

**1- 3 May 2018
Newsletter**

Top 10 Polluted cities

Kanpur

Person

Subhash Chandra Khuntia

Place

Which Indian city topped the list of 20 most polluted cities in the World (in terms of air pollution) that was released by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Geneva on 2 May 2018?
– Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh)

Explanation: Uttar Pradesh's industrial city Kanpur has topped the list of 20 most polluted cities in the World (in terms of air pollution) that was released by the WHO on 2 May 2018.

According to WHO's global air pollution database released in Geneva, India has 14 out of the 15 most polluted cities in the world in terms of PM 2.5 concentrations - the worst being UP's Kanpur with a PM 2.5 concentration of 173 micrograms per cubic metre, followed by Faridabad, Varanasi and Gaya.

Other Indian cities that registered very high levels of PM2.5 pollutants are Delhi, Patna, Agra, Muzaffarpur, Srinagar, Gurgaon, Jaipur, Patiala and Jodhpur, followed by Ali Subah Al-Salem in Kuwait and a few cities in China and Mongolia.

The study considered PM2.5 (particulate matter of diameter less than 2.5 micrometres) and PM10. PM2.5 is more dangerous than PM10. The period considered for the study was 2010 to 2016.

Defence

What is the name given to the newly developed state-of-the-art bullet-proof jacket by BARC capable to withstand eight 7.62mm bullets fired from an AK-47 rifle from a distance of 5-10 metres that will be used by the Central Armed Police Force (CARF)? –“BhabhaKavach”

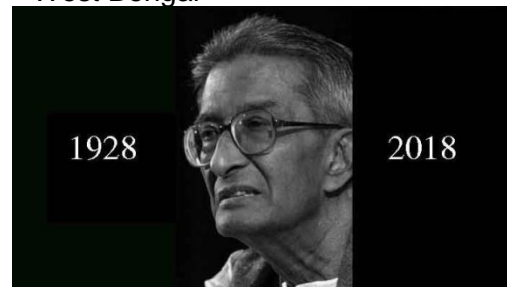
Explanation: “BhabhaKavach” is the name given to the newly developed state-of-the-art bullet-proof jacket developed by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). It can withstand eight 7.62mm bullets fired from an AK-47 rifle from a distance of 5-10 metres. It can even withstand the 5.56mm bullet of the Indian Small Arms System (INSAS) or that of the now decommissioned 7.65mm bullet of self-loading rifle (SLR).



This jacket will reduce the weight by nearly 50%. At present, CAPF use heavy steel-armoured jackets that weigh between 10kg to 17kg. It is made of boron carbide and carbon nanotube polymer composite.

Person

Noted scholar, economist and eminent leftist leader Ashok Mitra passed away on 1 May 2018. He was a former Finance Minister of which state?
– West Bengal



Explanation: Noted scholar and the first Finance Minister in the Left Front government in West Bengal Ashok Mitra passed away in a private hospital in Kolkata on 1 May 2018. He was 90.

Mitra was the first Finance Minister in the Left Front government after it came to power in Bengal in 1977 but resigned later following his differences with the Chief Minister JyotiBasu.

Besides serving the State Government, he also worked with the Central Government as the Chief Economic Adviser and was a member of RajyaSabha. He was also associated with World Bank for many years.

Appointment

Who was appointed the new Chairman of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) on 2 May 2018? - Subhash Chandra Khuntia

Explanation: Subhash Chandra Khuntia, a retired 1981 Karnataka cadre IAS officer, was on 2 May 2018 appointed the new Chairman of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

He held several positions at the Centre, including that of Additional Secretary and Financial Advisor in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

He will have tenure of 3 years. He replaces T.S. Vijayan who retired from the post on 21 February 2018.

Telecom

The Telecom Commission on 2 May 2018 approved the proposal of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) for Internet and mobile communication on aircraft. According to TRAI's recommendations the in-flight connectivity will be available at what altitude? – 3,000m

Explanation: Travellers flying through Indian airspace will be able to make phone calls and surf the Internet in the next three to four months. This comes after the Telecom Commission on 2 May 2018 approved the proposal of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) for Internet and mobile communication on aircraft.

However, as per the recommendations by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the in-flight connectivity will be available once the aircraft has achieved an altitude of 3,000 meters.

The DoT will now make the necessary amendments to the relevant laws to create a separate category of licences for in-flight connectivity operators, which could be telecom service providers.

**4-5 May 2018
Newsletter**

Defence
Dakota joined IAF

Place
Pakyong

Defence

A restored Dakota joined the Indian Air Force (IAF) on 4 May 2018 in an induction ceremony at Hindon air force station, more than four decades after the aircraft fleet was phased out following an illustrious service record. Who took the main initiative to induct this iconic aircraft into the IAF? - Rajeev Chandrasekhar



Explanation: A restored Dakota DC-3 VP 905 aircraft was formally inducted into the IAF at a grand ceremony at Hindon air base (Ghaziabad) where a key was received by the Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal B.S. Dhanoa from Air Commodore (retd) M.K. Chandrasekhar whose son and Rajya Sabha MP Rajeev Chandrasekhar bought and restored the aircraft.

Dakota was bought by the MP from "scrap" and got restored in the UK. The restored Dakota has been rechristened as 'Parashuram'. This aircraft commenced its journey from the UK on 17 April with a joint crew of IAF and Reflight Airworks. It flew a total of 9,750 km during its ferry en-route halts in France, Italy, Greece, Jordan, Bahrain and Oman, and finally landed on Indian soil at air force station Jamnagar on 25 April 2018.

The Dakota popularly known as the 'Gooney Bird' was the first major transport aircraft inducted in the fledgling Indian Air Force. It was at the forefront of operations from 1947 to 1971. Rajeev Chandrasekhar's father M.K. Chandrasekhar, who flew the aircraft during his service in the IAF, has been deeply attached with the aircraft and felt the need to restore it back to the service.

Aviation

Which airport is set to become the 100th operational airport in India as per information disclosed by Civil Aviation Minister Jayant Sinha on 2 May 2018? – Pakyong (Sikkim)



Explanation: Sikkim's Pakyong is all set to become the 100th operational airport in the country when it is commissioned in June 2018. This happened as low- cost airline SpiceJet has been granted permission to fly to Pakyong from Kolkata under the civil aviation ministry's regional connectivity scheme.

This was disclosed by Civil Aviation Minister JayantSinha on 2 May 2018. Sikkim was the only state without an airport in the country. The state would now enter India's aviation map soon when Pakyong airport becomes operational.

Corporate

Which Chinese smartphone maker filed for \$10 billion IPO in Hong Kong on 3 May 2018, which is expected to be world's biggest IPO since Alibaba's debut IPO in 2014? – Xiaomi

Explanation: Chinese smartphone maker Xiaomi Corp. became the first major company to use Hong Kong's new rules for going public as it filed for \$10 billion IPO in Hong Kong on 3 May 2018. This IPO is expected to be the biggest IPO since Alibaba's \$25 billion debut in 2014.



Though Xiaomi suffered through a challenging 2016, the company bounced back by revamping its sales model and expanding in India, where it rivals Samsung Electronics Co. as the biggest vendor.

Xiaomi is looking to enter developed markets for smartphones as it consolidates its position in emerging markets. It entered Spain last year and is also said to be talking to U.S. carriers to sell devices on Apple Inc.'s home turf.

Defence

According to a report released by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on 2 May 2018, India overtook which country to become one of the world's top five military spenders in 2017? – France

Explanation: India's defence spending rose by 5.5% to US\$63.9 billion in 2017, overtaking that of France as it became one of the world's top five military spenders. This was disclosed in a report published by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on 2 May 2018.

The United States, China, Saudi Arabia and Russia were the leading four last year in military spending. The list of the world's biggest military spenders has remained largely consistent in recent years, dominated by the US and China, which spent US\$610 billion and US\$228 billion during 2017.

**6-10 May 2018
Newsletter**

Corporate

WalMart

200th-Anniversary

Karl Marx's z



Place

Malaysia

Which south eastern country the opposition alliance won a historic election on 10 May 2018 and thus ending the six-decade rule of the ruling coalition? – Malaysia

Explanation: Malaysia's opposition alliance headed by veteran ex-leader Mahathir Mohamad won a historic election according to official results that were released on 10 May 2018, and thus ending the six-decade rule of the Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition.

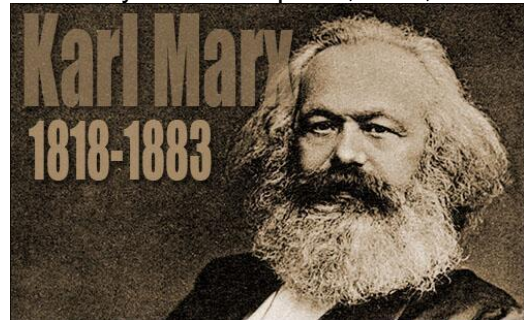
The results from the Election Commission showed the opposition grouping, "Pakatan Harapan", plus a party in the Borneo state of Sabah they are allied with, winning 115 seats, over the threshold of 112 seats needed in parliament to form a government.

Mahathir, who is now poised to become the world's oldest elected prime minister, came out of retirement to take on Prime Minister Najib Razak, who has become embroiled in massive corruption scandal surrounding state fund 1MDB.

Place

Karl Marx's which iconic anniversary was observed on 5 May 2018? – 200th

Explanation: Events took place across the world to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of the philosopher and revolutionary socialist and Das Capital writer Karl Marx on 5 May 2018. Bicentenary events were officially launched at a ceremony in his birthplace, Trier, Germany.



Despite what happened in the past hundred years in the communist countries, Marx is still believed to be an important thinker and a central figure of the modern canon around the world.

Corporate

Which entity bought 77% stake in home-grown e-commerce behemoth Flipkart for \$16 billion, as was announced by the entity on 9 May 2018? – Walmart



Explanation: Walmart Inc. announced on 9 May 2018 it has signed definitive agreements to become the largest shareholder in Flipkart Group. Subject to regulatory approval in India, Walmart will pay about \$16 billion for an initial stake of approximately 77% in Flipkart. The deal values Flipkart at around 20.8 billion dollars, up from its previous valuation of \$12 billion.

The remainder of the business will be held by some of Flipkart's existing shareholders, including Flipkart co-founder Binny Bansal, Tencent Holdings Limited, Tiger Global Management LLC and Microsoft Corp. On the other hand co-founder Sachin Bansal will make an exit by

cashing in his 5.96% stake in the company which will amount to around \$1.23 billion.

While the immediate focus will be on serving customers and growing the business, Walmart will support Flipkart's ambition to transition into a publicly-listed, majority-owned subsidiary in the future. The deal will redraw the retail landscape in India as Walmart takes its domestic battle with arch-rival Amazon to the global stage.

Finance

Which major foreign mutual fund made its exit from India as was announced on 7 May 2018? – BlackRock

Explanation: Black Rock Inc., which held 40% stake in DSP Black Rock Mutual Fund, announced its exit from India on 7 May 2018. The DSP Group, the partner in the mutual fund, has decided to buy out Black Rock's stakes for an undisclosed amount.

Post the deal, DSP Black Rock Mutual Fund will be renamed DSP Mutual Fund, while the holding company will be known as DSP Investment Managers. DSP Black Rock, which registered a growth of 32%, had assets-under-management (AUM) of ₹86,326 crore, accounting for 4% market share as of March 2018-end.

The 150-year-old DSP Group had tied up with Merrill Lynch Investment Managers in 1996 to establish its retail asset management business in India as DSP Merrill Lynch Asset Management. However, BlackRock Investment Managers stepped in 2008 as a partner after BlackRock took over Merrill Lynch's global asset management business in 2006.

In the last few years, over a dozen foreign fund houses have moved out of India due to stagnant growth in their market share. Some of the top overseas players in this list include Daiwa, Deutsche, Morgan Stanley, ING, PineBridge, Nomura, Fidelity, AIG, Zurich, Morgan Stanley, JP Morgan, Goldman Sachs and KBC.

11 –15 May 2018 Newsletter

Physics

E.C.G. Sudarshan
Quantum Optics

International

Indo – Nepal

Automobile

Green – Electrical Vehicles



SCIENCE

World's Second Oldest Rock Is From Odisha

THE LOGICAL INDIAN

Place

Indo-Nepal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nepali PM K. P. Sharma Oli on 11 May 2018 jointly inaugurated a direct bus service between which two sacred cities? - Janakpur and Ayodhya

Explanation: Nepal's Janakpur and India's Ayodhya have been connected through a bus service as part of the "Ramayan Circuit" to promote religious tourism in Nepal and India. The service was jointly inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Nepalese counterpart K. P. Sharma Oli on 11 May 2018.

Janakpur is known as the birth place of Sita, the wife of Lord Rama. Janaki temple was built in memory of Sita in 1910.

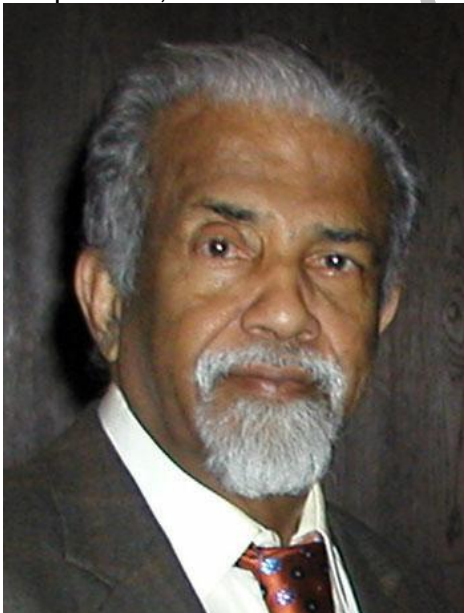
The Indian government has identified 15 destinations in India for development under the Ramayana Circuit theme namely Ayodhya, Nandigram, Shringverpur&Chitrakoot (Uttar Pradesh), Sitamarhi, Buxar&Darbhanga (Bihar), Chitrakoot (Madhya Pradesh), Mahendragiri (Odisha), Jagdalpur (Chattisgarh), Nashik&Nagpur (Maharashtra), Bhadrachalam (Telangana), Hampi (Karnataka) and Rameshwaram (Tamil Nadu).

Person

Noted Indian physicist E.C.G. Sudarshan, who passed away in the US on 14 May 2018, was known for making path-breaking discoveries which field of physics? - Quantum Optics

Explanation: EnnackalChandy George Sudarshan, popularly known as E.C.G. Sudarshan, who made path-breaking discoveries in the realm of Quantum Optics, died aged 86 in Texas (United States) on 14 May 2018. He was recommended for the Nobel Prize nine times, but never awarded.

Professor Sudarshan was a faculty at the University of Texas for the past 40 years. He made significant contributions to the field of theoretical physics - optical coherence, tachyons, quantum zeno effect, open quantum system, spin-statistics theorem, non-invariance groups, positive maps of density matrices and quantum computation, to name a few.



He worked for a brief period with HomiBhabha, father of Indian nuclear programme before moving to the US.

Place

The world's second oldest rock dating back to 4.2 billion years has been discovered in which Indian state, as was reported during May 2018? – Odisha

Explanation: A rock sample recovered nearly eight years ago from Champua in Odisha's Kendujhar district has put India at the forefront of geological research in the world.

Geologists from the University of Calcutta and Curtin University, Malaysia, along with researchers from the Chinese Academy of Geological Sciences, Beijing, made the discovery, which was published during May 2018 in 'Scientific Reports' journal.

The only instance of zircon older than this discovery was the one found in Jack Hill, Western Australia, which was 4.4 billion years old and is the oldest known rock sample.

Banking

On 12 May 2018 which public sector bank was kept under the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) mechanism by the RBI due to worsening asset quality? – Dena Bank

Explanation: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 12 May 2018 directed Dena Bank not to issue any fresh loans and hire new personnel as it was brought under the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) mechanism. This was done as the bank's asset quality continues to be worst.

Already, there are 11 banks, out of 21 state-owned banks, under the PCA of the Reserve Bank because of their weak financials.

Automobile

Electric vehicles (EVs) in India will get number plate of which colour, as was approved by the Union Government during May 2018? – Green



Explanation: Electric vehicles (EVs) in India will soon sport unique green license plates as the Union Government has given its approval to a proposal in this regard. Green number plates will make EVs eligible for benefits like concession on tolls, preferential parking and more.

The government has approved the use of green license plates with white fonts on personal EVs and with yellow fonts on EVs used for commercial purposes. The step has been taken to promote the adoption of EVs in the country.

State – Scheme

Which state government on 10 May 2018 launched “RythuBandhu Scheme”, an ambitious scheme under which farmers will get Rs. 8,000 per acre per year for two crops? – Telangana

Explanation: Telangana chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao launched the ambitious “RythuBandhu Scheme” (meaning brother of farmers scheme) in Karimnagar on 10 May 2018 that ensures farmers will get Rs. 8,000 per acre per year for two crops.

The Chief Minister gave the first passbook of the scheme to B Sanjiva Reddy at Huzurabad constituency of the Karimnagar district. He became the first beneficiary of the scheme as he received the cheque from the CM.

According to the CM, of 2.9 crore acres land in the state of Telangana, about 2.3 crore acres of land have been verified and around 1.4 crore acres of them have been identified as cultivable land. Whether they take up cultivation or not, the government will issue cheques as well as passbooks to all 58 lakh eligible farmers for this season.



16- 25 May 2018 Newsletter

Place

Sterlite Copper smelter plant

Tuticorin

Appointment

H.D. Kumaraswamy was sworn in as Chief Minister

Health

Nehpa - Virus



Place

Sterlite's copper smelter plant situated in which district of Tamil Nadu came into news as least 10 people were killed in police firing on 22 May 2018 after protests against the plant turned violent? – Thoothukudi (Tuticorin)

Explanation: Sterlite Industries, a unit of London-based Vedanta Resources, established India's biggest copper smelter in Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu (also known by its British name Tuticorin). But since opening in 1996 this plant has split Tuticorin between residents who say it is crucial for the local economy and farmers and fishermen who see it as a health hazard. The plant has numerous controversies associated with it.

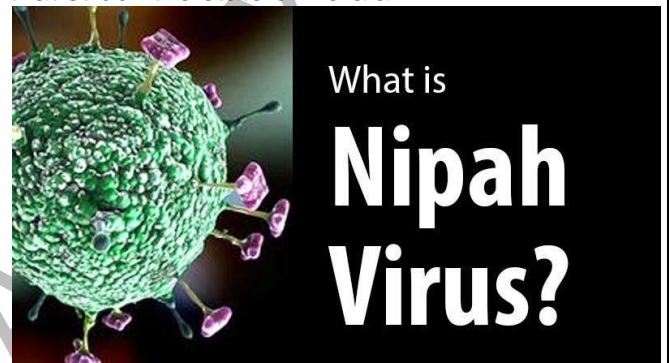
It was alleged that the poisonous gases leaked from the plant on 23 March 2018, which the company denied. A huge protest was staged by

locals against the proposed doubling of capacity of this plant on 22 May 2018. At least 10 people were killed in police firing when the police tried to quell the protestors. After this the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) ordered the closure of the plant with immediate effect and disconnected electricity supply to the unit on 24 May 2018.

Health

What is the name of the deadly virus carried mainly carried by fruit bats that during May 2018 struck Kerala causing large-scale panic in the state? – "Nipah"

Explanation: "Nipah" is the name of a deadly virus that struck the state of Kerala



during May 2018. It induces flu-like symptoms that often lead to encephalitis and coma. Fruit bats are considered the main carrier of the virus for which there is no vaccination, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

The traces of this virus were found in blood and body fluid samples of two persons who died of viral fever in Kerala's coastal Kozhikode region. It was confirmed by laboratory results from National Institute of Virology, Pune. By 21 May at least 11 persons died in Kerala, including a nurse who treated a Nipah patient.

Nipah was first identified in Malaysia in 1998. In India the disease was first reported in 2001 and again six years later, with the two outbreaks claiming 50 lives. There is no effective treatment of Nipah and treatment mostly focuses on managing symptoms like fever.

Place

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 19 May 2018 inaugurated which ambitious tunnel project, which will provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil and Leh and, at 14.2 km, will also

be the country's longest road tunnel? - Zojila Pass tunnel

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 19 May 2018 inaugurated the Zojila Pass tunnel project, which will provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil and Leh and, at 14.2 km, will also be the country's longest road tunnel.

The tunnel will cut down the time taken to cross the Zojila pass from the 3.5 hours to 15 minutes.

It will also be Asia's longest bi-directional tunnel and will be built at a cost of Rs. 809 crore. It is expected to be completed in five years.

The pass is situated at an altitude of 11,578 ft. on the Srinagar-Kargil-Leh National Highway and remains closed during winters due to heavy snowfall, which cuts off Ladakh region from Kashmir.

Banking

How much is the net loss of India's largest banking entity SBI for the quarter ending March 2018, as was reported by the bank on 22 May 2018? – Rs. 7,718.17 crore

Explanation: State Bank of India (SBI) reported a loss of Rs. 7,718.17 crore in the March quarter, or Q4 FY18, compared to a profit of Rs. 2,814.82 crore a year ago.

This is SBI's loss for the second consecutive quarter as bad loans continued to mount and provisions soared. The bank had posted a net loss of Rs. 2,416 crore in the fiscal third quarter (ending December 2018).

Provisions and contingencies surged 139.32% to Rs. 28,096.07 crore in the quarter from Rs. 11,740.09 crore a year ago. On a quarter-on-quarter basis, they rose 48.8% from Rs. 18,876.21 crore.

Political

Janata Dal (Secular) Legislature Party leader H.D. Kumaraswamy was sworn in as Chief Minister on 23 May 2018. He became the 24th Chief Minister of Karnataka. Who was sworn in as the Deputy Chief Minister? - G. Parameshwara

Explanation: Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Vala administered the oath of office and secrecy to JDS' H.D. Kumaraswamy on the steps of the

Vidhana Soudha on 23 May 2018. The presence of a galaxy of national leaders, who are in the forefront of an effort to form a united non-BJP coalition, was the highlight of this oath ceremony.

58-year old Kumaraswamy was sworn in as the Chief Minister for the second time. He was the Chief Minister for 20 months in the JD(S)-BJP coalition government during 2006-07.

The Congress' G. Parameshwara was sworn in as the Deputy Chief Minister. Earlier BJP's B.S. Yeddyurappa resigned from the post of Chief Minister on 19 May 2018, just two days after taking oath as he could not cobble up the required majority in the House.

Defence

What is the name of India's first all-women crew circumnavigation expedition (round the globe expedition) that arrived in Goa on 21 May 2018 after successfully circumnavigating the globe for over seven months? – "Navika Sagar Parikrama"

Explanation: "Navika Sagar Parikrama" is the name of India's first all-women crew circumnavigation expedition that has also been considered the first-ever such attempt in the world. This expedition was flagged-off on 10 September 2017 at the INS Mandovi Naval training base near Panaji in Goa by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitaraman.

INSV Tarini, a 55-foot sailing vessel, was used in the mission. It has been built indigenously by Aquarius Shipyard, Goa and was inducted into the Indian Navy in February 2017.

The mission comprised of 6-member crew of the Indian Navy led by Lt. Cdr Vartika Joshi and covered the expedition in five legs with stop-overs at four ports (Fremantle (Australia), Lyttelton (New Zealand), Port Stanley (the Falklands) and Cape town (South Africa) for replenishment of ration and repairs as necessary, before it returned to Goa on 21 May 2018. It finished the journey in 254 days.

The crew and the vessel encountered rough seas on numerous occasions during the voyage. The extremely cold climate coupled with stormy weather conditions especially in the Southern Ocean made the task daunting and challenging.

The other crew members of the expedition were Lt. Cdr. Pratihya Jamwal, Lt. Cdr. Swathi P., Lt. Aishwarya Boddapati, Lt. Sh. Vijaya Devi) and Lt. Payal Gupta.

Nuclear

What is the name of world's first floating nuclear power station that was launched by Russia during May 2018 as part of its plan to develop oil resources in Arctic? – "Akademik Lomonosov"

Explanation: "Akademik Lomonosov" is the name of the floating nuclear power station built by Russia. It was officially launched on 19 May 2018 primarily to meet Russia's growing electricity needs in its drive to develop oil resources in remote Arctic regions.

Built in Saint Petersburg, the nuclear ship was loaded with nuclear fuel in Murmansk before heading to eastern Siberia.

The 144-by-30-metre (472-by-98-foot) barge holds two reactors with two 35 megawatt nuclear reactors that are similar to those used to power icebreaker ships.

Terrorism

What is the name of the specialised anti-Naxal combat force for the state of Chhattisgarh that was announced by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on 21 May 2018? – "Black Panther"

Explanation: "Black Panther" will be the name of the proposed specialised anti-Naxal combat force for the state of Chhattisgarh that will be constituted on the lines of the Greyhounds. This was announced by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on 21 May 2018. He was speaking to reporters after chairing a meeting on Left-Wing Extremism (LWE).

The Greyhounds is a special force in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh that specialises in anti-insurgency operations against Naxals and Maoists.

Appointment

Who was appointed the new Chairman of the Lalit Kala Akademi by the Union Government on 17 May 2018? - Uttam Pacharne

Explanation: Noted artist and sculptor Uttam Pacharne was appointed the chairman of

the Lalit Kala Akademi on 17 May 2018. He was till now member of the advisory committee, Kala Academy, Goa and member of advisory committee, P L Deshpande State Lalit Kala Academy and director, Janseva Sahakari Bank, Borivali.

Pacharne is the recipient of National Lalit Kala Award 1985, Maharashtra Gaurav Puraska 1985 from Government of Maharashtra, Junior National Award 1986 and Jeevan Gaurav Puraskar 2017 from Prafulla Dahanukar Foundation.

Lalit Kala Akademi or National Academy of Art is India's national academy of fine arts. It is an autonomous organisation, established in New Delhi in 1954 to promote and propagate understanding of Indian art, in and outside the country.

Appointment

Who was sworn in as the new Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) on 21 May 2018 thus becoming the first-ever woman Director of US' intelligence agency? - Gina Haspel

Explanation: Gina Haspel took oath as the new Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) on 21 May 2018. Earlier the US Senate on 17 May 2018 had voted to confirm Haspel's nomination, 54 to 45, despite lingering concerns about the role she played in the brutal interrogation of suspected terrorists captured after the 11 Sept 2001, attacks.

26 May 2018
Newsletter

HAQ

Health care access and quality (HAQ)

Corporate

TCS



SingchungBugun Village Community Reserve

Corporate

Which corporate entity on 25 May 2018 became the first-ever Indian company to surge past market capitalization of Rs. 7 trillion? - Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. (TCS)

Explanation: Software major Tata Consultancy Services Ltd.'s (TCS) market cap surged past the Rs. 7 trillion mark on 25 May 2018, making it the first company to achieve this milestone.

Buoyed by a rally in its share price, TCS's market cap jumped to Rs. 703,309 crore in intraday trading on the BSE. TCS market cap had earlier this year surged past the Rs. 6 trillion mark, making it the second company to achieve the milestone after Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL).

Health

What is India's place in the health care access and quality (HAQ) index that was released by an international consortium of researchers during May 2018? - 145 among 195 countries

Explanation: The health care access and quality (HAQ) index, based on a comprehensive research done by an international consortium of researchers to draw conclusions on global healthcare access, was released in 'The Lancet' journal on 23 May 2018. The study ranked India

145 among 195 countries and lower than China, Bangladesh and Sudan on health care access and quality.

The study measured healthcare access through countries' capacities to prevent premature deaths from 32 diseases. India's overall score on the health care access and quality (HAQ) index increased to 41.2 in 2016 from 24.7 in 1990.

Goa and Kerala had the highest scores, both above 60, implying populations in these states have the best access to quality health care in the country, while Assam and Uttar Pradesh had the least scores, both below 40, meaning people there had the poorest access.

For comparison, Iceland had the highest score (97.1) for health care access and quality, followed by Norway (96.6) and the Netherlands (96.1), while the countries with the lowest scores were Central African Republic (18.6), Somalia (19) and Guinea-Bissau (23.4).

Health

Which country became the first from South-East Asia Region to eliminate trachoma, which is the world's leading infectious cause of blindness? - Nepal

Explanation: A letter acknowledging Nepal's historic achievement of eliminating trachoma was presented to Nepal by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in a programme held in Geneva, Switzerland on 21 May 2018.

Nepal thus became the first country in WHO's South-East Asia Region to defeat trachoma, which is rated as the world's leading infectious cause of blindness. It is worth mentioning that trachoma was the second leading cause of preventable blindness in Nepal in the 1980s.

In 2002, the Government of Nepal stepped up efforts to eliminate the disease with the establishment of a national trachoma programme. The fight against trachoma in Nepal gained momentum due to strong government commitment and leadership backed by community engagement and the support of health workers and volunteers.

Place

The Union Cabinet on 23 May 2018 approved an ordinance to set up the country's first national sports university. This proposed university will be established in which state? – Manipur

Explanation: India's first-ever national sports university will be established in Imphal (west) in Manipur. The pertaining bill is already pending in parliament and the Union Government on 23 May 2018 approved an ordinance in this regard.

The Manipur government has already allocated land for the proposed university.

This was disclosed by Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad.

The Union Government is of the view that a void exists in the sports environment of the country in various areas such as sports science, sports technology, high performance training and the proposed university is expected to bridge this gap.

Awards

What is the name of the community reserve in Arunachal Pradesh that was awarded the India Biodiversity Award 2018 on 22 May 2018 for its effort to conserve a critically endangered bird? - SingchungBugun Village Community Reserve

Explanation: SingchungBugun Village Community Reserve Management Committee (SBVCR) of Arunachal Pradesh was awarded the India Biodiversity Award 2018 on 22 May 2018, on the occasion of the International Day for Biological Diversity.

This community was awarded this prestigious award for its effort to conserve the critically endangered bird – 'Bugunliocichla'. This bird was discovered in 2006 in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh. The bird has been named in honour of the efforts of the Bugun community of Singchung village in West Kameng district in conserving the wildlife and forest of the area.

The known population of this species is between 14 and 20 individual birds and occupies an extremely small (3 to 4 square kilometre) area in the temperate forest around 2,200m which is entirely within the traditional lands of Singchung village.

27-28 May 2018 Newsletter

Sports

IPL

Power

Place

14 lane expressway

Delhi-Meerut Expressway



India

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 27 May 2017 inaugurated the first phase of India's first 14-lane expressway. Which expressway is this? - Delhi-Meerut Expressway

Explanation: Delhi-Meerut Expressway (DME), India's first 14-lane expressway will connect Delhi to Meerut, and on completion will reduce the travel time between Delhi and Meerut to 45 minutes from the present about 3-4 hours. It has been built at a cost of Rs. 841 crore.

The first package of the DME will provide a major relief to the commuters in Delhi-Noida and starts from Nizamuddin Bridge to UP Border having a 6 lane Expressway and 4+4 lane Highway.

DME is the first bridge in the country that have vertical gardens with solar power system and drip irrigation. The scheduled time period for the construction of this project was 30 months whereas the project has been completed in 17 months.

The Prime Minister also inaugurated the 135-km Eastern Periphery Expressway (EPE) which bypasses Delhi on the eastern side. The expressway provides connectivity between Delhi and the cities of Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Greater Noida, Baghpat and Sonipat. The expressway has been constructed at a cost of Rs. 11000 crores to relieve traffic congestion in the Faridabad-Ghaziabad stretch and also to prevent pollution causing commercial vehicles from entering Delhi.

The EPE has several unique features and is India's first highway to be lit by solar power besides provisions of rain water harvesting on every 500 metres on both sides.

Sports

Chennai Super Kings (CSK) defeated Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) by 8 wickets to win the Indian Premier League (IPL) title for 2018 on 27 May 2018. With this win CSK has now won three IPL titles and on par with Mumbai Indians (MI) for title wins. Who was named the most valuable player (or Man of the Series) of IPL 2018? – Sunil Naraine (Kolkata Knight Riders)

Explanation: CSK made a fairytale return to IPL as they won the 2018 Vivo IPL on 27 May 2018 by defeating SRH by 8 wickets in the finals played at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium. CSK were out of the last two editions of IPL after being handed a ban by the BCCI.

Needing 179 runs to win the title, CSK, powered by a brilliant 117 runs off 57 deliveries by Australian veteran Shane Watson, achieved the target with nine balls to spare. This was the third IPL title for CSK and the team has equaled Mumbai Indians' record for three wins. CSK's earlier titles came on 2010 and 2011 while MI won the title in 2013, 2015 and 2017.

Sunil Narine of KKR was named Most Valuable Player, also known as Man of the Series, while Rishabh Pant of Delhi Daredevils (DD) was named the Emerging Player of the Tournament. Andrew Tye, of Kings XI Punjab, was awarded the Purple Cap for finishing as the leading wicket-taker of the tournament with 24 wickets, while Sunrisers Hyderabad captain Kane Williamson won the Orange Cap for the leading run-scorer of the tournament with 735 runs.

Place

The "Bangladesh Bhavan" was inaugurated by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina at which place in West Bengal on 25 May 2018? – Santiniketan

Explanation: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Bangladesh Bhavan in Santiniketan on 25 May 2018 with his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina and West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee.

The two Prime Ministers also attended the convocation ceremony of Visva-Bharati University.

The Bangladesh Bhavan at Santiniketan will house a library, a state-of-the-art archival centre, and a seminar hall, besides a sprawling space for cultural get-togethers. Apart from the literary works of Rabindranath Tagore, the centre will also showcase books and photographs on the Bangladesh Liberation War and India's role in it.

Power

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation of the first phase of 2,400 Megawatt (Mw) capacity of NTPC's Patratu Super Thermal Power Project on 25 May 2018. This super thermal power plant being established at a cost of around Rs. 18,000 crore is in which state? – Jharkhand

Explanation: NTPC's Patratu Super Thermal Power Project is situated in NTPC's Patratu village in Jharkhand's Ramgarh district. The project is a Joint Venture with 74% stake of the Jharkhand government and Patratu Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd's (PVUNL) 26% stake. PVUNL is a subsidiary of NTPC.

PVUNL plans to develop the project in two phases with 2,400 MW capacity including three units of 800 MW capacity each to be commissioned in Phase-I and 1,600 MW with two units of 800 MW capacity each in Phase-II. The project will allocate 85% of the power generated to Jharkhand. This first unit is expected to be commissioned in 2022.

Education

The University Grants Commission (UGC) on 24 May 2018 gave which important permission to top Indian universities and colleges? – It allowed them to offer online courses from 2018-19

Explanation: Higher education regulator University Grants Commission (UGC) on 24 May 2018 approved new rules allowing top Indian universities and colleges to offer online courses including degrees and diplomas from the 2018-19 academic year.

According to statement released by the Human Resource Development Ministry (HRD Ministry), the higher educational institutions will be eligible to offer online programmes if they have been in existence for at least five years and are accredited by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) with a valid minimum score of 3.26 or A+ categorisation on a 4-point scale.

To be allowed to offer online courses, institutions should also be in the top-100 in overall category in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) for at least two years in the previous three years. However, NAAC and NIRF conditions shall not be applicable to existing government open universities.

However, online programmes requiring practical/laboratory courses as a curricular requirement shall not be permitted.

Automobile

Toyota Motor Corp. entered into a technology transfer agreement with which auto company for the development of an ultra high-efficiency powertrain for India? - Suzuki Motor Corp.

Explanation: The world's largest automaker, Toyota Motor Corp., along with Denso Corp., will transfer technology to Suzuki Motor Corp. for the development of an ultra high-efficiency powertrain for India and other global markets.

Under the agreement, Suzuki will receive support for the development of a compact, ultra high-efficiency powertrain that is vital to the company. While Denso and Toyota will provide Suzuki with technological support for the compact powertrain, Toyota Kirloskar Motor Pvt. Ltd will produce models developed by Suzuki for sale in India.

It is worth mentioning that in March 2018, Toyota and Suzuki had agreed to sell cars from their respective stables on both platforms, to deepen their ties.

29 May 2018

Newsletter

International

Ireland - Ban

Colombia

NATO as a "global partner"

Awards

Olga Tokarczuk

International

Ban on Abortion

Which European country voted overwhelmingly to overturn the ban on abortion on 25 May 2018? – Ireland

Explanation: A historic referendum was held in Ireland on 25 May 2018 to know the view of citizens on the issue of overturning the ban on abortion imposed in the country. Currently, abortion is only allowed when a woman's life is at risk, but not in cases of rape, incest or fatal foetal abnormality.

The results of the referendum were declared on 26 May 2018 in which the citizens of the country voted overwhelmingly to overturn the abortion ban by 66.4% to 33.6%.

With this result, the Eighth Amendment, which grants an equal right to life to the mother and unborn, will be replaced. A vote in favour of repeal paves the way for the Irish Parliament to legislate for change which would see the introduction of a much more liberal regime.



Global

Which country is poised to become the first country in Latin America to join NATO as a "global partner", as was announced on 25 May 2018? – Colombian



Explanation: Colombia will join the 29-nation North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) alliance making it the only Latin American nation in the alliance, President Juan Manuel Santos announced on 25 May 2018. Colombia will join as a "global partner", which means it will not necessarily have to take part in military action, and will be fully accredited in Brussels.

Other global partners include Afghanistan, Australia, Iraq, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand and Pakistan.

Juan Manuel Santos had signed a peace deal with the left-wing FARC guerrillas in 2016, ending the longest-running civil conflict in the western hemisphere and winning the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts.

Place

A cloud-enabled National Data Centre of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) was inaugurated at which place on 28 May 2018? – Bhubaneswar

Explanation: IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on 28 May 2018 inaugurated a cloud-enabled National Data Centre (NDC) of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) at Bhubaneswar (Odisha). This is the fourth NDC of the NIC after Delhi, Hyderabad and Pune.

The new NDC will offer round-the-clock operations with secure hosting for e-governance applications of ministries and departments.

Awards

Who won the Man Booker International Prize for 2018 during May 2018? - Olga Tokarczuk (Poland)

Explanation: Olga Tokarczuk became the first Polish writer to win the Man Booker International Prize. She took the £50,000 prize for her novel 'Flights'. She had to split the cash prize with translator Jennifer Croft.

Tokarczuk thus became the first-ever Polish writer to win the coveted prize. The annual award goes to the best work of translated fiction from around the world. The prize is different from the Man Booker Prize, which is given to the best original English language novel each year.



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Awards

Linnean Medal in Botany

Kamaljit S. Bawa

Telecom

SwadeshiSamridhhi SIM card

Person – appointment

SudhaBalakrshnan



SudhaBalakrishnan became 1st CFO of RBI

Banking - Person

Who assumed charge as the first Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) during May 2018? - SudhaBalakrishnan

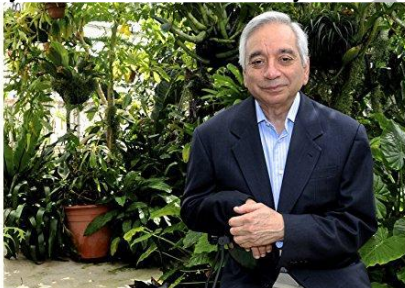
Explanation: Sudha Balakrishnan, a former vice president at National Securities Depository Ltd., took charge as RBI's first-ever Chief Financial Officer (CFO) on 17 May 2018.

She has been tasked to oversee several portfolios including government and bank accounts, corporate strategy and budget and will report to Deputy Governors Viral Acharya and B.P. Kanungo. Her job profile includes timely presentation and reporting of financial information, establishing accounting policies and ensuring compliance with financial regulations and standards.

Awards

Who became the first ever Indian to receive the prestigious Linnean Medal in Botany during May 2018? - Kamaljit S. Bawa

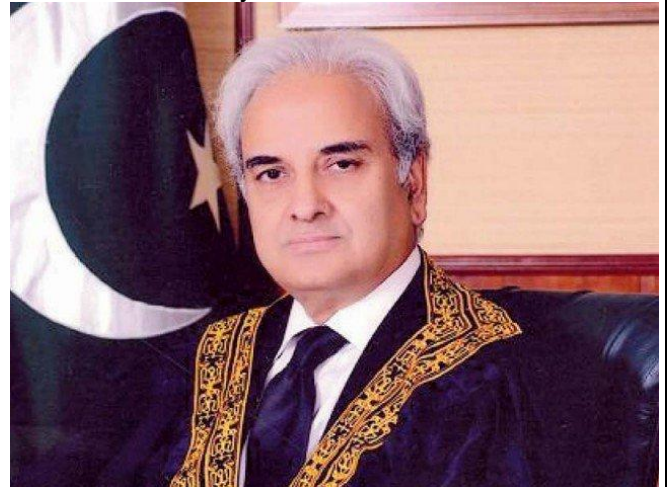
Explanation: Indian botanist Kamaljit S. Bawa, president of Bengaluru-based non-profit Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), received the prestigious Linnean Medal in Botany from the Linnean Society of London on 24 May 2018.



He is the first Indian to win the award ever since it was first constituted in 1888. He is recognised for his pioneering research on the evolution of tropical plants, tropical deforestation, non-timber forest products and for decades of work on the biodiversity of forests in Central America, the Western Ghats and the Eastern Himalaya.

Person

Who was appointed Pakistan's care-taker Prime Minister on 28 May 2018? – NasirUIMulk



Explanation: Pakistan on 28 May 2018 appointed former chief justice NasirUIMulk as interim prime minister until general elections are held on 25 July 2018. His appointment ended weeks of wrangling between President Shahid Khaqan Abbasi's ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and opposition leader Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah's Pakistan People's Party.

Mulk, who also served as the interim chief of the Election Commission of Pakistan, will head a technocratic government until elections as the current government and parliament will be dissolved on 31 May 2018.

Telecom

Yog guru Baba Ramdev's Patanjali entered the telecom space on 28 May 2018 by launching its own SIM card called Swadeshi Samridhhi SIM card. This SIM has been launched in collaboration with which telecom entity? - Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)

Explanation: After gaining popularity in the consumer goods market, Baba Ramdev's Patanjali entered the telecom space on 28 May 2018 by launching its own SIM card in collaboration with State-owned Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). This SIM card has been named 'Swadeshi Samridhhi SIM'.

Alongside the data and voice calling benefits, the Swadeshi Samridhhi SIM also offers health, accidental and life insurances to the customers. This SIM card and its benefits will be available only to Patanjali employees for now. As of now,

there's no information on when the SIM card will be available publicly.

पतंजलि स्वदेशी समृद्धि सिम कार्ड



31 May 2018 ND-Newsletter

Banking

Wage Revision

International

Singapore Airlines

Place

AP – new State Symbols



New state animal of Andhra Pradesh – Black Buck

Banking

Wage Revision

About 85,000 bank branches of two dozen public sector banks across India were largely shut on 30-31 May 2018. The call for the 2-day nationwide bank strike was given primarily to protest what? - Government's casual approach to wage revision for bank employees

Explanation: The call for 2-day bank strike was given by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), a representative body of nine bank unions, in the wake of the Government's casual approach to wage revision for bank employees/officers; Indian Bank Association's (IBA's) meagre offer of 2% hike in wage bill towards wage increase and IBA's delay in resolving charter of demands.

The strike started on 30 May and continued on 31 May 2018 involving about 10 lakh public sector bankers across the country. However, in the new-generation private banks like ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, etc. were almost normal, barring few activities including cheque clearance.

There are about 85,000 branches of 21 public sector banks across the country having business share of about 70%.

State

Andhra Pradesh government on 30 May 2018 announced separate symbols for the state after the bifurcation of Telangana. What is the new state animal of Andhra Pradesh? – Black Buck

Explanation: Black Buck has been declared the state animal of Andhra Pradesh while Neem has been declared the state tree. Rose-ringed Parakeet will be the state bird while Jasmine will be the state's flower.

This was announced through an official order by the Andhra Pradesh government on 30 May 2018.



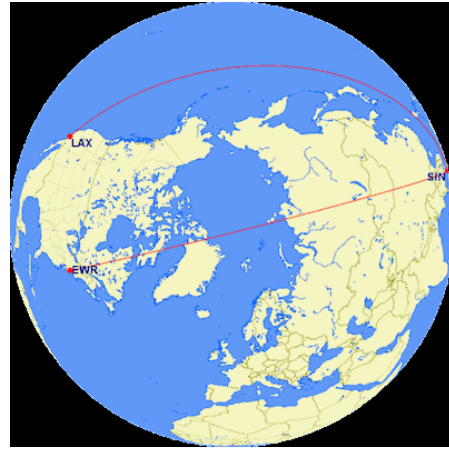
It is worth mentioning that Black Buck was the state animal of the undivided Andhra state while Telangana adopted spotted deer (Chital) as its official animal. The government felt that it is necessary to have separate symbols for the state

after the bifurcation of Telangana from it in June 2014.

Person

Who was appointed as the new Deputy National Security Advisor (DNSA) by the Union Government on 29 May 2018? – PankajSharan

Explanation: In a major development, the Government of India on 29 May 2018 appointed senior diplomat Pankaj Saran as Deputy National Security Advisor (DNSA). Saran is currently serving as India's Ambassador to Russia.



Sharan, the 1982 batch officer of Indian Foreign Service (IFS), was in November 2015 appointed as India's envoy to Russia. He had held various positions in India and abroad including the country's High Commissioner to Bangladesh.



Former chief of the Intelligence Bureau, AjitDoval is the National Security Adviser. He is assisted by Deputy National Security Advisers.

International

Which airline will launch world's longest commercial flight in October 2018 covering 15,329 km, as was announced on 29 May 2018? – Singapore Airlines

Explanation: Singapore Airlines on 29 May 2018 announced that it would launch the world's longest commercial flight in October 2018, a near-19 hour non-stop journey from Singapore to the New Jersey area.

The 15,329 km flight from Singapore to Newark, New Jersey with 161 business class and premium economy seats will eclipse the around 14,535 km Qatar Airways flight from Doha to Auckland as the world's longest.