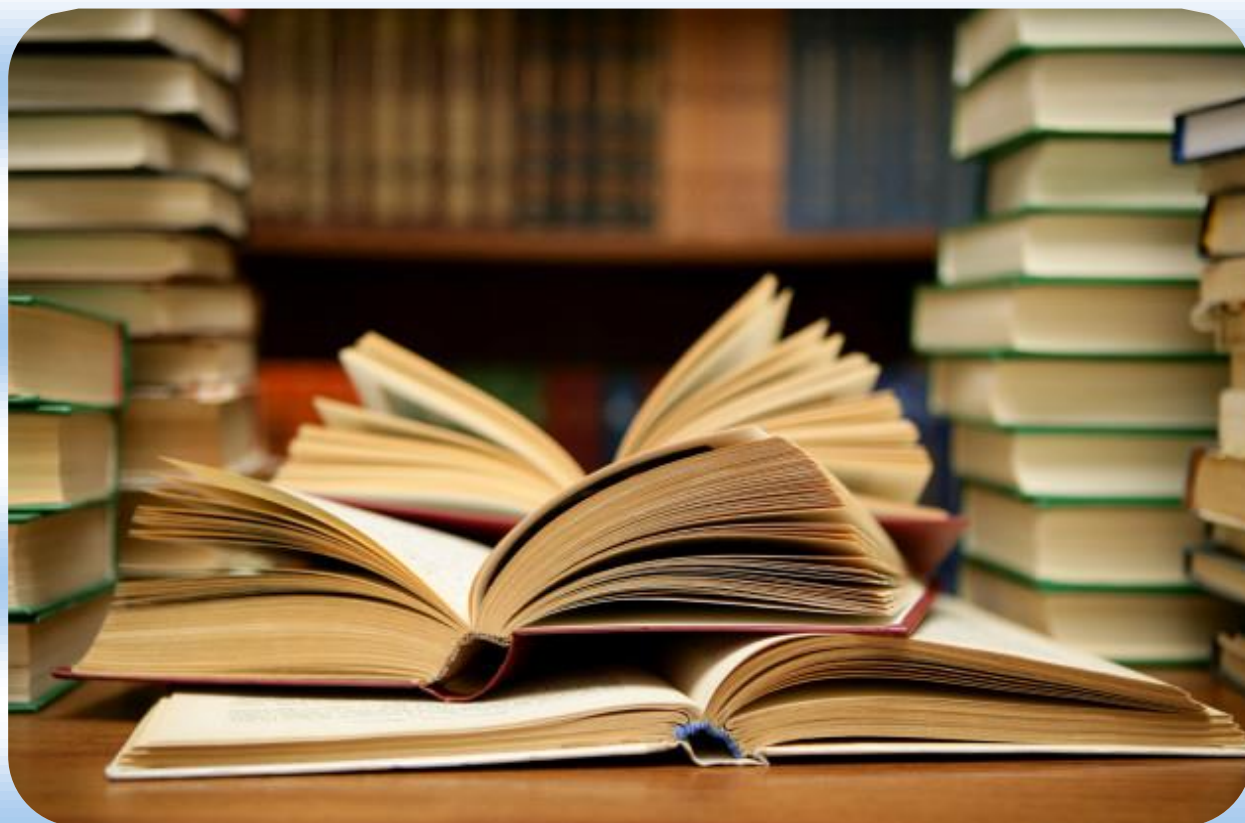


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GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



FEBRUARY-2019

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Startup India-WhatsApp Grand Challenge

To fuel the growth of India's entrepreneurial and small business community, the Facebook-owned WhatsApp in partnership with Invest India launched the "Startup India-WhatsApp Grand Challenge". The challenge will give away a total of \$250,000 (Rs 1.8 crore) to the top 5 winners. WhatsApp has listed healthcare, rural economy, financial and digital inclusion, education and citizen safety as the themes for the startup challenge. "Entrepreneurs with highly innovative ideas, business models that solve for a local India problem, making a large scale socio-economic impact, are invited to apply," WhatsApp said in a media release.

Budgetary allocations to the Ministry of Home Affairs

The NDA government's focus on internal security was reflected in the interim budget, with the allocation for the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) exceeding Rs 1 lakh crore for the first time. Interim finance minister allocated Rs 1,03,927 crore to the MHA, Rs 10,477 crore more than that for the previous year. The revised estimates for 2018-19 pegged the MHA's expenditure at Rs 99,034 crore. The allocation for improving police infrastructure went up to Rs 5,117 crore.

10 dimensions of Vision 2030

NEW DELHI: Unveiling the development vision for the next decade, the government Friday said it would focus on 10 key areas including job creation, physical and social infrastructure building, pollution-free nation and clean rivers. Presenting the Budget 2019-20, Finance Minister Piyush Goyal laid out vision for 10 most important dimensions in 2030. "The first dimension of this vision will be to build physical as well as social infrastructure for a USD 10-trillion economy

Braille Voter Slips for Visually Impaired and Blind

NEW DELHI: Visually impaired and blind voters will be provided with braille voter slips in the Lok Sabha elections due this summer. Braille is a script with raised dots that can be read with the fingers by people who are blind or who have low vision. It is a tactile reading and writing system used by blind and visually impaired people who cannot access print material. As part of its strategy framework for 'accessible elections', the commission has told all chief electoral.

Madras High Court Rules against Negative Marking in Competitive Exams

Differentiating between 'intelligent guessing' and 'wild guessing' and stressing upon the need to encourage the former, the Madras High Court on Friday held that the practice of awarding negative marks in competitive examinations should be done away with. The court was of the view that deducting marks for wrong answers would not in any way help in analysing the intelligence, aptitude or knowledge of the candidates. Justice R. Mahadevan said, "Intelligent guessing is an art. It is very useful in our life. One cannot be sure about all things at all times.

India becomes Second Largest LPG Consumer and Importer

India has become the world's second largest importer of liquefied petroleum gas as its government pushes cleaner alternatives to traditional cooking fuels such as firewood and cow dung. Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan says imports of LPG grew 12.5 percent over the past five years to 12 million metric tons (13 million tons) in 2018-19, surpassing Japan and putting India in second place behind China.

Plea in Supreme Court in favour of Two Child Policy

The Supreme Court may hear a plea to direct the Union government to give a "serious thought" to the rise in population and adopt the "two-child" policy norm in family planning. The public interest litigation petition, filed by activist Anupam Bajpai, said couples who followed the policy should be rewarded with incentives, while those who violated the "norm" should be punished by withdrawal of government "facilities and concessions". "The citizen should have a limit in giving birth only to the maximum of two children.

Dera Baba Nanak Land Post Designated as Immigration Centre for visiting Kartarpur Sahib

The Home Ministry Monday designated Dera Baba Nanak land post, which will be the exit and entry point for visiting Kartarpur Sahib gurdwara in Pakistan, as an authorised immigration check point. In a notification, the Home Ministry said anyone with valid travel documents can exit or enter through the post in Punjab's Gurdaspur district.



e-Aushadhi Portal

To increase transparency and accountability, the Ministry of AYUSH launched the e-AUSHADHI portal on Wednesday for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs and related matters. Addressing the gathering at the launch programme here, AYUSH Minister Shripad Yesso Naik said the portal was intended for increased transparency, improved information management facility, improved data usability and increased accountability. He informed that timelines would be fixed for processing of applications through the portal.

Bhopal to host 79th Indian History Congress

After Savitribai Phule Pune University allegedly backed out, the Congress government in Madhya Pradesh has decided to host the 79th Indian History Congress here beginning February 26, an IHC official said on Monday. The 79th session was earlier supposed to be held at the SPPU from December 28. 'Financial reasons' "However, it was cancelled by the local hosts apparently due to financial reasons," said IHC secretary.

Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) launched in 16 States and UTs

Sixteen states and Union Territories on Tuesday joined a pan-India network of single emergency helpline number '112' on which immediate assistance can be sought by anyone in distress. The 112 helpline is an integration of police (100), fire (101) and women (1090) helpline numbers. The health helpline (108) will be integrated with it soon. Launching the '112' helpline, under the the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), Home Minister Rajnath Singh said the central government is committed to the safety of citizens.

Govt clears Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transport System

NEW DELHI: The government on Tuesday approved construction of a ₹30,274 crore worth Regional Rapid Transport System (RRTS) to connect the national capital with Meerut through Ghaziabad. According to the government, the 82 kilometer-stretch will be covered in less than 60 minutes by high-speed and green public transit. The approval was given at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

PM Modi Flags-off First Ever Diesel-to-Electric Converted Locomotive

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday flagged off an electric locomotive converted from a diesel engine at the Diesel Locomotives Works (DLW) in his constituency here. In a first, the Indian Railways has converted a diesel locomotive into an electric one, as part of efforts to completely electrify the broad gauge network. Immediately after landing here, the prime minister reached DLW and flagged off the electric locomotive. He also inspected the engine from inside.

Kareena Kapoor Khan appointed ambassador of Swasth Immunised India campaign

Bollywood diva, Kareena Kapoor Khan, was last seen on the big screen in Shashanka Ghosh's Veere Di wedding along with Sonam Kapoor, Swara Bhaskar and Shikha Talsania in pivotal roles. Other than being a phenomenal actress, Kareena has also been supporting various social causes including the improved quality of education in India. The Jab We Met actress has now been named as the brand ambassador of Swasth Immunised India, an initiative to immunize children under the age of 2 years.

Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana of Madhya Pradesh

The Congress government in Madhya Pradesh on Friday rolled out its flagship 'Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana' that guarantees 100 days of employment every year to urban youths from economically weaker sections (EWS). The scheme, as part of which youths would be imparted skill development training, was launched by Chief Minister Kamal Nath here. "We are preparing a new roadmap for development for better future of the state, under which steps will be taken to ensure development of agriculture and employment to youths.

CBIC sets up Working Groups to Facilitate Exports, Curb Tax Evasion

New Delhi: The CBIC has set up three working groups to suggest ways to facilitate exports, especially through e-commerce, and improve compliance by way of curbing tax evasion. "Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has constituted three Working Groups to study and recommend measures to facilitate trade, promote exports and improve compliance," the board said in a statement.

Karnataka High Court quashes ED freeze on Greenpeace Bank Accounts

The Karnataka High Court has quashed the Enforcement Directorate (ED) order freezing the bank accounts of Greenpeace India, the Indian arm of the international environmental watchdog said on Saturday. "We welcome the quashing of the ED order by the Karnataka High Court as it unfreezes our bank accounts, which receive donations from thousands of environmentally conscious Indian citizens," said Greenpeace India in a statement here.

Deloitte launches WorldClass Initiative in India

Deloitte LLP announced the launch of 'WorldClass' in India – an initiative that aims to support estimated 10 million girls and woman across the country and develop their skills and align them with 'industry 4.0'. Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship was present in the launch of the initiative that has set its target for 2030. The company is looking forward to educating around 50 million women from around the globe and make them industry ready.

EVM is 'information' under RTI Act: CIC

New Delhi: An Electronic Voting Machine is "information" under the Right to Information Act and can be demanded by an applicant from the Election Commission of India on a payment of Rs 10, the Central Information Commission has ruled. This implies the Election Commission has to respond to an RTI application seeking the EVM either by providing it or refusing it under exemption clauses in the Act. But that also can be contested before the CIC.

Railway Minister launches Rail Drishti Dashboard

Dashboard brings information from various sources under a single window Minister of Railways & Coal, Piyush Goyal has launched Rail Drishti dashboard, encompassing all the digitisation efforts in Indian Railways and promoting transparency and accountability. It brings information from various sources on a single platform and gives access to key statistics and parameters to every citizen of the country. This dashboard can be accessed using a desktop/laptop or a mobile device such as a phone or tablet.

New Railway Zone for Andhra Pradesh

Indian Railways will be making a new zone in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh named 'South Coast Railway', Railway Minister Piyush Goyal said Wednesday. The present divisions, including Guntakal, Guntur and Vijaywada and Waltair division will be split into two and will have the headquarter at South Coast Railway, said Goyal. Goyal added that a part of the Waltair division will be converted into a new division with its headquarter at Rayagada, Odisha.

2nd edition of Indian Sign Language Dictionary Launched

The second edition of the Indian Sign Language dictionary was released on Wednesday, providing the hearing impaired people with 6,000 words in Hindi and English along with their corresponding graphic representation. The first edition of the first-of-its-kind dictionary was launched with 3,000 words on March 23, 2018. With the second edition, the dictionary now comprises 6,000 Hindi and English words and their corresponding graphic representation which are used in daily life.

Govt releases draft e-commerce policy

The government on Saturday released the draft national e-commerce policy proposing setting up a legal and technological framework for restrictions on cross-border data flow and also laid out conditions for businesses regarding collection or processing of sensitive data locally and storing it abroad. The draft policy said the framework would be created to provide the basis for imposing restrictions on cross-border data flow from specified sources including data.

GST council reduces Tax rates on Housing

Demand for residential properties is expected to receive a major boost following the government's decision to cut the goods & services tax (GST) rates for under-construction projects to 5 per cent from effective rate of 12 per cent. In a major push to stated objective of 'Housing For All by 2022', the government has reduced GST to marginal 1 per cent for affordable housing while revising the definition of such homes. Prior to this, under-construction residential properties attracted.

RBI Removes three Banks from PCA Framework

MUMBAI: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) removed Allahabad Bank NSE 4.79 %, Corporation Bank NSE 0.66 % and Dhanlaxmi Bank NSE 0.31 % out of the prompt corrective action (PCA) framework on Friday, subject to certain conditions and continuous monitoring. "Allahabad Bank and Corporation Bank be taken out of the PCA Framework subject to certain conditions and continuous monitoring," RBI said in a release. "It has also been decided to take Dhanlaxmi Bank out of the PCA framework.

Amendments to the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2018

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved proposals to amend the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2018. This will further strengthen the bill in its objective to effectively tackle the menace of illicit deposit-taking activities, and prevent such schemes from duping the poor, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said while briefing the media after the Cabinet meeting here. The bill provides for severe punishment and heavy pecuniary fines to act as deterrent.

Linking Of PAN Card with Aadhaar Mandatory for Filing IT returns : SC

Linking Aadhaar with the Permanent Account Number (PAN) will be mandatory for filing Income Tax Return for the assessment year 2019-20, the apex court has clarified in a ruling. With this, the court has turned the order given by the Delhi High Court early last year. "For the assessment year 2019-20, the Income Tax Return shall be filed in terms of the judgment passed by this Court,".

PM Lays Foundation Stone for Sela Tunnel in Arunachal Pradesh

In a key move aimed at improving all weather connectivity and enabling the swift movement of Indian troops to Arunachal Pradesh bordering China, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday laid the foundation stone for the Sela Tunnel Project, a Defence Ministry statement said. The tunnel is being built at an estimated cost of ₹687 crores by the Border Roads Organisation and is to be completed in three years. It aims to provide all weather connectivity.

Indian Air Force Strikes against Jaish-e-Mohammed camps in Pakistan

Indian fighter jets struck the biggest training camp of the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) inside Pakistan in a pre-dawn operation on Tuesday, killing over 300 terrorists. The synchronised strike, involving 12 Mirage 2000 aircraft and supported by a fleet of Sukhoi 30 jets, a mid-air refueller and two airborne warning and control systems, targeted JeM's "five-star resort style".



Rishi Kumar Shukla appointed CBI Director

NEW DELHI: Former Madhya Pradesh Police chief Rishi Kumar Shukla was on Saturday appointed the chief of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for a fixed tenure of two years, according to a Personnel Ministry order. Shukla, a 1983-batch IPS officer, is at present chairman of Madhya Pradesh Police Housing Corporation in Bhopal. He has been appointed in place of Alok Kumar Verma, who was removed from the post of CBI Director on January 10.

India's Mithali Raj Becomes First Woman Cricketer to Play 200 ODIs

Mithali Raj on Friday became the first-ever women cricketer to play 200 one-day internationals. The ongoing third ODI against New Zealand marks the 200th appearance of the Indian women's ODI team skipper. The 36-year-old, who made her ODI debut in June 1999, is serving the game for 19 years and 219 days, now. This is fourth-highest among the men cricketers too as Mithali is just behind Sachin Tendulkar (463), Sanath Jayasuriya (445) and Javed Miandad (233). Interestingly, Indian women have played a total of 263 ODIs in their history and Mithali has been a part of 200 of them.

Life Size Portrait of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Unveiled in Parliament

NEW DELHI: A life-size portrait of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee will be unveiled by the President in Parliament House on Tuesday, an official said. President Ram Nath Kovind will unveil the portrait in the Central Hall of Parliament.



Sushil Chandra appointed new Election Commissioner

CBDT Chairman Sushil Chandra was on Thursday appointed the new Election Commissioner ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, making the poll panel a three-member entity again. The other two members of the Commission are Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sunil Arora and Election Commissioner (EC) Ashok Lavasa. Chandra, 61, an IRS-IT officer of the 1980 batch, will fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of O.P. Rawat, who demitted office as Chief Election Commissioner (CEC).

Hina Jaiswal becomes the First Woman Flight Engineer of IAF

Flight Lieutenant Hina Jaiswal from Chandigarh has scripted history by becoming the first woman flight engineer to be inducted by the Indian Air Force (IAF) Having completed the six-month Flight Engineer course on Friday.



Azim Premji awarded EY Lifetime Achievement Award

Eicher Motors managing director and chief executive officer Siddhartha Lal was on Tuesday named the EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2018 at a ceremony attended by over 500 business personalities. This was the 20th edition of the EOY Awards in India which also saw Wipro chairman Azim Premji being honoured with the lifetime achievement award. According to an EY release, Siddhartha Lal has bagged the award for leading an impressive transformation at Eicher Motors since he took over the reins in 2006.

Siddhartha Lal Named EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2018 – India

Siddhartha Lal, managing director and chief executive officer, Eicher Motors, has been awarded the EY Entrepreneur of the Year for 2018. Having led an impressive transformation at Eicher Motors since he took over the reins in 2006, helping the company resurrect the Royal Enfield motorcycle brand in India and establishing it as a global brand icon. Lal will now represent India at the EY World Entrepreneur of the Year Award (WEOY) in Monte Carlo from 6 – 8 June 2019. This global business

PM Modi awarded Seoul Peace Prize

SEOUL: Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred the prestigious Seoul Peace Prize for 2018 on Friday for his contribution to international cooperation and fostering global economic growth. The award was presented to him by the Seoul Peace Prize Foundation at a grand ceremony here. A short film on the life and achievements of Prime Minister Modi was also screened at the event. Modi expressed his gratitude for the prestigious honour and said.

Ghumot to be declared Goa's heritage musical instrument

Ghumot, an indigenous earthen drum which was once banned due to the use of monitor lizard skin in its making, will soon be notified as a "heritage instrument of Goa", Art and Culture Minister Govind Gaude told reporters here on Monday. "We are going to declare ghumot as Goa's heritage musical instrument in a few days," he said. Traditionally, ghumot, a percussion instrument played during Ganesh Chaturthi 'aarties' (prayers).

HRD Ministry launches SHREYAS Programme

After launching schemes and initiatives to skill students in technical courses, the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry in collaboration with the National Skill Ministry and Labour and employment Ministry collaboratively launched SHREYAS – Scheme for Higher Education Youth for Apprenticeship and Skills. The website, shreyas.ac.in, is operational and is already inviting applications from students from non-technical courses.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

US, Russia suspend INF Treaty

President Vladimir Putin said Russia would start developing new missiles. On Friday, the US, which has long accused Russia of violating the treaty, formally announced it was suspending its obligations under the agreement. Signed in 1987 by the US and USSR, it banned the use of short and medium-range missiles by both countries. "Our American partners announced that they are suspending their participation in the treaty, and we are suspending it too," Mr Putin said on Saturday.

Iran successfully test fires Hoveizeh Cruise Missile

TEHRAN: Iran announced the "successful test" of a new cruise missile with a range of over 1,350 kilometres on Saturday, coinciding with celebrations for the country's 1979 Islamic revolution. "The test of the Hoveizeh cruise missile was carried out successfully at a range of 1,200 kilometres (840 miles) and accurately hit the set target," Defence Minister Amir Hatami said, quoted on state television which broadcast footage of its launch.

UK Home Secretary approves extradition of Vijay Mallya to India

The UK home secretary has ordered the extradition of Vijay Mallya, the Indian multimillionaire chairman of Kingfisher beer and former Force India Formula One team owner, over allegations of £1bn fraud. Sajid Javid on Monday formally ordered Mallya, who owns two multimillion UK properties and until last year had two superyachts, to be extradited, stating that the 63-year-old businessman is "accused in India of conspiracy to defraud, making false representations and money laundering offences".

International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve altering or injuring the female genitalia for non-medical reasons and is recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women. It reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes, and constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against women and girls. The practice also violates their rights to sexual and reproductive health, security and physical integrity, their right to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and their right to life when the procedure results in death.

President Trump Nominates David Malpass for the Presidency of World Bank

President Donald Trump nominated senior Treasury official David Malpass to lead the World Bank, choosing a loyalist who has been sharply critical of China and has called for a shakeup of the global economic order. My administration has made it a top priority to make sure US taxpayers dollars are spent effectively and wisely, Trump said on Wednesday at the White House. David has been a strong advocate for accountability at the World Bank for a long time.

International IP Index 2019

Washington: India has increased "substantially" its score in the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index, ranking 44th among 50 nations, but it needs to take additional and meaningful reforms to complement its policy, the US Chambers of Commerce said in a report. Despite improvement in the score, India continues to remain towards the bottom of the ladder. It now ranks 44 out of 50 countries. Last year, India ranked 43rd out of 45 countries in the Index.

Hindi Included as third official court language in Abu Dhabi

DUBAI: In a landmark decision, Abu Dhabi has included Hindi as the third official language used in its courts, alongside Arabic and English, as part of a move designed to improve access to justice. The Abu Dhabi Judicial Department on Saturday said it has extended the adoption of interactive forms of statement of claims filed before courts by including the Hindi language alongside Arabic and English in labour cases.

Egypt's el-Sissi Elected New Chairman of African Union

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA — Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi has been elected chairman of the African Union at the continental body's summit in Ethiopia. The rights group Amnesty International warned that el-Sissi's chairmanship might undermine the African Union's human rights mechanisms. The rights group said Egypt since 2015 has orchestrated a sustained political attack against the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

India Withdraws MFN Status of Pakistan

India has not informed Pakistan that it was withdrawing the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to it, a senior Pakistani official said Sunday, after New Delhi took strong economic action against Islamabad following the Pulwama terror attack. India on Friday announced the withdrawal of the MFN status for Pakistan, following the deadly terror attack on CRPF personnel in Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir, and hiked the customs duty by 200 per cent on goods originating from Pakistan with immediate effect.

President Trump Declares National Emergency in USA

Donald Trump has defied fierce criticism to announce that he is using emergency powers to bypass Congress and pursue the building of a wall on the US-Mexico border. At a combative, rambling and at times incoherent press conference in the White House, the US president insisted he had no choice but to declare a national emergency to stop illegal immigrants spreading crime and drugs.

India hikes customs duty to 200% on all goods imported from Pakistan

NEW DELHI: Day after announcing that it is withdrawing most favoured nation (MFN) status to Pakistan on the backdrop of the Pulwama terror attack, India on Saturday increased duties on imports from Pakistan to 200%. "India has withdrawn MFN status to Pakistan after the Pulwama incident. Upon withdrawal, basic customs duty on all goods exported from Pakistan to India has been raised to 200% with immediate effect.

Iran Unveils New 'Fateh' Submarine

EHRAN: Iran's state TV is reporting that the country's President Hassan Rouhani has unveiled the first Iranian made semi-heavy submarine. The Sunday report said the Fateh, "Conqueror" in Persian, is capable of being fitted with cruise missiles. Since 1992, Iran has developed a homegrown defense industry that produces light and heavy weapons ranging from mortars and torpedoes to tanks and submarines.

Mahatma Gandhi Scholarships awarded to 150 Sri Lankan students

The prestigious Mahatma Gandhi Scholarships for 2017-18 were awarded to 150 Advanced Level school students from all 25 districts across Sri Lanka by Viraj Kariyawasam, Minister of Education of Sri Lanka, Vijayakala Maheshwaran, State Minister of Education of Sri Lanka, and Taranjit Singh Sandhu, High Commissioner of India, at a special ceremony held at the Ministry of Education Auditorium, Battaramulla today.

President Trump Signs Directive to Create a Military Space Force

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday took a step needed for lawmakers to begin the lengthy process of creating a US Space Force, a new branch of the military dedicated to handling threats in space. marshal its space resources to deter and counter threats in space," through the establishment of Space Force that would be part of the Air Force, according to a draft seen by Reuters.



India to stop its share of water flowing into Pakistan

India on Thursday said it will no longer allow its share of river waters to flow into Pakistan, signalling that it was taking a close look at punitive measures it can take as an upper riparian country following the Pulwama terror attack in which 40 soldiers were killed. Water resources minister Nitin Gadkari made the announcement on social media platform Twitter: "Our government has decided to stop our share of water which used to flow to Pakistan. We will divert water from eastern rivers.

Navy Drill of Iran Velayat 97

Iran's navy says it will hold an annual drill in the strategic Strait of Hormuz as pressure mounts on the country months after the United States re-imposed sanctions on Iran, targeting its vital oil sector. The strait is located at the mouth of the Arabian Gulf and is crucial to global energy supplies, with about a third of all oil traded at sea passing through it.



UNSC condemns Pulwama Terror Attack

Signalling a clear shift, China Thursday signed off on a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) statement that “condemned in the strongest terms” the Pulwama terror attack and named Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad for the “heinous and cowardly suicide bombing”. The statement is significant because China has singlehandedly blocked the listing of JeM chief Masood Azhar as a “global terrorist” at the UN Security Council Resolution 1267 sanctions committee for the last 10 years.



FATF keeps Pakistan in Grey List for Failing to Stop Terror Financing

NEW DELHI: The international terror financing watchdog FATF Friday condemned the Pulwama terror attack that killed 40 CRPF jawans and decided to continue the 'Grey' listing of Pakistan for its failure to stop funding of terrorist groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jamat-ud-Dawa. In a statement, the Paris-headquartered Financial Action Task Force (FATF) said Pakistan should continue to work on implementing its action plan to address its strategic deficiencies.

IOC Suspends India from Hosting Global Sporting Events

The denial of visas to Pakistani shooters in the Delhi World Cup has jeopardised India's chances of hosting the Olympics or any global event with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) suspending all such discussions with the country and recommending that no big tournament be awarded to it. India denied visas to Pakistani shooters for the World Cup that starts on Saturday in the wake of the Pulwama terror attack. As a result, the IOC revoked the two Olympic quotas on offer in the men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol competition of the event.

Kelly Knight Craft is the new US ambassador to the UN

Donald Trump is nominating Kelly Knight Craft to be the United States' ambassador to the United Nations. Knight is currently the US ambassador to Canada. The president announced his choice in a pair of tweets on Friday evening, saying: "Kelly has done an outstanding job representing our Nation and I have no doubt that, under her leadership, our Country will be represented at the highest level."



Afghanistan Launches New Export Route to India through Chabahar Port

Afghanistan began exports to India through an Iranian port on Sunday, official said, as the landlocked, war-torn nation turns to overseas markets to improve its economy. Officials said 23 trucks carrying 57 tonnes of dried fruits, textiles, carpets and mineral products were dispatched from western Afghan city of Zaranj to Iran's Chabahar port. The consignment will be shipped to the Indian city of Mumbai.

Houses built under Indian Housing Project handed over to Beneficiaries

Over 150 houses, built by India under the Indian Housing Project in Sri Lanka, were on Sunday handed over to the residents of the country's plantation area. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Taranjit Singh Sandhu and Sri Lanka's Minister for Hill country New Villages, Infrastructure and Community Development Palani Digambaram, jointly handed over around 155 houses to the beneficiaries in a special ceremony at Bridwell Estate in Bogawantalawa.

India and Sweden to Increase Cooperation on Anti-Microbial Resistance R and D

Anti-microbial resistance (AMR) poses a "really dangerous" challenge globally, and India and Sweden intend to boost cooperation to tackle it, Swedish Health Minister Lena Hallengren said Monday. After a meeting with Union Health Minister J P Nadda, Hallengren told reporters, "We were discussing specifically this AMR work because there has been a cooperation but we intend to really increase (it) because it is a global and really dangerous situation we are facing."

Inclusive Internet Index 2019

India has been ranked 47th in the overall "Inclusive Internet Index 2019" score while Sweden topped the chart, followed by Singapore and the US, a Facebook-led study has revealed. According to the Inclusive Internet Index (3i) prepared by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) for Facebook, there are demonstrable benefits from comprehensive female e-inclusion policies, digital skills



ICJ advises Britain to return Diego Garcia to Mauritius

NEW YORK: Mauritius has won a case against Britain at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) involving decolonisation of the strategically important island of Diego Garcia, which is home to a US military base. Britain must give Mauritius control of the Chagos Archipelago in the Indian Ocean, the ICJ said on Monday. The court in a majority opinion, which included Judge Dalveer Bhandari of India, said decolonisation of Mauritius "was not lawfully complete" when it attained independence ..



SBI UK chief honoured 'Freedom of the City of London'

India's largest state-owned lender SBI's regional head in the UK has been honoured with the 'Freedom of the City of London' award in recognition of his contribution to promoting the bilateral relations. Sanjiv Chadha, who oversaw State Bank of India (SBI) UK's transition into a subsidiary in April last year, was nominated for the honour by Lord Mayor of London Peter Estlin and Sheriff Vincent Keaveny.

Elise Mertens Wins Qatar Open 2019

Mertens, 23, recovered from a set and a break down - losing 18 points in a row at one stage in the second set - to beat the world number three 3-6 6-4 6-3. World number 21 Mertens also overcame a lengthy medical time-out for a back issue in the first set. "Simona is a great player and it's nice to get the trophy," the Belgian said. Halep, 27, who last won the Qatar title in 2014, said: "Honestly, I wanted to lift this beautiful trophy but Elise deserved it very much."

Refugee wins the Australia's richest literary prize

An Iranian asylum-seeker detained in Papua New Guinea under Australian asylum laws has won Australia's most valuable literary prize for a book he reportedly wrote using the online messaging service WhatsApp. Behrouz Boochani, a Kurd who has been held on PNG's Manus Island since 2013, was awarded the Victorian Prize for Literature on Thursday, said a statement on a government website for the Australian state of Victoria.

UN Appoints Chandramouli Ramanathan as Controller & ASG

The UN has appointed an Indian official in one of the top most positions in its Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance. Chandramouli Ramanathan has been appointed as Controller, Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Budget and Finance in the management strategy, policy and compliance department, UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said. He succeeds Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas of Uruguay, Dujarric said.

