

President of India addresses first convocation of the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad



The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee addressed the first convocation of the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad in Hyderabad today (April 26, 2017).

- Speaking on the occasion, the President said on the august occasion of the first convocation of the English and Foreign Languages University, as we celebrate the impressive achievements of this University, he wanted to share with them some enduring reflections that ought to guide us in advancing our vision of education.
- He stated that to his mind, knowledge must pave the path of life; and living must essentially encompass pursue the path of learning. From times immemorial the continent of Asia, and South East Asia in particular, opened up novel paths of learning.
- Wherever the Buddha traversed - seeds of knowledge sprouted and flourished. Nalanda, after Takshashila, held the beacon of light very high for over a millennium across lands and seas and welcomed drifting seekers of knowledge and provided them a lasting resting place.
- The President said that today sustaining and reinvigorating higher education, in India as well as in other parts of the world, has become a major challenge, especially so in public institutions. Challenges exist for such institutions, both from outside and inside.

NCST SEEKS Information on Fake ST Certificate



National Commission for Schedule Tribes (NCST) has asked Uttar Pradesh Government to furnish information on fake certificates of Gond tribal community.

- The Secretary, NCST in his letter to Chief Secretary, UP has said that it has been brought to the notice of the Commission that many persons from Nayak Brahman and Brahman Ojha community in Gorakhpur, Devaria, Maharajganj, Basti, Aajamgarh, Mau and Balia districts have obtained fake certificates of Gond tribal community to get Govt Jobs.
- The Chief Secretary, UP has been asked to furnish the information of total population of ST community and percentage along with population and percentage of Gond community in the State.
- He has also been asked to furnish the details of the persons from Nayak Brahman and Brahman Ojha community who have been issued the certificates of Gond tribal community.

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- The Commission has also asked that whether any civil or criminal action been taken against persons having fake certificates of Gond tribal community.
- The Commission has taken the cognizance of the issue on the representation from an NGO.

Over Rs.one lakh cr investment approved for housing of urban poor



Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation has sanctioned 1,00,537 more houses for urban poor under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) with an investment of Rs.4,200 cr taking the total investment so far approved to Rs.1,00,466 cr.

- This is 307% more than the investment approved of Rs.32,713 cr during 2004-14 for affordable housing in urban areas.
- With the latest sanctions, the Ministry has so far approved construction of 18,75,389 houses for Economically Weaker Sections under PMAY(Urban) in 2,151 cities and towns in 34 States/UTs as against 13.80 lakh houses sanctioned during 2004-15 with an approved investment of Rs.32,009 cr.
- The total investment approved so far includes central assistance of Rs.29,409 cr, assistance from State Governments and beneficiary contribution.
- In the latest sanctions, Madhya Pradesh got 57,131 houses, Tamil Nadu-24,576, Manipur-6,231, Chattisgarh-4,898, Gujarat-4,261, Assam-2,389, Kerala-643, Jharkhand-331 and Daman & Diu-77.
- With total houses sanctioned of 2,66,842, Madhya Pradesh has emerged the leader for the first time in approvals under PMAY(Urban) with a total investment of Rs.18,283 cr.
- Tamil Nadu is second with 2,52,532 houses with a total project cost of Rs.9,112 cr.

Shri Narendra Modi will Flag-off First UDAN Flight under RCS



The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will flag off the first UDAN flight under RCS on Shimla-Delhi sector on 27th April, 2017.

- Simultaneously, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will also flag off the inaugural UDAN flights on Kadapa – Hyderabad and Nanded-Hyderabad sectors.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation is committed to providing air connectivity to currently underserved and unserved airports. To make air travel accessible to citizens in regionally important cities, the Ministry launched „Ude Deshka Aam Naagrik“ (UDAN) Regional Connectivity Scheme in October, 2016.
- The UDAN Scheme was developed through extensive consideration of various issues and consultations with stakeholders.

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- This is a first-of-its-kind scheme globally to stimulate regional connectivity through a market-based mechanism.
- The UDAN Scheme is a key component of the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) which was released by the Ministry of Civil Aviation on 15th June, 2016.
- The AAI followed a transparent bidding process by inviting interested bidders and airline operators to submit their Initial Proposals under the provisions of Regional Connectivity Scheme and subsequently inviting counter proposals against such Initial Proposals.
- The routes and networks are awarded to bidders who submitted valid proposals and quoted the lowest viability gap funding (VGF) from the government for such routes and networks.

Orientation programme for establishment of Spice Farmers Producer Companies in Arunachal Pradesh

Commerce and Industry Minister Smt. Nirmla Sitharaman, inaugurated the orientation programme for establishment of Spice Farmers Producer Companies (SFPCs) and a buyer-seller meet organized by Spices Board in Itanagar today to



highlight the promotion of spices and herbs being grown in the hill State of Arunachal Pradesh and integrate the farmers of the State with markets in India and abroad. • Shri Kiren Rijju, Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Wangki Lowang, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Trade & Commerce and Shri Tamiyo Taga, Minister of Power, Industries, Textiles & Handicraft, Government of Arunachal Pradesh also participated in the programme.

- “As part of Government of India Look East to Act East policy, North East region is given priority and actions are being initiated in the region for development.
- There is scope for export of spices like large cardamom, ginger, turmeric etc., which area produced naturally organic in Arunachal Pradesh.
- In order to aggregate the farmers’ produce, Spice Farmers Producer companies shall be formed” said Smt. Sitharaman. She further added that Spices Board, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC), Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDONER), North Eastern Council (NEC) and Government of Arunachal Pradesh are to work together for materializing the establishment of SFPCs.
- The first SFPC in the country will be established in the State of Arunachal Pradesh.

Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar appointed as DG, CRPF; Shri RK Pachnanda to be next DG, ITBP



The Government has appointed Shri Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar, IPS (UP:1983), Director General, Narcotics Control Bureau to the post of Director General, Central Reserve Police Force, from the date of joining the post and up to December 31, 2019 i.e. the date of his superannuation or till

further orders, whichever is earlier.

- The Government has also appointed Shri R. K. Pachnanda, IPS (WB:1983), Director General, National Disaster Response Force to the post of Director General, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, vice Shri Krishna Choudhary, IPS (BH:1979), DG, ITBP due to retire on superannuation on June 30, 2017, from the date of joining the post and up to October 31, 2018 or till further orders, whichever is earlier.

Union Home Minister calls on the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka



The Union Home Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh called on the Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe here today.

- In his meeting with the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, the Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh welcomed the Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe and emphasised the close political ties shared between the two countries.
- Both the leaders expressed concern over the growing threat from the terrorism and agreed that there should be continuous dialogue between the security organisations of the two countries, to thwart any attempt by the terror outfits to destabilise the stability and peace in the region.
- The issues concerning the fishermen who inadvertently cross the International Maritime Boundary Line were also discussed and it was felt that the same should be resolved at the earliest with no more loss of lives.

China's first home-built aircraft carrier hit water



China launched its first domestically built aircraft carrier on 26 April 2017, transferring the ship from a dry dock into open water in Dalian, a port city in China's Liaoning Province.

APPOINTMENTS

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- The launch ceremony was held at 9 am in the morning, three days after the 68th anniversary of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy that was on 23 April 2017.
- The launch ceremony was chaired by Fan Changlong, the Vice-Chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission.
- The carrier, temporarily named Type 001A, is China's second aircraft carrier after the Liaoning, former Soviet Union made carrier that was refurbished extensively before being commissioned to the PLA Navy in 2012.
- It is slightly larger than the Liaoning.
- While its length is 315 m, its width is 75 m and it has a cruising speed of about 31 knots and a displacement of 70,000 tonnes.