

AWARDS & HONOURS

Narendra Modi was conferred with the United Nations' highest environmental honor, '**Champions of the Earth Award 2018**' by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres.

Renowned author Maryse Conde hit the headlines for being bestowed upon the **New Academy Prize in Literature**.

Haryana topped the 'Best State' category in the '**Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2018**' conferred by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the concluding session of the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention at Rashtrapati Bhawan Cultural Centre.

Cochin International Airport, Kochi, was honored with the '**UN Champions of the Earth Award 2018**' in the category of 'Entrepreneurial Vision', for its leadership in the use of sustainable energy.

Sikkim was awarded the **UN Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Future Policy Gold Award** for becoming the world's first totally organic agriculture state.

The **Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2018** was awarded with one half to Frances H. Arnold "for the directed evolution of enzymes" and the other half jointly to George P. Smith and Sir Gregory P. Winter "for the phage display of peptides and antibodies."

The **Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences 2018** was awarded to William D. Nordhaus "for integrating climate change into long-run macroeconomic analysis" and Paul M. Romer "for integrating technological innovations into long-run macroeconomic analysis." Their findings have significantly broadened the scope of economic analysis by constructing models that explain how the market economy interacts with nature and knowledge.

The **Nobel Peace Prize 2018** was awarded to Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad "for their efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict."

The **Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2018** was awarded to James P. Allison and Tasuku Honjo "for their discovery of cancer therapy by inhibition of negative immune regulation." The Laureates has shown how different strategies for inhibiting the brakes on the immune system can be used in the treatment of cancer. Their discoveries are a landmark in our fight against cancer.

BUSINESS & CORPORATE

US based **General Electric (GE)** ousted CEO John Flannery just over a year into his tenure and replaced him with Larry Culp.

Indian government's premier think tank, NITI Aayog, inked agreement with **Microsoft** to deploy Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies to address challenges in agriculture and healthcare and promote adoption of local language computing.

Soft Bank of Japan proposed to offer free electricity after 25 years to International Solar Alliance member countries that sign power purchase agreements.

BILLS / ACTS / COMMITTEES / SCHEMES / POLICIES

- Azerbaijan, the former Soviet Republic, signed protocol on trade & economic, science and technology cooperation with India, at the bilateral meeting held in New Delhi on 11-12 October, 2018.
- The 6th Inter-sessional Ministerial Meeting of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) was held in Singapore.
- The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Central University of Jammu for setting up of Satish Dhawan Centre for Space Science in the University.
- The Union Cabinet approved Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between India and Finland on Environmental Cooperation.
- Odisha launched the 'Nirman Kusuma' programme that provides financial assistance to the children of construction workers for pursuing technical education in the state.
- The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) will be working in collaboration with the space agency of Russia for India's first manned space mission, Gaganyaan.
- The Union Government of India inked \$110 million loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to upgrade rural roads in Madhya Pradesh, under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).
- Member states of IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association) adopted the 'Delhi Declaration on Renewable Energy' at the 2nd Global Re-Invest India-ISA Partnership Renewable Energy Investors' Meet & Expo in Greater Noida.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first Assembly of International Solar Alliance in New Delhi.
- Odisha launched State Food Security Scheme (SFSS) to benefit the 25 lakh poor people who were left out of the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

ECONOMY & FINANCE

- As per the United Nations Report titled 'Economic Losses, Poverty and Disasters 1998-2017'\$79.5 billion is the amount of economic loss incurred by India in the last 20 years due to climate-related disasters.
- Bombay Stock Exchange became the first in the country to launch commodity derivative contracts.
- SEBI, Securities and Exchange Board of India, has allowed foreign entities to participate in commodity derivatives market of stock exchanges for hedging their exposures.
- The World Economic Forum (WEF) launched its new Centre for 'Fourth Industrial Revolution in India' in Maharashtra.
- The Union Cabinet approved establishment of National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) in the all-important skill development space.
- Indian IT industry's apex body National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) launched its Centre of Excellence for the Internet of Things (CoE-IoT) at Gurugram.
- India secured 28th position in the '2018 Government e-Payments Adoption Ranking(GEAR)', a ranking system which quantifies a country's progress towards digital transformation.
- CII (Confederation of Indian Industry), signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UN Environment for the coherent implementation of environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
- In order to enhance the employability skills of the Indian workforce, the Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship launched 'Closing the Skills Gap Task Force' in collaboration with World Economic Forum.
- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) launched 'Udyam Abhilasha', a national level entrepreneurship awareness campaign that was organized from 3-8 October, 2018.

PEOPLE IN NEWS

President Ramnath Kovind appointed **M B Lokur**, a senior judge of the Supreme Court as the Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority of India (NALSA).

Pankaj Sharma was appointed as the ambassador and India's permanent representative to the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

The Government appointed former Canara Bank MD **Rakesh Sharma** as head of IDBI Bank.

Justice **Ranjan Gogoi** was sworn in as the 46th Chief Justice of India.

Dr. **Shekhar Mande** was appointed as the Director-General of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

Tushar Mehta was appointed as the new Solicitor General of India.

SPORTS

- **Buenos Aires** was announced as the venue for the 2018 Youth Olympic Games.
- Weightlifter **Jeremy Lalrinnunga** scripted history by winning India's maiden gold medal at the Youth Olympics, claiming the top honours in the men's 62kg category.
- Teenage sensation from Mumbai, **Prithvi Shaw**, scored his maiden Test ton on debut against West Indies.
- **Tababi Devi Thangjam** grabbed the silver medal at the 2018 Youth Olympic Games, thus becoming the first Indian athlete to win a medal at the Olympic level (senior or junior) in Judo.

MISCELLANEOUS

World

- In order to encourage citizens and governments to take part in building more disaster resilient communities and nations, the 'International Day for Disaster Reduction' was observed globally on October 13, 2018.
- Stanford University, US, was ranked as the World's 'Most Innovative University' by Reuters News Agency for its work in inventing new technologies and powering new markets and industries.
- Following a groundswell of opposition to capital punishment, Malaysia announced that it would abolish death penalty for all crimes and halt pending executions.
- The theme for the 'World Obesity Day' observed globally on October 11, 2018, was 'It's time to end Weight Stigma'.
- October 11, 2018 was observed across the globe as 'International Day of the Girl Child'.
- 9th October was celebrated around the world as 'World Post Day'.
- Bangladesh gave assent to the controversial 'Digital Security Bill-2018', a move which has drawn flak from the media as it could endanger freedom of speech and pose threat to investigative journalism.
- Parker Solar Probe, NASA's spacecraft (mankind's first mission launched in August 2018 on a seven-year long journey to probe the outer corona of the Sun), successfully completed first flyby of Venus.

India

- National Environment Survey will be kicked off in January, 2019 by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) for the first time ever across the country.
- India will be conducting the first-ever "tri-services exercise" with US in 2019; a joint drill that will include all the Services as well as the Special Forces of the two nations.
- In order to enhance its operational capabilities, the Indian Navy has inducted Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle, to search, locate and provide assistance to downed or disaster-struck or distressed submarines at high sea.

- India was elected to United Nations Human Rights Council for a period of 3 years beginning January 1, 2019.
- National Human Rights Commission celebrated its Silver Jubilee (25 years) on October 12, 2018.
- The Union Cabinet approved establishment and operationalization of two new permanent campuses of the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) at Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh), Behrampur (Odisha).
- MedWatch, a mobile health app, was launched by the Indian Air Force (IAF) on the occasion of IAF's 85th anniversary on October 8, 2018; this being the first-of-its-kind mobile health app built by any of the three armed forces.
- The Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) launched India for Humanity Initiative to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- The 3rd edition of Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX-18) was held at Visakhapatnam.
- India's and Asia's first Dolphin Research Centre will be set up in Patna.
- Alphonso mango from 5 districts of Maharashtra, got the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, making it a part of the exclusive list of 325 products from India with the GI tag.
- Digi Yatra policy was released by the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation on biometric-based digital processing of passengers at airports as part of the initiative that seeks to promote paperless and hassle-free air travel.
- 'Sahyog HOP TAC-2018', the maiden joint exercise of Coast Guards of India and Vietnam, was held in the Bay of Bengal off the Chennai coast.
- The fourth 'India International Science Festival-2018 (IISF-2018)' was held from 5-8 October, 2018 in Lucknow.
- Samudra Maitri, a massive humanitarian operation, was launched by India to provide assistance to earthquake and tsunami victims in Indonesia.
- The Union Government approved the establishment of the National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR) in Sehore, Madhya Pradesh (NIMHR will be the first-of-its-kind in the country in the area of mental health rehabilitation).
- 'IBSAMAR 2018', a joint multi-national maritime exercise, was conducted, involving the Navies of India, South Africa and Brazil.
- The world's largest dome was inaugurated by Vice President Venkaiah Naidu in Pune, on the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Sujatha Gidla, the US-based Dalit writer, won the '**2018 Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize**' for her debut book "*Ants Among Elephants: An Untouchable Family and the Making of Modern India*".

Gujarat was declared the '**Best Agriculture State**' at the 2018 Global Agriculture Leadership Awards.

Unnayan Banka, the education initiative aimed at imparting quality education by using latest technology to the impoverished people of Banka district (Bihar), was awarded under the category of 'Innovation Incubation' at the **Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM) Awards**, 2018.

Mohammed Khayyam, the legendary music director, was honored with the prestigious **Hridaynath Award for Lifetime Achievement, 2018**.

To honor police personnel who do "exemplary work" in rescue and relief operations during any kind of disasters, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of a **national award** in the name of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

In recognition of his dedication towards improving international cooperation and harmony, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was honored with the **Seoul Peace Prize**.

Indian sculpting legend, Ram Vanji Sutar, was conferred upon the coveted **Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony**.

Pakistani human rights activist, Asma Jahangir (the first woman to serve as President of the Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan), was posthumously awarded the 2018 **UN Human Rights Prize**. The only Indian to have won the prize till now is Baba Amte.

The first **World Agriculture Prize** instituted by the Indian Council of Food and Agriculture (ICFA) was awarded to Prof. M S Swaminathan.

BUSINESS & CORPORATE

Researchers from the University of Michigan have developed a web-based tool to help monitor the prevalence of fake news on social media platforms like **Facebook** and Twitter.

Reputed shipping company **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers** signed a Rs. 2,435.15 crore contract with the Ministry of Defence for designing, constructing and supplying four survey vessels for the Indian Navy.

Huawei, the world's second largest phone maker, will begin manufacturing mobile phones in India from next year as the \$ 150 billion company plans to open 1,000 company-branded stores across the country to gain a foothold in the market.

According to a report by the International Air Transport Association (IATA), **India** will be the third largest aviation market by 2024.

In a first-of-its-kind CRM (Customer Relationship Management) initiative aimed at facilitating accessibility by answering users' queries pertaining to various services offered to railway passengers, the **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation** (IRCTC) launched Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered chatbot by the name of Ask Disha.

Renowned investor, entrepreneur and philanthropist, Paul Allen, died at the age of 65. He was the co-founder of **Microsoft**.

Indian steel magnate, **Sajjan Jindal**, was elected as the Treasurer of the World Steel Association (WSA) by the Board of Directors of WSA at the WorldSteel General Assembly held in Tokyo, Japan.

American automotive and energy company, **Tesla**, reached a milestone as it produced its 1,00,000th Model 3 Electric Car after just one year. The CEO and co-founder of this global auto giant is Elon Musk.

French major **Total SA** announced its partnership with Indian multinational conglomerate Adani Group, in the fast-expanding fuel retail business.

Sachin Tendulkar-backed celebrity fashion brand company, **Universal Sportsbiz**, raised \$13.5 million (Rs.100 crore) in a funding round led by Accel Partners, with participation from NB Ventures and Alteria Capital.

BILLS / ACTS / COMMITTEES / SCHEMES / POLICIES

- To commemorate 40 years of the landmark Alma-Ata Declaration on Primary Health Care, the 2nd International Conference on Primary Health Care was held on 25-26 October, 2018 at Astana, Kazakhstan.
- To strengthen the research ecosystem in the country, Minister of Human Resource Development Prakash Javadekar launched the web portal of two schemes. "Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS) and Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) were the two schemes of whose portal were launched.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Japan to attend the 13th Indo-Japan Annual Summit with his Japanese counterpart, Shinzo Abe.
- India held the first trilateral meet with Iran and Afghanistan on the Chabahar Port Project.
- Marking a new beginning between the two nations, India inked an agreement with China on internal security cooperation in the fields of counter-terrorism, organized crimes, drug control and human trafficking.
- India signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Myanmar on operationalization of the strategic Sittwe Port.

- Organized by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and hosted by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), the 27th Fusion Energy Conference (FEC 2018) was held in Gandhinagar.
- India and US agreed to elevate their bilateral 'Cope India' Air Force Exercise to trilateral format by including Japan.
- The 12th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) and 5th ADMM-Plus was held on 19 and 20 October, 2018 in Singapore.
- The 12th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit was hosted by Brussels.

ECONOMY & FINANCE

- The Finance Ministry notified the sale of 'Electoral Bonds' by the State Bank of India in the 6th phase of sale from November 1-10, 2018.
- The Infrastructure Investment Fund Board of Kerala announced to issue 'Masala Bonds' worth Rs. 5000 crore to mobilize funds for various development works from outside state revenue.
- Invest India, the National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency, won the 'UN Award for Excellence in Promoting Investments in Sustainable Development' at the World Investment Forum, Geneva.
- The 'Asian Economic Integration Report 2018' was recently presented by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) with focus on progress in cooperation and migration. The ADB is a premier financial institution established in 1966 with headquarters in Manila.
- As per the guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India for facilitating money transfer among prepaid instruments (PPI), the interoperability between mobile wallets and between bank accounts and e-wallets will be enabled through an instant real-time payment system by the name of Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- The 19th meeting of Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC), the super regulatory body for regulating India's financial sector, was held in New Delhi under the Chairmanship of the Union Finance Minister, Mr. Arun Jaitley.
- The Reserve Bank of India formally approved the appointment of Sandeep Bakhshi as the CEO of ICICI Bank.
- India was ranked 103rd among 119 countries on the 'Global Hunger Index 2018', prepared by Welthungerhilfe and Concern Worldwide.
- International Finance Corporation (IFC) launched a \$1 billion masala bond program to finance its rapidly expanding investment activities in India.

PEOPLE IN NEWS

- Distinguished constitutional lawyer, **Fali S. Nariman**, was bestowed upon the 19th Lal Bahadur Shastri Award for Excellence in Public Administration.
- **Mahinda Rajapaksa** was sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.
- Indian-American **Minal Patel Davis** was honored by the White House with The Presidential Medal for her outstanding contribution towards combating Human trafficking.
- Veteran political leader, **Narayan Dutt Tiwari**, passed away at 93 years of age. He holds the distinction of being the only Indian politician to have served as the Chief Minister of two states, namely Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand.
- The Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony for the years 2014, 2015 & 2016 was conferred on the doyen of Manipuri dance **Rajkumar Singhajit Singh**, Chhayanaut (a cultural organization of Bangladesh) and on one of India's greatest sculptors, Ram Vanji Sutar, respectively.
- Thai billionaire, **Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha**, died in a helicopter crash. He was the owner of which EPL football club Leicester City.

SPORTS

- **Pooja Dhanda**, the wrestler from Haryana, won bronze medal in the women's freestyle 57 kg weight class at the 2018 World Wrestling Championships, thus becoming the fourth Indian woman to win a medal at the World Championships.
- **Virat Kohli** became the 5th Indian batsman to have scored more than 10,000 runs in ODIs. He achieved this feat while playing against West Indies. In the process, he also broke Sachin Tendulkar's record to become the fastest to reach the milestone. Kohli joined Tendulkar (18426), Sourav Ganguly (11221) and Rahul Dravid (10768) to reach the elite club.
- The 15th edition of **World Wrestling Championships** of combined events were held from October 20-28, 2018 in Budapest.

MISCELLANEOUS

World

- CSIR scientists have developed Less Polluting Firecrackers which are not only environment friendly but 15-20 % cheaper than the conventional ones. These crackers have been named as safe water releaser (SWAS), safe minimal aluminium (SAFAL) and safe thermite cracker (STAR).
- Mammals of India (MaOI), is the citizen-science repository on Indian mammals by the scientists and researchers from the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) in Bengaluru, that aims to develop individual pages for all Indian mammals covering comprehensive information about their distribution, breeding, variation, identification and conservation.
- The 'Vigilance Awareness Week' was observed nationally from 29th October to 3rd November, 2018. Every year the Central Vigilance Commission observes the 'Vigilance Awareness Week' during the week in which birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel falls (31st October).
- The national railway network of India, Indian Railways, announced its plan to build the world's highest Railway Line at a height of 5,360 m above mean sea level.
- IIT-Bombay is the highest ranked Indian Institution in the 'QS Asia University Rankings 2019'.
- 'Harit Diwali-Swasth Diwali' is the national-level campaign launched by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to reduce air and noise pollution in the country, especially post Diwali celebrations involving excessive bursting of crackers.
- To pay homage to police martyrs, the Police Commemoration Day is observed nationally every year on 21st October.
- India's longest river bridge with total length of 19.3 kms will be built on Brahmaputra in Assam.
- In the first-of-its-kind technology in the field of Early Warning Dissemination System (EWDS) in India, Odisha state government launched an automatic public address system to warn coastal communities about impending cyclones and floods.
- Shahi Litchi, which received Geographical Indication (GI) tag from Chennai-based Geographical Indication Registry and Intellectual Property India, is a specialty of Bihar.
- The armies of India and Japan started 'Dharma Guardian'- a joint military exercise at Counter Insurgency Warfare School, Vairengte, Mizoram, the first such drill conducted by both nations together.
- Two mobile apps, NCR RASTA & Yatri RASTA, were launched by the North Central Railway (NCR) for its employees and passengers, respectively, for locating assets and stations and thus fulfilling the twin objectives of better passenger service and asset maintenance.
- To mark the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter, the United Nations Day (UN Day) is celebrated annually on 24th October.
- 24th October is observed every year across the world to create and spread awareness about the hazards of Polio.
- National University of Singapore was ranked as 'Asia's Best University' in the recently released Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Asia University Rankings.
- China inaugurated the world's longest sea bridge with total length of 55 kms.

- A contingent of the Russian Army arrived in Pakistan to participate in joint training exercise 'Druzhba-III' - the third joint military drill between Islamabad and Moscow under the bilateral training cooperation agreement.
- US President Donald Trump announced that US would unilaterally pull out of the three-decade-old Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty signed with Russia during the Cold War era between Ronald Reagan & Mikhail Gorbachev.
- The world's largest amphibious aircraft (AG600) that recently completed its first take-off and landing on water, has been developed and built by China.