

1-3 July 2017

1) Independent India's biggest reform initiative was ushered in the midnight of 30 June 2017 as the highly ambitious Goods and Service Tax (GST) regime kicked-off in the country. Which would be the simplest words to describe GST?

– **A destination-based indirect tax on consumption**

Explanation: In simplest words Goods and Service Tax (GST) can be defined as a destination-based indirect tax on consumption. It primarily seeks to eliminate inefficiencies in the tax system that result in 'tax on tax', known as cascading of taxes.

– It can also be described as a value-added tax at each stage of the supply of goods and services precisely on the amount of value addition achieved. To make sure that GST is levied only on the amount of value addition at each stage of the supply chain, credit for the taxes paid at the previous stage is granted.

– Businesses and traders with annual sales above Rs. 20 lakh are liable to pay GST. The threshold for paying GST is Rs. 10 lakh in the case of northeastern and special category states. GST is applicable on inter-state trade irrespective of this threshold.

– For this momentous occasion of implementing GST in the country, a special joint-session of the Parliament was convened in the midnight of 30 June 2017 in which President Pranab Mukherjee ushered the country into the GST era.

Top Questions on GST

2) The Union Government on 30 June 2017 reduced the interest rate on small savings by how many point for the July-September 2017 quarter? – **0.1%**

Explanation: The Union Government lowered interest rate on small saving schemes like Public Provident Fund (PPF), Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) and Sukanya Samridhhi by 0.1% for the July-September 2017 quarter.

– The rates have been lowered by 0.1% across the board compared to the April-June quarter. However, interest on savings deposits has been retained at 4% annually.

– Now investments in the PPF scheme will fetch lower annual rate of 7.8%. Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) investments will yield 7.5% and mature in 115 months. The one for girl child savings, Sukanya Samridhhi Account Scheme, will offer 8.3% annually, from 8.4 % at present.

– The investment on 5-year Senior Citizens Savings Scheme will yield 8.3%. The interest rate on the senior citizens scheme is paid quarterly. Term deposits of 1-5 years will fetch a lower 6.8-7.6% will be paid quarterly while the 5-year recurring deposit has been pegged lower at 7.1%.

3) Who was appointed the new Attorney General for India to succeed Mukul Rohtagi? – **KK Venugopal**

Explanation: Senior advocate KK Venugopal's appointment as the new Attorney General for India was cleared by President Pranab Mukherjee. He will succeed Mukul Rohatgi, who had announced his resignation during June 2017.

– 86-year old Venugopal had served as the Additional Solicitor General in the Morarji Desai government. He assisted the Supreme Court in a number of cases and was an amicus curiae in the 2G spectrum scam case.

– Among the prominent cases Venugopal had handled are the Mandal case, Ayodhya dispute, Presidential reference regarding appointment of Judges and also the case involving judicial appointments.

– He had also represented former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa in the wealth case and defended her in the petition challenging her appointment as Chief Minister. He argued in the Presidential reference in Gujarat elections case in 2002. He was also the counsel for senior BJP leader L.K.Advani in Babri Masjid demolition

case and argued against slapping of conspiracy charge against him.

.....

4) Aadhaar-issuing authority UIDAI on 1 July 2017 issued which important notification regarding operation of Aadhaar centers? – **From September 2017 all Aadhaar centers will function only from government premises**

Explanation: On 1 July 2017 Aadhaar-issuing authority Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) asked states to ensure that all enrolments, even those by private agencies, shift to government or municipal premises from external sites by September 2017.

– The move will have a bearing on 25,000 active enrolment centres across India and ensure that they come under direct supervision of the authorities. It is also expected to curb cases of overcharging by private operators as enrolment and updation can be closely monitored by the government.

– The latest move assumes significance as most government and other services such as benefits, subsidies and services like PAN, GST, bank accounts, passports and property registration now require Aadhaar.

.....

5) Which public sector bank on 1 July 2017 issued communication to its customers that it will block all Maestro debit cards from 31 July 2017? – **Punjab National Bank (PNB)**

Explanation: According to a communication issued by public sector-based Punjab National Bank (PNB) on 1 July 2017, its customers holding Maestro debit cards will face a card blockage if they fail to replace it with a more secure EMV chip based card by 31 July 2017. The bank said that it will block all Maestro debit cards from 31 July.

– The bank will not charge anything for the replacement and it will be provided free of cost. The replacement is as per RBI advisory issued in 2015, asking all the banks to migrate to a much secured EMV chip and pin based cards by 31 December 2018, irrespective of the validity

period of the cards. And from 31 January 2016 onwards, banks are directed to issue only EMV based debit and credit cards.

– PNB has identified that there are about one lakh customers with old Maestro debit cards and has started sending them SMSes as well.

.....

6) Who took over as the new CEO and MD of construction and infrastructure major L&T on 1 July 2017 thus marking the end of nearly two-decade-long tenure of A.M. Naik at the helm of the company? – **S.N. Subrahmanyan**

Explanation: S.N. Subrahmanyan became the new head of Larsen & Toubro (L&T) as he took charge as company's new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD) on 1 July 2017. The event marked a major change in leadership positions at L&T where A.M. Naik has served for over 52 years, including as its head for over 17 years. He will now work as Group Executive Chairman.

– Naik will assume the new role of Non-Executive Chairman for a period of three years beginning 1 October 2017, immediately upon his retirement as Executive Chairman on 30 September 2017.

– Under Naik's leadership, L&T transformed into a \$17-billion group with presence not only in engineering and construction but also in technology, manufacturing and financial services operating in over 30 countries.

.....

7) The Union Government during June 2017 launched the 'National Biopharma Mission' that aims at accelerating biopharmaceutical development in the country. What is the name of a new ambitious programme launched under the mission that aspires to create an enabling ecosystem to promote entrepreneurship and indigenous manufacturing in the sector? – **Innovate in India (i3)**

Explanation: The National Biopharma Mission was launched on 30 June 2017 by Science and Technology Minister Harsh

Vardhan in New Delhi. It is expected to bring together expertise from national and international corridors to provide strategic guidance and direction to move promising solutions through the product development value chain.

– On the other a new programme named “Innovate in India (i3)” was launched under this mission that is expected to witness an investment of US\$ 250 million with US\$ 125 million as a loan from World Bank.

4 July 2017



1) Canada observed which historic anniversary of its formation on 1 July 2017? – **150th**

Explanation: Canada marked its 150th anniversary as a country on 1 July 2017. It is worth mentioning that Canada became a Confederation on 1 July 1867 after the British North America Act became effective on this day. With this the colonies of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia joined to form the semi-autonomous federal Dominion of Canada, also called the Confederation of Canada.

– However, the country did not gain total independence from the United Kingdom. It achieved near-total independence in 1931 with the Statute of Westminster 1931. But the Constitution Act of 1982 removed the last remaining ties of legal dependence on the British Parliament, giving the country full sovereignty.

– But 1 July 1867 is observed as the day of formation of Canada as a country and on 1 July 2017 the country celebrated its 150th anniversary with much fanfare. The biggest bash was at

Parliament Hill in Ottawa, where thousands of people joined the celebrations.

– Prime Minister Justin Trudeau led the nation in celebrating this historic occasion. Prince Charles with his wife Camilla also took part in the festivities.

2)



Which corporate entity on 3 July became the fourth Indian company to cross market capitalization of Rs. 4 trillion? – **ITC Ltd.**

Explanation: ITC Limited (former name Indian Tobacco Company), which is a diversified conglomerate with major stake in Indian cigarette industry, on 3 July 2017 become the fourth Indian company to cross market capitalization of Rs. 4 trillion. This happened as investors continued to buy the stock after the government notified that cigarettes will be exempted of additional excise duty under the goods and services tax (GST) regime.

– Earlier, Tata Consultancy Services Ltd, Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) and HDFC Bank Ltd have achieved this milestone. Currently, TCS is the India’s most valued company with market capitalization of Rs 4.64 trillion, followed by RIL and HDFC Bank at Rs4.47 trillion and Rs. 4.25 trillion, respectively.

3) According to an announcement made on 3 July 2017, which two commodities exchange of the country have agreed to merge together to create the third largest commodity exchange in the country? – **NMCE and ICEX**

Explanation: National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE) will merge with Indian Commodity Exchange (ICEX) to create the country’s third biggest commodity exchange. This announcement was made by both the entities on 3 July 2017. The proposed merger is the first merger deal in the commodity exchange space in the country.

– The ICEX will hold a 62.8% stake in the merged entity, while NMCE shareholders will own the rest. It is worth mentioning that the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) is the largest commodity exchange in India by volume and is followed by the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX).

– The merged entity will offer a wide range of contracts, including bullion, oil, rubber, and other agri-commodities. It will also offer the world's first diamond futures contract, which has already received in-principle approval from the market regulator SEBI.



4) A photo-book on President Pranab Mukherjee titled “*President Pranab Mukherjee – A Statesman*” was released by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a function held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan on 2 July 2017. Which English-language newspaper has published this book? – “The Statesman”

Explanation: The President of India, Dr. Pranab Mukherjee received the first copy of the book “President Pranab Mukherjee – A Statesman” from Prime Minister, Narendra Modi who formally released it at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 2 July 2017.

– The book presents a photo essay on the 13th President of India. It primarily covers Pranab Mukherjee’s presidency and documents his various roles including those as a humane first citizen, as a thought-leader, as a patron of educational institutions and the arts and as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces etc.

– The book has been published by The Statesman, one of India’s oldest English-language newspapers.

5) Which country won its maiden Confederations Cup football title on 2 July 2017? – **Germany**

Explanation: Reigning FIFA World Cup champions Germany achieved another milestone as it won the 2017 Confederations Cup title by defeating Chile by 1-0 in the finals on 2 July 2017. The final was played in St. Petersburg (Russia) and the win gave Germany its first-ever Confederations Cup title.

– The lone goal of the match was scored by Germany’s Lars Stindl in the 20th minute, thanks to a mistake by Marcelo Diaz. It is worth mentioning that Germany has had also won the European Under-21 Championship in Poland on 30 June 2017.

– Confederations Cup is a quadrennial international men’s football tournament organised by FIFA. It is contested by the holders of each of the six regional championships, along with the current FIFA World Cup holder and the host nation, bringing the number of teams up to eight.

– 8 teams that took part in the tournament were – Germany (FIFA World Cup champs), Russia (hosts), Australia (AFC champs), Chile (2015 Copa America winner), Mexico (2015 CONACAF winner), New Zealand (2016 OFC winners), Portugal (2016 UEFA Euro Cup winner) and Cameroon (2017 Africa Cup winners).

– The 2017 edition of Confederations Cup was held in Russia, from 17 June to 2 July 2017, as a prelude to the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

5 July 2017

1) Which entity on 4 July 2017 became the first case to be admitted for bankruptcy proceedings under India’s new insolvency code? – **Jyoti Structures Ltd.**

Explanation: The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on 4 July 2017 approved

bankruptcy proceedings for power infrastructure company Jyoti Structures Ltd. It thus became the first entity among the 12 cases referred by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) under India's new Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). Jyoti Structures was one of the power sector firms hit by a lack of fuel linkages or trouble in completing land acquisition.

– The tribunal's order came on an insolvency application filed during June 2017 by the company's lead lender State Bank of India (SBI). According to NCLT filings, the company has total debt of Rs. 7,000 crore.

– On 13 June 2017 the RBI had directed banks to refer 12 troubled companies with a combined debt of close to Rs. 2.5 trillion to the NCLT.

.....
2) The film exhibitors in which state suspended the film screenings indefinitely from 3 July 2017 in response to the corporation tax introduced by the state government? – Tamil Nadu

Explanation: The Tamil Nadu Film Exhibitors Association (TNFEA) indefinitely suspended film shows from 3 July 2017 in response to the 30% corporation tax introduced by the E.K. Palaniswami-led state government in addition to the 28% GST rate.

– The move to impose 30% corporation tax takes entertainment tax in the state to about 58% from the tax-free status previously accorded at least to the local Tamil films. Even the 18% rate levied on theatres that price tickets below Rs.100 would mean 48% tax for them due to corporation tax.

– It is worth mentioning that Tamil Nadu has a history of according tax benefits to films quite easily. Under former Chief Minister Jayalalithaa's regime, any film with a Tamil movie title and a 'U' certificate from the censor board would be granted tax-free status.

.....



Kambala: Buffalo Race of Karnataka

3) President Pranab Mukherjee on 3 July 2017 promulgated the ordinance legalizing the traditional buffalo-race sport of 'Kambala'. Kambala is associated with which state? –

Karnataka

Explanation: Kambala is a folk sport, held traditionally under the auspices of local landlords and households in coastal Karnataka. The sport generally starts in November and lasts until March.

– In November 2016, the Karnataka High Court had banned the sport through an interim order. The petition seeking the ban was filed by the People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) as it felt this sport reflects cruelty towards animals. But the Karnataka Govt. passed an amendment bill in the state Assembly to legalise this sport after huge protests.

– Now the President has promulgated the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Karnataka Amendment) Ordinance, 2017, thus making Kambala legal in Karnataka.

.....

4) Which general insurance entity on 4 July 2017 agreed to take over the life insurance business of Sahara India Life Insurance Co. Ltd, which was effectively wound up by the IRDAI during June 2017? – ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Co.

Explanation: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Co. will acquire the life insurance business of Sahara India Life Insurance Co. Ltd. This was announced on 4 July 2017.

– The administration of Sahara India Life, a subsidiary of Sahara Group, was taken over by India's insurance regulator – the Insurance

Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) on 12 June 2017, as it had pointed out three major infractions at Sahara Life. On 23 June, IRDAI asked the company to stop issuing new policies, the first time in its 18-year history that the regulator had taken such a step.

– Subsequently, IRDAI offered six insurers – Life Insurance Corporation of India, ICICI Prudential Life, HDFC Standard Life Insurance Co. Ltd, Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Co. Ltd, Kotak Mahindra Old Mutual Life Insurance Co. Ltd and SBI Life Insurance Co. Ltd – a chance to take over Sahara Life’s insurance business.



5) What is the name of the South African woman cricketer who created a unique record of taking four wickets while conceding no runs in a match against the West Indies in the ICC Women’s World Cup 2017? – **Dane Van Niekerk**

Explanation: Dane Van Niekerk, the captain of South African women’s cricket team took four wickets and conceded no runs in her spell of 3.2 overs against the West Indies. It was thus the first time ever that a bowler has ended with figures of 4/0.

– West Indies team was bundled out for just 48 runs in the stipulated 50 overs. South Africa managed to chase down their target in just over six overs.

– It was the best bowling figure by any cricketer, man or woman. She surpassed Australian great Richie Benaud’s stats of 3/0 that was established more than half a century ago.

6-7 July 2017

1) Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s historic 3-day visit of Israel concluded on 6 July 2017. Seven agreements were signed between the two countries during this visit, which was the first

one by an Indian Prime Minister. Who was the first-ever Israeli Prime Minister to visit India? – **Ariel Sharon (in 2003)**

Explanation: India-Israel relations have been topsy-turvy since the formation of Israel on 14 May 1948. India was initially reluctant to recognize it but gave it formal recognition on 17 September 1950. But its relations remained informal in nature. India’s opposition to official diplomatic relations with Israel stemmed from both domestic and foreign considerations. This was due to India’s concerns for Palestine and Muslims.

– Ezer Weizman became the first Israeli President to visit India in 1997 while L.K Advani became the first Indian minister to visit Israel in 2000. In 2003, Ariel Sharon was the first Israeli Prime Minister to visit India. However, this visit was condemned in leftist and Muslim circles.

– Pranab Mukherjee became the first Indian President to visit Israel from 13 to 15 October 2015.

– On 4 July 2017, Narendra Modi became the first ever Indian Prime Minister to visit Israel. But breaking from convention, Prime Minister Modi did not visit Palestine during this. With the sole exception of Union Minister Rajnath Singh, previous trips by Indian ministers and President Mukherjee included visits to both Israel and Palestine.



2) The RBI on 6 July 2017 fixed the customer liability for unauthorized transactions and said

there will be zero liability in the case of third-party breach where the deficiency lies neither with the bank nor with the customer. According to the RBI a customer has to notify the bank within how many days to not to suffer any loss arising out of an unauthorized transaction? – **3 days**

Explanation: According to guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 6 July 2017, bank customers will not suffer any loss if unauthorised online banking transactions are reported within three days and the amount involved will be credited in the accounts concerned within 10-days.

– These guidelines were issued under the revised directions on ‘Customer Protection – Limiting Liability of Customers in Unauthorised Electronic Banking Transactions’. The revised directions were issued amidst recent surge in customer grievances relating to unauthorised transactions resulting in debits to their accounts/cards.

– In case the third party fraud is reported with a delay of four to seven working days, a customer will face maximum liability of up to Rs. 25,000. However, in cases where the loss is due to negligence by the account holder (such as sharing of payment credentials) the customer will bear the entire loss until the unauthorised transaction is reported to the bank.

– Any loss occurring after reporting of the unauthorised transaction will be borne by the bank.



3) Who took over as the 21st Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India on 6 July 2017? – Achal Kumar Joti

Explanation: Achal Kumar Joti, who had joined the three-member Election Commission of India as an Election Commissioner during May 2015, took over as the 21st Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India on 6

July 2017. He took over from Nasim Zaidi, who demitted office a day earlier on 5 July 2017.

– 64-year-old Joti was the Chief Secretary of Gujarat when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the Chief Minister of the state. He is a 1975-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer and would be in office till January 2018.

.....

4) On 5 July 2017 retirement fund manager Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) for the first-time joined hands with a group of four private banks to expand its service offerings and reduce transaction. Which are these 4 private sector banks?

– ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank

Explanation: For 60 years, State Bank of India was EPFO’s sole banking partner. In December 2016, EPFO roped in four more nationalized banks: Punjab National Bank, Allahabad Bank, Union Bank and Indian Bank. On 5 July 2017 EPFO tied up with 4 private sector banks – ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank. Apart from these 4 banks, state-run Bank of Baroda was also included as banking partner.

– With 10 banks as its banking partners, EPFO expects its transaction costs to be reduced by Rs. 300 crore annually. The banks have agreed to offer zero cost transactions to EPFO and thus helping it save money.

– EPFO has now asked seven more banks to come on board. Once these banks join in, the EPFO will save another Rs. 40-45 crore annually, lowering its annual transaction cost to less than Rs.10 crore from nearly Rs. 350 crore a year.

.....

5) Which state on 5 July 2017 became the last state to adopt a resolution to implement the GST in the state, thus paving the way towards a truly “one India, one tax system”? – Jammu & Kashmir

Explanation: The Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) legislative assembly on 5 July 2017 adopted the resolution to implement the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in the state. The resolution was moved by state finance minister Haseeb Drabu and passed by voice vote despite resistance from the opposition.

– Thus, J&K became the last state to adopt GST which was rolled-out nationwide on 1 July 2017.

8-10 July 2017

1) Which Indian city on 8 July 2017 became the first-ever Indian city to be declared a Heritage City by UNESCO's World Heritage Committee?

– **Ahmedabad (Gujarat)**

Explanation: The historic walled-city of Ahmedabad, that has 26 ASI-protected structures, was declared as a World Heritage City at the 41st session of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee meet in Karkow in Poland on 8 July 2017. It thus became the first Indian city to get this prestigious recognition.

– Close to 20 countries, including Poland, host country of the UNESCO meet Poland, unanimously supported Ahmedabad citing a secular co-existence of Islamic, Hindu and Jain communities along with exemplary architecture of intricately carved wooden havelis dating back hundreds of years. The countries also recognized that the city was a cradle for India's non-violent freedom struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi.

– Ahmedabad will now join the likes of Paris, Cairo and Edinburgh. Of the 287 world heritage cities across the globe, there were only two cities in the Indian subcontinent—Bhaktpur in Nepal and Galle in Sri Lanka.

.....



2) The 2017 G20 Hamburg summit, which was held on 7 and 8 July 2017 in Hamburg (Germany), was

which edition of this summit? – **12th**

Explanation: The 2017 G20 Hamburg summit was the twelfth meeting (12th Meeting) of the Group of Twenty (G20). It was held on 7-8 July 2017, at Hamburg Messe, in the city of Hamburg, Germany. The meeting was attended by heads of state of world's 20 largest economies including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US President Donald Trump, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Theresa May.

– While leaders of 19 countries of the G20 group, including India, reaffirmed their faith in the Paris deal, calling it “irreversible”, the United States, which had announced its decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, stood by itself. The US did manage to get its position on fossil fuels inserted in the joint statement through a formulation promising more efforts for “clean and efficient” use without any commitment to its end.

– While climate change was contentious, the G20 managed a compromise on trade where Trump's protectionist sentiment and call for free trade was accommodated.

.....

3) Which prominent European country's Parliament on 7 July 2017 passed the same-sex marriage bill, thus bringing the country in line with many of its Western peers? – **Germany**

Explanation: German Parliament's Upper House on 7 July 2017 gave green signal to same sex marriage bill that was earlier passed by the Lower House during June 2017. The bill will now head to the desk of the country's President.

– On 30 June 2017 the lower house had voted in favour of legalizing same-sex marriage after a short but emotional debate. Though Chancellor Angela Merkel voted against the measure, she paved the way for its passage by freeing other

members of her party to vote their “conscience.” 393 German lawmakers voted in favour of “marriage for everybody” and 226 against, with four abstentions.

– Germany has allowed same-sex couples to enter civil partnerships since 2001, but has not granted them full marital rights, which include the possibility to jointly adopt children. It will now join European countries such as Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK who have legalized same sex marriages.

4) Who won the Austrian F1 Grand Prix title for 2017 on 9 July 2017? – **Valtteri Bottas (Finland)**

Explanation: Finnish F1 driver Valtteri Bottas enjoyed a dominant victory at the Austrian Grand Prix on 9 July 2017 as he easily warded-off a challenge from his Mercedes teammate and former champion Lewis Hamilton (Britain) who finished at fourth place. Hamilton’s title rival and drivers’ championship leader Sebastian Vettel (Germany) finished second while Australian driver Daniel Ricciardo finished third for his Red Bull team.

– Former champion Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari team has now extended his lead over Hamilton by 20 points. Sergio Perez (Mexico) and Esteban Ocon (France) finished the race at sixth and seventh place respectively and thus garner 10 points for Force India team.

5) Which mutual fund entity during June 2017 became the latest fund house to enter the Rs 1 lakh-crore assets under management (AUM) club? – **Kotak Asset Management**

Explanation: As per data released on 8 July 2017, during the quarter ended June 2017, the average of assets under management (AUM) of Kotak Asset Management climbed to Rs 1.01 lakh crore. With Kotak’s entry, the club now has seven members.

– The other fund houses managing Rs. 1 lakh crore or more AUM are ICICI Prudential

Mutual Fund, HDFC MF, Reliance Nippon MF, Birla Sun Life MF, SBI MF and UTI MF.

11-12 July 2017

1) The US, Japanese and Indian navies on 10 July 2017 began the trilateral naval exercise titled ‘Malabar 2017’ that aims at achieving deeper military ties between the three nations. This exercise is being held in which ocean? –

Indian Ocean

Explanation: ‘Malabar 2017’ is the 21st edition of the Malabar series of naval exercises and is being staged in the Indian Ocean. It is the largest such exercise ever and is taking place amid the military standoff between armies of the India and China in the Sikkim sector and Beijing ramping up its naval presence in South China Sea.

– Taking part in the trilateral naval exercise are US Ship Nimitz (CVN68), guided missile cruise USS Princeton (CG59), guided missile destroyers USS Howard (DDG83), USS Shoup (DDG86) and USS Kidd (DDG100), a Poseidon P-8A aircraft, a Los Angeles fast-attack submarine, Japan Maritime Self Defence Force ships JS Izumo (DDH 183), JS Sazanami (DD1 13) along with Indian Naval Ship Jalashwa and INS Vikramaditya.

– It is worth mentioning that Malabar exercise was originally started in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between India and the United States. Japan became a permanent partner in 2015. Past non-permanent participants are Australia and Singapore.

2) What is the name of the newly-constituted committee of central bankers, of which India is expected to become a member soon? – **Global Foreign Exchange Committee (GFXC)**

Explanation: Global Foreign Exchange Committee (GFXC) is the name of a newly-constituted forum of central bankers and experts that works towards promotion of a robust and transparent forex market. It has

been established under the guidance of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), an international financial organisation owned by 60 member central banks, representing countries from around the world.

– The newly expanded and formalised GFXC, which will meet regularly, replaces a similar but more informal organisation of eight foreign exchange committees – namely those from Australia, Canada, Euro area, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, UK and the US.

– India is soon expected to get a seat on the GSF.

.....
3) According to the media reports of 10 July 2017, India will import crude oil for the first-time ever from which country?

– **United States**

Explanation: India, the world's third-largest oil importer, will import crude oil from the United States for the first time. For this purchase, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) bought a cargo that will be delivered in October 2017.

– Indian Oil will import 1.6 million barrels of US Mars crude, a heavy, high-sulphur grade, and 400,000 barrels of Western Canadian Select that will be delivered onboard a very large crude carrier.

– The purchase comes after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US in June 2017 when President Donald Trump said his country looked forward to exporting more energy products to India.

– India is the latest Asian country to buy US crude after South Korea, Japan, China, Thailand, Australia and Taiwan as the countries seek to diversify oil imports from other regions after the OPEC cuts drove up prices of Middle East heavy-sour crude, or grades with a high sulphur content.

.....
4) What is the name of the new mobile app for income tax launched on 10 July 2017 by Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley that allows entities

track TDS, pay taxes and apply for permanent account number (PAN)? – **'Aaykar Setu'**

Explanation: A mobile application (app) named 'Aaykar Setu', which literally means taxpayer's bridge, was launched by Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on 10 July 2017.

– It is a step by the I-T department to directly communicate with the taxpayers on a range of multiple informative and useful tax services aimed at providing tax information at their fingertips. It is expected to provide better taxpayer services and reduce grievances. 'Aaykar Setu' is initially available in Android version. With this app, most of the work the IT assessee can be discharged without any external help and sitting at home.

– The app is capable of compiling various tax tools, live chat facility, dynamic updates, and important links to various processes within the I-T department in a single module.

.....
5) On 11 July 2017 who was named as the joint Vice-Presidential candidate of 18 opposition parties for the forthcoming Vice-Presidential elections? – **Gopal Krishna Gandhi**

Explanation: Former West Bengal Governor Gopal Krishna Gandhi was on 11 July 2017 named the joint candidate for the post of Vice President by eighteen opposition parties. The Trinamool Congress MP Derek O' Brien proposed his name which was thereafter unanimously accepted by representatives of other political parties.

– Gopal Krishna Gandhi is the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi as well as C. Rajgopalachari, first Governor General of India.

.....
6) Ravi Shastri was named of the Indian cricket team on 11 July 2017 after his name was approved by the BCCI-appointed Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC). He had earlier worked in which administrative position in team India? – **Team Director**

Explanation: Ravi Shastri was appointed the Director of the Indian cricket team by the BCCI in 2014 and he held this position till 2016 T20 World Cup. Earlier in 2007 he was appointed as the temporary coach of the Indian team after Greg Chappell resigned following the 2017 World Cup debacle.

– On 11 July 2017 Shastri was appointed new Chief Coach of team India. He will hold the post for two years, until the ICC 2019 World Cup. He replaces Anil Kumble who resigned from the post on 20 June 2017 after occupying the post for less than 1 year, mainly due to differences with captain Virat Kohli.

– Zaheer Khan has been named bowling consultant for the same tenure, while Rahul Dravid will be India's batting consultant for overseas Test series.

13 July 2017

1) The Union Cabinet on 12 July 2017 cleared a proposal by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) to set up its South Asia Regional Centre in which Indian city? – **Varanasi**

Explanation: Uttar Pradesh's historic city Varanasi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Lok Sabha constituency, will have the privilege of hosting the South Asia Regional Centre of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). The PM led Union Cabinet okayed a proposal to set up this centre in Varanasi on 12 July 2017.

– This centre will be a boost for research on developing new breeds of rice and improving yields of existing varieties in India. The centre, which will be opened on the campus of the National Seed Research and Training Centre (NSRTC), will help harness and sustain rice production and develop special rice varieties. It will help India achieve higher per-hectare yield and improve nutrition content of rice.

– Rice is the most important food crop in India, grown mostly during the rain-fed Kharif crop season.

During July 2017 which state became India's first state to lay down minimum educational qualifications for contesting elections to cooperative bodies? – **Rajasthan**

Explanation: According to a notification issued by the Rajasthan state government on 10 July 2017 it has laid down the minimum educational qualifications for contesting elections to village cooperative societies and various other cooperative bodies. For this the State Cooperative Societies Rules, 2003 has been amended.

– Thus the state became the first in the country to prescribe minimum educational qualification rules for cooperatives.

– The educational qualifications will range from Class V to Class VIII for election as members of governing boards of dairy societies, farming societies, consumer societies, weavers' societies, housing construction societies, urban banks, primary land development banks, credit societies, salary earners' societies and cooperative unions.

3) In a first of its kind of development, the Indian Government gave financial assistance of \$500,000 (around Rs. 3.2 crore) to which country to wage battle against Islamic State-affiliated terror groups? – **The Philippines**

Explanation: India has rushed financial assistance of \$500,000 (25 million pesos or Rs. 3.2 crore) to the Philippines for its battle against Islamic State (IS)-affiliated terror groups in the city of Marawi, 800km south of Manila, in the troubled Mindanao province.

– This aid is intended for relief and rehabilitation and is the first time India is sending aid to another country to save itself from deadly terror groups.

– The aid follows a conversation between Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Philippines' Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano on 6 July 2017 in which Swaraj had expressed sympathies and condolences for the tragic loss of life in Marawi city.

4) Indian women's cricket captain Mithali Raj created history during the World Cup ODI against Australia on 12 July 2017 when she became the leading run-scorer in women's ODI cricket. Whose record of 5992 runs she broke?

– **Charlotte Edwards (England)**

Explanation: Mithali Raj on 12 July 2017 became the leading run-scorer in women's One Day International (ODI) cricket as she broke English cricketer Charlotte Edwards of 5992 runs. This feat was achieved during India's match against Australia in the ongoing ICC Women's World Cup 2017 match played at Bristol.

– Not only did Mithali go past the Englishwoman's world record but she also became the first ever woman cricketer to touch the 6,000 ODI runs mark.

– It is worth mentioning that 34-year old Mithali, who made her debut at the age of 16, has often been called the Sachin Tendulkar of Indian women's cricket.

5) The National Green Tribunal (NGT) on 12 July 2017 imposed a total countrywide ban on which product due to its threat to birds, animals, humans as well as the environment? – **Nylon or synthetic manjha (synthetic kite string)**

Explanation: A bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) headed by its chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar, on 12 July 2017 passed a judgment imposing a total ban on nylon or any synthetic manjha (also called Chinese manjha), including the ones coated with non-biodegradable substances. Manjhas are used to fly kites.

– It pronounced this judgment on a plea filed by Khalid Ashraf, Smt. Rani and non-profit organisation People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). Family members of Ashraf and Smt. Rani were fatally injured after a razor sharp nylon kite string slit their throat.

– However, the NGT made a clear distinction and emphasized that it had not banned use of traditional cotton manjha or kite string for kite flying during festivals and for recreational activity. It even added that traditional cotton kite strings, coated with powdered glass, could be used as the glass was coated using adhesives which reduced its sharpness.

14 July 2017

1) The National Green Tribunal (NGT) on 13 July 2017 passed a slew of directions to rejuvenate the Ganga. This includes declaring as 'No-Development Zone' an area of 100 metres from the edge of the river between Haridwar and Unnao. These directions were given in an old PIL filed by which noted environment activist? – **M. C. Mehta**

Explanation: Noted environment activist and advocate M. C. Mehta had filed a public interest litigation (PIL) on the issue of conserving and rejuvenating Ganga river in 1985 in the Supreme Court. This PIL was later transferred from Supreme Court to the NGT in 2014.

– A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar on 13 July 2017 passed numerous directions on this PIL. It declared as 'No-Development Zone' an area of 100 metres from the edge of the river between Haridwar (Uttarakhand) and Unnao (Uttar Pradesh) and prohibited the dumping of waste within 500 metres from the river.

– NGT also declared that a penalty of Rs. 50,000 as environment compensation charge would be imposed on anyone who dumped waste in the river. It directed the Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand governments to formulate guidelines for religious activities on the ghats of the Ganga or its tributaries.

2) On 12 July 2017 China dispatched troops to which African country where it is establishing its first overseas naval base? – **Djibouti**

Explanation: China is establishing its first-ever overseas military base in Djibouti, the tiny East African country located in the strategic Horn of Africa. Two naval warships carrying Chinese military personnel departed from the port of Zhanjiang in southern China's Guangdong Province on 12 July 2017.

– According to Chinese defence ministry, the base in Djibouti will ensure China's performance of missions, such as escorting, peace-keeping and humanitarian aid in Africa and West Asia. It will also be conducive to overseas tasks, including military cooperation, joint exercises, evacuating and protecting overseas Chinese and emergency rescue, as well as jointly maintaining security of international strategic seaways.

– China had already signed an initial 10-year lease for the base and will pay \$20 million per year to Djibouti in rent. This base will be stationed just a few miles from Camp Lemonnier, the only permanent US base in Africa since 2002. The US pays \$63 million a year to lease this base. Djibouti also hosts troops from France and Japan.

.....
3) An iceberg weighing more than a trillion tons and spread around 5,800 square km size broke-off from the Antarctica ice shelf during July 2017. This incident, which is the largest iceberg break-off recorded ever, took place in which region of Antarctica? –

Larsen C Ice Shelf

Explanation: The massive iceberg breakoff took place between 10 and 11 July 2017 when a 5,800 square km section of Larsen C broke away. This iceberg was spread around 5,800 square km size and weighed more than a trillion tons.

– The calving of this iceberg leaves the Larsen C Ice Shelf reduced in area by more than 12%, and the landscape of the Antarctic Peninsula changed forever. It is the largest recorded incident of iceberg breakage.

– According to Project MIDAS, a UK-based Antarctic research project, the breakaway was

detected and confirmed by US space agency NASA's satellites.

.....
4) China's Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo died on 13 July 2017 in custody following a battle with cancer. He thus became the first Nobel Peace Prize winner to die in custody since 1938. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in which year? – **2010**

Explanation: Liu Xiaobo was a prominent democracy advocate of China. He was arrested in 2008 after co-writing "Charter 08", a petition that called for the protection of basic human rights and reform of China's political system. He was sentenced to 11 years in prison in December 2009 for "subversion".

– He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2010 but at the prize ceremony in Oslo he was represented by an empty chair. He died at the First Hospital of China Medical University on 13 July 2017 while still in custody. He was suffering from liver cancer. Chinese officials had ignored international pleas to let him spend his final days free and abroad.

– Liu's death puts China in dubious company as he became the first Nobel Peace Prize laureate to die in custody since German pacifist Carl von Ossietzky, who passed away in a hospital while held by the Nazis in 1938.

.....
5) According to an international m-cap analysis released during July 2017, which country has emerged as the best-performing major market globally in 2017 (till now)? –

India

Explanation: India has emerged as the best-performing major market globally in 2017. The market capitalisation (m-cap) of all domestically listed firms of India has risen 30% (in dollar terms) so far this year. Second-biggest growth in m-cap has been reported by France at 20.7%.

– Another important fact is – India, ranked ninth in global m-cap, is closing gap with Canada and Germany. Germany ranked seventh, while Canada came eighth. At \$2.02 trillion, India's m-

cap is just 4.2% less than Canada's (\$2.11 trillion) and 7.5% less than Germany (\$2.19 trillion).

6) What is the name of the 4-month old Bengaluru-based start-up which was acquired by Google during July 2017 thus marking its first-ever acquisition in India? – **Halli Labs**

Explanation: Halli Labs is the name of the 4-month old Bengaluru-based start-up that is developing artificial intelligence and machine learning solutions. It came to news as it was acquired by global Internet giant Google recently. This acquisition marked Google's first-ever acquisition in India.

– Halli Labs was started in April 2017 by Pankaj Gupta, an Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, and Stanford University alumnus.

15 July 2017

1) India's first solar-powered DEMU train was launched on 14 July 2017. This train having 16 solar panels being fitted in six coaches runs between which railway stations? – **Sarai Rohilla (Delhi) and Farukh Nagar (Haryana)**

Explanation: Indian Railways on 14 July 2017 launched country's first-ever solar-powered DEMU (diesel electrical multiple unit) train. This train was launched at the Safdarjung railway station in Delhi but it will run from Sarai Rohilla in Delhi to Farukh Nagar in Haryana.

– This train features a total of 16 solar panels being fitted in six coaches, each producing 300 Wp of power. The train has a power back-up and can run on battery for at least 72 hours.

– The cost of these solar panels, manufactured under 'Make in India' initiative, is Rs. 54 lakh. This is the first time in the world that solar panels are being used as grid in railways. With each of this type of train, Indian Railways is expecting to save 5.25 lakh litres of diesel in 25 years.

2) Which country overtook the United States to become Facebook's largest country audience, as was reported in the figures reported by it to advertisers during July 2017? – **India**

Explanation: According to the figures quoted by social media giant Facebook to advertisers, India has overtaken the US to become Facebook's largest country audience with a total 241 million active users. The active users in the US stood at 240 million.

– The figures indicate that active users in India were growing more than twice as fast as in the US. Active users in India were up 27% in the past six months alone, compared to growth of 12% in the US over the same period.

– However, Facebook gender imbalance in India was also visible as men still represent three-quarters of the active Facebook profiles. In contrast, in the US, 54% of the platform's active users were women.

3) State-owned bank State Bank of India (SBI) from 15 July 2017 reduced the charges on electronic transfer of funds through NEFT and RTGS by up to 75%. What is the new NEFT charge on fund transfer up to Rs 10,000? – **Re.1**

Explanation: In a push to digital payments, SBI cut charges on electronic transfer of funds through National Electronic Fund Transfer (NEFT) and Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) by up to 75% from 15 July 2017. This move is expected to benefit nearly 5.27 crore customers.

– As per the revised schedule, the NEFT charge on fund transfer up to Rs 10,000 has been halved to Re. 1, and to Rs. 2 for up to Rs. 1 lakh. For transfers between Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 2 lakh, the NEFT charge will be reduced to Rs. 3 from the existing Rs. 12. The charge above Rs. 2 lakh has been fixed at Rs. 5 as against the current Rs. 20.

– For RTGS transactions, the charges will be Rs. 5 for transactions between Rs. 2 lakh and Rs 5. lakh. Currently, the bank charges Rs. 20

for such transaction. If a customer transfers more than Rs. 5 lakh through the RTGS channel, he will be charged Rs. 10 as against Rs. 40 currently.

– SBI has also waived charges for fund transfer of up to Rs 1,000 done through Immediate Payment Service (IMPS).

.....
4) What is India's position in the SDG Index & Dashboards Report, the global index that assesses the performance of countries towards achieving the ambitious sustainable development goals (SDGs)? – 116 out of 157 countries

Explanation: The 2017 SDG Index & Dashboards Report was released on 13 July 2017. It has been produced by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the Bertelsmann Stiftung. It is a global index of 157 countries that assesses the performance of countries towards achieving the ambitious 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) prepared by the United Nations (UN).

– India is ranked 116th on the index with a score of 58.1, behind countries such as Nepal, Iran, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and China. Pakistan is ranked 122.

– Sweden leads the list, followed by Denmark and Finland. Among the G7 countries, only Germany and France are among the top ten performers. The United States ranks 42nd on the Index, while Russia and China rank 62nd and 71st respectively.

– One important conclusion from this report is that the countries which are closest to fulfilling the goals are not the biggest economies but comparably small, developed countries.

.....
5) What is the name of the book written on Suvra Mukherjee, the late wife of President Pranab Mukherjee, which was released by Vice President Hamid Ansari during a function held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on 13 July 2017? – 'Pranaber Preyosi' ('President's Lady')

Explanation: The book titled 'Pranaber Preyosi' ('President's Lady') is based on Suvra Mukherjee, the late wife of President Pranab Mukherjee and is written by Sangeeta Ghosh. The book was released by Vice-President Hamid Ansari on 13 July 2017 and the first copy of the book was presented to the President.

– Suvra Mukherjee was not into politics despite his husband's very active political life. She had a strong interest in music (particularly Tagore music) painting and writing. She was born in Jessore (now in Bangladesh) and had faced the uprooting that affected millions in the sub-continent due to country's partition in 1947.

16-17 July 2017

1) Roger Federer created tennis history by winning his eighth Wimbledon singles title as he crushed the challenge from Marin Cilic in the final played on 16 July 2017. With this title Federer overtook which legend's record of seven Wimbledon single titles? – Pete Sampras

Explanation: Roger Federer (Switzerland) won a record eighth Wimbledon title on 16 July 2017 as he demolished the challenge from injury-hit Marin Cilic (Croatia) by defeating him 6-3, 6-1, 6-4 in the final. This was Federer's first Wimbledon title since 2012. He has won this tournament in – 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012 and now 2017.

– With this win Federer also became the tournament's oldest champion at age of 35, succeeding Arthur Ashe, who was almost 32 when he won in 1976. He also overtook American tennis legend Pete Sampras' record of 7 Wimbledon singles titles.

– This was the 19th Grand Slam title for Federer, who is the most successful male player of tennis' Open era. The 'Open era began in 1968 when the Grand Slam tournaments agreed to allow professional players to compete with amateurs. Before 1968, only amateurs were allowed to compete in the Grand Slam

tournaments and other major events. However Ken Rosewall of Australia remains all-time great with 23 grand slam titles (including the titles won before the Open-era).

.....

2) Who defeated former champion Venus Williams in the final of Wimbledon's women's singles title on 15 July 2017 to win her first Wimbledon title? – Garbine Muguruza

Explanation: 23-year old Garbine Muguruza of Spain clinched a maiden Wimbledon title on 15 July 2017 after registering a thumping win over veteran former champion Venus Williams. She defeated Williams 7-5, 6-0.

– She also became the second Spaniard since her coach Conchita Martinez (1993) to win this prestigious title.

– It was Muguruza's second grand slam title to add to the French Open title she won last year (2016). It was her second Wimbledon final, having lost to Venus's sister Serena on the same stage in 2015.

.....

3) The US House of Representatives on 14 July 2017 passed a US \$621.5 billion defence policy bill worth that also proposes to advance defence cooperation with India. The India-centric amendment in this defence bill was adopted by voice vote was moved by which Indian-American Congressman? – Ami Bera

Explanation: The US House of Representatives passed a \$621.5 billion defence bill (for 2017-18) on 14 July 2017.

– An amendment in this bill, moved by Indian-American Congressman Ami Bera, was adopted by a voice vote by the House as part of the National Defense Authorisation Act (NDAA) 2018, beginning 1 October 2017. The amendment requires the Secretary of Defence, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to develop a strategy for advancing defence cooperation between the United States and India.

– NDAA needs to be passed by the Senate before it can be sent to the White House for the

US President Donald Trump to sign into law. The previous NDAA-2017 had designated India as a major defence partner which brings India at par with closest American partners in terms of defence trade and technology transfer.

.....

4) Which airport topped in the 2017 Customer Satisfaction Survey among 49 airports in the country, as was disclosed by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) on 14 July 2017? – Raipur Airport

Explanation: Chhattisgarh capital Raipur's Swami Vivekananda Airport was once again ranked first in Customer Satisfaction among 49 airports in the country. The survey for 2017 was conducted by an independent agency commissioned by the AAI. Raipur airport had topped the previous survey also.

– Raipur Airport achieved 4.84 score in a five point scale index in latest CSI (Customer Satisfaction Index) survey conducted by an independent agency for the period of Jan-June 2017 followed by Udaipur, Amritsar and Dehradun airports which scored 4.75, 4.74 and 4.73 respectively.

– The said survey covered wide range of parameters like transportation, parking, passenger facilities and cleanliness etc. Raipur airport was named after Swami Vivekananda in 2012 and in the same year its integrated terminal building was inaugurated. It is the main airport of Chhattisgarh state.

.....

5) Maryam Mirzakhani, who passed away on 15 July 2017, was a noted personality associated with which field? – Mathematics

Explanation: Maryam Mirzakhani was an Iran-born American mathematician who in 2014 became the first woman awarded the Fields Medal, often called the most prestigious prize in mathematics. Fields Medal is awarded by the International Mathematical Union (IMU) and is officially called the International Medal for Outstanding Discoveries in Mathematics.

– When Maryam won the Fields Medal, it was considered a moment of great symbolic importance for women in mathematics and science. She is till-now the only woman to have received the medal, named for Canadian mathematician John Charles Fields, since it was first awarded in 1936.

– She grew up in Tehran and came to the United States in 1999 for graduate study at Harvard University. Her mathematical interests included the theoretical study of complex geometric shapes and the movement of billiard balls across surfaces.

– She was a professor of Mathematics in Stanford University and had been suffering with breast cancer. She passed away on 15 July 2017.

6) Lewis Hamilton won the British F1 Grand Prix on 16 July 2017. He has won this title how many times now? – **Five**

Explanation: British Formula One (F1) driver Lewis Hamilton, who drives for Mercedes team, took a dominant victory at the British F1 Grand Prix on 16 July 2017 and was able to tie the all-time record of five career wins here.

– He equalled the tally of Jim Clark (Scotland) and Alain Prost (France) with his fourth home win in a row. Hamilton's teammate Valtteri Bottas (Finland) was second while third place was taken by another Finnish driver Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen.

– Force India's drivers Esteban Ocon (France) and Sergio Perez finished at 8th and 9th place respectively and collected 6 points for the team.

18-19 July 2017

1) The elections for choosing the 14th President of India were held on 17 July 2017. What important fact emerged in this election? – **With over 99% voting, it was the highest voter turnout for Presidential election ever**

Explanation: The presidential election, featuring contest between Ram Nath Kovind, the nominee of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and Meira Kumar, the nominee of the opposition parties, was held on 17 July 2017. The election was conducted at 32 polling stations, including in Parliament and the State Assemblies.

– The voting percentage in this election was over 99%, which is the highest voter turnout for Presidential election ever.

– The total value of the votes of the Electoral College, which comprises 776 MPs and 4,120 MLAs, is 10,98,903. In terms of the value of the votes, the Sikkim Assembly has the lowest and Uttar Pradesh the highest value.

2) On 17 July 2017 who was nominated as the candidate of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) for the election of the Vice-President of India? – **M. Venkaiah Naidu**

Explanation: Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Urban Development Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu (M. Venkaiah Naidu) was on 17 July 2017 announced as the official candidate of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) for the upcoming election of the Vice-President of India.

– While the announcement about Venkaiah Naidu's candidature was made by BJP president Amit Shah, his name was endorsed by all the parties within the NDA. Naidu resigned from the Cabinet on the same day.

– The election for Vice-President of India will be held on 5 August 2017. Earlier the opposition parties had nominated former West Bengal Chief Minister and Mahatma Gandhi's grandson Gopal Krishna Gandhi as their candidate.

– Later on 18 July 2017 Smriti Irani, Minister for Textiles, was assigned the additional charge of the important Information and Broadcasting Ministry, while Narendra Singh Tomar, who is holding numerous portfolios including Rural Development and Mines, was given Urban Development Ministry as

additional charge. Venkaiah Naidu was holding these ministries.

.....

3) What is the name of the dedicated portal for home buyers launched by State Bank of India (SBI) on 18 July 2017 that will assist buyers to choose residential units from across the country? – 'SBI Realty'

Explanation: 'SBI Realty' is the name of the dedicated portal for home-buyers that was launched by India's largest commercial bank State Bank of India (SBI) on 18 July 2017. This portal will help home buyers to choose flats from its 3,000 approved projects across the country, which are spread across 13 states and Union Territories covering 30 cities.

– A one-stop integrated website (www.sbirealty.in) has been made available under this initiative. This website has been developed by SBICAP Securities in association with PropEquity in terms of data support, project information, etc.

– At present, there are 9.5 lakh home units available on the website. Customers can compare current and past trends of prices for the properties in various localities in the city. The portal will assist customers in calculating appropriate loan amount a customer should borrow based on income and credit profile.

.....

4) Who took over as the new MD and CEO of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) on 17 July 2017? – Vikram Limaye

Explanation: Vikram Limaye on 17 July 2017 took over as the new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of India's largest stock exchange

– the National Stock Exchange (NSE). He was shortlisted for the top NSE post in February 2017 after Chitra Ramkrishna resigned as chief executive officer on 2 December 2016, citing personal reasons.

– Limaye is an MBA in finance and multinational management from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania (US). He was till now

the managing director and CEO of IDFC Ltd, from which he officially resigned on 15 July 2017. He was also a member in the Supreme Court-appointed committee of administrators of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) from which he also resigned after his appointment in the NSE.

– The NSE has been fighting allegations of giving preferential access to brokers at its co-location facility, used for algorithmic trading.

.....

5) Which corporate entity on 17 July 2017 became the second Indian company to cross Rs. 5 trillion market capitalization? – Reliance Industries Ltd.

Explanation: On 17 July 2017 Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) became the second Indian company to cross Rs. 5 trillion market capitalisation after the nation's biggest software major, Tata Consultancy Services Ltd (TCS).

– RIL stock has been performing well since 1 April 2017 when the company ended its free internet service and started charging its Reliance Jio clients.

– TCS is the first company to have achieved this milestone and the last time it was seen above Rs. 5 trillion was on 7 June 2017. This also means that RIL has become the most valuable corporate entity at present.

.....

20 July 2017

1) What is the name of the new mobile app launched by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on 19 July 2017 that enables Aadhaar-holders their unique identification profile on their mobiles? – mAadhaar

Explanation: The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), which issues Aadhaar numbers, on 19 July 2017 launched the 'mAadhaar' mobile application (app) that provides mobility to the aadhaar-holders in carrying the unique identification profiles on mobile phones.

– The app which is available only on the Android platform currently, allows users to not only have their Aadhaar profile on their mobile as a quick and convenient identification proof, it also lets users lock/ unlock their biometric data that's linked to Aadhaar via the app to secure their personal data.

– Other features include viewing and sharing updated Aadhaar profile via QR (Quick Response) code – the two-dimensional barcode, and sharing eKYC (electronic Know Your Customer) details with service providers such as telecommunications companies.

– UIDAI has said that the app is currently in beta mode which means that users may encounter bugs and issues. Some of the services will only be applicable after subsequent updates.

.....

[Country Reports: South and Central Asia](#)

.....

2) Which state government during June 2017 constituted a controversial a nine-member committee to submit a report on designing a separate flag for the state and providing a legal standing for it, a move that was ridiculed in various quarters? – **Karnataka**

Explanation: During June 2017 the Karnataka Government had constituted a nine-member committee, led by principal secretary, Department of Kannada and Culture, to submit a report on designing a separate flag for the state and providing a legal standing for it. It was constituted after a representation from noted Kannada writer and journalist Patil Puttappa, and social worker Bheemappa Gundappa Gadada.

– If the flag comes into being, Karnataka will be the second state to have its official flag after Jammu and Kashmir, which enjoys a special status under Article 370 of the Constitution.

– But Karnataka's bid to go in for a separate flag was ridiculed in various quarters, including the BJP, which saw this move as being disrespectful to the national flag – the tricolor. Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, however,

defended the move saying there is no constitutional provision against it.

.....

3) TR Zeliang was appointed Chief Minister of Nagaland once again on 19 July 2017 after Governor PB Acharya dismissed the incumbent CM as he failed to turn up for the floor test to prove his majority in the state Assembly. What is his name? – **Dr. Shurhozelie Liezietsu**

Explanation: Dr. Shurhozelie Liezietsu was to prove his government's majority in the Nagaland Assembly on 19 July 2017 but he failed to turn up for the Assembly session to take a vote of confidence. 80-year old Liezietsu was made to come out of retirement from electoral politics to take over as Chief Minister following Zeliang's resignation in February 2017.

– This was the second time that Zeliang was appointed Nagaland Chief Minister. His first term was from 24 May 2014 to 20 February 2017. He had to resign from his post following protests by civil society groups opposed to his move to hold civic polls with 33 per cent seats reserved for women.

.....

4) Which state has been ranked as the most competitive state in the country from the point of view of business, as was disclosed in a new study released by the NCAER during July 2017? – **Gujarat**

Explanation: In a study released during July 2017 by the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER), Gujarat is the most competitive state in the country. The study, which estimates state-wise investment potential, ranks their competitiveness on six pillars, namely – land, labour, infrastructure, economic climate, political stability and governance, and business perception.

– In this study Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Telangana and Tamil Nadu have been ranked after Gujarat to form the group of top six states in India for business investment potential.

– Among these six states, Haryana and Telangana have made the most gains on the index over the past year, moving up 12 and 8

spots, respectively. On the other hand, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand have fallen the most, finds the study.

– Despite West Bengal ranks last on the index, followed by Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, these states do fare better on sub-indices. Bihar, for example, does better on labour; Uttar Pradesh on land and West Bengal on economic climate.

5) Which entity is poised to become the first-Indian media entity to have a presence in China, as was reported in sections of media on 19 July 2017? – **Pocket Aces**

Explanation: Pocket Aces, which creates long- and short-format content for digital consumption, will be the first Indian digital media company to have a presence in China. The company has entered into a partnership with WebTV Asia, a multi-platform digital media entertainment company.

– Its content will be available on one of China’s biggest websites, Youku Tudou, which is owned by e-commerce giant Alibaba.

– The Chinese market is a tough one to crack for foreign content creators. While digital is a new medium, even traditional media like films struggle to get over the Great Wall.

21-24 July 2017

1) Hosts England defeated India by 9 runs in nail-biting final of the 2017 ICC Women’s World Cup that was played on 23 July 2017 at the Lord’s. With this title win England has won ICC Women’s World Cup how many times? – **Four**

Explanation: India fell just nine runs short in the ICC Women’s World Cup final at Lord’s against hosts England on 23 July 2017 to lose their second ICC World Cup final. Needing 229 runs to win the World Cup, Indian team was all-out at 219 runs with 8 balls to spare, thus losing the match by 9 runs.

– However, the overall performance in the World Cup was a commendable one for India as they were initially termed underdogs in the tournament. India defeated three top teams – England, Australia and New Zealand during the World Cup.

– With this win, England has now won the ICC Women’s World Cup four times. It had won its previous titles in 1973, 1993 and 2009. However, Australia remains the most successful team having won the title six times. New Zealand won the title once (in 2000).

– This was the second ICC Women’s World Cup lost by India after they lost to Australia in 2005 World Cup finals by 98 runs.

– The 2017 ICC Women’s World Cup was the 11th edition of this world cup and was held from 24 June to 23 July 2017. It was hosted jointly by England and Wales. Tammy Beaumont of England was declared Player of the Series while another English player Anya Shrubsole, who took 6 Indian wickets for 46 runs, was declared Player of the final match.

(Photo Courtesy: ***Indian Express***)

2) What is the name of the new pension scheme for senior citizens launched on 21 July 2017, which promises an assured return of 8 per cent? – **Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY)**

Explanation: Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY) is the name of the new ambitious pension scheme for senior citizens that was launched by Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on 21 July 2017. The main feature of this scheme is that it promises an assured return of 8%. The scheme was announced in the 2017-18 Union Budget.

– State-run Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India has been given the mandate to operate the scheme and the scheme is open to people aged 60 years and above. Enrolment under the scheme can be made till 3 May 2018.

– Minimum and maximum purchase prices for the pension scheme are Rs.1,50,000 and Rs. 7,50,000 respectively. If a senior citizen is in a

liquidity crunch, loans up to 75% of the purchase price after three policy years can be availed. The interest payments will be adjusted against pension instalments while the loan amount will be recovered from claim proceeds.

– PMVVY is exempt from the Goods & Services Tax (GST)

.....
3) Ram Nath Kovind, the NDA candidate, was on 20 July 2017 elected as India's 14th President after he won convincingly against opposition's joint candidate Meira Kumar. He garnered more than 65% of the votes in the Electoral College. But Meira Kumar still was successful in making which record despite her defeat? – She polled the highest votes by a losing candidate

Explanation: Despite her big defeat at the hands of Ram Nath Kovind, Meira Kumar, the joint opposition's candidate, too created one record – she polled the highest votes by a losing candidate in the history of India's Presidential elections.

– The last candidate who came close was a former Chief Justice of India Koka Subba Rao who contested the 1967 election as a candidate of united opposition parties against Zakir Hussain. Justice Rao had resigned from the judiciary to contest the election, lost to Hussain but secured a record 3.63 lakh votes. It was an unbeaten record for 50 years.

– Kovind received 2930 votes with a value of 702044 while Meira Kumar polled in 1844 votes with a value of 367314. The election was marked by cross-voting in various states where many opposition members favoured. Kovind thus became the first BJP member to be elected president.

.....
Which private sector bank during July 2017 launched a unique facility whereby its existing salaried customers can avail instant personal loans up to Rs. 15 lakh at ATMs? – **ICICI Bank**

Explanation: During July 2017 ICICI Bank launched a facility whereby its existing salaried customers can avail personal loans at ATMs. These customers can get pre-qualified personal

loans up to 15 lakhs in their savings account instantly.

– Under this facility, on completion of a transaction for balance enquiry or cash withdrawal, customers will be shown the option of availing the loan (at ICICI Bank ATM).

– The facility offers a bouquet of features – swift application in simple steps, multiple eligible loan amount options up to Rs. 15 lakh based on pre-checked CIBIL scores and instant transfer of the money to the customer's account.

– Customers can also avail personal loans from the Bank's website, iMobile
– its mobile banking application as well as its branches.

.....
5) President Pranab Mukherjee on 20 July 2017 inaugurated the Bicentenary celebration of the heroic "Paika Rebellion". This rebellion against the British was associated with which state? – Odisha

Explanation: Paika Rebellion (also called the Paika Bidroha) was an armed rebellion against the British East India Company's rule in Odisha in 1817. The 'Paikas' were the traditional landed militia of Odisha. They served as warriors and were charged with policing functions.

– They rose in rebellion against East India Company under their leader Bakshi Jagabandhu and, projecting Lord Jagannath as the symbol of Odia unity, the rebellion quickly spread across most of Odisha before being ruthlessly put down by the company's forces.

– Many scholars, researchers and historians have opined that the Paika Rebellion was India's first organized armed rebellion against British Raj.

– The Bicentenary celebration (200 year) of Paika Rebellion was inaugurated by President Pranab Mukherjee in a programme organised by the Ministry of Culture in Bhubaneswar on 20 July 2017.

25 July 2017



1) What is the name of the giant naval aircraft carrier that was commissioned into the US Navy on 22 July 2017 that is the most expensive aircraft carrier in the world? – **USS Gerald Ford**

Explanation: USS Gerald Ford is the name of the next-generation naval aircraft carrier that cost \$12.9 billion and is the most expensive naval carrier till date. It was commissioned into the US Navy by President Donald Trump at Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia on 22 July 2017.

– The giant ship has been named after Gerald Ford, the 38th President of the United States. It is 337m (1106 ft.) in length and incorporates advanced technology and operational systems that will allow aircraft take off and land more quickly, with a smaller crew and improved chances of survival against attack.

– It is capable of launching 220 airstrikes a day, i.e., one every six minutes. The ship's ability to launch so many airstrikes is thanks to electromagnetic force, which propels the jets forward at incredible speeds.

2) A Bill to authorise the RBI to direct banking companies to resolve the problem of stressed assets was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 24 July 2017. This bill seeks to replace which ordinance? – **Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2017**

Explanation: Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on 24 July 2017 introduced the

Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2017. The bill seeks to amend the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 and replace the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2017.

– The Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2017 was promulgated in May 2017. It is worth mentioning that the RBI had in June 2017 identified 12 large loan defaulters who account for 25% of the total bad loans in the banking sector.

3) Prof. U.R. Rao, often called the grand old man of Indian space programme, passed away on 24 July 2017. He was Chairman of ISRO during which period? – **From 1984 to 1994**

Explanation: Prof. Udupi Ramachandra Rao (U.R. Rao) was the fourth Chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and headed it during its critical formative years between 1984 and 1994.

– He was involved in all ISRO missions till date in one capacity or the other. ISRO credits him with establishing the development of indigenous satellite technology, giving thrust to early rocket development efforts with the ASLV and the PSLV.

– He initiated the development of the medium powered GSLV rocket for two-tonne spacecraft in 1991. It was during his time that India was denied the Russian cryogenic technology for the GSLV's upper third stage.

– He is the only Indian to date to have been inducted into the Satellite Hall of Fame, Washington, in 2013 by the Society of Satellite Professionals International. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1976 and the Padma Vibhushan, India's second highest civilian honour, this year (2017).

4) The CCEA during July 2017 gave its in-principle approval for the sale of government's how much stake in PSU oil-marketing company HPCL to the ONGC? – **51.1%**

Explanation: According to an announcement made by Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra

Pradhan in the Lok Sabha on 24 July 2017, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has given its in-principle approval for the sale of the government's 51.11% stake along with the management control of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) to the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC).

– But after this stake sale HPCL will continue as a public sector undertaking (PSU). The proposed acquisition in the oil sector will create a vertically integrated public sector oil major company having presence across the entire value chain.

.....
5) Which Indian player won the men's singles title of US Open Grand Prix Badminton Gold on 23 July 2017 to win his third grand prix gold title? – H.S. Prannoy

Explanation: Indian badminton player H.S. Prannoy clinched the third grand prix gold title of his career by defeating country-mate Parupalli Kashyap in the final of the US Open Grand Prix Badminton Gold on 23 July 2017. He defeated Kashyap in three games by 21-15, 20-22, 21-12.

– On their way to the final, Prannoy had notched up a 21-14, 21-19 win over Vietnam's Tien Minh Nguyen in the first semi-final while Kashyap on the other hand, earned a hard-fought 15-21, 21-15, 21-16 win over South Korean Kwang Hee Heo in the second semifinal.

– This was Kashyap's first major final in 21 months.

26-27 July 2017

1) Ram Nath Kovind took over as the 14th President of the Indian Union on 25 July 2017. With his taking the charge of the highest post in the country, what new chapter was written in the annals of Presidents of India? – It is the first time that a BJP member has reached the post of President

Explanation: 71-year old Ram Nath Kovind on 25 July 2017 became the 14th President of India at an oath ceremony held in the Central Hall of Parliament. He was administered oath by Chief Justice of India Justice J.S. Khehar. Apart from being the second Dalit President after K.R. Narayanan, Kovind also became the first-ever BJP member to hold the nation's highest office.

– A 21-gun salute was given in his honour and the new President then delivered his acceptance speech and first address to the nation. Earlier, before the oath ceremony Kovind paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat in New Delhi.

– While the sprawling 340-room Rashtrapati Bhawan became the residence of the 14th President of the country, the outgoing President Pranab Mukherjee on the same day moved to his new residence – 10, Rajaji Marg, a 2-storey villa, a short distance from the massive Presidential Palace. Keeping with the tradition, President Ram Nath Kovind gave a warm farewell to Mukherjee and accompanied him to his new residence to bid him good bye.

.....
2) Prof. Yaspal, the eminent Indian scientist, educator and educationist, passed away on 24 July 2017. Under his chairmanship a landmark report on the issue of overburdening of school children was published in 1993. What is the name of this report? – 'Learning Without Burden'

Explanation: Veteran scientist, administrator and popular science communicator, Professor Yash Pal died on 24 July 2017 in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. He was 90. He made significant contributions to the field of science and to the study of cosmic rays, high-energy physics, astrophysics and development, among others. He was also instrumental in establishing institutions that were keys to India's space programme.

– In 1991 Yash Pal hosted 'Turning Point', a popular science show on *Doordarshan*. He was also the recipient of several awards including

the Indira Gandhi Prize for Popularization of Science in 2000 and the Meghnad Saha Medal in 2006. He served as the Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi from 2007 to 2012. He was also the Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC) from 1986 to 1991.

– In 1993, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India, set up a National Advisory Committee, with Yash Pal as chairman, to go into the issue of overburdening of school children. The report of the committee, entitled “Learning without Burden”, is now regarded as a seminal document in Indian education.

– When the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) embarked on the exercise of drawing up the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), Prof. Yash Pal was asked to chair its Steering Committee. In 2009, the MHRD set up a Committee on Higher Education with him as the chairman, for examining reform of higher education in India.

.....
3) State-owned broadcaster Doordarshan during July 2017 invited entries from the public to design a new logo to replace its iconic ‘human eye’ logo. Doordarshan has been using this logo since which year? – **1959**

Explanation: Doordarshan has been sporting the current ‘human eye’ logo since 1959. This iconic logo was designed by Devashish Bhattacharya then a student of Ahmedabad-based National Institute of Design (NID). The logo was officially launched on 15 September 1959.

– Doordarshan has in July 2017 invited entries from Indian citizens to design a new logo to replace this old logo. According to the invitation seeking new designs, the new logo will connect and identify with the younger generation. A cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000 will be given to winner.

– This comes as a part of Prasar Bharati’s efforts to revive the viewership and finances of

the entire Doordarshan network. Doordarshan operates 23 channels across the country.

.....
4) Microsoft Inc. on 24 July 2017 announced the deprecation of which very popular 32-year-old program that led to huge outpouring of fans in favour of it? – **MS Paint**

Explanation: Software behemoth Microsoft Inc. announced the deprecation of MS Paint, the hugely popular paint drawing and image processing program that made its debut in 1985 with the Windows operating system. Deprecation of MS Paint means that it will not be available as a default part of Windows package, like it had been available since 1985. It also means that the program is not in active development in Microsoft.

– But the announcement of the potential removal of MS Paint led to an anguished outcry almost all the world with its lovers demanding that it should not be removed from new updates of Windows.

– Later Microsoft announced that it will save MS Paint by putting it on the Windows Store. This means that the program will no longer be installed by default with Windows and on work and enterprise machines. However, home users will be free to download Microsoft Paint from the Windows Store.

.....
5) NSE Nifty on 25 July 2017 breached which landmark level for the point? – **10,000 points**

Explanation: On 25 July 2017 the National Stock Exchange of India’s benchmark Nifty 50 index opened above 10,000 points, the first time it breached that mark. The climb from 9,000 to 10,000 took 875 days.

– It is worth mentioning that Nifty had crossed the 1,000 point mark on 3 November 1995 and had taken 2985 days to cross 2,000 points mark (on 9 Jan 2004). But it took just 35 days (on 1 November 2007) to cross 6,000 point mark after the index crossed the 5,000 point mark on 27 September 2007.

– The rise in Indian equities has been fuelled by consistent buying from domestic and foreign institutions. So far this year, local mutual funds and insurance companies have bought Rs. 24,000 crore worth of stocks, while foreign funds have purchased around \$8.5 billion.

.....

28-31 July 2017

1) A grand memorial of former Indian President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam at Rameswaram (Tamil Nadu) was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 27 July 2017. Which entity has established this memorial? – **DRDO**

Explanation: Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has established a grand memorial of former Indian President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam at Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu. Kalam was born in Rameswaram and was also cremated here. The memorial was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi on 27 July 2017, the second death anniversary of Kalam.

– The memorial, build at a cost of Rs. 20 crores, blends Mughal and Indian architecture. Its main entrance resembles Delhi's India gate. The dome reflects the Rashtrapati Bhavan. The main door is a replica of the entrance of the Brihadiswara Temple in Tanjavur.

– The interiors of the memorial reflect the various facets of Dr. Kalam's life, including the Pokhran nuclear test. There's even a missile model celebrating his contribution to space science.

– Dr. Kalam, popularly known as the "Missile Man", was the 11th President of India between 2002 and 2007. He died of a cardiac arrest on 27 July 2015 in Shillong where he had gone to deliver a lecture.

.....

2) Which entity during July 2017 received the final clearance from the RBI to operate the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS)? –

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)

Explanation: National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the umbrella organization for all retail payment systems in the country, during July 2017 received the final nod from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to function as the Bharat Bill Payment Central Unit and operate the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS).

– The clearance from RBI came almost a year after NPCI launched the BBPS pilot project to make payment of utility bills easier. The pilot started on 31 August 2016 with eight BBPS operating units that had received in-principle approval from RBI.

– As per the framework, a customer will be able to pay several bills such as electricity, telephone, water, gas, and direct-to-home television at a single location – physical or electronic-and receive instant confirmation once the payment is made. At present the bulk of transactions on BBPS are towards payment of electricity bills.

.....

3) What is the name of India's first unmanned tank developed by the DRDO that was rolled-out from Chennai on 29 July 2017? – **Muntra**

Explanation: "Muntra" stands for the term 'Mission UNmanned TRacked' and is given to the India's first unmanned tank developed by Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (CVRDE) in Avadi (Chennai), an organisation under Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

– Three versions of tank have been launched – S, M and N. Muntra-S has been developed for unmanned surveillance missions, whereas Muntra-M is built for detecting mines. Muntra-N will be deployed in areas where nuclear radiation or bio weapon risk is high.

– Though the tank has been developed and tested for the army paramilitary forces have expressed interest to use them in Naxal-hit areas.

4) Union Science and Technology and Earth Sciences Minister Harsh Vardhan on 27 July 2017 launched India's first Integrated Information Dissemination System (IIDS) to communicate with and help the coastal community. What is the name given to this system? – **"Sagar Vani"**

Explanation: "Sagar Vani" is the name of India's first-of-its-kind Integrated Information Dissemination System (IIDS). This system primarily aims to communicate and help the coastal community, especially fishermen, with advisories and warnings related to the safety at sea.

– This system can send information in regional languages through various platforms including radio, television, voice calling, text service, social media, mobile apps and e-mail. It aims at timely dissemination of ocean information and advisory services that includes Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ) advisories, Ocean State Forecast (OSF), High Wave Alerts and Tsunami early warnings.

– The advanced system has been developed by Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), under the Ministry, through its industry partner, Gaian Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

5) Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif stepped down after Supreme Court disqualified him from holding public office in a landmark decision on the Panama Papers case on 28 July 2017. Who headed Pakistani Supreme Court's implementation bench that gave this judgment? – **Justice Ejaz Afzal Khan**

Explanation: Justice Ejaz Afzal Khan was heading the apex court's implementation bench following its order of 20 April 2017 on the Panama Papers case. Justice Khan on 28 July 2017 announced that the larger bench had unanimously deemed PM Sharif unfit for holding office and would also order an accountability court to open references against him and his family, and other respondents.

– The judgment thus brought Sharif's third term in power to an unceremonious end, roughly one year before the scheduled general elections. If this happened he would have seen him become the first Pakistani prime minister to complete a full five-year term.

– On the other hand, Speaker of National Assembly Ayaz Sadiq assumed the responsibility of the interim prime minister.

6) During July 2017 the Sri Lanka Government gave its clearance to \$1.12bn agreement with a state-run Chinese firm to give it the rights to operate which southeast port? – **Hambantota**

Explanation: Under the agreement, Sri Lanka Ports Authority has agreed to sell a 70% stake in the Hambantota port to the state-run China Merchants Ports Holdings. The Chinese firm will run the workings of the newly constructed port over a 99-year lease.

– The Sri Lankan Cabinet approved the agreement on 25 July 2017, almost six months after the framework deal was signed. However, thousands of Sri Lankans rallied against the loss of land and concerns that the port could be used by the Chinese military.

– India has also voiced concerns that China could use the deep sea port in the Indian Ocean to dock military vessels.