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NATIONAL NEWS

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- A three-day National Tribal Dance Festival will be held in Chhattisgarh's capital Raipur from December 27 to 29, wherein international folk artists from 23 states and six other countries are expected to take part and portray their respective tribal folk culture.
- On the occasion, artists from various states and the countries will march past in their traditional attires.
- Nearly 1,400 artists belonging to 151 art troupes from 23 states and guest artists from six countries including Sri Lanka, Belarus, Uganda and Bangladesh will participate in the three-day programme.

Puducherry unveils a start-up policy

- Puducherry Industries Minister Shajahan unveiled a startup policy of the Industries Department which has laid emphasis on providing financial grant, monthly stipend, fiscal incentives to interested entrepreneurs and bring new business ventures to the Union Territory.
- The policy aims to create a corpus fund of Rs 10 crore to support setting up of startup incubators and to develop co-working spaces.
- The department also plans to provide a grant of Rs 3 lakh to the projects recommended by incubators established by the government or private sector as startup grant.
- The committee of experts constituted under the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Committee will approve the projects and monitor their progress.

COMMITTEE

Defence Minister chairs Parliament's meeting of Consultative Committee

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh chaired a meeting of the Consultative Committee of Parliament for the Ministry of Defence in New Delhi.
- The subject of the meeting was Border Roads Organisation, BRO. Director General BRO Lt Gen Harpal Singh gave a detailed presentation on the working of the organisation, especially on maintaining operational road infrastructure for the armed forces in border areas.
- Defence Minister lauded the efforts of BRO in building border infrastructure and contributing to the improvement of lives of people residing in the border areas.

3 day "International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems" for BIMSTEC countries begins in New Delhi

- The three day 'International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems' for BIMSTEC countries organized by the Department of Agricultural Research & Education, Ministry of

Agriculture & Farmer's Welfare and Indian Council of Agricultural Research began in New Delhi.

- Participants from all the Seven BIMSTEC Countries viz. Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and BIMSTEC Secretariat is attending the Seminar.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India, Indonesia resolve to strengthen cooperation in several areas

- India and Indonesia resolved to strengthen cooperation in areas of defence and security, connectivity and trade during talks between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Indonesian counterpart Retno Marsudi in New Delhi.
- The two sides reviewed the entire gamut of ties at the 6th India-Indonesia Joint Commission Meeting (JCM).
- During the meeting, both sides reiterated their commitment to strengthen ties in the areas including people-to-people exchanges.
- As key partners in the Indo-Pacific, both sides called for greater synergy in the region, guided by the shared vision on maritime cooperation.

PM Modi reiterates India's commitment for strong, democratic and peaceful Maldives

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reiterated India's commitment to partner the Government of the Maldives for a strong, democratic, prosperous and peaceful Maldives.
- The Maldivian Foreign Minister thanked Mr Modi for his vision and strong leadership in driving the India-Maldives relationship.
- The 6th India-Maldives Joint Commission Meeting, which was held in New Delhi. Three MoUs were signed and exchanged after the meeting.

ECONOMIC

Moody's cuts India's GDP growth forecast to 5.6% for 2019

- Moody's Investors Service has lowered its 2019 GDP growth forecast for India to 5.6 per cent as slow employment growth weighs on consumption.
- It expects economic growth to pick up in 2020 and 2021 to 6.6 per cent and 6.7 per cent respectively, but sees the pace of growth remaining lower than past.

Economic census launched in national capital

- The Seventh Economic Census was launched in the National Capital Territory of Delhi.
- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has tied up with Common Service Centre to carry out the economic census.
- The first time the entire census is being conducted on a digital platform by the use of an application which will ensure high accuracy and data security.
- Delhi is the 26th State where the survey has been launched. The process is already on in 20 States and five Union Territories.

RELATED TO PERSON

Ravi Mittal appointed I&B Secretary

- Ravi Mittal will be the new Information and Broadcasting Secretary.
- Mr Mittal, who belongs to 1986 batch of Bihar Cadre of Indian Administrative Service, will replace Mr Amit Khare who has been appointed as the new secretary of the Department of Higher Education.
- Mr Mittal is currently working as the Special Secretary in the Department of Financial Services in the Ministry of Finance.

British PM Boris Jhonson wins General Elections in UK

- British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has won the historic UK General Election as his Conservative Party crossed the magic number of 326 required for a majority in the Parliament.
- Johnson hailed the projected win for his Conservative Party as a powerful new mandate to move forward with his deal to leave European Union, the 28-member economic bloc.
- The latest projections put the Johnson-led Conservatives at around 363, but the party can safely celebrate its victory as it comfortably crossed over the half-way finish line for the 650-member House of Commons.

AWARD

Space startup with AI solution to stubble burning wins 'Space Oscar'

- A Gurgaon-based startup working in utilizing satellite data to solve environmental problems has won an international prize for its AI (artificial intelligence)- based tool to measure and monitor farm fires and stubble burning across India.
- Millions of tonnes of crop residue are burnt on farms to clear them for new crops every winter in North India, releasing massive amounts of greenhouse gas emissions which cause peak in pollution levels in Delhi and elsewhere.
- Stubble burning is also a major problem in other parts of the country. Efforts to utilize crop waste for power generation and other applications are hampered due to lack of data about availability and quality the waste.

SPORTS

FIH unveils new world ranking system for 2020

- The International Hockey Federation (FIH) unveiled a new world ranking system for 2020 in Lausanne, Switzerland.
- It will come into effect from the first of next month. For a better reflection of current performances, the new ranking will be match-based instead of tournament-based calculation.
- The new world ranking system has been launched after 12 months of painstaking research, analysis and testing.
- It cited numerous restrictions of the tournament-based system for the change.
- The new model removes much of the subjectivity surrounding continental weighing by creating a system which is fair to all.



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