INDIAN AFFAIRS

- As per World Bank’s bi-annual South Asia Economic Focus report released on April 15, 2018, Indian economy has recovered from the adverse impacts of demonetisation (in November 2016) and roll out of Goods and Services Tax (in July 2017). Owing to recovery from above stated events, Indian economy is projected to grow by 7.3% in 2018 and 7.5% in 2019.
- On April 16, 2018, Union Textiles Minister Smriti Irani inaugurated the 7th edition of Home Expo India 2018 at the India Expo Mart in Greater Noida. This three-day fair has been organised by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH), which is the nodal export promotion body for handicrafts in India.
- In a bid to further boost the consumption of natural gas in the country, Indian Government is planning to set up a Gas Trading Hub/Exchange (GTHE) by October 2018. The GTHE will enable trading in natural gas and supply through a market-based mechanism instead of multiple formula driven prices.
- Bengaluru has emerged as the highest paying city in India, with an average annual cost to company (CTC) for talents through all levels and functions at Rs 11 lakh, as per the report of Randstad Insights. The report said that professionals from pharma and healthcare industry are paid the highest in India average CTC Rs 10 lakh followed by professional services a little more than Rs 9 lakh, FMCG (Fast-moving consumer goods) sector CTC of Rs 9 lakh, IT sector, Infrastructure, real estate & construction sector.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Highest Paying City</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bengaluru</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pune</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NCR</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Mumbai</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Chennai</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Hyderabad</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Kolkata</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- On 16th April 2018, the biannual Indian army commanders’ conference began in New Delhi & it is held for 6 days. Issues that will be discussed are: infrastructure development in the Northern borders, review of strategic railway lines, optimisation of limited budget to make up critical deficiency in ammunition, issues related to Border Road Organization projects, ECHS, matters related to operations, administration and welfare of troops.
- Government of India has decided to issue Sovereign Gold Bonds 2018-19 – Series-I. These bonds will be issued by Reserve Bank India (RBI) on behalf of the Government of India. Subscription Date: April 16, 2018 to April 20, 2018. Bond Certificate will be issued on May 4, 2018. Denomination: 1 gm multiples. Issue Price: Rs. 3114 per gram. Click here to know more.
- Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations has designated 14 new sites as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) since 2016. The 14 new sites are wide ranged from oases to rice terraces, wasabi cultivation to raisin production. These places have shaped landscapes into works of art. They have protected sustainable ways of living and producing food. Click here to read more.
- On April 16, 2018, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) unveiled the beta version of a website that contains information about mobile tariffs of all operators for all service areas. Objective
behind unveiling this portal is to allow users to compare tariffs of different telecom operators and thereby enhance transparency in the industry.

- On April 17, 2018, Union Commerce and Industry Minister, Suresh Prabhu launched Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO’s) GlobalLinker, a digital platform for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Exporters which is a growing global network, which currently comprises over 140000 SME firms.

- On April 15, 2018, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated a 2.5-km-long bridge built over the Ib river in Sambalpur district. This is Odisha’s second longest bridge and has been built at a cost of Rs. 117.50 crore. The bridge has enabled direct road connectivity between Sambalpur and Brajarajnagar in Jharsuguda district.

- Union Minister for Civil Aviation Suresh Prabhu said that, Central government along with state government and private partners is working to promote Goa as a tourism destination and a cargo hub. He said that, Mopa airport will start operations by September 2020. Dabolim Airport will continue to operate along with Mopa Airport.

- A MoU was signed between the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM), India, and the Groupement des Industries Françaises Aéronautiques et Spatiales (GIFAS), France, to promote a sustainable framework for present and future partnerships and cooperative actions between the French aerospace industry and the Indian defence industry.

- On 16th April 2018, a loan agreement worth USD 48 million for the “Meghalaya Community - Led Landscapes Management Project (MCLLMP)” was signed by India and the World Bank, in New Delhi. The objective of this project is to enhance community-led landscapes management in selected landscapes in Meghalaya.

- The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules 2018. The amended Rules state that, the phasing out of Multilayered Plastic (MLP) is now applicable to MLP that are non-recyclable, or non-energy recoverable, or with no alternate use. Rule 15 of the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules 2018 on “explicit pricing of carry bags” has been omitted.

- On 16th and 17th April 2018, the India-Wiesbaden Conference 2018 was held at the Federation House, Tansen Marg, New Delhi. It was hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs, India, along with the Government of Germany and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA). The Title of the Conference is ‘Securing Global Supply Chains through Government-Industry Partnerships towards Effective Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540’.

- According to latest data released by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Bihar has the highest rate of crimes against Schedule Caste/Schedule Tribe population & lowest in West Bengal. Madhya Pradesh reported the highest rate of crime (43.4%) against SCs specifically, while West Bengal had the lowest at 6%. Rajasthan reported the highest rate of crime (12.9%) against STs specifically.

- On April 13, 2018, Union Cabinet Minister Smriti Irani inaugurated Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers & Chemicals Limited (GNFC’s) Neem Project in Amethi district of Uttar Pradesh. Under this project, GNFC intends to collect 8,000 to 10,000 MT Neem seeds from Uttar Pradesh, which in turn will provide additional income of Rs 12-15 crore for over one lakh rural woman from 2,500 villages in the State.

- On April 17, 2018, Minister of State for Communications, Manoj Sinha launched DARPAN-PLI App, which will help in collection of premium for Postal Life Insurance and Rural Postal Life Insurance policies at Branch Post Offices anywhere in India. This app is a part of Department of Posts endeavour to go digital which will help in providing better after-sales service to customers of PLI and RPLI, particularly to those living in rural areas of India.

- On April 18, 2018, Union Minister of External Affairs, Ms. Sushma Swaraj launched ‘Study in India’ portal which is aimed at making India a preferred destination for the foreign students to pursue their education. The 150 institutions are the ones which have a high National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranking.

- On 18th April 2018, the first meeting of National Council on India’s Nutrition Challenges under POSHAN Abhiyaan was held at Vigyan Bhawan, in New Delhi. The POSHAN Abhiyaan aims to
reduce the level of under-nutrition and other related problems by making sure the convergence of various nutrition related schemes.

- The Finance Ministry might bring up a Rs 10,000-crore follow-on fund offer of the Bharat-22 exchange traded fund (ETF) as it plans to dilute stake in Coal India to meet the minimum public holding norm. PSUs that are part of the new Bharat ETF-22 are ONGC, IOC, SBI, BPCL, Coal India and Nalco.

- Intra-State E-way (Electronic Way) bill i.e. the E-way bill for movement of goods within the state will be rolled out in six more states from April 20, 2018. Six states are Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura and Uttarakhand. Karnataka is the only state which had rolled out Intra-State E-way bill system from April 1, 2018.

- On 17th April 2018, the Environment Ministry released the draft of National Clean Air Programme aimed to reduce air pollution. Objectives are to augment and develop an effective and a proficient ambient air quality monitoring network throughout India to ensure comprehensive and reliable database & to have efficient data dissemination and a public outreach mechanism for timely measures for prevention and mitigation of air pollution.

- In a bid to reduce the digital divide, from May 2018, Chhattisgarh State Government will start distributing free smartphones to over 50 lakh people across the state under the Sanchar Kranti Yojana (SKY). On account of this scheme, 13900 villages of Chhattisgarh will get better phone connectivity.

- On April 18, 2018, Uttar Pradesh State Government ordered all government hospitals and orphanages to establish SHISHU SWAGAT KENDRA - PALNA and put up cradles in front of their buildings so that any person, lady or couple can leave their unwanted child without disclosing their identity. Objective of this setup is to tackle the problem of abandoning the infants at the roadside or other places which may pose a risk of life for the baby.

- Minister of State of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Giriraj Singh has stated that four technology centres are being established in North Eastern India namely Imphal (Manipur), Dimapur (Nagaland), Tinsukia (Assam) and Agartala (Tripura) for supporting Micro industries in the region.

- On 16th and 17th April, 2018, India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) organized a Consultative Workshop in New Delhi for the Delegation from the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Kazakhstan. Interactive discussions on the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) & Role of Information Technology (IT) and a Training Programme were conducted during the course of this workshop.

- Karan Johar (referred to as KJo), will soon become first Indian filmmaker to get a wax statue at Madame Tussauds, London. Amitabh Bachchan, Sachin Tendulkar and PM Narendra Modi are some of the other Indian dignitaries who have got a wax statue at Madame Tussauds, London.

- On 16th April 2018, the Union Rural Development Ministry said that, due to the need and urgency of rural roads for national development the target date for completion of PMGSY-I has been preponed from 2022 to 2019. To meet this target, the government has sanctioned the order for construction of roads to connect 1.66 lakh habitations.

- On 16th April 2018, Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani launched 'Pocket Cop' project to improve crime detection rate in the state, in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Under the Pocket Cop project, smartphones having data of people with a criminal background will be given to 4,900 police personnel. The smartphone will contain four different applications for passport verification, tracing criminals, finding missing persons and for stolen vehicles.

- On 18th April 2018, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu launched 'Atal Amrit Abhiyan', a health scheme of Assam government that provides free medical care of up to Rs 2 lakh for every person from Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Above Poverty Line (APL) families. The scheme has been named after former Indian prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
On April 18, 2018 Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has taken another effort to increase the privacy level of aadhar details without disclosing the 12-digit Aadhar card number by introducing an updated digitally signed ‘QR code’ on e-Aadhaar that will now contain the photograph of the Aadhaar user with other non-sensitive details like name, address and birth date.

From April 28 to 30, Kerala will host the India Skills Kerala 2018 in Kochi, as part of the World Skills India 2018. It will help youngsters in the State to show their vocational skills. It aims to generating interest and creating awareness among the general public. It might help training students to get medals at the World Skills Competition Kazan 2019.

On 18th April 2018, the integration of e-SANAD portal and NAD – National Academic Depository was launched by Union External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi. National Academic Depository was launched by the government to digitally store school learning certificates, degrees and other academic awards of institutions of higher education.

On 19th April 2018, the 2-day Regional Conference on “Urban Development: Technological Solutions and Governance Challenges” began in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Issues related to financing, institutional and regulatory environment, technological options for sustainable future, financial sustainability etc. were discussed in the conference.

On World Haemophilia Day (17th April 2018), Gujarat assembly Speaker Rajendra Trivedi launched ‘Haemophilia Jagruti, a magazine to create awareness on haemophilia, an inherited bleeding disorder. It aims to share knowledge and the research done on Haemophilia. Hemophilia affects over 6,000 people in Gujarat.

On 18th and 19th April 2018, President Ram Nath Kovind was on his two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir. He addressed the sixth convocation of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) at Katra on 18th April 2018. Nearly 880 scholars received degrees and merit certificates at the event & visited the Mubarak Mandi heritage site.

On April 20, 2018, India and Eritrea signed memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Foreign Office Consultations in New Delhi. The MoU will facilitate a structured dialogue for strengthening bilateral corporation between both the countries. India has been providing capacity building assistance to Eritrea in several fields such as legislative drafting, technical scholarships (agriculture, education, health), and food aid.

Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS), Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) have come together to make Uttar Pradesh Open Defecation Free (ODF). This is the first training camp, launched as a part of an intense drive towards making India Open Defecation Free (ODF) by October 2019.

In a bid to promote trade between India and Taiwan, Taipei World Trade Centre (TWTC) launched its office at New Delhi on April 19, 2018. Taipei World Trade Centre will serve as a single venue that combines consulting service on trade-related issues, trading partners, suppliers, and markets for international business. The gross volume of the bilateral trade between India and Taiwan currently stands at 6.3 billion.

Third edition of the Annual 5G India Congress 2018 was held on April 20, 2018 in New Delhi. Indian government is planning to roll out 5G by 2020. Besides, as per Global Mobile Operators Association, 5G will account for 14 percent of global wireless connections by 2025. According to a recent report on Indian telecom market, the revenue from 5G-enabled digitisation in India will reach USD 25.9 billion by 2026 and 5G-enabled industry revenue is expected to add around $13 billion to operator revenue.

A Group of Ministers constituted by the Union Road Transport and Highways Ministry, has recommended a uniform structure of road tax for vehicles across states. The GoM is headed by Rajasthan transport minister Yoonus Khan. For levying tax based on invoice price of the vehicles, GoM has recommended three slabs viz. 8 percent tax on vehicles below 10 lakhs, 10 percent for vehicles costing between 10-20 lakh, and 12 percent for vehicles above 20 lakh.

On April 20, 2018, Nagaland launched "Saubhagya, Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana", aimed at electrifying over 90000 households across the state by March 31, 2019. Under this programme, electricity will be provided to 66766 rural households and 24,566 urban households in Nagaland. The programme will be monitored by Rural Electrification Corporation (REC).
• On April 20, 2018, Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Statistics and Programme Implementation, Vijay Goel inaugurated the new office of Central Project Monitoring Unit for the e-Vidhan project of the Government at the Parliament House Annexe. e-Vidhan, a part of Central Government’s Digital India Programme, is a mission mode project to digitize and make the functioning of State Legislatures in India paperless.

• The Four day first International SME (Small, Medium Enterprises) convention 2018 is being held in New Delhi from 22nd to 24th April 2018. The main focus of this convention is on inclusion of MSMEs in the Make in India program & empowering women entrepreneurs. It has been engaged by Minister of MSME (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises) with 35 International Trade Development organizations.

• Shri. Jagat Prakash Nadda, Union health minister has decided to roll out ‘Integrated initiative for prevention & control of viral hepatitis’ with a budget of Rs 517.39 crore for three year. This initiative for prevention and control of viral hepatitis has roll out under National Health Mission (NHM).

• On April 21, 2018, Union Home Minister, Rajnath Singh laid foundation for various development projects in Union Territory, Diu. He laid foundation for Construction of a pile jetty in Vanakbara village, first phase of sewerage network, New school buildings at Kamleshwar, Zampa and Ghoghla. Diu has been selected for Central Government’s Smart Cities Mission.

• Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors from G20, (the Group of 20 economies) have agreed to aim for economic growth by promoting trade. Agreement in this regard was arrived at the G20 Spring Meeting held in Washington D.C., US on 19th and 20th April, 2018. The meeting was chaired by Argentina’s Treasury Minister Nicolas Dujovne.

• SJVN Limited, the operator of one of the largest Hydro Power Plants in India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Union Ministry of Power for the year 2018-19. SJVN Ltd. is a Mini Ratna public sector undertaking under administrative control of Union Power Ministry. SJVN’s Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) target for 2018-19 has been set at Rs. 900 crore.

• Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat launched a campaign called "Devbhoomi dialogue", calling upon youth to look for self-employment opportunities in their chosen fields. Seeking valuable suggestions from Youth, Mr. Rawat stated that a search for self-employment opportunities can to help check the perennial problem of migration from the remote hill areas.

• As per rankings released by Facebook on April 19, 2018, Facebook (FB) page of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is the most popular among all other chief ministers of India. With 42 million likes, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the most popular Lok Sabha member while legendary cricketer, Sachin Tendulkar is the most popular Rajya Sabha member with over 28 million likes.

• On April 22, 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi honoured officials for making Manipur’s Karang the first cashless island of the country, and implementing the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and other priority initiatives of the Centre. The island, a remote and backward region.

• The central government has declared Digambarpur gram panchayat of West Bengal in South 24 Parganas district as the best panchayat in the country. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee reminded that state was topped in job creation under the NREGA project. West Bengal has not only topped in rural employment generation, but also been able to reduce the unemployment rate by 40%.

**INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

• Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has said that India, China and other Asian countries will work together to voice against the "Asian Premium". OPEC sells oil to Asian countries, including India, at a higher price as compared to America and European countries. The price differential is referred to as ‘Asian Premium’.
• On April 12, 2018, United States Trade Representative (USTR) announced that it is reviewing the eligibility of India, Indonesia, and Kazakhstan under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) in response to concerns that these countries are not complying with the programme criterion. In 2017, India benefited to the tune of $5.6 billion under GSP.

• The first African Land Forces Summit (ALFS) began on April 16, 2018 in Nigerian capital, Abuja. It is hosted by U.S. Army Africa and Armed Forces Nigeria. This weeklong Summit brings together land force chiefs from across Africa for candid dialog aimed at improving security and stability across the continent.

• On April 16, 2018, New South Wales (NSW), a southeastern Australian state, announced a two-year USD 1.58 million partnership with India to enhance Indian startup ecosystem, technology, and advanced manufacturing sectors. Announcement in this regard was made by New South Wales Premier Gladys Berejiklian, who is on an official visit to India from 16th – 19th April, 2018.

• Bisket Jatra celebration began in Bhaktapur, Nepal on April 14, 2018. It is a nine-day festival, celebrated annually to welcome the spring and the Nepalese New Year. It is believed that the festival started during Malla dynasty, that ruled Kathmandu from 1201–1769 AD.

• On 16th and 17th April 2018, the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi visited Sweden on the invitation of Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Lofven. During the visit Narendra Modi held separate bilateral meetings with PM Lars Lokke Rasmussen of Denmark, PM Juha Sipila of Finland, PM Katrin Jakobsdottir of Iceland and PM Erna Solberg of Norway on 17 April 2018.

  ➢ India - Nordic Council Summit
  ➢ Sweden India Joint Action Plan (April 17, 2018)
    o To promote bilateral cooperation, the following Joint Action Plan was decided. They are, Innovation, Trade and investment, Smart Cities and Next Generation Transport, Smart, sustainable and renewable energy, Women’s skills development and empowerment, Defence, Space and science, Health and Life Sciences.
  ➢ List of MOUs and Agreements signed and exchanged on the occasion of the visit of Prime Minister to Stockholm (April 16-17, 2018).
    o Joint Declaration on India-Sweden Innovation Partnership for a Sustainable Future MOUs/Agreements between India and Denmark.
    o MOU on Cooperation in the field of Sustainable and Smart Urban Development.
    o MOU on Cooperation in the fields of Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
    o MOU on Food Safety Cooperation.
    o MOU on Cooperation in Agricultural Research and Education.
    o MOUs/Agreements between India and Iceland.
    o MOU on the Establishment of the ICCR Chair for Hindi Language.

• On April 16, 2018, India won six elections to UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) bodies. By winning these elections, India won places on the executive boards of four UN bodies, three commissions and a committee. In election for the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) Committee, within the Asia-Pacific group, India got the highest number of votes (46).

**India has also been elected to following bodies:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board/Commission</th>
<th>Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Board of UN-Women</td>
<td>Three-year term starting January 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission on Population and Development</td>
<td>Will start immediately. Term will end in September 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission for Social Development</td>
<td>Four-year term starting immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice</td>
<td>Three-year term starting January 2019</td>
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• On April 18, 2018, China proposed a India-Nepal-China economic corridor with multi-dimensional connectivity through the Himalayas. China has proposed this trilateral economic corridor on basis MoU signed by Nepal to join its multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

• According to a Reuters poll of economists, India will reach the top position among the world’s fastest-growing major economies in 2018, but increasing trade tensions between the United States...
and China might hinder that growth. It has predicted that India's economy will expand 7.4% in the fiscal year that began in April 2018.

- India was ranked 10th on a new Commonwealth Innovation Index. First three rankers are UK, Singapore and Canada. The Global Innovation Fund (GIF) will work as the delivery partner to host a new Commonwealth Innovation Fund (CIF). The GIF will manage the fund and its investments, which will be targeted at innovative projects across Commonwealth countries that "save and improve lives".
- As per UK India Business Council (UKIBC’s) report ‘The UK and India: The Bilateral Trade Relationship’, a free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the UK will help boost two-way commerce and investments between both the countries.
- On April 18, 2018 Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in London, United Kingdom (UK) for a four-day official visit, during which, he held bilateral meeting with UK Prime Minister Theresa May and attended Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in London on April 19, 2018.
  - PM Modi’s visit to UK focused on the India-UK technological partnership and an enhanced role in the Commonwealth.
  - In context of this news, it is important to note that India-UK bilateral trade stands at USD 13 billion and UK is among the largest G20 investors into India.
  - CHOGM is generally held at an interval of two years. Indian Prime Minister’s attendance at this meeting comes after a gap of 9 years. The last CHOGM attended by an Indian Prime Minister was CHOGM 2009 in Trinidad and Tobago, by the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.
  - UK Joins International Solar Alliance to Mark PM Modi’s visit
  - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi & British Prime Minister Theresa May in London discussed multiple aspects of India-UK bilateral relations and issues like counter-terrorism, radicalisation and online extremism.
  - India and UK sign 10 agreements in several sectors including cyber-relationship and Ganga rejuvenation.
  - UK-India Tech Alliance launched by Nasscom, TechUK
  - UK-India Joint Statement issued during the visit of Prime Minister Modi to UK, both the countries have agreed to reinforce the Strategic Partnership, based on shared values, common law and institutions.
  - India pools into USD 5mn small states fund at CHOGM
  - PM Modi holds bilateral talks with Hasina, others on CHOGM sidelines
- On 18th April 2018, Saudi Arabia unveiled its first cinema in more than 35 years with a private screening of the mega hit Hollywood movie ‘Black Panther’, as a trial run before movie theaters are opened to the public.
- On 19th April 2018, the first meeting of the BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors was held in the sidelines of the IMF/World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington D.C., United States. Major issues discussed in the meeting were related to:
  - Improving the project pipelines of New Development Bank (NDB) evenly across member countries
  - Expansion of NDB’s membership
  - Proposal of South African Presidency for setting up a working group on illicit financial flows
  - BRICS Task Force on Public Private Partnership
  - Issues related to BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)
  - BRICS Bond Fund.
On 20th April 2018, India and Afghanistan held bi-lateral talks to discuss issues related to illicit drug trafficking and narcotics abuse, in New Delhi. Discussions were held on cooperation between India and Afghanistan for exchange of ideas, sharing of best practices and enhancing areas of cooperation in the drug crime domain.

A high-level Malaria Summit was held in London, UK on April 18, 2018 to step up action and announce new commitments in the fight against Malaria. The summit was hosted by ‘Malaria No More’, a non-profit organization that aims to end death caused by malaria, and was Co-hosted by the Government of the United Kingdom and leaders of Rwanda and Swaziland.

On April 19, 2018, king of Swaziland, King Mswati III announced that his country’s name has been changed to ‘Kingdom of eSwatini’. The declaration was made during celebrations marking King Mswati III’s 50th birthday as well as 50 years of independence from British colonial rule. In Swazi language, eSwatini means "place of the Swazi".

Syria has returned to France the prestigious Légion d'honneur presented to its President Bashar al-Assad. Syria has returned the award citing the reason that it is no honour for its President to wear the award given by a country that is a ‘slave’ to America.

Leaders of 53 Commonwealth countries have unanimously agreed to work closely to evaluate and strengthen their cybersecurity frameworks and response mechanisms by 2020. Announcement in this regard was made through a landmark declaration at the end of 25th Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting (CHOGM), held on 19th and 20th April, 2018 in London, UK.

On April 19, 2018 The Cuban government has selected the country’s 57-year-old first vice-president, Miguel Díaz-Canel, as the country’s President, replacing Raúl Castro. He is the first leader outside the Castro dynasty to lead the country since the 1959 revolution. Raúl became Cuba’s President in 2008 after taking over from his brother Fidel Castro.

Kyrgyzstan’s new President Sooronbay Jeenbekov has dismissed the republic’s cabinet of ministers headed by Prime Minister Sapar Isakov, the Kyrgyz president’s press service. On April 19 the Kyrgyz MPs voted to express no confidence in the government. The motion was backed by 101 MPs, and five people voted against it.

On April 20, 2018, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Germany after wrapping up his visit to the United Kingdom where he attended the 25th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) and held bilateral meeting with British PM Theresa May. Germany is India’s largest trade partner in the European Union. In 2016-17, the bilateral trade between India and Germany stood at USD 18.76 billion.

On 19th and 20th April 2018, Shri Subhash Chandra Garg, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance, Government of India led the Indian Delegation to the G-20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) Meeting held in Washington D.C. The Main schema of the Meeting was to discuss prospects and vulnerabilities of global economy, harnessing future of work for inclusive growth and take stock of progress made under G20 Compact with Africa Initiative.

North Korea halts missile and nuclear tests, a pledge made by leader Kim Jong-un ahead of a meeting with Donald Trump. All other countries have welcomed this decision. North Korea has conducted all six of its nuclear tests at Punggye-ri test site in the country’s north-east. It tested its first nuclear weapon in 2006, while its last and most powerful test came last September 2017.

**BANKING & FINANCE**

Yes Bank has launched ‘Yes GST’, an OD (over draft) facility for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). ‘Yes GST’ enables MSME to avail OD up to Rs 1 crore, based on their annual turnover, backed by Goods and Services Tax (GST) returns.

On 16th April 2018, data from Ministry of Commerce & Industry stated that, India's annual Wholesale Price Inflation (WPI) was at 2.47 % in March 2018, a nine-month low, due to a fall in price of vegetables and other food and beverages. The build up inflation rate in the financial year so
far was 2.47 percent compared to a build up rate of 5.11 percent in the corresponding period of the previous year.

- Bandhan Bank has found a place in the list of the top-50 most valuable companies in terms of market capitalization (m-cap) in India. Bandhan Bank has surpassed Dabur India, Britannia Industries, New India Assurance Company, Tech Mahindra and Bharti Infrastructure in the last 10 trading sessions. Tata Consultancy Services Ltd is the most valuable company in India. It is followed by Reliance Industries Ltd and HDFC Bank Ltd.

- On April 17, 2018, India’s largest private sector bank, ICICI Bank announced that it has on-boarded over 250 corporates on its blockchain platform for domestic and international trade finance. In August 2016, ICICI Bank became the first bank in India to successfully undertake pilot transactions on its blockchain platform for international trade finance.

- On April 16, 2018, market capitalisation of Kotak Mahindra Bank, for the first time surpassed that of State Bank of India. At the end of the trading day on April 16, 2018, Kotak Mahindra Bank’s market capitalisation rose to Rs 2.23 lakh crore compared with SBI’s market cap of Rs 2.22 lakh crore. Kotak Mahindra Bank has become the second-most valuable bank in India after HDFC Bank.

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has announced that it has extended total credit support of Rs 14690 crore to Rajasthan during 2017-18. Rajasthan has been one of the biggest beneficiaries under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) of NABARD. Funds sanctioned by NABARD were used for 10 irrigation projects, construction of 1614 roads and two rural drinking water supply projects in the state.

- On 17th April 2018, Communications and Railways Minister Manoj Sinha said that, the government aims to empower 1.55 lakh post offices after integration with 650 Payments Banks to offer digital services including financial inclusion. He also launched Digital Advancement of Rural Post Office for a New India or Darpan program with a budget of Rs 1,300 crore.

- As per Trust Research Advisory’s Brand Trust Report 2018, State Bank of India (SBI) is the most-trusted bank (among both public and private sector banks) in India. Among private sector banks, the list was topped by ICICI Bank. Although SBI has topped the Banking and Financial Services Institutions its overall brand trust index ranking has dropped from 13th in 2017 to 21st this year.

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has placed Mumbai-based City Co-operative Bank under directions, owing to which, its customers will not be allowed to withdraw more than Rs. 1000 per deposit account. In addition to withdrawal restrictions, City Co-operative Bank would not be able to accept fresh deposits, disburse loans, make any investment, or borrow funds without RBI approval.

- AU Small Finance Bank has decided to improve its business through crowd-sourcing, involving not only employees but also customers and non-customers using the mobile app named ‘Kamao’ (earn). AU Small Finance Bank has planned to encourage stakeholders to refer prospective customers, who want to open deposit accounts or get loans, on the app and win rewards.

- Global Findex Report, 2017 released by the World Bank has acknowledged that rapid increase in financial inclusion has taken place in India in recent years. As per the report, number of account holders in India rose from 35 percent of the adults in 2011 to 53 percent in 2014 and 80 percent in 2017. 36 percent of account owners in India are already using their accounts to make or receive digital payments.

- India’s largest private sector bank ICICI Bank has introduced a ‘digital form’ which will help open current accounts in a few hours. Through ‘digital form’, ICICI Bank officials would be able to capture information about the customer and the business digitally and verify KYC documents in real-time, at the premise of the customer.

- Mid-size private sector bank YES Bank has got approval from the Reserve Bank of India to open two international representative offices - in London and Singapore. Offerings at these offices would include ‘Yes First’ and ‘Yes Private Wealth Management’ programme along with Non-Resident External/ Non-Resident Ordinary (NRE/NRO) savings accounts and deposits and similar services.
India’s second largest public sector bank, Punjab National Bank (PNB) has stated that Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has confiscated passports of 150 wilful defaulters based on its complaints. In March 2018, Union Finance Ministry asked banks to obtain passport details of those who have borrowed more than Rs 50 crore and ensure swift action in case of fraud in order to prevent them from fleeing the country.

On April 20, 2018, Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) entered into an agreement with National e-Governance Services Limited (NeSL) for utilizing its Information Utility Services envisaged under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016.

On April 20, 2018, Reserve Bank of India amended its ‘know your customer’ (KYC) guidelines, making Aadhaar mandatory for conducting customer due diligence by banks and finance companies. As per the circular, for the purpose of doing customer due diligence, all RBI regulated entities must obtain Aadhaar number, PAN or Form No. 60 from an individual who is eligible for enrolment of Aadhaar.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Urjit Patel has stated that India’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to grow at 7.4% in 2018-19. He stated that global demand has been improving, which should encourage exports and boost fresh investments in 2018-19. According to Mr. Urjit Patel, Gross fiscal deficit (GFD) of the Central Government is budgeted at 3.3 per cent in 2018-19.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Deutsche Post DHL Group, a Global logistics group, is working to connect Indian companies with businesses in the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) to enhance India's economic relations with Southeast Asian markets. Alfred Goh, President, said that, they aim to capitalise their presence in high-growth markets and partner businesses on developing cross-border commerce and trade.

On 16th April 2018, Suzlon, a renewable solution provider, said that it has commissioned 626 MW of wind power projects in 2017-18 (FY18), the highest installations by any firm in this fiscal year.

As per latest World Economic Outlook, released by International Monetary Fund (IMF) on April 17, 2018, Indian economy is projected to grow 7.4% in the current fiscal i.e. FY 2018-19 and accelerate further in FY 2019-20 to 7.8%. India’s growth in current and next fiscal will come on back of strong private consumption as well as fading transitory effects of demonetisation and roll out of Goods and Services Tax.

On April 12, 2018, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) stated that India’s gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to grow at 7.3-7.7 percent during the 2018-19 financial year. As per CII, agriculture sector is expected to grow at 2.5-3.5 percent, industrial sector to grow at 7.2-7.5 percent and services sector to grow at 8.4-8.7 percent.

On April 20 2018 Telecom giant Vodafone announced the rollout of Voice-over LTE(VoLTE) Services in Chennai, Tamilnadu and confirmed it would expand the service across the State over the next few months. By using the VoLTE services, 4G customers in Chennai can make calls and can access Vodafone VoLTE for no additional charges and all calls would be billed as per existing plan. The company has invested Rs 7,200 crore till date including Rs 450 crore last year.

India has been declared the 6th largest economy in the world with a GDP of 2.6 trillion in 2017, according to the International Monetary Fund’s World Economic Outlook (WEO) for April 2018. India has replaced France on the 6th position. United States of America, China, Japan, Germany, and the United Kingdom are ahead of India in the ranking. India has improved from 6.7 % in 2017 to 7.8 % in 2018.

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include ‘Yes First’ and ‘Yes Private Wealth Management’ programme along with Non-Resident External/ Non-Resident Ordinary (NRE/NRO) savings accounts and deposits and similar services.

- On April 20 2018 , TCS moved closer to the USD 100 billion mark in market capitalisation as its share price surged nearly 7 per cent , adding about USD 6.2 billion to its valuation. This has taken its market capitalisation (m-cap) to over Rs 6.50 lakh crore or around $98 billion. With this, the IT major emerges as the first Indian company with a market capitalisation of close to $100 billion.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- The production team of "Game of Thrones" drama will be awarded the BAFTA Special Award at this year's British Academy Television Craft Awards. The BAFTA Craft Awards will be held on 22nd April 2018 in London. Hannah Murray and John Bradley will receive the award on behalf of the “Game of Thrones” production team.

- The 2018 Commonwealth Games, officially known as the XXI Commonwealth Games or Gold Coast 2018, which is held in Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia, between 4 and 15 April 2018. India bagged 66 medals and won third place in 2018 commonwealth Games. Click here to read more.

- The prestigious Pulitzer Prizes for achievements in journalism, literature and musical composition were announced on April 16, 2018. This was the 102nd edition of Pulitzer Prizes. Coming as a positive surprise, a comic novel, ‘Less’, written by Andrew Sean Greer has won the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. 30-year old Kendrick Lamar became the first rapper to win a Pulitzer Prize for music. Click here to read more.

- Aditi Rao Hydari will be awarded the Dada Saheb Phalke excellence award 2018 for the Best Leading Lady (Critics Award) for her performance in the Bollywood movie 'Bhoomi'. The film 'Bhoomi' also featured actor Sanjay Dutt. The story revolved around a protective father who saved his daughter from all evils surrounding her.

- Madhya Pradesh will be conferred Most Film Friendly State Award 2017 by Central Government. Announcement in this regard was made on April 19, 2018 by Ramesh Sippy, Chairman of the jury for selecting the Most Film Friendly State Award 2017. The jury comprised renowned filmmakers - Nagraj Manjule, Raja Krishna Menon, Vivek Agnihotri and Uday Singh.

- Mr. Rana Kapoor, MD & CEO of Yes Bank, was recognized as an Outstanding Contributor to the Media and Communication Industry and Indian Brand Builder by Advertising Agencies Association of India (AAAI) at the 13th edition of Goafest 2018. Goafest was hosted by AAAI and the Advertising Club for the advertising industry on April 5th to 7th 2018.

- Bhuj Mercantile Cooperative Bank has won the Banco Award for best performing cooperative bank & received the Award from Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao at an award ceremony held recently in Hyderabad. Also, Bhuj Mercantile Cooperative Bank ranked in the top in Gujarat for hi-tech technology upgradation. It ranks third in the category at National level.

- On 18th April 2018, Indu Jain, chairman of Bennett, Coleman & Co received the All India Management Association’s (AIMA’s) annual award for lifetime contribution to media. Indu Jain also received the Padma Bhushan in 2016. She launched the Times Foundation in 2000 to carry out community services, research foundation, and relief funds.

- National felicitation ceremony of Kayakalp awardees (2017-18) was held in New Delhi on April 19, 2018. All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi got the first prize of Rs. 2.5 crore under the Central Government Hospitals A category. NEIGRIHMS, Shillong was adjudged the winner in Group B category and was awarded Rs. 1.5 crore.

- 2018 TIME 100 Most Influential People List, featuring some of the world’s most significant artists, leaders, scientists, activists and entrepreneurs was announced on April 19, 2018. Four Indian who have featured in 2018 TIME 100 are Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli, Ola co-founder Bhavish Aggarwal, Bollywood star Deepika Padukone and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella.
• The awards of Print Biennale India 2018 were given at a function in New Delhi on April 20, 2018. It is the first-ever International Exhibition of Graphic Prints was inaugurated in New Delhi on March 25, 2018. It was hosted by India’s National Academy of Art, the Lalit Kala Akademi.

**Winners of the ‘1st Print Biennale India 2018’**:
Arup Kumar Kuity (Andhra Pradesh), Satya Narayana Gavara (Andhra Pradesh), Purvi Parmar (Gujrat), Preya Bhagat (Uttar Pradesh) and Sonal Varshneya (Uttar Pradesh).

• On Apr. 20 2018, International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach presented a memento to Indian Olympic medallist shooter Abhinav Bindra and boxer Vijender Singh.

**APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNS**

• On April 18, 2018, senior journalist T K Rajalakshmi was elected the new president of the Indian Women's Press Corps (IWPC). Along with T K Rajalakshmi’s election as President, Jyoti Malhotra and Shobhna Jain were declared vice-presidents of IWPC. Besides, Shalini Bhardwaj was elected joint secretary and Preeti Mehra as treasurer.

• On April 17, 2018 Chief engineer of the Indian Army’s Northern Command Lieutenant General P P Malhotra has assumed charge as the new Director General of the National Cadet Corps (NCC), the largest uniformed youth organization in the world on 11 Apr 2018.

• Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has appointed Rahul Kulshreshth as the next Ambassador of India to Egypt. Kulshreshth is a member of the 1985 batch of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS). He is currently serving as Ambassador of India to the Republic of Turkey.

• Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has appointed Sanjay Bhattacharya as the next Ambassador of India to Turkey. He is a member of the 1987 batch of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS). He is currently serving as Ambassador of India to Egypt.

• Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has appointed Ravi Thapar as the next Ambassador of India to Nicaragua. He is a member of the 1983 batch of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS). He is currently serving as Ambassador of India to Panam.

• On 17th April 2018, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry informed that, it has appointed Dilip Chenoy as its new Secretary General. He replaces Sanjaya Baru as the Secretary General of FICCI. Sanjaya Baru had decided to step down from his position.

• On April 19, 2018 Jim Bridenstine, a Republican congressman from Oklahoma became 13th Administrator for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The appointment has been confirmed by acting NASA Administrator Robert Lightfoot.

• On April 20 2018, Prince Charles was confirmed as the successor to Queen Elizabeth as head of the Commonwealth at a meeting of the group’s heads of government in Windsor at Buckingham Palace in London, Britain. The biennial meeting, taking place in Britain for the first time in 20 years. The next summit will be held in Malaysia in 2020.

**AQUISITIONS & MERGERS**

• On 16th April 2018, fashion retailer Myntra announced that it has acquired Witworks, a Bengaluru based technology startup, involved in developing smart wearable devices and their underlying software. Witworks launched the Blink Watch wearable device in 2016. It operates on their voice-based platform, Marvin OS.

• Zoom, part of the Times Network has announced a partnership with India’s leading online fashion e-tailer, Myntra. This partnership is slated to be one of the biggest-ever brand partnerships in the television history in India. On April 19, 2018, Zoom unveiled its new avatar, ‘Zoom Styled by Myntra’.
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- On 16th April 2018, China authorities said that, China will launch Fengyun-II 09 satellite, a new meteorological satellite, in 2018 to enhance its weather forecasting capabilities. This is the last in the Fengyun-II series. It will collect meteorological, maritime, and hydrological data to help weather forecast in China and neighbouring regions & will be launched from Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in Sichuan Province of China.

- On April 14, 2018, Pakistan successfully test fired 'Babar Weapon System-1 (B)', an enhanced version of indigenously-built Babur cruise missile. This enhanced version on Babur, has a strike range of 700 km and can deliver conventional and non-conventional weapons.

- On April 17, 2018 (as per Indian Standard Time), US space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will launch Transit Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS), a satellite designed to detect more exoplanets. TESS will be launched aboard a SpaceX’s Flacon 9 rocket from Florida, US. TESS will use a detection method called transit photometry. With four sensitive cameras, it will track.

- Chinese scientists have developed ‘Artificial Transpiration’, a new device of 3D hollow-cone structure that can greatly increase the solar-thermal conversion efficiency. The device was named by Zhu Jia and his team members in Nanjing University.

- Scientists at Northwestern University, USA, headed by an Indian, have developed “Memtransistor”, an electronic device that can mimic the human brain. It combines the functions of a memristor and a transistor. The memtransistor has great potential in Artificial Intelligence (AI). It has been designed by Dr Vinod Kumar Sangwan (Indian), a post-doctoral researcher at Northwestern University and a team of scientists.

- Scientists in Britain and the United States have discovered “PETase” an enzyme that can digest some commonly polluting plastics. PET (polyethylene terephthalate) is a strong plastic that is commonly used in bottles. Ideonella sakaiensis 201-F6 is a bacterium that uses the plastic as its major energy source.

- Indian scientists have formulated world’s first ayurvedic drug to cure dengue, which is likely to be available in the market by 2019. It has been made with seven herbal ingredients which are in use in Ayurveda system of medicine.

- Scientists in the University of Southampton have discovered that, stimulating a specific location on the surface of immune cells can be targeted with antibodies to help in fighting cancer. This discovery is related to a receptor called CD40. CD40 is found on the surface of certain immune cells which regulates their activity.

- On 18th April 2018, ‘Chandrayaan-2’, India's second moon mission, which was planned to be launched in April 2018 has been postponed to October-November 2018. Chandrayaan-2 will comprise a lander and rover probe which will descend on the surface of the moon. It will observe the lunar surface and send back data for analysis of the lunar soil.

- On 18th April 2018, NASA’s latest planet-hunting spacecraft TESS on board a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket took off from Cape Canaveral, in Florida, United States. It aims to scan 85 % of the skies for cosmic bodies where life might exist. The spacecraft is of the size of a washing machine.

- On 17th April 2018, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) successfully launched Colorado High-resolution Echelle Stellar Spectrograph or CHESS 4 on a NASA Black Brant IX sounding rocket, from the Kwajalein Atoll in The Republic of the Marshall Islands. The CHESS 4 mission will study the interstellar medium (the matter between stars). It focuses on translucent clouds of gas that provide the fundamental building blocks for stars and planets.
**ENVIRONMENT**

- Scientists at the National Institute of Virology, Pune, have discovered that the Indian Aedes aegypti mosquito, when infected with the African strain of the Zika virus (ZIKV), can transmit the infection to suckling mice. A study was conducted by scientists from the NIV, the National Jalma Institute of leprosy and other Mycobacterial Diseases, to demonstrate how the Indian Aedes Aegypti mosquito is vulnerable to the Zika virus (ZIKV).

**SPORTS**

- On 16th April 2018, Yuki Bhambri entered into the top-100 ATP men’s singles ranking with a rank of rank 83, for the first time since February 2016. This is the best rank an Indian has obtained in ATP singles ranking, after Somdev Devvarman reached rank 62 in 2011. Divij Sharan has improved to rank 41. Leander Paes has secured 49th position. Rohan Bopanna is at rank 19. Sania Mirza remains at 24th rank in the women’s ranking.

- Indian Badminton player Kidambi Srikanth has lost his World No. 1 rank and has dropped four places to fifth in latest men’s singles rankings released by the Badminton World Federation (BWF) on April 19, 2018. Denmark’s Viktor Axelsen has reclaimed the No. 1 spot in men’s singles ranking. In women’s singles ranking, India’s PV Sindhu and Saina Nehwal retained their positions at third and the 12th rank respectively. Japan’s Akane Yamaguchi has dethroned Taiwan’s Tai Tzu Ying to become the new World No. 1 in women’s singles ranking.

- Red Bull’s Daniel Ricciardo celebrated his 6th career win after he won 2018 Chinese Grand Prix. Defending world champion Lewis Hamilton crossed the line fifth behind Verstappen but was promoted to fourth after the Dutchman’s penalty was applied. Top three in 2018 Chinese Grand Prix are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Team</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Daniel Ricciardo</td>
<td>Red Bull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Valtteri Bottas</td>
<td>Mercedes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kimi Raikkonen</td>
<td>Ferrari</td>
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- On 18th April 2018, Son of Dreams was unveiled as official Mascot of the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019, in Beijing, China. Son of Dreams was born in China on 8th August 2015. Son of Dreams' magical horns give him the power to see in the future, visualizing plays and moves before they happen in real. This first ever 32-team FIBA Basketball World Cup will be held in eight Chinese cities from 31st August to 15th September 2019.

- The Mumbai Football Arena, the new hub of Indian football, will play host to the inaugural edition of the four-nation Intercontinental Cup, which is slated to be held from June 1 to June 10, 2018. The Intercontinental Cup has been planned to be an annual event and will thus have representation from the CAF (Confederation of African Football) region in the form of South Africa, New Zealand from the Oceania, and Chinese Taipei from the AFC.

- On April 2018, Differently-abled Indian arm wrestler Shrimant Jha won a bronze medal at the Asian Armwrestling Championship, which is being held from April 16 to April 22 in Kazakhstan. He is aiming to achieve in para-olympics. He is currently working as a junior engineer in a private company. Jha, who has five world championship medals. He also secured a silver medal in Para-Arm Wrestling World Cup in Poland under 80 kg category.

- Julio Cesar, 38-year-old former Brazil, Inter Milan and Benfica goalkeeper has retired from football after playing a last match for boyhood club Flamengo. Julio Cesar honoured with five Italian titles and the 2010 Champions League title with Inter, three Portuguese titles with Benfica and the 2004 Copa America with Brazil.

**OBITUARY**

- On 16th April 2018, journalist S Nihal Singh died due to multiple organ failure, at the National Heart Institute, in New Delhi. He was the Chief Editor of The Statesman, Editor-in-Chief Indian Express.
and Editor of Khaleej Times. He received the International Editor of the Year Award in New York. He was Director, Press Institute of India. He was also President of the Press Club of India.

- On 17th April 2018, Barbara Bush, the Former First Lady of the United States, passed away due to ill health at her home in Houston, United States. She was the wife of former US President George Herbert Walker Bush, and the mother of George Walker Bush, who is also a former US President.

- Veteran journalist and columnist TVR Shenoy passed away on April 17, 2018 in Karnataka. He was awarded the prestigious Padma Bhushan award in 2003. Shenoy was a regular contributor to The Indian Express. She also contributed among various newspapers which included Mathrubhumi, Gulf News. He was also the editor of The Week and was an executive member of Prasar Bharati.

- On 16th April 2018, former principal information officer (PIO) Shakuntala Mahawal, passed away after a short term illness, in Brussels, Belgium. She was the principal information officer (PIO) from March 2004 to July 2005. She also served as special correspondent at the All India Radio's office in Brussels. She also worked as spokesperson for the Finance Ministry and the Head of News in Doordarshan.

- On 17th April 2018, Indian animation expert Bhimsain Khurana passed away at a hospital in Mumbai while undergoing dialysis. He had directed and produced several animation and ad films. He had won National Award for his animation short film “Ek Anek Ekta”.

- On April 20, 2018 Chief Editor of leading Malayalam daily Kerala Kaumudi M S Ravi, 68 passed away in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. He is the youngest son of Kerala Kaumudi founder editor K S Sukumar, was also the Director of Kerala Kaumudi. Late M S Madhusudanan, Late M S Sreenivasan and M S Mani are his brothers.

- South Sudan confirmed that its military chief General James Ajongo has died during a visit to Egypt. General James Ajongo had taken over the role a year ago after Paul Malong was fired and put under house arrest.

- Swedish DJ Avicii, one of the world's biggest dance music stars, has died in Oman at the age of 28. Avicii was an international pop star, performing his well-known electronic dance songs around the world. The Grammy-nominated DJ and producer, born Tim Bergling, was best known for "Levels" and "Wake Me Up."

- On April 22, 2018 The world’s oldest person Nabi Tajima has died in southern Japan at the age of 117. Her town of Kikai is in Kagoshima prefecture on Kyushu, the southernmost of Japan’s four main islands. US-based Gerontology Research Group announce that Japanese woman, Chiyo Yoshida, 116 years old, is the next world’s oldest person in its records.

**BOOKS & AUTHORS**

- On April 21, 2018 The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, received the first copy of the book “Adi Shankaracharya: Hinduism’s Greatest Thinker”, from the author Shri Pavan Varma, at Rashtrapati Bhavan. He established four Peethas – in the north, south, east and west. These Peethas were and are different – and at once they were and are the same. That is the beauty of India.


**IMPORTANT DAYS**

- On April 15, 2018, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur hoisted the Indian national flag at the Ridge Maidan in Shimla to mark state's 71st foundation day. The state of Himachal
was founded on April 15, 1948. Mr. Thakur, presented awards to the best performers in the field of administration, sports, health and social work.

- On 17th April 2018, World Haemophilia Day was observed all over the world. It is observed throughout the world to create awareness about haemophilia and other inherited bleeding disorders. The theme is: Sharing Knowledge Makes Us Stronger.

- On 18th April 2018, World Heritage Day also known as International Day For Monuments and Sites was celebrated all over the world. This day is celebrated to create awareness on the cultural heritage of humanity, their vulnerability and efforts needed to protect and conserve them. Theme for World Heritage Day 2018: Heritage for Generations.

- On 19th April 2018, World Liver Day was observed all over the world to create awareness on importance of liver to our body and how liver ailments can be treated and managed. Liver diseases can be caused by hepatitis A, B, C, alcohol and drugs. Theme for World Liver Day 2018: "Riding new waves in liver diagnosis, staging and treatment."

- On April 21, 2018, official World Creativity and Innovation Day (WCID) will be celebrated. This day will be observed six days after Leonardo da Vinci’s birthday and one day before International Mother Earth Day. It can expand opportunities for everyone, including women and youth. It can provide solutions to some of the most pressing problems such as poverty eradication and the elimination of hunger.

- Secretaries Day also known as Administrative professionals Day or Admin Day is observed in several countries to recognize the work of secretaries, administrative assistants, receptionists, and other administrative support professionals.

- The Government of India celebrates April 21 every year as ‘Civil Services day’. This date is chosen to honor the day in 1947 when first Home Minister of Independent India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the probationers of Administrative Services Officers at Metcalf House, Delhi, he referred to civil servants as the ‘steel frame of India’. As part of Civil Servant Day, Prime Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Public Administration are presented to Districts/Implementing Units for implementation of Priority programme and innovation categories.

- Earth Day is observed every year on April 22. It was first celebrated in 1970. The founder of Earth Day is Gaylord Nelson, a US senator from Wisconsin. Nelson, who had been witnessed the devastation caused by an enormous oil spill in Santa Barbara, California in 1969. Theme of Earth Day 2018 - 'End Plastic Pollution'.

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