

Vice President inaugurates First International Kala Mela in New Delhi

- The Vice President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the First International Kala Mela in New Delhi. Lalit Kala Akademi, the premier institution for the promotion of Art and Culture is organizing an International Kala Mela (Arts Festival) wherein artists and groups can showcase their art works from 4th to 18th February from 12pm to 8pm daily, at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi (IGNCA).
- **Objective:** The central objective of Kala Mela is to focus on direct interaction between the artist and the connoisseur and also educating and raising awareness about art.
- This is for the first time that the Akademi has planned the International Kala Mela at such a large scale. More than 800 artists from all across the country are participating in the event.

1500 km gas pipeline to be laid from Guwahati to Tinsukia

- Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has said that a 1500 km gas pipeline will be laid at an estimated cost of Rs 6000 crore stretching from Guwahati to Tinsukia via Numaligarh to supply gas to the NE states.
- Five major oil and natural gas PSUs – ONGC, Oil India Limited, Indian Oil Corporation, Numaligarh Refinery Limited and GAIL – will set up a joint company for this.

J&K Legislative Assembly passes Rs. 95,666.97 crore budget for 2018-19

- The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly passed the Rs 95,666.97 crore budget for 2018- 19 with 20 per cent rise in the budget size over this year.
- For the first time in state legislative history, the finance minister has linked the appropriation bill with wide- ranging expenditure reforms to ensure checks and balances for efficient fiscal management and speed up spending to make productive use of resources for the larger public good.
- The administrative departments would, in turn, ensure release of funds to the subordinate offices within four weeks of their receipt, failing which these funds would be deemed to have been transferred to the intended Drawing and Disbursing Offices on the dates they ought to have been released by the administrative departments or Controlling Officers.

Maratha Light Infantry to celebrate 250 years tomorrow

- The Maratha Light Infantry celebrated 250 years of its existence by organising a programme at the Manekshaw Centre on 4 February 2018.
- The families of the light infantry soldiers, who are posted in Delhi will also grace the occasion. February 4 is celebrated as "Maratha Light Infantry Day" across the regiment throughout the country.
- The date holds a historic significance as on this day, in 1670, Maratha ruler Chhatrapati Shivaji conquered the famous Kondana Fort, which is now known as Sinhgad today in Maharashtra.
- Maratha Light Infantry: The Maratha Light Infantry is the only regiment which has contributed two battalions of the special forces to the Indian Army. The regiment has an affiliation with 10

Mechanised Infantry regiments, two artillery regiments and an air defence regiment in the Army.

Filmmaker Shyam Benegal gets lifetime achievement award at MIFF

- Veteran filmmaker Shyam Benegal was conferred with V Shantaram Lifetime achievement award at the 15th Mumbai International Film Festival for Documentary, Short and Animation Films.
- The filmmaker was honoured with the award for his outstanding contribution in the field of feature and documentary films.
- **Nature of the Award:** The award carries a trophy, a citation and cash prize of Rs 10 lakh.
- At the closing ceremony of the festival today, Austrian filmmaker Stefan Bohun's documentary "Brother Jakob, Are You Sleeping?" won the prestigious Golden Conch award for the best documentary in the International Competition.

"Green Good Deeds" campaign, launched by Environment Ministry

- Union minister Harsh Vardhan stated people in Delhi are facing the problem of air pollution and asked the teaching community to join a campaign to sensitise all about climate change and global warming, which he termed was a matter of "concern" for the world.
- Asserting that it was not impossible to restore the environment to its clean and green state, it is not merely a technical issue, but a moral responsibility to restore and return the clean and green environment to the next generation. ***With this objective in mind, the environment ministry has launched a people-oriented campaign named Green Good Deeds.***
- Addressing around 700 principals of all government schools from North Delhi Municipal Corporation, Vardhan said environment is a matter of global concern like never before, and asked them to join the "Green Good Deeds" campaign, launched by the ministry.

JAXA successfully puts microsatellite into Earth's orbit

- Japan launched a mini-rocket, which successfully put a microsatellite into orbit. The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) said that the No. 5 vehicle of the SS-520 series lifted off from the Uchinoura Space Center in Kagoshima prefecture, southwestern Japan.
- **Features:** The rocket, measuring 10 meters in length, 50 centimeters in diameter and some 2.6 tons in weight, was the smallest satellite-carrying rocket in the world.
- It was the first time for the SS-520 series rocket to successfully send a microsatellite into orbit. The launch followed a failed attempt in January last year, when the flight of the No. 4 vehicle of the SS-520 series was terminated shortly after its launch due to problems caused by a short circuit.

Researchers find more than 60,000 hidden Maya ruins in Guatemala

- Researchers have found more than 60,000 hidden Maya ruins in Guatemala in a major archaeological breakthrough.

- Laser technology was used to survey digitally beneath the forest canopy, revealing houses, palaces, elevated highways, and defensive fortifications.
- The researchers mapped over 810 square miles (2,100 sq km) in northern Peten. Archaeologists believe the cutting-edge technology will change the way the world will see the Maya civilisation.
- Results from the research using Lidar technology, which is short for "light detection and ranging", suggest that Central America supported an advanced civilisation more akin to sophisticated cultures like ancient Greece or China.

BJP MP from Uttar Pradesh Hukum Singh passes away

- BJP MP from Uttar Pradesh Hukum Singh, who was suffering from breathing problem, passed away recently. He was 79-year-old.
- He was an MLA in Uttar Pradesh for seven terms and a minister in the state before entering the Lok Sabha in the 2014 polls.

Tamil Nadu leads medals tally in athletics at Khelo India Games

- With competition in athletics coming to an end on 3 February 2018, in Khelo India School Games, Tamil Nadu leads the medals tally in athletics with 19 medals of which 5 are gold and 8 silver.
- Kerala follows next with 17 medals, Haryana 12 medals and Maharashtra 11 medals. They all got 5 golds each. Though Uttar Pradesh got 16 medals, its gold tally in athletics is only 2.