



# IAS PARLIAMENT

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A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative

## Prelim Bits 23-02-2018

### Press Freedom-Corruption Perception Index

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- India is a worst regional offender of press freedom in Asia Pacific, according to Corruption Perception Index.

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- Transparency International finds crackdowns on NGOs and media are associated with higher levels of corruption in the world.

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- On average, every week at least one journalist is killed in a country that is highly corrupt.

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### DEATH ON THE JOB

At least eight journalists died in line of duty in India this century

Name	Organisation	Date	Cause of death
Asiya Jeelani Masoom	Freelance	Apr 20, 2004	Dangerous assignment
Jagendra Singh	Freelance	Jun 8, 2005	Murder
Ashok Sodhi	Daily Excelsior	May 11, 2008	Dangerous assignment
Javed Ahmad Mir	Channel 9	Aug 8, 2008	Dangerous assignment
Anil Majumdar	Ajit	Mar 24, 2009	Murder
Dwijamani Singh	Prime News	Dec 23, 2012	Dangerous assignment
Karun Misra	Jansandesh Times	Feb 13, 2016	Murder
Gauri Lankesh	Gauri Lankesh Patrike	Sept 5, 2017	Murder

Source: Committee to Protect Journalists

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- The analysis by Transparency International showed that in the last six years,

more than 9 out of 10 journalists were killed in countries that score 45 or less on the Corruption Perceptions Index.

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- Transparency International is a Berlin-based non-government organization.

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## **Echindas**

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- Echidnas, also called spiny anteaters, are mammals
- Echidnas are one of the world's oldest surviving mammals.
- They are egg-laying mammals.
- It is listed as 'least concern' in IUCN classification.
- However, the short-beaked echidna found only in Australia and Papua Guinea is threatened.

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- The main threats are land clearing and habitat loss ,traffic, feral cats and potentially the rapidly changing climate.

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## **Humanoid Robot- Sophia**

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- Sophia is the world's first AI powered humanoid robot
- It was a part of the World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT), 2018, held in Telegana, India.
- A Humanoid may be defined as something that resembles or looks like a human and having their characteristics like opposing thumb etc,
- A Humanoid robot is fully automated as it can adapt to its surroundings and continue with its goals, as the case with Sophia.
- Sophia with her incredible human likeness and expressiveness is an evolving genius machine.
- Sophia, with a perfect skin and soft facial muscles, can give as many as 66 facial expressions.

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## **Gobar Dhan**

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- During the budget, the finance minister announced the launch of "GOBAR-Dhan" (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources-Dhan).
- The initiative has two objectives:

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1. To make villages clean and generate wealth
2. Energy from cattle and other waste.

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- The GOBAR-Dhan initiative is expected to convert cattle dung and other organic waste to compost, biogas and even larger scale bio-CNG units.

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- The Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin will pilot this initiative.

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## PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration, 2018

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- Government of India has instituted the scheme to acknowledge, recognize and reward the extraordinary and innovative work done by Districts / organizations of the Central and State Governments.
- The Award aims to bring about transparency, improvement in approaches, systems and processes in the delivery of public services.
- Following four priority programmes have been identified for the awards this year:

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1. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana,

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2. Promoting Digital Payments,

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3. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban & Rural, and

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4. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDUGKY).

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- The awards will be presented on Civil Services Day, 2018 function to be organized by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.

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- Every year on 21<sup>st</sup> of April (Civil Services Day) the awards for excellence in Public Administration are given.

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## **SARAS**

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- India's indigenous light transport aircraft SARAS has been successfully test flown for a second time recently.

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- The design and development of the aircraft is being done by CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories, NAL.

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- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, HAL has been identified as the production agency for the military version of SARAS.

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- SARAS Mk 2 will be ideal for commuter connectivity under Government of India's UDAAN Scheme.

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- It can be used for variety of applications like air taxi, aerial search/survey, executive transport, disaster management, border patrol, coast guard, ambulance and other community services.

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**Source: PIB, The Hindu, Business Standard**

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