

FORMER FBI DIRECTOR ROBERT MUELLER NAMED SPECIAL COUNSEL FOR RUSSIA PROBE



Robert Mueller, former Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was appointed a special prosecutor to oversee the Russian interference in the 2016 United States elections. The appointment was announced by Deputy Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein on 17 May 2017. Robert Swan "Bob" Mueller III served as the sixth Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation 4 September 2001 to 4 September 2013.

CCEA APPROVES ELECTRIFIED DOUBLING LINE BETWEEN PHEPHANA-INDARA AND MAU-SHAHGANJ IN UP



The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on 17 May 2017 approved the construction of double line with electrification between Phephana-Indara and Mau-Shahganj (excluding Indara-Mau) in Uttar Pradesh (UP). This electrified doubling line will spread across 150 km approximately. The respective length of the Phephana-Indara and Mau-Shahganj lines will be 50.53 km and 99.75 km respectively.

ICJ STAYS KULBHUSHAN JADHAV'S EXECUTION TILL FINAL ORDER



The International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 18 May 2017 stayed the execution of Kulbhushan Jadhav till its final decision. Ruling in favour of India, the Court asked Pakistan to keep it informed about the measures, including on consular access, taken by it in this connection. Reading out the verdict at The Hague, Netherlands, ICJ President Ronny Abraham said that India has the right to consular access to Jadhav under Vienna convention. He said the court considers that it has prima facie jurisdiction in the matter as there is a dispute between the parties.

CABINET APPROVES MOU BETWEEN INDIA AND AUSTRALIA ON COMBATING INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM



The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Australia on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime. The proposed MoU is aimed to strengthen the relationship between India and Australia and bring peace and stability in the region through the exchange of information, expertise, experience and capacity building.

TATA GROUP IS INDIA'S MOST VALUABLE BRAND: BRAND FINANCE



Brand Finance report of 2017 has listed Tata Group as the most valuable brand in India with India at an estimated brand value of \$13.1 billion. Brand Finance is a global brand valuation and strategy consultancy firm and it released its Brand Finance India 100 2017 report on 17 May 2017. The Tata group topped the list of India's 100 most valuable brands once again even after its value declined by 4 per cent to \$ 13.1 billion in 2017 from \$ 13.7 billion in 2016. It says, the decline of the brand value by 4 per cent is lesser than the decline of 11 per cent which was seen between 2015 and 2016.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE HELD TO DISCUSS DISASTER PREPAREDNESS OF STATES AND UTS



The annual Conference of Relief Commissioners and Secretaries of the Departments of Disaster Management of States and Union Territories was convened on 17 May 2017 in Delhi. Organised by the Ministry of Home Affairs, the conference was held mainly to review the preparedness of the states and UTs for dealing with any natural disaster that may arise due to the South West Monsoon 2017. It was inaugurated by Rajiv Mehrishi, the Union Home Secretary.

UNION CABINET APPROVES AMENDMENT OF THE PUBLIC PREMISES ACT, 1971



The Union Cabinet on 17 May 2017 approved the amendment in Section 2 and Section 3 of the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971. Chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Cabinet gave its approval for the following amendments: Insertion of the definition of 'residential accommodation occupation' in a new clause in section 2 of the Act. Insertion of provisions relating to eviction from residential accommodation occupation in a new sub-section 3B below sub-section 3A of Section 3 of the Act.

INDIAN SCIENTIST SHRINIVAS KULKARNI WINS DAN DAVID PRIZE 2017



Indian scientist Shrinivas Kulkarni on 18 May 2017 won the prestigious Dan David prize 2017 for his contribution in the field of astronomy. He was awarded in the 'Future' category which is dedicated to astronomy this year. He will share the award with Andrej Udalski of the University of Warsaw and Neil Gehrels of NASA for their discoveries on time-domain astrophysics. Kulkarni is a professor of astrophysics and planetary science at California Institute of Technology in Pasadena.

CABINET APPROVES AGREEMENT BETWEEN INDIA AND TAJIKISTAN IN CUSTOMS MATTERS



The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for signing and ratifying, an Agreement between India and Tajikistan on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters. The Agreement will help in the availability of relevant information for the prevention and investigation of Customs offences. The Agreement is also expected to facilitate trade and ensure efficient clearance of goods traded between the countries.

UNION ENVIRONMENT MINISTER ANIL MADHAV DAVE DIES



Union environment minister Anil Madhav Dave passed away this morning. He was 60. Dave had not been keeping well for the last few months. He complained of uneasiness at his home this morning and was rushed to AIIMS where he passed away, official sources told. Science and technology minister Harsh Vardhan will now hold additional charge of the environment ministry. The minister was in meetings with Prime Minister Narendra Modi as late as last evening, the latter tweeted, calling him “a devoted public servant”. Several Central and state politicians also expressed their condolences.”I was with Anil Madhav Dave ji till late last evening, discussing key policy issues.

CABINET APPROVES CONSTRUCTION OF 10 UNITS OF INDIA'S INDIGENOUS PRESSURIZED HEAVY WATER REACTORS



In a significant decision to fast-track India's domestic nuclear power programme, and give a push to country's nuclear industry, the Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for construction of 10 units of India's indigenous Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR). The total installed capacity of the Plants will be 7000 MW. The 10 PHWR project will result in a significant augmentation of nuclear power generation capacity.

COUNTRY'S FIRST ORNAMENTAL FISH PARK TO COME UP AT CHENNAI



India's first Aquatic Rainbow Technology Park, an ultra modern exclusive facility for ornamental fish equipped with multi-species hatchery and live feed culture units, would become operational at Chennai in three months. Fulfilling a major requirement of the industry for mass production of high value aquarium fish, the facility was being developed by Fisheries College and Research Institute (FCRI), Ponneri in Tamil Nadu, the second largest exporter of ornamental fish after West Bengal, Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) chairman A Jayathilak said here today.

ANDHRA PRADESH AMENDS ACT TO APPOINT PV SINDHU AS GROUP-1 OFFICER



The Andhra Pradesh Legislature today passed a Bill to appoint Olympics silver medallist P V Sindhu as a Group-1 officer in the government, by amending the State Public Services Act. Certain provisions in the Andhra Pradesh (Regulation of Appointments to Public Services and Rationalization of Staff Pattern and Pay Structure) Act, 1994, prevented the appointment of the badminton player as any recruitment in public service should only be through the AP Public Service Commission, selection committee or employment exchange.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR TO HOST 14TH GST COUNCIL MEET IN SRINAGAR



Jammu and Kashmir is set to claim its place in India's economic history with the 14th meeting of the goods and services tax (GST) Council starting here on Thursday. The headlines of the local newspapers say it all, etching a new narrative from what is normally featured in local and national media on Kashmir. "Crucial GST meet to begin today" said the lead of Greater Kashmir, while The Tribune's Srinagar edition carried the story as the third lead on the front page with the headline, "Countdown begins for GST rate bracket".

PAYTM GET FINAL NOD TO LAUNCH PAYTM PAYMENTS BANK



Digital payment and commerce company Paytm has received the final nod from the Reserve Bank of India and is set to launch Paytm Payments Bank on May 23. According to a statement from One97 Communications Pvt. Ltd, which owns Paytm, the payment bank operations will start from May 23. A Paytm spokesperson said, "We are in process of launching Paytm Payments Bank on 23rd May. We recently received approval from the RBI for Renu Satti to be the CEO." Satti is currently the vice-president, business, at Paytm.

ACTRESS REEMA LAGOO PASSES AWAY DUE TO A CARDIAC ARREST



Veteran actor Reema Lagoo died early on Thursday morning after suffering from a cardiac arrest, she was 59. Her family confirmed that she died at 3.15 am on Thursday after suffering a heart attack at the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Mumbai. Her son-in-law Vinay Waikul confirmed her death and said, "She was fine but complained of chest pain around 1 pm.

INDIAN TEEN HAS DEVELOPED WORLD'S SMALLEST SATELLITE FOR NASA



When the US' National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) launches the world's smallest satellite KalamSat on June 21, it will be the first time ever that it would be piloting an experiment by an Indian student. Developed by Rifath Sharook, an 18-year-old boy, from Tamil Nadu's Pallapatti town, KalamSat weighs only 64 grammes.

CABINET MINISTER INAUGURATES 15TH NATIONAL MEETING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



Thawar Chand Gehlot, the Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment inaugurated the 15th National meeting of the State Commissioners for Persons with Disabilities (PWD) on 17 May 2017. The two-days meet aims to review the implementation of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of rights and Full Participation) Act-1995 and formulate a strategy for its more effective implementation.

CCEA APPROVES NEW COAL LINKAGE POLICY 2017 SHAKTI



The Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Wednesday approved a new auction-based coal linkage policy. Thermal capacities in the private sector to the tune of 30,000 megawatt — two-thirds of which are equipped with long-term power purchase agreements (PPAs) — will get the right to fuel produced by Coal India under the new policy, branded Shakti.

MUKESH AMBANI TOPS FORBES LIST OF 'GLOBAL GAME CHANGERS' FOR BRINGING INTERNET TO MASSES



Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani leads a Forbes list of 'Global Game Changers' who are transforming their industries and changing the lives of billions of people around the globe. Forbes' second annual Global Game Changers list includes 25 "intrepid business leaders" who are "unsatisfied with the status quo" and "transforming their industries and changing the lives of billions of people around the globe." Ambani, 60, comes at the top of the list for his game changing efforts to bring the internet to India's masses.