



## CURRENT AFFAIRS (SEPTEMBER - 2018) :

### National

- ⇒ The Union Ministry of Human Resources Development (HRD) granted Institution of Eminence (IoE) status to 6 educational institutions – 3 Institutions from Public Sector and 3 from Private Sector. They were selected by Empowered Expert Committee headed by former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) N Gopalaswami. Selected institutions are – Public Sector: Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru (Karnataka); Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay (Maharashtra) and IIT Delhi. Private Sector: Birla Institute of Technology & Sciences, Pilani (Rajasthan); Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal (Karnataka) and the proposed Jio Institute of Reliance Foundation in Pune (Maharashtra) under Green Field Project. The Institutions of Eminence (IoE) scheme was rolled out by the University Grants Commission (UGC). It aims to help 20 higher educational (10 public and 10 private) institutions from the country to break into top 500 global rankings in 10 years, and then eventually break into top 100 over time.
- ⇒ Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently paid a State visit to the Republic of Rwanda, Uganda and South Africa. Mr. Modi gifted 200 cows to Rweru Model village in Rwanda for poverty reduction and tackling childhood malnutrition. In Uganda he unveiled a bust of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Kampala.
- ⇒ Seychelles President Danny Faure visited India recently and held talks with the Indian PM Narendra Modi. They agreed to work together on a project to develop a naval base at the Assumption Island Naval Base. This will give India a strategic advantage in the Indian Ocean Region.
- ⇒ Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the world's largest state-of-the-art visa centre at Dhaka in Bangladesh. India has total 12 visa centres in Bangladesh, which is the highest number that India has in any country in the world.
- ⇒ ISRO has successfully conducted the ground test of its high thrust version of Vikas Engine at ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) in Mahendragiri, the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu. Vikas Engine belongs to the family of liquid fuelled rocket engines conceptualized and designed by ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre in the 1970s. The design was based on licensed version of Viking engine of Canada with chemical pressurisation system.
- ⇒ Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government has won the No Confidence Motion moved in Lok Sabha by 325 – 126 votes. This was the first no-trust motion against Narendra Modi government after it came to power in May 2014 and less than a year before the next general elections. The no-confidence motion against the government was moved by a former NDA ally Telugu Desham Party (TDP).

### International

- ⇒ Israel's parliament (Knesset) adopted a law defining the country as the nation state of the Jewish people.
- ⇒ A UAE firm has decided to bring huge icebergs from the Antarctica by towing to the country's coastline in an ambitious 12,000 km journey by early 2020 to provide fresh water to the region. An average large iceberg contains more than 20 billion gallons of water, enough for one million people for over five years.
- ⇒ The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has adopted 'Resolution 2427', aimed at providing legal framework for mainstreaming protection, rights, well-being and empowerment of children throughout the conflict cycle anywhere in the world. The resolution has won unanimous approval of the 15 members of the council.
- ⇒ A group of 12 Thai boys aged 11 to 17 from a junior football team Wild Boars and their 25 year old assistant coach Ekapol Chantawong went missing when they were trapped in the Than Luang Nang Non caves near the Myanmar border in Thailand. They all were rescued after 17 days.
- ⇒ The Asian trade ministers recently held a meeting to discuss the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in Tokyo. RCEP is a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) of ten member-states of the ASEAN and the six Asia-Pacific states with which ASEAN has existing free trade agreements (Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand). An agreement in this regard is likely to be signed in November 2018 during the ASEAN Summit in Singapore.

### Economy

- ⇒ Under the money circulation and credit control policy of the RBI, the existing rates (as on 20.9.2018) are :
  - \* Repo Rate (*Repo Rate is the rate at which commercial banks borrow money from the central bank, i.e., RBI*) : 6.50%.
  - \* Reverse Repo Rate (*Reverse Repo Rate is the rate at which the commercial banks deposit their surplus money to the central bank*) : 6.25%
  - \* Statutory Liquidity Ratio (*SLR is the percentage of deposits that commercial banks have to maintain with themselves*) : 19.5%
  - \* CRR (*Cash Reserve Ratio is the proportion of deposits which the banks have to keep with the central bank*) : 4%
  - \* Bank Rate (*Bank rate is the rate at which central bank, i.e. RBI, rediscounts the bills of exchange of commercial banks*) : 6.75%
  - \* MSF (*Marginal Standing Facility is the loan banks are permitted to avail themselves from the RBI on overnight basis, using its SLR securities*) : 6.75%.
  - \* Base Rate (*Base Rate reflects the actual cost of banks that has to be covered through lending. Banks cannot lend money below the Base Rate, which varies from bank to bank*) : 8.85% - 9.45%.



- \* Term Deposit (Fixed Deposit) Rate (more than 1 year): 6.25% - 7.25%.
  - \* Savings A/c.: 3.50% - 4.00%.
  - \* MCLR (Overnight) : 7.90% - 8.30%.
- (MCLR, the Marginal Cost of Fund-based Lending Rate, is the new benchmark lending rate at which banks will now lend to new borrowers. Till 31 March 2016, banks used the Base rate as the benchmark lending rate. MCLR is built on four components – Marginal cost of funds, Negative carry on account of CRR, Operating costs and Tenor premium).*
- ⇒ According to the latest World Bank figures on GDP of countries for 2017, India has become the world's sixth-biggest economy pushing France to the seventh place. India's gross domestic product (GDP) amounted to \$2.597 trillion at the end of 2017, as against \$2.582 trillion for France. At the end of 2017, United States was the world's largest economy with the size of US \$19.39 trillion, followed by China (US \$12.23 trillion) at the second place. Japan (US \$4.87 trillion) and Germany (US \$3.67 trillion) are at third and fourth places respectively. Britain is still the world's fifth-biggest economy with a GDP of \$2.622 trillion.
  - ⇒ India has formally been inducted as the 69th shareholder of European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). India had applied for EBRD membership in December 2017. However, India being a shareholder, will only take shareholding in EBRD and will not be recipient of EBRD financing. But it may benefit India indirectly through EBRD projects or if Indian companies invest alongside the bank. The headquarter of the EBRD is in London.
  - ⇒ The Union Government constituted a high-level task force under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary PK Sinha to identify various items and policy interventions to reduce dependence on imports. It will suggest ways to cut import of those items which can be manufactured or explored in India.
  - ⇒ Fertiliser major IFFCO has launched e-commerce platform IFFCO iMandi (an mobile application and web portal) to address all needs of the farming community associated with it. For this initiative, IFFCO has partnered with Singapore-based technology firm iMandi.
  - ⇒ Union Finance Ministry is planning to infuse additional capital close to Rs 11,336 crore in 5 more public sector banks (PSBs) by September 2018-end. These five state-owned banks are Punjab National Bank (PNB), Corporation Bank, Andhra Bank, Allahabad Bank and Indian Overseas Bank (IOB). This round of capital infusion will be done through issuance of recapitalisation bonds and not directly from Budget. This additional capital will help these banks to meet minimum regulatory capital adequacy ratio (CAR) and enable them to make interest payments on certain bonds on time.
  - ⇒ The government has slashed the minimum annual deposit requirement for accounts under the Sukanya Samridhi Yojana from Rs. 1000 to Rs. 250. Under the scheme, a parent or a legal guardian can open an account in the name of the girl child until she attains the age of 10 years.
  - ⇒ In the recently released Global Innovation Index (GII) 2018, India was ranked 57th among 130 countries. It was the 11th edition of GI and was jointly released by Cornell University, a graduate business school; INSEAD and the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). Switzerland topped the list of GI, followed by Netherlands and Sweden.
  - ⇒ According to the report published by the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) 2017, Andhra Pradesh has emerged as the best State to do business outperforming 28 other States and 7 Union Territories. Telangana and Haryana got the second and third places respectively in ease of doing business list for the financial year 2016-17.
  - ⇒ RBI has recently cancelled the licence of Alwar Urban Co-operative Bank in Alwar, Rajasthan as it was not in a position to pay its depositors in full as and when their claims mature.
  - ⇒ According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon.com.inc is the richest person in the world with the net-worth of \$ 159 billion. He is followed of Bill Gates (\$ 95.5 billion) and Warren Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway (\$ 83 billion).  
Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani has become the richest man in Asia (\$ 44.3 billion), while Alibaba Groups Jack Ma (\$ 44 billion) has come to the second position.
  - ⇒ RBI has made it compulsory to incorporate the purchaser's name on the face of demand draft, pay order, banker's cheque, etc. to prevent money laundering.
  - ⇒ According to the Brookings Institution report released recently, Nigeria replaced India to have the highest number of people living in poverty. Poverty is defined as people living on less than \$ 1.9 a day. India has 70.6 million people living in extreme poverty whereas Nigeria has 87 million.
  - ⇒ According to the data released by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Dubai-Mumbai air sector witnessed the highest flow of international passengers from India at about 2.5 million during 2017-18.
  - ⇒ Five central oil PSUs – IOCL, ONGC, GAIL, OIL, and NRL have signed agreement for executing 1500 Km North-East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid. It is a major initiative to connect all North-East States to National Gas Grid. It will be implemented under Centre's ambitious Urja Ganga Gas Pipeline Project. The project was launched in October 2016 with an aim to provide piped cooking gas (PNG) to residents of eastern region of the country and CNG gas for the vehicles.



- ⇒ According to the Public Affairs Index (PAI) 2018, Kerala tops the list as the best-governed State in the country for the third consecutive year since 2016 among large states. Kerala is followed by Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka and Gujarat.
  - ⇒ Odisha Government has unveiled the first-ever 'Tribal Atlas of Odisha', a compilation of demographic and cultural information of the tribal population in the State. It is claimed to be the first-of-its-kind tribal compilation in the country. As per Census 2011, Odisha has the second highest tribal population in the country after Madhya Pradesh.
  - ⇒ NITI Aayog has signed Statement of Intent (SoI) with Lupin Foundation to collaborate in Aspirational Districts Programme to create templates for concerted development policy. Under this collaboration, both parties will partner to improve indicators in education, health and nutrition, financial inclusion and skill development, agriculture and water resources and basic infrastructure in Aspirational Districts. The programme, launched in January 2018 aims to quickly and effectively transform some of the most underdeveloped districts of the country.
  - ⇒ The government accepted the Project Sashakt, proposed by a panel led by PNB chairman Sunil Mehta, a five-pronged strategy to resolve bad loans. Bad loans of up to Rs. 50 crore will be managed at the bank level with a deadline of 90 days. For bad loans of Rs. 50-500 crore, banks will enter an inter-creditor agreement (ICA), authorising the lead bank to implement a resolution plan in 180 days, or refer the asset to NCLT. For loans above Rs. 500 crore, the panel recommended an independent AMC, supported by institutional funding through the AIF (Alternative Investment Fund).
  - ⇒ Banks and Financial Institutions (FIs) have signed an Inter-Creditor Agreement (ICA) aimed at faster resolution of stressed assets of Rs. 50 crore or more which are under consortium lending. It has been signed by 22 public sector banks, 19 private sector banks and 32 foreign banks and 12 major financial intermediaries like LIC, HUDCO etc. The ICA framework gives a bigger say to the lead lender in the consortium and allows resolution plan to be approved if 67% of the banks in the group agree to it. It authorises lead bank to implement the resolution plan in 180 days.
  - ⇒ The 2018 Earth Overshoot Day was observed on August 1. It was the date when humanity's annual demand on nature exceeds what the Earth can regenerate over the entire year. Every day after August 1 is now considered as strain on Earth's natural resources. In 2018, nature's budget for entire year has already been used up in just a span of 8 months only. It means humanity is currently using nature 1.7 times faster than the Earth's ecosystems can regenerate.
  - ⇒ Invest India and Business France have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote investment facilitation and cooperation between the startups of India and France.
  - ⇒ HDFC Bank has surpassed Russia's Sberbank to become the most valuable bank in the emerging world market outside China. HDFC Bank's current market capitalization is \$78.4 billion.
  - ⇒ RBI has issued licence to Bank of China to open a branch in India.
  - ⇒ Google has been fined \$ 5 billion (4.3 billion euro) by the European Union and ordered to change the way it puts its search engine and Chrome apps on android mobile devices.
  - ⇒ On the recommendation of the government's price advisory body Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP), the Union Cabinet has approved the hike in the minimum support price (MSP) for paddy by a record Rs 200 per quintal to Rs 1,750 per quintal for 2018-19 season.
  - ⇒ The government has banned the manufacturing of Oxytocin for domestic use. Oxytocin's use is widespread in the dairy industry, where livestock are injected with oxytocin to make them release more milk.
  - ⇒ The Rajya Sabha, for the first time in 76 years since it came into being, entered into an MoU with a foreign counterpart for promoting inter-parliamentary dialogue. Vice President Venkaiah Naidu signed such an agreement with the Republic of Rwanda.
  - ⇒ The Archaeological Survey of India allowed photography by visitors in all the monuments and archaeological sites in India except the mausoleum of the Taj Mahal, the Ajanta Caves and the Leh Palace.
  - ⇒ According to the data on language released as part of the census 2011, 44% Indians speak Hindi as their mother tongue. Bengali remains at the second place (8%) while Marathi is at the third position (7%). Only 0.02% of the population speak English as the first language.
  - ⇒ More than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongue, according to the latest analysis of a census. However, 96.71% population in the country have one of the 22 scheduled languages as their mother tongue.
  - ⇒ NABARD has launched South-East Asia's first centre for climate change in Lucknow.
  - ⇒ LIC's board approved the acquisition of up to 51% stake in IDBI Bank.
- Sports**
- ⇒ MS Dhoni became the first Indian wicket keeper to take 300 catches in one-day internationals (ODIs) when he took Jos Buttler's catch against England at the Lord's.
  - ⇒ India finished runner-up in the Champion's Trophy Men's Hockey Tournament after being defeated by Australia in Breda, the Netherlands.



- ⇒ The Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) of the Union Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs has included the entire Men's Hockey team of India under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS). This is the first instance that entire team has been made beneficiary of the scheme. Earlier only individual athletes from different sports were included as beneficiaries of the scheme. The 18 team members will be provided with a monthly allowance of Rs. 50,000 each under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).
- ⇒ Novak Djokovic of Serbia won the 2018 Wimbledon title in men's singles category by defeating Kevin Anderson of South Africa. In women's singles category, Angelique Kerber of Germany won the title by defeating Serena Williams of the United States.
- ⇒ France has won the 2018 FIFA World Cup Football by defeating Croatia by 4-2 goals in the final match held at the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow, Russia. It was France's second World Cup crown after it had won it in 1998. It was Croatia's first World Cup final. Luka Modric of Croatia won the Golden Ball award. Harry Kane, the England captain won the Golden Boot award for scoring six goals across six games. Thibaut Courtois of Belgium won the Golden Glove award. Next World Cup will be hosted by Qatar in 2022. It will be the first Arab country to host the World Cup and it will also for the first time it will be held in the Middle East region.
- ⇒ The second International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Junior World Cup was held in Suhl, Germany. India remained in top position in the medal tally with 26 medals : 15 golds, 2 silvers and 9 bronzes.
- ⇒ India's Chess sensation, twelve years and ten months old R. Praggnanandhaa made history by becoming the youngest Indian Grandmaster and the second youngest overall. Earlier, Parimarjan Negi at 13 years and 5 months was the youngest chess GM.
- ⇒ Hima Das of Assam scripted history by becoming the first Indian woman to win Gold at the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) World U-20 Athletics Championship when she won the 400m title in Tampere, Finland. She became the first Indian woman athlete to win a gold in a world championship across all age groups.
- ⇒ Dipa Karmakar clinched the gold medal in the vault event of FIG Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup at Mersin, Turkey.

### **Awards**

- ⇒ Renowned Carnatic vocalist Aruna Sairam has been selected for the 2018 Sangit Kalanidhi award of Music Academy for her contribution to Carnatic music.
- ⇒ Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje was conferred the 'Chief Minister of the Year' award for her remarkable work in e-governance. The award was given at the 52nd Scoch Summit in New Delhi.

- ⇒ Two Indians Bharat Vatwani and Sonam Wangchuk are among the six who have been declared winners of the 2018 Ramon Magsaysay Award, often referred to as Asian version of the Nobel Prize. The winners received certificate, medallion bearing image of late Filipino leader Ramon Magsaysay and a cash prize. Bharat Vatwani is a psychiatrist who works for mentally-ill people living on the streets in Mumbai. Sonam Wangchuk is an educational reformer from Ladakh.
- ⇒ The 'English Patient' by Michael Ondaatje has been crowned the best work of fiction from the last five decades with the Golden Man Booker Prize.
- ⇒ Noted artist Anjolie Ela Menon has been awarded the National Kalidas Samman for visual arts by the Madhya Pradesh government.

### **Persons**

- ⇒ Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been re-elected President of Turkey.

### **Died**

- ⇒ Rita Bhaduri, the veteran Bollywood actress passed away.
- ⇒ Dada J P Vaswani, the spiritual leader of the Pune-based Sadhu Vaswani Mission passed away.
- ⇒ Gopal Das Neeraj, the famous Hindi poet who wrote many Hindi popular Bollywood songs, died recently.
- ⇒ M M Jacob, the senior Congress leader and former Meghalaya Governor passed away.

### **Miscellaneous**

- ⇒ The Union Cabinet has approved to grant Special Remission to prisoners as part of the commemoration of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi to be observed in 2019. Those who are considered for special remission are –
  - Women and transgender convicts of 55 years or above age and who have completed 50% of their actual sentence period.
  - Male convicts of 60 years or above age who have completed 50% of their actual sentence period.
  - Physically challenged / disabled convicts of 70% disability and who have completed 50% of their actual sentence period.
  - Terminally ill convicts.
  - Any convicted prisoner who have completed 66% of their actual sentence period.
- ⇒ The Human Resources Development Ministry has announced that the JEE (Main) and NEET (UG) exams will now be conducted twice from the next year in 2019. However, UGC-NET exam will be held once a year. All these exams will henceforth be conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) and not by the CBSE.
- ⇒ The Union government has unveiled a draft bill to replace the higher education regulator University Grants Commission (UGC) with a new Higher Education Commission of India (HECI).



- ⇒ The government has formed a committee, headed by C K Mishra to look into the issue of industrial pollution around the Taj Mahal.
- ⇒ BSNL has unveiled India's first internet telephony service with the brand name 'Wings'. The service can be used by installing a SIP client or a soft application on a smartphone or tablet. The app will allow users to make and receive calls from anywhere in India or abroad with any landline or mobile.
- ⇒ India has signed three MoUs with three top UK academic institutions to facilitate meaningful exploration and early adoption of SG technology. The MoUs were signed between the representatives of King's College, London; University of Surrey; University of Bristol and C-DoT, a government owned body engaged in research and development in the field of telecommunications in India.
- ⇒ The Union Ministry of Tourism has approved RS. 50 crore under the 'PRASAD' scheme for future development of Chintpurni Devi temple in Una district of Himachal Pradesh.
- ⇒ The India-Korea Technology Exchange Centre was inaugurated at National Small Industries Corporation premises in New Delhi. The centre will work towards identifying Indian technologies which can be exported to Korea and find suitable Korean partners for the same. It will initiate various cooperative MSME projects complementing each other's strengths in the MSME sector.
- ⇒ India and the United Kingdom signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the sphere of Law & Justice and establishing Joint Consultative Committee. The MoU aims to enhance bilateral cooperation in legal affairs which would provide framework for promoting greater cooperation between judicial and legal professionals in both countries through exchange of expertise and training.
- ⇒ According to a recent study published in the international journal Ecological Engineering, climate change is threatening the Nilgiri tahr, the State animal of Tamil Nadu. It is estimated that the endangered wild goat could lose approximately 60% of its habitat, starting from 2030s. It makes them vulnerable to local extinction. Nilgiri tahr, known locally as Nilgiri ibex, is endemic to Western Ghats from the Nilgiris to Kanyakumari.
- ⇒ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 'Dharohar Bhawan' – the new headquarters building of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in New Delhi.
- ⇒ National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has drafted fee regulations to put in place uniform fee framework to check frequent and arbitrary increases in school fees by unaided private schools. It has proposed a 10% yearly cap on the fee hike permissible by private, unaided schools. It suggests setting up district fee regulatory authority in States to monitor school fee increases.
- ⇒ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 171 km long Bansagar canal project in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh. Bansagar Dam project is a joint venture (JV) between Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar Governments. It is a multipurpose river valley project built on Son River situated in the Ganges Basin in Madhya Pradesh.
- ⇒ Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Saab, the Swedish aerospace and defence firm for jointly marketing L-Band 3D air surveillance radar (RAWL-03) which is co-developed by the companies. RAWL-03 is a long range air surveillance radar for early detection and tracking of air and surface targets.
- ⇒ Indian Army is going to resume the trials of US-made M777 ultralight howitzer in the Pokhran firing range, Rajasthan. The trials will begin after they were suspended in September 2017 following a barrel burst caused by faulty ammunition during firing.
- ⇒ President Ram Nath Kovind has signed the Assam Witch Hunting (Prohibition, Prevention and Protection) Bill, 2015 passed by the State Assembly in August 2015. The law aims to prohibit any person from calling, identifying or defaming any other person as witch by words, signs, conducts or indications.
- ⇒ Union Cabinet approved the proposal of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) to make district magistrates (DMs), instead of courts, the final authority for approving adoptions.
- ⇒ National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has launched the Centre for Climate Change in Lucknow. It is the first of its kind centre in South East Asia. It aims at accelerating concerted climate action by various stakeholders in government, private, financial and non-government sectors. The Centre for Climate Change will help NABARD in enhancing its capacity building efforts manifold. It will extend professional support to stakeholders for designing climate related projects and take up collaborative studies and action research projects in the area.
- ⇒ Ministry of Earth Sciences has unveiled state-of-the-art Air Quality and Weather Forecast System – SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting) at Chandni Chowk in Delhi. It is the first of its kind and most advanced system in India. SAFAR was developed indigenously by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune and operationalized by India Meteorological Department (IMD). It will monitor all weather parameters like temperature, rainfall, humidity, wind speed and wind direction. It also will measure the sun's UV-Index (UVI), PM1, Mercury and Black carbon in real time in addition to regular air quality and weather parameters like PM2.5, PM10, Sulphur Dioxide, Ozone, Nitrogen Oxides, Carbon Monoxide, etc.



# EXCELLENT TUTORIAL

Jadavpur : 9433267091, 033-24187224. Site : [www.excellenttutorial.in](http://www.excellenttutorial.in)

- ⇒ Odisha Special Task Force (STF) has launched a drive to bust an international syndicate that peddles endangered pangolin, one of the world's most illegally traded mammals. It has requested Union Home Ministry to approach the Myanmar government to block the transit route for smuggled pangolin under Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT).
- ⇒ India is going to host the inaugural 2+2 Dialogue with the USA in September 2018 in New Delhi. In the inaugural meeting, the Minister of External Affairs (MEA) Sushma Swaraj and the Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will host the US Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and the US Secretary of Defence James Mattis. The inaugural meeting will cover broad range of bilateral, regional and global issues of shared interest, with a view to strengthening strategic and security ties between the two countries.
- ⇒ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched India-assisted emergency ambulance service in Sri Lanka. The project is another milestone in wide-ranging development partnership between India and Sri Lanka.
- ⇒ Union Government has created a Group of Ministers (GoM) and a high-level committee to deliberate and make recommendations for a separate penal provision on incidents of mob violence. The GoM will be headed by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh, whereas the committee will be headed by Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba. It will suggest measures and legal framework to effectively deal with incidents of mob violence and lynching.
- ⇒ Indian Air Force (IAF) for the first time participated in the multinational air exercise Pitch Black – 18 (PB-18) in Australia hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). It was a three week multi-national large force employment exercise.
- ⇒ Blood Moon 2018 or the century's longest total lunar eclipse of 1 hour 43 minutes occurred on July 27-28, 2018.
- ⇒ Indian Railways had organised a programme on Ethics in Public Governance and launched Mission Satyanishtha at a day-long event held at National Rail Museum, New Delhi. It was the first of its kind event organised by any government organization in the country.
- ⇒ Two types of indigenously built high-power multi-fuel engines V-46-6 and V92S2 were handed over to the Indian Army for the first time under the Make in India. These engines were manufactured by Engine Factory Avadi (EFA), a unit of Ordnance Factory Board (OFB). These engines are based on Russian design. V92S2 is a high power diesel engine with 1000 HP capacity and it is fitted in T-90 Battle Tank (Bhisma Tank). V-46-6 is also a high power diesel engine with 780 HP and it is fitted in T72 Main Battle Tank (Ajeya Tank). They are manufactured with 100% Made in India parts.
- ⇒ The United States has designated India as Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1) country that will allow the country to buy highly advanced and cutting-edge sensitive technologies from America. This coveted status brings India in par with US's closest allies and partners such as NATO.
- ⇒ The South Korean President Moon Jae-in was in India on a four-day visit. He, along with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the world's largest mobile factory in Noida.
- ⇒ In order to lay down standards for Metro rail system in India, the government has set up a committee headed by E Sreedharan who is popularly known by 'Metro Man',
- ⇒ India would operate Sri Lanka's loss-making Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport in Hambantota. The airport, 241 km south-east of Colombo, is dubbed as the world's emptiest airport due to lack of flights.
- ⇒ The rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC), the world's largest multilateral naval exercise has been held recently off the Hawaii in the Western Pacific Ocean. It was attended by 26 nations including India.
- ⇒ India's first defence incubator is coming up in Hyderabad, Telangana. The incubator will be housed at T-Hub and will be India's missile development centre and fast emerging as the hub for aerospace industries.
- ⇒ The Airport Authority of India will set up a Civil Aviation Research Organisation (CARO), aimed at finding indigenous solutions to meet the challenges posed by the growing air traffic. The CARO will be set up at the Begumpet Airport, Hyderabad.
- ⇒ The government is going to set up India's first ever state-of-the-art e-waste recycle unit in India's technology capital Bengaluru.
- ⇒ The world's first all-digital museum called 'MORI' Building Digital Art Museum has been unveiled in Tokyo.
- ⇒ South Africa celebrated the 100th birth anniversary of Nelson Mandela.
- ⇒ The 19th edition of the International Union of Food Science and Technology will be held in Navi Mumbai in October.
- ⇒ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch a rover to explore the viirgin south side of the moon, where no nation has gone before. It will study the potential for mining 'Helium-3' as a source of waste-free nuclear energy.

## **Books & Authors :**

- ⇒ Lethal White – Robert Galbraith (J K Rowling)
- ⇒ The English Patient – Michael Ondaatje
- ⇒ In A Free State – V S Naipaul
- ⇒ Indian Cultures As Heritage : Contemporary Parts – Romila Thapar
- ⇒ Moon Tiger – Penelope Lively
- ⇒ The Only Story – Julian Barnes

\*\*\*\*\*