

[Current Affairs / Daily GK Updates : 8th May 2019](#)

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Current Affairs (National)

◆ **Thrissur Pooram temple festivities starting May 11**



- Thrissur Pooram is an annual temple festival held in Kerala, India. It is held at the Vadakkunnathan Temple in Thrissur every year on the Pooram day - the day when the moon rises with the Pooram star in the Malayalam Calendar month of Medam. It is the largest and most famous of all poorams.

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◆ Indian passport improves its ranking on global index, jumps 10 ranks in 5 years



- India was ranked 67th, as it provides visa-free access to 25 countries, visa on arrival to 39 countries and for 134 countries, visa requirement is compulsory.
- Last year, India ranked 68th on the Passport Index. The ranking of the Indian passport, as per the index, has become stronger in the last five years. In 2015, India's rank was 77.

◆ e-Governance Services India ties up with IIT-Kanpur to upscale Unnat Bharat Abhiyan



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- Common Service Centre's (CSC) e-Governance Services India Limited, a special purpose vehicle under the Ministry of Electronics & IT, on Friday said it has tied up with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Kanpur to upscale 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan'.
- 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan' is an initiative of the Ministry of HRD. It aims to find solutions to accelerate sustainable growth in rural India.
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◆ Commerce ministry organises interaction to boost India-Africa trade ties



- A two-day interaction was organised by the Commerce Ministry and Indian High Commissions and embassies of eleven African countries to strengthen the India-Africa trade ties.
- The interaction was arranged over Digital Video Conference (DVC) over two days, on May 3rd and May 6th with the Indian business community in Africa.
- In order to build an effective engagement with the Indian Diaspora in Africa, the interactions with Indian Diaspora were held in Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Zambia, and Mauritius, Nigeria, Mozambique, Ghana, South Africa, Botswana, and Madagascar.
- The DVC was attended by over 400 members of the Indian business community in 11 African countries.

Current Affairs (International)

◆ India gets re-elected as observer to Arctic Council



- “India was an Observer at the Council from 2013 onwards,” Rajeev told Down To Earth on the phone from Rovaniemi, Finland, where he had gone to attend the 11th Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting of the Council.
- When asked whether India had put forward any of its concerns regarding the Arctic, Rajeev said, “Observers are not allowed to take part in the active meetings. We usually participate in side events.” Besides India, China, South Korea, Singapore, Italy and Japan also have Observer status at the Council.
- The Arctic Council is formed of Russia, the United States, Canada, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland and Finland.
- The two-day meeting began on May 6, 2019. At the culmination, the member countries released a joint statement in which they pledged a number of measures to preserve the Arctic.

Banking and Finance

◆ Meeting of the 15th Finance Commission with the Reserve Bank of India held in Mumbai



- The 15th Finance Commission headed by Chairman, Shri N.K. Singh today held a detailed meeting with the Governor and Deputy Governors of RBI in Mumbai today.
- Key issues raised by RBI Governor, Shri Shaktikanta Das and Finance Commission Chairman, Shri N.K. Singh were discussed in detail at the meeting. These issues included the following:–
 - The necessity of setting up State Finance Commissions for respective State Governments.
 - Public Sector Borrowing Requirements.
 - Continuity of the Finance Commission. It was felt that this was required more in view of the fiscal management requirements of the States, especially given the absence of mid-term reviews of Awards granted by the Finance Commission, as it used to happen earlier with the Awards granted by the Planning Commission.
 - Need for Expenditure Codes, especially given that expenditure norms vary from state to state.
 - Role of States in Growth and Inflation, for instance, role of states in Ease of doing Business.

Award

◆ CANADA CAPTURES IBNS 2018 BANK NOTE OF YEAR AWARD



- The International Bank Note Society (IBNS) announces that its voting membership has selected the Bank of Canada to receive its prestigious “Bank Note of the Year Award” for 2018
- The face of the note features the portrait of social justice icon Viola Desmond while the back depicts the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Appointment

◆ UN Re-Elects India's Jagjit Pavadia To International Narcotics Board



- Jagjit Pavadia has been re-elected with the highest number of votes by the UN Economic and Social Council to a five-year term on International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), while China's candidate lost.
- Ms Pavadia polled 44 votes on Tuesday in the first round of voting in the 54-member Council facing a field of 15 candidates for the five seats up for election this year ensuring her continuance on the board.
- The defeat of China's Hao Wei in his bid for re-election bid was glaring because of Beijing's strong campaign backed by its Yuan diplomacy across the developing countries. He got only 22 votes in the first round and 19 in the second. A minimum of 28 votes were required for election.

Sports

◆ Solanki, Kaushik won gold at the XXXVI Feliks Stamm International Boxing Tournament



- Gaurav Solanki and Manish Kaushik bagged a gold each as Indian boxers finished with a rich haul of six medals at the XXXVI Feliks Stamm International Boxing Tournament in Warsaw, Poland.
- Besides two gold medals, Indians boxers also clinched a silver and three bronze to wrap off their campaign on a high.
- The 22-year-old Solanki (52kg) outpunched England's William Cawley 5-0 on his way to the top honour. He showed glimpses of the impeccable form that brought him gold medals at the Commonwealth Games and the Chemistry Cup last year.

Important Day

◆ 8 May World Red Cross Day



- World Red Cross Day, also known as World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day which is observed every year on May 8 is a gentle nod to all the volunteers who have made unparalleled contribution to people in duress or need. Incidentally, the day is also the birthday of Henry Dunant, who had generated the Red Cross Committee of the International (ICRI) in 1863 in Switzerland, Geneva. He was born in May 8, 1828 and was also the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.
- **Theme 2019- #Love**

◆ 8 May World Thalassemia Day



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- World Thalassaemia Day on May 8, which is observed every year to create awareness about the condition and commemorate patients and their parents, he suggests a few ways to manage the condition.
- Thalassaemia (or Mediterranean Anaemia) is the most common monogenesis disease affecting people across the world. This debilitating disorder, characterised by abnormal production of haemoglobin in the body, is a silent killer. Annually, nearly 70,000 babies worldwide are born with Thalassaemia Major, out of which, around 10,000 are born in India.
- **Theme 2019- “Universal access to quality Thalassaemia healthcare services: Building bridge with and for patient”.**

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