Cabinet approves extension to 15th Finance Commission for one year

NATIONAL NEWS

Cabinet approves extension to 15th Finance Commission for one year

- The union cabinet extended to the term of the Fifteenth Finance Commission by a year, asking it to submit an interim report for fiscal year 2020-21 and a full report for fiscal years 2021-22 to 2025-26—a decision apparently taken to factor in Jammu and Kashmir's new status.
- The extension of the term will enable the Commission to examine various comparable estimates for financial projections in view of reforms and the new realities to finalize its recommendations for the period 2020-2026.

SUMMIT/CONFERENCE

Gadkari addresses NuGen Mobility Summit 2019

- Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari has called upon the auto industry to think about future technologies as skilled man-power, cheap labour and technology are available in the auto sector.
- The Minister was speaking at the NuGen Mobility Summit 2019 at International Centre for Automotive Technology Centre, ICAT in Gurugram.
- The three-day Summit is being attended by experts from the automotive industry, system and technology companies, experts in technology domains, researchers, policymakers, test houses and agencies, associations and academia from all around the world.

47th All India Police Science Congress begins in Lucknow today

- In Uttar Pradesh, the 47th All India Police Science Congress (AIPSC) begins in Lucknow today.
- The two-day event will be inaugurated by Puducherry Lieutenant Governor and retired IPS officer Kiran Bedi.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah will be the chief guest at the valedictory function tomorrow evening.
- That Uttar Pradesh Police in association with the Home Ministry and the Bureau of Police Research and Development is organising the event at the police headquarters in Lucknow.

STATE NEWS

Assam govt imposes ban on tobacco products

- The Assam government has prohibited manufacture and sale of gutkha, pan masala or any others chewing material in the state.
- An order issued by the Food Safety Commissioner said manufacture, storage, sale, display and transportation of any products containing tobacco or nicotine are banned in the state for one

year.

INSURANCE

IRDAI slaps Rs 2-cr fine on India Infoline Insurance for violating norms

- Insurance sector regulator IRDAI has slapped a penalty of over Rs 2 crore on India Infoline Insurance Brokers for violating various norms, including those related to office infrastructure.
- The regulator has penalised the broker with a fine of Rs 1 crore each for violating norms on related party transactions and not having its own office infrastructure.
- A fine of Rs 4 lakh has also been imposed for using unqualified persons for solicitation of business.

BANKING

Credit Access Grameen to acquire Madura Micro Finance for Rs 876 crore

- Microfinance institution Credit Access Grameen (CAGL) that will acquire 100 per cent stake in Chennai-based Madura Micro Finance (MMFL) in a two-step process for Rs 876 crore.
- In the first leg, Bengaluru-headquartered CAGL will acquire up to 76.2 per cent stake for Rs 666.4 crore in MMFL from its existing shareholders for cash and in the second stage, MMFL shall be merged into CAGL through a scheme of arrangement.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UAE and Saudi Arabia sign four memorandums of understanding

- The UAE and Saudi Arabia signed four memorandums of understanding (MoUs) during the second meeting of the Saudi-Emirati Coordination Council in Abu Dhabi.
- The meeting, chaired by Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, and Prince Mohammed Bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, also reviewed seven strategic initiatives.
- The two leaders are also expected to discuss regional issues and issues of mutual interest.

Saudi Arabia elected to UNESCO's World Heritage Committee

- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, member state of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was elected to the World Heritage Committee for the first time, days after winning the membership in the UNESCO Executive Board.
- Prince Badr bin Abdullah bin Farhan, Minister of Culture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, who is also Chairman of the National Committee for Education, Science and Culture, that the Kingdom's election to the World Heritage Committee shows the international community's confidence in the Kingdom's standing and supportive role for preserving the world heritage.

Sweden King, Queen to undertake 6-day visit to India

- Sweden King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will undertake a six-day visit to India, the Ministry of External Affairs.
- The King will have meetings with President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on bilateral and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

- Apart from Delhi, the royal couple is scheduled to visit Mumbai and Uttarakhand. This will be King Gustaf's third visit to India.
- The King will lead a high-level business delegation for engagements with Indian counterparts. The ties between India and Sweden have been on an upward trajectory in the last few years. The bilateral trade volume was 3.37 billion US dollars in 2018.

APPOINTMENT

Veteran George Bailey Appointed Australia National Selector

- Veteran batsman George Bailey has been appointed as the new Australia national selector and will join the panel in February next year.
- Bailey will succeed Greg Chappell in the National Selection Panel as the third selector that also has Cricket Australia chairman Trevor Hohns and coach Justin Langer.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ISRO successfully launches India's latest earth observation satellite Cartosat-3

- Indian Space Research Organisation, ISRO today successfully launched the country's latest earth observation satellite Cartosat-3 in a copybook style mission.
- The workhorse rocket PSLV-C47 injected it in a polar orbit, along with 13 nano-satellites of a US customer organization.
- The 13 nano-satellites were later ed into their intended orbits one after the other.
- Immediately after the separation of Cartosat-3 from the rocket, its solar arrays were deployed automatically and the ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network at Bengaluru assumed control of it.

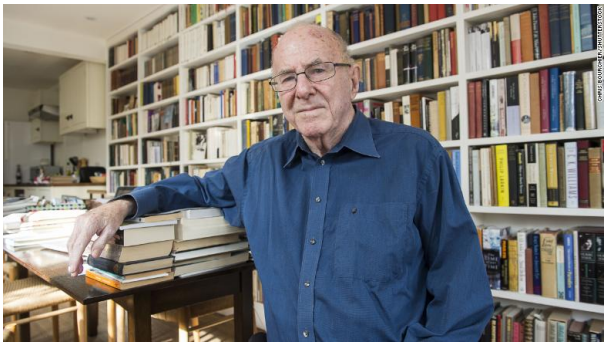
ENVIRONMENT

New snake species found in Arunachal

- Researchers have discovered a new species of non-venomous burrowing snake in Arunachal Pradesh, named **Trachischium apteii.**
- It was found under fallen logs inside a thickly forested area of the Tally Valley Wildlife Sanctuary near the town of Ziro in Arunachal Pradesh during a field expedition by researchers in July 2019.
- Trachischium apteii was named so to honour the contribution of **Deepak Apte, well-known marine biologist and Director of the BNHS**.
- Trachischium species are commonly called slender snakes, and are currently known by seven species that are distributed across the Himalayas, and the Indo-Burma and Indo-China regions.

OBITUARY

Clive James, Australian author, poet and broadcaster, dead at 80



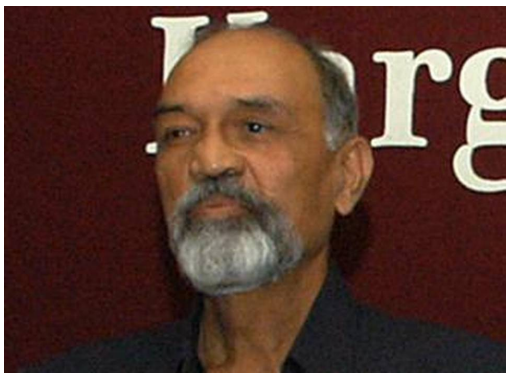
- Clive James, the prolific Australian-born writer, broadcaster and poet, whose sardonic works were celebrated by audiences in Britain and around the world, has died aged 80.
- James had been battling illnesses including leukemia for a number of years.

Barbara Hillary, the first black woman to make it to both the North and South poles, dies



- Barbara Hillary, the first black woman to reach the North and South poles, died. She was 88.
- At age 75, the trailblazer became the first African American woman to make it to the North Pole. She reached the South Pole four years later, when she was 79.

Former Navy Chief Admiral Sushil Kumar dead



- Former Navy Chief Admiral Sushil Kumar passed away at the Army's Research and Referral Hospital in Delhi. He was 79. Admiral Kumar was the 16th Chief of Naval Staff and oversaw Naval operations during the Kargil conflict of 1999.
- He recently authored a book, A Prime Minister to Remember- Memories of a Military Chief, on Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, in which he credited Mr. Vajpayee for turning a "strategic tactical loss into a massive victory".

SPORTS

Bhubaneswar, Rourkela to host 2023 Men's Hockey World Cup

- The 2023 Men's Hockey World Cup will be held in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced.
- India will host the Men's Hockey World Cup for the second consecutive time after the country was picked to stage the game's showpiece event in 2023 by the International Hockey Federation (FIH).
- The tournament will be held from January 13 to 29.

Abhishek-Jyothi combine claims compound mixed pair gold at Asian Archery C'ships

- Abhishek Verma and Jyothi Surekha Vennam claimed the gold in compound mixed pair event at the 21st Asian Archery Championships, which ended in Bangkok.
- The Indians defeated Chinese Taipei opponents Yi-Hsuan Chen and Chieh-Luh Chen 158-151 in the final clash. India picked up seven medals including one gold, two silver and four bronze medals in the event.

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