Tamil Nadu – to set up Lokayukta by February 1, 2019

The undertaking for the same was given to the Supreme Court by the Government

IIT, Madras – develops the country’s first 3D Printing ‘Construction Technology’

The Civil Engineering department of IITM has established a 3D Printing Lab ‘IIT Madras Printability Lab’ in association with an Additive manufacturing Startup ‘Tvasta Manufacturing Solutions’ – to develop this technology for the Mass market

It aims to develop a specific process to build a single-storeyed house of 320-sq.ft within 3 days

It intends to build India’s first 3D printed house within the next 6 to 8 months
NATIONAL

- Train 18 – India’s first ‘Engineless’ train – set for trials on October 29, 2018

- After the initial trials, the train will undergo further testing with ‘Research Design and Standards Organisation’
- The 16 coach train has a Stainless steel body with the driver cabin at both the ends
- The fully air-conditioned train will be tested at a speed of 180 km per hour
- It was developed by the Chennai-based ‘Integral Coach Factory’ (ICF) within a period of just 18 months at a budget of Rs 100 crore
- It will replace the Shatabdi Express, which was launched in 1988

- Government – to create a separate fund to boost the Fish production by 2020
  - The fund is called ‘Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund’
  - It will have a corpus amount of Rs 7,522 crore with lending from various entities
  - The fund will be used to achieve the ‘Blue revolution’ target of producing 15 million tonnes of fish by 2020 with a further growth of 8% to 9% per year
  - It will be helpful to create fisheries infrastructure facilities in marine and inland fisheries sectors
  - India’s current annual fish production is estimated at around 12 million tonnes

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) – is the only Indian company in the Top 10 firm list - to get Foreign labour certification for the H-1B visas
  - It received 20,755 H-1B specialty occupation Labour certifications for the fiscal year 2018 ending on September 30, 2018
  - This was announced by Department of Labour’s Office of Foreign Labour Certification
  - Among the positions certified, software developers and applications accounted for nearly 25% of the total certifications
  - California topped the list of States for getting maximum H-1B labour certification, followed by Texas and New York
Among the companies, Earnest and Young (UK), a multinational professional services firm, has emerged as the top employer with 12.4% of all foreign labour certifications.

Qualcomm Technologies, Mphasis Corporation and Capgemini America are the other companies in top 10

Khushi – a new AI powered customer service app – launched by PNB Metlife

It has been designed by PNB Metlife’s innovation centre, Lumer Lab in Singapore.

It provides all the information about insurance sector.

It can also work as branch locator and can interact with the customers.

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

Supreme Court – ruled that there will not be any sale of BS-IV (Bharat Stage-IV) vehicles from April 1, 2020.

The ruling was made by a three-judge bench headed by Justice Madan B Lokur.

The bench clarified that only BS-VI compliant vehicle will be sold in India from April 1, 2020.

Back in 2016, the Government announced the direct transition from BS-IV to BS-VI, skipping past BS-V norms, by April 1, 2020.

The BS-IV norms were in force across the country since April 1, 2017.

BS norms were introduced in 2000 and were modelled around European regulations; BS IV is equivalent to Euro IV.

For fuels, it stipulates characteristics such as sulphur – a major pollutant – content, density of fuel etc.

India lags Europe. Euro VI came in Sept 2014. BS VI will now come in 2020.

‘Bharat Stage’ emission standards were introduced in 2000 as per the recommendations of RA Mashelkar Committee.

Delhi has already the made the transition to BS-VI Standards.

Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, NCR and Pune will make the transition from January 1, 2019.
Supreme Court – ruled that a person with 3 children is not eligible to contest panchayat polls and barred them from holding the post of a member or sarpanch in a panchayat

The ruling was re-iterated by a 3 Judge bench of CJI Ranjan Gogoi and Justices S K Kaul and K M Joseph as per the legislative intent under Panchayati Raj Act

INTERNATIONAL

Nepal – becomes the latest country to launch Electric bus service

The Prime Minister of Nepal, K P Sharma Oli has inaugurated the service in Kathmandu

Philips – selects 19 Start-up companies – for its 1st Global Start-up Colloboration Programme ‘AI in Healthcare for Radiology, Ultrasound and Oncology’

The programme will be held for 12 weeks and it will focus on the application of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare

It provides access to Philips’ health technology expertise and its ecosystem of knowledge partners

It will be conducted at Philips’ innovation hubs in Bengaluru, Cambridge (US), Eindhoven (the Netherlands) and Shanghai (China)
COMMITTÉS

- Government – constitutes 4-member ‘Group of Ministers’ (GoM) under Rajnath Singh, Union Home minister – to look into the issues of sexual harassment of women at the workplace
  - The other members of the group includes –
    - Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Road Transport and Highways
    - Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Defence
    - Maneka Gandhi, Minister of Women and Child Development

- Ministry of HRD – constitutes an Expert group – to formulate a policy for reducing the weight of Schoolbags
  - The group will be led by Professor Ranjana Arora of the ‘National Council of Educational Research and Training’ (NCERT)
  - Maharashtra and Telangana already have a policy that the weight of school bag should not exceed 10% of the body weight of Students

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- Water, Energy, Technology and Environment Exhibition (WETEX 2018) - begins in Dubai
  - The expo will showcase technologies and products of Energy, water and the environment
  - About 40 Indian companies from the relevant sectors are participating in the 3-day exhibition
  - The exhibition is considered as one of the leading sustainability exhibitions in the Middle East and North Africa region
‘SAGAR Discourse 2.0’ – inaugurated by the Vice President, Venkaiah Naidu in Panaji, Goa

- The 3-day Maritime conference was organized by ‘Forum for Integrated National Security’
- Scientists and researchers from around 15 countries participated in the conference.
- It aims to highlight technological, economic and developmental opportunities with space and research
- SAGAR - Security And Growth for All in the Region

TECH 2018 – to be conducted in Vizag city, Andhra Pradesh between November 15 and 17, 2018

- It is organized by UNESCO, Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) in partnership with the Government of Andhra Pradesh
- The conference aims to highlight the role of ‘Games and Digital learning’ in the transformative pedagogies to develop the society
- Following the success of TECH 2017, TECH conference will be organized annually for the next 4 years
PERSONALITIES

- 3 Indian-Americans – named in the Time Magazine's 'Health Care 50' List
  - Divya Nag, Dr Raj Panjabi and Atul Gawande – are named in the Time magazine’s 2018 list of the 50 most influential people whose work is transforming healthcare in the US

- Divya Nag is leading Apple’s special projects focusing on health
- Panjabi, a Harvard Medical School professor, co-founded ‘Last Mile Health’ to train community health workers in areas that lack local health services
- Gawande leads a nonprofit corporate health care venture that covers more than 1 million employees of Amazon, Berkshire Hathaway and JPMorgan Chase

ECONOMY

- Bank of Baroda, Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank – to set up internal committees for the smooth merger process
  - The committees will comprise the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and Executive Directors of all the three banks
  - The combined entity will be the country’s 3rd largest bank after SBI and ICICI
  - After the merger, the total number of PSU banks in the country remains at 19
  - Earlier, the Government announced the merger of 3 banks on Sep 17, 2018

APPOINTMENTS

- Satish Kumar Gupta – appointed as the new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Paytm Payments Bank

- He succeeds Renu Satti, who will be the COO of the bank’s new retail segment
Gupta had earlier served as the chief product officer at National Payments Corporation of India and the State Bank of India
Gupta has become the 3rd CEO of the Paytm Payments Bank within a span of just two years
The first CEO Shinjini Kumar had left Paytm in May 2017
Paytm Payments Bank was launched in May 2017
The CEO of the bank is Vijay Shekhar Sharma

AWARDS

M S Swaminathan, Agricultural Scientist – to receive the inaugural ‘World Agriculture Prize’

The prize was instituted by the Indian Council of Food and Agriculture (ICFA)
It will be presented by the Vice-President, Venkaiah Naidu at a special session in New Delhi

SPORTS

Virat Kohli – becomes the fastest batsman in the world to reach 10000 runs in One Day internationals – in the 2nd ODI match against West Indies at Visakhapatnam

He had reached the milestone in just 205 innings surpassing the record held by Sachin Tendulkar in 259 innings
Kohli holds the record of the second highest number of centuries apart from being the fastest batsman to cross 5,000 ODI runs
He is the only batsman in history to average over 50 in Tests, ODIs and T20Is simultaneously.
He was conferred with the Arjuna Award in 2013, the Padma Shri in 2017 and the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, the highest sporting honour in India, in 2018
Sanjeev Kumar, Para Shuttler – wins 2 Gold and a bronze in the 1st Victor Denmark Championship

- Sanjeev, a wheelchair Badminton player was dropped for Para Asian Games
- He is ranked at 10th position in Asia and 2nd in Indian-WH2 category

RANKINGS

Global Trends in Aviation – Released by ‘The International Air Transport Association’ (IATA)

- China will displace the US as the world’s largest aviation market in the mid-2020s
- India will be the world’s third largest air travel market by 2024-25 when it overtakes UK
- The number of flyers globally could double to 8.2 billion in 2037
- Indonesia is forecasted to be a standout performer — climbing from the world’s 10th largest aviation market in 2017 to the 4th largest by 2030
- Thailand is expected to enter the top 10 markets in 2030, replacing Italy which drops out of the ranking
- Asia-Pacific region will see the maximum growth with more than half the total number of new passengers over the next 20 years coming from these markets

OBITUARY

Na. Muthuswamy, Theatre artist and Playwright (82 years)

- He founded the famous theatre group ‘Koothu-p-pattarai’ in 1977
- He gained prominence in 1969 with the play ‘Kalam Kalamaga’, which was regarded as one of very first modern plays in Tamil
- Between 2000 and 2007, Koothu-p-pattarai was identified by UNESCO as one among the five learning centres for theatre
- Muthuswamy studied Theru-k-Koothu for about eight years
- Koothu-p-pattarai has over 60 major Tamil theatrical productions to its credit like ‘England’, ‘Appavum Pillaiyum’, ‘Six Characters In Search Of An Author’ and ‘Macbeth’ among others
- Muthuswamy made his first film appearance in 2008 in the film Vaazhththukkal, starring Madhavan and Bhavana, and directed by Seeman.
- In the Tamil Film industry, he is known for training prominent actors like Vijay Sethupathi, Vimal, Pasupathi, Kalairani etc.,
- He was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi award in 1999 and the Padma Shri in 2012
REMEMBERING SADAKO SASAKI ON HER DEATH ANNIVERSARY

- Sadako Sasaki (Jan 7, 1943 – Oct 25, 1955)

- Sadako was a Japanese Girl of 2 years old when an American atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945.
- She developed a form of cancer 'Leukemia' due to radiation exposure.
- She became one of the most widely known hibakusha – a Japanese term meaning "bomb-affected person"
- She is remembered through the story of the 1000 origami cranes which she folded before her death.
- She is considered as a symbol of the innocent victims of nuclear warfare.
- Dedicated to Sasaki, people all over Japan celebrate August 6 as the annual peace day.
- Sasaki is also a heroine for many girls in Japan.
- Her story is told in Japanese schools on the anniversary of Hiroshima bombing.