

**November 14<sup>th</sup> news:**

**International:**

**Cooperation and Integrity discussed in ASEAN summit**

The 31st Summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and related meetings began in Manila on 13<sup>th</sup> November, with leaders of 10 member-nations and dialogue partners convening to discuss security, cooperation and regional integration.

The Philippines, Asean's rotating chair for 2017, set the theme of "Partnering for Change, Engaging the World", putting security and regional integrity high on the agenda

Terrorism and violent extremism endanger the peace, stability and security of our region because these threats know no boundaries, leaders said in summit

Asean countries and more than 10 dialogue partners, including international organisations such as the European Union (EU) and the UN, will discuss issues of common concern.

Leaders of 10 Asean countries and six of its dialogue partners, namely Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand, will meet for their first Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) leaders' meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November, the first such meeting after related negotiations started in 2012.

At the closing ceremony of the Asean summit and related summits on 14<sup>th</sup> November, Duterte will hand over the chairmanship of Asean to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore, the incoming chair for 2018.

Established in 1967, Asean, which groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

**Indian PM showcases reforms, seeks global investment**

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted India's growth story and his government's economic reforms at the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit in Manila on 13<sup>th</sup> November and portrayed the country as an attractive investment destination. He said the task of transforming India was moving at an unprecedented scale.

The PM committed to make India a global manufacturing hub and turn the country's youth job creators instead of job seekers. He exhorted the power-packed audience to invest in India, saying over 90 per cent of the Indian economy was open to foreign direct investment.

He said that processes to start companies in India and to secure clearances have been simplified. He mentioned that South and South-East Asia would be the growth engine of the world, and that India attaches greater importance to boosting economic ties with the ASEAN nations. Modi said cashless transactions in India have registered a 34 per cent growth since demonetisation.

He said that technology is being put in place to ensure transparency. Demonetisation as well as measures like the linking of Aadhaar numbers with bank accounts led to the formalisation of a big part of the Indian economy.

He said large sections of population in India did not have access to banking services, but the Jan Dhan Yojana changed that in a matter of months and transformed the lives of millions. He also said about 1,200 outdated laws have been deleted from the statute book.

The PM highlighted the implementation of GST and said a complex process has been successfully completed. He referred to India climbing 30 places in the World Bank's 'ease of doing business' ranking this year, the biggest jump by any country in a single year.

#### **National:**

##### **Cartoon Network Theme Park to Come up in Gujarat**

India's first Cartoon Network-branded theme park will come up in Gujarat. Turner International India, which owns the Cartoon Network brand, has entered into a brand partnership with Gujarat based real estate, entertainment, and hospitality group Rajgreen for the launch of a 61,000 square meter property Amaazia, in Surat. To be launched in the first quarter of 2019 on a budget of Rs 450 crore, the amusement park will be located at Surat, in Gujarat. Amaazia will be Cartoon Network's first brand association for an amusement park in India

##### **Haryana becomes first state in India to treat Hepatitis C patients with oral medicine**

Haryana has emerged as the first state in the country to treat Hepatitis-C patients through oral medicine. For the first time, the state government has included oral medicine in government hospitals. The medicine and treatment costs about Rs 28,000 to Rs 30,000 in the market, but the state government would provide this facility free of cost.

##### **Government to give proxy voting rights NRIs**

The government has decided to give proxy voting rights to over 25 million non-resident Indians (NRIs) spread across the world, Attorney general KK Venugopal told the Supreme Court.

The Election Commission of India had already recommended that the government take necessary steps to amend the law for NRI voters. It had prepared a report titled 'Exploring Feasibility of Alternative Options for Voting by Overseas Electors' and presented it to the court in October 2014.

#### **Bilateral**

##### **Australia-India-Japan-United States consultations on the Indo-Pacific**

Senior officials from Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade have met on 13<sup>th</sup> November with India's Ministry of External Affairs, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the United States'

Department of State to discuss a shared vision for increased prosperity and security in the Indo-Pacific region and to work together to ensure it remains free and open.

The officials examined ways to achieve common goals and address shared challenges in the region. This includes upholding the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific and respect for international law, freedom of navigation and overflight; increase connectivity; coordinate on efforts to address the challenges of countering terrorism and upholding maritime security in the Indo-Pacific.

Officials also agreed to work together to address threats to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the DPRK's nuclear and missile programs.

The participants committed to continuing quadrilateral discussions and deepening cooperation on the basis of shared values and principles.

### **Economy:**

#### **Union Minister Nitin Gadkari announced World Bank backed Rs.6,000 crore irrigation scheme**

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari announced World Bank-backed Rs.6,000 crore scheme to improve the irrigation facilities and water accessibility capacity in several states including Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Telangana.

Gadkari also announced Rs.25,000 crore-worth Daman Ganga-Pinjar inter-state river connectivity project, which is expected to resolve the domestic water supply demand of Mumbai.

### **Science and Technology:**

#### **Tejas aircraft capability to be enhanced**

In the face of the Air Force raising questions about the capability of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, the government is now aiming to install capability enhancements and speed up the rate of production. The production of Tejas Mk-1A will begin in 2019. Most of the 43 improvements have already been made and the tender process to install an Advanced Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar and Self-Protection Jammer is under way. A refuelling probe would also be added to increase range. While the design cannot be changed and endurance improved as it is powered by the GE-404 engine, the enhancements will increase the capability of the aircraft

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) was undertaking the enhancements and was in the process of setting up another assembly line at a cost of Rs 130 crore to increase production rate from the present eight to 16. The second line would be ready by 2019 when Mk-1A began production

### **Environment**

#### **Global carbon emissions will rise 2% in 2017**

After being flat for three years, global carbon emissions from human activities are slated to grow 2 per cent to 41 billion tonnes this year. This is mainly because of increased emissions from China, which is witnessing a spurt in industrial growth, a multinational team of researchers said on 13<sup>th</sup> November.

While carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuel and industry in China are expected to rise about 3.5 per cent, after about two years of economic slowdown, India's contribution to the atmospheric build-up would go up by nearly 2 per cent, the researchers have found.

In the US and EU, on the other hand, emissions came down by 0.4 per cent and 0.2 per cent respectively. They grew 1.9 per cent in the rest of world.

India's emissions are expected to grow at a relatively lesser pace than in the previous decade. While annual emissions from India grew 6 per cent in the previous decade, the increase this year is expected to be only 2 per cent, perhaps due to a slowdown in industrial activity following demonetisation.

The scientists published the report simultaneously in the journals *Nature Climate Change*, *Earth System Science Data Discussions* and *Environmental Research Letters*

The emissions were actually growing at a slower rate since 2010, and there was hardly any increase in the last three years, giving hopes that the warming could be contained to less than 2°C

The increase in emissions this year, however, may upset the calculations. "This would essentially mean that we need to have policies to lock in the gains we have had in the last few years

### **Varanasi Tops The List of Country's Most Polluted City**

A report by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) found that the air quality of holy city Varanasi is most polluted among the 42 cities monitored recently. Varanasi's Air Quality Index (AQI) was at an alarming 491, followed by Gurugram at 480, Delhi at 468, Lucknow at 462 and Kanpur at 461. Notably, pollution level is categorized as 'severe' when the AQI ranges between 401 and 500.

### **About National Air Quality Index**

1. Air Quality Index is a tool for effective communication of air quality status to people in terms, which are easy to understand. It transforms complex air quality data of various pollutants into a single number (index value), nomenclature and colour.
2. There are six AQI categories, namely Good, Satisfactory, Moderately polluted, Poor, Very Poor, and Severe. Each of these categories is decided based on ambient concentration values of air pollutants and their likely health impacts (known as health breakpoints). AQ sub-index and health breakpoints are evolved for eight pollutants (PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, CO, O<sub>3</sub>, NH<sub>3</sub>, and Pb) for which short-term (upto 24-hours) National Ambient Air Quality Standards are prescribed.