

Digital transactions rose 23% in March



Digital transactions increased by about 23 times in March to nearly 64 lakh, with total value of Rs 2,425 crore, from last November when demonetisation took effect.

- —Volume of all digital transactions increased by about 23 times with 63,80,000 digital transactions for a value of Rs2,425 crore in March 2017, compared to 2,80,000 digital transactions worth Rs101 crore till November 2016, Niti Aayog said in a statement.
- Aadhaar Enabled Payments have increased from 2.5 crore in November 2016 to over 5 crore in March 2017, it said.
- After scrapping of Rs500 and Rs1,000 notes on November 8, 2016, the government had launched two schemes to incentivise digital payments—Lucky Grahak Yojana and DigiDhan Vyapar Yojana on 25 December.
- The statement also said Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) transactions have also increased from 3.6 crore to 6.7 crore during the same period.
- In order to achieve the target of 2,500 crore digital transactions in the current financial year, the Prime Minister today announced about 75 townships spread all over India as ‘less-cash townships’, it said.

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PM Modi inaugurates new units in Koradi thermal power station in Nagpur



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 14 April 2017 dedicated various units of the thermal power plants at Koradi, Chandrapur and Parli of Maharashtra to the nation.

- The total capacity of these plants is 3230 Mega Watts.
- PM Modi inaugurates new units in Koradi thermal power station
- The dedicated power plants include
- Three super-critical units 660 MW each at Koradi
- Two of 500 MW each at Chandrapur
- One of 250 MW at Parli
- The power station was inaugurated during Modi's day-long visit to Nagpur.
- Immediately after arrival at airport, he proceeded to sacred Deekshabhoomi and paid rich tributes to the Architect of Indian Constitution Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar at the Central Memorial on his birth anniversary.
- Later, he dedicated the thermal power plants to the nation.

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Noise pollution exceeds permissible limit in 7 Indian cities

The average level of noise pollution generally exceeds the permissible limits in seven cities of the country, including Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai.



- The information was made available by Environment Minister Anil Madhav Dave on Monday in a written reply in Rajya Sabha.
- He said the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with its counterparts in every state carries out monitoring of noise pollution in seven metropolitan cities – Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, Lucknow and Hyderabad through a network of 70 noise-monitoring stations under National Ambient Noise Monitoring Programme (NANMP).
- The noise standards for motor vehicles, air conditioners, refrigerators, gensets and certain types of construction equipment are prescribed in the Schedules of the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, Dave said.
- The minister said pressure horns (sirens and multi-tone horns) are banned except for police van, ambulance and fire brigades under provisions of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.

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Prakash Jvadekar to Launch Own Portal and Mobile App of RUSA



The Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), under the aegis of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, is going to launch its own portal and mobile app tomorrow (the April 17, 2017) by Union HRD Minister Shri. Prakash Jvadekar here in New Delhi.

- The portal is a one-stop for States' Higher Education Plans, decision of the States' Higher Education Councils and details of the resources under this scheme. Also, the gallery is a rich repository of the projects initiated under RUSA.
- Present on the occasion will be 12 State Education Ministers, Secretaries, RUSA Nodal officers, apart from those who will be present for the launch here; others will witness the launch through digital telecast.
- Seventeen RUSA projects will also be launched tomorrow digitally. They include a cluster university in Jammu and Kashmir, micro ATM facility at the RUSA centre for intelligent systems in Pune University, solar power facility in Shree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, Kerala; language laboratories in Ghatsila College, Jharkhand, among others.

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Mahavir Phogat awarded FICCI's gender parity award



Mahavir Singh Phogat, a real life hero and father of wrestler Geeta Phogat, along with Apollo Hospital founder Prathap C Reddy, bagged Ficci's gender parity award for their contribution in harnessing the talents of their daughters.

- Phogat was accompanied by his Commonwealth Games gold medal winner daughter Geeta at the event that marked the launch of the country's first gender parity index by Ficci's Ladies Organisation (FLO), which will gauge how women fare in a male dominated corporate sector of India.
- Industry captains lauded Phogat for empowering his daughters, which was replicated in Bollywood's block-buster film Dangal, starring Aamir Khan.
- Leading film director Farha Khan, fashion designer Anita Dongre, HDFC managing director Renu Sud Karnad and Hindustan Times group chairperson Shobhana Bhartia also got the Ficci Ladies Organisation ICON awards.
- Giving away the awards, finance minister Arun Jaitley said India must move towards greater gender parity.
- Amid a challenging global economic scenario, Jaitley said India is the only country which is willing to reform.
- Vinita Bimbhet, president of FLO, said, —Gender equality is intrinsically linked to sustainable development.
- The overall objective of gender equality is a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, rights and obligations in all spheres of life. ||

AWARDS

Two billion people drinking contaminated water: WHO



The World Health Organization (WHO) on 13 April 2017 published a report, Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) 2017, that states that nearly two billion people currently use contaminated water.

- The revelation was by made in the new report published by WHO on behalf of UN-Water.
- The report states that countries will not meet global aspirations of universal access to safe drinking-water and sanitation unless steps are taken to use financial resources more efficiently.
- Contaminated drinking-water is estimated to cause more than 500000 diarrhoeal deaths each year.
- Contaminated water is also a major factor in several neglected tropical

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diseases, including intestinal worms, schistosomiasis and trachoma.

India cancels maritime talks with Pak



India has called off maritime security dialogue with Pakistan, scheduled for early next week, amid tensions over death sentence being awarded to Kulbhushan Jadhav.

- A delegation led by Pakistan's Maritime Security Agency (MSA) was to visit New Delhi April 16-19 to discuss issues related to fishermen and search and rescue operations.
- News agency Press Trust of India quoted its sources in the Coast Guard as saying the Ministry of Defence has not given clearance for the delegation's visit.
- The development comes amid tension between the two countries over Mr Jadhav, a former Indian naval officer, being awarded death sentence by a Pakistani military court.
- The death sentence to Mr Jadhav, 46, was confirmed by army chief General Bajwa after the Field General Court Martial found him guilty of "espionage and sabotage activities" in Pakistan.
- Pakistan claims its security forces had arrested Mr Jadhav from the restive Balochistan province on March 3 last year after he reportedly entered from Iran. It also claimed that he was "a serving officer in the Indian Navy." .
- The Pakistan Army had also released a "confessional video" of Mr Jadhav after his arrest. However, India denied Pakistan's contention and maintained that Mr Jadhav was kidnapped by the Pakistan authorities.

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