

## India changes 4 decade old definition of blindness



India has changed its over four-decade-old definition of blindness, bringing it in line with the WHO criteria, a step that would drastically bring down the number of people considered "blind" in the country.

- According to the new definition, a person who is unable to count fingers from a distance of three metres would be considered "blind" as against the

earlier stipulation of six metres, which was adopted in 1976.

- The aim of revising the definition is also to be able to generate data which can be compared with global estimates and achieve the WHO goal of reducing the blindness prevalence of India to 0.3 per cent of the total population by 2020.
- The notification in this regard has been issued by the Union Health Ministry.
- Going by the new definition, the population of blind people in India will reduce from 1.20 crore (as per National Blindness survey 2007 data) to 80 lakh.

## Indian Railways to Organise Two Day Global Technology Conference On 3rd & 4th May 2017 at New Delhi



In keeping with the unremitting agenda of the Indian Railways to augment the pace of its operational improvements through enhancing its pace of modernized technological adaptations, the Research

Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) Lucknow of the Indian Railways has decided to hold a two-day Global Technology Conference on 3rd & 4th May 2017 at New Delhi.

- The Technical Engineering Institutes of the Indian Railways viz. Institute of Rolling Stock Engineers (IRSE) and the Institution of Signal and Telecommunications Engineers (IRSTE) are the nodal bodies are collaborating in organizing this Conference. Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu, Hon<sup>ble</sup> Minister for Railways will inaugurate the Global Conference on 3rd May 2017.

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- With four lead thrust areas viz. Safety, Reliability, capacity enhancement and customer service, the Global Technological Conference envisages bringing in new perspectives and insights in planning for future rail transportation growth in the country and for assessing contemporary global technologies relevant to adoption on IR.
- The Conference shall feature technical sessions, technical presentations, and table-top exhibits, besides wide opportunities for several industries networking too.

### **One Crore MGNREGA assets geotagged**



Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has reached a new milestone today by geotagging one Crore assets and putting them in public domain.

- The scale of rural assets created under MGNREGA is very large. Since the inception of the programme in financial year 2006-07, about 2.82 Crore assets have been

created under the programme.

- On an average, about 30 Lakh Assets are created annually which includes a variety of works such as water harvesting structures, plantations, rural infrastructure, flood control measures, individual assets for sustainable livelihood, community infrastructure and so on.
- The process of geotagging is going on and all assets under MGNREGS will be geotagged.
- Special focus is being given to geotag Natural Resource Management works especially the water related works.
- GeoMGNREGA is a unique endeavor of the Ministry of Rural Development in association with National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), ISRO and National Informatics Centre.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Ministry of Rural Development with NRSC on 24th June 2016 for geo-tagging the assets created under MGNREGS in each gram panchayat.
- Strength of Space technology has been leveraged.

## Meeting of the Consultative Committee for Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas on “Digital Modes of Payment - Promotion of cashless transactions” held



Meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Members of Parliament for the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas was held in Srinagar on 21st April, 2017.

- Following Hon<sup>ble</sup> Members of Parliament participated in the meeting - Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma, Shri

Chandrakant Bhaurao Khaire, Sh. Harinder Singh Khalsa, Shri Janak Ram, Shri Murali Mohan Maganti, Shri Narasimham Thota, Shri Ninong Ering, Shri Satya Pal Singh, Shri Ramdas Chandrabhanji Tadas, Dr Ravindra Babu Pandula, Col. (Retd.) Sona Ram Choudhary, Shri Tamradhwaj Sahu, Shri Tariq Anwar, Shri Vikaram Usendi, Shri Ranjib Biswal and Shri Ravi Prakash Verma

- A presentation on the topic “Digital Modes of Payment - Promotion of cashless transactions” was made during the meeting.
- The Hon<sup>ble</sup> Members gave their valuable inputs and suggestions to further promote the digital modes of payment by way of cashless transactions.
- Chairing the meeting, Minister of State (I/C) for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan welcomed all the Members of the Consultative Committee.
- Shri Pradhan emphasized on the efforts made by the Ministry and the OMCs to promote digital payments at fuel stations.
- He informed that the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas took the lead role in digital payment promotion drive.
- A three pronged strategy was followed ie rapid expansion of digital payment infrastructure at fuel stations, massive awareness campaign and incentivizing consumers.
- He informed that 38,128 ROs are with POS and more than 86% of ROs have digital infrastructure today.

## Minister of State (IC) for Labour & Employment Presents NSCI Safety Awards – 2016 to 70 Organisations



The Union Government is committed to the safety, health and welfare of the working class, said the Minister of State (Independent charge) for Labour and Employment, Shri Bandaru Dattatreya.

- He was speaking at a function after presenting

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National Safety Council's „NSCI Safety Awards“ for the year 2016 in New Delhi today.

- Altogether 70 organisations have been awarded in four categories – Sarva Shreshtha Suraksha Puraskar, Shreshtha Suraksha Puraskar, Suraksha Puraskar and Prashansa Patra.
- Besides, 12 client organizations from Construction Sector have also been awarded. In Manufacturing Sector, IOCL- Digboi Refinery; National Fertilizers Ltd., Panipat and NPCIL, Kaiga Generating Station 3 & 4, Kaiga, Karnataka under Group A, Group B and Group C respectively; in Construction Sector, L&T Ltd., Rawatbhata, Chittorgarh for NPCIL Atomic Power Project, Rajasthan and Godrej & Boyce Mfg. Co. Ltd. and in MSME Sector, Electricals & Electronics, Thane, Maharashtra have won Sarva Shreshtha Suraksha Puraskar for the year 2016.
- Shri Bandaru Dattayeya said that as a part of legislative reforms of labour laws, the Centre has started a process of codification and amalgamation of 44 Central Labour Laws into four Codes in order to simplify them. They are: Code on Wages, Code on Industrial Relations, Code on Social security & Welfare, and Code on Safety & working conditions.
- He said that as a founder member of the International Labour Organization India has contributed immensely in formulation and implementation of labour standards. So far India has ratified 45 Conventions and 1 protocol of ILO.

## **Modi, Vijay Shekhar Sharma in Time's 100 Most Influential Persons**



Time Magazine on 20 April 2017 released the annual list of 100 most influential people of 2017.

- This year's list includes the names of Presidents and Prime Ministers, CEOs and celebrities for the power of their inventions, the scale of their ambitions, the genius of their solutions to problems that could not be solved before.
- This year, only two Indians to feature on the list- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Paytm founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma.
- Oscar winner Viola Davis, Grammy winner John Legend, actor Riz Ahmed, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and philanthropist Melinda Gates graced the five different covers of this year's list of 100 most influential people.
- US President Donald Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin and British Prime Minister Theresa May featured on the new list of 100 most influential people by the magazine.

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## Mongolia launches its first ever satellite



Mongolia launched its first satellite on Wednesday, part of its efforts to make use of new technology to diversify its resource-dependent economy.

- The 1,227-megahertz satellite, called Mongol Sat-1, will help landlocked Mongolia expand its television, telecoms and broadband services, according to a video posted on the official website of Mongolia's parliament .

- The satellite was launched in partnership with Asia Broadcast Satellite (ABS), a telecoms and broadcast provider for the region.
- No details about the cost of the satellite and the launch were provided, and government agencies could not be immediately reached for comment.
- "The project that began over 10 years ago has been finally accomplished," said Parliament Speaker Miyegombo Enkhbold in a meeting with ABS Chief Executive Officer Thomas Choi at the satellite's launch.
- Enkhbold said the satellite would also be used to help with space research, map making and with preparing for natural disasters.

## World Bank Approves \$ 375 Million Loan for Developing National Waterway-1



In a major boost towards realising country's ambitious inland waterways project, the World Bank has approved a \$375 million loan for capacity augmentation of National Waterway-1 (River Ganga) under Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP).

- The government is developing NW-1 (River Ganga) under JMVP from Haldia to Varanasi (1390 Km) with the technical and financial assistance of the World Bank at an estimated cost of Rs 5369 crore.
- The project would enable commercial navigation of vessels with capacity of 1500-2,000 DWT.
- Under the project, there are going to be three multi-modal terminals--one each at Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Sahibganj (Jharkhand), and Haldia (West Bengal), two inter-modal terminals- at Kalughat and Ghazipur, a new

Navigation Lock at Farakka, five Roll on-Roll off (Ro-Ro) terminals, development of Ferry services at Varanasi, Patna, Bhagalpur, Munger, Kolkata and Haldia and Vessel repair and maintenance facilities.

- While the contracts for construction of multi-modal terminals at Varanasi, Sahibganj, and a new Navigation Lock at Farakka have been awarded, and the work at respective sites has commenced, the construction of multi-modal terminal at Haldia will begin soon.
- The foundation stone for the multi-modal terminal at Sahibganj was laid by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 6th April, 2017.
- In August 2016, the Minister for Road Transport, Highways & Shipping Shri Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone for multi-modal terminal at Varanasi.

