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Bank Investment Company

- A Bank Investment Company (BIC) would be established by the government under Companies act, 2013.
- BIC would act as a core investment company and will hold more than 50% shares in Public Sector Banks (PSBs).
- The character of BIC's business would make it resemble a passive sovereign wealth fund for the Government's banks.
- BIC was mooted in 2014 by the Reserve Bank of India's PJ Nayak Committee to review governance of boards of banks.
- As per the Committee's recommendations, the government set up a Bank Boards Bureau (in 2016) for selecting the top management of PSBs.

Kochi-Mangaluru Natural Gas Pipeline

- This 450 km long gas pipeline has been built by Gas Authority of India Limited i.e., GAIL (India) Ltd.
- This pipeline marks an important milestone towards the creation of 'One Nation One Gas Grid'.
- It will carry natural gas from the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Regasification Terminal at Kerala's Kochi to Karnataka's Mangaluru.
- It will supply eco-friendly Piped Natural Gas (PNG) to households and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) to the transportation sector.
- It will also supply Natural Gas to commercial and industrial units across the districts along the pipeline.
- To overcome the hurdle of laying the pipeline to cross water bodies at many locations, the Horizontal Directional Drilling method was used.

Deepor Beel

- Kamrup district administration has prohibited community fishing at Deepor Beel - Assam's only Ramsar site.
- Deepor Beel is a permanent freshwater lake located to the south-west of Guwahati city.
- Lying in a former channel of the Brahmaputra river, it lies to the south of the main river channel.
- It was designated as a Ramsar site in 2002 for sustaining a range of aquatic

life forms besides 219 species of birds.

Himgiri

- Himgiri, the first of the three Project 17A ships built at Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited (GRSE), has been launched.
- P17A ships are the first gas turbine propulsion and largest combat platforms ever built at GRSE.

Project 17A

- Project 17A or Nilgiri-class frigate is follow-on of the Project 17 Shivalik-class stealth frigate for the Indian Navy.
- A total of seven P17A ships are being built using integrated construction methodology at Mazagon Dock and GRSE.
- P17A frigates integrate new design concepts for improved survivability, sea keeping, stealth, ship manoeuvrability, advanced indigenous weapon and sensor fit along with other improvements.

Bird Flu

- The mysterious deaths of thousands of birds, across species, in several parts of India have prompted concerns about bird flu.
- Bird flu or Avian influenza is a disease caused by infection with avian flu Type A viruses.
- These viruses are found naturally in wild aquatic birds around the world and can infect domestic poultry as well as other bird and animal species.
- Based on their molecular characteristics and potency, these viruses are divided into,
    1. Low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) A viruses - Causes mild or no disease, and
    2. Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) A viruses - Causes severe infection that leads to high mortality.
- Avian influenza A viruses can infect birds through contact with infected wild birds or other infected poultry, as well as surface contamination.
- Human infections, though rare, happen when sufficient quantity of bird flu virus enters a person’s nose, eyes or mouth, or through inhalation.

Sagarmala Seaplane Services Project

- Sea Plane will utilise the nearby water bodies for take-off and landing.
- Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways kicked off the project of Sagarmala Seaplane Services (SSPS) with potential airline operators.

- The joint development and operation of SSPS on the select routes will be undertaken by forming a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) with **Sagarmala Development Company Limited** (SDCL).
- [SDCL would execute and implement the SDCL project.
- SDCL comes under the administrative control of the Shipping Ministry.]
- The proposed Origin-Destination pairs are developed under **Hub and Spoke model.**
- One Seaplane Service is already in operation between Kevadia and Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad.

Source: Hindustan Times, Economic Times, Business Line, The Hindu, Down To Earth, Times Now

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