

MONTH OF AUGUST 2017

Government Policy and Schemes

B N Srikrishna Committee: The Union Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MEITY) has constituted an expert Committee to study and identify key data protection issues and recommend methods for addressing them. The ten member committee will be headed by Supreme Court Judge (retired) Justice B N Srikrishna and comprise of members from government, academia and Industry.

e-Rashtriya Kisan Agri Mandi: The Union Government has launched e-Rashtriya Kisan Agri Mandi (e-RaKAM) portal to provide a platform for farmers to sell agricultural produce. e-RaKAM is a first of its kind initiative that leverages technology to connect farmers from the smallest villages to the biggest markets of the world through internet.

Genetic mutation repaired for first time: Scientists for the first time have successfully repaired a genetic mutation in human embryos by using a gene-editing tool called CRISPR-Cas9. It has freed embryos of faulty DNA that causes deadly hereditary heart disease. It potentially opens the door to preventing 10,000 disorders that are passed down the generations.

BRICS Agriculture Research Platform: The Union Cabinet has approved for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed among India and various BRICS countries for establishment of the BRICS Agriculture Research Platform (BRICS ARP).

Proxy voting to NRIs: The Union Cabinet has cleared a proposal to extend proxy voting to Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and overseas Indians. Currently, only service personnel are permitted to vote through proxy.

MahaDBT and MahaVASTU Portal: Maharashtra Government has launched two online portals MahaDBT and MahaVASTU to streamline the process of direct benefit transfer (DBT) and to bring in more transparency in construction sector.

14 New AIIMS: The Union Government has proposed to establish an additional 14 new AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Science) under various phases of Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) in different parts of the country.

AGRI-UDAAN Food and Agribusiness Accelerator 2.0 programme: The Union Government is going to launch AGRI-UDAAN Food and Agribusiness Accelerator 2.0 programme in an attempt to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in agriculture. It will mentor startups and help them connect with potential investors.

BN Srikrishna Committee: A High Level Committee set up to review the Institutionalization of Arbitration Mechanism in India has submitted its report to the Union Law Ministry. It was headed by Justice (retired) BN Srikrishna.

Gujarat Rural Roads Project (GRRP): India has signed a loan agreement with China led-Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) for financing of \$329 million for Gujarat Rural Roads Project (GRRP).

2nd Phase of measles-rubella (MR) vaccination: Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the second phase of measles-rubella (MR) vaccination campaign to reduce measles morbidity and mortality. The second phase of campaign will cover 8 states.

Tele-Law scheme: The Union Ministry of Law & Justice in association with the National Legal Service Authority (NALSA) launched 'Tele-Law' scheme in Bihar. The scheme aims at providing legal aid services to marginalized communities and citizens living in rural areas through digital technology.

NCRB merged with BPRD: The Union Home Ministry has merged three-decade old National Crime Records Bureau

(NCRB) with Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD). The merger aims at improving administrative efficiency and optimal utilisation of resources for development works related to policing. It will also boost crime data collection and research efforts.

Committee to make drugs more affordable: The Union Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers has constituted a committee of joint secretaries for ensuring enhanced affordability, availability and accessibility of drugs for the citizens. The committee will suggest ways to make pricing policy in favour of poor patients.

Green Climate Fund (GCF): The 2030 Water Resources Group (2030WRG) has decided to help the Maharashtra Government to raise \$270 million from the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The amount raised will be invested in state government's integrated watershed programmes such as Jalyukt Shivar Yojana which has successfully augmented the ground water in drought affected areas of the state.

Sustainable Action for Transforming Human Capital (SATH): The NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog has announced partnership with three states each to radically transform their Health and Education sectors under its Sustainable Action for Transforming Human Capital (SATH) initiative.

Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals (DGS&D): The Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry has started the process of shutting down Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals (DGS&D), over 100-year-old government procurement arm, in this fiscal. Now the public procurement of goods and services will be managed by the Government's e-market platform (GeM).

Logistics Data Bank (LDB) project: Union Ministry of Shipping is planning to expand Logistics Data Bank (LDB) project to the country's southern region. So far, it had covered only the western logistics corridor. The LDB project was launched at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT), Mumbai in July 2016, making it first port in India to provide this service.

Swachh Survekshan Gramin 2017: The Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has released Swachh Survekshan Gramin 2017, third party survey report to assess the progress Swachh Bharat Mission in rural India. The survey was undertaken by the Quality Council of India (QCI) between May and June 2017 to take into account status of rural sanitation in all States and UTs.

Namami Gange Jagriti Yatra: The Uttar Pradesh Government has launched Namami Gange Jagriti Yatra, an awareness drive along banks of Ganga River to maintain cleanliness. The campaign was flagged off by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath from the state capital in Lucknow.

Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana: The Union Ministry of Rural Development is going to launch Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY), a sub - scheme under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).

National Cyber Coordination Centre (NCCC): The Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) has announced that the first phase of National Cyber Coordination Centre (NCCC) has become operational. NCCC has been set up to scan the country's web traffic to detect cyber security threats.

SheMeansBusiness programme: Odisha government and social networking giant Facebook has launched 'SheMeansBusiness' programme to train women entrepreneurs in the state. It was launched in partnership between Odisha's MSME (micro, small and medium enterprises) department and Project Mission Shakti.

First online course on Infusion Therapy: The Infusion Nurses Society (INS)-India in its 6th National conference launched country's first online course on Infusion Therapy for nurses. INS is global authority in infusion therapy. Under the online course, the INS aims to train over 3000 nurses in the vital medical procedure.

GeMSamvad: The Public procurement portal Government eMarketplace (GeM) and industry body Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) have signed a MoU to establish GeMSamvad, a GeM -Industry forum. GeMSamvad aims to create awareness about online purchase of goods and services by government agencies and departments.

New Metro Policy: The Union Cabinet has approved a new policy for expanding and regulating metro rail services in cities across India. This is the first such policy document prepared by the Union Urban Development Ministry since metro rail operations began in Delhi in 2002. The policy gives a big boost to private players by making private participation mandatory for all the three funding options.

Alternative mechanism for strategic disinvestment: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved revision in the procedure and mechanism for strategic disinvestment.

Madhyamik and Uchchta Shiksha Kosh (MUSK): The Union Cabinet has approved creation of a single corpus fund non-lapsable known as Madhyamik and Uchchta Shiksha Kosh (MUSK). Under it, all proceeds of secondary and higher education cess will be credited and utilised for the government's schemes in education sector.

Orthopaedic knee implants: The drug price regulator National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA) has capped the prices of orthopaedic knee implants upto 70% lower than current market rates. It will be valid for all orthopaedic knee implants sold within India – whether domestic or imported.

Long Term Irrigation Fund (LTIF): The Union Cabinet gave its approval for raising Extra Budgetary Resources of up to Rs, 9,020 crore for Long Term Irrigation Fund (LTIF) during the financial year 2017-18. The funds will be raised by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) through the issuance of Bonds at 6% per annum as per requirement.

North Koel Reservoir Project: The Union Cabinet approved proposal to complete the balance works of North Koel Reservoir Project in Bihar, stalled since 1993. It also revived the project to address environmental concerns.

MyFASTag and FASTag Partner mobile Apps: The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) launched two mobile Apps – MyFASTag and FASTag Partner in to facilitate the availability of FASTags for Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) project. The mobile apps will ease the process, making it possible to buy or recharge FASTags easier using mobile button.

New Rs.50 Note: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will shortly issue new banknotes of Rs.50 denomination in the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series. The base colour of the new notes will be fluorescent blue. RBI also has clarified that all banknotes in Rs.50 denomination issued in the earlier series will continue to be legal tender.

Two-by-Two Ministerial Dialogue: India and US have established new two-by-two (2 by 2) ministerial dialogue to enhance strategic coordination between them and maintaining peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. The new dialogue format will replace the earlier India-US Strategic and Commercial Dialogue. It will be similar to the India-Japan 2+2 dialogue format between foreign and defence secretaries of the two countries.

Digital Police Portal: The Union Ministry of Home Affairs launched digital police portal under Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems Project (CCTNS). The portal is a smart policing initiative of the Government to provide services to citizens and aid efficient police investigation.

Project Varshadhari: Karnataka Government has launched clouding seeding Project Varshadhari in Bengaluru under which an aircraft will spray chemicals to induce rainfall. The cloud seeding project is an experimental project that will cover Bengaluru, Gadag and Yadgir districts of the state

Swasth Bachche, Swasth Bharat Programme: The Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) launched 'Swasth Bachche, Swasth Bharat' Programme. The programme is an initiative of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) to prepare a physical Health and Fitness Profile Card for more than 12 lakhs of Kendriya Vidyalaya students.

Mentor India Campaign: The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog has launched Mentor India Campaign, a strategic nation building initiative to engage leaders for guiding and mentoring students at Atal Tinkering Labs.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved renaming of SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) as Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY).

India's first Farm Price Forecasting Model: Karnataka Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with software giant Microsoft India to develop a unique "farm price forecasting model". The proposed initiative is claimed to be the first-of-its-kind in the country.

First Videsh Bhavan: The Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) launched country's first Videsh Bhavan by assimilating all Regional Passport Offices and allied departments under a single roof at the Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

National Sports Talent Search Portal: The Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has launched 'National Sports Talent Search Portal' to unearth sporting talent from every nook and corner of the country. The portal will be also available as smartphone application.

YUVA: The Delhi Police has launched YUVA – a skill development programme under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY). It aims to connect with youth by upgrading their skill as per their competencies.

Deep Ocean Mission: The Union Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) is going to launch Deep Ocean Mission by January 2018 to spur research activities in ocean science and develop technology to harness ocean resources. The proposed inter ministerial and interdisciplinary project aims to explore and harness mineral resources beneath the ocean floor.

Persons in news – Appointments/Elections

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi: Pakistan's Petroleum Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi was elected the 18th Prime Minister of Pakistan by National Assembly. Abbasi, nominee of ruling Pakistan Muslim League (N) secured 221 votes in House of 342. Abbasi succeeds Nawaz Sharif who was disqualified by the Supreme Court over Panama Papers scandal.

Arvind Panagariya: Arvind Panagariya (64) has resigned as Vice Chairman of NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog and announced to return to academics in US.

Rajiv Kumar: The Union Government has appointed economist Rajiv Kumar as the new vice-chairman of National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog. Rajiv Kumar will succeed Arvind Panagariya. As Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog he will hold cabinet minister rank.

Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu: Former union minister Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu (68) was elected as 13th Vice President of India. He will succeed Hamid Ansari, who held the position for two consecutive terms of 5 years.

S. Aparna: The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has appointed senior IAS officer from Gujarat S. Aparna as Executive Director of the World Bank. At the World Bank, she will represent the constituency of India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka for three years.

Justice Dipak Misra: President Ram Nath Kovind has appointed Justice Dipak Misra (63), senior-most judge of the Supreme Court as the next Chief Justice of India. He will be 45th CJI and succeeds Justice JS Khehar.

Prasoon Joshi: The Union Information and Broadcasting Ministry has appointed Prasoon Joshi as the new Chairman of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). He will replace Pahlaj Nihalani and shall have tenure of three years.

Ashwani Lohani: The Union Government has appointed Ashwani Lohani as the new Chairman of the Railway Board (Ministry of Railways). Prior to this appointment, he was serving as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Air India.

Science, Technology & Environment

SC bans use of heavy metals in firecrackers: The Supreme Court has imposed ban on use of five harmful heavy metals like lithium, antimony, mercury, arsenic and lead in the manufacturing of firecrackers as they cause air pollution.

Curcumin: bioactive component of turmeric: Scientists from United States have found that curcumin, the bioactive component of turmeric that is widely used in Indian cuisine can treat cancer in children. They have found that nanoparticles loaded with curcumin can target and destroy neuroblastoma tumour cells, which commonly affects children aged five or less.

Venus Satellite: Israel has launched its first environmental research satellite named as Venus (Vegetation and Environment Monitoring New Micro-Satellite). It is a joint venture between the Israel Space Agency (ISA) and its French counterpart CNES.

Sun's core rotates 4 times faster than its surface: Study: A team of researchers have discovered solar seismic waves which revealed that Sun's core is rotating four times faster than its surface. Earlier it was assumed that sun's core rotate at same speed as the surface.

NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) Satellite: ISRO and NASA are jointly working on the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) mission to co-develop and launch a dual frequency synthetic aperture radar (SAR) satellite by 2021. The satellite will be the world's most expensive earth-imaging satellite till date, costing around \$1.5 billion. It aims to study global environmental change and natural disasters.

Time and frequency traceability services: The ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) and CSIR National Physical Laboratory (NPL) have signed MoU to make indigenous regional positioning system-NavIC independent from the US clock system.

Nanotechnology-based drug delivery system: An all-women team of researchers from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi has developed a new drug delivery platform using nanoparticles. The nanotechnology-based drug delivery system has ability to boost the efficacy of antibiotics at the cellular level and improve chances of recovery from cancer related bacterial infections.

WASP-121b exoplanet: Astronomer's using NASA's Hubble Space Telescope have found that exoplanet WASP-121b which provides strongest evidence about existence of a stratosphere on it along with glowing water molecules. The stratosphere is a layer of atmosphere in which temperature increases with higher altitudes.

Two new species of Cycas discovered: Research conducted on Cycas pschannae, a lone tree found in the Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Indian Botanic Garden, West Bengal has revealed two new species of Cycas to the world. This discovery takes the total number of Cycas species found in India to 14.

Low Cost nanometre-scale carbon monoxide (CO) sensor: Indian Institute of Science (IISc) researchers from Bengaluru have developed a highly sensitive, low cost nanometre-scale carbon monoxide (CO) sensor, with potential applications in environmental pollution monitoring. The sensor was developed using novel fabrication technique that does not involve costly and time consuming lithography technology.

2nd commitment period of Kyoto Protocol: India has ratified the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol (or Doha Amendment) that commits countries to contain the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs). In this regard, India

deposited its Instrument of Acceptance of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol. With this, India became the 80th country to accept the amendment relating to the second commitment period (2013- 2020) of the Kyoto Protocol.

Hyperspectral Imaging Satellite: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is planning to launch a full-fledged niche Earth observation (EO) satellite — called the Hyperspectral Imaging Satellite (HySIS). The HySIS satellite has critical chip called an “optical imaging detector array” indigenously developed by ISRO.

NGT bans non-biodegradable plastic bags in NCR Delhi: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) imposed an interim ban on use of non-biodegradable plastic bags which are less than 50 microns in the entire national capital Delhi.

Film-Evaporation MEMS Tunable Array (FEMTA) thruster: Engineers from Purdue University in US have designed and tested a micropropulsion system called a Film-Evaporation MEMS Tunable Array (FEMTA) thruster that uses liquid water as the propellant for orbital maneuvering of tiny satellites called CubeSats.

Gaj Yatra: The Union Ministry of Environment and Forest has launched a nationwide campaign Gaj Yatra to protect elephants. It was launched on the occasion of World Elephant Day observed on August 12.

DNA chip based sensor: Researchers from CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB) and National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) have developed an ultrasensitive DNA chip based sensor for quick pathogen detection. The sensor can detect *S. pyogenes*, a bacterium which causes a wide range of diseases in about 30 minutes.

World’s first plant-based Zika vaccine: Scientists from US have developed the world’s first plant-based Zika vaccine that may be more effective, safer and cheaper than other vaccines against the mosquito-borne Zika virus. The vaccine was developed using proteins derived from Tobacco plant.

World’s largest volcanic region on Earth: Researchers from the University of Edinburgh in Britain have discovered the largest volcanic region on Earth, two km below the surface of the vast ice sheet in west Antarctica. They have found 91 previously unknown active volcanoes in the region known as the West Antarctic rift system, adding to the existing 47 volcanoes that were discovered earlier. This makes it largest volcanic region on the Earth.

Malpelo plate: Researchers from US-based Rice University have found new tectonic microplate off Ecuador’s coast in the eastern Pacific Ocean. It has been named Malpelo plate, after a Colombian island and an oceanic ridge it contains. It is overall 57th tectonic microplate to be discovered so far and the first in nearly a decade. Microplates are tectonic plates with an area less than 1 million km².

Ecosystem Service Improvement Project: The Union Government has inked US \$24.64 million Grant Agreement from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) of the World Bank for Ecosystem Service Improvement Project. The Project will be entirely financed by the World Bank out of its GEF Trust Fund. The project’s duration is of five years.

Harit Diwali, Swasth Diwali campaign: The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has launched “Harit Diwali, Swasth Diwali” campaign. The campaign aims to reduce adverse environmental conditions especially pollution in country after post Diwali celebrations due to excessive bursting of crackers which contributes significantly to air and noise pollution.

Artificial womb developed: Scientists have developed an artificial womb that can be used in future to save the lives of extremely premature human babies. It was successfully used to incubate healthy baby lambs for a week. The research showed that preterm lambs were successfully maintained in a healthy, infection-free condition with significant growth, for a period of one week using exvivo uterine environment (EVE) therapy.

Tracking and Data Relay Satellite-M (TDRS-M): The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has successfully launched Tracking and Data Relay Satellite-M (TDRS-M) into orbit. It was launched aboard a United Launch Alliance (ULA) Atlas V rocket. TDRS-M is third and final satellite in a series of the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System (TDRSS), next generation communications satellites.

New State of Matter: Scientists Los Alamos National Laboratory, US have discovered a potential new state of matter that may help explain phenomena like superconductivity. It was discovered in the high-magnetic-field state of the heavy fermion superconductor CeRhIn5.

Versius: world's smallest surgical robot: Scientists in the United Kingdom (UK) have developed the world's smallest surgical robot called Versius. It was developed using low-cost technology used in mobile phones and space industries. The robot can mimic human arm and can be used to carry out a wide range of surgical procedures. It can be controlled by a surgeon using a console guided by a 3D screen in the operating theatre.

Project Brainwave: Software giant Microsoft has launched Project Brainwave, a deep learning acceleration platform for real-time artificial intelligence (AI).

World's first low Enriched Uranium bank: The UN global nuclear watchdog, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has opened world's first low Enriched Uranium (LEU) Bank in Oskemen in Kazakhstan. The bank is owned and managed by IAEA. It will be the first of its kind LEU bank not to be under control of any individual country.

Indo-German Energy Programme – Green Energy Corridors (IGEN-GEC): India and Germany have signed an agreement on technical cooperation under the Indo-German Energy Programme – Green Energy Corridors (IGEN-GEC). The agreement was signed between India's Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH India on behalf of Germany.

Defence Related

Humraaz mobile application: Indian Army has developed Humraaz mobile application through which serving soldiers can track details like postings and promotions. The app will also enable soldiers to view their monthly salary slips, Form 16 and also download them.

India's first private missile production facility: India's first private sector missile sub-systems manufacturing facility Kalyani Rafael Advanced Systems (KRAS) plant was inaugurated near Hyderabad, capital of Telangana. It is 51:49 joint venture between India's Kalyani Group and Israel's Rafael Advanced Defence Systems Ltd.

ICGS Shaurya: Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Shaurya was commission in Vasco, Goa. ICGS Shaurya is an offshore patrol vessel designed and built indigenously by Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL). It will be based at Chennai under administrative and operational control of Commander Coast Guard Region (East).

Indra tri-services exercise: India and Russia for first time are going to conduct Indra tri-services exercise, involving their armies, navies and the air forces in October 2017 to further ramp up military ties. It will be for the first time India will participate in a tri-services exercise with a foreign country with such large scale participation by Army, Navy and Air Force.

IMMSAREX 2017: Indian Ocean Naval Symposium's (IONS) maiden International Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise (IMMSAREX) will be held in November 2017 in the Bay of Bengal under the chairmanship of Bangladesh. The ships and aircraft of the members and observers of the IONS including China, India and Pakistan will participate in the exercise.

Navika Sagar Parikrama: A six-member all-woman team of the Indian Navy will set sail to circumnavigate the globe on the sailing vessel INSV Tarini. This is the first-ever Indian circumnavigation of the globe by an all-woman crew. The expedition has been aptly titled 'Navika Sagar Parikrama' with an aim to promote women empowerment in the country and ocean sailing by the Indian Navy.

AH-64-E Apache attack helicopters: The Union Defence Ministry has cleared a proposal to procure six AH-64-E Apache attack helicopters along with weapons systems from American aerospace giant Boeing for the Indian Army.

LCU Mark IV L52: Indian Navy's second LCU (landing craft utility) Mark IV L52 ship was commissioned at Port Blair, capital of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. LCU L52 is the second LCU Mk-IV class ship to be inducted into the Indian Navy. It has been indigenously designed and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.

MRSAM defence system: The DRDO has signed Rs.17,000 crore deal with Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) for producing advanced medium—range surface to air missile (MRSAM) system for Indian Army by 2020. The deal envisages developing 40 firing units and around 200 missiles.

Finance, Business and Economy

RBI bimonthly policy review: The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reduced short-term lending rate, or repo rate, by 25 basis points to 6%. It was RBI's third bimonthly policy review for the financial year 2017-18.

T K Viswanathan Committee: Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has set up a committee on 'fair market conduct'. It will be headed former law secretary T K Viswanathan. The committee will suggest measures for improving surveillance of the markets and strengthen rules for algorithm trades, among other norms.

Bharat 22: The Union Finance Ministry has launched second exchange-traded fund (ETF), named Bharat 22. It will help to speed up Government's disinvestment programme budgeted to raise a record Rs 72,500 crore in the FY 2018. Bharat 22 comprise of 22 stocks including those of central public sector enterprises (CPSEs), public sector banks (PSBs) and its holdings under the Specified Undertaking of Unit Trust of India (SUUTI).

Global Retirement Index (GRI): India was ranked last at 43rd position in 2017 Global Retirement Index (GRI) published by French asset management company Natixis Global.

India's first gold options contract: Commodity derivatives bourse Multi Commodity Exchange Ltd (MCX) has received markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India's (SEBI) approval to launch India's first gold options contract. The gold futures contract will have bi-monthly duration. The option will also have the existing gold kilo futures contract as its underlier.

Framework for Consolidation of PSBs: The Union Cabinet has approved Framework for Consolidation of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) through an Alternative Mechanism (AM). The decision would facilitate consolidation among the nationalised banks to create strong and competitive banks and also improve their competitiveness and efficiency.

New Rs. 200 note notified: The Union Finance Ministry on the recommendations of the Central Board of Directors of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has notified currency notes of Rs.200.

World's first diamond futures contracts: The Indian Commodity Exchange (ICEX) as launched world's first diamond futures contracts to provide exporters with a hedging tool.

Events & Observances

7 August: National Handloom Day: The National Handloom Day is being observed every year on 7 August to honour the handloom weavers in the country and also carter an impetus to India's handloom industry. This year it was third edition of the National Handloom Day after it was instituted in 2015.

75th anniversary of Quit India Movement: The 75th anniversary of the Quit India Movement was observed across the country. This year's theme was "Sankalp se Siddhi- the attainment through resolve". The campaign pledges to build new India by 2022.

August 10: International Biodiesel Day: The International Biodiesel Day (IBD) is celebrated every year on August 10 in a bid to create awareness about non fossil-fuels (Green Fuels). The day also honours the research experiments by Sir Rudolf Diesel who ran an engine with peanut oil in the year of 1893.

India-US Global Entrepreneurship Summit: India and US are going to co-host the Global Entrepreneurship Summit at Hyderabad, Telangana from 28th to 30th November 2017. American delegation will be led by US President Donald Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump.

15th BIMSTEC ministerial meeting: The 15th edition of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) ministerial meeting was held in Kathmandu, Nepal.

12 August: International Youth Day: The International Youth Day is observed across the world on 12 August to draw attention to a given set of cultural and legal issues surrounding youth. The theme for this year is 'Youth Building Peace'. It aims at celebrating young people's contributions in preventing conflicts and bringing about transformations along with social justice, inclusion and sustainable peace.

India-ASEAN Youth Summit: The first India-ASEAN Youth Summit was held at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh to commemorate 25th anniversary of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India dialogue partnership in the ongoing year.

19 August: World Humanitarian Day: The World Humanitarian Day (WHD) is observed every year on 19 August to recognize work of humanitarian personnel and those who have lost their lives. The campaign theme for this year is #NotATarget.

August 29: National Sports Day: The National Sports Day is observed every year on 29th August every year to birth anniversary of the legendary hockey player Dhyan Chand who was born on 29 August 1905.

August 29: International Day Against Nuclear Tests: The International Day Against Nuclear Tests was observed across the world on 29 August with an aim to raise awareness about the effects of nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions.

Sports

First National Sports Museum: The Union Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs is going to establish National Sports Museum at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi. It will be first of its kind sports museum in India. The aim of the sports museum is to popularise the sports as a way of life within the country. It will showcase the India's achievements in sports and also focus on the traditional sports within the country.

PV Sindhu: Indian ace shuttler and 2017 Rio Olympic silver medallist PV Sindhu won the silver medal in 2017 World Badminton Championship held at Glasgow, Scotland (United Kingdom). In the final match, Sindhu lost to Japan's Nozomi Okuhara by 19-21, 22-20, 20-22 score.

Persons in news: Died

Ustad Hussain Sayeeduddin Dagar: Ustad Hussain Sayeeduddin Dagar, one of the foremost exponents and custodian of the venerable Dhrupad tradition of Hindustani classical music passed away in a Pune.

Pushpa Mittra Bhargava: Veteran molecular biologist Pushpa Mittra Bhargava passed away in Hyderabad. He was 89. Bhargava was the founding director of Hyderabad based Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB).

S Paul: Veteran photographer S Paul passed away in New Delhi. Paul was a self-taught photographer who discovered his passion for the art as a teenager. He joined The Indian Express in the 1960s and retired in 1989.

Rishang Keishing: Former Manipur Chief Minister and Veteran Congress leader Rishang Keishing passed away in Imphal following a brief illness. He was freedom fighter and member of India's first parliament (1952-57). He had served as the Chief Minister of Manipur for four terms from 1980 to 1988 and 1994 to 1997.

Miscellaneous Terms and Facts

19th RCEP Trade Negotiating Committee meetings: The 19th round of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) meetings and other related meetings were held in Hyderabad, Telangana.

India-Bhutan New Trade and Transit agreement: The new bilateral Agreement on Trade, Commerce and Transit between India and Bhutan came into force from July 2017. The new agreement aims to further strengthen the bilateral trade relations between both countries.

Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2017: Parliament has passed the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2017 with Rajya Sabha approving it. Lok Sabha had passed it earlier. The Bill amends the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE), 2009 by extending the deadline for teachers to acquire the prescribed minimum qualifications for appointment.

Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2017: Parliament passed the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2017 by voice vote. It will replace the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2017. The bill seeks to amend the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 to insert provisions for handling cases related to stressed assets or non-performing assets (NPAs) of banks.

NABARD (Amendment) Bill, 2017: The Lok Sabha has passed the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Amendment) Bill, 2017 by voice vote. The Bill seeks to amend the NABARD Act, 1981. NABARD is responsible for providing and regulating facilities like credit for agricultural and industrial development in the rural areas.

Indian Institutes of Information Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2017: Parliament has passed the Indian Institutes of Information Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2017 after the Rajya Sabha approved it. The Lok Sabha has already passed it. The Bill amends the IIIT Act, 2014. The IIIT Act, 2014 declares certain Institutes of Technology as institutions of national importance.

State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill, 2017: The Lok Sabha has passed the State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill, 2017. The bill seeks to repeal the two Acts namely State Bank of India (Subsidiary Banks) Act, 1959, and State Bank of Hyderabad Act, 1956. It also seeks to amend the State Bank of India (SBI) Act, 1955 to remove references to subsidiary banks and powers of SBI to act as an agent of the RBI for subsidiary banks.

Hizbul Mujahideen: The United States has named Pakistan based Kashmiri terrorist outfit Hizbul Mujahideen as a "Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO)". The designation slaps a series of US sanctions on the outfit.

Melbourne: According to the 2017 Global Liveability Report compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), Australian city Melbourne is the most liveable city in the world. The EIU Liveability index scores 140 major cities of the world on the scale ranging from 0 (least liveable city) to 100 (most liveable city) based on healthcare, education, stability, culture, environment and infrastructure parameters. No Indian city was ranked in the top ten or bottom ten.