

1-2 August 2017



1) The Union Government has constituted a committee of experts to identify “key data protection issues” and suggest a draft data protection bill. This was informed to the Supreme Court by the UIDAI on 1 August 2017. Who is heading this expert committee?

– **Justice B.N. Srikrishna**

Explanation: Former Supreme Court Judge Justice B.N. Srikrishna is heading a committee of experts that will assist in a comprehensive law on data protection. The committee was constituted on 31 July 2017 and will primarily identify “key data protection issues” and suggest a draft data protection bill.

– The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) informed a nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court on 1 August 2017 about constitution of this committee. It is worth mentioning that the Supreme Court is hearing the question whether privacy is a fundamental right or not. UIDAI has said that privacy is not a fundamental-right; it is subjective and dependent on human behaviour.

2) Which public sector bank on 31 July 2017 became the first to carry out a rate revision in savings deposit rate after the RBI deregulated savings bank deposit in 2011?

– **SBI**

Explanation: The country’s largest bank-State-Bank of India (SBI) on 31 July 2017 reduced interest rate on savings deposits up to Rs. 1 crore by 50 basis points (bps) to 3.5% per annum with immediate effect.

– It thus became the first bank to revise the savings deposit rate after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had deregulated savings bank deposit interest rate on 25 October 2011. It is expected that the SBI will end up lowering its annual interest bill by Rs 4,230 crore on its latest savings deposit base of Rs 9.4 lakh crore.

– Low inflation and high real interest rate weighed on the bank to decide on the cut. This downward cut in interest rate also set the stage for other banks to follow suit.

3) From July 2017 Indian Railways started the process of doing away with providing blankets in AC compartments after facing severe criticism from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG). The process of phasing out blankets was initiated with which train?

– **Jammu Mail**

Explanation: According to information provided by a senior official of Indian Railways (IR), the —no-blanket rulell has been initially implemented in the third AC coach of the Jammu-Delhi Jammu Mail.

– IR also started the process of gathering data from passengers on the viability of not having blankets on trains. Once it finds out how many of them ask for blankets and how many say that they can do without these, it will come to a decision about replicating the project in other trains.

– The Railways has begun thermal control and regulating the temperature in the third AC compartment of Jammu Mail to around 24-26 degree Celsius from the current 19 degrees so that passengers are comfortable and do not need blankets.

– The step to phase out blankets from trains was taken after severe criticism from the CAG in its report recently about dirty blankets and bedrolls.

4) Who was elected as the interim Prime Minister of Pakistan by country’s parliament on 1 August 2017? – **Shahid Khaqan Abbasi**

Explanation: The Pakistan Parliament on 1 August 2017 elected Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) nominee Shahid Khaqan Abbasi as the interim Prime Minister. The Supreme Court had on 28 July 2017 disqualified Nawaz Sharif from holding public office till life in the wake of corruption charges against him and his family members.

– Abbasi secured 221 votes out of 341, while the three candidates fielded by the divided opposition collectively got 84 votes. Naveed Qamar of the Pakistan People’s Party got 47 votes, while the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf’s nominee secured 33 votes and the Jamaat-e-Islami candidate four votes.

– He is expected to hand over power to Shahbaz Sharif once the latter is elected to the National Assembly in six weeks. Shahbaz Sharif, who is the Chief Minister of Punjab, is the younger brother of Nawaz Sharif.

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5) Abu Dujana, the most-wanted in Jammu and Kashmir for dozens of attacks, was killed in a joint anti-terror operation in Pulwama on 1 August 2017. He was associated with which terrorist organisation? – Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)

Explanation: Pakistan-born Abu Dujana was a category “A++” terrorist and was wanted in over three dozen attacks on security forces and civilians. He carried a reward of Rs. 15 lakh. He had been Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander for the Kashmir Valley

– He was killed in a joint anti-terror operation in Jammu and Kashmir’s Pulwama in the early hours of 1 August 2017. The forces had acted on intelligence inputs about the presence of terrorists in the village and had circled the village earlier in the night.

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3-4 August 2017

1) In a major boost to India, the World Bank allowed India to construct two hydroelectric power projects in the state of Jammu & Kashmir that were opposed by Pakistan. Which are these 2 projects? – Ratle and Kishanganga

Explanation: Pakistan has been opposing the construction of the 850-MW Ratle and 330-MW Kishanganga hydroelectric power plants being built by India on tributaries of the Chenab and Jhelum rivers in Jammu and Kashmir. A secretary-level talk of India and Pakistan under the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) was held during July 2017.

– After the meeting, the World Bank in a fact-sheet issued on 2 August 2017 said that India is allowed to construct these hydroelectric power projects with certain restrictions under the IWT. It noted that the two countries disagreed over whether the technical design features of the two hydroelectric plants contravene the treaty.

– The IWT was signed in 1960 after nine years of negotiations between India and Pakistan with the help of the World Bank, which is also a signatory to this agreement.



2) With the election of Sampathiya Uikey as member of Rajya Sabha on 3 August 2017 what important landmark was achieved by the BJP? – BJP became the largest party in the Rajya Sabha for the first time

Explanation: As Sampathiya Uikey from Madhya Pradesh was elected to the Rajya Sabha on 3 August 2017, her party Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) created history as it ended Congress’s 65-year run as the Rajya Sabha’s biggest party.

– The BJP now has 58 members, the Congress has 57, though the BJP-led government is still

short of a majority in the 245-seat Upper House of Parliament. While the BJP and its allies have a big majority in the Lok Sabha after they swept the national election three years ago, the government has struggled to push through reforms and legislation in the Rajya Sabha because it is in a minority.

– Uikey was elected unopposed in a by-election for the Rajya Sabha seat held by union minister Anil Madhav Dave who died in May this year.

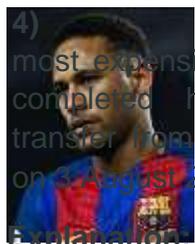


3) On 3 August 2017 who became the first paralympian to be recommended for the country's highest sporting honour – the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award? – **Devendra Jhajharia**

Explanation: Two-time Paralympic gold medallist Devendra Jhajharia created sporting history as his name was recommended for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award, India's highest sports honour on 3 August 2017. His name was recommended along-with former India hockey captain Sardar Singh.

– 36-year-old Jhajharia, who is the first Indian to win two Paralympic gold medals, was the first choice of the awards selection committee headed by Justice (Retd) C.K. Thakkar. 31-year-old midfielder Sardar was nominated as committee's second nominee for the top honour. The committee also recommended 17 names for the Arjuna award.

– Jhajharia won his medals in the javelin throw event.



4) Which player became the most expensive footballer of all-time with his completed his world-record €222 million transfer from Barcelona to Paris St-Germain on 3 August 2017? – **Neymar**

Explanation: Brazilian superstar became the most expensive footballer of all-time as he completed his record-breaking €222 million (around Rs. 1,680 crore) transfer deal from

Spanish club Barcelona to French club Paris St-Germain (PSG) on 3 August 2017.

– PSG signed Neymar for a 5-year deal from Barcelona. He will thus earn Rs. 6.5 crore a-week before tax. His transfer fee is more than double that of Paul Pogba's record move (€105 million) from Juventus to Manchester United.

– 25-year old Neymar has scored 105 goals in 186 appearances for Barcelona.

5) Which Karnataka-based plant of Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India (HMSI) during August 2017 became Japanese auto giant Honda's biggest two-wheeler plant worldwide? –

Narsapura

Explanation: On 2 August 2017 HMSI inaugurated the fourth assembly line at the company's Narsapura plant near Bengaluru (Karnataka) and thus increasing annual production by 6 lakh units.

– With this expansion, the Narsapura plant is now Honda's biggest two-wheeler plant worldwide, with 24 lakh annual production capacity.

– Honda's total capacity from four plants in India is now 64 lakh units in FY2017-18, up from 58 lakh units. Apart from Narsapura plant, HMSI has plants also in Manesar (Haryana), Tapukara (Rajasthan) and Vithalpur (Gujarat).

5 August 2017

1) According to the information disclosed by the union government on 4 August 2017 it has set up a new exchange-traded fund (ETF) comprising 22 scrips including ONGC, IOC, SBI and Axis Bank. It is the second ETF from the government after CPSE ETF. What is the name given to this ETF?

– **Bharat-22**

Explanation: Bharat-22 is the name of the new exchange-traded fund (ETF) established by the Union Government that comprises of 22 blue-chip public sector units, state-owned banks and some holdings in SUUTI. It has a diversified portfolio of six sectors, including energy, FMCG, finance, basic material and industrial and utilities.

– Shares of nine PSUs, including Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (5.3% stake), Coal India Ltd (3.3%), and Indian Oil (4.4%), and four state-owned banks including State Bank of India (8.6%), will comprise the ETF. Besides, SUUTI holdings in Axis Bank (7.7%), ITC (15.2%) and Larsen and Toubro (17.1%) will also be part of the fund.

– Other entities in Bharat-22 are BPCL, Nalco, Bharat Electronics Limited, Engineers India, NBCC, NTPC, Indian Bank, Bank of Baroda, NHPC, SJVNL, GAIL, PGCIL, REC, PFC and NLC India.

– The first CPSE ETF consisted of scrips of 10 PSUs — ONGC, Coal India, IOC, GAIL (India), Oil India, PFC, Bharat Electronics, REC, Engineers India and Container Corporation of India.

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2) The Union Government on 4 August 2017 made Aadhaar mandatory for registration of deaths so as to provide an effective method to prevent identity fraud. Mandatory Aadhaar registration for death will come into effect from which date? – 1 October 2017

Explanation: According to a notification issued by the Home Ministry on 4 August 2017, Aadhaar number will be required for the purpose of establishing the identity of the deceased for the purpose of death registration with effect from 1 October 2017.

– It would be applicable for the residents of all states except Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and Meghalaya, for which a date would be notified separately.

– The use of Aadhaar will result in ensuring accuracy of the details provided by the

relatives or dependents or acquaintances of the deceased. It will provide an effective method to prevent identity fraud. Further, it will obviate the need for producing multiple documents to prove the identity of the deceased person.

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3) Which country is poised to be the first country in the Gulf region to grant permanent residency to some of the foreigners as a landmark legislation was approved by this country's Parliament on 2 August 2017? –

Qatar

Explanation: Qatar Government on 2 August 2017 approved a legislation with the potential to ultimately transform Gulf societies by granting permanent residency to some of the foreigners who dominate its population.

– Under the new law, permanent residents will be treated more like Qatari nationals and will benefit from elements of the state's generous welfare system, including education and health-care services.

– They will also be given priority, after locals, for military and civilian public jobs and would be allowed to own property and run certain commercial activities without a local partner. Citizenship, however, will remain off-limits to foreigners.

– The legislation was approved after Qatar's ruler, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, instructed officials in a speech on 22 July 2017 to expedite measures to lure investments and reduce the economy's reliance on energy in the wake of the boycott of the country by Saudi Arabia and its allies.

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4) Union Government divested 5.5% of its stake in which public sector entity through the offer for sale (OFS) route on 2 and 3 August 2017? – Hindustan

Copper Limited (HCL)

Explanation: The Union Government raised Rs. 327 crore by divesting 5.5% of its stake in Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) through the

offer for sale (OFS) route. The govt. was looking to sell up to eight per cent in HCL, however, the OFS failed to garner the expected response due to lukewarm response from institutional investors.

– The OFS issue was open for non-retail investors on 2 August, while for retail investors the issue was conducted on 3 August 2017. The issue was in line with the government's steep divestment target set in the Union Budget 2017-18.

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5) US stock exchange Dow Jones during August 2017 crossed which mark for the first time ever? – 22,000 points

Explanation: On 2 August 2017 Dow Jones industrial average crossed the 22,000 mark, the first time it crossed this mark.

– The persistent gains this year have come courtesy of robust profits at big companies, low interest rates and a rare alignment of developed economies in good or improving health at the same time.

– The extraordinary rise of the stock markets since early 2009 – when it was a mere 7,063, has greatly fattened the portfolios of American investors.

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6-8 August 2017

1) M. Venkaiah Naidu comfortably won the Vice-Presidential election on 5 August 2017 defeating united opposition's candidate Gopal Krishna Gandhi. With this win Naidu became the second BJP member to become Vice-President. Who was the first? –

Bhairon Singh Shekhawat

Explanation: Bhairon Singh Shekhawat was the first BJP nominee to win the Vice-Presidential elections. He had won in 2002 against the Congressll Sushil Kumar Shinde.

– In the elections for electing the 13th Vice President of Indian on 5 August 2017, M. Venkaiah Naidu received 516 votes against the Gopalkrishna Gandhi's 244. This was thus the highest votes secured by a vice presidential candidate in 44 years. BD Jatti was the only winning candidate to have secured more votes, 521 in all, in 1974. Naidu's 67.9% vote share is also the highest in 30 years.

– Naidu is the first Vice-President of the country to be born after Independence (born in 1949).

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2) Who was nominated as the next Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog on 5 August 2017 to replace the incumbent Arvind Panagariya? – Rajiv Kumar

Explanation: Senior economist Rajiv Kumar, a senior fellow at the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), was nominated as the new Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog. He will replace Arvind Panagariya.

– Rajiv Kumar holds a D.Phil. in Economics from Oxford and a Ph.D. from Lucknow University. He was Secretary General of the FICCI and was also part of CII. He has also served as Director and Chief Executive of the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations or ICRIER.

– The appointment for the post of NITI Aayog vice chairman was necessitated as Arvind Panagariya had on 1 August 2017 announced that he will leave the government think tank on 31 August 2017 and return to Columbia University. He had joined as the Niti Aayog in January 2015.

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3) Who became the first Hindu to become a minister in the Cabinet of Pakistan in 20 years after his name was cleared on 4 August 2017?
– Darshan Lal

Explanation: After a span of 20 years, a Hindu politician, Darshan Lal, is set to take the role of a cabinet minister in Pakistan.

The decision was announced on 4 August 2017 as the new Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi formulated his cabinet.

– Lal has been allotted the responsibility of overseeing co-ordination between the four provinces of Pakistan: Punjab, Sindh, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. He was elected to the national assembly for the second time in 2013 on a Pakistan Muslim League (N) ticket under the minority quota.

– Pakistan has had a two Hindu Cabinet ministers in the past. While Jogendra Nath Mandal, a Scheduled Caste legislator from Bengal, was Pakistan's first law minister, Rana Chander Singh, a veteran leader from Umerkot, a Hindu-dominated district in Sindh, served as a Cabinet minister under Benazir Bhutto. He was the last Hindu minister in Pakistan.

4) Which senior bureaucrat was on 6 August 2017 appointed Executive Director in the World Bank in the US? – **S. Aparna**

Explanation: Senior bureaucrat S Aparna, a 1988-batch IAS officer of the Gujarat cadre, was appointed Executive Director in the World Bank for three years on 6 August 2017. She is presently Principal Secretary to Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani.

– As the Executive Director, she will represent the constituency of India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka in the World Bank. She is replacing S.C. Garg, who has recently taken over as Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, in the Union Finance Ministry.

5) Jamaican legend Usain Bolt was unable to end his career on a high as he was beaten in the men's 100 final at the IAAF World Championships in London on 5 August 2017. Who won this most-awaited final? – **Justin Gatlin (US)**

Explanation: Veteran American athlete Justin Gatlin came all guns blazing in the men's

100m finals at the 2017 IAAF World Championships in London on 5 August 2017. He won the race in 9.90 seconds. Another American Christian Coleman was second in 9.94 seconds.

– Bolt finished the race at third place with timing of 9.95 seconds. Justin Gatlin first became the men's 100m world champion in 2005. Now 35, he was handed two drug bans in his career.

– With this curtains came down on his showcase event (100m sprint). This race was bolt's last 100m final before retiring. His last race, however, will be on 12 August 2017, where he will look to bring gold for his country in the 4x100m relay event.

6) Indian boxer Vijender Singh defeated which Chinese boxer to win his second title and ninth consecutive professional bout on 5 August 2017? – **Zulpikar Maimaitiali**

Explanation: Indian professional boxer Vijender Singh won his second title and ninth consecutive professional bout as he beat his Chinese opponent Zulpikar Maimaitiali on points by a unanimous decision in a close fight in Mumbai on 5 August 2017. He won the WBO Oriental super middleweight title by winning this bout.

– The judges scored the fight 96-93, 95-94, 95-94 in favour of the Indian boxer.

– Vijender already holds the WBO Asia Pacific super middleweight title, which he won beating Australian Kerry Hope in July 2016.

9-10 August 2017

1) The nation observed the 75th anniversary of the 'Quit India Movement', an important milestone in the Indian freedom struggle, on 9 August 2017. What is the chosen theme for this event as suggested by the Prime Minister? – **"Sankalp se Siddhi"** (The Attainment through Resolve)

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his 'Mann ki Baat' radio programme, had suggested "Sankalp se Siddhi" (which means 'the attainment through resolve') as the theme for the momentous occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Quit India Movement.

– To mark the special occasion, both houses of Parliament held a special session on 9 August 2017. Both Houses suspended the Question Hour and Zero Hour to make way for the special session's proceedings. The National Archives of India organized a special exhibition in New Delhi to mark the occasion.

– It is worth mentioning that the call for 'Quit India Movement' was given at the Bombay session of the All-India Congress Committee by Mahatma Gandhi on 8 August 1942 demanding an end to British Rule of India. The clarion call of the movement was given after failure of the Cripps Mission of 1942. Indian citizens became associated with the movement from 9 August 1942.

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2) On 8 August 2017 India ratified the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol that commits countries to contain the emission of greenhouse gases. With this India became the country to accept the amendment relating to the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol – **80th**

Explanation: India's Representative to the UN Syed Akbaruddin on 8 August 2017 announced that India has deposited its Instrument of Acceptance of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol under the UN Convention on Climate Change. India thus became the 80th country to accept the amendment relating to the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, the international emissions reduction treaty.

– The Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which commits its Parties by setting internationally binding emission reduction targets. It was adopted in Kyoto,

Japan, in December 1997 and entered into force in February 2005.

– The first commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol was from 2008-2012. The Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Qatar in December 2012.

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3) Which three states were chosen by NITI Aayog for transformative change in health and education sectors, as announced on 8 August 2017? – **Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Karnataka** in Health and **Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Jharkhand** in Education

Explanation: NITI Aayog has selected Uttar Pradesh, Assam, and Karnataka to improve healthcare delivery and key outcomes in these States. In Education, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Jharkhand have been selected for support to better learning outcomes. The six States have been chosen after a rigorous competitive process based on comprehensive metrics to determine potential for impact and likelihood of success.

– This announcement was made on 8 August 2017. The selections were made after presentations by the states in respective sectors. The states highlighted the initiatives undertaken by them thus far, their willingness to accelerate improvement and justified why they should be selected for the institutional support being offered by NITI Aayog.

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4) The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation on 8 August 2017 released the findings of the survey of 1.4 lakh rural households, undertaken by the Quality Council of India (QCI) between May and June 2017. According to this survey how many households had access to a toilet? – **62.45%**

Explanation: The survey, covering 4626 villages across all States and Union territories, claimed that 62.45% of the households had access to a toilet. It also pointed out that 91.29% of the people who had access to a toilet also used it, indicating a change in sanitation behaviour.

– Northeastern States of Sikkim, Manipur and Nagaland were top performers with 95% rural households covered by toilets, while Bihar (30%) and Uttar Pradesh (37%) were the worst performers.

5) Which state has become the first in the country to implement the policy of coal utilisation between power units so as to give preference to fuel-efficient private power plants? – **Gujarat**

Explanation: Gujarat has become the first state in India to come up with the policy of coal utilization between power units based on fuel-efficiency. During August 2017, the Gujarat Government issued a tender for power developers to receive cheap coal marked for the state in return for selling coal-based power at less than Rs 2.82 a unit.

– Through the auction, Gujarat will transfer the coal allocated to power generating stations owned by Gujarat State Electricity Corporation (GSECL) to more fuel-efficient private power plants.

– The reverse auction would be held in September 2017 for procuring 1,000 megawatt (Mw) of power. The successful power plant would be selling electricity to the state from 1 October 2017 to 30 June 2018.

– The move is in line with the initiatives of the Central Government to ensure fuel availability to stressed power plants. The aim is to reduce the cost of fuel for financially ailing distribution companies and ensure effective distribution of domestic coal.

11 August 2017

1) In the biggest-ever investment in Indian Internet space, at least \$2.5 billion was invested in Indian retail major Flipkart, as was disclosed in media reports on 10 August 2017. Which entity made this investment? –

Soft Bank Vision Fund

Explanation: According to media reports of 10 August 2017, India's largest Internet firm Flipkart Ltd has raised at least \$2.5 billion from Soft Bank Vision Fund. This funding has taken Flipkart's cash reserves to more than \$4 billion.

– Flipkart has thus increased its firepower in the fight with arch rival Amazon India for dominance over India's e-commerce market.

– Flipkart has now raised more than \$6 billion in cash since starting out in 2007, by far the highest by any Indian start-up and among the highest by any start-up globally.

2) Hamid Ansari completed his second tenure as the Vice-President of India on 10 August 2017. He thus became the second Vice-President to complete two terms. Who was the first to complete two Vice-Presidential terms? – **S. Radhakrishnan**

Explanation: Sarvapelli Radhakrishnan, the first Vice-President of the country, was also the first to complete two Vice-Presidential terms. His two terms were from 13 May 1952 to 12 May 1962. He later became the second President of India.

– Hamid Ansari, the 12th Vice-President, has now become the second to complete two Vice-Presidential terms. His first term started from 11 August 2007 while his second term started in August 2012.

– Ansari also has unique distinction of having served three Presidents – Pratibha Patil (2007-2012), Pranab Mukherjee (2012-2017) and Ramnath Kovind. He is the only Vice-President to achieve this distinction.

3) Which private bank announced first-of-its-kind Instant Credit Card Service on 9 August 2017 under which customers can log in through their internet banking account for an instant credit card? – **ICICI Bank**

Explanation: ICICI Bank on 9 August 2017 announced the launch of Instant Credit Card

Service, which will enable its savings account customers to get a credit card instantly, in a completely digital and paperless manner. This is the first-of-its-kind offering in the Indian banking industry.

– Using this service, pre-qualified customers can apply and get credit card number and other important details online, using which, he/she can immediately start shopping online, without having to wait for the physical card to arrive.

– Currently, this facility to apply for a credit card is available through the Bank's internet banking platform. It will also be available shortly on iMobile, the Bank's mobile banking application.

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4) During August 2017 the 3-decade old National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) was merged with which entity?

– **Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD)**

Explanation: The Union home ministry on 4 August 2017 issued an order on the merger of National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) with the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD). The merger has been done so as to improve administrative efficiency and optimal utilisation of resources.

– The BPRD Director General (DG) will be the head of the merged new entity, where the NCRB Director, an Additional DG rank post will report to the former.

– The NCRB was created in 1986 as the central police organisation to collect crime data, on various parameters, from across all the states of the country. On the other hand BPRD was established on 28 August 1970 primarily for the modernisation of police forces.

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12 August 2017

1) What is RBI's dividend payout for the year ended 30 June 2017 as was announced by the RBI on 10 August 2017? – **Rs.30,659 crore**

Explanation: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 10 August 2017 announced that it would pay Rs. 30,659 crore as a dividend to the Union Government. This amount is less than half the surplus it transferred the previous year (Rs. 65,876 crore) and is thus expected to potentially affect govt.'s fiscal math this financial year.

– The reason for this decrease in dividend payout was not explained by the RBI. However economists are of the view that lower returns from the central bank's foreign asset holdings, the costs of demonetisation and managing the increasing liquidity in the banking system – are some possible reasons for this.

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2) M. Venkaiah Naidu was on 11 August 2017 sworn in as the 15th Vice-President of India. But he is overall the..... person to hold this post? – 13th

Explanation: President Ramnath Kovind administered the oath of office to M. Venkaiah Naidu at a brief ceremony in the Durbar Hall of Rashtrapati Bhawan on 11 August 2017. He took the oath in Hindi in the name of God.

– While he is the 15th Vice-President, he is the 13th person to hold the constitutional post. This is due to the fact that two Vice-Presidents occupied the post twice.

– Naidu's predecessor Hamid Ansari and India's first Vice-President S. Radhakrishnan had held the post for two consecutive terms.

3) The Lok Sabha on 10 August 2017 passed the bill to approve the merger of associate banks with the SBI. This bill repealed which Act associated with formation of the subsidiary

banks of the SBI? – The SBI (Subsidiary Banks) Act 1959

Explanation: The Lok Sabha on 10 August 2017 passed the State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2017 to repeal the SBI (Subsidiary Banks) Act 1959, State Bank of Hyderabad Act 1956 and to further amend the State Bank of India Act, 1955, following the merger of five associates with the parent SBI.

– According to the statement of object and reasons of the State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2017, after the acquisition of the subsidiary banks by SBI, the subsidiary banks have ceased to exist and, therefore, it is necessary to repeal the State Bank of India (Subsidiary Banks) Act, 1959 and the State Bank of Hyderabad Act, 1956.

– Five associates and the Bharatiya Mahila Bank became part of State Bank of India (SBI) beginning 1 April 2017, catapulting the country's largest lender to among the top 50 banks in the world. The five associates that were merged are State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur (SBBJ), State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH), State Bank of Mysore (SBM), State Bank of Patiala (SBP) and State Bank of Travancore (SBT).

4) Who was appointed the new Chairman of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), after Pahlaj Nihalani was sacked from the post on 11 August 2017? – Prasoon Joshi

Explanation: Noted lyricist and adguru Prasoon Joshi was appointed the new Chairman of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) on 11 August 2017. His appointment was made after his predecessor Pahlaj Nihalani was removed from the post he had occupying since January 2015.

– 45-year old Prasoon Joshi, who won the Padma Shri in 2015, is one of the film industry's leading lyricists and screenwriters. He has twice won the National Award For Best Lyrics for 'Maa' in *Taare Zameen Par*

(2008) and 'Bolo Na' in *Chittagong* (2013). He has also written the lyrics for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's anthem for the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

– It is worth mentioning that Pahlaj Nihalani's tenure was highly controversial. He was accused of turning the CBFC like his personal fiefdom. He was also trolled for demanding irrational cuts and moral policing. Under him the CBFC had (in 2016) ordered 89 cuts and told producers to remove all references to Punjab, elections and political parties in "*Udta Punjab*", a film on the state's drug problem.

5) Which athlete on 10 August 2017 became the first Indian to qualify for the men's javelin throw final round in the IAAF World Championships? – Davinder Singh Kang

Explanation: Davinder Singh Kang from Punjab created history as the ongoing IAAF World Championships in London on 10 August 2017 as he became the first Indian athlete to qualify for the men's javelin finals.

– With his last throw reaching 84.22m, Kang pipped the more fancied Neeraj Chopra, a junior World Champion, who had the best effort of 82.26m. He stood in the seventh position among the final round qualifiers.

13-16 August 2017

1) Which bank replaced Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) as the bank with the highest bad loan ratio for the three months ended June 2017? – IDBI Bank Ltd

Explanation: IDBI Bank Ltd reported a net loss of Rs. 853.01 crore for the three months ended June 2017, as compared with a profit of Rs. 241.10 crore a year ago. Its bad loan ratio (gross bad loans to gross assets) thus rose to 24.11%.

– With this IDBI Bank has the unwanted record of becoming the bank with the highest bad loan ratio, replacing Indian Overseas

Bank (IOB). IOB has a gross NPA ratio of 23.6%.

– Following IDBI’s results, the total gross NPAs of the 38 listed banks in India rose to Rs. 8.29 trillion from Rs. 6.54 trillion a year ago.

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2) The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on 14 August 2017 pronounced the first insolvency resolution order under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016. This order is associated with which entity? – Synergies-Dooray Automotive Ltd.

Explanation: Synergies-Dooray Automotive Ltd., a maker of alloy wheels for cars, has been featured in the first-ever insolvency resolution order under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 pronounced on 14 August 2017 by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

– The company’s plea for insolvency was admitted on 23 January 2017. The resolution plan was submitted to NCLT on 21 July, within the 180-day period as envisaged by the code, and the tribunal approved the plan on 2 August. The final order was uploaded on the NCLT website on 14 August 2017.

– It is worth mentioning that the bankruptcy law, which was passed by the Parliament in May 2016, came into effect from December 2016, superseding other existing laws to tackle bad loans and non-performing assets (NPAs) in the system.

3) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 15 August 2017 launched a new portal to honour all the gallantry award winners since Independence. Which portal is this? – gallantryawards.gov.in

Explanation: <http://gallantryawards.gov.in> is the new portal launched on 15 August 2017 to honour all the gallantry award winners since Independence. It will preserve and tell the stories of India’s bravest men & women, civilians as well as armed forces personnel.

4) Earth’s largest volcanic region was uncovered recently by scientists of a UK university in which area? –

Antarctica

Explanation: Researchers at Edinburgh University in the UK have uncovered the largest volcanic region on Earth below the surface of the vast Antarctic ice sheet. This region consists of almost 100 volcanoes and is around 2 km below Antarctica’s icy surface.

– These volcanic peaks are concentrated in a region known as the West Antarctic Rift system, which stretches 3,500 km from Antarctica’s Ross ice-shelf to the Antarctic peninsula.

– It is worth mentioning that this new discovery adds to the 47 other volcanoes that had been discovered previously, with the highest as tall as the Eiger, which stands at almost 4,000 metres, in Switzerland.

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5) What is the reserve price for Sahara Group’s Aamby Valley resort town that went for auction in a Supreme Court-ordered auction process on 14 August 2017? – Rs. 37,392 crore

Explanation: A Supreme Court-ordered auction process for embattled Sahara Group’s luxurious Aamby Valley resort town began on 14 August 2017. The official liquidator invited bids at a reserve price of Rs. 37,392 crore. It is worth mentioning that Sahara has pegged the project’s market valuation at over Rs. 1 trillion (Rs. 1 lakh crore).

– Aamby Valley is an integrated hill city township spread over 6,761.6 acres near Lonavala in Pune district and has two land parcels measuring over 1,700 acres.

– Sahara has been engaged in a long-running battle with the capital market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

6) What is the name given to an ambitious countrywide campaign launched from 12 August 2017 by the Wildlife Trust of India to raise awareness about the shrinking space for wild elephants in the country? – **“Gaj Yatra”**

Explanation: “Gaj Yatra” is the name given to a new pan-India campaign launched in a bid to raise awareness about the shrinking space for wild elephants in the country. The campaign was launched from Mumbai on 12 August 2017 by an NGO, the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI).

– The campaign will take the form of a roadshow that will move through 12 elephant range states over the next 15 months. It will feature elephant-sized artworks created by local artists and craftsmen as the centerpiece.

– The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) is partnering this campaign.

17-18 August 2017

1) The Initial Public Offering (IPO) of which state-owned entity during August 2017 created history by becoming the most successful public-sector IPO in the last decade as it was oversubscribed almost 75 times? –

Cochin Shipyard Limited

Explanation: The IPO of Cochin Shipyard Limited created history as it became the most successful public-sector IPO of last decade. It was over-subscribed 75 times thus raising more than Rs. 1.11 lakh crore, as against the offer size of Rs. 1,442 crore.

– The issue also saw a strong interest from retail segment with over 20 lakh applications. The qualified institutional buyers (QIB) portion was over-subscribed by more than 63 times and the high net worth individual (HNI) portion was over-subscribed by 287 times.

– Cochin Shipyard tapped the market to raise money to part-fund an expansion plan involving

the construction of a new dry dock and boosting its ship-repair capacity. The yard, which is in the heart of Kochi (Kerala), is currently executing orders worth a little over Rs. 3,000 crore comprising six ships.

2) After fixing the price of cardiac stents some time back, the Union Government fixed the ceiling price of which medical product on 16 August 2017? – **Knee Implants**

Explanation: The Union Govt. fixed the ceiling prices of orthopaedic implants used in knee surgeries from 16 August 2017. Based on the numbers of about 1 to 1.5 lakh orthopaedic knee procedures done in India every year, there will be a saving of about Rs.1500 crore for the people of India per annum.

– According to the government this step has been taken so as to prevent unethical profiteering and ensure affordable and quality healthcare for the last man. As per the data analysis of National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), under Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, there was huge margin in trade.

– The NPPA, while fixing the ceiling prices, has kept all the new technology implants in mind and prices have been fixed accordingly. For example the ceiling price of the most widely used cobalt chromium knee implant has been fixed at Rs. 54,720 while its average MRP is Rs. 1,58,324.

3) The Union Cabinet on 16 August 2017 approved the creation of a single non-lapsable corpus fund for Secondary and Higher education from the proceeds of Cess for Secondary and Higher Education. What is the name of this new corpus fund? – **Madhyamik and Uchchta Shiksha Kosh (MUSK)**

Explanation: Madhyamik and Uchchta Shiksha Kosh (MUSK) is the name of the newly formed non-lapsable corpus fund for secondary and higher education. All proceeds of “Secondary and Higher Education Cess” will be credited into this fund under Section 136 of Finance Act, 2007.

– The funds arising from the MUSK would be utilized for schemes in the education sector which would be available for the benefit of students of secondary and higher education, all over the country.

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4) According to the preliminary results from the first-ever synchronised all-India Elephant Population Estimation the total elephant population in India is 27,312. According to this estimate, which state has the largest number of elephants in the country? – **Karnataka**

Explanation: The preliminary results of the synchronised all-India Elephant Population Estimation were released during August 2017. It pegs India's Asian elephant population at 27,312.

– According to the report, released by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change on 12 August 2017, Karnataka has the highest number of elephants (6,049), followed by Assam (5,719) and Kerala (3,054).

– The numbers are lower than from the last census estimate in 2012 (between 29,391 and 30,711). But experts say parallels cannot be drawn, because in the 2012 count, various states used different methodologies and the effort was not synchronised across the country; errors and duplication could have led to overestimation.

– The estimate, derived from the sighting-based direct count method alone, will be confirmed with estimates from the indirect dung-count method in three months.

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5) Which city was named world's most liveable city for a record seventh year in a row in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Report for 2017? – **Melbourne**

Explanation: Australian city Melbourne has been named world's most liveable city for a record seventh year in a row. This annual report is published by the Intelligence Unit of

'Economist'. The city scored an overall rating of 97.5 out of 100 on the liveability index this year, narrowly pipping the Austrian capital Vienna (97.4 points) at the post.

– In a repeat of last year's result, the Canadian cities of Vancouver, Toronto and Calgary took the next positions, with Adelaide in a tie with Calgary for fifth place.

– As far as the worst cities in the index, Syrian capital Damascus scored just 30.2 points to remain at the bottom of the list of 140 countries. It was followed by Lagos (Nigeria), Tripoli (Libya), Dhaka (Bangladesh) and Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea) as the 5 worst cities.

– Under the liveability index each city is assigned a rating of relative comfort across 30 factors involving stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education and infrastructure.

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19 August 2017

1) Which European city was hit by a terror attack on 17 August 2017 with a van running over pedestrians and killing 13 persons? – **Barcelona (Spain)**

Explanation: La Rambla, a very popular street in central Barcelona, was site of a terror attack on 17 August 2017 as a van rampaged down the street and running over pedestrians. 13 persons were killed in this attack and over 100 were injured.

– An assailant drove the white Fiat Talento van at a speed of about 80 kmph through the busy street and throwing people into the air. The vehicle was reportedly hired from a neighbouring location. Later the Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility for the attack.

– This was the deadliest terror attack since Madrid train bombings of 11 March 2004 by Al-Qaida in which 192 persons were killed and over 2 thousand were injured.

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2) Infosys CEO & MD Vishal Sikka resigned from the post abruptly on 18 August 2017 and his resignation was accepted on the same day by the company board. Who was appointed the interim CEO of the company? – **U.B. Pravin Rao**

Explanation: Vishal Sikka, who was the first non-founder Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD) of Infosys, resigned with immediate effect on 18 August 2017. He had taken over the reins of the company exactly 3 years ago.

– After his resignation was accepted by the company board, he was appointed as Executive Vice Chairman in a newly created position. On the other hand the company named company veteran U.B. Pravin Rao as the interim CEO.

– Sikka's resignation came after he has been caught up in turmoil at Infosys over the past one and a half years during which the company's founders and the board has been at odds with each other. Infosys is India's second largest software exporting company.

3) According to an announcement made by the Defence Ministry on 18 August 2017, the Indian Army will get 6 units of which American heavy-duty attack helicopters? – **Apache AH-64E**

Explanation: The Defence Ministry on 18 August 2017 cleared the acquisition of six Apache AH-64E attack helicopters, armed with Hellfire and Stinger missiles, for the Army at a cost of Rs. 4,168 crore.

– It is worth mentioning that the Indian Army had been involved in a bitter tussle with the Indian Air Force (IAF) for acquiring these helicopters. Indian Army had earlier sought the government's approval for acquisition of 11 Apache helicopters from the US as a follow-on contract to the Rs. 13,952 crore deal inked for 22 such helicopters for the IAF in September 2015.

– The Army for long has been pushing for three squadrons of attack helicopters,

among other choppers, for its three primary "strike" corps geared for rapid armoured thrusts into enemy territory. Apache AH-64E attack helicopters are manufactured by Boeing Inc.

4) Who took over as Pakistan's High Commissioner to India on 16 August 2017? – **Sohail Mahmood**

Explanation: Sohail Mahmood, the 1985-batch officer of the Pakistani Foreign Service, assumed the charge of Pakistan's High Commissioner to India in New Delhi on 16 August 2017.

– He replaced Abdul Basit, a career diplomat, after his premature retirement earlier in August 2017. Mahmood was till now Pakistani Ambassador in Turkey. Prior to it he was Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

20-22 August 2017



1) What is the name of the new version of Google's Android mobile operating system as announced by the company on 21 August 2017? – **Oreo**

Explanation: Google on 21 August 2017 announced that upcoming version of its Android mobile operating system will be called 'Oreo', named after the famous cookie brand of Mondelez International. The company thus continued the tradition of naming software versions after a dessert.

– Oreo will be technically Android version 8.0 and will bring several interesting features including picture-in-picture mode, which will enable users to watch a video in a resizable

and movable small window atop of any other app.

– It is worth mentioning that Google has been following the tradition of naming Android versions after desserts since Android Cupcake (version 1.5) that was initially released on 27 April 2009. Cupcake was the third Android versions after Android 1.0 and 1.1. Later versions of Android are Donut (2009), Eclair (2009), Froyo (2010), Gingerbread (2010), Honeycomb (2011), Ice Cream Sandwich (2011), Jelly Bean (2012), Kit Kat (2013), Lollipop (2014), Marshmallow (2015) and Nougat (2016).

– Google is also following alphabetical order in naming the new versions of Android.



2) Which express train was involved in an accident caused by derailment in Muzaffarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh on 19 August 2017 resulting in death of at-least 23 persons and injuries to over 100 passengers? – **Kalinga-Utkal Express**

Explanation: Kalinga-Utkal Express (train no. 18477), which is an important express train of Indian Railways connecting two pilgrimage centers of India – Haridwar and Puri, was involved in a major accident caused to derailment on 19 August 2017.

– This accident took place in the evening near Khatauli railway station in Muzaffarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh. 14 of the 23 train coaches derailed and mounted on one another while one carriage crashed into a house on the side of the tracks. 24 persons died in the accident while over 123 were injured. Major negligence on the part of

railway employees was primarily expected the reason for this derailment.

– Later Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Delhi, General Manager (Northern Railway) RN Kulshrestha and Member Engineering of Railway Board (secretary level) were sent on leave while Assistant Engineer, Senior Divisional Engineer, Junior Engineer and Senior Section Engineer (Permanent Way), responsible for track maintenance, were suspended. Chief Track Engineer of Northern Railway was transferred.

3) The Union Government on 20 August 2017 gave more financial powers to which entity with the primary aim of strengthening the road infrastructure in the border with China? –

Border Roads Organisation (BRO)

Explanation: The Defence Ministry on 20 August 2017 empowered officials of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) with enhanced financial powers. This was done primarily to improve the speed of work in the Indo-China border roads along the northern borders.

– The earlier financial powers permitted a Chief Engineer to approval “departmental works” up to Rs. 10 crore, and the ADGBR (Assistant Director General Border Roads) up to Rs. 20 crore. From now a Chief Engineer of BRO can accord administrative approval up to Rs 50. crore, ADGBR upto Rs 75. crore and DGBR up to Rs. 100 crore.

– Concerns have been mounting as BRO is far behind schedule in constructing 73 approved Indo-China border roads. While China has constructed a wide-spread network of roads that allow their troops to reach the border quickly on vehicles, Indian foot patrols must march long distances to reach the same areas.

4) President Ram Nath Kovind visited which area on 21 August 2017 as part of his first

visit outside Delhi after assuming office in July 2017? – **Leh (J&K)**

Explanation: President Ram Nath Kovind, who is also the supreme commander of the Indian Armed Forces, on 21 August 2017 visited Leh in Jammu and Kashmir as part of his one-day visit of the state. This was the President's first visit outside Delhi after assuming office on 25 July 2017.

– He presented the President's colours to the Ladakh Scouts Regiment and its five battalions.

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5) Essar Oil on 21 August 2017 announced the sale of its India assets to the Russian government controlled consortium for \$12.9 billion has been completed. What is the name of this Russian consortium which has purchased these assets as part of the largest-ever foreign direct investment (FDI) in India? – **Rosneft**

Explanation: Rosneft is the name of the consortium controlled by the Russian Government that has acquired the assets of Ruias-run Essar Oil under the mammoth \$12.9 billion deal. This deal is the largest foreign direct investment (FDI) into India till date and also the largest outbound investment from Russia.

– The deal includes sale of its 20 million tonne refinery at Vadinar in Gujarat, a captive power plant and captive port as well as over 3,500 petrol pumps. It was completed more than 10 months after it was announced on 15 October 2016 on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Goa.

– Debt-ridden Essar will pay back as much as Rs. 70,000 crore from the deal to lenders, including SBI, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, IDBI Bank and StanChart.

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23-24 August 2017

1) In a historic judgment, the 5-member constitutional bench of the Supreme Court on 22 August 2017 struck down the Islamic practice of triple talaq ("talaq-e-biddat") as unconstitutional and maintained that it is not protected by Article 25. Who was the main petitioner in this case? – **Shayara Bano**

Explanation: Shayara Bano of Kashipur (Uttarakhand) is the first petitioner in the case that led the Supreme Court to pass a verdict declaring the practice of triple talaq unconstitutional. She had filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the apex court in 2016, seeking a ban on the practice of instantaneous divorce after her 14-year-marriage ended abruptly in October 2015.

– Bano had been joined by at least five other women from different parts of the country, seeking a similar ban. But since hers was the first petition, this case is known as Shayara Bano versus the Union of India.

– The 5-member constitutional bench gave its judgment by a majority of 3:2. Chief Justice J.S. Khehar, who led the Bench, held that *talaq-e-biddat* is an integral part of Article 25 (freedom of religion). But this view was endorsed only by Justice S. Abdul Nazeer. Justices Kurian Joseph and Rohinton Fali Nariman gave separate judgments against the validity of instant *talaq*. Justice U.U. Lalit supported Justice Nariman's judgment thus tilting the decision against triple talaq.

– In his judgment, Justice Kurian held that instant *talaq* was against the tenets of Quran. He differed with Chief Justice Khehar that just because a practice has been around for 1,400 years does not make it eligible for protection under Article 25.

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2) What is the new ceiling of creamy layer of the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category after it was raised by the union government on 23 August 2017? – **Rs. 8 lakh per annum**

Explanation: The Union Cabinet on 23 August 2017 increased the creamy layer ceiling for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category to Rs. 8 lakh per annum from the existing Rs. 6 lakh for central government jobs.

– This means that those in the OBC category earning up to Rs. 8 lakh per annum would get the reservation benefits from now on.

3) Who was appointed the new Chairman of the Railway Board following the resignation of A.K. Mital on 23 August 2017? – Ashwani Lohani

Explanation: Ashwani Lohani, the Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of Air India was on 23 August 2017 named the Chairman of the Railway Board following the resignation of A.K. Mital.

– This move came after A.K. Mital tendered his resignation on 22 August 2017. Sources said he resigned owing moral responsibility of the Puri-Haridwar Utkal Express derailment in Uttar Pradesh on 19 August 2017 due to several lapses in the track maintenance work.

– Lohani, an Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineering (IRSME) cadre had served as DRM, Delhi Division; Director, National Rail Museum; and Chief Administrative Officer, Rail Alternate Fuel. He holds the Guinness Record for successfully running the 'Fairy Queen Express', the world's oldest working steam locomotive.

4) The Director General of Shipping (DGS) came up with which measure against the unregistered/unlicensed recruitment and placement services engaged in immigration of Indian seafarers? – New software to capture data of Indian seafarers going abroad

Explanation: The Director General of Shipping (DGS), the Indian maritime regulator, has developed an e-migrate software for immigration of Indian seafarers after consulting the Protector of Emigrants

(PoE) attached to the Ministry of External Affairs.

– It will capture the data of seafarers engaged by local fleet owners on Indian flag ships, through recruitment agents on foreign flag and Indian flag ships, and those hired directly by global fleet owners on foreign flag ships.

– This software will be used to crack the whip on recruitment and placement service (RPS) touts who snare desperate seafarers with impunity and leave them to fend for themselves during distress.

5) BWEL The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on 23 August 2017 approved the closure of which loss-making central public sector enterprise? – Bharat Wagon and Engineering Company

Explanation: Bharat Wagon and Engineering Company Limited (BWEL) is a central public sector enterprise under the Ministry of Railways. The CCEA on 23 August 2017 approved its closure due to huge accumulated losses.

– The decision to wind-up BWEL was taken in view of continuing poor physical and financial performance of the company for more than 10 years. It was established in 1978 to produce rail wagons.

– 626 employees of BWEL will benefit from the voluntary retirement scheme to be offered at the 2007 pay scale. The Government will have to provide one-time grant of Rs. 151.18 crore towards the severance package and for clearing the current liabilities of the company.

25-26 August 2017

1) In a landmark and unanimous decision, the 9-member constitutional bench of the Supreme Court on 24 August 2017 declared that privacy is a fundamental right under the Constitution of India. With this judgment the Supreme Court overruled which of its two earlier judgments? –

M.P Sharma vs. Satish Chandra (1954) and Kharak Singh vs. State of Uttar Pradesh (1961)

Explanation: In its two earlier rulings M.P Sharma vs. Satish Chandra (1954) and Kharak Singh vs. State of Uttar Pradesh (1961), the Supreme Court had ruled that right to privacy cannot be defined as a fundamental right.

– But in its landmark judgment of 24 August 2017, the 9-member Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court (led by Chief Justice J.S. Khehar) overruled these earlier judgments and said – “Privacy is intrinsic to the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution and will be included under schedule III of the Constitution.”

– This Constitutional Bench was set up on 18 July 2017 and heard arguments over three days each week by lawyers for the central government, states and petitioners who contended that the collection of personal details under the Aadhaar infringed on the right to privacy.

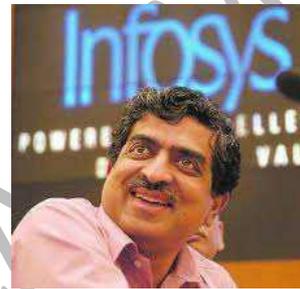
– The right to privacy will now find place under Schedule III of the Constitution along with other fundamental rights: right to equality before law, right to various freedoms such as speech and expression/to move freely, right against exploitation, right to freedom of religion, cultural and educational rights and right to constitutional remedies.

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2) What is the name of the ambitious strategic nation building initiative to engage leaders to guide and mentor students that was launched by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant on 23 August 2017? – “Mentor India”

Explanation: “Mentor India” is the name given to the strategic nation building initiative to engage leaders who can guide and mentor students at more than 900 Atal Tinkering Labs. This initiative a part of the Atal Innovation Mission and was launched by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant in New Delhi on 23 August 2017.

– This initiative is aimed at maximising the impact of Atal Tinkering Labs. Mentors are expected to be enablers rather than instructors, wherein the idea is to engage leaders who will nurture and guide students in the Atal Tinkering Labs.

– Atal Tinkering Labs are dedicated works spaces where students from Class VI to Class 12 learn innovation skills and develop ideas that will go on to transform India. The labs are powered to acquaint students with state-of-the-art equipment such as 3D printers, robotics and electronics development tools, Internet of things and sensors.



3) Who was appointed the new Chairman of the Infosys board on 24 August 2017? – Nandan Nilekani

Explanation: Nandan Nilekani, one of the co-founders of software major Infosys, was on 24 August 2017 appointed the new Chairman of the company board even as 5 members resigned from the Board.

– Nilekani had served as Infosys CEO from 2002 to 2007. His appointment is being seen as significant victory for co-founder N.R. Narayana Murthy in his fight against the board of Infosys after the dramatic resignation of CEO Vishal Sikka.

– As he was appointed the company Chairman, non-executive chairman R. Seshasaye, co-chairman Ravi Venkatesan, executive vice-chairman Vishal Sikka and directors Jeffrey Lehman and John Etchemendy resigned from the board.

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4) Facing diplomatic boycott from 4 Arab countries, Qatar on 24 August 2017

announced restoration of full diplomatic relations with which country? – **Iran**

Explanation: Amidst Arab diplomatic crisis, Qatar restored full diplomatic relations with Iran on 24 August 2017. It thus disregarded the demands of Arab nations now locked in a regional dispute with it that it lower its ties with Iran.

– Qatar had pulled its ambassador in Iran in early 2016 after Saudi Arabia’s execution of a prominent Shiite cleric sparked attacks on two Saudi diplomatic posts in Iran. But despite this, Iran and Qatar maintained their valuable commercial ties. Qatar and Iran share a massive offshore natural gas field, called the South Pars Field by Tehran and the North Field by Doha.

– The Arab diplomatic crisis began 5 June 2017, when Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates cut ties to Qatar over allegations including it funding extremists and being too close to Iran. Qatar long has denied funding extremists.

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5) Union Commerce and Industry Ministry on 25 August 2017 constituted a task-force to explore possibilities to leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) for development across various fields. Who is heading this task-force? – **V. Kamakoti**

Explanation: V. Kamakoti of IIT Madras is heading the task-force on Artificial Intelligence (AI) constituted by Nirmala Sitharaman, the Union Commerce and Industry Minister, on 25 August 2017. This task force is titled ‘Task Force on AI for India’s Economic Transformation’.

– It will submit concrete and implementable recommendations for government, industry and research institutions. The primary task of the task force will be to explore possibilities to leverage AI for development across various fields. It comprises of experts, academics, researchers and industry leaders.

27-29 August 2017

1) After weeks of diplomatic negotiations, India and China agreed to disengage from the standoff on the Doklam plateau, disputed between China and Bhutan. This was stated in a statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs of India on 28 August 2017. The Doklam controversy arose on which date? – **16 June 2017**

Explanation: Doklam is an area with a plateau and a valley, lying between Tibet’s Chumbi Valley to the north, Bhutan’s Ha Valley to the east and India’s Sikkim state to the west. It has been depicted as part of Bhutan in the Bhutanese maps since 1961, but it is also claimed by China. India’s doesn’t claim Doklam but supports Bhutan’s claim.

– The Doklam controversy started on 16 June 2017 as Chinese troops with construction vehicles and road-building equipment began extending an existing road southward in Doklam. Bhutan accepted this as interference in its sovereignty. On 18 June 2017, around 270 Indian troops, with weapons and two bulldozers, entered Doklam to stop the Chinese troops from constructing the road. This led to a huge controversy that continued for weeks with Chinese government and media continuously cautioning India for its alleged misadventure.

– But after weeks of diplomatic efforts, Indian troops withdrew back to their posts in Sikkim on 28 August 2017 while China also promised to make adjustments to their troop deployments. This announcement was made by India’s Ministry of External Affairs.

– The resolution of Doklam controversy came just a week before Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to China to attend the BRICS summit from 3 September 2017.

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2) What is an important feature associated with the consolidated foreign direct

investment (FDI) policy that was released by the Union Govt. on 28 August 2017? – **For the first time start-ups have been mentioned in FDI policy**

Explanation: According to the directives of the consolidated foreign direct investment (FDI) policy, start-ups can issue equity, equity linked instruments and debt instruments to foreign venture capital investors in accordance with FEMA rules. They can also issue convertible notes to persons residing outside India under certain conditions.

– It was thus the first time that an FDI policy has come up with directives for start-ups.



3) Who took over as the 45th Chief Justice of India on 28 August 2017? – Justice Deepak Misra

Explanation: Justice Dipak Misra was on 28 August 2017 sworn in as the 45th Chief

Justice of India by President Ramnath Kovind at a brief ceremony in the Darbar Hall of Rashtrapati Bhawan.

– He replaced Justice J.S. Khehar who retired a day earlier on 27 August 2017. Justice Misra had made history when he led the three-judge Bench which heard Yakub Memon, the sole condemned man in the Bombay blasts case, who came knocking on the Supreme Court's door for reprieve in the wee hours of the day he was hanged to death.

– He is also third person from Odisha to be appointed the Chief Justice of India, after Justices Ranganath Misra and G B Pattanaik.

4) Who defeated India's P.V. Sindhu in the women's singles final of BWF World Badminton Championship 2017 on 27 August 2017? – Nozomi Okuhara (Japan)

Explanation: Japan's Nozomi Okuhara inflicted a heart-wrenching defeat on India's P.V. Sindhu in the finals of women's singles final of BWF World Badminton Championship 2017 thus ending Sindhu's attempt to become India's first ever badminton World Champion. Okuhara became the first Japanese woman to win a Singles World Championship Gold.

– Okuhara defeated Sindhu by 19-21, 22-20, 20-22 in an epic final that went for 1 hour 49 minutes. By losing the final, Sindhu had to content with the silver medal. She had won bronze medals from past editions of World Championships.

– On the other hand another Indian ace Saina Nehwal won a bronze earlier on 26 August after losing her semifinal to Okuhara. For India, it still was a historic World Badminton Championship edition since for the first time country's shuttler are returning with two medals from the world championships.

– The men's singles title was claimed by Denmark's Viktor Axelsen who defeated the legendary Lin Dan of China in straight games by 22-20, 21-16. He became the third Dane to claim the men's singles crown. BWF World Badminton Championship 2017 was from 21 August to 27 August 2017 in Glasgow (Scotland).

5) India's first-ever "Videsh Bhawan", that assimilates all Regional Passport Offices under one roof, was inaugurated on 27 August 2017 in which city? – Mumbai

Explanation: External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj on 27 August 2017 inaugurated the country's first Videsh Bhavan in Mumbai.

– As a first pilot project, four offices of the MEA – Regional Passport Office (RPO), Protector of Emigrants (PoE) office, Branch Secretariat and Regional Office of the ICCR

– have been assimilated and brought under one roof at the state-of-art office.

– It is worth mentioning that at present over 90 RPOs and PoEs across the country are functioning from rented offices thus costing huge amount to the MEA. Merging and integrating them into similar Videsh Bhavans in different state capitals is expected to cut costs besides ensuring improving efficiency and speeding up the delivery of various services.

30-31 August 2017

1) The Union Government on 30 August 2017 announced first-of-its-kind significant reforms to the Indian Army to enhance its combat capability and also optimize expenditure. These historic reforms will be undertaken on the recommendation of which committee's recommendations on this subject? – **D.B. Shekatkar Committee**

Explanation: The 11-member D.B. Shekatkar Committee, headed by Lt. General D.B. Shekatkar (Retd.), was constituted by the Union Government on 20 May 2016. It was mandated to come up with recommendations to enhance the combat potential of the armed forces and re-balancing defence expenditure.

– The committee had submitted the final report to the then Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar on 21 December 2016. The committee had noted that if majority of its recommendations are implemented over the next five years, the government can save up to Rs 25,000 crore from its current expenditure.

– The government has decided to implement 65 army reforms recommended by the committee to enhance Indian Army's combat capability and optimize its expenditure.

– The reforms involve the redeployment of 57,000 personnel, optimization of communication arms and the closure of 39 military farms. The reform measures also

include optimization of supply, transport and ordnance infrastructure and the closure of several military postal departments in so-called peace locations.

– This is the first time that any government has undertaken such a move, which most defence analysts agree should have happened long ago.

2) According to RBI's annual report released on 30 August 2017, what percentage of the Rs. 1000 notes and Rs. 500 notes demonetized currency notes had returned to it by June 2017?

– **98.96%**

Explanation: Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) annual report shows that 98.96% of Rs 1000 notes and Rs 500 notes that were banned after demonetisation had returned to it by the end of June 2017. The report released on 30 August 2017 estimates value of Rs. 1000, Rs. 500 notes returned was Rs. 15.28 trillion against Rs. 15.44 trillion that was in circulation before demonetization.

– By rendering 500 and 1000 rupees illegal in one stroke on 8 November 2016 and imposing restrictions on how the money could be returned to lenders, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had been intending to make it difficult for hoarders of undeclared wealth, or black money, to exchange their undeclared cash for legal tender.

– But the number released by the RBI could renew scrutiny about the effectiveness of demonetization as RBI got almost all of the banned currency notes.



3) India's longest hanging bridge was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 29 August 2017. This bridge is situated at which place? –

Kota (Rajasthan)

Explanation: India's longest hanging bridge in Kota (Rajasthan) was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 29 August 2017. He inaugurated this landmark bridge by pressing the remote button in Udaipur. The bridge is popularly known as "Kota Bypass Bridge" and it crosses the Chambal River just outside the city.

– The bridge is cable-stayed with single plain suspension with the main span of 350 metre and lateral spans of 175 metre on either side of the bridge. The bridge is around 60-metre-high from the surface of the Chambal River. Cables of the bridge are aerodynamic giving them the ability to be neutral in stormy winds

– The work on this 1.5 km long bridge started in 2007 but a deadly accident in 2009 and other reasons delayed it. 48 people died in that accident.

4) What is the name of the deadly tropical storm that brought unprecedented and catastrophic flooding in southeastern Texas in the US during August 2017? – **Hurricane**

Harvey

Explanation: Hurricane Harvey was the first major hurricane to make landfall in the United States since Wilma in 2005. It thus broke a record 12-year period with no hurricanes of Category 3 intensity or higher making landfall in the United States.

– Harvey developed from a tropical wave to the east of the Lesser Antilles, reaching tropical storm status on 17 August 2017. It continued to gain intensity became a Category 4 hurricane late on 25 August. Hours later it made landfall near Rockport, Texas, at peak intensity.

– At least 29 people died to flooding in South-eastern Texas and Greater Houston.

Preliminary estimates of economic losses due to this storm range anywhere from \$10 billion to \$50 billion.

5) The Union Government disinvested 5% of its stake through offer for sale (OFS) in which public sector entity on 29-30 August 2017 to garner around Rs. 7,000 crore? – **NTPC**

Explanation: The Union Government sold 5% of its holding (or 41.22 crore shares) in India's biggest power producer NTPC on 29-30 August 2017. This disinvestment was done through offer-for-sale (OFS) mode.

– Institutional investors had placed bids for 46.35 crore shares on the first day of OFS (29 August 2017) as against the total of 32.98 crore shares reserved for them. On second day bids were invited from retail investors, for whom 8.24 crore shares were reserved.

– The government owns 69.74% stake in NTPC as on 30 June 2017. The government has targeted to raise Rs. 72,500 crore in 2017-18 through stake sale in PSUs. This includes Rs. 46,500 crore from minority stake sale, Rs. 15,000 crore from strategic disinvestment and Rs. 11,000 crore from a listing of PSU insurance companies.