



Presents

## International Current Affairs - May 2019

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### International Current Affairs

#### Japan gets a new Emperor

- Japan welcomed the start of a new Reiwa imperial era and a new emperor, Emperor Naruhito (59) was formally invested after his father, Akihito, 85, stepped down. Akihito, the first Japanese monarch to abdicate in two centuries, became an active symbol of peace, reconciliation and democracy during his three-decade Heisei era.

#### Nepal to start construction of railways linking Kathmandu with India, China

- Nepal is planning to start construction of railways linking Kathmandu with India and China through the Detailed Project Reports of Birgunj-Kathmandu and Rasuwagadhi-Kathmandu railways, which connecting Kathmandu to both India and China by railways, will be prepared and construction works will be started within two years.

#### US to propose hike in H-1B application fee

- The Trump administration is proposing a hike in the H-1B visa application fee to increase funding for the expansion of an apprentice programme, which trains American youths in technology related activities.
- The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise.

#### India re-elected as observer to inter-governmental forum Arctic Council

- India has been re-elected as an observer to inter-governmental forum Arctic Council. The Arctic Council promotes cooperation, coordination and interaction among Arctic states on common issues, particularly on sustainable development and environmental protection.

#### India, Bangladesh to jointly produce movie on life, works of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

- India and Bangladesh will co-produce a film on the life and works of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and a documentary on Bangladesh Liberation War.

**Iran likely to withdraw from parts of nuclear deal**

- Iran is likely to announce today that it is partially withdrawing from the nuclear deal it struck with world powers. The move comes a year after President Donald Trump pulled America from the accord.

**India, UK agree to boost Indo-Pacific cooperation**

- India and the United Kingdom agreed to increase their collaboration in the fields of Indo-Pacific cooperation, climate change, disaster resilience, development in third world countries amongst other areas.

**India, Vietnam to strengthen cooperation in atomic energy, defence and security**

- India and Vietnam agreed to further strengthen cooperation in defence and security, peaceful uses of atomic energy and outer space, oil and gas and renewable energy as Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu concluded his four-day visit to the Southeast Asian country.

**US issues new warning to ships after ‘sabotage’ off UAE**

- The U.S. issued a new warning to sailors over alleged “acts of sabotage” targeting ships off the coast of the United Arab Emirates amid heightened regional tensions between America and Iran.

**Pompeo to meet Putin in Sochi**

- Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to visit a top military flight test centre and inspect new weaponry. Mr. Pompeo will visit Mr. Putin in Russia’s Black Sea resort of Sochi for the highest-level talks between Moscow and Washington in nearly a year.

**Chinese navy launches two new guided missile destroyers**

- China, which is developing its navy at a feverish pace, has commissioned two more guided missile destroyers taking the total of such warships to 20 with more in the pipeline.

- The Chinese navy for the first time in its history has logistic bases in Djibouti in the Indian Ocean and is developing Pakistan's Gwadar port in the Arabian Sea.

### **China blocks all language editions of Wikipedia**

- China has broadened its block of online encyclopedia Wikipedia to include all language editions.
- According to a report by the Open Observatory of Network Interference (OONI), China started blocking all language editions of Wikipedia last month.

### **Austria approves headscarf ban in primary schools**

- Austria has approved a law aimed at banning the headscarf in primary schools. However, patka head covering worn by Sikh boys or the Jewish kippa would not be affected, says the government.

### **Trump to propose merit-based immigration policy**

- US President Donald Trump is all set to announce a new proposal to overhaul the immigration policy that would give preference to foreigners based on merit rather than preference to family ties.
- The move could end the agonising Green Card wait for hundreds and thousands of Indian professionals.

### **US, France join UAE probe into sabotage of ships**

- US and France join UAE in the investigation of sabotage of commercial ships. The US and France are assisting the UAE in its investigations into the sabotage attack on four commercial cargo ships in the Sea of Oman.

### **Trump announces new green card system**

- U.S. President Donald Trump on Thursday announced a proposal that will include significant changes to the way green cards are allocated, by dramatically reducing the number of family-based green cards and moving towards a points-based ("merit-based") system that will reward, among other factors, education, skills and English language proficiency.

**Iran, India discuss visa extension**

- Iran at present provides visa-on-arrival to Indian travellers which is given as a paper visa. Iranian visas are also given to Indians online and through missions. Two days after the visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif, India held the 11th Consular Committee Meeting with Iran.

**U.S. lifts metal tariffs on Canada, Mexico**

- President Donald Trump announced a deal to lift U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminium imports from Canada and Mexico that had created friction between the neighbours and blocked a new North American free trade agreement.

**In Japan, driverless tractors are on the move**

- This driverless tractor came in the market in December 2018. It can sense any obstruction on the field and come to an automatic halt when needed. It can make U-turns using GPS technology to determine its location.

**Joko Widodo elected President of Indonesia for second term**

- Indonesia's Joko Widodo has been re-elected as president of the country, beating rival Prabowo Subianto, a retired general.

**Serbia lawmakers amend penal code to introduce life sentence without parole**

- In Serbia, lawmakers today amended the penal code to introduce a life sentence without parole, despite concerns voiced by the Council of Europe. Until now, the maximum sentence in Serbia, which seeks to join the European Union, was 40 years in prison.

**Pakistan appoints Mueenul Haq as High Commissioner to India**

- Pakistan has appointed career diplomat Mueenul Haq as the High Commissioner to India. Haq, the current ambassador to France, has previously served as chief of protocol at the Foreign Office.

**India votes in favour of UNGA resolution demanding UK withdraw from Chagos Archipelago**

- India was among 116 nations to vote in favour of a UN General Assembly resolution that demanded the UK withdraw its “colonial administration” from the Chagos Archipelago unconditionally within six months, supporting Mauritius in its quest for the restoration of sovereignty over the island chain in the Indian Ocean.

**Pakistan successfully test-fires ballistic missile Shaheen-II**

- Pakistan successfully test-fired surface-to-surface ballistic missile Shaheen-II, capable of hitting targets as far as 1,500 kilometers away, bringing major Indian cities under its range.
- “Shaheen-II Missile is capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads upto a range of 1,500 km. Shaheen-II is a highly capable missile which fully meets Pakistan’s strategic needs towards maintenance of desired deterrence stability in the region”.

**China unveils 600 kmph magnetic levitation train prototype**

- China has unveiled a prototype magnetic levitation train with a designed maximum speed of 600 kmph, which its manufacturers say could pose a major competition to the airline industry.

**Theresa May will quit as Conservative leader on June 7**

- British Prime Minister Theresa May announced that she will step down as U.K. Conservative Party leader on June 7, sparking a contest to become the country’s next Prime Minister.

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