

CURRENTAFFAIRS SNIPPETS: APRIL 2018BUSINESS**NSE's India Index Services & Products Ltd launches Nifty equity savings index**

The National Stock Exchange's (NSEs) arm India Index Services & Products Ltd (IISL) has launched Nifty equity savings index that will serve as benchmark for equity saving funds offered by various mutual funds. The index will capture performance of portfolio having exposure to equity, equity arbitrage and debt instruments in similar way to the investment philosophy of equity savings funds.

TCS becomes India's first \$100 billion IT company

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), the country's largest IT outsourcing company created history by becoming the first Indian company to reach \$100 billion market capitalisation (m-cap) milestone. Market capitalisation is value of company that is traded on stock market, calculated by multiplying total number of shares by present share price. The Indian IT giant hit \$100 billion in market capitalisation after it crossed Rs 3,447 per share, assuming the current value of the rupee at 66.2150 against the US dollar.

11 public sector banks placed under RBI's PCA Framework

RBI has placed 11 public sector banks (PSBs) out of 21 State-owned banks under its Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework because of deteriorating performance. Three-four more PSBs are expected to be brought under PCA framework.

India's global trade rises 16 % to \$ 767.9 billion in 2017-18

According to the Commerce Department data, India's global trade was increased by 16.32% to USD 767.9 billion in 2017-18. In 2016-17, the trade stood at USD 660.2 billion.

India becomes second largest manufacturer of crude steel

According to Steel Users Federation of India (SUFI), India has overtaken Japan to become world's second largest producer of crude steel in February 2018. China is the largest producer of crude steel in the world, accounting for more than 50% of the production. Earlier in 2015, India had overtaken US to become third largest producer of crude steel.

India is world's third largest electricity producer

India's electricity production grew 34% over seven years to 2017, and the country now produces more energy than Japan and Russia, which had 27% and 8.77% more electricity generation capacity installed, respectively, than India seven years ago.

India becomes World's second largest mobile phone producer

India has replaced Vietnam to become second largest producer of mobile phones in 2017. This information has been shared by government on the basis of data provided by Indian Cellular Association.

GOVERNMENT**PM Narendra Modi launched Van Dhan Scheme**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Van Dhan Scheme of Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) during the celebrations of Ambedkar Jayanti (April 14) at Bijapur, Chattisgarh. PM also inaugurated first model Van Dhan Vikas Kendra under the scheme in Bijapur.

Government launches Seed import-export portal.

The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has launched seed import-export portal to facilitate export-import of seeds and planting material. It has been developed for making trade process easy. The ministry has removed all prohibitions imposed on export of seeds of different varieties to encourage export of seeds.

Government launches first tranche of Sovereign gold bonds for FY19

The Union Government (Finance Ministry) in consultation with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched first tranche of sovereign gold bonds (SGBs) for current fiscal (FY 2018-19). It will be sold through banks, designated post offices and recognised stock exchanges namely NSE and BSE and Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited. RBI has notified rate of interest of 2.50% per annum on SGB bonds is payable on half yearly basis

Government launches Study in India programme to attract foreign students

The Ministry of Human Resources Development (HRD) in collaboration with Ministry of External Affairs has approved 'Study in India' programme to attract foreign students to pursue higher education in India. The programme is similar to initiative launched by Australia, Malaysia, Singapore and Canada. It aims at boosting country's share of international students and subsequently, improve global reputation and rankings of Indian educational institutions.

Government launches e-FRRO scheme to facilitate hassle-free travel for foreigners

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has launched web-based application e-FRRO (e-Foreigners Regional Registration Office) to allow foreign tourists and travellers to avail of paperless and cashless visa-related services.

Government to launch Gobardhan Yojana nationally from Haryana

The Union Government will launch GOBARDhan Yojna, a central government scheme nationally from Karnal district of Haryana by end of April 2018. GOBAR is acronym for Galvanising Organic Bio Agro Resources. The scheme was announced by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in his 2018 budget speech. The government aims to cover nearly 700 districts under the scheme in this financial year (2018-19).

Government launches UTTAM App for coal quality monitoring

The Ministry of Coal has launched UTTAM (Unlocking Transparency by Third Party Assessment of Mined Coal) Application for coal quality monitoring. The app aims to ensure transparency and efficiency in coal quality

monitoring process and bring coal governance closer to people.

e-SANAD portal and National Academic Depository integrated

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) has launched integration of e-SANAD portal and NAD – National Academic Depository in a bid to make education system in India more transparent.

Tourism Ministry and Google launch 360-degree Virtual Reality experience video on Incredible India

Google Arts & Culture in partnership with Ministry of Tourism has unveiled 360-degree virtual reality (VR) video for global 'Incredible India' tourism campaign. As part of it, Google Arts & Culture will provide users with immersive 360-degree view of India's heritage, festivity, spirituality and adventure.

Diu Smart City: First to run on 100% Renewable Energy during daytime

Diu Smart City has become first city in India to run on 100% renewable energy during daytime. With this, it has set new benchmark for other cities to become clean and green.

Delhi becomes first city to roll-out BS-VI fuel

Delhi became the first city in India to supply ultra-clean Bharat Stage (BS) VI grade fuel (both petrol and diesel) with an aim to combat the rising levels of air pollution in Delhi-NCR region. State-owned oil firms have started supplying the BS-VI fuel (equivalent to fuel meeting Euro-VI emission norm) at all their 391 petrol pumps in NCT.

Defence Planning Committee to formulate military, security strategy, supervise foreign deals

The Union Government has formed Defence Planning Committee (DPC), a new integrated institutional mechanism that will drive country's military and security strategy and guide defence equipment acquisitions. It will be under the chairmanship of National Security Advisor Ajit Doval.

Ayushman Bharat Scheme: First health & wellness centre inaugurated in Bijapur, Chhattisgarh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first Health and Wellness Centre in Bijapur, Chhattisgarh to mark the launch of Ayushman Bharat Yojana- National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM). The insurance scheme dubbed as Modicare was announced in Union Budget 2018 and was approved by Union Cabinet in March 2018 with budgetary support of Rs 10,500 crore. It is world's largest government-funded healthcare programme.

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana launched in New Delhi

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas launched Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana in New Delhi. It was inaugurated by Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan. Under it gas connections will be distributed to identified beneficiary women in the national capital.

India's forex reserves at record high of \$425 billion

According to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), India's forex (foreign exchange) reserves have touched record high of \$425 billion in April 2018. The surge was due to massive spike in foreign currency assets (FCAs), a key component of the reserves. The forex reserve had crossed \$400-billion mark for the first time in September 2017, but has since been fluctuating.

IIT-Delhi installs India's first 5G lab

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Delhi has installed Massive Multiple-Input, Multiple-Output (MIMO) lab on campus for standardisation, R&D and manufacturing of 5G equipment. It will be the first of its kind 5G lab in the country and has been set-up at Bharti School of Telecommunication Technology and Management.

NIRF Rankings 2018: IISc Overall Best, AIIMS Best Medical College

The Indian Institute of Sciences (IISc), Bengaluru was adjudged as overall best Indian university in National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2018 or NIRF-3 released by Ministry of Human Resource Development. This year it is third edition NIRF survey and was released as part of India Rankings 2018 for the Educational Institutions.

E-way Bill comes into effect on Inter-state movement of goods over Rs 50,000

As per previous decision of GST council, the e-way Bill System for Inter-State movement of goods across the country is being introduced from April 1, 2018. From this date, the businesses and transporters moving goods worth over Rs. 50,000 from one state to another will have to carry an electronic or e-way bill. The e-way bill will apply to inter-state transportation of goods worth over Rs. 50,000 through road, railways, airways and vessels.

CCEA approves Minimum Support Prices for Raw Jute for 2018-19 season

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its approval for increase in Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Raw Jute for 2018-19 season. The MSP for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) of Raw Jute was increased to Rs.3700 per quintal for 2018-19 season from Rs. 3500 per quintal in 2017-18 season.

INDIA'S GLOBAL RANKINGS

India ranks 138th in World Press Freedom Index 2018

In recently released World Press Freedom Index (WPF) 2018 by Reporters Without Borders, India was placed at 138th rank out of 180 nations surveyed worldwide in terms of press freedom in 2017. It was ranked at the 135 in WPF 2017.

Index of Economic Freedom 2018: India ranks 130th

India ranked 130th out of 186 economies in recently released Index of Economic Freedom 2018 that measures the degree of economic freedom in the countries of the world. In this edition of index, India with score of 54.5 jumped 13 places from 143rd rank in previous year (2017) with a score of 52.6 points.

Internet Security Threat Report: India third most vulnerable country to cyber threats

According to recently published Internet Security Threat Report, India emerged as third most vulnerable country in terms of risk of cyber threats, such as malware, spam and ransomware in 2017. India has moved up by one place over previous year. The report was published by security solutions provider Symantec.

India ranks 37th in global startup ecosystem in 2017: Startupblink Report

According to report released by global startup ecosystem map Startupblink, India was ranked 37th out of 125 countries in global startup ecosystem in 2017. Startupblink is a global startup ecosystem map with tens of thousands of registered startups, coworking spaces, and accelerators. Its report prepared in association with ANSYS Startup Program measures startup ecosystem strength and activity.

INTERNATIONAL

International Buddhist Conference held in Lumbini, Nepal

International Buddhist Conference was held in Lumbini, Nepal on 29 and 30 April 2018 to commemorate 2562nd Buddha Jayanti. The theme of the conference was ‘Lumbini Nepal: The birthplace of Lord Buddha and the fountain of Buddhism and world peace’.

India-China Informal Summit held in Wuhan

The first Informal Summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and China’s President Xi Jinping was held in Wuhan. The purpose of meeting was to exchange views on overarching issues of bilateral and global importance and to elaborate their respective visions and priorities for national development in context of current and future international situation.

India highest recipient of Remittances in 2017: World Bank

According to recently released Migration and Development Brief by World Bank, India has retained top position as recipient of remittances with about \$69 billion in 2017. India was followed by China (\$64 billion), Philippines (\$33 billion), Mexico (\$31 billion), Nigeria (\$22 billion) and Egypt (\$20 billion).

SCIENCE, AEROSPACE, DEFENCE and TECHNOLOGY

LCA Tejas successful test fires Derby air-to-air beyond visual range missile

Indigenously developed light combat aircraft (LCA) Tejas successfully fired Derby air-to-air beyond visual range missile (BVRM) off the Goa coast.

The successful test demonstrated its overall capability as effective supersonic combat jet.

HARIMAU SHAKTI 2018: India-Malaysia joint training exercise to be held in Malaysia

Bilateral joint training exercise HARIMAU SHAKTI 2018 between India and Malaysia will be conducted in the dense forests of Sengai Perdik, Hulu Langat, Malaysia from 30 April 18 to 13 May 2018 as part of ongoing defence cooperation between both countries. The exercise aims at bolstering cooperation and coordination between armed forces of both nations. It also seeks to share expertise of both contingents in conduct of counter insurgency operations in jungle terrain.

Exercise Gaganshakti 2018: IAF to conduct biggest combat exercise along Pakistan, China borders

Indian Air Force (IAF) is going to conduct Exercise Gaganshakti 2018, biggest air combat exercise along Pakistan, China borders between April 10 to 23, 2018. The aim of this exercise is real time coordination, deployment and employment of air power in short and intense battle scenario. Though it is IAF centric exercise, it will also be executed keeping in mind “Joint Operational Doctrine” so that requirements of other services are also met.

TESS: NASA launches its newest planet-hunting spacecraft on SpaceX rocket

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) launched Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS), a new planet-hunting spacecraft onboard of SpaceX’s Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida, US. TESS mission is designed to carry out first spaceborne all-sky transiting exoplanet survey.

IRNSS-1I: ISRO successfully launches navigation satellite.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully launched IRNSS-1I navigation satellite from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. The satellite was launched on board of PSLV-C41 (height of 44.4 meters and weight of 321 tonnes) after the normal lift-off and was successfully placed in the designated orbit. It was overall 20th flight of PSLV-XL version and 41st successful mission of total 43 of PSLV.

ASPIRE: NASA successfully tests supersonic Mars landing parachute

NASA has successfully conducted Advanced Supersonic Parachute Inflation Research Experiment (ASPIRE) to test supersonic parachute that will help its space exploration missions to land on Mars. The parachute was launched aboard of sounding rocket from NASA's Wallops Flight Facility in US. It was tested in sky, mimicking conditions of entering red planet.

AWARDS & HONORS

Abu Zeid: Jailed Egyptian Photographer wins 2018 UNESCO Press Freedom Prize

Jailed Egyptian photojournalist Mahmoud Abu Zeid, popularly known as Shawkan, will be awarded United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) World Press Freedom Prize for year 2018. He was arrested in August 2013 for covering deadly demonstration at Rabaa Al-Adawiya Square in Cairo (Egypt's capital) between security forces and supporters of ousted Islamist president Mohammed Morsi.

2018 Pulitzer Prize winners

The 2018 Pulitzer Prizes were awarded by Pulitzer Prize Board for work during 2017 calendar year. In Journalism, New York Times won most awards of any newspaper, with three, bringing its total to 125 Pulitzer Prizes. The New York Times and The New Yorker have jointly won the Pulitzer Prize, in the Public Service category for long-running Harvey Weinstein saga of sexual harassment and abuse in Hollywood. In Letters, Drama & Music, Andrew Sean Greer's comic novel Less won best Fiction award.

Vinod Khanna posthumously honoured with Dadasaheb Phalke Award 2017

Late veteran actor and politician Vinod Khanna was posthumously honoured with prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award 2017. He is the 49th recipient of the award, considered as the highest honour in Indian cinema given by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

National Film awards 2018:

Here is the full list of few winners:

Best Director: Jayaraj for Bhayanakam (Malayalam)

Best Feature Film: Village Rockstars (Assamese)

Best Actor: Ridhhi Sen for Nagar Kirtan (Bengali)

Best Actress: Sridevi for Mom (Hindi)

Dadasaheb Phalke Excellence Awards 2018

Here's the list of few winners:

Best actor (male): Shahid Kapoor

Best actor people's choice award: Ranveer Singh

Entertainer of the year: Kartik Aryan

Best actress (critics): Aditi Rao Hydari

Lifetime achievement award: Simi Garewal

4 Indians featured on Time's 100 Most Influential People of 2018

Among those who made it to the list from India were Indian cricket team captain Virat Kohli, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, Bollywood star Deepika Padukone and Ola co-founder Bhavish Aggarwal.

PERSONALITIES

Indu Malhotra: First woman lawyer to sworn in as Supreme Court judge

Senior Advocate Indu Malhotra was sworn in as Judge of Supreme Court of India. She was administered oath to the office by Chief Justice (CJI) Dipak Misra. With this, she became first woman Judge to be elevated directly from the Bar.