

CURRENT AFFAIRS SNIPPETS : NOVEMBER 2017

BUSINESS

YONO: SBI to unveil India's first integrated digital platform

YONO is first digital banking platform that will allow customers to meet their lifestyle needs across 14 categories including booking and renting cabs, entertainment, dining experience, travel and stay etc. YONO is path-breaking comprehensive digital product of SBI, developed using world's latest digital technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Predictive Analytics and Machine Learning.

Logistics sector gets Infrastructure Status

The Union Finance Ministry has granted Infrastructure Status to Logistics sector. Logistics Infrastructure was included by insertion of new item in renamed category of 'Transport and Logistics'.

The inclusion of "Logistics Sector" in the Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure Sub-sectors was considered in the 14th Institutional Mechanism (IM) Meeting chaired by Finance Minister. The proposal was mooted by the Commerce Ministry and was approved by finance ministry.

IPPB Bank to become operational in 650 districts by April 2018

The Union Government has announced that India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) will become operational in all 650 districts of the country by April 2018 to facilitate financial inclusion.

These banks will be linked to 1.55 lakh rural post offices for its operations and carry out banking services. This will be largest banking network in the country. Two such banks are already operational in Ranchi (Jharkhand) and Raipur (Chhattisgarh).

SEBI to bring Initial Coin Offerings using crypto currencies under its lens

The capital market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is planning to bring Initial Coin Offerings (ICO) under its existing legal framework. Crypto currencies like bit coin, ethereum and such offerings have been under government radar for long time. Even discussions were held between various regulatory bodies, including SEBI and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to regulate crypto currencies.

GOVERNMENT

Government will transform 115 backward districts by 2022

These districts include 35 districts affected by Left Wing Extremists (LWE) violence, 55 districts just affected by LWE and another 15 including districts in J&K and northeast affected by terrorism, which union government has selected for rapid transformation by 2022.

The Union Government has selected 115 backward districts for rapid transformation by 2022 in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to create a "New India" over the next five years.

5th Global Conference on Cyber Space inaugurated in New Delhi

GCCS, one of world's largest conferences on cyber space was organized in India for the first time. The theme of the two-day conference is "Cyber4All: A Secure and Inclusive Cyberspace for Sustainable Development" and was inaugurated by Prime Minister of India.

Objectives of GCCS 2017 are to promote importance of inclusiveness and human rights in global cyber policy, defend the status quo of open, interoperable and unregimented cyberspace, create political commitment for capacity building initiatives to address digital divide and assist countries, and develop security solutions in balanced fashion that duly acknowledge importance of the private sector and technical community.

Government to initiate Safe city plan for women in eight cities

This plan will serve as robust emergency response system and provides police-verified public transport will come into place. This initiative will be implemented in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Lucknow, Bengaluru and Hyderabad.

The Safe city plan will serve as robust emergency response system and provides police-verified public transport will come into place. In the meeting, it was decided that police and municipal corporations of these metropolitan cities will frame plan of action.

First ever North East Development Summit held in Manipur

It was organized by Delhi-based think tank India Foundation in collaboration with Union Government and Manipur government. NEDS 2017 aims to boost trade and investment in underdeveloped region of North East.

It also aimed at building confidence and altering perception among visiting delegates and investors. Various international finance agencies laid down their plan for development in the region. Key Focus Areas of NEDS 2017 were Trade and Investment, Connectivity and Infrastructure Development, Tourism Development in North-East India, Skill Development, Capacity Building and Entrepreneurship.

First Namami Barak festival held in Assam

The event was organized at 3 locations in Barak Valley also known as Southern Assam. Silchar is main event area while other two locations are Hailakandi and Karimganj district.

It was first ever Namami Barak festival held at Silchar in Assam & it was inaugurated by Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal.

India's first mega CEZ to come up at JNPT in Maharashtra

The first of its kind mega CEZ will stretch along north Konkan region spread across Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Nashik and Raigarh.

CEZ will be developed as part of plan for developing 14 such industrial clusters to spur manufacturing and generate jobs. The plan envisages total investment of Rs 15,000 crore in first phase and creation of more than 1.5 lakh jobs.

Aadi Mahotsav: Fortnight long Tribal Festival held in New Delhi

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated Aadi Mahotsav, a fortnight long Tribal Festival in New Delhi. The theme of the festival is 'A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Cuisine and Commerce'. The festival featured exhibition-cum-sale of tribal handicrafts, art, paintings, fabric, jewellery and much more through about 200 stalls. Over 750 tribal artisans and artists from over 25 States participated in the festival. Tribal India cuisine, recreated and presented in delectable forms to suit urban tastes by special tribal chefs is special feature of the festival. In line with the national aspiration to go cashless, all stalls will prefer and promote payments through cards.

BS-VI fuels to be sold in Delhi from April 1, 2018

The Petroleum Ministry in consultation with Public Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) has decided for preponement of BS-VI grade auto fuels in National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi from 1 April 2018 instead of 1 April 2020.

The decision was taken into account the serious pollution levels in Delhi and adjoining areas and as part of government's concerted efforts to reduce vehicular emissions and improve fuel efficiency with an aim to reduce the carbon footprints and keep a healthy environment.

Government targets for bio-toilet to be installed by December 2018

The Union Ministry of Railways has advanced target for 100% completion of installing human waste discharge free Bio-toilets in coaches to December 2018. Earlier, the target to install bio-toilets in all its coaches as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission was by September 2019.

The new target was announced at event titled "Indian Transport Sector: Marching towards sustainable mobility" at Conference of Parties (COP-23), Indian Pavilion at Bonn, Germany. The announcement comes on backdrop of World Toilet Day (observed on 19 November) with the theme Wastewater.

Project Saksham: Railways launches largest time-bound upskilling exercise for its employees

Project Saksham aims to upgrade the skillsets of 13 lakh-strong workforces of Indian Railways with a single drive spanning nine months. It will start in January 2018 and go on till September 2018.

Under this project, over the next one year, all employees in each zone will be put through a week's training in skills and knowledge relevant to their work area.

OHEPEE Project: Government signs \$ 119 Million Loan Agreement with World Bank

The Union Government has inked US\$ 119 million Financing Agreement with World Bank for IBRD loan for the Odisha Higher Education Programme for Excellence & Equity (OHEPEE) Project.

The OHEPEE Project aims is to improve the quality of 'students' equitable access to selected institutions and enhance governance of the higher education system in Odisha. The closing date for project is November, 2022.

Facebook launches Disaster Maps in India for better response to disasters

The social networking giant has rolled out Disaster Maps for India in a bid to help communities recover and rebuild faster in aftermath of natural disasters. It was launched at Facebook's first Disaster Response Summit in India along with National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to improve disaster response and disaster management in India.

2nd Meeting of EAC-PM focuses on Job Creation, Social Sector and Infrastructure

The Second Meeting of Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) has spelt out 'clear road map' for government to ramp up job creation and infrastructure financing avenues while investing more resources in health, education and skill development. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Bibek Debroy, Member NITI Aayog.

The deliberations of EAC-PM took stock of economic and social analysis done by theme groups and evolving initiatives led by different Members. It identified key issues, strategies and recommended interventions in respect of these themes.

Haryana becomes first state to treat Hepatitis-C patients with oral medicine

This is for first time; state government has included oral medicine in government hospitals. The oral medicine will be provided free of cost for permanent residents of all categories at the district level. The medicine and treatment costs about Rs 28,000 to Rs 30,000 in market, but state government will provide it free.

PM Modi inaugurates rice field laboratory named after him in Philippines

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated rice field laboratory named after him International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Los Banos in Philippines during his three-day visit to attend ASEAN-India and East Asia summits.

A regional centre of IRRI in Varanasi to develop high-yielding rice varieties to increase farmers' income by enhancing and supporting rice productivity, reducing cost of production, value addition, diversification and enhancement of farmers' skills.

INTERNATIONAL

North Korea launched an intercontinental ballistic missile

North Korea has test-fired a brand new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), which experts said shows a major advance in technology and threat named 'Hwasong-15' that means "Mars" in Korean language. The missile flew 10 times higher than the International Space Station and 500 miles higher than previous missile tests of its kind. This system has much greater advantages in its tactical and technological specifications and technical characteristics than 'Hwasong-14' which was released in July 2017.

Paradise papers Scam

The Paradise Papers are a set of 13.4 million confidential electronic documents relating to offshore investments that were leaked to the German newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung. Most of the data leak came from Appleby, a Bermuda-based legal services provider that facilitated setting up of offshore firms with low or zero tax rates. The names of several Indians have surfaced, linked to companies in offshore tax havens, according to a journalistic investigation published by media outlets, dubbed the 'Paradise Papers'. India ranks 19th out

of 180 countries in terms of the number of names in the offshore data leak. A total of 714 Indians have been named.

India-led solar alliance to add 1,000 GW of energy by 2030

Indian-led International Solar Alliance (ISA) plans to add 1,000 gigawatt (GW) of solar power across the globe by 2030 with an investment of nearly 1,200 billion euros.

ISA's future plans were made public in Bonn on the sidelines of the ongoing UN climate change conference (COP23). The Alliance, India's brainchild to bring 121 solar rich countries on a single platform to give push to solar energy, was jointly launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the then French President Francois Hollande in Paris on November 30, 2015.

Volcano eruption in Bali

A phreatic eruption took place, with the ash cloud top reaching 3,842 metres (12,605 ft) above sea level. THE Mount Agung volcano in Bali has erupted for the first time in more than half a century, forcing tens of thousands of people to flee the Indonesian island's "danger zone."

It led to temporary shutdown of Ngurah Rai International Airport, Bali, Indonesia. Hundreds of flights have been cancelled and up to 120,000 travelers have been stranded as huge plumes of thick, dark ash spews high into the sky.

India will host 36th International Geological Congress in 2020

The delegation of International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) had visited India to discuss preparatory aspects of 36th IGC in November 2017. India had won the bid in 2012 at 34th IGC Brisbane, Australia to host the Congress in 2020. The 36th IGC to be held in New Delhi is jointly funded by Ministry of Mines and Ministry of Earth Sciences with active support of Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and science academies of India's neighbouring co-host countries, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

8th Global Entrepreneurship 2017 Summit held in Hyderabad

This summit was jointly inaugurated by the PM Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump's advisor and daughter Ivanka Trump.

The mega event was co-hosted by NITI Aayog and US Government in partnership with Telangana Government. The theme for 2017 GES is "Women First, Prosperity for All" to celebrate entrepreneurship in all its strength, diversity and entirety. Around 1,500 delegates from over 160 countries will participate in 2017 GES.

42nd International Congress of Military Medicine held in New Delhi

It was organised by Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS), Ministry of Defence (MoD). The theme of this edition of World Congress is "Military Medicine in Transition: Looking Ahead.

The five-day event was being organised for the first time in India. It was the largest medical conference ever organised by AFMS. It was attended by around 350-400 foreign delegates from 80 countries.

Moscow declaration adopted for co-ordinated action on TB, end of HIV co-infection deaths

Health ministers, NGOs, and private sector representatives from 120 countries have adopted Moscow Declaration on the sidelines of the first WHO Global Ministerial Conference.

The declaration calls for eliminating additional deaths from HIV co-infection by 2030 and achieving synergy in coordinated action against Tuberculosis and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). India is among signatories to the declaration. A co-infection is when a person suffers from two infections at same time.

Steering Committee of SARTTAC held in New Delhi

Interim Meeting of Steering Committee of International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Centre (SARTTAC) was held in New Delhi.

Officials from all Six SARTTAC Member countries attended the meeting together with Development Partner representatives European Union, United Kingdom, Australia, and USAID along with IMF staff.

World's first fully electric cargo ship launched in China

China launched world's first fully electric cargo ship in Guangzhou, capital city of Guangdong province. It is the first ship in the world to use lithium ion battery. The ship will be mainly used to run in inland section of Pearl River for carrying coal for generation of electric power.

China launched world's first fully electric cargo ship in Guangzhou, capital city of Guangdong province. It is the first ship in the world to use lithium ion battery. The ship will be mainly used to run in inland section of Pearl River for carrying coal for generation of electric power.

India re-elected member of UNESCO's executive board

The election was held at 39th session of General Conference of UNESCO in Paris. UNESCO's General Conference consists of representatives of States Members of organization. It meets every two years.

SCIENCE, AEROSPACE, DEFENSE AND TECHNOLOGY

World's first Artificial Intelligence politician developed in New Zealand

Scientists from New Zealand have developed world's first artificial intelligence politician named SAM by entrepreneur Nick Gerritsen.

The virtual politician SAM can answer person's queries regarding local issues such as policies around housing, education and immigration.

Aditya L1 Mission: ISRO's first sun mission to take off in 2019

India's first dedicated scientific mission to study sun aims to put 1,500-kg heavy class Aditya-L1 satellite into halo orbit around Lagrangian point L1, a point between Sun and Earth. This point is at a distance of about 1.5 million km from earth.

The mission is a joint venture between ISRO and physicists from various institutes including Indian Institute of Astrophysics (Bengaluru), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (Mumbai) and Inter University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (Pune). Aditya L1 satellite will be launched by using PSLV XL.

BrahMos cruise missile successfully test-fired from Sukhoi-30 MKI for first time

The world's fastest supersonic cruise missile BrahMos was successfully test fired from Indian Air Force's (IAF) Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jet for the first time. The missile was gravity dropped from Su-30MKI from its fuselage and two-stage missile's engine fired up and was propelled towards the intended target in Bay of Bengal.

It was for first time that missile was successfully tested from fighter aircraft against sea-based target. It makes IAF first air force in world to have successfully fire air-launched 2.8 Mach surface attack missile of this category.

NASA launches Joint Polar Satellite System-1

JPSS-1 is a joint venture between NASA & National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). It was launched into orbit atop United Launch Alliance-built Delta II rocket from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

JPSS-1 is first multi-day weather forecasts satellite in NOAA's series of four, next-generation operational environmental satellites representing major advancements in observations used for severe weather prediction and environmental monitoring. It is designed to monitor weather around world and help improve forecasts.

NIRBHAY Sub-Sonic Cruise Missile successfully flight tested

DRDO successfully conducted flight test of its indigenously designed and developed long range sub-sonic cruise missile 'Nirbhay' from test range at Chandipur, Odisha. It is India's first indigenously designed and developed Long Range Sub-Sonic Cruise Missile.

It was the fifth experimental test of Nirbhay missile system. It achieved all mission objectives completely from lift-off till the final splash, boosting the confidence of all scientists associated with the trial.

Military and Naval Exercises:

IMMSAREX 2017 Exercise held in Bangladesh

The 2017 International Multilateral Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise (IMMSAREX) was held in Bangladesh from November 26 to 28 2017.

The exercise is taking place under the aegis of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). It was inaugurated by Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina.

IMBAX 2017: India-Myanmar joint Army exercise conducted in Meghalaya

It is first of its kind military training exercise between India and Myanmar on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO). It was conducted by Army's RED HORNS DIVISION under aegis of GAJRAJ CORPS. The six-day training exercise aimed at building and promoting closer relations with armies of the neighbouring countries. It also aims to train officers of Myanmar Army in various United Nations Peacekeeping roles and tasks. Its focus was on training the Myanmar army delegation on tactics, expertise, procedures and methodology required by contingent of member nations for serving in UNPKO.

Sampriti 2017: Indo-Bangladesh Joint Military Exercise held in Mizoram

The exercise was aimed to strengthen and broaden the aspects of interoperability and cooperation between the Indian and Bangladesh Armies.

It was 7th edition of exercise in SAMPRITI series which is held alternately in India and Bangladesh every year with aim to build and promote positive relations between armies of two neighbors

SPORTS

Mirabai Chanu wins gold at World Weightlifting Championships

She achieved this feat by lifting new world record of 194kg - 85kg snatch and 109kg clean-and-jerk in the 48 kg weight category. Thailand's Sukcharoen Thunya won silver medal with total lift of 193, while

Segura Ana Iris won bronze medal with 182kg lift. She became first Indian in over two decades to win the medal at the Championships. She is only second Indian weightlifter after Karnam Malleswari to achieve this feat. Olympic bronze medallist Karnam Malleshwari had won the top prize in worlds twice in 1994 and 1995.

Pankaj Advani wins IBSF World Billiards & Snooker Championship

Pankaj Advani won IBSF World Billiards Championship by defeating Mike Russell of England with the score of 6-2.

He also won IBSF World Snooker Championship by defeating Amir Sarkosh of Iran with the score of 8-2.

Mary Kom wins gold medal in Asian Women's Boxing Championships

Five time world champion Mary Kom won gold medal in Asian Women's Boxing Championships in Light Flyweight (48 kg) category. In the final match held at Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, she defeated North Korea's Kim Hyang Mi in the final bout 5-0 by unanimous judge's decision.

It was her fifth gold medal in 48 kg category in Asian Women's Boxing Championships (earlier won in 2003, 2005, 2010 and 2012) in only six appearances (in 2008 final she won silver), making her unbeaten in summit clash of continental championship. This was also Mary Kom's first international gold medal since 2014 Asian Games and her first medal in over year.

HS Prannoy, Saina Nehwal win 82nd Senior National Championship titles

HS Prannoy won the 82nd Senior National Championship title of Badminton in men's single category by defeating Kidambi Srikanth (World No 2) by 21-15, 16-21, 21-7 score.

The women's single title was won by Saina Nehwal (World No 11). She defeated PV Sindhu (World No 2) by 21-17, 27-25 score. The mixed doubles title was won by Satwik Sai Raj R and Ashwini Ponnappa by defeating Pranaav Jerry Chopra and N Sikki Reddy pair by 21-9, 20-22, 21-17 score.

2017 ITTF Challenge Spanish Open

Sathiyam Gnanasekaran, an Indian table tennis player from Tamil Nadu, has clinched the men's singles gold medal at the 2017 ITTF Challenge Spanish Open in Almeria, Spain. Sathiyam defeated Japan's Kazuhiro Yoshimura 11-7 3-11 11-6 6-11 13-11 11-7 in the men singles final on November 26, 2017. He is currently being supported by the Go Sports Foundation through the Rahul Dravid Athlete Mentorship Programme.

Asian Marathon Championships 2017

Gopi Thonakal became the first Indian man to win Asian Marathon Championship after he achieved the feat in the 16th edition of the prestigious event. Gopi Thonakal clocked 2 hours, 15 minutes and 48 seconds to clinch the gold. Andrey Petrov of Uzbekistan bagged the silver with a timing of 2:15:51s, while Byambalev Tsevenravdan of Mongolia won bronze by clocking 2:16:14s.

PERSONALITIES**Debjani Ghosh will be first woman President of NASSCOM in 2018**

The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) has named Debjani Ghosh its president-designate. She will succeed R Chandrashekhar after his tenure ends in March 2018. It will make her first female president global trade body representing software companies.

She is former Managing Director of Intel South Asia. She is also member of NASSCOM's Executive Council and a trustee of NASSCOM Foundation.

Shaktikanta Das appointed as India's G 20 Sherpa

The Union Ministry of Finance has appointed Shaktikanta Das, Former Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) as India's G 20 Sherpa till December 31, 2018 for Development Track of G20. Sherpa is personal representative of leaders participating at G-20 summit and are responsible for thrashing out details before meeting of the leaders.

Shubhangi Swaroop: First-ever female pilot to be inducted into Indian Navy

She will soon fly Maritime Reconnaissance aircraft. She is native of Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh. She will now head to INS Garuda in Kochi and then will undergo training at Dundigal Air Force Academy, Hyderabad which trains pilots of Indian Army, Navy and the Air Force.

Besides Swaroop, Astha Segal from New Delhi, Roopa A from Puducherry and Sakthi Maya S from Kerala also created history by becoming country's first women officers at Naval Armament Inspection (NAI) branch of Navy. They were among 328 midshipmen and cadets who passed out of Ezhimala Naval Academy in Kerala. All four will be undergoing subsequent professional training in their respective chosen branches before being employed on duty.

DEATHS**Pandit Narayanrao Bodas, passes away**

Eminent exponent of Gwalior gharana of Hindustani classical music, Pandit Narayanrao Bodas, passed away in Pune, Maharashtra after a brief illness. He was revered for his deep voice and expressive face among actor vocalists.

He was born into family connected with gayaki of Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. He learned music from his father Laxmanrao and subsequently from Pralhadpant Ganu. He had started his career as an actor-vocalist from play Saubhagyarama written by B N Purandare.