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Govt. Appoints New Envoys to China & Pakistan

- The government of India has appointed Gautam Bambawale the ambassador to China. On the other hand, Ajay Bisaria will be the next high commissioner to Pakistan.
- Bambawale has served as India's high commissioner to Pakistan while Ajay has served as India's ambassador to Poland
- Bambawale has served as joint secretary of East Asia division where he handled both China and Japan.
- He was one of the longest-serving joint secretaries there with his tenure lasting from 2009 to 2014.
- Bisaria had headed the Eurasia division from 2009 to 2014.

Chawngthu Second Woman in Mizoram Council of Ministers

- Lalawmpuii Chawngthu has become the second woman to be inducted into the Council of Ministers of Mizoram after a period of 30 years.
- Chawngkunga is the president of the Mizoram Pradesh Youth Congress Committee
- She was elected from Hrangturzo seat
- Lalhimpui Hmar was the first woman Minister of State in Mizoram in 1987.

About Mizoram

- Mizoram is a Northeast state of India
- Its capital is Aizawl.
- This state shares 722-kilometre border with Bangladesh and Myanmar

Balraj Joshi Appointed New NHPC chairman

- NHPC Ltd has roped in Balraj Joshi as its new chairman-cum-managing director (CMD) NHPC Ltd is India's hydropower power utility.
- He is appointed by Appointment Committee of the Cabinet.
- Joshi is currently serving as the technical director in NHPC.
- According to another notice, Cabinet Committee has appointed P. Alli Rani, who is at present director (finance) in Container Corporation of India Limited, as the CMD of Cotton Corporation of India (CCI)
- Joshi is appointed for two years while Rani is appointed for five years.

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About NHPC

- It stands for National Hydroelectric Power Corporation
- It is an Indian Hydropower generation company.
- It was incorporated in the year 1975
- NHPC is a **Mini Ratna Category-I** Enterprise of the Govt. of India

About CCI

- It was incorporated on July 31, 1970
- Its headquarters is located in Mumbai.
- It is a public sector agency responsible for equitable distribution of cotton
- It is engaged in diverse activities related to trade, procurement, and export of cotton

PV Sindhu Jumps to World No 2 in Latest Ranking

- On the latest Badminton World Federation rankings, PV Sindhu has jumped to number 2 from number 5.
It is her career's best ranking with 75664 points
- Chinese Taipei's Tai Tzu Ying is on the top
- Spain's Carolina Marin has secured the third place
- Sindhu Managed to secure the second position after winning the India Open Superseries
- It is notable that Saina Nehwal has also protected her place in top 10 names by claiming the 9th position.
- In the men's ranking India's Ajay Jayaram has secured the 20th rank while the list is topped by SON wan Ho of South Korea followed by Viktor Axelsen and Lin Dan for second and third position respectively.

'Newton' is India's official entry for Oscars 2018

- Amit Masurkar's 'Newton' will be the Indian entry at the Oscars 2018
The Film Federation Of India (FFI) notified that the movie is selected unanimously by the members of the FFI committee which is headed by Telugu producer C V Reddy.

Oscar Awards 2018

- The 90th Academy Awards or the Oscar Awards will be held in Los Angeles on March 4, 2018
- It is a set of **twenty-four awards** for artistic and technical merit in the American film industry

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Indians who won Oscars

- **Bhanu Athaiya** won an Academy Award for Best Costume Design for her work in the film Gandhi (1982) along with John Mollo.
- **Satyajit Ray** was awarded Oscar in 1992 for Lifetime Achievement.
- **AR Rahman and Gulzar** won an Oscar for Best Original Song ('Jai Ho') for the film Slumdog Millionaire. Rahman won once again for Best Original Score for Danny Boyle's Slumdog Millionaire.
- **Resul Pookutty** received an Oscar for his work in the Oscar-winning film Slumdog Millionaire

NITI Aayog and IRF Geneva Join Hands For Intelligent Transportation Systems

- India and Geneva have joined hands to work on Intelligent Transportation Systems.
- India's National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) and the International Road Federation, Geneva (IRF Geneva) have signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) to cooperate in the field of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).
- SOI aims at creating a national platform for the purpose of developing a National ITS Policy that will cover Traffic Management, Parking Management Electronic Enforcement of Traffic Rules and Regulations, Fleet Management and Monitoring, Innovation in the field of ITS, Education in the field of ITS

About NITI Ayog

- NITI Aayog which stands for National Institution for Transforming India is a Government of India policy think-tank established by the BJP government.
- It replaced the Planning Commission which followed the top-down model.
- It was formed on 1 January 2015

Kalvari, First Scorpene Submarine Commissioned into Indian Navy

- Kalvari, the first of the six Scorpene submarines was handed over to the Indian Navy by shipbuilder Mazgaon Dock Ltd
- The submarines, designed by French naval defence and energy company DCNS
- These submarines are being built by Mazagon Dock Ltd in Mumbai as part of Project-75 of the Indian Navy.
- Kalvari is named after the **Tiger shark**.
- The second of the Scorpenes, Khanderi is currently undergoing the rigorous phase of sea trials.

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- The third Scorpene, Karanj, is being readied for launch later this year. The rest are in various stages of outfitting.

Himachal Pradesh Becomes First State to Launch e-Buses

- Himachal Roads Transport Corporation has launched its electric bus service on Manali-Rohtang highway.
- The service had undergone a trial run for two years prior its official launch.
- With this initiative, Himachal Pradesh has become the first hill state in the country to run electric buses.
- Many Electricity charging points have been installed at Manali and Marhi.
- The buses will ply on Manali-Kullu and Mandi routes during winters when the road to Rohtang is blocked with snow.
- The government has also decided to start an eight-seater electric vehicle service in Manali town.

2017 Declared as e-Pragati Year by Andhra CM

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has announced 2017 as the year of e-Pragati
- The announcement was made on the 2nd day of Collectors' Conference
- CM has asked all districts to come under the purview of real-time governance.
- If any college students are trained on e-pragati, the program can be taken to basic level
- Andhra Pradesh Sports Policy 2017 was launched on the same occasion'
- CM also announced six categories of the AP Green Awards which will start from this year.

Six award categories are as follow

- Overall greenery in local bodies.
- Individual public parks
- Industries, corporates, institutions (public n private separately)
- Schools, colleges, universities n hospitals (public n private separately)
- Govt office premises
- Home gardens, apartment gardens.

Pune NGO Wins UN Equator Prize 2017

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- Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) has won this year's UN Equator Prize.
SSP is a Pune-based non-governmental organisation working among women farmers
- The award recognises SSP's initiative to empower over 20,000 women farmers from the impoverished Marathwada region in Maharashtra
- The prize was received by Godavari Dange and Kamal Kumbhar, two women farmers from Osmanabad district, at the UN General Assembly meeting in New York on Sunday.
- SSP helps to promote climate-resilient agro-ecological farming that addresses many issues relating to sustainable development, such as food security, income security and natural resource management.
- SSP's climate-resilient farming model works by giving cultivation rights of a small piece of land, which is usually half or one acre, to women from marginal families.
- Last year, SSP won UNFCCC's Momentum for Change Lighthouse Activity Award for this initiative

