

September 2018

• **Appointments/Nominations**

1. President appoints Justice Ranjan Gogoi as next Chief Justice of India (46th CJI).
2. Kamlesh Nilkanth Vyas has been appointed Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission.
3. Senior IPS officer Rajni Kant Misra appointed as Director General of BSF.
4. Senior IPS officer SS Deswal appointed as DG of Sashastra Seema Bal.
5. Anil Kumar Chaudhary has been appointed as new Chairman of Steel Authority of India Ltd
6. Sunil Mehta has been elected as new Chairman of Indian Bank's Association for 2018-19.
7. LK Advani has been renominated as Chairman of Ethics Committee of Lok Sabha.

• **National Mission:** National Mission on Government-e-Marketplace (GeM) for increasing awareness and accelerating use of GeM by major central Ministries, State Governments.

• **Srinivas Committee:** Government sets up Injeti Srinivas High Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility.

• **GSTN:** Cabinet approves conversion of GSTN into 100% government entity.

• **Financial inclusion Index:** Government launches Financial Inclusion Index. The index has three measurement dimensions (i) Access to financial services (ii) Usage of financial services and (3) Quality.

• **www.psbloansin59minutes.com:** Finance Ministry launches web portal to grant loans to MSMEs within hour.

• **Pakyong airport:** PM Narendra Modi inaugurates Sikkim's first airport.

• **IIP:** It records 6.6% growth in July 2018.

• **Rail Sahyog:** A web portal launched for corporates to fund creation of amenities at Railway stations.

• **Bengaluru airport:** It is set to become first in Asia to use face recognition as boarding pass.

• **DRT:** Union Finance Ministry has doubled pecuniary limit to Rs. 20 lakh from Rs.10 lakh for filing loan recovery application in Debt Recovery Tribunals.

• The **International Women Entrepreneurs Summit-2018** was recently organized by the *South Asian Women Development Forum (SAWDF)*, a SAARC recognized body in Kathmandu, Nepal. The theme of the summit was "*Equality begins with Economic Empowerment*".

• **Maralal Camel Derby** is an annual event, held mid-year just outside of Maralal town, Kenya. This is Kenya's best known and most prestigious camel race, attracting both local and international competitors.

• Union Cabinet has approved the extension of timeline for implementation of **Umeed Scheme** for Jammu & Kashmir for another period of one year during 2018-19. It is a Special programme for J&K, implemented under *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)*, launched in J&K in 2013 to encourage rural women to make small savings so that their Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to eventually become bankable at reduced rate of interest.

• President Ram Nath Kovind has inaugurated the **centenary celebrations** of the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha in New Delhi. It was established in the year 1918 by Mahatma Gandhi with the sole aim of propagating Hindi in southern states. The first Pracharak was none other than Devadoss Gandhi, son of Mahatma Gandhi.

• The Trump administration has threatened tough action against the International Criminal Court should it try to prosecute Americans for alleged war crimes in Afghanistan. It also said the Palestinian Liberation Organisation's office in Washington would be closed for seeking to punish Israel through the court.

About ICC

• The International Criminal Court (ICC) is an independent judicial body with jurisdiction over persons charged with genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

• It is located in The Hague, The Netherlands. ICC came into force on 1 July 2002.

- The Court was established by the Rome Statute. This treaty was negotiated within the UN; however, it created an independent judicial body distinct from the UN.

Battle of Haifa

- On September 6, 2018 the northern Israeli coastal city of Haifa celebrated the centenary of its liberation from Ottoman rule during World War I.
- The celebration honoured the brave Indian soldiers who laid down their lives in what is considered "the last great cavalry campaign in history".
- The historic battle was fought entirely by Indian troops -- the Jodhpur Lancers and the Mysore Lancers and Hyderabad Lancers -- towards the end of World War I to capture the strategic city of Haifa in Israel from the Ottomans. The Indian cavalry brigades were fighting under the leadership of *British General Edmund Allenby*.
- The event also holds significance as the Indian soldiers were armed only with lances (a kind of spear) and swords while the Turks had in their possession advanced artillery and machine guns.
- Another important objective of this battle was to ensure the safety of Abdul-Baha, the son of the founder of the Bahai faith (Baha'u'llah) who was a resident of Haifa at that time and whose life had been threatened by the Turkish Commander-in-Chief.
- The Indian Army commemorates September 23 every year as **Haifa Day** to pay its respects to the three Indian Cavalry Regiments which were part of the 15th Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade of the then British Indian Army at the Battle of Haifa in 1918.

Indo-Bangla Friendship Pipeline

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina jointly inaugurated the construction of a friendship pipeline project through video conferencing.
- The 130-kilometre **India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project** will connect Siliguri in West Bengal in India and Parbatipur in Dinajpur district of Bangladesh. The project will help fulfil energy needs of Bangladesh at cheaper rates.

- Besides the pipeline, the two leaders also inaugurated the construction of the third and fourth dual-gauge rail lines in **Dhaka-Tongi section** and the dual-gauge rail line in **Tongi-Joydebpur section** of Bangladesh Railway.

BIMSTEC Joint Military Exercise

- o In a first such initiative, militaries of BIMSTEC member nations *barring Nepal* conducted a week-long anti-terror exercise at Aundh near Pune. Nepal did not participate in this exercise.
- o The long-term goal of this initiative is to explore possibility of creating a viable regional security architecture to deal with the challenge of terrorism and transnational crimes.
- o BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) is a regional grouping comprising Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal.
- o The grouping accounts for 22 per cent of the global population, and has a combined gross domestic product of USD 2.8 trillion.

• KAZIND 2018

- o Exercise KAZIND-2018, a joint military exercise between **Indian and Kazakhstan** Armies, commenced in Otar Military Area, Kazakhstan.
- o This was the third edition of joint military training exercise between Indian Army and Kazakhstan Army. The second edition of the exercise was held in India in 2017.
- o The joint training aims to build & promote army to army relations and exchange skills & experiences between Indian Army and the Kazakhstan Army.

• KAKADU 2018

- o KAKADU 2018 (the 14th edition of the exercise) exercise is a multilateral maritime engagement hosted by the Royal Australian Navy with support from the Royal Australian Air Force.
- o This biannual joint exercise, which started in 1993, took place both ashore and at sea off the *coast of Darwin* in Australia's north.
- o The name KAKADU is derived from Kakadu National Park, a protected area in the northern territory of Australia, 171 km south-east of Darwin.

o This year's exercise involves 27 nations and more than 3000 personnel which represent the largest military commitment to the exercise since it began in 1993.

• **AVIANDRA 2018**

o The joint air exercise between India and Russia "Aviandra 18" took place in Lipetsk, Russia from September 17 to 28, 2018. The second session of Avaiandra 18 will be conducted in Jodhpur, Rajasthan from December 10 Dec to 22, 2018.

o The first edition of this exercise was conducted in 2014 and has been planned as a bi-annual exercise.

• **Yudh Abhyas 2018**

o A joint military training exercise between the Indian and US armies began at Chaubattia in the foothills of the Himalayas in Uttarakhand's Almora district.

o Yudh Abhyas 2018 is one of the longest running joint military training exercises and a major bilateral defence cooperation endeavour between India and the US.

o This is the 14th edition of the joint military exercise, which is hosted alternately by the two countries.

o The combined exercise simulates scenarios where both nations are working together in counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations in mountainous terrain.

• **Nomadic Elephant-2018**

o Indo-Mongolia joint exercise Nomadic Elephant-2018, commenced at Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF) Five Hills Training Area, Ullanbaatar, Mongolia.

o Exercise Nomadic Elephant is an annual, bilateral exercise since 2006 which is designed to strengthen the partnership between Indian Army and Mongolian Armed Forces.

o The exercise will see them improve their tactical and technical skills in joint counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations in rural and urban scenario under United Nations mandate.

• **SLINEX 2018**

o India, Sri Lanka joint naval exercise SLINEX-2018 was held at Trincomalee, Sri Lanka.

o SLINEX series of bilateral maritime exercises were initiated in 2005 and since then five successful engagements have been conducted.

o SLINEX over the year s has helped both the Navies in understanding each other's procedures and enhanced interoperability.

o This edition of the exercise will further strength ties between the two maritime neighbours and contribute towards maritime security in the region.

• **Prahaar Missile**

o India successfully test-fired its indigenously developed surface-to-surface short-range tactical ballistic missile 'Prahaar' from the Odisha coast.

o Developed by DRDO, this missile is capable of filling the gap between the multi-barrel rocket system 'Pinaka' and medium-range ballistic missile 'Prithvi'.

o It is a solid-fuelled short-range missile fitted with inertial navigation system, which can also engage multiple targets in different directions.

• **Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile**

o Indigenously developed Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM), was successfully

flight tested by DRDO from the Ahmednagar range, Maharashtra.

o Also, production facility for manufacturing these missiles has been inaugurated at Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL) unit at Bhanur.

o It is a third-generation anti-tank guided missile, fitted with a high-explosive anti-tank (HEAT) warhead and has a maximum engagement range of about 2.5 Kms.

o It is being developed as a part of Make In India project. Earlier in 2017, MoD had called off the planned purchase of Israeli Spike-MR and had directed the DRDO to indigenously work on man- portable fire and forget guided missile.

• **World Hindu Congress**

o The 2nd World Hindu Congress was organized in Chicago, United States. It was held to commemorate 125 years of Swami Vivekananda's historic Chicago address on September 11, 1893.

o The theme of WHC-2018 was "**Sumantrite Suvikrante" — think collectively, achieve valiantly**".

o The inaugural World Hindu Congress event was held in November 2014 in New Delhi with the me '**Sangachchhadhwam**

Samvadadhvam' which means 'Step together, Express together'.

o The World Hindu Congress (WHC) is a global platform for Hindus to connect, share ideas, inspire one another, and impact the common good.

o It offers Hindus an opportunity to introspect towards improvement and tap into our collective resources to seek tangible solutions to the most pressing issues of our age.

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