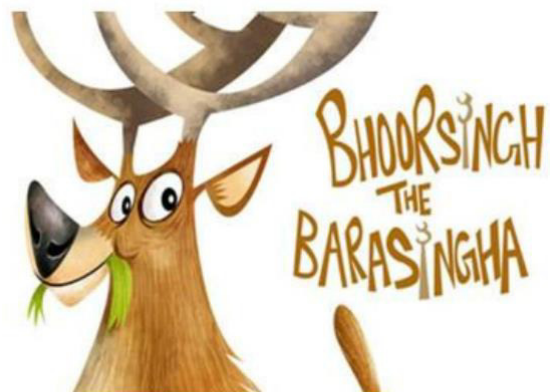



Current Affairs: March, 2017



OBITUARY
Monsoon Man of India



Mr. Dev Raj Sikka, famously known as the Monsoon Man of India was former Director at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM). His study of Indian Monsoon helped create many models that currently provide good quality forecast, used by millions of farmers across India. In 1980's he found the crucial link between El Nino and Indian Monsoon, helping advancing the study of meteorology in the country.

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1. **INS Viraat Decommissioned**

World's oldest aircraft carrier was decommissioned in Mumbai. It was a centaur class ship of Indian Navy and was the top Ship in INS before Commissioning of INS Vikramaditya (Soviet-era) in 2013. It was called HMS Hermes in Royal Navy when began service in 1959 before transferring to Indian Navy in 1987. INS Vikrant is getting built with US help.

2. **Kurukh Language**

West Bengal government has given official status to Kurukh language as UNESCO has listed it as an Endangered language. Rajbangshi/Kamtapuri spoken in parts of North Bengal also is recognized by WB Govt. Kurukh is part of North Dravidian Group of Languages (malto, also known as Paharia). Kurukh is spoken by almost 18 lakh people and is written in Devanagari Script. It is spoken by Oraon tribes of Chotta-Nagpur Plateau and some areas of Bangladesh.

191 languages of India are Vulnerable or Critically Endangered.

3. **Operation Thunderbird**

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MOEFCC) conducted this operation to curb wildlife crime. 2524 species of live animals, 20kg elephant ivory, 1 tiger skin, 9 carcasses, 1 jar of snake venom and 1 Indian Mujtac skin was seized. **Operation Save Kurma** was also carried out from 15 Dec 2016 to 30th January 2017 to save Turtles.

4. **SWATHI RADAR**

An indigenous weapon locating Radar WLR SWATHI has been developed by DRDO's Electronics and Radar Development Establishment (LRDE). It can locate enemy mortar, shell, rocket and can handle multiple projectiles and help in directing our artillery response. It has a range of 50KM. It has 2 modes – Weapon Location and Direction of Own Artillery Fire(DOOAF). DRDO also has INMAS (Institute of medical and Allied Science).

5. **Interceptor Missile**

India has successfully test fired supersonic interceptor missile capable of destroying any incoming enemy missile at low altitude. It is a 7.5-meter-long single stage solid rocket propelled guided missile with a navigation system, sophisticated radar and secure link.

6. **Seemai Karuvelam Tree**

Madurai bench of Madras high court has ordered state govt. to create a plan to eradicate these trees. They are called Prosopis Juliflora and are highly invasive. They are capable to grow in Arid- semi arid conditions and are a big nuisance in South Africa, East Africa, Australia and coastal asia.

7. **Linking Godavari with Penna**

A **LIDAR** (Light Detection and Ranging) Survey will be done Water and Power Consultancy Services India Ltd. (WAPCOS) to envisage a project to transfer water from Godavari to Somasilla Reservoir in Penna river and new reservoir at Bollapalli in Andhra Pradesh. LIDAR uses Topographic radar to send Infrared light to map the land and bathymetric Lidar uses water penetrating green lights to measure sea floor and river bed elevations by using satellites and even Aircrafts.

8. **Ornamental Fisheries Project**

A pilot scheme has been launched by Department of Animal husbandry, dairying and Fisheries along with Ministry of Agriculture and farmers Welfare in Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Maharashtra, Gujarat , Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. This is done to get benefits of technology and innovations in rearing and sales of Colorful seawater and freshwater fishes.

9. **Floating Solar Power Plant in Kerala**

NETRA(NTPC Energy Technology Research Alliance), along with CIPET Chennai has setup a Photovoltaic Solar Power Plant at Kayamkulam Kerala. It will conserve water body as less evaporation, better cooling effect, and floatable.

10. **Saraswati Samman Award 2016**

Mahabaleshwar Sail has been awarded for his novel HAWTHAN, he is a Konkani Writer and is given a ₹15lakh and a Citation. He has 4 Marathi and 7 Konkani novels. Hawththan is a 2009 novel on Pottery community of Goa. It is given by KK Birla Foundation only for 22 languages of Schedule VIII, started in 1991, first given to Harivansha Rai bacchan.

11. **INS Tillanchang**

A water Jet Fast Attack Craft (WJFAC) was commissioned in Indian Navy at Karwar. It is 3rd one after INS Tarmugli and Tihayu of Follow-on WJFAC built by Garden Reach Ship Builders and Engineers Kolkata. This is a Chetlat class ship.

12. **Surya Kiran XI**

11th edition of Joint India-Nepal Military Exercise took place in Pithoragarh Uttarakhand. It's a battalion level 2 week long biannually conducted exercise that takes place alternatively in India and Nepal.

13. **Al Nagah II**

2 week joint exercise between India and Oman took place in Bakloh Belt of Himachal Pradesh. It first held in Muscat, Oman in 2015.

14. **Copernicus Satellite launched**

Copernicus SENTINEL-2B, 5th of Europe's Earth Observation Satellite was launched for high-res optical imaging of the environment, aquatic and vegetation. It has res area of 290 kms and will map the entire earth in 5 days.

15. **UDAN (Ude Desh Ke Aam Nagrik)**

Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched a scheme that will operate flights under regional connectivity scheme and provide air travel to 43 destinations on subsidized rate. Air alliance (subsidiary of air India), Turbo Megha airways, Spice Jet, Air Deccan, Air Odisha Aviation got the contract to operate on these routes with half the seats capped at Rs2500 per hour's Flight. Shimla, Agra, Bikaner, Gwalior, Jharsuguda, Vidyanagar, Kullu, Mysore, Jagdalpur, Salem, Hosur etc have inactive airports which get a revival with the advent of this scheme.

16. **GST Network**

GST will soon be launched but a Private Company has been floated to help in maintaining the database and enabling new tax regime called GSTN with govt. stake 49% and Private companies like ICICI and HDFC, LIC with 51 % stake.

17. **Kanha Tiger Reserve has an Official Mascot BhoorSingh**

A 'barasingha' BhoorSingh makes Kanha Tiger Reserve to be First one in India to introduce a mascot and spread awareness about Swamp Deer's vulnerable state. BaraSingha is the State Animal of Madhya Pradesh and

is prevalent in India and Nepal and now extinct in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

18. Supreme Court bans Bharat Stage III vehicles

From April 1, All vehicle Registering Authorities are prohibited from registering any vehicles that do not meet BS-IV standards of emission. In 2016, govt. announced that it would skip the BS-V norms altogether and launch BS-VI from 2020. CPCB and MOEFCC decide the standard and implementation ways.

19. Montenegro becomes 29th Member of NATO

NATO is Inter-Governmental alliance between North-American and European states signed on 4th April, 1949. Its headquarters are in Brussels, Belgium.

20. INCLU L51 Surveillance Ship Commissioned

Built by GRSE Kolkata, and this ship will be used for stopping illegal fishing, poaching, drug trafficking etc. in the Indian Ocean region. It is first of the 8 LCU MkIV class and boasts 900tons weight, 68 meters length and 11 meters width. It is loaded with CRN 91 – 30mm guns, 12.7 mm heavy Machine Guns, and 7.62 mm medium Machine Guns.

21. 36th Scientific Expedition to Antarctica

National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR), Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt of India organizes the expedition every year and this year 4 teams of ISRO(SAC Ahmedabad), one from National Remote Sensing Centre Hyderabad, Indian Institute of Remote Sensing Dehradun and 1 from Space Physics Laboratory (SPL) from Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre Thiruvananthapuram. These teams will set stakes in Bharti and Maitri Glaciers and measure surface velocity and Study Differential GPS, Atmospheric Black Carbon.

22. DRDO gives SONAR to Indian Navy

USHUS II Submarine Sonar, Directing gear for Hull Mounted Sonar Array and RLG based inertial navigation System for Ship Applications (INSA) were given by DRDO. USHUS-II is an active intercept, obstacle avoidance, underwater telephony sonar.

23. SYNLIGHT

Scientists have built a big Honeycomb of 149 spotlights called Synlight, and it uses short-arc lamps to simulate sunlight. It is focused to impede 1000 times the normal solar radiation on a place. It creates up to 3000 .C temp and test new ways to make Hydrogen. Its world's largest artificial Sun.

24. **National Health Policy 2017**

The new policy has following objectives

Increase life Expectancy at birth from 67.5 to 70 by 2025.

Reduce Total Fertility Rate to 2.1 at all levels by 2025

Reduce under 5 Mortality to 23 by 2025 and Maternal Mortality Rate to 100 by 2020.

Reduce IMR to 28 by 2019.

90:90:90 Target for HIV/AIDS – By 2020, aim to aware those who are infected with HIV at least 90 % , Then those Infected with HIV, out of them, at least 90 % receive Antiretroviral Therapy and try to increase HIV Suppression in at least 90 % of these .

To eliminate Leprosy by 2018 and Kala-Azar by 2017 and Lymphatic Filaria by 2017.

25. **Monsoon Man of India Passed Away**

Dev Raj Sikka, former director of Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune who first Proposed a link between El-Nino and Indian Monsoon is no more. He also Developed Weather Models and Computer Modelling to forecast Indian Monsoon.

26. **Longest Road Tunnel of India – Chenani nashri tunnel**

In J&K, Udhampur District, 9 km long tunnel is a twin tube tunnel at elevation of 1200metres passing through a high Seismic Zone.

27. **Ganga-Yamuna declared Living Entity**

5 days after New Zealand's Whanganui River, Uttarakhand High Court declared Ganga and Yamuna as living Entities bestowing them rights same as of a person. Court will allow complaints to be filed in the name of the rivers. Though Ganga is World's third largest river according to the number of people it serves it is also the dirtiest and heavily polluted.

28. **United nations World happiness report 2017**

India ranked 122 out of 155 countries in WHR2017, while Pakistan was 80, Nepal at 99, Bhutan at 97, Bangladesh at 110, Sri Lanka @120.

Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, and Finland and Iceland topped the list.

29. **Abel Prize**

Yves meyer wins maths Nobel for work on Wavelets. It's a Norwegian Prize awarded by the Govt of Norway after Neils Henrik Abel and modelled after the Nobel Prizes.

30. **Barak Missile System**

Barak 8 also known as LR-SAM or MR-SAM is an Indian- Israeli Surface to Air Missile designed to defend Airborne threats. It has a range of 70 KM max. After test firing successfully from INS Vikramaditya, we now have both land based and sea based versions of this missile.

Important Days

24 March - World TB day (Robert Koch discovered Mycobacterium Tuberculosis in 1882)

23 March - World Meteorological Day (International Cloud Atlas launched)

22 March - World Water day (It's a Sustainable Development Goal no 6.3 Clean Water)