

## TRIAL OF AGNI-II BALLISTIC MISSILE FAILS TO MEET DESIRED PARAMETERS



India on 4 May 2017 flight-tested Agni-II Intermediate Range Surface-to-Surface Ballistic Missile from Abdul Kalam Island in Bhadrak district of Odisha. However, the user trial failed and it did not meet all the desired parameters. The test was carried out by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) as part of a training exercise. The Naval ships tracked the vehicle, while a network of radars, telemetry and electro-optical instruments monitored the trajectory. The last test of Agni-II Ballistic Missile was carried out in 2014.

## RUSSIA, IRAN AND TURKEY SIGN A DEAL ON SYRIAN CRISIS



Allies of Syria- Russia and Iran and rebel supporter Turkey signed a memorandum on 4 May 2017, backing Moscow's plan of creating safe zones in Syria to encourage a truce between the Syrian government and the rebel forces. The deal was signed by the heads of the delegations representing the three ally countries during peace talks in Kazakhstan's capital city, Astana. The Syrian government and rebel delegations were not among the signatories.

## ANDHRA PRADESH'S BANGANAPALLE MANGO GETS GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION TAG



The Banganapalle mango in the first week of May 2017 received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag. This makes Andhra Pradesh the proprietor of the variety known for its sweetness. O P Gupta, the Registrar of Geographical Indications Registry, Chennai, accorded the registration following an application from Andhra Pradesh Horticulture Commissioner. The Andhra Pradesh government is the registered proprietor of the GI tag for Banganapalle mangoes, often hailed as “the king of fruits.”

## ANCIENT WATER BODY TO BE REVIVED IN TAMIL NADU BY EFI



A non-governmental organisation, the Environmentalist Foundation of India (EFI) has initiated the process of reviving an ancient water body that is located in the front of the Sri Ramanujar Sannadhi at Sevilimedu in Kancheepuram district of Tamil Nadu. The revival work coincides with the 1,000th birth anniversary of Sri Ramanuja. The work involving deepening of the tank bed up to a depth of 2 feet and laying fresh bunds on all the four sides of the tank was initiated almost a fortnight ago. The machines and fuel required for desilting, deepening and building fresh bunds were hired with contributions from philanthropists.

## 2012 DELHI GANG RAPE CASE: SUPREME COURT CONFIRMS DEATH SENTENCE FOR FOUR CONVICTS



The Supreme Court on 5 May 2017 confirmed the death penalty for the four convicts of the 2012 gang rape and murder of Nirbhaya. A bench headed by Justice Dipak Misra and Justices R Banumathi and Ashok Bhushan was hearing an appeal filed by the four convicts – Akshay, Pawan, Vinay Sharma and Mukesh, who challenged the Delhi High Court’s ruling of confirmation of death sentence handed to them by a trial court in 2013. Nirbhaya rape-cum-murder case is the rarest of rare case.

## FACEBOOK ON 4 MAY 2017 LAUNCHES EXPRESS WIFI IN INDIA



Facebook on 4 May 2017 launched Express WiFi service commercially in India. The Express WiFi offers Internet facility through public hotspots to users in rural parts of India. The social network giant partnered with telecom operator Bharti Airtel that plans to bring an additional 20000 hotspots online. The company previously launched the service commercially in Kenya. The launch of the service comes a year after Facebook put an end to the controversial “Free Basics” programme that drew severe criticism from advocates of net neutrality.

## PRATAP BHANU MEHTA APPOINTED VICE CHANCELLOR OF ASHOKA UNIVERSITY



Ashoka University on 4 May 2017 named Pratap Bhanu Mehta as its Vice Chancellor (VC). The varsity announced that Mehta has been appointed “after conducting an extensive global search”. Mehta is a renowned public intellectual and head of Centre for Policy Research, a Delhi-based think-tank. Mehta will take charge from 1 July 2017 at the Sonapat, Haryana-based university. He will be the second VC of the liberal arts university since its inception after Rudrangshu Mukherjee.

## DRAFT RULES FOR NO FLY LIST FOR BANNING UNRULY PASSENGERS UNVEILED



The government has released draft rules for a no fly list for banning unruly passengers. The Ministry of Civil Aviation had set up a committee to come up with the final draft of the new set of rules. The new rules would be opened for public comments for a period of one month. After receiving comments, the civil aviation ministry would study the comments and then will release the final Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR).

## CHIEFS FOR COFFEE AND TEA BOARDS APPOINTED BY APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Government of India  
Ministry of Commerce and Industry  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointments of Prabhat Kamal Bezboruah and M S Boje Gowda as chairmen of the Tea Board and the Coffee Board, respectively. Prabhat Kamal Bezboruah is a leading tea association industrialist who was once a banker in the US. Bezboruah is also the current head of the Tea Research Association (TRA) and has previously served as the chairman of Assam Tea Planters' Association. Bezboruah will be the first non-IAS to head the Tea Board of India. Bezboruah's tenure will last until November 1, 2018.

## BIGGEST COMBING OPERATION IN 15 YEARS CONDUCTED IN SOUTH KASHMIR



The Army, security forces and police had launched a massive cordon and combing operation in south Kashmir's Shopian district following the recent militant attacks on policemen and banking facilities. This is the first time in 15 years that the combing operation of this magnitude has been conducted by the security forces. The major objective behind the combing operation is to bring the situation in the Kashmir Valley under control. It is also aimed at exerting pressure on militants and force them to move out of their comfort zone.

## ‘SOUTH ASIA SATELLITE’ SET TO BE LAUNCHED – IMPORTANT POINTS TO PONDER



The South Asia Satellite is all set to be launched on Friday by the Indian Space Research organization (ISRO). The Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle GSLV F-09 carrying the communication and broadcasting satellite will take off from the second launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota at 4.57 pm. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his recent radio address to the nation ‘Mann Ki Baat’ has said the South Asia Satellite is India’s gift to the region, that will go a long way in addressing the economic and development priorities of the nations in the region.

## INDIA’S 1ST PRIVATE SMALL ARMS MANUFACTURING UNIT OPENED IN MADHYA PRADESH



Punj Lloyd Ltd (through its wholly-owned subsidiary Punj Lloyd Industries Limited) and its JV partner Israel Weapon Industries (IWI) has inaugurated the country’s first private sector small arms manufacturing plant at Malanpur in Madhya Pradesh. The JV company, Punj Lloyd Raksha Systems Pvt Ltd, will manufacture small arms in the plant for the Indian defence forces and also for exports. “This is the first opportunity for the country to get its own ‘Made in India’ small arms.

## MADHYA PRADESH ASSEMBLY DECLARES NARMADA LIVING ENTITY



After a long debate that saw legislators quoting Upanishads and Puranas on the floor of the Assembly, the Madhya Pradesh government on Wednesday passed a resolution granting river Narmada the status of a living entity and committed itself to the protection of its legal rights. A month ago, the Uttarakhand High Court had declared Ganga, Yamuna and their tributaries living entities with the status of a legal person. A week ago, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh, while participating in the Narmada Seva Yatra, had suggested that the Madhya Pradesh government bring a Bill in the Assembly to this effect.

## KNOW ABOUT: THE NABARD (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2017



A bill to enable exit of RBI from NABARD (Amendment) Bill and increase authorised capital of the development institution six times to Rs 30,000 crore was introduced in the Lok Sabha today. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Amendment) Bill, 2017 introduced by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley also seeks to amend certain clauses in the light of reference of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act, 2006 and the Companies Act, 2013 in the proposed legislation.

## RELIANCE, SAP LAUNCH SARAL GST SOLUTION FOR TAXPAYERS



Reliance Corporate IT Park (RCITPL) on Wednesday said it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with enterprise application software major SAP SE to launch SARAL GST solution for taxpayers. According to the subsidiary of Reliance Industries, the new offering will enable taxpayers to be GST compliant and smoothly access the government's GST System, once GST is rolled out from July 1, 2017.