



Environment Minister Launches “Harit Diwali, Swasth Diwali” Campaign

- ❖ Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, launched the “Harit Diwali, Swasth Diwali” campaign. Addressing a gathering of about 800 children from schools of Delhi and NCR, the Minister impressed upon the children the importance of their contribution towards reducing pollution by not bursting harmful fire crackers during Diwali. As a part of the campaign, the Environment Ministry will undertake various activities to create awareness among various stakeholders and encourage people to participate in combating air pollution.

Vishal Sikka Resigns as MD and CEO of Infosys

- ❖ Vishal Sikka has resigned as the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Infosys. Pravin Rao has been appointed as the interim CEO. Sikka has been appointed executive vice chairman effective from August 18, and will hold office until the new permanent Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director takes charge, which should be no later than March 31, 2018. U B Pravin Rao is currently the Chief Operating Officer responsible for the entire portfolio of the company’s offerings.

Veteran Photographer S Paul Died

- ❖ Veteran photographer S Paul died in New Delhi at the age of 88. Paul received recognition and fame as a professional photographer when his pictures were selected for publication in three renowned British publications -- Amateur Photographer, Miniature Camera and Miniature Camera World. B&W Magazine of US had described him as 'The Henry Cartier-Bresson of India'. Apart from other recognitions, Paul was the first Indian to be profiled by The British Journal of Photography in 1967. He was the first Indian to win the Nikon International Photo Contest in 1971.

Cabinet clears stalled Bihar dam project

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has decided to revive the North Koel Reservoir Project, stalled since 1993, and claims it will irrigate over 40,000 hectares in some of the most backward and drought-prone regions in Jharkhand and Bihar. However, the centre piece of the project, the Mandal dam, will be made smaller than proposed and capacity reduced by up to 85%, to accede to environmental and forest norms. The dam threatened to submerge portions of the Betla National Park and the Palamau Tiger Reserve and in its truncated avatar will cause only “minimal” submergence of the reserve. The National Wildlife Board cleared the project two months ago but imposed conditions. A 24 MW power project that was to be part of the original design has also been scrapped.

Music icon Bappi Lahiri awarded 7th Dr. Ambedkar award

- ❖ Bappi Lahiri, 1st music director who composed songs for Bharat Ratna Shri. Atal Bihari Vajpayee & Bharat Ratna Dr. Ambedkar gifted the CDs to Honorable President of India Mr. Ram Nath Kovind in

the presence of Home Minister Rajnath Singh Bappi Lahiri was awarded 7th Bharat Ratna Dr. Ambedkar Award for his legendary 48 years of musical work in both Bollywood and Hollywood

Serena Williams is the highest-paid female athlete of 2017

- ❖ Forbes recently released its list of the highest-paid female athletes, and to no-one's surprise, Serena Williams is right at the top and leads by a significant margin. Between June 2016 and June 2017, Williams earned \$27 million (R361,19 million), Forbes reports. This is more than double any other female athlete in the world this year. While she's earned a lot from prize money, much of Williams' revenue comes from her multitude of endorsements. These include deals with Nike, Intel, Beats by Dre and JPMorgan Chase

Tata Power introduces QR code for bill payment

- ❖ Tata Power has introduced a QR code service for bill payments in the megapolis, The QR code linked to Unified Payments Interface (UPI) will be printed on the electricity bills and customers can scan the code with Bhim app or any other UPI-linked bank apps and pay their bills without any hassle, The bill details will be displayed on the app, after which the customer can authorise the payment within a few seconds and his bill will be paid instantaneously with a real time update of the payment in his consumer account.

RBI Makes Aadhaar Linkage Mandatory for Farmers

- ❖ To ensure hassle-free benefits to farmers under Interest Subvention Scheme, the Reserve Bank of India has advised banks to make Aadhaar linkage mandatory for availing short-term crop loans up to Rs.3 lakh in 2017-18. This move is in line with the government's increasing emphasis on linking Aadhaar to various transactions in the economy including filing Income-Tax returns and getting direct benefit transfer. In order to provide short-term crop loans to farmers at an interest rate of 7 per cent (the same as in the previous year) during the year 2017-18, the RBI said it has been decided to offer interest subvention of 2 per cent to lending institutions - public sector banks, private sector commercial banks (in respect of loans given by their rural and semi-urban branches only) on use of their own resources.

Italy to Host G-7 Interior Ministers' Summit

- ❖ Italy will host a summit of G-7 interior ministers centered on security issues. According to Italian Interior Minister Marco Minniti, the meeting is being organized at the request of Italy's G-7 partners namely Canada, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan and the United States. Italy currently holds the rotating helm of the G-7 industrialized nations. The summit is expected to be held in October.