

Afghan president inaugurates first air corridor with India, bypassing Pakistan



President Ashraf Ghani has inaugurated the first Afghanistan-India air corridor during a ceremony at the Kabul international airport – a direct route that bypasses Pakistan and is meant to improve commerce.

- Ghani, who thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the air corridor, said the aim of the route is to create more opportunities and make Afghanistan an exporter country. “India is a big market for Afghan goods,” he said.
- The president’s adviser, Sediqullah Mujadedi, said Afghan agricultural products will for the first time head to India on cargo planes. Mujadedi said the first India-bound flight on Monday included 60 tons of medicinal plants and a second flight will carry 40 tons of dry fruits from the southern Kandahar province.
- Afghanistan is a mountainous landlocked country and all imports and exports depend on neighbouring countries. Even before relations between Kabul and Islamabad became strained over accusations of harbouring militants, Pakistan has stymied Afghanistan’s efforts to trade with India.

Australia announces online visa applications for Indians from 1 July



The Australian High Commission and Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection announced on 16 June 2017 that from 1 July 2017, all Indian nationals will be able to apply for visitor visa online.

- Speaking on the development, Australia’s Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Alex Hawke, said that the online application option would make applying for the country’s visitor visa easier for Indians and thus enhance their overall experience.
- According to an official statement by the Australian government, there has been a significant increase in demand for Australian visas in India with the rising popularity of Australia as a holiday destination.

India becomes 71st country to ratify UN TIR Convention



India has become the 71st country to ratify the United Nations International Convention on Road Transports (TIR) that will help boost trade and regional integration across South Asia and beyond, fast-tracking the region’s potential to become a strategic trade hub.

- TIR is the global standard for goods customs transit managed and

INTERNATIONAL
NEWS

INTERNATIONAL
NEWS

NATIONAL
NEWS

- developed by IRU, International Road Transport Union.
- Speaking on India's acceptance of the body, IRU Secretary General Umberto de Pretto said that he is delighted to welcome India into the TIR family of nations and it is a significant step in harmonising standards and boosting transport, trade and development across South Asia.
- The accession to the TIR Convention is part of India's multi-modal transport strategy that aims to integrate the economy with global and regional production networks through better connectivity.
- The last country to ratify the convention before India was China, which did so on 6 July 2016.

Aadhaar mandatory for opening bank account, transactions



In a fresh development, Government has made Aadhaar mandatory for opening a bank account.

- It has also made it mandatory for financial transactions of Rs 50,000 and above.
- All the existing account holders have been asked to submit Aadhaar to banks by December 31, 2017, failing which accounts will become invalid.
- It has come a week after the Supreme Court upheld the government's decision to link Aadhaar to one's PAN card but refused to make it compulsory for those who don't have an Aadhaar card or who have not yet applied for one, till a Constitutional Bench decides on the privacy question pending before it.
- The tax provision by the Centre, said that those who file income tax returns without an Aadhaar-linked PAN card would have their PAN declared invalid.

100 years of Sabarmati Ashram: Gandhi Darshan

tourist train flagged off



It was more aastha (spiritual immersion) than an acquaintance with Gandhian ethics and values that spurred several of the 623 people to take the inaugural journey of the „Aastha Special Tourist Train (Gandhi Darshan)“ on Saturday morning from Sabarmati station here.

- Besides places related to Mahatma Gandhi's freedom struggle like Sevagram Ashram (Wardha), Champaran Satyagraha Memorial at Bettiah and Motihari, the train will connect cities such as Varanasi, Gaya and Allahabad popular pilgrimage destinations.
- The special train was flagged off by Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani in the morning with Rail Minister Suresh Prabhu, who joined in via video conferencing from Bandra.

**NATIONAL
NEWS**

**NATIONAL
NEWS**

- Ahmedabad based businessman Ramesh Dhanwani (58), said that his keenness to visit the places on the itinerary made him book his tickets.
- “I am particularly interested in visiting places like Sangam in Allahabad and Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi and Buddhist temples in Bodhgaya,” he said.

Lockheed signs pact with Tata to make F-16 planes in India



Weeks ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s first meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump, U.S. aircraft major Lockheed Martin and Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) signed an agreement to make the F-16 Block 70 fighter aircraft in India to meet the IAF’s single-engine jet requirement.

- The IAF is about to initiate the process for selection of a single-engine fighter aircraft to replace the Russian MiGs under the Strategic Partnership model of the Defence Procurement Procedure.
- The announcement from Paris Air Show, where among those present was Ratan Tata, came ahead of Mr. Modi’s meeting with Trump later this month.
- “This agreement builds on the already established joint venture between Lockheed Martin and Tata and underscores the relationship and commitment between the two companies,” said N. Chandrasekaran, chairman of Tata Sons.
- The Strategic Partnership model has four segments submarines, single-engine fighter aircraft, helicopters and armoured carriers/main battle tanks and specifically intends to open up defence manufacturing to the private sector.
- The deal for 100- plus fighter aircraft is estimated to be worth over Rs. 60,000 crore.
- The contenders for the deal are F-16 of Lockheed Martin and Gripen of SAAB. The likely Indian private sector players in the race are TASL and Mahindra group, both of which have a footprint in the aerospace sector.

Dalit Face of NDA government as Presidential candidate



Amit Shah in New Delhi after BJP Parliamentary Board meeting, where the name for the leader for the upcoming Presidential election was discussed.

- Amit Shah said that Kovind has worked hard for the Dalits and backwards section of society.
- Kovind, a Dalit leader and a politician from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is the present Governor of Bihar.
- He was appointed as the governor of the state by President Pranab Mukherjee on 8 August 2015.

**NATIONAL
NEWS**

**NATIONAL
NEWS**

- Born on 1 October 1945, Kovind was elected to Rajya Sabha from the state of Uttar Pradesh during the two terms of 1994-2000 and 2000-2006.

Kidambi Srikanth beats Kazumasa Sakai to win Indonesia Open Super Series Premier title



Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth on 18 June 2017 clinched the Indonesia Open Men's Singles trophy with a straight-game victory over Japanese qualifier Kazumasa Sakai in the final.

- The 2017 Indonesia Open Super Series Premier title is Srikanth's third Super Series title.
- The 2017 Indonesia Super Series Premier was the fifth Super Series tournament of the 2017 BWF Super Series.
 - The tournament was held in Jakarta, Indonesia and has a total purse of \$1000000.
- The Women's Singles title of the tournament was won by Japan's Sayaka Sato.
- Kidambi Srikanth beats Kazumasa Sakai to win Indonesia Open Super Series Premier title.

SPORTS

