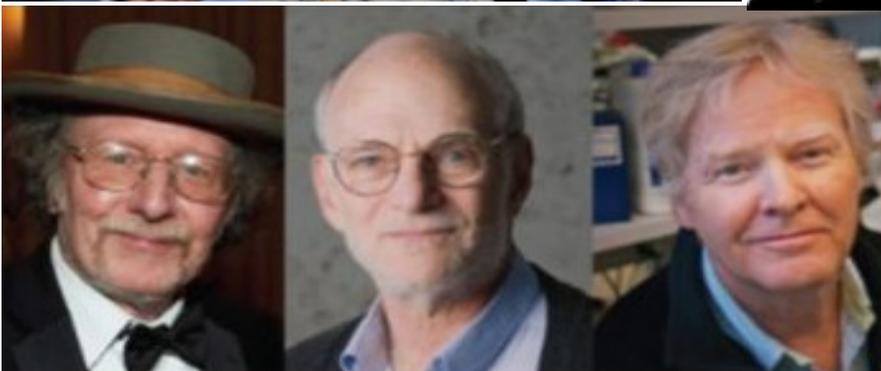
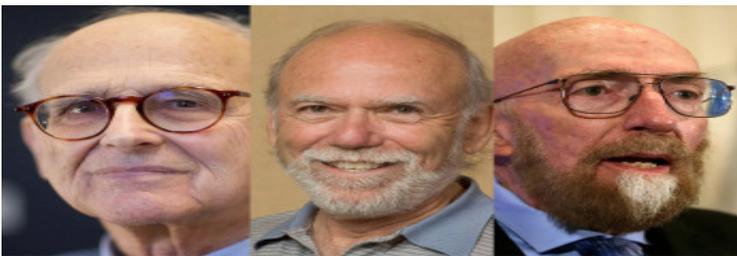


Yearly Current Affairs 2018



LATEST UPDATE

PSLV-C39/IRNSS-1H Mission Launch Fails

In a setback, India's mission to launch its eighth navigation satellite, where the private sector was involved for the first time in the assembly of its spacecraft, failed on following a technical snag after a perfect lift-off of its polar rocket.

Describing the failed mission as a "mishap", Isro chairman Kiran Kumar said the heat shield did not separate for the IRNSS 1H, a backup navigation satellite, to be put into orbit in the final leg of the launch sequence. As a result, the satellite got stuck in the fourth stage of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) C39.

The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, in its forty-first flight (PSLV-C39), will launch IRNSS-1H, the eighth satellite of the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) into a Sub-Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (Sub-GTO). The launch will take place from the Second Launch Pad (SLP) of Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota. As in the previous six launches of IRNSS satellites, PSLV-C39 will use 'XL' version of PSLV equipped with six strap-ons, each carrying 12 tons of propellant.

IRNSS-1H will be launched into a sub Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (sub-GTO) with a 284 km perigee and 20,650 km apogee with an inclination of 19.2 deg with respect to the equatorial plane. After injection into this preliminary orbit, the two solar panels of IRNSS-1H are automatically deployed in quick succession and the Master Control Facility (MCF) at Hassan takes control of the satellite and performs the initial orbit raising manoeuvres using the Liquid Apogee Motor (LAM) of the satellite, thereby finally placing it in its designated slot in the inclined Geosynchronous orbit.

While IRNSS-1H joins the constellation for providing navigation services, IRNSS-1A will be used for messaging services. IRNSS 1H comes with more flexibility in service and it is compatible with the satellites, which are in orbit.

Payloads: Like its other IRNSS predecessors, IRNSS-1H also carries two types of payloads – navigation payload and ranging payload. The navigation payload of IRNSS-1H will transmit navigation service signals to the users. This payload will be operating in L5-band and S-band. Highly accurate Rubidium atomic clocks are part of the navigation payload of the satellite. The ranging payload of IRNSS-1H consists of a C-band tran-

Government Launches Swachh Survekshan Gramin 2017

After the Swachh Survekshan was successful in improving the sanitation coverage in urban areas by creating a healthy competition among the cities, the government will now use the same strategy to increase sanitation coverage in rural parts of India through the Swachh Survekshan Gramin.

In a first, a swachhta competition has been kickstarted in rural areas under the Swachh Bharat Mission- Gramin (SMB-G) by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation. With an aim to improve sanitation coverage and solid liquid waste management (SLWM) and to push forward government's Clean India Mission, all the 534 districts of India will be ranked under this Swachh Survekshan. The first round of the survey was carried out between May-June 2017 by the Quality Council of India (QCI) covering 4,626 villages and it was observed that the overall toilet coverage in these areas is 62.45%.

The progress report was launched today at the National Media Centre, Delhi by the Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation Narendra Singh Tomar in presence of several dignitaries including Secretary Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation Param Iyer, Director General of Press Information Bureau Frank Noronha and the Chairman of QCI Adil Zainulbhai.

sponder, which facilitates accurate determination of the range of the satellite. IRNSS-1H also carries Corner Cube Retro Reflectors for laser ranging.

Launch Vehicle: PSLV-C39/IRNSS-1H Mission

Type of Satellite: Navigation

Manufacturer: ISRO

Owner: ISRO

Application: Navigation

Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY)

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on 21st July 2017 formally launched a pension scheme for senior citizens with an assured return rate of eight percent, favouring efficiency with social security. "Banks have to lend at feasible rates, while senior citizens want secure, reasonable, unfluctuating return on their investment," Jaitley said here launching the pension scheme -

Nobel Prizes 2017

The Nobel Prize in Physics 2017



Rainer Weiss, Barry C. Barish and Kip S. Thorne

"for decisive contributions to the LIGO detector and the observation of gravitational waves"

The Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2017



Jacques Dubochet, Joachim Frank and Richard Henderson

"for developing cryo-electron microscopy for the high-resolution structure determination of biomolecules in solution"

The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2017



Jeffrey C. Hall, Michael Rosbash and Michael W. Young

"for their discoveries of molecular mechanisms controlling the circadian rhythm"

The Nobel Prize in Literature 2017

The Nobel Prize in Literature for 2017 is awarded to the English author Kazuo Ishiguro.



Kazuo Ishiguro

"who, in novels of great emotional force, has uncovered the abyss beneath our illusory sense of connection with the world"

Kazuo Ishiguro was born on November 8, 1954 in Nagasaki, Japan. The family moved to the United Kingdom when he was five years old; he returned to visit his country of birth only as an adult. In the late 1970s, Ishiguro graduated in English and Philosophy at the University of Kent, and then went on to study Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia.

Kazuo Ishiguro has been a full-time author ever since his first book, *A Pale View of Hills* (1982). Both his first novel and the subsequent one, *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986) take place in Nagasaki a few years after the Second World War.

The Nobel Peace Prize 2017

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 2017 to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). The organization is receiving the award for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons.



International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

"for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons"

5 Persons, 1 Organization Honored At 2017 Ramon Magsaysay Award

Five individuals and an organization from Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Singapore and Sri Lanka received on Thursday the prestigious 2017 Ramon Magsaysay Award, Asia's equivalent of the Nobel Prize. The Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation honored the awardees, who collectively "advanced causes to improve lives and transform societies across Asia."

The 2017 Magsaysay Awardees are: Yoshiaki Ishizawa, Japan; Lilia de Lima, Philippines; Abdon Nababan, Indonesia; Philippine Educational Theater Association, Philippines; Getsie Shanmugam, Sri Lanka; and Tony Tay, Singapore.

Japanese scholar Ishizawa, led conservation efforts in Cambodia's Angkor Wat in the 1980's – which was then in danger of destruction – by campaigning in Japanese media and working with Cambodians.

De Lima, the first Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) Director-General, led reforms at the agency, allowing the Philippines to rise as one of the region's top investment destinations. Despite criticisms, she streamlined PEZA's operations by halving its 1,000-person bureaucracy and promoting a culture of transparency and honesty.

Nababan, founder of Indonesian nongovernment organization Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara or Indigenous People's Alliance of Archipelago, was known for his advocacy affecting his country's indigenous peoples. He worked with communities and government in legal reforms, conflict settlement and economic empowerment.

PETA was the only organization that was awarded this year. It has greatly contributed in shaping theater arts in the Philippines as a force for social change. "Its impassioned, unwavering work in empowering communities in the Philippines, and the shining example it has set as one of the leading organization of its kind in Asia," the Foundation said.

Shanmugam, on the other hand, has devoted four decades of her life working for the Sri Lankan people displaced by war. She has worked "under extreme conditions" to rebuild war-scarred lives by providing psychosocial support and counseling to the victims. For 14 years, Tay fed the poor in Singapore through "Willing Hearts," a volunteer-based, non-profit organization that distributes hot, packed meals daily to the poor. The group now cooks 6,000 meals daily by 300 regular volunteers.



Winners of the 2017 Ramon Magsaysay Award pose for a picture after a briefing inside the Ramon Magsaysay headquarters in Manila, Tuesday. Abdon Nababan of Indonesia (left to right), Tony Tay of Singapore, Getsie Shanmugam of Sri Lanka, Lilia De Lima of Philippines, Yoshiaki Ishizawa of Japan and Cecilia Garrucho, representing the winner Philippine Education Theater Association (PETA).

- Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY).

The PMVVY is a pension scheme announced by the government exclusively for the senior citizens aged 60 years and above, which is open for subscription between May 4, 2017 and May 3, 2018.

It provides an assured return of eight per cent per annum payable monthly (equivalent to 8.30 percent per annum effectively) for 10 years.

The scheme can be purchased offline as well as online through the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), which has been given the sole privilege to operate this scheme.

Under the scheme, the pension returns are payable at the end of each period, during the policy term of 10 years. The frequency of payment can be monthly/ quarterly/ half-yearly/ yearly, as opted for by the subscriber.

The scheme is exempt from the Goods and Services Tax (GST). On survival of the pensioner till the end of the policy term of 10 years, purchase price along with final pension instalment shall be payable.

Loan up to 75 percent of the subscription amount shall be allowed after three policy years (to meet the liquidity needs).

Loan interest shall be recovered from the pension instalments and the principal from the claim proceeds.

The scheme also allows for premature exit for the treatment of any critical/ terminal illness of self or spouse. On such premature exit, 98 percent of the subscription amount shall be refunded.

On death of the pensioner during the policy term of 10 years, the subscription amount shall be paid to the beneficiary.

The ceiling of maximum pension is for a family as a whole, wherein the family will comprise pensioner, his/her spouse and dependants.

The shortfall owing to the difference between the interest guaranteed and the actual interest earned and the expenses relating to administration shall be subsidised by the government and reimbursed to the LIC.

Israel Launches First Environmental Research Satellite Venus

Israel launched the country's first environmental research satellite on Wednesday morning from a launch site in French Guiana, in a joint venture between the Israel Space Agency (ISA) and its French counterpart CNES (Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales).

The satellite took flight from South America at 4:58 a.m. Israel time, and was broadcast live on the Israel Space Agency website. The VENUS satellite's goal is to obtain high-resolution photographs of specific sites to track environmental issues such

as desertification, erosion, pollution, natural disasters, and other phenomena linked to climate change.

The camera on the satellite takes photographs in 12 wavelengths, more than are discernible to the human eye. The high resolution — plants can be distinguished as little as five meters apart — makes possible "precision agriculture," in which farmers would be able to accurately plan for water, fertilizer, and pesticide needs.

The satellite uses an Israeli-developed electrical propulsion system that allows it to navigate with more accuracy than older satellites.

VENUS, which stands for "Vegetation and Environment Monitoring on a New Micro Satellite," will be able to take repeated photos of the same spot in the same light conditions (accounting for the position of the sun), allowing for more accurate tracking of changing environmental issues. This is called "heliosynchronous orbit" because it requires taking a photo of the same coordinates while the sun is in the same position. Previously, satellites have been able to provide heliosynchronous photos every 10-15 days, while the VENUS satellite will allow for comparable photographs every two days.

It is the first time that Israel is launching a satellite to focus on agricultural and ecological research. The satellite can record data about the status of the land, snow cover, foliage, forestation, agriculture, and quality of water sources, among other things.

The satellite is considered a "microsatellite," weighing just 265 kilograms (584 pounds) with a wingspan of just 4.4 meters (14.4 feet) when the solar array is expanded. After two days, the satellite will reach its orbiting level of 720 kilometers (447 miles) above the surface of the earth.

The satellite will circle the earth 29 times in each 48-hour period and will stay in commission for 4.5 years, at which time it will move to a lower orbit. The first satellite images are expected just five hours after launch, though they will be released to researchers in November. The satellite will focus on monitoring 100 pre-chosen spots for the first 2.5 years.

The Israel Space Agency, part of the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Space, has invested NIS 5 million in research projects based on the satellite images that will be produced.

The satellite was launched at the same time as OPTSTAT-3000, an observation satellite for the Italian military. Arianespace, a private launch systems company founded in 1980, launched both satellites. Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) built both of the satellites in Israel.

RAM NATH KOVIND ELECTED NEW PRESIDENT OF INDIA

Ram Nath Kovind took oath as the 14th President of India in the Central Hall of Parliament on 25 July 2017. Chief Justice JS Khehar administered the oath of office to Kovind who swore to “preserve, protect and defend the constitution and law.” Former President Pranab Mukherjee, Vice President Hamid Ansari, Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan and Prime Minister Narendra Modi were present at the ceremony.

Ram Nath Kovind (born 1 October 1945) is an Indian politician who is the President of India, in office since 2017. Previously he served as Governor of Bihar from 2015 to 2017 and was a Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha from 1994 to 2006. He was a leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Kovind was nominated as a presidential candidate by the ruling NDA coalition and won the 2017 presidential election, becoming the second Dalit to be elected to the post of President. He assumed office on 25 July 2017. Before entering politics, he was a lawyer for 16 years and practiced in the Delhi High Court and the Supreme Court until 1993.

Kovind was born in Paraukh village in the Kanpur Dehat district, Uttar Pradesh. His father Maikulal was a landless Kori (a Dalit weaving community) who ran a small shop to support his family. He was the youngest of five brothers and two sisters. He was born in a mud hut, which eventually collapsed. He was only five when his mother died of burns when their thatched dwelling caught fire. Kovind later donated the land to the community.

After his elementary school education, he had to walk each day to Khanpur village, 8 km away, to attend junior school, as nobody in the village had a bicycle. He holds a bachelor's degree in commerce and a LLB from DAV College (affiliated with Kanpur University). After graduating in law from a Kanpur college, Kovind went to Delhi to prepare for the civil services examination. He passed this exam on his third attempt, but he did not join because he was selected for an allied service instead of IAS and thus started practicing law.

Kovind enrolled as an advocate in 1971 with the bar council of Delhi. He was Central Government Advocate in the Delhi High Court from 1977 to 1979. Between 1977 & 1978, he also served as the personal assistant of Prime Minister of India Morarji Desai. In 1978, he became an advocate-on-record of the Supreme Court of India and served as a standing counsel for the Central Government in the Supreme Court of India from 1980 to 1993. He practiced in the Delhi High Court and Supreme Court until 1993. As an advocate he provided free legal aid to weaker sections of society, women and the poor under the Free Legal Aid Society in New Delhi.

He joined the BJP in 1991. He was President of the BJP Dalit Morcha between 1998 and 2002 and President of the All-India Koli Samaj[when?]. He also served as national spokesperson of the party. He donated his ancestral home in Derapur to the RSS. Soon after joining the BJP, he contested for Ghatampur assembly constituency, but lost and later contested for Bhognipur(in 2007) (both in Uttar Pradesh) assembly constituency on the BJP ticket but lost again.

In 1997, Kovind joined the protest against certain orders from the Central government that had adverse effects on the SC/ST workers. Later, three amendments were made to the Constitution that revoked the orders, by the NDA government headed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

He was elected and became a Rajya Sabha MP from the state of Uttar Pradesh in April 1994. He served a total of twelve years, two consecutive terms, until March 2006. As a member of parliament, he served on the Parliamentary Committee for Welfare of Scheduled Castes/Tribes, Home Affairs, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Social Justice and Empowerment, Law and Justice. He also served as the chairman of the Rajya Sabha House Committee. During his career as a parliamentarian, under the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme, he focused on education in rural areas by helping in construction of school buildings in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. As a member of parliament, he visited Thailand, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore, Germany, Switzerland, France, the United Kingdom and the United States on study tours.

On 8 August 2015, the then President of India appointed Kovind as Governor of Bihar. On 16 August 2015, the acting Chief Justice of Patna High Court, Iqbal Ahmad Ansari, administered the oath to Kovind as the 35th Governor of Bihar. The function took place at Raj Bhawan, Patna.

Kovind's appointment was criticised by then Chief Minister of Bihar Nitish Kumar as it came months before State Assembly elections and the appointment made without consulting State Government as recommended by Sarkaria Commission. However, Kovind's term as Governor, was praised for constituting a judicial commission to investigate irregularities in promotion of undeserving teachers, mis-management of funds and appointment of undeserving candidates in universities. In June 2017, when Kovind was announced as candidate for Presidential election, Nitish Kumar backed Kovind's choice and praised Kovind as being unbiased and working closely with the State Government during his Governorship.

India Ranks 43rd In 2017 Global Retirement Index

India ranks abysmally at 43rd out of 45 countries in a global innovation index, according to a report released by US Chambers of Commerce which cited the country's "anemic" Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) policy and patent act as challenges to innovation.

In the 5th annual International IP Index The Roots of Innovation by US Chamber of Commerce's Global Intellectual Property Center (GIPC), there is slight improvement in India's performance; it was ranked last or next-to-last in the previous four years. "In India, many of the same challenges to innovation remain," said David Hirschmann, president and CEO of GIPC.

India has 8.4 score as against Americas 32.6 which tops the list of 45 countries.

The United States is followed by United Kingdom (32.4), Germany (31.9), Japan (31.3) and Sweden (31). China has 14.83 points. Neighbouring Pakistan ranks 44th with 8.37 score. "Although India has made incremental progress, the government needs to build upon the positive rhetoric of its IPR policy with the substantial legislative reforms that innovators need," he said.

Hirschmann said reforms can improve its reputation as a destination for doing business, foreign businesses ability to invest in and Make in India, and India's own innovative industries.

"If Indian policymakers wish to deliver the kinds of results the Modi administration once hoped for, they can act to address issues that impact Indian innovation, such as software patentability, life sciences patents, copyright protection and enforcement, and trade secrets protection," Hirschmann said. In a statement, US Chambers of Commerce said in addition to its anemic Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) policy, the report cited challenges with the scope of patentability for computer-implemented inventions, Section 3(D) of the Indian Patent Act and the recent High Court of Delhi decision regarding photocopying copyrighted content.

The report said the slight improvement in India's overall scores is largely because of a relatively strong performance on the five new indicators included in the Index and not from any actual improvements to their national IP environments.

Wimbledon Grand Slam 2017

Roger Federer became the first man to win Wimbledon eight times and extended his record to 19 Grand Slam titles with victory over Croatia's Marin Cilic. The Swiss third seed won 6-3 6-1 6-4 as seventh seed Cilic struggled with a blister on his left foot and broke down in tears during the second set. Federer,

35, finished the contest in one hour and 41 minutes to claim his first Wimbledon title since 2012. He becomes the oldest man in the Open era to win at the All England Club.

Garbine Muguruza defeated Venus Williams in the women's singles final of Wimbledon 2017, claiming the championship at the All England Club. The Spanish star was aggressive throughout and dominated the encounter as Williams faded in the second set. Muguruza prevailed 7-5, 6-0 as she turned on the style towards the end of the battle.

Men's Singles : Switzerland Roger Federer def. Croatia Marin Cilic, 6-3, 6-1, 6-4

Women's Singles : Spain Garbiñe Muguruza def. United States Venus Williams, 7-5, 6-0

Men's Doubles : Poland Lukasz Kubot / Brazil Marcelo Melo def. Austria Oliver Marach / Croatia Mate Pavic, 5-7, 7-5, 7-6(7-2), 3-6, 13-11

Women's Doubles : Russia Ekaterina Makarova / Russia Elena Vesnina def. Chinese Taipei Chan Hao-ching / Romania Monica Niculescu, 6-0, 6-0

Mixed Doubles : United Kingdom Jamie Murray/Switzerland Martina Hingis def. Finland Henri Kontinen/United Kingdom Heather Watson, 6-4, 6-4

India Ratifies 2nd Commitment Period Of Kyoto Protocol

India has ratified the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol that commits countries to contain the emission of greenhouse gases, reaffirming its stand on climate action.

In a brief statement, India's Permanent Mission to the UN said that India deposited its Instrument of Acceptance of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol under the UN Convention on Climate Change here yesterday. With this, India became the 80th country to accept the amendment relating to the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, the international emissions reduction treaty.

"India's acceptance reaffirms our continued commitment to climate action," the Indian mission said in a statement. India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin—who handed over India's Instrument—tweeted, "Maintaining momentum on Climate Change. India submits instrument of acceptance of Doha Amendment to Kyoto Protocol".

The Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which commits its Parties by setting internationally binding emission reduction targets.

The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Kyoto, Japan, in December 1997 and entered into force in February 2005.

WannaCry Ransomware Cyber-Attack

WannaCry malicious software has hit Britain's National Health Service, some of Spain's largest companies including Telefónica, as well as computers across Russia, the Ukraine and Taiwan, leading to PCs and data being locked up and held for ransom. The ransomware uses a vulnerability first revealed to the public as part of a leaked stash of NSA-related documents in order to infect Windows PCs and encrypt their contents, before demanding payments of hundreds of dollars for the key to decrypt files.

The co-ordinated attack had managed to infect large numbers of computers across the health service less than six hours after it was first noticed by security researchers, in part due to its ability to spread within networks from PC to PC. The ransomware has already caused hospitals across England to divert emergency patients – but what is it, how does it spread and why is this happening in the first place?

What is ransomware?

Ransomware is a particularly nasty type of malware that blocks access to a computer or its data and demands money to release it.

How does it work?

When a computer is infected, the ransomware typically contacts a central server for the information it needs to activate, and then begins encrypting files on the infected computer with that information. Once all the files are encrypted, it posts a message asking for payment to decrypt the files – and threatens to destroy the information if it doesn't get paid, often with a timer attached to ramp up the pressure.

How does it spread?

Most ransomware is spread hidden within Word documents, PDFs and other files normally sent via email, or through a secondary infection on computers already affected by viruses that offer a back door for further attacks.

What is WannaCry?

The malware that has affected Telefónica in Spain and the NHS in Britain is the same software: a piece of ransomware first spotted in the wild by security researchers MalwareHunterTeam, at 9.45am on 12 May.

Less than four hours later, the ransomware had infected NHS computers, albeit originally only in Lancashire, and spread laterally throughout the NHS's internal network. It is also being called WanaCrypt0r 2.0, Wanna Decryptor 2.0, WCry 2, WannaCry 2 and Wanna Decryptor 2.

How much are they asking for?

WannaCry is asking for \$300 worth of the cryptocurrency Bitcoin to unlock the contents of the computers.

Who are they?

The creators of this piece of ransomware are still unknown, but WannaCry is their second attempt at cyber-extortion. An earlier version, named WeCry, was discovered back in February this year: it asked users for 0.1 bitcoin (currently worth \$177, but with a fluctuating value) to unlock files and programs.

How is the NSA tied in to this attack?

Once one user has unwittingly installed this particular flavour of ransomware on their own PC, it tries to spread to other computers in the same network. In order to do so, WannaCry uses a known vulnerability in the Windows operating system, jumping between PC and PC. This weakness was first revealed to the world as part of a huge leak of NSA hacking tools and known weaknesses by an anonymous group calling itself "Shadow Brokers" in April.

Is there any defence?

Yes. Shortly before the Shadow Brokers released their files, Microsoft issued a patch for affected versions of Windows, ensuring that the vulnerability couldn't be used to spread malware between fully updated versions of its operating system. But for many reasons, from lack of resources to a desire to fully test new updates before pushing them out more widely, organisations are often slow to install such security updates on a wide scale.



The first commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol was from 2008–2012. The Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Qatar in December 2012. The amendment includes new commitments for parties to the Kyoto Protocol who agreed to take on commitments in a second commitment period from January 2013 to December 2020 and a revised list of greenhouse gases to be reported on by Parties in the second commitment period, according to the UNFCCC website.

The Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had in January given its approval to ratify the second commitment period of the international treaty.

Justice Dipak Misra Sworn In As 45th Chief Justice Of India

Justice Dipak Misra was sworn in on 27 August 2017 as the Chief Justice of India (CJI) in a brief ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan, where he was administered the oath of office by President Ram Nath Kovind. Misra will be the 45th chief justice of the Supreme Court and have a 14-month tenure till October 2018. He takes over from chief justice J.S. Khehar.



Khehar nominated Misra last month on behalf of the collegium for consideration by the centre as the next chief justice of the country.

Born in 1953, 63-year-old Misra joined the bar in 1977 and began his judicial career at the Orissa high court as an additional judge in 1996.

Misra was then transferred to the Madras high court following which he assumed charge as chief justice of the Patna high court in 2009. He was named chief justice of Delhi high court in 2010.

In 2011, Misra was elevated to the Supreme Court, where he has been part of several noteworthy cases and judgments including the historic one on 30 July, 2015, when the apex court was opened at 3am to decide on Yakub Memon's appeal against his execution. Memon was convicted in the 1993 Mumbai blasts case.

Misra also headed the bench that upheld the death sentence awarded in the Nirbhaya gang rape case.

He has also played an active role in the crackdown on child pornography websites.

His views on nationalism have been highlighted through his guidelines on the mandatory playing of the national anthem in theatres. Apart from all this, Misra has addressed the plight of farmers in various farmer suicide cases.

The introduction of 'Nyaya Sanyog' (Legal Assistance Establishments) in states to provide legal access to the poor also bears his imprimatur.

A number of challenges lie ahead. Apart from the matters pending before him, he is likely to be at the receiving end of litigations arising out of the recently passed judgment widening the scope of privacy by deeming it a fundamental right under the Constitution.

As he was chosen to be part of a three-judge bench constituted by erstwhile chief justice Khehar to hear the Ayodhya land dispute case, delivering a judgment in this matter is expected to be one of the biggest challenges before him.

Senior advocate Sanjay Hegde, elaborating on the tasks ahead for the new CJI, said, "As CJI, he is likely to play a role in at least 10 appointments to the Supreme Court. He will also have to ensure that the paperless project that the court has been trying to adopt since former CJI J.S Khehar's tenure is finally put in practice. Other than that, he has important cases like the Ayodhya dispute to address and will also be the judge before whom all new and pending cases that may arise from the privacy judgment come up."

There are, however, a few concerns over his appointment as he is embroiled in a land allotment case in Odisha where the lease of land allotted to him was cancelled by the state government owing to irregularities in an affidavit.

He was also among those named in the suicide note of former Arunachal Pradesh chief minister Kalikho Pul, wherein corruption allegations were made.

Besides, there is the annoyance of a petition filed by Punjab MP Harinder Singh Khalsa, challenging Misra's appointment, pending before the Delhi high court.

Konkani Writer Gets Saraswati Samman

Eminent Konkani writer Mahabaleshwar Sail has been honoured with the Saraswati Samman 2016 for his novel Hawthian.



The award comprises a cash prize of Rs 15 lakh and a citation. The 74-year-old writer's novel was shortlisted from 22 regional language books.

Best known for his work, 'Paltadcho Munis', which inspired a film by the same name, Sail is a renowned bi-lingual writer based in Goa. He has four Marathi dramas and seven Konkani novels to his credit.

He has also written short stories and a novel in Marathi. Published in 2009, 'Hawtha' is a work of fiction presenting the cultural map of the traditional potter community of Goa.

After Kalpana Chawla, Jalseen Kaur Josan Becomes 2nd Indian Woman To Fly For NASA's Mars Mission

When we give examples of inspirations to the world, Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams who are the names which are the pride of India. Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams were the first two Indian origin women to fly to space. Here is one more rising inspiration- Jasleen Kaur Josan becomes the first Indian Sikh woman to be selected by NASA for the Mars Expedition happening in 2030.

After Kalpana Chawla, Jasleen Kaur Josan has become the 2nd Indian Women and first Sikh women to be selected by NASA for the Mars Expedition happening in 2030. The mission called the Orion Mission will be the first man mission to the red planet and candidates were selected from around the world.

"It will likely take nine months to reach there, three months to stay there, and then another nine months to return. So it's a 21-month mission in total", said Jasleen Kaur. She shared that she and her family are more excited than nervous about the chance to go Mars.

The group will be the first to live and create a habitat on Mars and many people will not return. However, Jasleen is part of the two way mission where those going will return.

The 2020 mission candidates will not return back to planet Earth. An earlier mission to Mars will take place in three years from now, although this is a one-way colonization mission where the group inhabiting Mars will not be returning to Earth. Josan is part of the two-way mission which is set to happen in 2030.

After Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams now Jasleen Kaur Josan has set an example for the world to look upto and get motivated to pursue their dreams. Indians are really proud of them.

India Ranks 116 Out Of 157 Nations On SDG Index

India is ranked 116 out of 157 nations on a global index that

assesses the performance of countries towards achieving the ambitious sustainable development goals (SDGs). The SDG Index and Dashboards Report produced by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the Bertelsmann Stiftung shows that world leaders need to strengthen their joint efforts to realise the 17 global goals.

India is ranked 116th on the index with a score of 58.1, behind countries such as Nepal, Iran, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and China. Pakistan is ranked 122.

The report said that the countries which are closest to fulfilling the goals are not the biggest economies but comparably small, developed countries.

Sweden leads the list, followed by Denmark and Finland. Among the G7 countries, only Germany and France can be found among the top ten performers.

The United States ranks 42nd on the Index, while Russia and China rank 62nd and 71st respectively.

Bertelsmann Stiftung chairman and CEO Aart De Geus said the report's findings show that politicians, businesses and society altogether must urgently intensify their efforts and commit themselves to this agenda.

"SDG Index and Dashboards highlight the need for urgent action on the part of G20 countries in making sustainable development a reality both within and beyond their borders. If the world is to achieve the SDGs, all countries must take up the goals as part of their national development strategies, and ensure that they take responsibility for their impact on the rest of the world," said Jeffrey D Sachs, Director of the SDSN. The SDG Index and Dashboard collect available data for 157 countries to assess where each country stands in 2017 with regard to achieving the SDGs.

The SDG Index ranks countries based on their performance across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Maharashtra Becomes First Indian State To Criminalize Social Boycott

Maharashtra has become the first Indian state to criminalize social boycott. The Prohibition of People from Social Boycott (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2016, prescribes up to three years in jail and maximum fine of Rs. 1 L. The law was passed by the assembly in May'16. The president gave assent on June 20. This gives life to the initiative by late rationalist Narendra Dabholkar.

With the President of India giving assent to the Maharashtra Prohibition of People from Social Boycott (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2016, Maharashtra has become the first state in the country to bring a law making social boycott a crime.