarded the Best Performance of The Year.

Overview of 91st Academy Awards (Oscars 2019)

The 91st Academy Awards (commonly known as Oscars), presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), honored the best films of 2018, on February 24, 2019, at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles, California. Read full details of awards here - <https://www.affairscloud.com/overview-of-the-91st-academy-awards-oscars-2019/>

Playwright Mahesh Elkunchwar chosen for the META lifetime achievement award

Mahesh Elkunchwar, an eminent Indian Playwright, has been chosen for 2019's META Lifetime Achievement Award, which will be conferred upon him at the 14th Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) festival to be held in New Delhi on 12th March 2019.

President presented Gandhi Peace Prize for 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018

President Ram Nath Kovind presented the "Gandhi Peace Prize" at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi. The following are the awardees:

- 2015 - Vivekanand Kendra, Kanyakumari
- 2016 - Akshaya Patra Foundation and Sulabh International (jointly)
- 2017 - Ekal Abhiyan Trust
- 2018 - Yohei Sasakawa

G.R. Karthikeyan received the Lifetime Achievement Award

G.R. Karthikeyan was awarded the Lifetime Achievement award at the FMSCI(Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India) annual awards function held in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He is the father of Narain Karthikeyan- India's first Formula One racer.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi conferred the National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 Awards

The National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 awards were given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The festival was launched with a theme "Be the Voice of New India" and "Find solutions and contribute to policy" by Sports and youth affairs minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore on January 12 to encourage youth (18-25 years) to engage with public issues.

National e-Governance Awards 2019 was presented by Shri Jitendra Singh

Minister of state in Prime Minister's office, Dr. Jitendra Singh presented National e-Governance Awards 2019 in New Delhi with a view to recognize and promote excellence in implementation of e-Governance initiatives.

CZPDC Bhopal and WZPDC Indore honoured with Saubhagya Award

The Central Zone Power Distribution Company (CZPDC), Bhopal and West Zone Power Distribution Company (WZPDC), Indore were conferred with the "Saubhagya Award" under Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana at the National Conference of Energy Ministers by the Union Minister of State for Energy, R.K. Singh.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNS

Mushtaque Ahmad has been designated as Vice-President of AHF

India's Mohd Mushtaque Ahmad was elected Vice-President of the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) and Asima Ali was elected as the Executive Committee member, for a 4-year term in Gifu, Japan.

Justice Uma Nath Singh takes oath as First Lokayukta of Nagaland

Justice Uma Nath Singh took the oath as the first lokayukta of Nagaland. He was formerly the Chief Justice of Meghalaya High Court. His tenure would last for a period of 5 years or until he turns 70, whichever occurs earlier.

Brij Bhushan Sharan elected as WFI President for the third time

Brij bhushan Sharan Singh was elected as the President of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) for a third time for a period of 3 years. Returning Officer, Justice R. B. Misra, a retired judge of the Himachal Pradesh High Court conducted the elections.

State Governor of Sudan Ayala Appointed Sudan's Prime Minister

The governor of Gezira state, Mohamed Tahir Ayala was appointed as Sudan's Prime Minister.

Dr. KJ Srinivasa designated as Indian High Commissioner to Cooperative Republic of Guyana

Dr. K. J. Srinivasa, Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer of 2002 batch has been named as next High Commissioner of India to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana. He will succeed V. Mahalingam.

PepsiCo's former CEO Indra Nooyi appointed to Amazon's Board of Directors

Former CEO of Pepsico Indra Nooyi has joined Amazon's Board of Directors. With her appointment, Amazon's 11-member board now has five women, including Nooyi, Brewer, Jamie Gorelick, Judith McGrath and Patricia Stonesifer.

Govind Prasad Sharma appointed as NBT Chairman

The autonomous organization under the Department of Higher Education, National Book Trust (NBT) appointed educationist and author Govind Prasad Sharma as its new Chairman replacing Baldeo Sharma.

Hemant Bhargava appointed as Non-Executive Chairman of IDBI Bank

IDBI Bank (Industrial Development Bank of India) appointed Hemant Bhargava as non-executive non-whole-time Chairman for a period of 3 years or till he continues as the chairman-in-charge and MD of LIC (Life Insurance Corporation of India).

Muhammadu Buhari got his second term as Nigeria's President

Muhammadu Buhari, who is a member of All Progressive Congress (APC) has defeated Atiku Abubakar with more than three million votes in the election to become the President of Africa's most populous country – Nigeria for the second time.

ACQUISITIONS & MERGERS

Thomas Cook India Group announces acquisition of Digiphot Entertainment Imaging (DEI)

Thomas Cook India Group—a travel services group has acquired 51 percent share in Digiphot Entertainment Imaging (DEI) based in Dubai. The deal is valued at \$40.6 million (Rs 289 crore).

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

SpaceX launched Israel's first moon lander, "Beresheet", from Florida

Israel's first moon lander, the 585 kg "Beresheet" ("Genesis" in Hebrew), was launched atop a Falcon 9 rocket from the private US-based SpaceX in Florida, United States. At a cost of USD 100 million, it is the lowest-budget spacecraft to ever undertake such a mission.

Scientists have discovered 300,000 new galaxies using a Low-Frequency Array (LOFAR) telescope

A study conducted by 200 scientists from 18 countries has led to discovery of 300,000 new galaxies using a Low-Frequency Array (LOFAR) telescope in Netherlands.

Iran launched cruise missile from submarine for the first time during war drills

Iran launched a cruise missile from a submarine for the first time during ongoing annual military drill named “Velayat-97” in the Strait of Hormuz. The “anti-ship cruise missile” was launched from a Ghadir-class submarine.”

Scientists discovered exo planet named ‘hot Earth’ that orbits its star in just 11 hours

A Team of Scientists from Harvard-Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics had discovered a exo planet named ‘hot Earth’ that orbit’s its dwarf star in eleven hours by using the data of NASA’s planet-hunting satellite Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS).

Piyush Goyal initiated Rail Drishti Dashboard for passengers to promote transparency

Union Minister Piyush Goyal launched Rail Drishti Dashboard, an online portal containing information related to passenger and freight trains and links to live feeds of IRCTC kitchens. It has been developed by the Centre for Railway Information System (CRIS). The URL of the dashboard is railydrishti.cris.org.in.

India successfully test fired surface-to-air missile “QRSAM” from Odisha

India successfully test fired the short range Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile (QRSAM), developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for the Indian Army, from a test range along the coast at Chandipur in Balasore district, Odisha. It will replace the ‘Akash’ missile.

Tejas Networks Launches World’s First Ultra-Converged Broadband Product At Mobile World Congress, Barcelona

Tejas Networks today launched its broadband access product which provides both wireline as well as wireless broadband services from a single integrated platform. It was launched by Mr. Anshu Prakash, Additional Secretary, Department of Telecom, Government of India at the Mobile World Congress (MWC), Barcelona.

DAC consented to acquire Defence Equipment worth 2700 crores

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) headed by Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman approved the acquisition of defence equipment at cost of Rs 2700 crores.

ENVIRONMENT

World’s largest bee spotted the first time since 1981

Wallace’s giant bee (Megachile pluto), the largest bee known on the Earth which was considered to be extinct since 1981 was re-spotted in an Indonesian forest.

Himachal Pradesh government declared Monkeys as vermin

Monkey’s are declared as vermin by the Himachal Pradesh government again, in 11 districts, 91 tehsils and sub-tehsils for the next one year.

SPORTS

Australian wicket-keeper, Alyssa Healy, sets Guinness World Record at MCG

Australia’s wicketkeeper Alyssa Healy set a new Guinness World Record after achieving the feat for the ‘highest catch of a cricket ball’ at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). She caught a ball which was dropped from a drone, 80 metres above the cricket ground. She broke the record of England’s Kristan Baumgartner with a catch from 62 metres.

India suspended by IOC From Hosting International Sporting Events after Pakistan Shooters were Denied Visa

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) suspended all Indian applications to host future events and urged international sports federations not to stage competitions in the country after two Pakistanis were denied visas to compete in 25m Rapid Fire Pistol Competition during

International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup event held in New Delhi following the attack by a Pakistan-based militant group in Pulwama.

Chennai Spartans won Pro Volleyball League title

Chennai Spartans won the inaugural edition of the Pro Volleyball League (PVL) by defeating Calicut Heroes by 3-0 in Nehru Indoor Stadium, Chennai.

Sri Lanka became the first ever Asian team to win Test Series in South Africa

Sri Lanka cricket team became the first Asian side to win a Test series in South Africa after winning the series by 8 wickets with a score of 2-0 at Port Elizabeth. This was Sri Lanka's sixth series in South Africa and their first win.

FIFA banned Chelsea for breaching transfer rules

The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)'s disciplinary committee has banned the English Premier League club Chelsea from signing players in the next two transfer windows, after the club was found to have breached FIFA rules relating to international transfer and registration of players under the age of 18.

Rashid Khan became first bowler in T20I history to pick 4 wickets in 4 balls

Afghanistan cricket team's leg spinner, Rashid Khan, became the first bowler to take out 4 wickets in 4 balls in Twenty20 Internationals (T20Is) during the third and final T20I against Ireland in Dehradun.

Afghanistan broke Australia's record for the highest Twenty20 cricket total

Afghanistan created history against Ireland in their second Twenty20 International at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Dehradun, Uttarakhand, by scoring 278 runs for the loss of 3 wickets from their allotted 20 overs, to register the highest-ever total in T20s.

Abhijeet Gupta won the Cannes International Open trophy

Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta won the Cannes International Open held in Cannes, France. After taking an easy draw with Pier Luigi Basso of Italy in the ninth and final round.

Suresh Raina became first Indian to score 8000 runs in T20s

Indian batsman Suresh Raina became the first Indian to score 8000 runs in T20 cricket after scoring just 12 runs in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy match in New Delhi against Puducherry. He was playing for Uttar Pradesh.

Sanath Jayasuriya banned from all forms of cricket for 2 years

Former captain of Sri Lanka, Sanath Jayasuriya has been banned from all forms of cricket for 2 years after admitting breaching two counts of the ICC Anti-Corruption Code viz. "Article 2.4.6" and "Article 2.4.7".

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Venkaiah Naidu Launched the book 'Quality, Accreditation & Ranking' by Dr. H Chaturvedi

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu publicized the book titled 'Quality, Accreditation and Ranking – A Silent Revolution in the Offing in Indian Higher Education' edited by EPSI's Alternate President, Dr. H Chaturvedi at the book launch function organized by the Education Promotion Society for India (EPSI), BIMTECH and Bloomsbury Pvt Ltd.

OBITUARY

Telugu Film Director Kodi Ramakrishna Dies At 69

Kodi Ramakrishna, Telugu film director died due to ill health. He originally hails from Palakollu in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Thinking Day celebrated on 22nd February

Every year, Girl Scouts and Girl Guides celebrate the World Thinking Day on 22nd February. The theme 2019 was "Leadership".

Central Excise day observed on 24th February, 2019

Central Excise day is observed annually on 24th February in India to commemorate the establishment of the Central Excise and Salt Act on 24 February 1944.

World NGO Day 2019 was observed on 27th Feb

On 27th February 2019, the human Right activists and all individuals celebrated world NGO Day 2019. It was officially recognized and declared by the 12 member countries of the IX Baltic Sea NGO Forum of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and first time marked by the rest of the world, UN, EU leaders and international organizations in 2014.

STATE NEWS

Delhi govt presented Rs 60,000 cr budget for financial year 2019-20

Delhi Finance Minister Manish Sisodia presented a Rs. 60,000 crore budget for 2019-20 laying emphasis on the education, health and transport sectors. The 26% of the total expenditure of budget is allocated towards higher education. Two new universities have been proposed in NCR namely University of Applied Sciences and University for teachers' training.

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