President of India launches ‘Swachhta hi Seva’ Campaign

The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, launched a nationwide sanitation campaign, ‘Swachhta hi Seva’, at Ishwariganj village in Kanpur today (September 15, 2017).

- He also administered the ‘Swachhta hi Seva’ pledge to all present there whereby they resolved to create a clean, healthy and new India.
- The President honoured village-level champions who contributed to making Ishwariganj village ‘Open Defecation Free’.
- Addressing the gathering, the President said India is fighting a decisive battle for cleanliness and hygiene.
- Today, all of them had taken an oath that committed them to ensuring public hygiene, personal hygiene and environmental hygiene.
- Cleanliness is not the responsibility of only sanitation personnel and government departments; it is a multi-stakeholder national movement.

As a follow up to the new policy called Scheme for Harnessing and Allocating Koyala (Coal) Transparently in India (SHAKTI), Coal India Limited (CIL) conducts the auction for Independent Power Producers (IPPs)

On May 17, 2017, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved a new policy for allocation of future coal linkages in a transparent manner for power sector. This policy was christened as Scheme for Harnessing and Allocating Koyala (Coal) Transparently in India (SHAKTI).

- The policy was an important initiative in alleviating one key challenge in power sector, viz. lack of coal linkage and is expected to positively contribute in resolution of a number of stressed assets.
- As a part of this policy, CIL/SCCL is to grant coal linkages on notified price on auction basis for Independent Power Producers (IPPs) having already concluded domestic coal based Power Purchase Agreement (PPAs), with the bidding parameter being levellised discount on existing tariff that the IPP is willing to provide.
- This was expected to result in a win-win situation of IPPs having a long term supply security of coal from a source of their choice while consumers will benefit from a lower tariff.
- Accordingly, Coal India Limited (CIL), a PSU of Ministry of Coal, Government of India, invited expressions of interest from potential bidders by 19 August 2017.
- A total of 31 applications were received. These were scrutinized by Central...
Electricity Authority (CEA) and finally a total of 14 bidders were found to be eligible.

**The Transport Development Council and State Transport Ministers scheduled to meet in Vadodara on 19th September**

The 38th meeting of Transport Development Council and State Transport Ministers is scheduled to be held at Vadodara in Gujarat on the 19th September, 2017.

- Shri Nitin Gadkari, Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation said in a statement today that Transport Ministers of all states will come together in the day long meeting to discuss issues like public transport reforms, the status of Vahan and Sarathi sites under Transport National Register, Seamless Transport across state borders, identification of Black Spots, Digitalisation of payments, Inter-State transfer of private vehicles and citizen facilitation.
- The Council meeting will give an opportunity to the state Transport Ministers to get an exposure on the new and upcoming reforms in the transport sector.
- There will be a discussion on the subject of Public Transport Reforms and way forward to Bus Ports.
- Director, Transport for London (TFL) will participate in this discussion via video conferencing, along with other experts in the sector.
- The Transport Ministers will also be taken on a visit to the modern Vadodara Bus Terminal and also the Vadodara Automated Driving Testing Track.
- The objective is to give them a first hand exposure to such modern facilities, so that they can help develop the same in their respective states.

**Rs.300 cr Plan for better solid waste management in Delhi**

Minister of Housing & Urban Affairs Shri Hardeep Singh Puri today announced a Rs.300 cr action plan for a visible improvement in Solid Waste Management in Delhi.
Addressing the ‘Public Affairs Forum of India’ here today, the Minister said this initiative will be supported by the Ministry from the ‘Urban Development Fund’ operated by Delhi Development Authority.

Shri Puri informed that under the Plan, automated machinery, equipment and other systems will be procured for better collection, transport and storage of garbage, decentralized treatment and better maintenance of sewers and drains.

Soon after assuming office, Shri Puri raised the issue of garbage problem in the national capital during a discussion on Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) in the Ministry on the fifth of this month and desired an action plan for improving the situation.

North, South and East Municipal Corporation of Delhi will spend Rs.100 cr each on procuring a total of 549 units of modern equipment.

An assistance of Rs.80 cr will be provided to each MCD from the Urban Development Fund.

All equipment including treatment plants are to be procured and commissioned by the end of this year.

This initiative will quickly add a waste treatment capacity of 670 metric tons of bio-degradable waste besides preventing release of foul gases, smell and proliferation of germs, pathogens, pests etc.

**Stipend of Rs 50,000 per month be paid to the elite athletes preparing for Tokyo Olympic, Asian Games or Common Wealth Games to meet pocket expenses**

The Government, accepting the recommendation, today took decision to give stipend of Rs 50,000 per month. The Government has selected 152 elites under TOP scheme.

All the athletes will get benefit from this decision. The stipend will be paid with effect from 1st September, 2017.

This decision was announced by the Minister of State (I/C) youth affairs and Sports Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore (Retd.) on social media platform.

Further, Government is getting in touch with all the athletes selected under TOP to get training & competition exposure plan and any further assistance required for preparation of prestigious competitions.
Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar to give away Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar & National Safety Awards for the Performance year 2015 on 17th September 2017

The Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India, has been operating the “Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar (VRP)” (Previously known as Shram Vir National Awards) and “National Safety Awards (NSA)” since 1965.

- These Award schemes are operated by the technical wing of the Ministry, namely the Directorate General Factory Advice Service & Labour Institutes (DGFASLI), Mumbai – an attached office of the Ministry of Labour & Employment.
- DGFASLI renders technical advice/service to workers, their representatives & managements in factories and docks to make the industrial activities safe and to promote workers’ health & well-being.
- It is 50th (Golden Jubilee) Award presentation Ceremony being organised by the ministry.
- Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, the Minister of State for Labour & Employment (Independent charge), will give away Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar and National Safety Awards for the Performance year 2015 on 17th September 2017.

Cassini spacecraft makes death plunge into Saturn after 20-year journey

The vaunted Cassini spacecraft was vaporized Friday as it streaked through Saturn’s atmosphere at 76,000 mph, ending a career that revolutionized scientists’ understanding of the ringed planet and its moons.

- But even during its final moments, the spacecraft was collecting intelligence and beaming it back to Earth, where researchers quickly began poring over it.
- The last radio signal from Cassini to NASA’s giant antenna in Canberra, Australia, was received at 7:55 am ET, 30 seconds later than projected.
- The spacecraft was not expected to survive more than a minute after it lost touch with Earth.
- Though NASA could have chosen to keep Cassini hanging around, managers chose to plunge it into the depths of Saturn, where the spacecraft
could gather data on the planet’s composition and magnetic field that are available nowhere else.

**North Korea fires missile over Japan that lands far out in the Pacific**

North Korea fired a missile that flew over Japan’s northern Hokkaido far out into the Pacific Ocean on Friday, South Korean and Japanese officials said, deepening tensions after Pyongyang’s recent test of its most powerful nuclear bomb.

- The missile flew over Japan and landed in the Pacific about 2,000 km (1,240 miles) east of Hokkaido.
- Warning announcements about the missile blared around 7 a.m. (2200 GMT Thursday) in parts of northern Japan, while many residents received alerts on their mobile phones or saw warnings on TV telling them to seek refuge.
- U.S. Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis said the launch "put millions of Japanese into duck and cover", although residents in northern Japan appeared calm and went about their business as normal after the second such launch in less than a month.
- The missile reached an altitude of about 770 km (480 miles) and flew for about 19 minutes over a distance of about 3,700 km (2,300 miles), according to South Korea’s military - far enough to reach the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam.