BUSINESS

Amazon acquires connected security camera maker 'Blink'

Amazon bought Massachusetts-based company 'Blink' that makes Internet-connected doorbells and security cameras. The move could help Amazon compete in the fast-growing home security camera market and against similar devices made by Nest, a subsidiary of Google parent company Alphabet.

ONGC acquires 10 per cent stake in UAE's Zakum oilfield

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)-led consortium of Indian state oil firms have acquired 10% stake in Abu Dhabi's offshore Lower Zakum Concession for $600 million. The acquisition is part of deal inked between company executives and UAE officials in presence of visiting Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Abu Dhabi crown prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi.

ONGC to introduce Asia's first large scale CO2 injection technique at Gandhar field.

State owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) is planning to introduce carbon dioxide (CO2) injection technology in its Gandhar oil field in Gujarat. It will be first large scale CO2-injected project in Asia. Its purpose is to recover extra 20 million barrels of crude oil under enhanced oil recovery (EOR) programme

Maharashtra inks deal with Virgin Group for World's First Hyperloop between Mumbai and Pune

The Virgin Group led by Richard Branson has signed an intent agreement with Maharashtra Government to build world's first hyperloop transportation system between Mumbai and Pune. The foundation stone for the project was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on first day of Magnetic Maharashtra investor summit held in Mumbai.

Airtel, Huawei successfully conduct India's first 5G network trial.

Telecom Major Bharti Airtel and Chinese telecom equipment maker Huawei have successfully conducted India's first 5G (fifth generation) network trial. It was conducted at Airtel's network experience centre in Manesar, Gurugram (Haryana) and was able to achieve over 3 gigabit per second (Gbps) data speed. The setup for this 5G trial involved 5G RAN that operated on 3.5GHz network band, along with 5G Core and 50GE network slicing router.

CCI fines Google Rs.136 crore for search bias.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has imposed Rs.136 crore fine on world's most popular search engine Google for unfair business practices in Indian market for online search. The penalty was imposed on Google for infringing anti-trust conduct.

Google launches '#SecurityCheckKiya' campaign

Search engine giant Google has launched '#SecurityCheckKiya' campaign in India to create awareness around Internet safety. It was launched on the occasion of Safer Internet Day (6 February). The campaign aims to protect first-time web users from account hijacking, safeguard Android devices from malicious apps and secure all their personal data if they lose their device.

Google and NCERT join hands to teach students digital safety.

Google and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has signed a pact to integrate a course on 'Digital Citizenship and Safety' in information and communication technology (ICT) curriculum. The pact was signed on 'Safer Internet Day' (February 6). The course aims to bring awareness amongst the young generation of India to make Internet a Safe space.

Bengaluru Becomes First Indian City to have its Own Logo

Karnataka's capital city Bengaluru has become the first Indian city to have its own logo after the state government launched it. The logo was designed by a start-up and uses both English and Kannada alphabets with red and black colors. With this, Bengaluru joins a select group of global cities like New York City, Melbourne and Singapore to have a tourism logo of its own.

7th India Energy Congress 2018 held in New Delhi

The 7th India Energy Congress (IEC) 2018 was held in New Delhi. The theme for this edition of conference was Energy 4.0: Energy Transition Towards 2030. It was organised by World Energy Council India (WEC India) and inaugurated byUnion Power and New and Renewable Energy Minister R K Singh.

Government to launch KUSUM scheme to encourage farmers for solar farming
The Union Government has announced Rs.1.4 lakh-crore Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahaabhiyan (KUSUM) scheme for promoting solar farming i.e. decentralised solar power production of up to 28,250 MW to help farmers. The Union Budget 2018-19 has allocated Rs. 48,000 crore for the scheme for the ten-year period.

CriSidEx: CRISIL, SIDBI launches India's first MSE Sentiment Index

The SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India) and ratings agency Crisil have launched CriSidEx, India's first MSE Sentiment Index for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The index will help to indicate the current state and expected outlook on the MSME sector every quarter.

Government to ban cryptocurrencies from its payments system

The Union Finance Ministry is planning to ban cryptocurrencies from payments system and at the same time appoint regulator to oversee unregulated exchanges that trade in crypto assets. The Dinesh Sharma committee constituted by the Government to look into issues relating to cryptocurrencies will finalise its recommendations by submiting its report in current fiscal year, ending on March 2018.

President inaugurates 88th Mahamastakabhisheka at Shravanabelagola
President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated 88th Mahamastakabhisheka of Lord Gomateshwara by unveiling an idol of Bahubali at Shravanabelagola in Hassan district, Karnataka. President also lighted lamp to mark inauguration of the mega event which is held once in 12 years.

Government launches ASH TRACK mobile app for Fly Ash management
Ministry of Power has launched Web based monitoring System and Fly Ash mobile application named ASH TRACK. It was launched by Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy R.K Singh in New Delhi. These platforms will enable better management of fly ash produced by thermal power plants by providing interface between ash producers (thermal power plants) and potential ash users such as –cement plants, road contractors etc.

India's first radio festival held in Delhi
India's first radio festival was held at the UNESCO House in New Delhi to mark World Radio Day (February 13). It was organised by International Association of Women in Radio and Television (IAWRT) in partnership with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Atal Bhujal Yojana: Government formulates ambitious water conservation scheme.
The Union Government has formulated ambitious water conservation scheme Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABY) to tackle ever-deepening crisis of depleting groundwater level. The Rs 6,000-crore will be piloted under the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation. It is awaiting cabinet's clearance. The objective of scheme is to recharge ground water and create sufficient water storage for agricultural purposes.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates World Information Technology Congress 2018.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated World Information Technology Congress (WITC) 2018 in Hyderabad, Telangana via video conference. The theme of this edition of conference was 'Future Enterprises.' It was hosted by Telangana Government, in association with country's top IT body, National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) and global IT organization World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA).

India is Global Host for World Environment Day 2018
India will be the Global Host for World Environment Day (WED) 2018 which is observed annually on 5 June. The central theme for this year is 'Plastic Pollution". In this regard, Letter of Intent (LoI) was signed between India and UN Environment in New Delhi. WED 2018 will be celebrated across the length and breadth of the country. It will involve all States and Union Territories, districts, local bodies and organizations.

Cabinet approves setting up Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal
The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved setting up of tribunal for adjudication of long-pending dispute between Odisha and Chhattisgarh over Mahanadi river waters. The tribunal was constituted under Inter-State River Disputes (ISRWD) Act, 1956 on request of Odisha and is in line with Supreme Court's order issued in January 2018. Odisha was repeatedly sought formation of tribunal stating that negotiations have failed to resolve the matter.

RBI constitutes YH Malegam committee to monitor bad loans, rising cases of frauds, audits.
Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted an expert committee to look into the entire gamut of issues relating to classification of bad loans, effectiveness of audits and rising incidents of frauds. The committee will be headed by Y H Malegam, a former member of Central Board of Directors of RBI.

First sale of electoral bonds from March 1, 2018: Finance Ministry
The first sale of electoral bonds will start from March 1, 2018 for period of 10 days at four main branches of State Bank of India in Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and New Delhi. These bonds will have a life of 15 days, and citizen of India or an entity incorporated or established in the country can purchase them. The electoral bonds scheme was announced in Union Budget 2017 with an aim for increasing transparency in political funding. It makes India first country in the world to have such unique bonds for electoral funding.

UIDAI launches Blue coloured Bal Aadhaar.
Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), the nodal authority for issuing Aadhaar cards has rollout 'Bal Aadhaar', meant for kids under 5 years of age. Bal Aadhaar literally means Kid's Aadhaar. It will have blue colour to differentiate it with regular Aadhaar. It will be linked with one of parent's Aadhaar card. No biometric details will be captured.

Government to launch GOBAR-Dhan Yojana
The Union Government is going to roll out Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBAR-DHAN) scheme. It was first announced by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley during his 2018-19 budget speech. The scheme focuses on managing and converting cattle dung and solid waste in farms to useful compost, biogas and bio-CNG . It will also help in keeping the village clean while increasing income of farmers and cattle herders.

Cabinet approves Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018
The Union Cabinet has approved the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018 for introduction in the Parliament. Human Trafficking is third largest organized crime violating basic human rights. At present there is no specific law to deal with this crime. The bill addresses the issue of human trafficking from point of view of prevention, rescue and rehabilitation.

Highlights Budget 2018-19

Union Finance minister Arun Jaitley presented Union Budget 2018 in Parliament. It is last full budget of Narendra Modi Government before 2019 Lok Sabha.

Taxation – Corporate/Personal/Customs Duty

- Standard Deduction of Rs. 40,000 in place of the present exemption allowed for

transport allowance and reimbursement of medical expenses

- Increase in education and health cess on personal income tax and corporation tax to 4 %
- To introduce a tax on distributed income by equity-oriented mutual funds at the rate of 10%
- Customs Duty on mobile phones increased to 20% and also on televisions increased to 15 %
- Exemption of interest income on deposits with banks and post offices are proposed increased to Rs. 50,000 from Rs. 10,000.
- Hike in deduction limit for health insurance premium and medical expenditure to Rs. 50,000 from Rs. 30,000 under section 80D. Deduction limit for medical expenditure increased to Rs. 1 lakh under section 80D DB

Rural Economy
- Ujjwala Scheme's target base for distribution of free LPG connections increased to 8 crore poor women
- Plan for employment of 321 crore person days, 51 lakh new rural houses will be construced along with 1.88 crore toilets, 1.75 crore new household will be provided electric connections and 3.17 lakh kilometers of rural roads will be built.

Schemes announced in Union Budget 2018-19.

Several new schemes were announced. Some of them are

National Health Protection Scheme
National Health Protection Scheme (Ayushman Bharat Scheme) will cover 10 crore poor and vulnerable families. Under it, up to Rs 5 lakh insurance cover will be provided to each family per year in secondary and tertiary care institutions. It will have 50 crore beneficiaries. It will be world's largest government-funded healthcare programme.

Operation Green
It will be launched with an allocation of Rs 500 crore on the lines of Operation Flood. It aims to promote farmer producers organisations, processing facilities, agri-logistics and professional management. It also aims to aid farmers and help

control and limit erratic fluctuations in the prices of tomatoes, onions and potatoes . The idea behind it is to double the income of farmers by the end of 2022.

Eklavya School
Eklavya schools will be established for scheduled caste (SC) and schedule tribe students by 2022 on the lines of Navodaya schools. It will in areas with more than 50% tribal areas and 20,000 tribal people. These schools will be part of Navodaya Vidyalayas..

Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) Scheme

RISE scheme aims to lend low-cost funds to government higher educational institutions. It will be launched with a total investment of Rs. 1 lakh crore in the next four years. It will be financed via restructured higher education financing agency (HEFA), a non-banking financial company.

Prime Minister Fellowship Scheme
It is aimed at facilitating cutting edge research by provide high fellowship amounts to 1000 B. Tech students to pursue PhD in IITs and IISc. Its purpose is to make to produce better research in India and make its institutions climb up in global rankings.

Kisan Credit Card to Fishermen and Cattle owners
Kisan Credit Card was extended to fishermen and cattle owners. It will enable them to avail the easier loans. It will help people associated with milk production business in rural areas by providing financial assistance and also to fisheries.

Affordable Housing Fund (AHF)
Affordable Housing Fund (AHF) will be created under National Housing Bank (NHB). It will be funded from priority sector lending shortfall and fully serviced bonds authorised by Central Government. Beyond this, he did not elaborate about the proposed Fund. It will be used to construct one crore households in the rural areas Pradhanmantri Awas Yojana.

Gobar-Dhan Yojna
Gobar-Dhan Yojana (also known as Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resource Fund scheme) aims to improve lives of the villagers. Under it, solid waste

of dung and fields will be changed into compost, biogas and bio-CNG.

National Bamboo Mission
Rs. 1,290 crore will be allocated under this scheme to help development of bamboo production as an industry in the country. This will help the people of rural and tribal areas.

INDIA'S GLOBAL RANKINGS

India ranks 42nd in 2017 Global Democracy Index
India ranked 109th out of 122 countries in mobile internet speed and 76th out of 133 countries in broadband space in the November 2017 Global Index (SGI).The index was released by popular internet speed testing service provider Ookla. It ranked average internet speeds in different countries on mobile and home broadband to understand a real state of the networks that internet users are relying on.

The World Rankings 2018: More Indian Universities in Asia's Top 200
Only two Indian institutes have featured in the top 50 Asian institutes in recently released TIMES Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings for educational institutes in Asia. The two institutes that have made their way to top 50 are Indian Institute of Science (29th rank) and Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (44).

India ranks 44 in US Chamber's Intellectual Property Index.
India was ranked 44th out of 50 countries in the Intellectual Property (IP) Index released by US Chamber of Commerce. Last year, India was ranked 43rd out of 45 countries in index, with an overall score if 8.4 points.

Mumbai 12th richest city globally: Report
India's financial capital Mumbai, with a total wealth of US $950 billion was ranked 12th richest city globally in the report published by New World Wealth. In the report, total wealth, refers to private wealth held by all individuals living in each city. It includes all their assets (cash, equities, property, business interests etc.) less any liabilities. Government funds are excluded from it.

India ranks 81st in Corruption Perception Index 2017
India was ranked 81st among 180 countries in Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2017 released by NGO Transparency International. India has dropped by two ranks from 79th slot in CPI 2016. It scored 40 on the scale. CPI ranks countries on a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean) based on their perceived levels of corruption in the public sector.

Inclusive Internet Index 2018: India ranks 47th
India was ranked 47th out of 86 countries in Inclusive Internet Index (III) 2018 report. India has slipped by 11 positions compared to 36th rank in 2017 III report due to low internet usage and poor quality. The report was commissioned by Facebook in 2017 and is conducted by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). It provides rigorous benchmark of national-level Internet inclusion across four categories: Availability, Affordability, Relevance and Readiness. 2018 edition of report has covered 91% of the world's population and expanded data set of 86 countries, up from 75 countries in 2017.

INTERNATIONAL

KP Sharma Oli sworn in as Nepal's Prime Minister
KP Sharma Oli was sworn in as Nepal's prime minister for the second time. He is the 41st prime minister of Nepal. He was administered the oath of office and secrecy by President Bidya Devi Bhandari. He is known for his pro-China stance and had served as the country's prime minister from October 2015 to August 2016.

Cyril Ramaphosa sworn in as new President of South Africa.
Cyril Ramaphosa, head of ruling African National Congress (ANC) has sworn in as new President of South Africa. He was elected as new president by the ruling party politicians dominating 400-member parliament after the resignation of scam-tainted Jacob Zuma.

World Sustainable Development Summit 2018 held in New Delhi.
The 2018 edition of World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS 2018) was held at VigyanBhawan in New Delhi. It was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. WSDS is

flagship forum of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). It seeks to bring together global leaders and thinkers in the fields of sustainable development, energy and environment sectors on common platform. The theme of WSDS 2018 is 'Partnerships for a Resilient Planet'

India to host first International Solar Alliance summit

India is going to host first International Solar Alliance (ISA) summit in March 2018 in New Delhi. It will be hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and attended by leaders from over 50 member countries. It will include French President Emmanuel Macron, United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid. During the summit, two new programmes - on scaling solar e-mobility and storage, and on rooftop solar will be inaugurated.

Petro: Venezuela becomes first country to launch virtual currency

Venezuela become first sovereign country to officially launch its own cryptocurrency called Petro backed by oil, gas, gold and diamond reserves to circumvent US-led financial sanctions. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has claimed that the pre-mined cryptocurrency Petrohas raised US $735 million on the first day of its pre-sale.

International Conference on Sustainable Biofuels 2018 held in New Delhi.

The two day international conference on Sustainable Biofuels was held in New Delhi. It was jointly being organized by Department of Biotechnology and Biofuture platform. It aimed to provide common platform to Government policy makers, industry, investors and research community to exchange experiences and challenges related to development and scaling of advance biofuels. It also focused on concerns of private sectors to speed up large scale production of sustainable biofuels.

SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY, AEROSPACE & DEFENCE

Nuclear Capable Agni-1 Missile successfully test-fired

Indigenously developed short-range nuclear capable ballistic Agni-1 was successfully test-fired from mobile launcher located at Integrated Test Range of Dr Abdul Kalam Island (Wheeler Island) off the

Odisha. The missile was tested as part of a periodic training activity by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) of the Indian Army to consolidate operational readiness. It is claimed to be part of India's minimum credible deterrence under No first to use policy.

Nuclear capable Prithvi-II missile successfully test fired.

Indigenously developed nuclear capable surface-to-surface Prithvi-II missile was successfully test fired from a test range in Odisha. The test was carried out from mobile launcher from launch complex-3 of the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur near Balasore, Odisha.

Paschim Lehar: Tri-service maritime exercise held off western coast

Tri-service maritime exercise 'Paschim Lehar' was held off India's western coast with an aim to build interoperability between Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard. This exercise includes participation of large number of ships, submarines and aircraft from Western Naval Command of Indian Navy and units from Eastern Naval Command, Indian Army, Air Force and Coast Guard.

First night trial of Prithvi-II missile successfully conducted.

Prithvi-II missile was successfully conducted from a defence facility off Odisha coast. The indigenously developed missile mounted on Mobile Tatra transporter-erector Launcher (MTL) was test fired from launching complex III (LC-III) of Integrated Test Range (ITR). It was equipped with state of art guidance system and was fired in real-time situation. Prithvi-II is India's first developed indigenously and inducted indigenous surface-to-surface strategic missile. It is first missile to be indigenously developed by DRDO under India's prestigious Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP).

Dhanush missile successfully test fired.

Nuclear-capable surface-to-surface Dhanush ballistic missile was successfully test-fired from naval ship off Odisha near Paradip in the Bay of Bengal. The missile test was carried out by Strategic Forces Command (SFC), the tri-services military command that controls all of India's nuclear weapons and their associated delivery systems. Dhanush missile is also known as Prithvi-

III. It is naval variant of indigenously-developed Prithvi-II missile.

Indian Navy to host MILAN in March 2018.

The Indian Navy is going to host 16 countries for multi-national 2018 MILAN exercise at Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) islands from March 6 to 13, 2018. The eight-day mega naval exercise will be held under aegis of Andaman and Nicobar Command with theme of 'Friendship Across the Seas'. Milan 2018 will witness diverse mix of professional exercises and seminars, social events and sporting fixtures.

Balong 5G01 chipset: Huawei unveils world's first 5G chip

Chinese electronic device and smartphone maker Huawei has unveiled Balong 5G01, world's first 5G chip at Mobile World Congress 2018 held in Barcelona, Spain. The company also showed its f5G-ready CPE equipment. The chip has been designed and manufactured by Huawei. It offers 3GPP standard 5G connectivity and provides downlink speeds of up to 2.3Gbps.

SPORTS

India wins Under-19 World Cup 2018

India has won Under-19 ICC World Cup 2018 by defeating Australia by eight wickets. With this victory, India became first nation to win Under-19 World Cup four times. It was India's sixth appearance in the under-19 World Cup finals. Australia had made into the final five times, winning the tournament three times.

Khelo India School Games: Haryana tops in medal tally.

The first (inaugural) edition of Khelo India School Games (KISG) was held from from 31st January to 8th February, 2018 at Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi. Haryana had emerged as overall champions, finishing with 102 medals, which included 38 gold, 26 silver and 38 bronze medals. Maharashtra finished second with 111 medals, which included 36 gold, 32 silver and 43 bronze medals. Delhi finished third with 94 medals, which included 25 gold, 29 silver and 40 bronze.

8th edition of Theatre Olympics inaugurated

The 8th edition of Theatre Olympics was inaugurated by Vice president Venkaih Naidu in New Delhi. The event was organised by National School of Drama (NSD) under Ministry of Culture. The theme of the festival is – "Flag of Friendship". 51-day long nationwide theatre extravaganza was held in various cities. It featured Indian and international theatre groups, eminent theatre personalities along with their performances

BOOK RELEASES & AUTHORS

Exam Warriors: Book written by Narendra Modi released

The book "Exam Warriors" authored by Prime Minister Narendra Modi s released by External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj at a function in New Delhi. The books aims to inspire youth to face the difficult moments of examinations and life with fresh and new energy. It emphasizes the importance of play, sleep & even travel.

AWARDS & HONORS

Odisha wins Geospatial World Excellence Award 2018.

Odisha Government has won 'Geospatial World Excellence Award-2018' for successful IT application for tracking of mineral production, dispatch and value accrued on real-time basis through its i3MS web-based software. The award was presented at the Geospatial World Forum Meeting held at Hyderabad, Telangana. The event was attended by more than 3,000 geospatial experts from 90 different countries.

Shesh Anand Madhukar honoured with Sahitya Akademi Bhasha Samman award.

Magahi writer Shesh Anand Madhukar was honoured with Sahitya Akademi Bhasha Samman award. He is second writer of Magahi language to be given this award. Magahi language also known as Magadhi is language spoken in Bihar-Jharkhand

region of eastern India. It has been derived from ancient language Magadhi.

India's Aadhaar and Umang App win awards at world Government Summit 2018

India's Aadhaar and Umang App have won awards at recently concluded 6th World Government Summit 2018 in Dubai. Umang App won in Best m-Government Service Award for Accessible Government Category and Aadhaar won in the Best Government Emerging Technologies Award. The awards were presented by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of UAE Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

PERSONALITIES

Sudeep Lakhtakia took charge as new Director General of NSG

Senior IPS officer Sudeep Lakhtakia took charge as the new Director General of National Security Guard (NSG). He succeeds S P Singh who retired from the post and will hold post till July 2019. Sudeep Lakhtakia is 1984-batch IPS officer of the Telangana cadre.

Chandrashekhar Kambar elected as President of Sahitya Akademi

Jnanpith recipient and Kannada litetrateur Chandrashekhar Kambar (81) was elected as President of the Sahitya Akademi. He will serve as president of the Akademi for a period of five years. Hindi poet Madhav Kaushik was elected as vice president of the Sahitya Akademi.

Avani Chaturvedi: First woman fighter pilot to fly fighter jet

Flying officer Avani Chaturvedi (24) created history by becoming first Indian woman pilot of Indian Air Force (IAF) to complete a solo flight in a MiG-21 Bison fighter aircraft. She had achieved this feat by completing half-an-hour long solo flight in Russian-origin jet in the skies over Jamnagar Air Base, Gujarat.